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THE DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

DC-UK

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THE OFFICIAL REVIEW!

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Sonic Team: Phantasy Star

Yuji Naka talks exclusively to DC-UK about the world's first online RPG

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Online Gaming

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DC-UK tries out EVERY Dreamcast game with online play Get ready for phone bill hell!

PREVIEWED!

Daytona USA

Is it still the best driving game in the world? We take a spin in the Japanese demo

MASSIVE!

2001 Preview

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ON THE COVER

048 Grandia II

Come with me into the tavern weary adventurer, and with a mug of strong ale sit ye downe. I will tell thee wondrous stories of brave men, hideous creatures and comely maidens. *Grandia II* be the theme of my tale, a Role Playing Game forged by an anciente clan of wizards known only as GameArts. Err. Oh. I think I drinketh too deeply of this ale. Exuseth me, I'm going to be sicketh.

006 Sonic Team

We wrestle with the *Phantasy Star Online* hype monster just weeks before the game's Japanese release. What do Sonic Team have to say about the amazing beast they have spawned? Just how angry will Yuji Naka get when we ask him if there will be a sequel? Find out in our four page interview!

036 2001

Last year we employed Nostradmus to preview all the brightest games of the coming 12 months. This year, we disguise our preview feature as a six page tabloid gossip column! Go on, have a look now, it's mental.

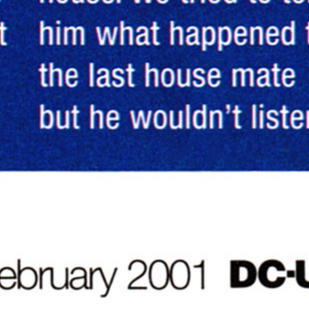
Welcome

Well, that's it, I'm off. After a year at the helm of DC-UK I'm jumping ship. It's been a wild, tumultuous voyage, filled with breath-taking highs and one or two heart-thumping lows, and I wouldn't have changed it for the world. But it's time to go.

Before I do get kicked out of the office, though, let's have a quick romp through **DC-UK** 19. *Grandia II*, *Phantasy Star Online*, *Daytona USA 2001*, *Fighting Vipers 2* – it's clear that the Dreamcast bandwagon is rolling on healthily, despite the presence of a certain other machine. We knew it would, there's no arguing with quality. And those who believe support for the machine is set to decline this year should check out our 2001 preview feature. Once you've managed to suss out the theme of the article, you'll realise just how many games are lined-up for release this year. And they are probably only a fraction of what we can truly expect. Last month we told you that Sega has at least 20 in-house projects planned for this year and most of those have yet to be announced. What could they be?

We'll find out soon enough. From next month, it will be Lee's lovely mug that stares out at you from this page. Hopefully, I'll pop by now and again to contribute the odd review, if they'll have me. Until then, I'd like to say a few self-indulgent thank yous. First of all, thank YOU for reading **DC-UK** and for supporting the mag with your letters, emails and reviews – keep up the good work. Thanks also to Stu Ledger, Steve Starvis, Danielle Woodyatt, Jeremy Chubb, Sarah Chudley, Caspar Field, Fran Reyes, Koji Aizawa and Mark Maslowicz. And obviously thanks to my beautiful hard-working team. Right that's enough of that, I'm making myself feel sick. Enjoy the rest of the mag. Oh and come on Man City! ■

Keith Stuart
Editor



Keith Stuart
Security are clearing Keith's desk by chucking everything out of the window. Luckily, he salvaged the Britney posters

Lee Hart
"**DC-UK** is mine, mine I tell you, all mine! And you – you are all my children now. And I'm putting Roy Keane on the cover next month"

Claire Howlett
Apparently Claire has absolutely nothing exciting planned for this year. We think she should move out of her caravan

Neil Randall
Our resident muso is working on a new album this year. "It will be more minimalist than survival horror" he commented glumly

Karl Jaques
Karl plans to find love in 2001, ideally with a Leeds fan, or even a player if what Claire's dad says about Alan Smith is true

Andrew Hind
"I might actually buy a Dreamcast this year" commented Beast this month. He's heard that Sega is working on a Kebab sim

Adrian Lawton
Adrian is going to move into the Beast's house. We tried to tell him what happened to the last house mate but he wouldn't listen

February 2001

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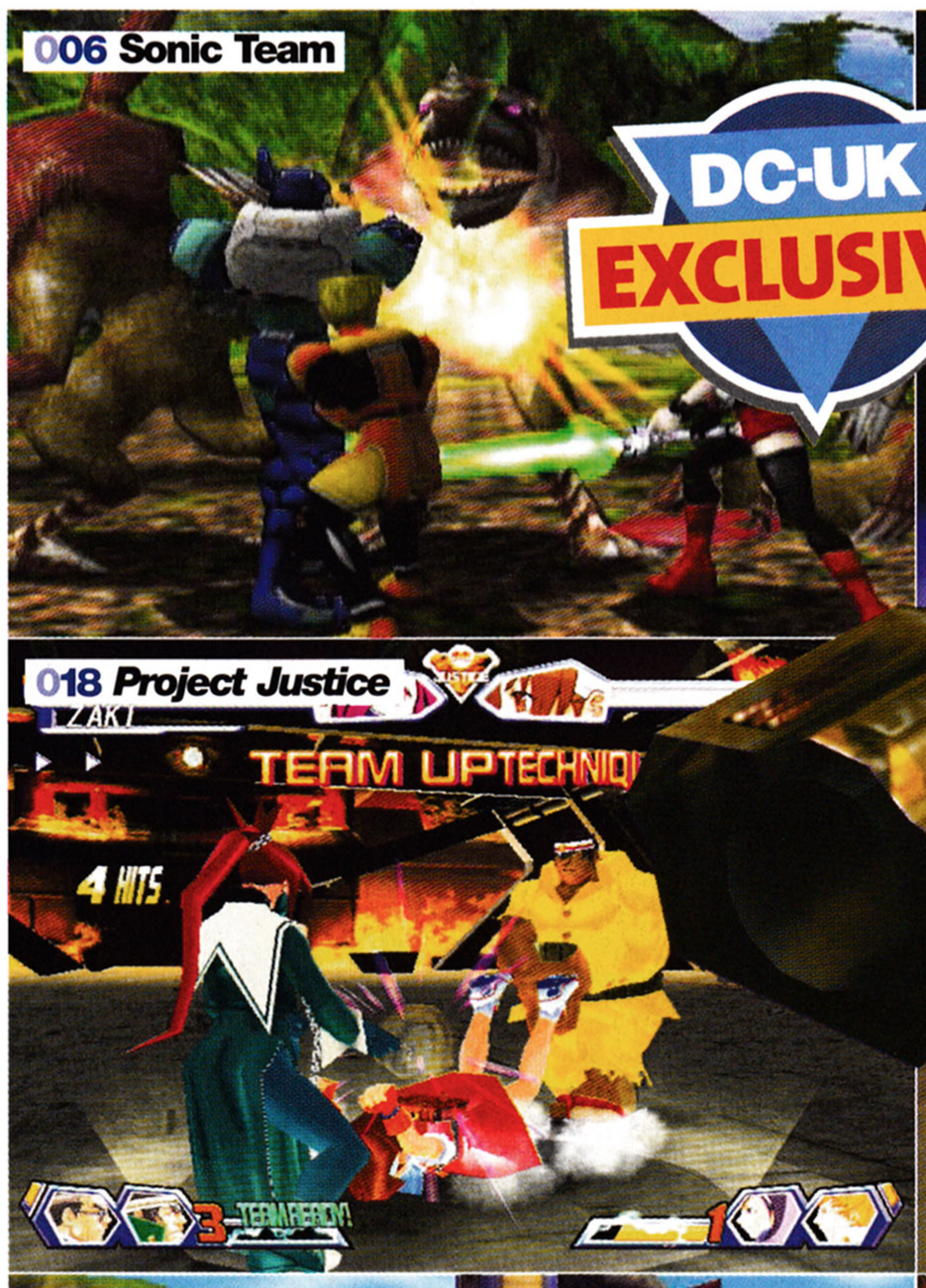

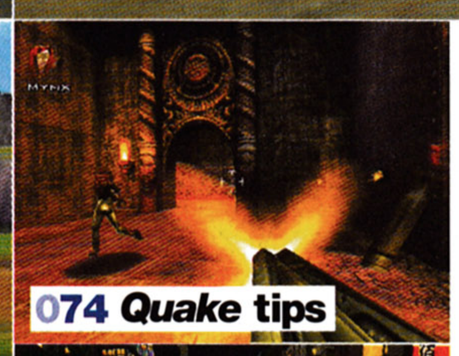

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Reviews you can trust

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Game Arts' voluptuous RPG is a tasty treat for Spring 2001. Come and have a lick courtesy of our UK exclusive review

054 Vanishing Point
Camper vans, lovely graphics, innovative bits and pieces. Can this racer from Clockwork games compete with the driving big boys?

058 Spawn The comic has sold around 135 million copies worldwide so a videogame workout for the hellish hero was inevitable. But is it any good? Guess. Go, on, guess

060 Surf Rocket Racers
Feel your engine throb as the waves crash about you and the seat grows hot beneath your bottom. It could only be a jet ski sim. Climb on board and we'll take you for a splash

062 Rainbow Six Lead a group of highly trained commandos as they infiltrate enemy bases very, very quietly before finally shooting everyone in an orgy of gunfire and sudden death

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036 2001 Preview Every year, every videogame mag looks forward to the games coming out over the next 12 months. They're usually pretty dull, but we've tried to liven the tired format up again (remember Nostradamus in **DC-UK** 05?)

042 Up to 6bn players?
Finally, Sega's promise of multiplayer gaming online is being realised. We take a look at all the titles currently offering Net play. Is it going to be worth the phone bill?

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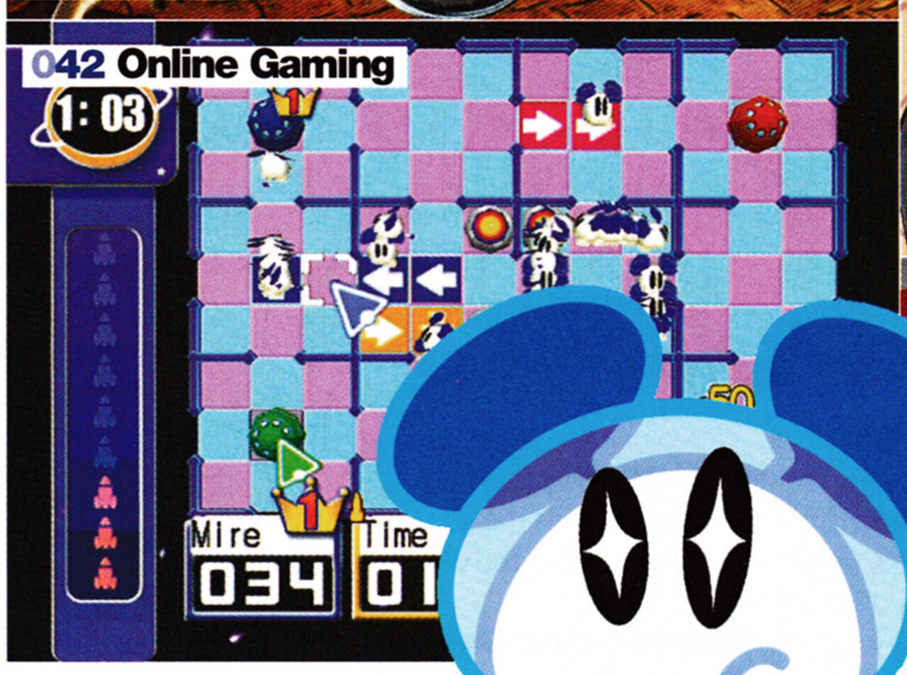

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Your favourite games made easy

074 *Quake III Arena* Are you that useless one in every game of *Quake* – you know, the one that seems to provide target practise for everyone else? The one who always comes out worst in gun battles, even when you have loads more health and a better weapon than your opponent? Have you basically got 'shoot me' drawn on your forehead? Have you? Don't worry, you useless fool, **DC-UK** can help

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PHANTASY STARS

DC-UK talks to the team behind the most important Sega videogame since *Sonic the Hedgehog*. Oh and they wrote that as well...

This thing is everywhere in Japan. Excited gamers discuss nothing else on the streets of electronics Mecca Akihabara; the Internet is buzzing with related chat (major topics of conversation being it's broadband compatibility and the distinct possibility of sequels); it has revolutionised the console RPG. We are, of course, referring to *Phantasy Star Online*, Sonic Team's vast multiplayer adventure which should be out in Japan by the time you read this. Correction. It should be breaking sales records in Japan by the time you read this.

It is fitting that such a phenomenon should come from Sega. In the '90s the company pioneered 3D racers and beat 'em ups (with *Virtua Racing* and *Virtua Fighter* respectively) and more recently injected a welcome dose of gameplay creativity into a tired, jaded industry with the likes of *Seaman*, *Crazy Taxi* and *Jet Set Radio*. And let's not forget Shenmue's impeccably realised world and Ulala's funky universe-saving dance moves! *PSO*'s release (in Japan at least) marks a spectacular coup at the end of the Century. It is the first time that people from five nationalities will be able to participate together in an RPG – arguably the most text heavy of all genres. This is the sort of revolution PS2 promised for its launch but never delivered. This is the sort of thing that will save Dreamcast from the wolves Sony has sent to its door.

***Phantasy Star Online* is developed** by Sonic Team, the Sega studio headed by Yuji Naka. Other key members include director Takao Miyoshi and art director Satoshi Sakai, though only Naka has been with the team since its inception in 1991, when Sega split its development dept into several divisions. "Sonic Team was formed in July," he recalls. "We've always been interested in creating action games and back then, our largest competitor was Nintendo's Mario. So we wanted to create a title that could compete against him and sell well in Europe and America." Thus the company's speedy and spiky mascot was born. Indeed to this day, Naka still likes the original *Sonic the Hedgehog* the best out of all of the chap's adventures.

Miyoshi joined Sonic Team later during those Mega Drive years; with *PSO* he's finally realised what he says has been his ambition all along – to create an online game. Unsurprisingly, its also the favourite of all his projects. Sakai has been with Sega since 1993 and joined the team in '97. "My constant intention has

DC-UK EXCLUSIVE!

■ Some of the creatures and characters may look familiar, but Sonic Team claims to have no direct influences with *Phantasy Star Online*

been to create something that could appeal not only in Japan, but all over the world," he states. The trio are also big fans of another Japanese visual language taking the world by storm. "Of course we're all in love with anime and manga!" Sakai laughs. They collectively cite the works of Hayao Miyazaki (Princess Mononoke), *Gundam* and live action creature feature Godzilla on the top of their lists.

The game begins with the arrival of the Pioneer 2 spacecraft in the orbit of planet Ragol, where a colony was instigated seven years ago. A sudden huge explosion on the surface cuts off all contact with the base and its up to the would-be new inhabitants of the frontier world to form teams, beam down and find out what exactly happened.

"Our largest concern was to keep the storyline simple, so that players can develop different variations", Miyoshi explains. Naka adds that the team's aim was really for punters to set the tone of the adventure themselves, "because by allowing them to choose their own dialogue, the game will develop in different directions which we cannot predict." 2000 phrases or expressions are available and each is number coded and reproduced across the languages available. While Naka concedes that communications via single expressions may be somewhat limited, Miyoshi explains that they can be combined to form longer sentences, giving players greater variation.

Both remark that international compatibility has been the biggest challenge in creating the game. "It was really important because Sega wanted to release it simultaneously over the world," Naka says, "though the reality is that they'll get it a month or two later overseas. But to have people be able to play it over the Internet was the hardest aspect." "Being a network game, the graphics shouldn't be sacrificed," Sakai offers on the topic. "We've managed to create a 3D world I'm proud of. Another aspect is how players can differentiate each character and I've tried something very new. Creating all the different types of faces and the morphing of their bodies was a lot of hard work."

Indeed, the character customisation available is nothing you've ever seen before on any console RPG. This element is so extensive, it's actually closer to features usually found in hardcore mech strategy titles. Miyoshi demonstrates by picking a tough, heroic Hunter-class chap and goes to work. Hair, skin and ▸

■ The planet's native creatures have turned especially nasty. Kill them all to clear a particular area

> "The game will develop in different directions which we cannot predict"

► clothing colour, facial expressions – literally anything can be tweaked to satisfaction. By the end of the makeover, our character sports a gigantic purple afro, huge wrap-around sunnies straight from the '70s and has packed on at least ten kilos in his mid-section! You won't find chunky funk soul brothers in many other RPGs this year. "Our starting point was that this game would be played world wide," Naka explains, "so many different personalities should be possible. I'm really looking forward to seeing how players will develop their characters' appearance and attitude in the game and how characters will compare with those created by players overseas."

When we mention the mother of all networked RPGs *Ultima Online*, Naka gushes, "that's a fantastic game. It's a great achievement to create such a universe in a game." With a laugh he reveals there's some staff at Sega who play it everyday and can't stop talking about it, but he's also quick to point out the fundamental differences between *Ultima* and *PSO*. "*Ultima*'s played on the PC using a mouse. With *Phantasy Star* being console based, our aim is to cultivate a wider audience for online games." He's optimistic about what's to come. "I'm sure there are many people who will discover a networked game for the first time from playing *PSO* and I'm sure they'll understand the fun and the possibilities available."

Being a fan of *Ultima* doesn't necessarily mean its been educational in the development of *PSO*. "*Ultima*'s really closer to *Diablo*," Naka remarks, "but having said that, they're both unique. It took *Ultima* two or three years with various upgrades to reach the stage it's at now, whereas *PSO* will be complete and ready to go at the start. As a consumer item, we have constraints in that we can't produce patches and various add-ons to the game like they do in the PC world."

So what's their favourite part of *PSO*? "I like the dragon scene," Naka offers. "Its role is very important and has a big part in the development of the game." Miyoshi is also fond of the scene, but he's more taken by the communication aspect over graphics and cites the visual lobby, where players gather and form their four-person parties: "When I see people meeting and talking for the first time, that's my happiest moment." Sakai remarks with a laugh: "as the design leader, I would have to say all of it!"

The characters and world design have been a result of brainstorming

SONIC CREAM

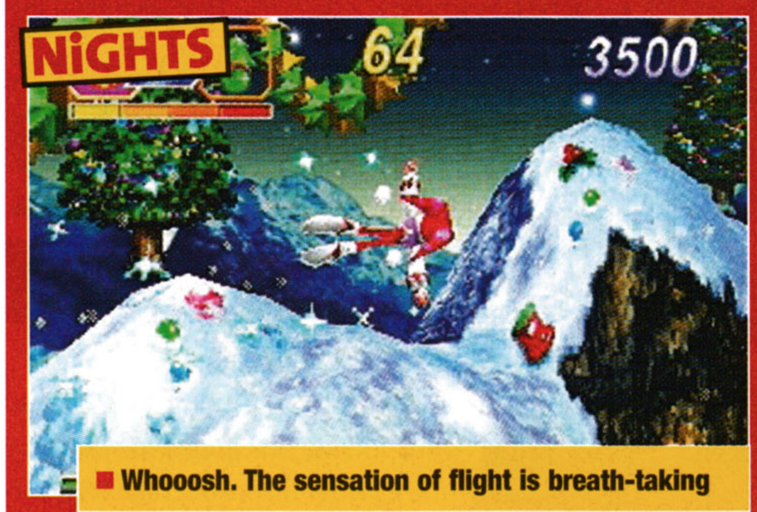
Yuji Naka's Sonic Team has been responsible for some of the most innovative and playable games of the last decade. Here's a quick look at a few of our favourites. If you've never played them, get yourself a second-hand Mega Drive or Saturn and do so!

■ The original is Yuji Naka's fave Sonic game

The Mega Drive's 1991 Mario-beater was a slick, speedy riposte to sedate Nintendo gameplay. One of the first games – and characters – to be considered cool, Sonic was bound to become an icon ■

■ "I'm a firefighter, twisted firefighter"

Some say this futuristic fire-fighting adventure placed too many demands on the Saturn, visually. But the concept behind the game is innovative (as usual) and a modern day re-interpretation would work brilliantly ■

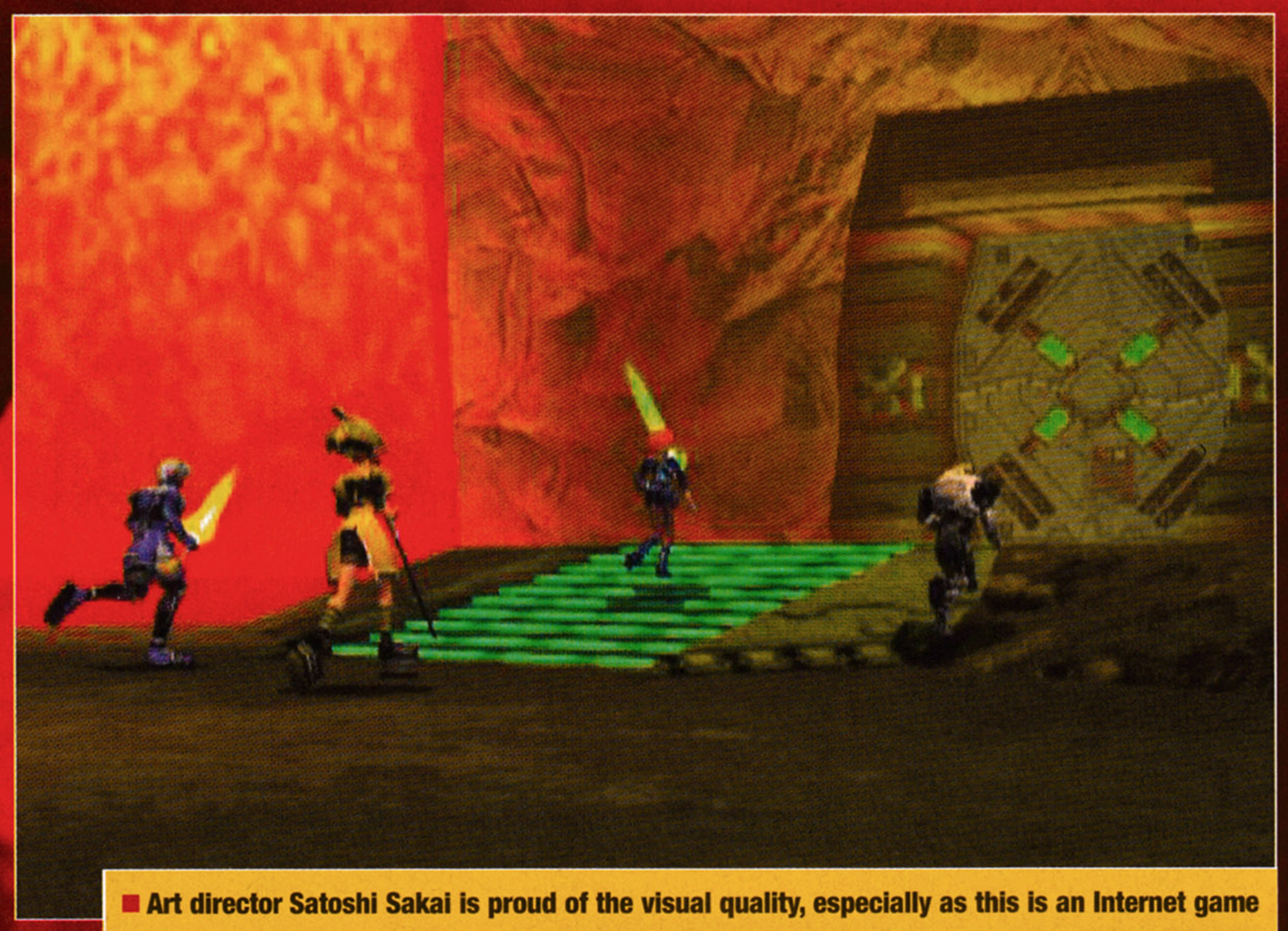


■ Whooosh. The sensation of flight is breath-taking

People talk about Saturn titles *NiGHTS* and *Christmas NiGHTS* (pictured) with the wistful nostalgia normally reserved for discussing first loves. These were magical, beautifully conceived 'platformers' ■

■ Massive, magnificent monkey maraca magic

By no means the first 'rhythm action' game, but certainly one of the best. Combines the hilarious interface with imaginative, chaotic visuals and a great soundtrack. A real party game ■



■ Art director Satoshi Sakai is proud of the visual quality, especially as this is an Internet game

■ A Hunter-class character: strong, well-armed and deadly up close

■ Blade Runner seems to have been a big influence on the designers

■ The Pioneer 2 is your main nexus, allowing you to stock up on health and arms

■ Talking to other characters is imperative if you want to make headway

sessions and – particularly for Sakai – photographic research. "I'm sure we're influenced by many things", Naka reckons, "but I couldn't put a finger on anything specific." Sakai emphasises that their baby is an original. "There may be some scenes that people think have come from something else, but that's not the case. We've created this world from the ground up."

"Our character sports a gigantic purple afro and huge wraparound sunnies"

As if getting *PSO* wasn't enough, a trial version of *Sonic Adventures* 2 will also be included with the game when it is released; that project is a collaboration with Sonic Team USA based in San Francisco.

Sonic's second Dreamcast outing will also mark the company mascot's tenth anniversary; Naka doesn't have any qualms about having such a big project partially developed on the other side of the world. "The geological difference doesn't mean very much anymore, because we can work together via the Internet. The only problem has been with the time difference." The creation of Chao, the cute artificial life creatures that make up the mini games in *Sonic Adventure 1* and *2* is handled in Japan while the US side is responsible for the main action part of the game. Chao is a concept that originated in *NiGHTS*, and Naka enthuses that it will be further developed for Sonic's new adventure.

As for... *PSO2*, Naka says the development of a sequel will depend on how well the original does once it's out. "I suspect we'll be making something continuous. Whether it will be a *Phantasy Star Online 2* or not, I don't know. But we've acquired some experience while making this game." Not wanting to elaborate on something that hasn't been created yet, he explains "it's like I have delivery pains and then people ask what's next. But *this* is such a cute baby!" Post delivery, he's keen to adventure with players around Japan and the rest of the world. "With previous domestic online games, you don't really know who's playing on the other side. But with this game, you can really get a sense of what your counterparts are like." Forget all that talk of a European super state – the real International society begins here. See you online ■

PHANTASY STAR

With a preview copy of the game in hand, DC-UK ventures into the RPG event of the new millennium...

IN A NUTSHELL

> The *Phantasy Star* series finally returns.

The first online console role playing game arrives on the Dreamcast with Sonic Team at the helm. An epic adventure that will bring international gamers together using the console's modem ■

DETAILS

Publisher:	**Sega**
Developer:	**Sonic Team**
Origin:	**Japan**
Players:	**One to four**
Release date:	**February 23**

***Phantasy Star Online* will be out in Japan by the time you read this. The land of the rising sun will already be experiencing one of the greatest RPGs ever to come to a console. They'll know what happened on Pioneer 1 and why the catastrophic explosion occurred on the surface of the planet Ragol. Thankfully, we won't have to wait too long to join them. On February 23rd, the UK will see the release of the latest *Phantasy Star* title, a series with a reputation equalling *Zelda* and *Final Fantasy* for those who know their role playing stuff. Sonic Team is back on Dreamcast and gaming doesn't get any better.**

Famitsu, Japan's definitive game magazine, recently reviewed *PSO* and gave it a whopping 37/40, placing it just three points away from the only two full scorers ever, *Soul Calibur* and *The Legend of Zelda* on N64. That's some serious critical acclaim, but now having played *PSO* ourselves for ten hours of its mammoth gaming time, we're finding it difficult to argue.

■ It's not the Grim Reaper but your enemies will find him just as unhealthy

You begin by choosing a character from one of three classes, then equip them with various weapons and items before embarking on the quest. The Hunter class consists of close-range combatants that can rush in with a light sabre or a photon-charged weapon to pummel opponents. The Ranger class are experts in long-range weaponry and sniping, from basic handguns to rifles and heavy artillery, these are the guys you want in support if you're a Hunter rushing into a fight with multiple enemies. The third and final choice is the Forcer class, a group of mags who are able to cast powerful spells to both aid you in battle and destroy opponents with destructive elemental attacks. Weak when caught in physical

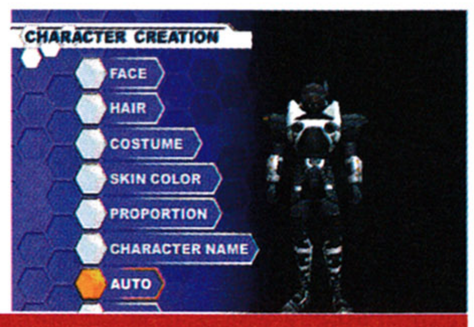
■ Come get some, beasties

■ Tyrell needs your help

■ As in many RPGs, you'll meet other AI-driven adventurers that will help you

ONLINE

■ In the city, you can meet new players to take along on your adventure



■ The character creation system gives you a completely unique hero

combat, the Forcer class is the ultimate back-up for Hunters and Rangers alike when confronted with overwhelming resistance.

With a character selected, you begin the mission to discover what happened on Ragol. But first you should wander around the city contained within the massive Pioneer 2 vessel that orbits the planet. Here you can replenish health, purchase items and go into the Hunter's guild and pick up various sub quests that will help you earn money and find special items before teleporting down to the planet's surface for the main quest.

The gameplay is simple and very effective. Utilising a free-roaming, real-time battle system similar to Square's *Secret Of Mana*, *Phantasy Star Online* has all the depth of an RPG while retaining the freedom and action of an adventure title. You can string combos together with careful timing and use various different tiered attacks: from basic sword moves to adrenaline-charged magical destruction. This excellent combat, in conjunction with the engrossing narrative, had us hooked and left us in no doubt that we're looking at one of the best RPGs ever made ■

■ Destroy the mosquito nest!

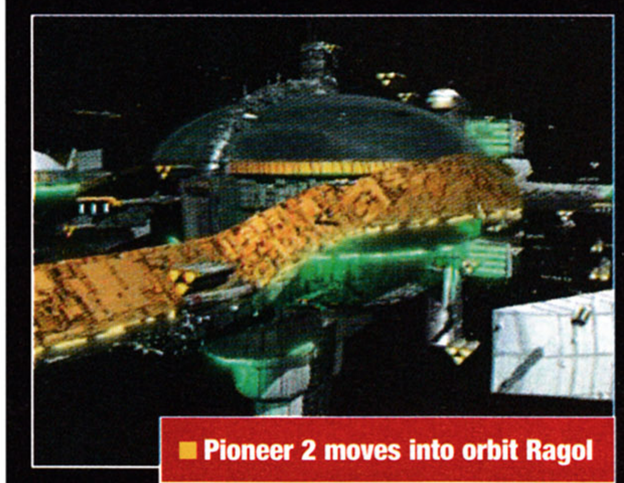
> "Adrenaline-charged magical destruction"

WHAT HAPPENED HERE?

> At the beginning of *Phantasy Star Online*, the event that inspires your quest is shown in a cinematic sequence where the Phoenix 2 ship makes contact with the Phoenix 1 colony planet base.

All is going well until a mysterious entity appears next to the ground base and a massive explosion ensues, leaving no room for survivors. What happened here? Well, we're not going to ruin it. All will be revealed though, as you progress through the adventure ■

■ Pioneer 1 as it was before the disaster. What could have happened to the inhabitants?



■ Pioneer 2 moves into orbit Ragol

■ The two colonies make initial contact

■ A mysterious explosion occurs on Pioneer 1 with a mysterious being appearing nearby

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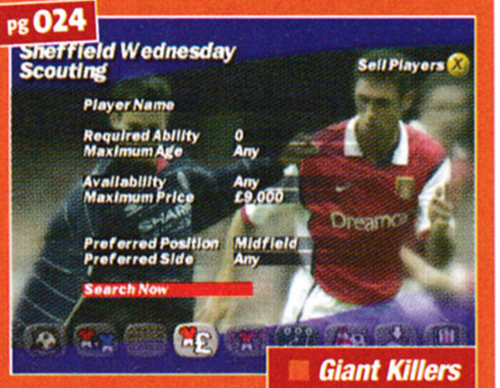


Giant Killers

If the screen is red like this, you're taking a pasting

A face full of the deadly bio-sludge ain't good, so avoid at all costs

UNREAL TOURNAMENT

Hit the road *Quake III*, there's a new sheriff in town and its name is *Unreal*

Listen up people, this is no training mission. Here at the *Unreal* school of combat we don't have time for losers and you're gonna have to be the best to beat the rest. If you think you're up to the task then follow us to a place where you'll need every ounce of concentration and skill you can muster, where every breath could be your last. Follow us if you dare, into the dark, violent world of *Unreal Tournament*. And before we leave, remember to put the cat out and say your farewells because if our experiences are anything to go by, you might not be back for a long, long time...

If you're still with us, we'll assume you've been cutting your teeth in the arenas of the mighty *Quake III* and fancy yourself as a bit of a fragster. Well it's time for a reality check, because *Unreal Tournament* is ready to redefine standards for the console FPS.

Secret Level, the team responsible for the Dreamcast port, has decided to push Sega's machine to the limits by offering eightplayer online gaming and the resulting mayhem will be enough to test the skills of even the mightiest cyberspace gladiators.

But the first thing you'll notice about this game is the quality of its visuals. Beautiful textures, realistic skins and nifty lighting effects ensure the DC version is on a par with its PC sibling. Running through a monitor, it's hard to tell them apart, even though the code we have is still some way from completion. There have been some concessions due to RAM limitations, but DC's texture compression capabilities means that the game looks solid

> "There are new DC exclusive arenas for us to enjoy"

IN A **NUTSHELL**

DETAILS

Publisher: **Infogrames**
Developer: **Secret Level**
Origin: **USA**
Players: **One to four** (offline)
Two to eight (offline)
Release date: **March**

> Console FPS action on an unprecedented scale.

Amazing visuals, cunning level designs and plenty of big ass guns combined with the promise of eightplayer online gaming means *Quake III* has some serious competition ■

The damage amplifier is a very tasty piece of kit

The first rule of *Unreal Tournament* – if it moves, kill it

If you've got time to look around, there's some really cool scenery

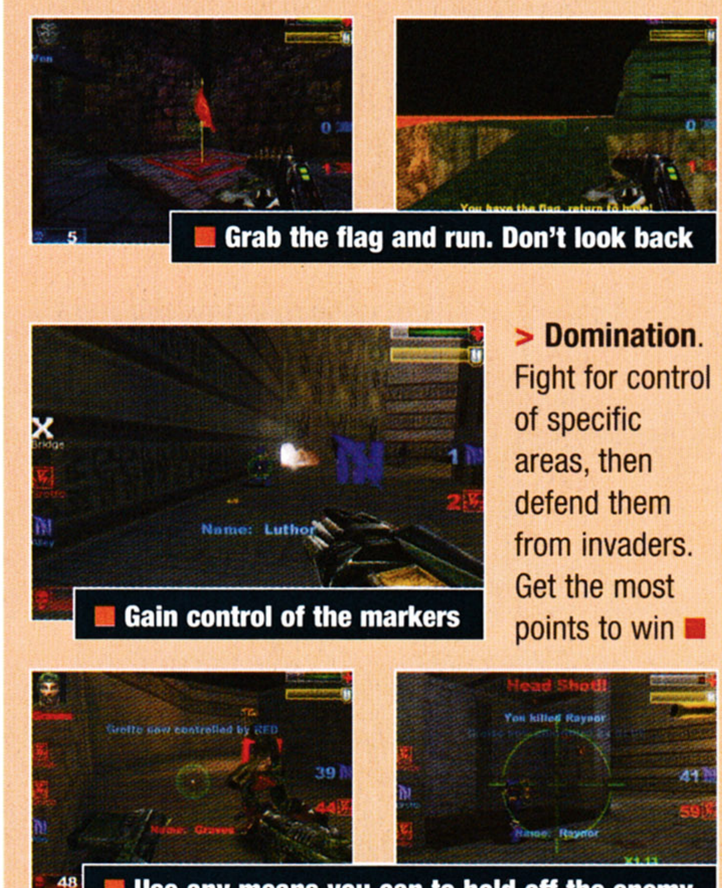
Every weapon has a secondary firing mode – double the fun!

MODE OVERLOAD

> Not content with mental deathmatch antics, Unreal Tourney offers some other modes to keep you entertained. Check these out ■

Fight your way into the base

> **Capture The Flag**. Battle your way to the opposition's base, grab their flag and quickly leg it back to your base ■



Grab the flag and run. Don't look back

Gain control of the markers

> **Domination**. Fight for control of specific areas, then defend them from invaders. Get the most points to win ■

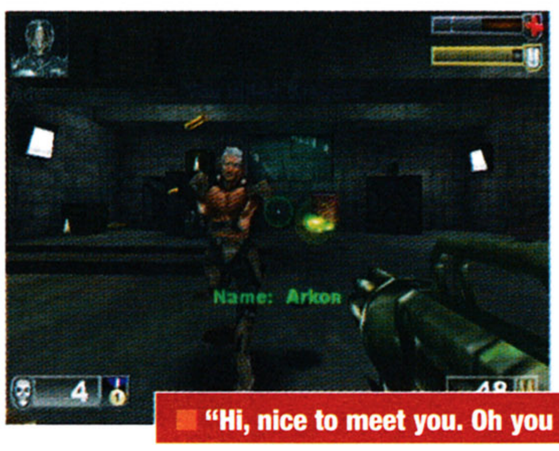
Use any means you can to hold off the enemy

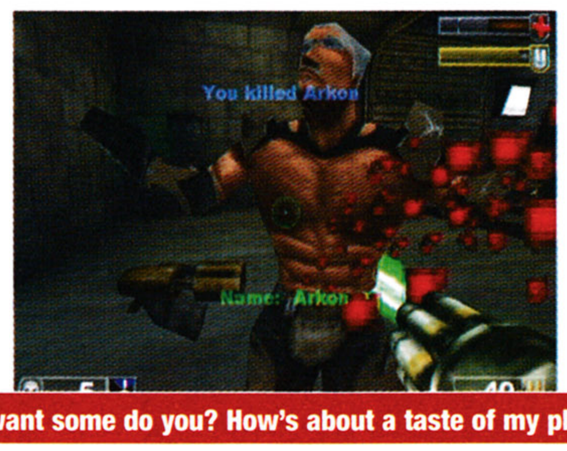
and smooth, with some truly impressive environments, including huge fortresses, platforms floating in space and enclosed, claustrophobic arenas. Many levels have been trimmed down from the PC version to make the experience tighter and more intense, and this strategy has paid off handsomely, just as it did for Raster Productions on Dreamcast *Quake III*. Aside from these modified areas, there are also some new, Dreamcast exclusive arenas for us to enjoy. Overall, there are 40 for Deathmatch, 15 for Domination and a further 15 for Capture The Flag and there's a good balance between larger levels (with plenty of hidey holes and sniping points) and smaller, more enclosed arenas where there's nothing for it but to go flying in with all guns blazing. ▶

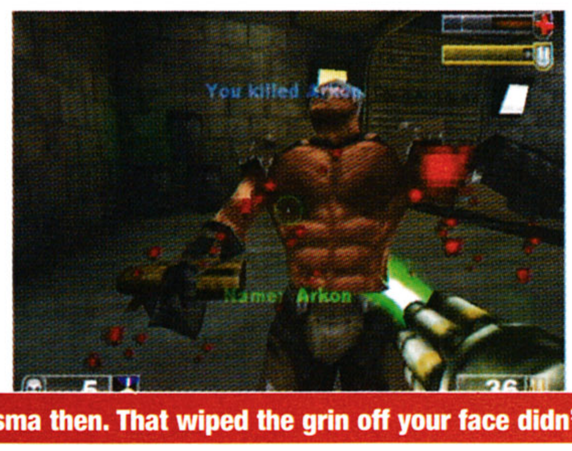
> "*Quake III* begins to look like a mere warm up before the real contest"

"Is that cannon fodder I see in the distance? Come to daddy..."

Unreal Tournament really goes to town with the DC lighting capabilities







"Hi, nice to meet you. Oh you want some do you? How's about a taste of my plasma then. That wiped the grin off your face didn't it? Whoops! You seem to have disintegrated"

Hitting a moving target with the Rocket Launcher can prove a little tricky

"An intense fragfest that every discerning DC player should sample"

Of course, as with any respectable first person shooter, a major concern is the weapons and items available, but don't worry because *Unreal* doesn't disappoint here. There's a multitude to mess about with such as shock rifles, deadly alien bio-sludge, personal teleporters and, of course, the all-important sniper rifle. This, combined with the fact that each addition to your arsenal has an alternate method of firing, makes for an impressive armoury. Perching high up in the rafters and picking opponents off with headshots is something that you'll rarely experience in *Quake* and provides a welcome strategic element to *Unreal*'s gameplay.

We lucky Dreamcasters also get the benefit of a whole host of 'mutators', which have the effect of altering the pick-ups available and the game itself too. Our particular favourites are the one-shot-kill 'instagib' (being the bloodthirsty lot that we are), 'hyperspeed' and 'low-gravity', but there are plenty of others. This level of customisation makes for a deeper gaming experience that can be tweaked to your hearts content. Add to this the fact that there's a familiar bunch of power-ups like invisibility, damage amplifier and speed and *Quake III* begins to look like a mere warm up before the real contest.

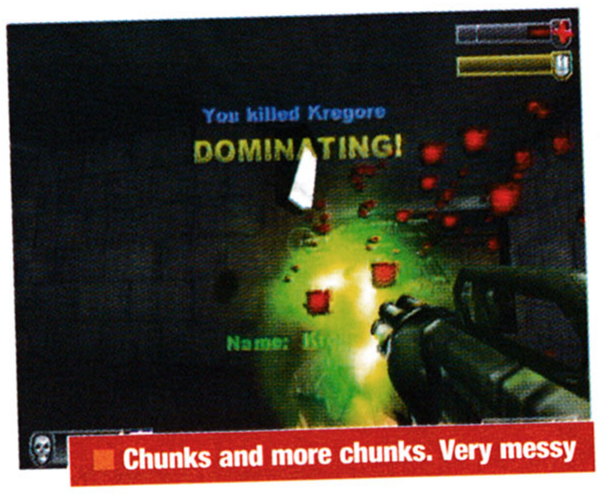
While the early code we played didn't yet feature online play or a fourplayer mode, the twoplayer action could be cranked up by including computer-controlled bots, taking the number of fraggers on-screen at the same time to an incredible eight. The resulting action is enjoyably hectic and the bots perform with eerily realistic Artificial Intelligence as they track you around the arenas. Although *Unreal* is essentially a multiplayer game, those looking for a more solitary experience will be happy to know that there's plenty to

DC-INTERVIEW

PETER CLARK

We get the lowdown on *Unreal Tournament* from the game's Producer, Peter Clark from developer Secret Level

DC-UK: Firstly, can you tell us how the game is coming along?
PC: Everything's coming along great. We're getting the final menu screens in place and checking all the maps for fourplayer split-screen functionality. The light is getting closer!



Chunks and more chunks. Very messy

DC-UK: How easy have you found it to port the game from the PC? And can we expect the game to retain the graphical quality of the PC version?
PC: The RAM limitations of the Dreamcast have been an issue since day one, but we've been able to do just about everything we hoped, and then some.

If you compare the Dreamcast version to the PC version running on a TV screen, the DC actually looks better, due to things like full-screen anti-aliasing and superior colour saturation.

DC-UK: Is there anything you've had to omit in order to run the game on Dreamcast?
PC: The only omission is the Assault mode, which we recently tried to resurrect, to no avail. The maps are just too damn big! Everything else made it through, I'm pleased to report.

DC-UK: How well does Dreamcast cope with fourplayer split-screen? Are there any levels that you've had to leave out?
PC: In the interests of frame-rate, we've had to limit fourplayer split-screen to a select group of maps, much like the PlayStation 2 version. We're thinking of adding a cheat that would enable any map to be playable, frame-rate be damned!

DC-UK: With *Unreal Tournament* being such a fast-paced title, have you encountered any discernible latency problems during online play? And what do you think of DC's online capabilities overall?
PC: There's absolutely no difference between the PC and DC versions in respect to online play. It's all about the user's connection and I think that with the LAN adaptor, the Dreamcast rivals the PC in every way.

DC-UK: How does the Dreamcast version compare to the PS2 game?
PC: Well, you can't play online with the PS2 version, which to me is huge. Also, the DC version has about 20 more maps, which increases replayability.

DC-UK: How do you think *UT* on DC will compare to Raster's port of *Quake III*?
PC: I think it's better. More maps, auto-aim to assist people using the standard DC controller, and double the number of players (eight as opposed to four) add up to create a superior gaming experience.

DC-UK: What DC-specific features can we expect in the release?
PC: We have maps that can't be found anywhere else, which is pretty cool. We also incorporated all the SegaNet stuff to make it as easy as possible to play online. And we've recently added Team Deathmatch as a gameplay mode, which wasn't in the PlayStation 2 version.

DC-UK: Finally, what's the best thing about *Unreal Tournament*?
PC: Low-gravity, instagib Capture The Flag mode. It rules! ■

Even in twoplayer, the bots make for a very intense contest

"Oi, you over there! Snipe at DC-UK will you? Taste our rockets"

The Flak Cannon is a firm favourite in close combat. Deadly

> "*Unreal* is ready to redefine standards for the console FPS"

keep you occupied. The singleplayer game begins with just one arena but progression is via a ladder system where you can unlock loads more levels and modes as you hopefully improve on your game.

Currently, frame-rate suffers during some of the more frenetic moments but with still some way to go before its March release, you can rest assured that this will be tweaked to get the best out of Dreamcast. Control is also a bit of a sticking point, as there's just too many functions to assign to the pad and you'll probably have to splash out on the mouse/keyboard combo, if you haven't already.

Unreal Tournament doesn't quite match up to *Quake III* in terms of sheer speed, but it offers a more finely balanced and deeper experience where everyone can find their favoured weaponry and gameplay style. The eightplayer mode, combined with the vicious bots and cunning level design makes this an incredibly intense fragfest that every discerning Dreamcast player should sample. So, get as much practice as you can in the online arenas of *Quake III* over the next few months because come March, there's going to be an even bigger challenge headed our way. You've been warned... ■

The bright scenery, the cars, the handling – it's all vintage *Daytona*

Collisions are likely with 40 cars on the track, but smashes like this will really mess you up

DAYTONA USA

The coin-op legend returns to claim its rightful title as king of driving games. Get on your knees

IN A NUTSHELL

> The name we all know and love is back at long last.

Like a gaming Messiah returning from the wilderness after living in solitude for years, *Daytona USA 2001* is the King of Kings and will be welcomed with open arms. Amen! ■

DETAILS

Publisher:	**Sega**
Developer:	**Amusement Vision**
Origin:	**Japan**
Players:	**One to four**
Release date:	**March**

Rollllliiinnngg stttaarrrttt! If you don't recognise that exclamation, it's safe to assume that you've never played *Daytona USA*, either in the arcade or on the Saturn. The fact is, the opening moments of '*777* Oval' are now legendary among gamers – at least gamers who appreciate that *Daytona* is one of the greatest racing games ever, if not *the* greatest.

Originally appearing as a coin-op in 1994, Yu Suzuki's stock car racer was the first driving game to use texture maps, achieving a far greater level of visual realism than its predecessor, *Virtua Racing*. To say arcade-goers were gobsmacked is a gross understatement. And that's only half the story. The gameplay was second to none – speed, over-the-top crash routines, and the greatest J-Pop soundtrack ever cemented AM2's reputation for being masters of the driving genre.

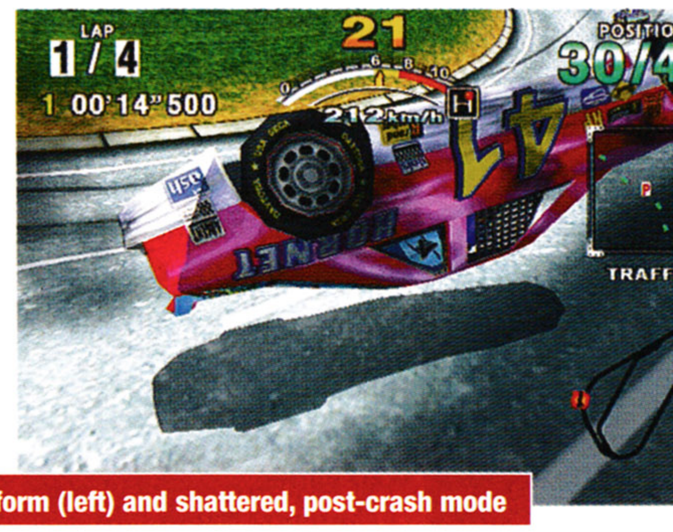
As reported in **DC-UK** 17, the Dreamcast conversion – now known as *Daytona USA 2001* – is headed to Europe in March, complete with fourplayer online gaming and a host of extras. Having just played the covermount demo from a Japanese Dreamcast Magazine, it's safe to say that this is *Daytona* through and through: pick a car, tune it to your tastes and head out onto the track.

The three circuits from the original game are here, Three Seven Speedway, Dinosaur Canyon and Sea Side Street Galaxy, plus tracks from *Daytona 2* and a new track called Rin Rin Rink. Graphically, things are actually improved over the original, with a higher polygon count and some wonderful reflections on the cars' surfaces. The trackside motifs such as Sonic Mountain are perfectly rendered, with none of the ugly pop-up of the Saturn version. You can even see through the rollcage and into the cabin, which adds mightily to the realism.

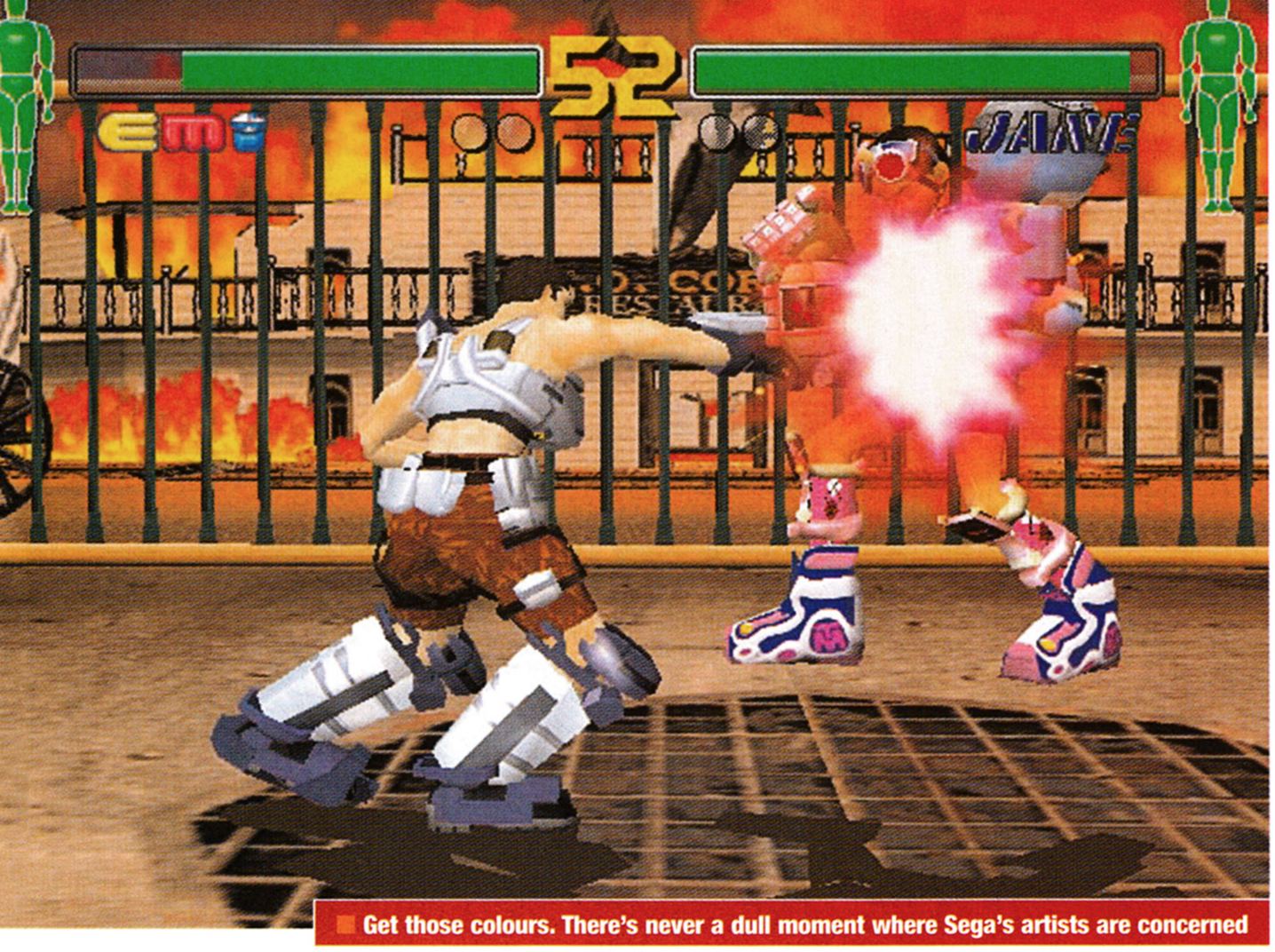
But that's not what *Daytona*'s about. Instead, it relies on overblown speed and spectacular collisions to keep you on the edge of your seat. Charging round the track while jostling for position among the other 39 drivers is still an enormous thrill, with much opportunity for massive drifts and dangerous overtaking manoeuvres. The only potential downside is that the handling seems a bit overactive. Hopefully the finished game will have provision for tweaking the sensitivity, or just for plain old digital control.

It's glorious news that AM2's masterpiece is coming to DC and we're totally geared up for the PAL version in March. The list of must-have titles just keeps growing ■

Turning too soon will see your poor tyres grinding along the side



The car models are suitably realistic, both in shiny new form (left) and shattered, post-crash mode



Get those colours. There's never a dull moment where Sega's artists are concerned

A typical move. The original was fast. This'll be phenomenally fast

FIGHTING VIPERS 2

Time for some more hyper-fast armoured fight action courtesy of AM2. Do you want some? Do you?!

IN A NUTSHELL

> AM2 hits back with its heavily-armoured and super-fast brawler. Knacker your opponent's defenses for a quick kill, but keep your own shields up.

Bright colours and big characters cement what should be another damn fine beat 'em up ■

DETAILS

Publisher:	**Sega**
Developer:	**In-house**
Origin:	**Japan**
Players:	**One to two**
Release date:	**February**

Right, quick history lesson. Sega Saturn = nice 32bit machine, unfortunately scuppered by PlayStation. Great for 2D shooters, RPGs and beat 'em ups. Examples of the latter: *Virtua Fighter 2* (Bosh!), *Fighters Megamix* (Smack!), *Last Bronx* (Crunch!), *X Men: Children of the Atom* (erm, Fnak!) and *Fighting Vipers* . That last one mixed brightly-coloured combatants with lightning fast action. Sprang from the fruitful loins of AM2. Was hugely enjoyable. Sega updated the series for the arcades just under two years ago. Now it's headed for DC. Lesson over.

This is the point at which our more cynical readers will throw down their copies of **DC-UK** and cry "Bejesus! Haven't we had enough beat 'em ups? What, in the name of Jackie Chan, does *Fighting Vipers 2* do that all the others don't?" Well, if you'll just calm down for a second we'll tell you. Firstly, there's the armour. Each character has body armour that can withstand a certain number of hits, before being destroyed. Exposing the area under the armour spells Game Over very quickly, so a degree of strategy is called for during bouts.

The characters are also a bit unusual. Mixing the chunky, spikey armour of manga robots, the street fashions of modern youth and the grandeur of medieval war attire, they're wacky, they're trendy, they're dangerous. They're so dangerous in fact, that one character – Charlie – rides a bike! And uses it as a shield! It's crazy.

Another unusual feature is the use of ringed arenas. Now, while many of you will point out that *DOA2* has these, the original *Vipers* arcade game preceded Tecmo's offering by a few years, introducing such things as multi-tiered and interactive environments, plus the aforementioned ringed areas long before *DOA* bounced onto the scene. Pushing your opponent out the top window of a skyscraper was, and still is, a hell of a thrill, especially when coupled with the game's hyper-kinetic nature. Yes, speed is the most fundamental ingredient, and it sometime borders on the sheer, cheetah-like velocity of *Virtual On*. And that's fast.

So, *Fighting Vipers 2* looks to be another fine example of what Sega does best – storming arcade games with more visual appeal than Cameron Diaz's underwear drawer. Let it spank you, come February ■

The level of detail is amazing with beautifully realised interactive backdrops

The characters are heavily armoured for maximum defence

> "Pushing your opponent out of a skyscraper was, and still is, a hell of a thrill"

Footie-nutcase Roberto makes good use of his striking skills – Goal!

The 3D camera spins round to show power moves from different angles. The close ups look great

PROJECT JUSTICE

There's only one outcome when rival schools meet – Fight! Fight! Fight!...

PlayStation was never known for its beat 'em ups. With the exception of the *Tekken* series, there were few other fighters worthy of note. That is, until *Rival Schools* appeared, introducing a colourful and crazy spin on the usually sober genre. Featuring some of the strangest characters and incredibly overblown special moves ever seen, it found favour with gamers weaned on the likes of *Street Fighter*, retaining a 2D playing style despite the 3D graphics. And thanks to Capcom's eagerness to produce endless sequels, a second successor to *Rival Schools* is coming soon – but this time it's heading for Dreamcast.

The action centres around two schools that are arch-enemies in the field of combat. However, when their neighbourhood is attacked by the ruthless Hyo Imawano, they're compelled to join forces in a bid to thwart the threat. Quite why they must fight among themselves to achieve this is beyond us, but that is exactly what they do for the entire duration of the game.

If you never played the original, a quick glance at the new 'un may not reveal anything particularly revolutionary. However, once you've been in your first fight you'll notice two standout points about *Project Justice*, namely the characters and the moves. The cast of fighters is like Grange Hill set in the twilight zone and includes both pupils and teachers. Each one has a particular vocation, from the football-obsessed Roberto to the

The Party Up technique lets all three team members lay on the smackdown

Fast moves increase character motion blur

IN A NUTSHELL

> Capcom once again assaults us Dreamcasters with its brazen graphics and addictive as hell gameplay.

You'd better start brushing up on your subjects kiddo, as the School of Hard Knocks gets ready for the ultimate punch-up ■

DETAILS

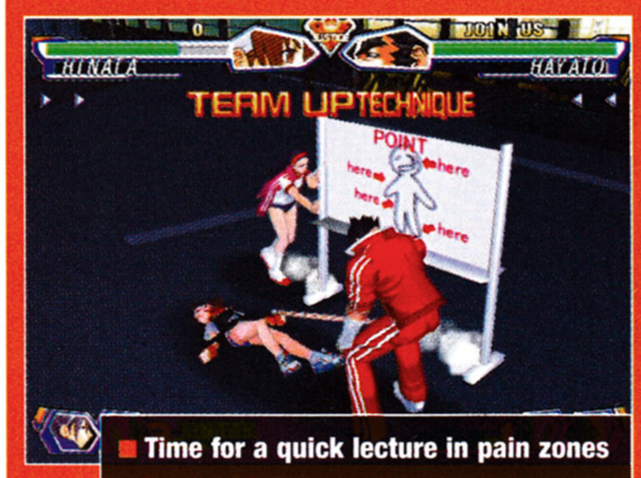
Publisher:	**Virgin/Capcom**
Developer:	**Capcom**
Origin:	**Japan**
Players:	**One to two**
Release date:	**March**

OOH, THAT'S GOTTA HURT!

> The special moves in *Project Justice* are barmy. You can expect to be forced into synchronised dancing, get involved in a photo shoot, be kissed all over and get beaten about the head and body with a baseball bat. Each move is both devastatingly painful and hilarious at the same time and it's this sense of fun that gives *Project Justice* its comic appeal. It's just as good to watch as it is to play ■

■ Smile for the camera, baby!

■ One, two, three, four and back, two...



■ Time for a quick lecture in pain zones

■ Lordy – it's the human wheel in action

■ High jumps are not unusual in *Project Justice*. You can keep juggling your opponent indefinitely

■ Now that's fair – pick the bint up by the wrists and ankles and bash her good

■ Nearly every impact is accompanied by a brilliant flash of light

■ The burning vigour attacks are executed by quarter-circle moves

■ The climate is changeable, with rain and darkness

labcoat-wearing, clipboard-carrying Kyoko. You'll see a baseball player, a violinist, a cheerleader and the headteacher himself, so the temptation to set up staff-versus-students scraps is very high.

In either the Arcade, Tournament or League modes, you get to pick three characters from the 16 that are initially available (six unknowns are crackable). In arcade, there is the option for Free Mode, which lets you select any character currently available, or the Story Mode, which follows a set plot.

The fundamentals are pretty much similar to most other brawlers you've played, with light and heavy punches and kicks on the A, B, X and Y buttons, as well as quarter-circle projectile moves. There are also the usual throws, jumps and sidesteps included, so you'll pick up the basics in mere minutes. However, the real fun comes with the Team Technique and Party Up manoeuvres, where you can join up with one or both of your team mates for some mental power moves and double the trouble.

And it's this teamwork that is the very crux of *Project Justice*. With the standard Capcom charge bar suitably powered, you can squeeze either trigger to call in one of your team or else both triggers for a full-on three-way assault. Each character performs their tag move in some of the most brutal and flashy ways we've seen since *Dead or Alive 2* bounced its way onto our DCs. Expect immense pain at every turn.

Judging by the smashing time we had with our preview copy, *Project Justice* is looking like another brilliant slice of Capcom combat fun, complete with sweet graphics and motorhead-fuelled fighting antics. As usual in the videogame schoolyard, it looks like brawn is going to defeat brains once again ■

> "Another brilliant slice of Capcom combat fun"

FLOIGAN BROS.

Steptoe and Son trapped in a Nintendo-style platform puzzler? Surely it couldn't happen? Erm, yes it could

Now, when it comes to protracted game development, we like to think of ourselves as patient creatures. But when a project drags on as long as *Floigan Bros.* – a game so long in the tooth it could almost have been publicised by crude cave paintings – we get more than a little curious about what's been holding everything up.

As one of the first batch of titles originally announced for Dreamcast, it turns out that *Floigan* suffered from the developers changing tack halfway through – from a conventional platformer to an oddball, puzzle-based adventure. But if the result is a better game then we're hardly complaining are we? Until recently the press haven't been granted so much as a sniff, so we're happy to bring you these exclusive shots bagged on a trip to the game's creator Visual Concepts, based just north of San Francisco, California. In fact, this company should need no introduction to any Dreamcast owner worth his or her salt (especially one that wears a baseball cap back to front, and suffers from too much facial hair). That's because Visual Concepts are the masters of American sports games, the brainchild behind killer sporting franchises such as *NFL2K1* and *NBA2K1*. Which makes it all the more surprising that they're also working on the videogame equivalent of Steptoe and Son.

Okay, the only real similarity with the aging BBC sitcom is that the eponymous brothers *Floigan* are also purveyors of junk. The action takes place almost entirely within the walls of their junkyard, and revolves around the exploits of the two mismatched siblings Hoigle and Moigle as they try and save their homestead from the clutches of a heartless property developer with his greedy eye on one thing – the oil that lies in the ground below.

You control Hoigle, the less

IN A NUTSHELL

> Barmy 3D platform puzzle game with cartoon scenery and innovative gameplay.

You control one of two scrapyard-owning brothers desperate to save their business from evil oil tycoons. VM modes complete the package ■

DETAILS

Publisher:	**Sega**
Developer:	**Visual Concepts**
Origin:	**USA**
Players:	**One**
Release date:	**March (US) TBA (UK)**

■ The scrapyard setting offers a variety of nooks and crannies to explore

■ Moigle can be used in a variety of ways to reach new areas and solve tricky puzzles

■ A mini-menu (top right) offers you a variety of commands with which to direct the characters

■ "It's behind you!" cartoon spooks and creatures also inhabit the game

This crazy-mouthed dog reveals the Warner Bros inspiration behind some characters

"Must not... let... spider... pinch... my... bottom"

cerebrally challenged of two, and through interacting with his big, dumb brother, a gigantic puzzle-based story is gradually unravelled in true cartoon fashion. The story goes that Hoigle is working on a secret invention in his shed and needs his brother to help him find seven crucial components – each one well hidden within the confines of the messy junkyard. By triggering certain emotions in Moigle, such as giving him a hug or calling him names, a desired reaction will follow in certain circumstances. For example, one scene sees you needing a key that's perched on top of a sign. A few insults hurled in Moigle's general direction sees the big softie get mad, screw you up into a baseball and bat you in the direction of the said key. Similarly, another sees you needing to cross a sunken river bridge and only upsetting Moigle (and getting him to 'cry a river') will raise it so Hoigle can cross. To ease matters, boxes strewn around the place will give you hints on what behaviour is most appropriate.

Moigle also awards you points for helping him, and you can engage with him in mini games to help him to learn how to overcome certain obstacles. This aspect of the game with its AI routines and Tamagotchi-like learning fun – could elevate it above the standard adventure and platform gaming fare. And intruigingly, the developers are hoping to carry such 'learned' events over to future episodes via the VM – there are already a few whispers of a wild

> "Something a little different from the norm. And about time, too"

west iteration of *Floigan Bros.* being on the drawing board.

Visually, it goes without saying that the developer has created some sumptuous environments, and considering that everything is set inside the junkyard – which opens up as you progress through the game's ten-plus hours of play – there's a surprising amount of variety in there, too.

With great Warner Brothers-style animation and well choreographed slapstick you might be tempted to think this one's being squarely aimed at kids – but this isn't the case. Just as Nintendo's best titles have deceptively deep play mechanics underneath a veneer of cutesy simplicity, Hoigle and Moigle's dysfunctional antics promise something a little different from the norm. And about time, too ■

THE BROTHERS GRIM

> There are various ways that Moigle and Hoigle Floigan interact throughout the game and this provides a central component of the action. The player only has direct control over Hoigle, but the great hulking beast that is Moigle can be manipulated in various cunning ways. He's a bit like a Tamagotchi-style virtual pet, except really fat.

The relationship between the siblings often bounds across into Looney Tunes-style physical comedy. In the sequence below, Moigle gets a fright and leaps into the air unwittingly landing on his bro, squashing him completely. We asked Andy Ashcraft at Visual Concepts if this sequence is part of a fiendish puzzle-solving manoeuvre but he would only answer, "good question, you'll just have to play to find out. (However, that is EXACTLY the kind of unexpected thing you'll find in the game!)." Hmm, most intriguing ■

When Moigle gets startled by something he jumps straight into the air. If you're unlucky he can land on Hoigle squashing him flat in typical Looney Tune style. Ouch

A wide variety of boats are available, but first you've got to earn them

The computer controlled opponents don't give up easily. Smash 'em into the nearest wall

AQUA GT

Tired of tarmac? Then why not slip into the driving seat of one of these supercharged babies...

For dedicated petrolheads, Dreamcast is definitely the place to be at the moment with the likes of *F355*, *Le Mans* and *MSR* giving us lucky drivers an unmatched choice of quality titles to get stuck into. But what is there for those who prefer water-based antics? Well think back to last year when Midway released *Hydro Thunder*. While by no means a classic, it scored a respectable 7/10 back in issue 03 of this very mag because it was so much damn fun to play. The superbly designed courses – featuring mental jumps and sneaky shortcuts – made for some memorable gaming moments and, until now, the title stood alone as the only water racer available on Dreamcast. But like London buses, there's been no sign of any for ages, then suddenly two arrive at once. Jetski 'em up, *Surf Rocket Racers* gets a review this issue and riding on it's bow wave comes *Aqua GT*.

First of all, don't expect the mad arcade action of *Hydro Thunder*. *GT* seeks to simulate the experience of real-life powerboat racing (though there is an Arcade mode for quick thrill seekers). Initially, only the London and Amsterdam courses are available for water-based hi-jinks, but players can unlock more by competing in the not-in-anyway-original Championship mode. This offers bronze, silver and gold categories, each providing a harder challenge than the last, surprisingly enough.

To add variety to the game, courses are raced at low and high tide; meaning that cutting the same corners you did at high tide is likely to result in smashing straight into the canal wall when the water level's lower. And don't expect the computer-controlled opponents to wait while you get back into the action. They're a competitive bunch and if you make the slightest misjudgment, they'll be past you before you know it.

In the preview code we played, the visuals are already up to a pretty high standard. The boats look cool, with excellent reflective effects as they bounce wildly along at ridiculous speeds. The water textures are pleasingly realistic and the environments are decent simulations of their real-life counterparts, with famous landmarks such as Big Ben clearly visible from the course.

In twoplayer mode, as you'd expect, the graphical detail drops slightly, though not enough to ruin your enjoyment. What is of more concern at present is the drop in frame-rate the game suffers from during multiplayer larks. Juddering along instead of flying past at breakneck speeds tends to spoil the fun somewhat. Let's hope this is sorted out before the game's release, because with *Surf Rocket Racer* splashing down around the same time, *Aqua GT* will need to improve if it's to stand any chance of competing ■

IN A NUTSHELL

> Powerboat racing around world famous locations with more of a sim feel than *Hydro Thunder*.

Rev up and race at low and high tides for aquatic mayhem. Career mode challenges but multiplayer lacks excitement ■

DETAILS

Publisher:	Take 2
Developer:	East Point Software Ltd
Origin:	UK
Players:	One to two
Release date:	February

The races take place during both night and day and high and low tide

There are some tasty visuals, but frame-rate drops away badly in the multiplayer mode

Explosions are one of the graphical high points in this very short-lived arcade experience

Look out for these giant flying fish. They have a tendency to bite. Ouch!

CHARGE 'N' BLAST

And that's all you'll do for the short time you'll be playing this game

Your battle suit makes you look like something from the Power Rangers

IN A NUTSHELL

> Short lived arcade shoot 'em up that's as dull as spending a day with Rich and Judy.

Charge up your weapons and shoot everything. Looks out of place next to the other arcade conversions on DC. One for the hardcore shooter fans only ■

DETAILS

Publisher:	Sims
Developer:	Sega/CRI
Origin:	Japan
Players:	One to two
Release date:	Out now (Japan)

Here at DC-UK we believe in giving everything a fair chance. So after hearing some pretty derisory things about *Charge 'n' Blast* we sat ourselves tentatively down with an open mind to play our import copy to see if what we'd heard was true. But within a few minutes of starting the game, we're sorry to say the reports were absolutely right. Apart from complete arcade freaks, this title isn't going to win any fans among the Dreamcast faithful.

You and a companion can choose from three characters who have been selected to save the earth from marauding alien bugs that arrived with a shower of meteorites. Gameplay consists of simply charging up your weapons and blasting anything that moves.

Each boss has a weak point. Target it and keep firing. It's that simple

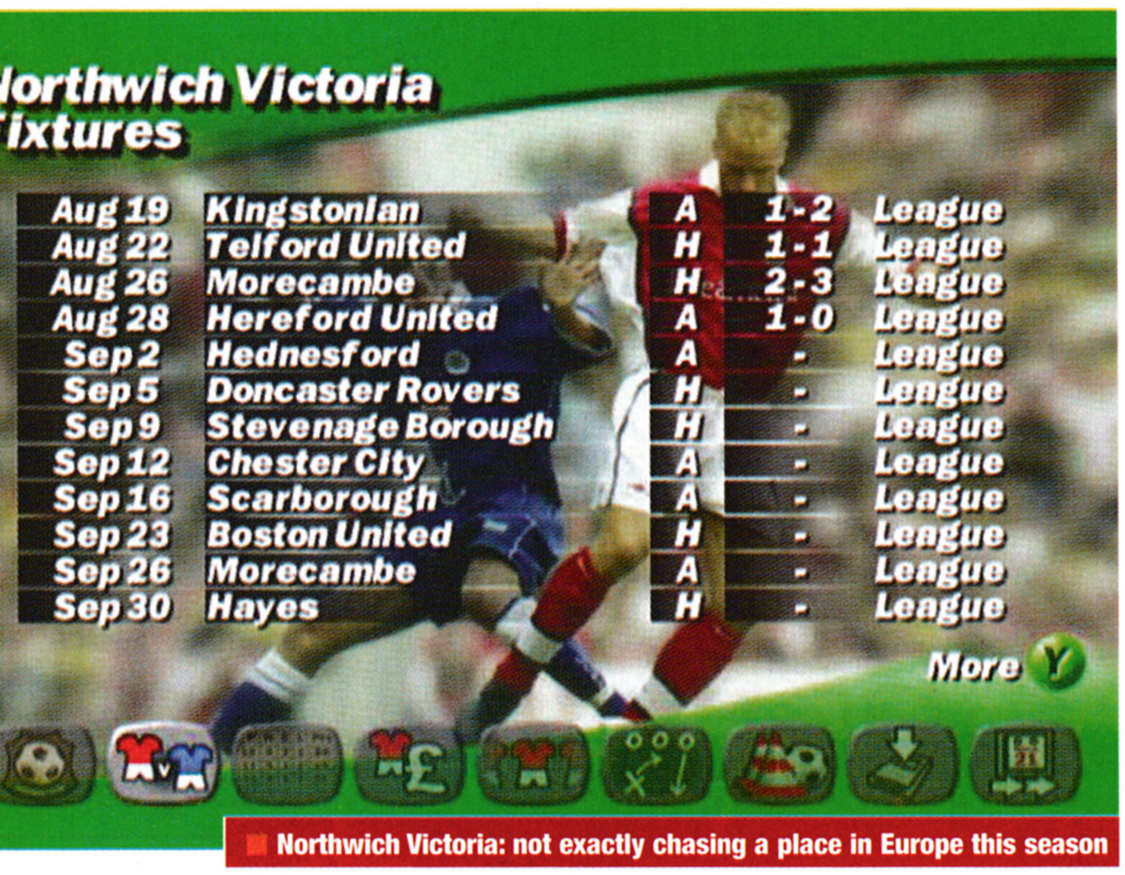
And that's it. While shooters hold a dear place in the heart of **DC-UK**, this is only mildly entertaining at best. Despite the 3D graphics, the whole game is on-rails, simply moving you from one shoot out to the next. There's no roaming around cities, no hidden areas or secrets to uncover. In fact, you can't even move around, except to strafe left and right.

Another major gripe with the title is the fact that it'll only take you around fifteen minutes to complete. While a lack of longevity doesn't necessarily mean that a game is poor, when combined with uninspired gameplay and average graphics the whole thing begins to grate on your nerves. With such outstanding conversions as *Crazy Taxi* and *Samba De Amigo* already a huge hit on Dreamcast, *Charge 'n' Blast* just looks even worse in comparison.

The only major plus point of this game is in the boss encounters. You'll come across some real monstrosities along the way, including huge scuttling insects and giant fire-spewing sea creatures. For the DC version, the developers have added a time attack mode and firstperson perspective, but this is still nowhere near enough to save *Charge 'n' Blast* from the dumper.

More big explosions. Will the innovation never end?

Originally heralding from Sega's arcade division, we find it difficult to believe that this came from the same stable as *Space Harrier*, *House of the Dead 2* and countless other quality titles. But unfortunately, this *is* a Sega game and it's only value is to serve as a reminder that no one, not even Sega, is infallible. Unless there are some serious changes between this and the PAL version, we'd suggest that you avoid this at all costs. It stinks ■



Northwich Victoria: not exactly chasing a place in Europe this season

Nigel Martyn? Doncaster Rovers?! Ah, the crazy world of football management sims

GIANT KILLERS

IN A NUTSHELL

> Simplified management game aimed at kids, but with the scope to provide a decent challenge to all.

Clean, easy presentation and an array of options make this one a very promising proposition. Let's see how the lad does in training ■

DETAILS

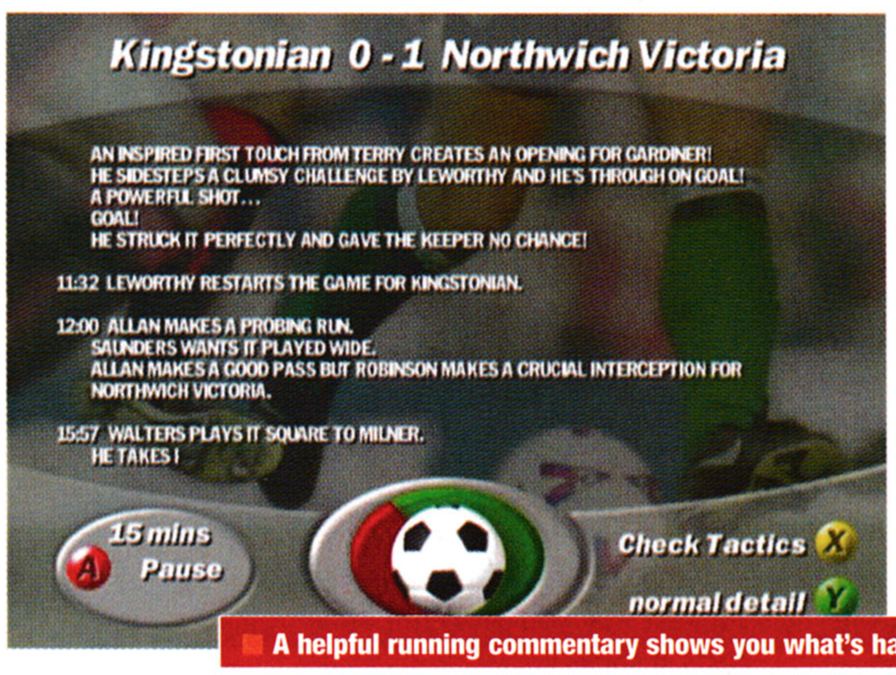
Publisher:	**Triple AAA**
Developer:	**Smoking Gun/ io Productions**
Origin:	**UK**
Players:	**One**
Release date:	**February**

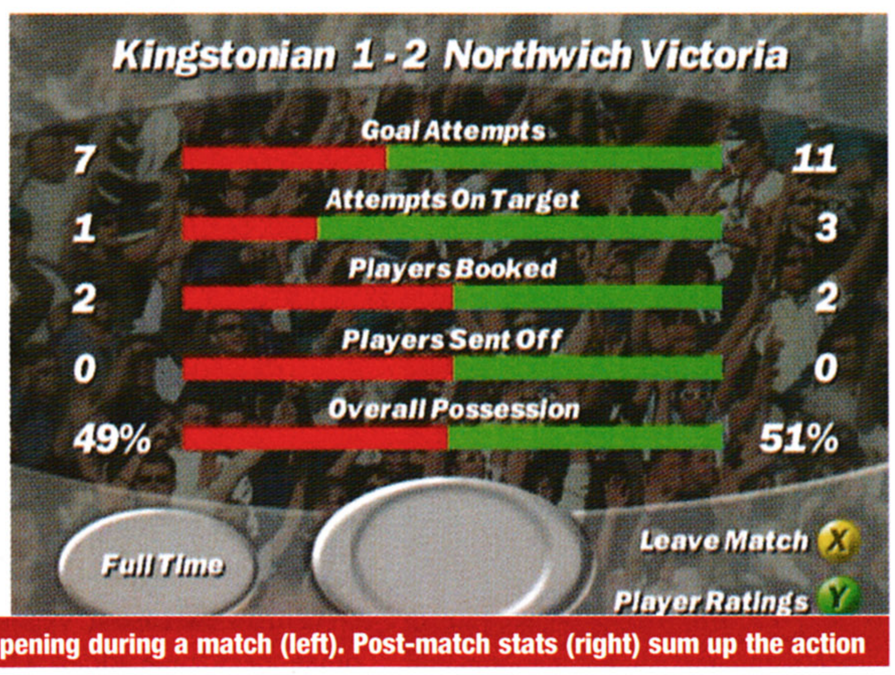
No, it's nothing to do with Jack and the Beanstalk. It is in fact a footy management game. At last!

The terms 'Sheffield United' and 'Tactics' are used together here for the first time ever

You can leave us alone now. Go on, hop it. No, wait, not all of you. Just the ones who send us letters every month asking when a football management game will be coming to Dreamcast. Because, like some kind of ultra-benevolent soccer god, new publisher Triple AAA has answered your beautiful game prayers. The PC management sim *Giant Killers* is transferring to DC in February. You must be, ahem, over the moon.

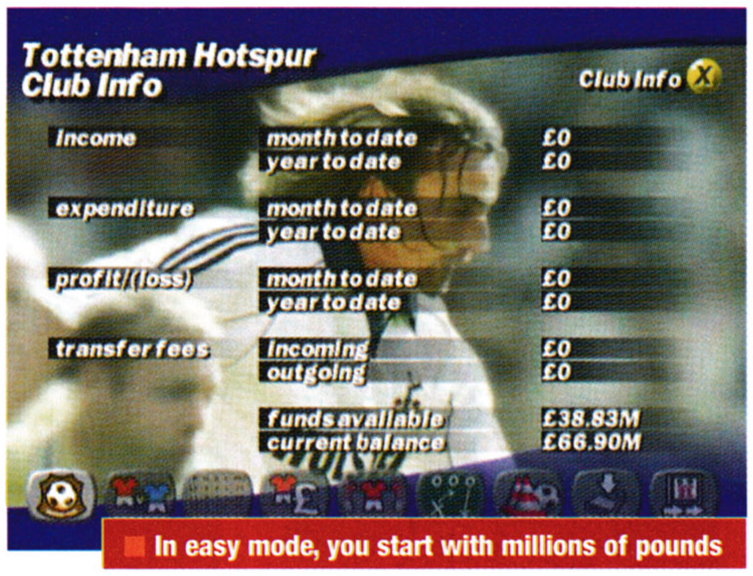
Developed by Smoking Gun and the imaginatively named io Productions, *Giant Killers* features all the teams from the English leagues along with a range of features you'd expect from any modern manager sim. Full commentary, comprehensive match reports, individual player ratings and an intuitive interface are among the major attractions on offer. But this is no ordinary management affair. The original version was aimed at Under 16's and this concept has made it across to DC with the inclusion of an Assistant Manager option (which suggests team formations to the player) and an 'optional investment from a wealthy benefactor' mode. This rather generous feature bundles you £25 million at the beginning of the season so you can, say, buy Del Piero for Rotherham or something. For those over 16, there are a



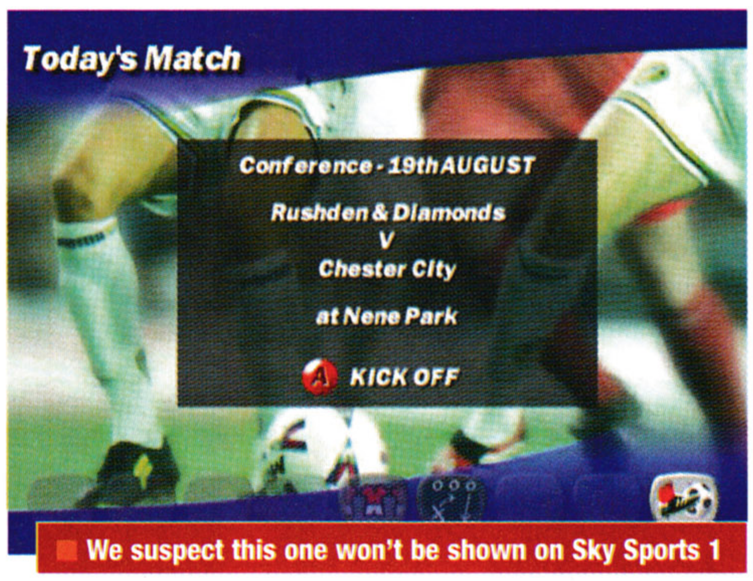


A helpful running commentary shows you what's happening during a match (left). Post-match stats (right) sum up the action

It appears Celtic have already tired of their Swiss International defender. Get in there Doncaster Rovers!



In easy mode, you start with millions of pounds



We suspect this one won't be shown on Sky Sports 1

Hmm, not a great team. A dabble in the transfer market might help

SICK AS A PARROT

Eleven new options you'd need for a truly accurate modern football management sim

1) THE HALF-TIME BARRACKING
Where would Peter Reid, Barry Fry or Alex Ferguson be without their expletive-strewn mid-game 'pep talks'? Select this mode to hurl a range of ego-crushing insults (and mugs of tea) at your players.

2) THE SEX-SCANDAL OPTION
You almost haven't made it in the modern game unless you've 'made it' with your naïve Scandinavian child-minder. Choose from a variety of coquettish foreign teenagers, or create your own from scratch!

3) THE TERRY VENABLES OPTION
Is everything going wrong for your under-achieving premiership hangers-on? Don't worry, just visit a special dedicated Website, download Terry Venables to your VM and then he'll sort it all out for you!

4) THE 'BLAMING THE OFFICIALS' OPTION
Too many poor results in a row? Chairman breathing down your neck? Simply select this option to divert attention away from your incompetent tactical mind!

5) THE 'YOU WON'T WIN ANYTHING WITH KIDS' OPTION
Simply listen to anything that Alan Hansen says on Match of the Day and then arrange your team around his words of wisdom. (Unfortunately liable to see you finishing at the bottom of the league).

6) THE 'SOUTHAMPTON' CHEAT MODE
Type in the word 'Southampton' at the beginning of the game and you can be as crap as you like yet still finish one place above the relegation zone – season upon season!

7) THE TEMPERAMENTAL FOREIGNERS MODE
Also known as 'Chelsea mode' – fill your team with ageing foreigners, who were once occasionally brilliant but are now only interested in seeing out their twilight years with a huge wage, glamourous Brit model girlfriend and limited edition sports car. (See also George Weah mode).

8) PRAWN SANDWICH MODE
Activate this by being far too successful, putting the gate prices up, loosing your hardcore fans, and filling the stadium with businessmen who are more interested in the quality of the complimentary champagne than the match.

9) THE 'CONCENTRATE ON THE LEAGUE' OPTION
Pull out this 'joker' after being knocked out of every cup competition going. Unfortunately often coincides with poor league form. (see also 'Bradford' mode).

10) THE 'BUY STAN COLLYMORE' MODE
Bring in British football's bad boy thinking you'll be the one to finally get the best out of him. Feel momentarily smug when he scores an amazing goal in his first match. Feel gradually less smug when he scores nothing in the next 12 games while alienating all his teammates.

11) AUTOBIOGRAPHY OPTION
Write memoirs, quit game, re-start as TV pundit ■

further two difficulty levels, ensuring that this isn't just for the kids. Indeed, Triple AAA is adamant that there's enough here to challenge even the most hardened sheepskin coat wearers.

We had a brisk sprint through the preview version recently and found it well presented and surprisingly authoritative. The transfer market is easily navigable with lots of cross-referencing, and there's an excellent feature which gives a statistical rating for each formation available. In other words, if you select Hereford and then choose a 3-5-2 formation and a passing style of play, it may only garner a 52 per cent rating. Go for good old 4-4-2 and a long-ball game however and you may find that the farm boys will play at 70 per cent. Purists probably won't like this overt simplicity, but then purists don't like much do they? Annoying blighters.

What the game probably lacks then, is the sheer teeth-grinding depth of *Championship Manager*. Here, you probably won't be able to choose the gristle percentage in the half-time pies, or select which way your players do up their boots. You simply put out a team every Saturday, keep an eye on the transfer market and occasionally vary the training so you give each squad member a full array of skills. Admittedly, the original *Giant Killers* only received a luke warm reception on PC, but PC owners are a bit funny aren't they? We'll judge how the DC version measures up in **DC-UK** next month ■

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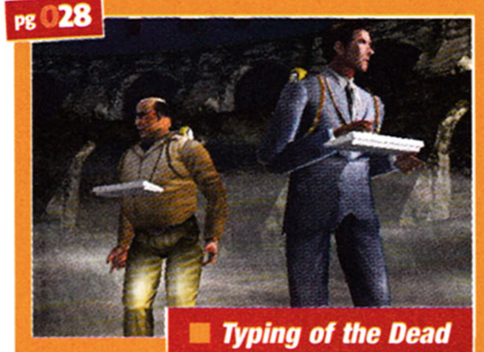

Typing of the Dead

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Max Steel

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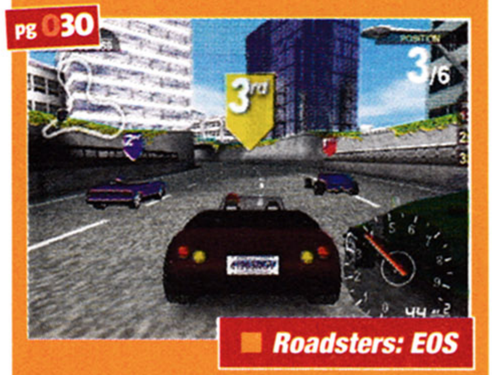

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News

Essential info from the wild world of Dreamcast

Panzer Dragoon Saga Continues?

Team Andromeda in crazy reforming shocker?! Could the answer to our prayers be here? Read on...

Before we get your hopes up too high, we'll have to confess that there is still no concrete answer to the above question. *However*, the appearance of a suspicious-looking picture on the Net has sparked a rumour riot. Fan art? Official press material? Who can tell?

Team Andromeda, the outfit responsible for the famed *Panzer Dragoon* series on Sega's Saturn console, supposedly split up after the release of the third instalment, with some of its staff allegedly joining Polyphony Digital, creator of *Gran Turismo* (check out Polyphony's *Omega Boost* to see the likeness). But recently, rumours suggest that Team Andromeda, which has always been close to Sega, has reformed for a possible Dreamcast incarnation of its magnum opus.

If you've never experienced the *Panzer Dragoon* games, you're missing out. Translating to 'Tank Dragon', the first two games were on-rails 3D shooters that saw you fly an armoured dragon on various swooping raids. What was really noteworthy, however, was the ability to look all around at the gorgeous, pseudo-medieval locations. Oh, and cleverly, the start of the first game actually follows on from the end of the second – a neat space/time paradox. Heavily steeped in fantastical mythology, the third game took on a very *Zelda*-esque feel, being a RPG that played as a three dimensional adventure. Easy to pick up and intuitive to control, it remains one of Saturn's most illustrious titles and will easily fetch £200 in mint second-hand condition.

Usually, when rumours reach this temperature, there's some truth to them, no matter how small. Whether *Panzer Dragoon Saga II* is in production and whether it's being coded by a reformed Team Andromeda is difficult to say. The word from our Japanese correspondent is that the *Panzer Dragoon* sequel is merely a plan at this stage and not a fully-fledged project. However, there does seem to be a producer assigned to the game – he's keeping his mouth tightly shut at present. We'll endeavour to prize it open ■

Is this real Sega advertising or just fan art? Hmmm

We want this on Dreamcast!

SEGA'S NEW TOY

Japanese news corporation Nikkei has released information regarding Sega's next hardware project. Apparently, it will allow gamers to download games over broadband as well as featuring other network facilities. Ordinarily, we'd dismiss such wild rumours, but Nikkei is highly-respected in the news industry and doesn't usually get it wrong. Keep 'em peeled.

TOO HOT TO HANDLE?

THE HOTTEST GAMES OF 2001	HOW FIRED UP SHOULD YOU BE?
18 Wheeler American Pro Trucker	4
Agartha	4
Alien Front Online	4
Alone in the Dark IV	4
Black and White	5
Cannon Spike	3
Daytona USA 2001	5
Fighting Vipers 2	4
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Unreal Tournament	5

Toys Я Online

Sega releases *Toy Racer* for a fantastic price *and* donates to charity

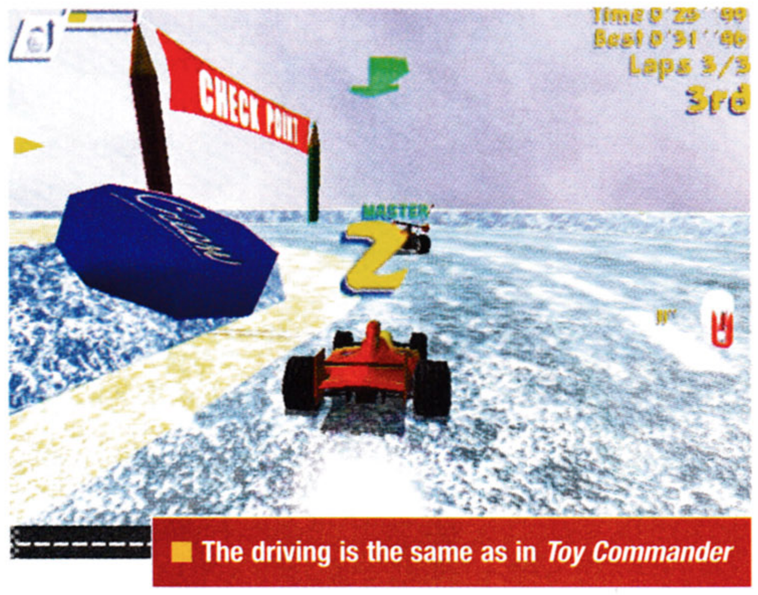
A great little online racing game for a mere fiver? It's an absolute bargain and no mistake

No Cliché and Sega teamed up this past Christmas to bring us all a little festive cheer in the form of *Toy Racer*, a spin off from 1999's hit title *Toy Commander*. Released on December 15, the game is primarily an online racer offering fourplayer network battles, but can also be played split-screen offline. The biggest treat is that the title is on sale at the amazing price of just £4.99! And the good news doesn't stop there because Sega is donating twenty per cent of profits from *Toy Racer* to children's charities. Isn't that nice?

Based on the multiplayer aspect of *Toy Commander*, the game is just as bright and colourful as its predecessor and offers four tracks (which isn't a lot, but hey, what do you expect for a fiver?), each of which can be reversed to add some variety to proceedings. There's a generous selection of vehicles, with 24 available from the start plus a further four to unlock as you progress. These range from the agonisingly slow but tough tanks, to the manoeuvrable and fast but easily wrecked F1 cars. Each vehicle has it's own benefits and everyone will be able to find a runabout to their liking.

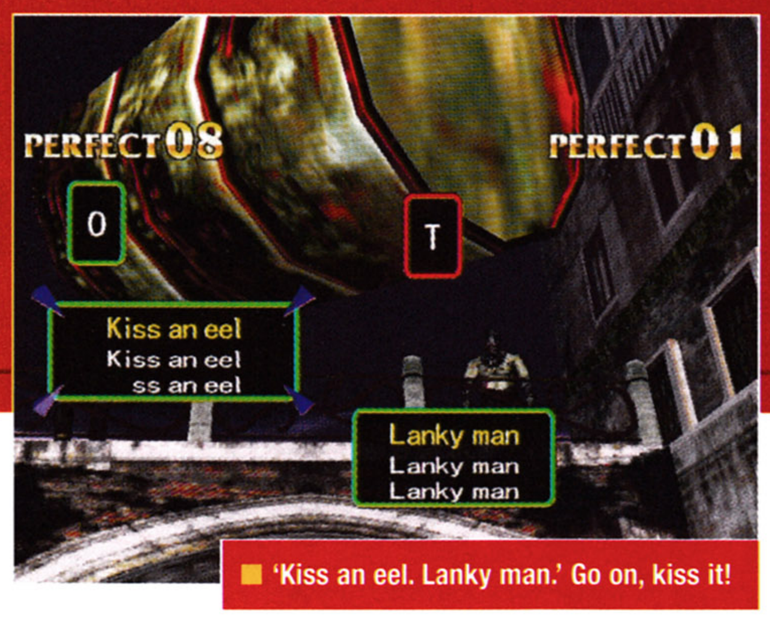
Gameplay is, like most titles of this ilk, inspired by the *Mario Kart* model. Race a predetermined number of laps, using the power-ups littered around the track to blow the opposition out of the way and ensure you reach the finish line first. Pick-ups are plentiful and there are some deliciously wacky ones like the miniature Big Ben which results in an old fashioned London pea souper enveloping everything in sight. And there's a host of others like homing missiles, ice, and of course, the obligatory speed boosters. The twist on this is that some come in two varieties – red and green. Red causes the power-up to backfire, while the green ones affect everyone but you. So, if you're not careful you can be on the receiving end of your own nastiness, which isn't too clever.

But it's the Net play that most people are interested in and *Toy Racer* offers full online racing for you and three others from around Europe (you can read what we think of the Internet play in our Online round-up on page 042). In addition to this, there are chat facilities including a private chat function so you can waffle with your mates without being disturbed by random Net dweebs. Put all this together and we think that *Toy Racer* is a great little game from those charitable bods at Sega. It's on the shelves right now, so if you haven't bought it already, get down the shops and do your bit for charidee – we have, although we don't like to talk about it ■



The driving is the same as in *Toy Commander*

Race through a series of checkpoints in a variety of home-based tracks



'Kiss an eel. Lanky man.' Go on, kiss it!

"Hmm, do you think we look sexually dubious with these strap-on keyboards?"

DAILY RADAR UK

The latest gaming news courtesy of **dailyradar.co.uk**

SPIKEOUT SEQUEL ANNOUNCED

Visitors to the Amusement Vision Website have recently been confronted by a mysterious screen with the words *Spikers Battle* emblazoned across it. After much speculation, Amusement Vision confirmed what many thought, that *Spikers Battle* is the official follow-up to *Spikeout*.

This arcade scrolling beat 'em up will allow four players to co-operate through multiple levels of *Streets Of Rage* style action. Hopefully a DC version will be on the cards soon after and should provide a much-needed quality boost to this flagging genre ■

SEGA EUROPE CEO RESIGNS

Boss of Sega Europe, JF Cecillon has resigned his post in charge of Dreamcast's European fortunes after two years at the helm. In his place will be Sega Japan's, Isao Okawa and it looks as though Europe will follow Sega Of America's lead in having a regional chief reporting to Okawa-san.

During his time in charge, DC has reached all its first year targets of one million hardware units, 400,000 users registered to Dreamarena and three million units of software sold. However, there has been industry criticism of Sega Europe's marketing strategy under Cecillon, specifically, whether enough has been done to ensure Dreamcast's long-term future in the light of the PS2 launch and the impending release of X-Box and Gamecube. Only time will tell how DC fares under its new European management ■

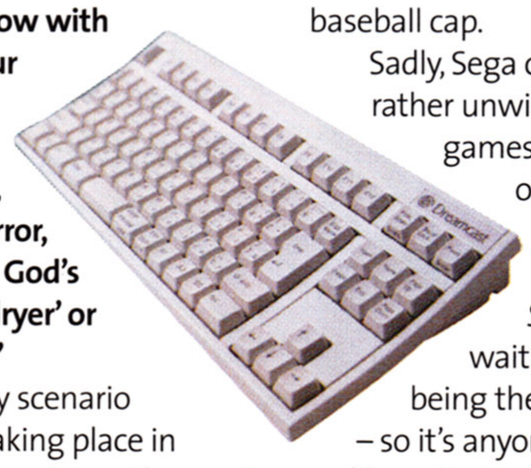
SEGA AND NAMCO JOIN FORCES

Sega and Namco have announced a deal that will see Sega taking over Namco's coin-op distribution in Japan. This includes all 430 Namco arcade centres and 600 Sega arcades. While it has no bearing on the UK arcade business, closer links between the two companies can only be good news for DC. A few more titles of the same standard as *Soul Calibur* certainly wouldn't go amiss ■

Type or Die!

Feel the power of our words!

The air is thick with tension, the only audible sound is the rain hammering relentlessly against the window. This is always the worst time – the calm before the storm, the moment of peace before they come for us again, before the zombies attack. Then, suddenly, a noise. An undead creature bursts through a window with axe in hand. Your friend panics and grabs you by the shoulder, screaming in terror, "Type, man! For God's sake type 'Hairdryer' or we're doomed!"

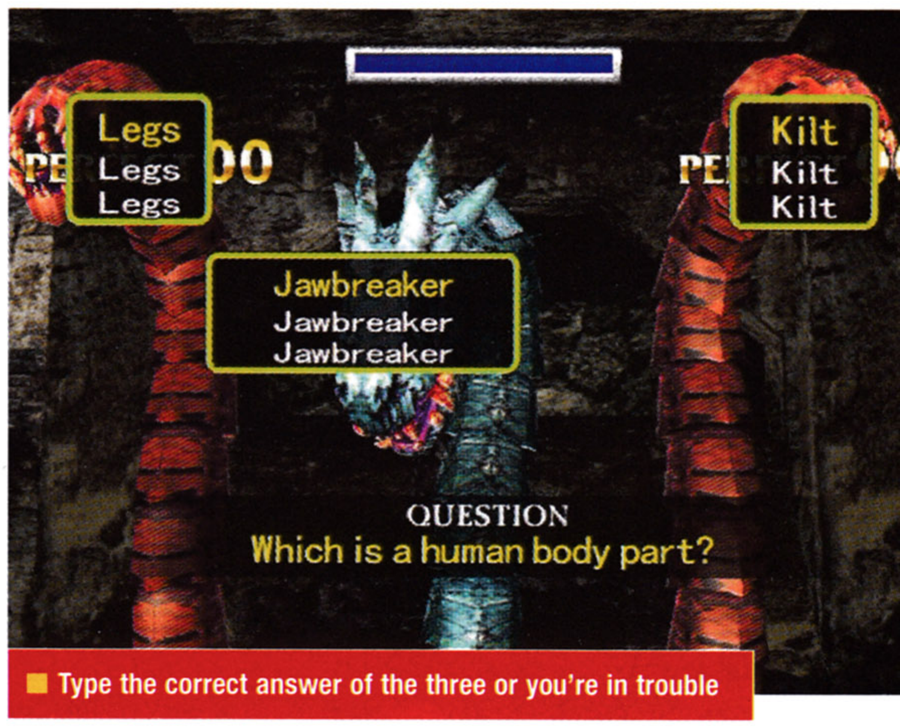


This unlikely scenario could soon be taking place in homes across America as the most insanely hilarious game ever to come out of Japan has finally been translated into English. Have you ever imagined playing *The House of the Dead 2* but, instead of killing zombies with a lightgun, you have to type words on a DC keyboard to blow them away? If you have then you're in dire need of psychiatric help, but believe it or not, this is actually the basis of *The Typing of the Dead*.

Words flash up on screen in front of your undead target and you have to rapidly bash them out on the keyboard before you get your head bashed in. As you progress the task becomes increasingly difficult with entire sentences and phrases to type before you can waste the monsters. It was a massive hit in Japan, it's clearly deranged and it's funnier than William Hague in a baseball cap.

Sadly, Sega of Europe seems rather unwilling to release any games without an obvious commercial appeal – the magnificent *Seaman* still waiting to be set free being the obvious example – so it's anyones guess whether we'll see *Typing of the Dead* over here. If not, we'd strongly advise you getting hold of the US version – the zombies are out there and only words can stop them... ■

Only a bizarre sentence can save you from a big chainsaw



Type the correct answer of the three or you're in trouble

"It's funnier than William Hague in a baseball cap"

GearBox discuss Half-Life

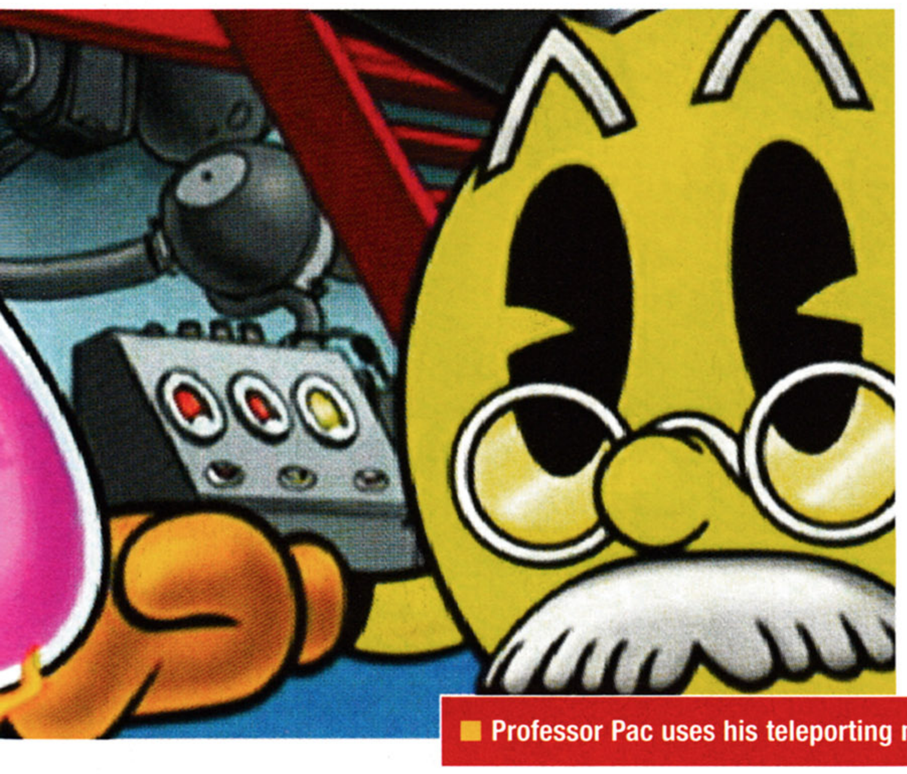
Multiplayer Half-Life for the UK?

Gearbox Software, the company responsible for the Dreamcast conversion of *Half-Life* has been speaking out about the possibility of a multiplayer version of the game appearing. It seems as though a release would probably contain not only Team Fortress Classic, Deathmatch and Capture The Flag but also a singleplayer game in the form of the acclaimed PC add-on, *Opposing Force*. While this is an exciting prospect, the company went on to say that all this hinges on the performance of Dreamcast over the coming months. If DC's resurgence continues and the company sees it as a viable commercial prospect, then we'll get it, if it doesn't, we can forget it. It's as simple as that. We'll just have to keep our fingers crossed ■

We want multiplayer *Half-Life*. Give it to us!

PHANTASY SCORES BIG IN JAPAN

Top Japanese Dreamcast mag and friend of **DC-UK**, Famitsu has given the long-awaited Sonic Team RPG, *Phantasy Star Online* a massive 37/40 in the latest issue. This means the game won the coveted Platinum award, scoring superbly with all four reviewers. Scores of nine, nine, nine and ten out of ten were recorded by the notoriously stringent critics. For some idea of the level of marking in Famitsu, it's worth noting that the only two games ever to score a perfect 40/40 are *Legend Of Zelda: The Occarina Of Time* and DC's own *Soul Calibur*. Look out for a huge review in **DC-UK** closer to its late February release date.



Professor Pac uses his teleporting machine to send Ms Pac-man into the different worlds to recover the precious gems

Ms Pac-man Maze Madness

The first lady of videogames makes her DC debut

She's been around longer than most of us care to remember but *Ms Pac-Man* is still going strong with the Dreamcast release of *Ms Pac-Man Maze Madness*.

Ooh, what a lovely flower arrangement

First appearing on PlayStation, the game is, unsurprisingly, a maze-based puzzler with the emphasis firmly on gameplay rather than graphics. But if you haven't played a *Pac* game since the Atari days, you may be surprised to know that it now takes place in three dimensions!

The action is set over four different worlds and contains 180 or so levels to keep you entertained, along with a fourplayer battle game thrown in for good measure. On top of this there's also the full arcade version of the original *Ms Pac-Man*, so the game should have enough to keep most gamers busy for quite some time.

Gameplay is extremely basic, consisting of moving blocks around, using jump-pads and pulling levers to find the gem in each maze. And, of course, there's the classic *Pac*-person action that is eating dots, avoiding ghosts, eating power pellets then eating the ghosts.

As is often the case with these multi-platform, non-Dreamcast specific titles, the visuals aren't of the highest standard, being merely tarted-up 32bit offerings. But this kind of retro action is all about addictive gameplay and *Maze Madness* has plenty to offer nostalgics wanting to indulge in a little old skool arcade fun. Add to this a bundle of extras and *Ms Pac-Man* should last much longer than most others of this ilk ■

Sega's Planet

Space Harrier's sequel rocks!

Currently lurking in an inconspicuous corner of a London arcade is the next generation of Sega gaming. It's a test version of *Planet Harriers* (sequel to the legendary *Space Harrier*) and – guess what? – we've tested it!

We were virtually dribbling with anticipation as we pressed start and our harrier flew out into a gorgeous forest world. And after playing the game for half an hour all we can say is, BLOODY HELL! *Planet Harriers* runs on Sega's ultra-powerful Hikaru arcade board and it has produced quite literally, The Best Graphics In The History Of The World, Ever. The detail, vibrancy and depth of field in the visuals are breathtaking and it's an absolute joy to see it in motion.

The shoot 'em up action is equally impressive and actually plays more like *Panzer Dragoon* than *Space Harrier* – swooping along 3D rails, dodging between obstacles and locking homing missiles onto enemies that blow them away with an explosion of amazing lighting effects.

Those who feared the classic *Space Harrier* gameplay might not translate well to 3D can stop worrying as this is one of the most fluid and exhilarating coin-ops we've ever experienced. Get down on your knees and pray for a Dreamcast conversion ■

Both visuals and gameplay are jaw-droppingly great

RUMOUR

Rumour: Very, very inside sources have been suggesting that shoot 'em up master Treasure is working on an update of its seminal Mega Drive shooter, *Gunstar Heroes*. The informant just happens to have a friend who is a designer for Square and the story goes that in Japan, software companies put aside their differences after work and indulge in the odd Sapporo and a spot of karaoke. The upshot of this is that members of Square, Sonic Team and Treasure often discuss ideas together, off the record of course, leading to our informant's friend blabbing about Treasure's supposed sequel. And let's face it, what gamer could possibly keep that kind of information to themselves?
DC-UK: The only possible downside is that the intended console for the game looks suspiciously like a Borg ship. Figure that one out for yourselves.

Rumour: What gives? Our next rumour involves Treasure again. After the canning of *Gunbeat*, Treasure released the name *Ikaruga* as the next title on its development schedule. Aside from it being another shooter, it was the project codename that raised a few eyebrows – RS2.
DC-UK Call us premature, but those initials have a little something to do with a rather classic game for the Saturn. No prizes for guessing which one, but it involved radiant silverguns. Oh man! ■

CHARTS

Dreamcast wildlife...

Top ten creatures associated with DC

1. **Metropolis Sheep Racer**
2. **Psychic Horse 2012**
3. **Mortal Wombat Gold**
4. **Deadly Flies**
5. **Dynamite Cockatoo**
6. **F1 World Grand Flea**
7. **Resident Weevil 2**
8. **Housemartin of the Dead 2**
9. **International Track and Fieldmouse**
10. **Railroad Racoon II**

Pick a car, any car – they all handle pretty much the same

Roadsters returns

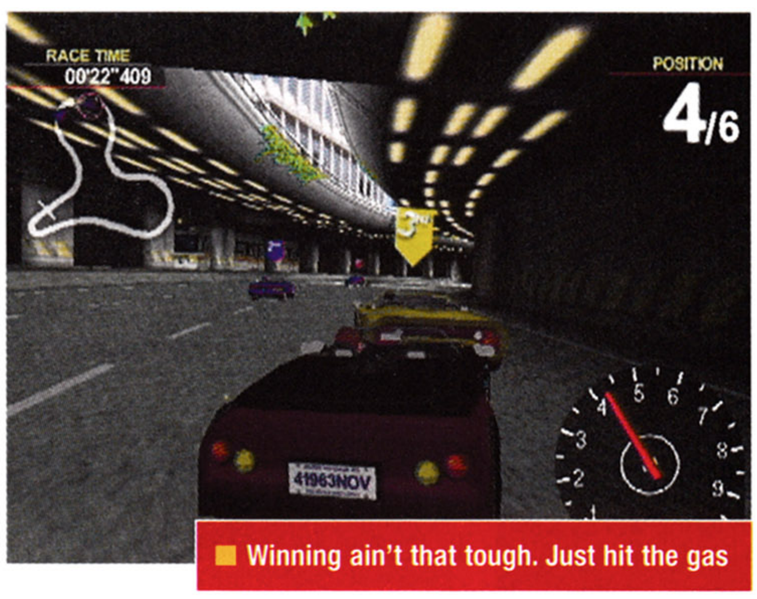
Can this arcade racer compete with the elite?

Released late last year, the original *Roadsters* was one of those elusive little blighters that slipped out onto the shelves before DC-UK had a chance to put it through its paces, because... well frankly, because it was bloody awful. So what has developer Player One got in store for us with the sequel, *Roadsters 2: Exhibition Of Speed*?

Like the original, *EOS* is very much in the arcade style, with slidey, unrealistic handling the order of the day and cars cornering as if they're on rails. There's also a typically generous selection of different modes available to test your racing prowess, including Time Trial, Quick Race and Trophy.

The latter of these is the main challenge and offers a structured progression through the game with three increasingly difficult trophy competitions to win. Successful racing is rewarded with cash, and while to begin with you only have a small amount of money – limiting you to the dodgiest motors – winning races will soon see you earning big bucks to splash out on the faster cars and upgrades for them.

From what we've seen so far, the gameplay is currently a long way from the calibre of *F355* or *Le Mans* but the visuals are competent enough and there's a decent selection of tracks – complete with numerous shortcuts and ramps to send you hurtling through the air. Fourplayer shenanigans are also a bit of a laugh, but in all honesty, *Exhibition Of Speed* needs to improve quite considerably between now and its February release if it's to stand any chance of competing with the extremely tasty racing opposition available for Dreamcast ■



Winning ain't that tough. Just hit the gas

CHARTS

ChartTrack Dreamcast top ten...

1 Shenmue
Publisher: Sega
★ Yu Suzuki's epic adventure shoots straight to the chart summit and rightly so – it's a videogame milestone.

2 Sonic Adventure
Publisher: Sega
◆ Does the return of Sonic mean new DC owners are buying the game alongside the console? Let's hope so.

3 Quake III Arena
Publisher: Sega
★ The legendary firstperson shooter is an awesome DC online experience.

4 Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation
Publisher: Eidos
▲ Lara is showing her age but she still has enough charms to entice you lot.

5 Sega Bass Fishing
Publisher: Sega
▲ Is there no end to the madness that is getting bass? Let's hope not.

6 Metropolis Street Racer
Publisher: Sega
▼ The best racing game of the year, no contest. Everyone should own this.

7 Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?
Publisher: Eidos
▼ Okay, enough's enough, it's about time this board game left the charts.

8 Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2
Publisher: Activision
★ The boarding maestro returns in an even more impressive sequel.

9 Ultimate Fighting Championship
Publisher: Ubi Soft
★ Enjoyable, ultra-violent scrapper that beats wrestling games any day.

10 Jet Set Radio
Publisher: Sega
★ This is one of the top five games of the year. So go and BUY IT!

KEY: ★ New entry ▲ Climber ▼ Dropped ◆ Non-mover

LOAN-GAMER COMPETITION WINNER!
Congratulations to Andrew Masters of Hertfordshire. You win a year's membership to Loan-Gamer, the last word in online games rental. This gives you £120 worth of free Dreamcast games rental over the next twelve months. You lucky devil.

Enemies may look hard as nails, but they're actually big soft cissies

Max is a master of both weaponry and hand to hand combat. Bosh!

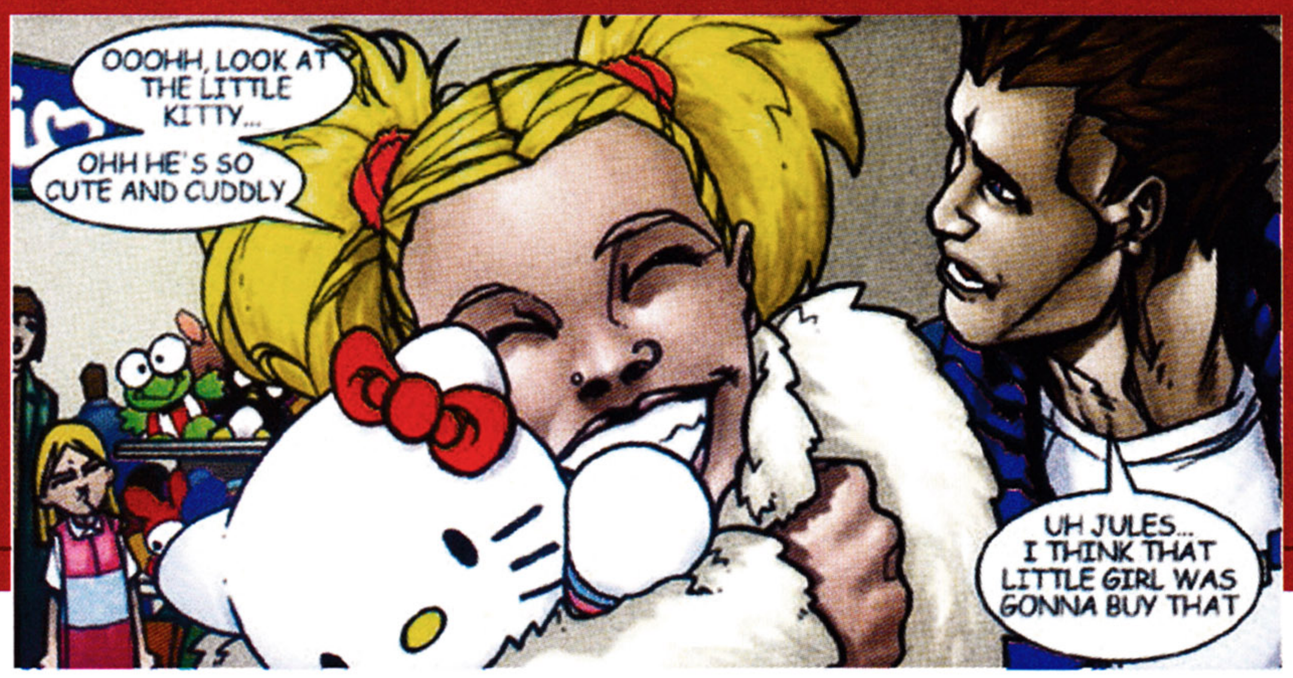
Man of Steel?

Max takes it to the max

Definitely winning the award for Cheesiest Name of the Year, *Max Steel*, star of the popular American animated series, is now heading to Dreamcast in his very own action/adventure title. Can the one-man fighting machine live up to his cartoon pedigree? We thrashed the demo version to bring you the full rundown.

From the off, it's obvious where this title finds its inspiration (please stand up and take a bow *Syphon Filter* and *Metal Gear Solid*), offering, as it does, a blend of action and stealth as you battle past enemies using the weapons and equipment at Max's disposal. You'll find trip-mines, grenades, remote mines and a whole host of guns in your armoury, with the added bonus that Max is also quite useful in a hand to hand scrap. To further aid him in his quest, Max has a couple of fancy tricks up the sleeves of his combat suit, in the form of a sneaky stealth mode and a turbo dash. It's not all just a case of run and shoot everything in sight though, Max also has his fair share of puzzle solving to contend with – mainly in the basic form of locating colour-coded door keys and such like.

Judging by the early code we played, *Max Steel* seems to be a fairly enjoyable adventure game. Coming from developer Treyarch (responsible for *Tony Hawk's* on Dreamcast), we're hoping it'll prove to be a winner when it arrives early this year. However, we do have a few reservations about the variety of the gameplay. The puzzles are somewhat repetitive and while Max has a large arsenal of weapons at his disposal, there's little difference in their effect. Look out for a full preview soon ■



Com.x appeal

Cover art company turns to comics

A British company previously responsible for designing loads of videogame cover art is moving into the world of comics. Dept.x worked on *Silent Hill* and *Metal Gear Solid* for Konami and is currently drawing up the *Half-Life* art for Havas. Now the company has set up a new subsidiary, Com.x, to bring that artistic flair to the world of comics.

Following a distinctly patriotic agenda, Com.x seeks to employ the cream of British talent and will be setting several new titles loose on the public during the first quarter of this year. Names like John Higgins (famous for work on Judge Dredd and Batman), Liam McCormack-Sharp (Spiderman, Spawn) and Trevor Hairsine (2000 AD) have signed to the label and we can look forward to some fresh, exciting creations as a result.

To commemorate the launch of its first titles, Com.x has produced Issue Zero, a collection of stories introducing some of the new series. It features, among other stories, Bazooka Jules, a brash bubblegum sci-fi outing and Puncture, a bloody, 'heavy noir' tale spanning centuries of bloodshed. Hmmm, sounds promising. Other projects, including a graphic novel based on PS hit *Silent Hill*, will be available from good comic stockists during Q1. Read 'em and weep ■

Driven mad by Crazy Taxi?
KO'd by Soul Calibur?

You need to consult the
DC-UK GAME LINE
0906 466 4445
7 days a week, from 8am to 11pm
For tips and cheats on all your favourite Dreamcast games

Customer Services 0870 800 6155
Calls costs £1.50 a minute at all times. Call charges will appear on your standard telephone bill.
Please seek permission from the person that pays the bill before calling.

DAVE 2000

Each month our man on the inside puts on his best school teacher voice and gives the videogame industry a right telling off

While the sheep followed Sony's shepherds, Santa followed the star

Can you hear that sound? A chorus of DC start-up tunes, new consoles all whirring away, clean and crisp new buttons clicking merrily, bringing joy to thousands of happy children that got one of the lovely machines for Chrimbo. Good old Father Christmas, he understands the kids.

Santa is probably also aware of economics. A man purchasing that many gifts each year must know that no one wants to pay three hundred pounds for an allegedly superior console with a load of rubbish sequels. Or do they?

Why are there always crowds of people standing around in shops looking at PlayStation 2? It seems to have a bizarre magical attraction. Maybe it's like slowing down to look at a car accident as you drive past – people are drawn to the horror. How could it turn out to be so bad? It was supposed to be powerful enough to drop nuclear missiles on France for a laugh, but it turns out it can't even manage to make old PS games look different.

People turn their noses up at DC as they expect it to be rubbish. Everyone says it's not as good as PS2, so they avoid making up their own minds by believing what they read in the papers.

Those who write fawning news stories for the tabloids get their information from official Sony press releases. An official-looking piece of paper tells them PS2 is five hundred times better than DC, so they believe it and tell everyone.

Some papers have spectacularly messed up, hailing PS2 as a wonder machine that can do everything, when in fact it is merely another console, hewn by peasant workers from the same Taiwanese plastic as everything else you've got plugged into your telly.

How many of PS2s innovative new features are currently being used? None. No Internet, no hard drive, a measly two pad holes, botched DVD playback and a pile of games that wouldn't even pass for entertainment in an eastern European country where they've never even seen games before.

Enthuse to a non-believer about how good DC is, and they'll recite some lies about how PS2 is better because someone told them so in a pub. Why is it better? They don't know, it just is. You can tell when a newspaper feature about games was written by someone who knows their onions – because they always plump for DC ■

Dave 2000 is a genius. Or so he tells us.

Worms World Party © 2000 Team17 Software. Team17 and Worms are registered or trademarks of Team17

This year, the average person will unwittingly suffer from at least one type of worm infestation.

With tougher, meaner worms and on-line game play, it's an epidemic in the making.

WORMS WORLD PARTY. A TRULY GLOBAL PROBLEM.

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International News

Our global DC detectives investigate the latest gossip

Spider-Mania

Heads up! It's the amazing Spider-Man on DC!

What's that?! Spider sense tingling! It's – whoa! – It's Activision's *Spider-Man* game crawling onto Dreamcast! That's right Spidey fans, last year's PlayStation hit is currently being converted to our favourite console, and the wall-crawler will soon be spinning his web in glorious 128bit-o-vision.

Developed by Treyarch, the team responsible for the excellent *Tony Hawk's Skateboarding* DC port, *Spider-Man* is a 3D action/adventure where you control the greatest superhero in the universe as he swings around a massive recreation of New York City in an effort to clear his name. Spidey has been accused of a crime he didn't commit and through 34 levels of fantastic web-slinging, wall-crawling, villain-scrapping comic book action, Spider-Man must prove his innocence and save the city from a crimewave. Along the way you'll bump into some of his most famous enemies like Dr Octopus and Venom, while fellow Marvel heroes including Black Cat and Daredevil show up to help him.

The PS version is easily the finest superhero game yet seen. The size of the city and the total freedom to crawl around it makes for superb action-packed gameplay and, perhaps more importantly, the *feel* of Spidey's world is captured to perfection. We can expect the DC release to be equally enjoyable but with the added bonus of even better comic-style visuals. Due for a Spring release, we'll have more on *Spider-Man* in the next issue ■

> "34 levels of fantastic wall-crawling, comic book action"

■ Always target the opposition leader

■ Look closely and you'll see a DC on that robot's back!

■ Robots are incredibly popular in Japan for some reason

Virtual On and on

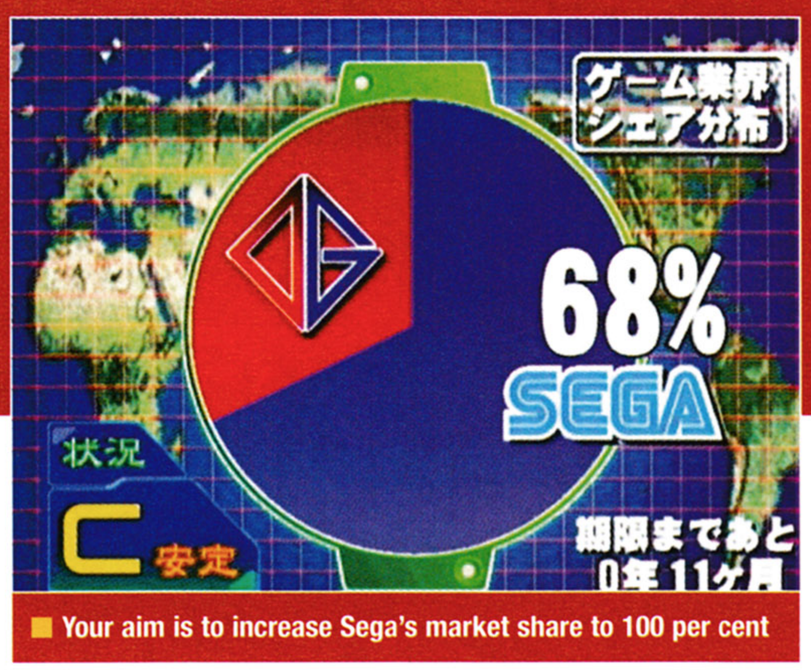
Sega's robot battler gets the fourplayer treatment

Hitmaker is currently leading the way in the arcades, with a slew of quality titles emerging from the Sega division over the last couple of years. *Crazy Taxi*, *Virtua Tennis* and skating sim *Air Trix* all hail from this talented team and now it's getting ready to take the popular *Virtual On* franchise to new heights with the imminent release of the fourth in the series, *Virtual On Force*.

The biggest additional feature in the new game is the option for frenetic fourplayer battles, with two-on-two teams fighting for dominance. Each team must select a leader and victory is obtained by crushing your adversaries' boss. This puts the emphasis of play on teamwork and tactics – such as choosing different types of robot, with one player opting for speed while a team-mate goes for increased firepower. Protecting the leader is paramount and to this end, a 'rescue dash' is provided whereby life gauges can be shared between players.

Running on the new Naomi 2 arcade board, *Force* certainly looks the business, with detailed 3D environments and tasty light sourcing complementing the well-hard looking cyber fighters. The game attracted a large crowd when it debuted in Japan recently and should provide some top fun when it arrives in the arcades next year ■

You rival company has a lot of posters up. Not good



Your aim is to increase Sega's market share to 100 per cent

Could you get the UK launch and marketing right?

All we hear is Segagaga

Fancy running your favourite videogame company? Here's your chance

Shock news just in, Sega has handed control of the company over to a young boy and girl in the hope that these enthusiastic kids can regain some of the videogame legend's past glory... Not really, only kidding. But this IS the intriguing concept behind Hitmaker's forthcoming game *Segagaga*. It is apparently a response to all the Sega fans who have criticised the company's management over the last couple of years. Those in charge have got so sick of people saying, "If I ran Sega I'd...," that they've handed over the company in digital form so that would-be business experts can test their theories.

The game takes place in two halves. The first is like a straightforward sim where the aim is to increase Sega's market share to 100 per cent. Out to thwart your plans is a massive rival named Dogma which controls the market share at the beginning of the game. To overtake them you must scout for new developers and projects to claw your way back into public favour – blimey, all this sounds familiar. Many of these projects are in fact classic Sega games of which there are meant to be around 108 to discover.

The second part of the game is more like an RPG as you wander around the Sega offices getting into battles. You can also take a trip around Akihabara, Tokyo's famous 'Electric Town' district, checking out the game posters – the more Sega adverts displayed in shop windows, the better you're doing.

This all sounds bizarre enough, but add 25 minutes of crazy animations, loads of retro detail and plenty of kooky humour and you've got what seems like a cool novelty game. Whether we'll see an English translation is another story ■

ON SALE NOW!

Gran Turismo 3

The world's greatest racer driven on PlayStation 2! Only in GM 103!

THE DAILY CHRONICLE MONDAY, JANUARY 15, 2001,

Britain's hottest gaming gossip

Dreamcast VIP

Edited by Keith Stuart, Lee Hart and Neil Randall

DC-UK goes into tabloid gossip column mode to present the biggest, brightest and best games of 2001. Remember, you read it here first, folks!

BOSS HOG!

Eggman beware, Sonic's back in town!

EXCLUSIVE

Dreamcast VIP has had a few nights on the tiles in its time – all done in the name of searching out the juiciest DC gossip, naturally.

But our bad behaviour is nothing compared with the outrageous antics of that spiky blue hog, Sonic, over the past year and a half.

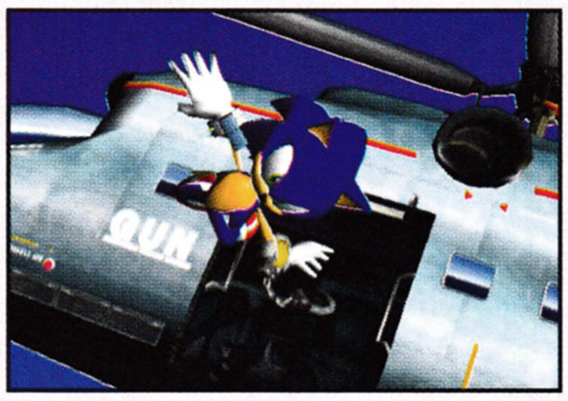
Since foiling fatboy Dr Robotnik in his last adventure, the heroic hedgehog has been keeping himself busy down at the Met Bar, getting ratted on cocktails and jiggy with the Appleton sisters (at the same time!). But when we bumped into him last night at the Almost Famous premiere in the West End, Sonic had more serious matters on his mind. Dr Robotnik is up to his old tricks again and our Sonic is getting back into shape so he can sprint, spin and kick ass better than ever before in *Sonic Adventure 2*.

***Sonic 2...* the hog does Hawk's**

"I thought I'd finished Eggman once and for all last time," Sonic told us, "But I've heard he's hatching another evil plot to take over the world. I'll be ready for him though, don't you worry. I feel flash, fast and fit and all my old pals are going to be helping out again. My best mate Tails has finished his GCSEs, Knuckles is out of rehab and over his soil addiction and Amy has decided that lap dancing isn't for her after all."

Soggy

"We'll have a few new surprises up our sleeves, you can be sure of that. It's my tenth birthday this year and I'm going to celebrate it with my best adventure yet. Check it out for yourself!" And with that, the spiky feller slipped a GD-ROM into our sweaty hands and we rushed home with it faster than Sonic on steroids.



***Sonic 2...* Geronimooooooooo!**

Pants

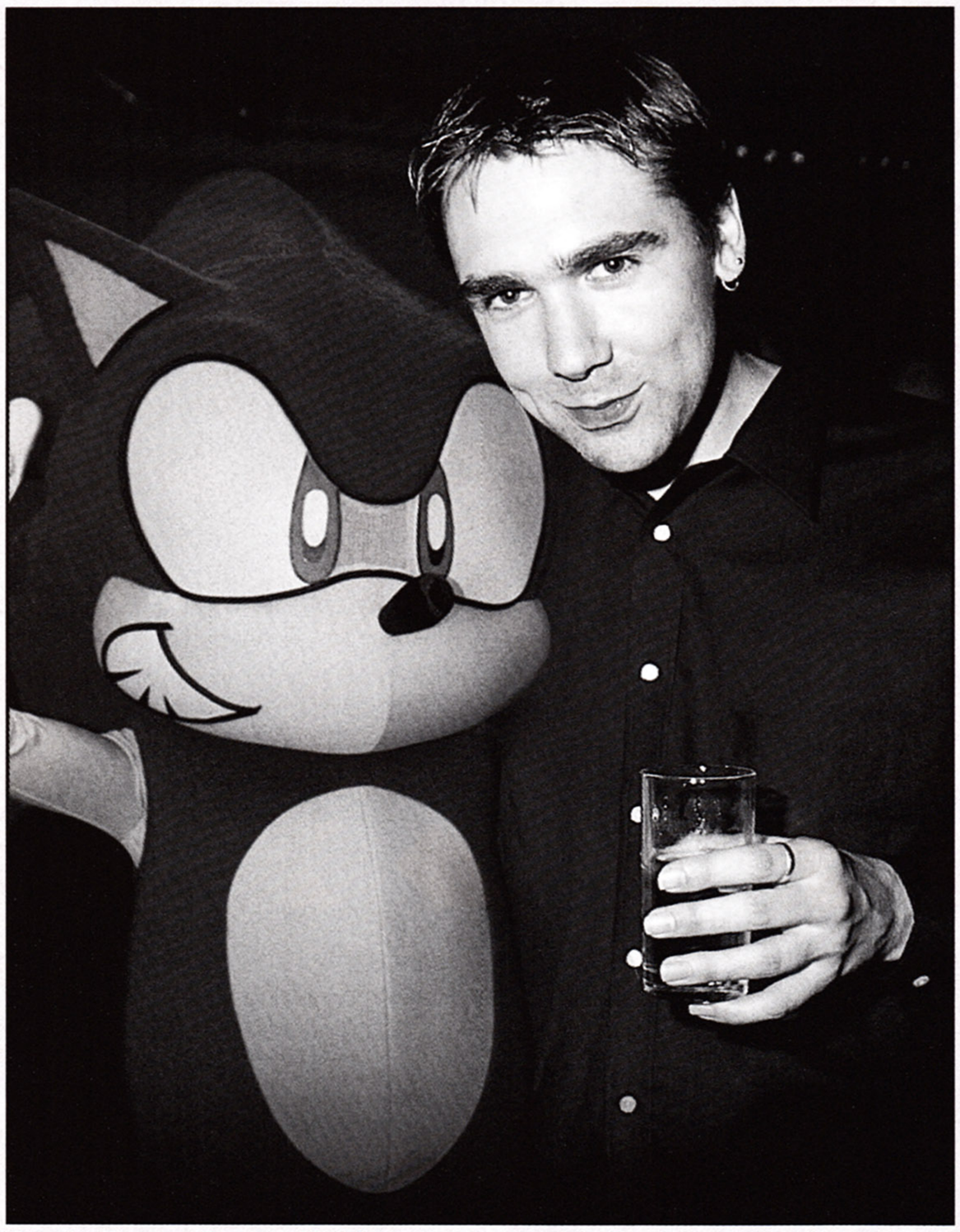
We've played the first level of *Sonic Adventure 2* and all we can say (with an irritating American twang) is, "Whoa!" The game kicks off with a helicopter flying back to base, the pilot starts yelling that the hedgehog is causing mayhem which is the cue for Sonic to smash open the door, grab a snowboard from under the wing and skysurf down to the city streets.

Back on solid ground, the first level, City Escape, begins with Sonic boarding around the bustling metropolis, performing crazy stunts and smashing cars off the road. And when you step off the board for some traditional Sonic action, it becomes even more impressive. Running at a blistering 60 frames per second, the hog is faster and smoother than ever and has a few sexy new abilities up his spiky hide, such as grinding surfaces *Jet Set Radio* stylee and swinging across parallel bars.

Sonic Adventure 2 is looking hot, hot, hot and after that fantastic first stage, we reckon Robotnik will be shaking in his eggy boots before the summer release.

"HE'S HATCHING ANOTHER PLOT"

***Sonic 2...* platform fun returns**



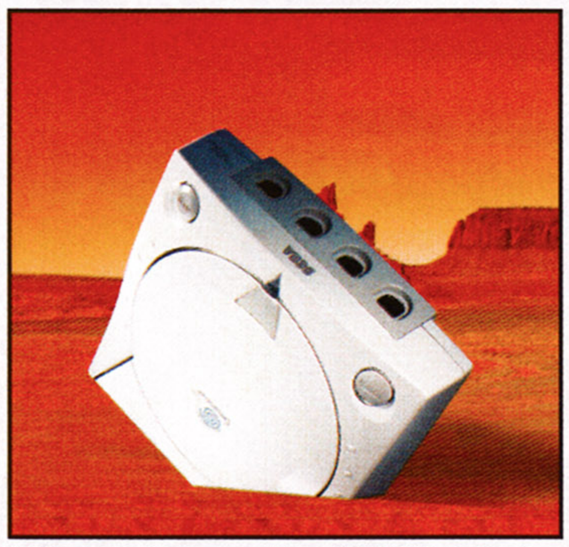
Sonic Boom Boy... Keith meets up with Sega's hedgehog

DREAMCAST FOUND ON MARS!

EXCLUSIVE

Voyager space probe discovers proof of intelligent life in space!

A series of amazing photos taken by the Voyager space probe of the surface of Mars, have revealed what looks like a Dreamcast half buried in the Martian dust. NASA scientist Dr Mark Truffle claims that this conclusively proves that there is intelligent life in the universe. "If there was no intelligence out there, we would have discovered a PlayStation 2!" commented the life-long Sega fan.



Life on Mars... the NASA photo

SHOCK!! HORROR!!

Body mutilation, hideous monsters, lives scarred by years of abuse: as purveyors of showbiz gossip we've seen them all over the years.

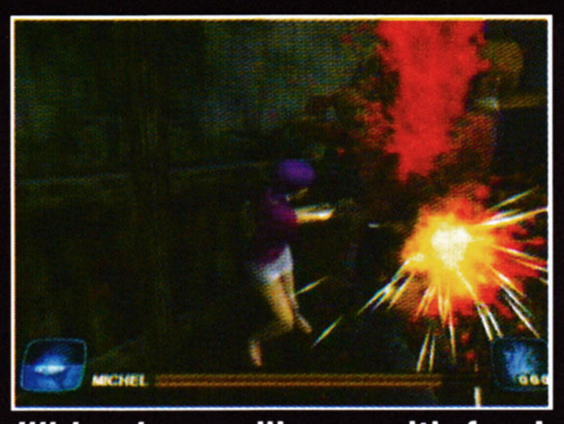
But even the shocking lifestyles of modern pop starlets, constantly off their empty heads on coke and booze, can't compare with the three horror games coming to DC in 2001.

First on the Dreamcast VIP fear-o-meter is *Alone in the Dark IV*, the long awaited fourth title in Infogrames' spook-tastic series. Set in and around a haunted mansion on a monster-ridden island, the adventure stars Edward Carnby and Aline Cedrac as paranormal investigators

OFF THEIR EMPTY HEADS ON COKE AND BOOZE

***Alone in the Dark IV*... spooky**

looking for ancient artefacts. "The game uses state of the art Dreamcast lighting effects to make everything pitch dark so you need a torch to look around," said one videogame expert to us on the phone the other day, "this adds to the scary atmosphere." With eerie locations, gothic architecture and various spooks, ghouls and goblins to battle, this one will have you reaching for your bible quicker than a born again singer after an underage sex scandal. We can expect to see it in April.



***Illbleed*... you'll poo with fear!**

More shocking still is *Illbleed*, a so-called survival horror game (computer slang for a game that cribs its storyline from old George A Romero films), by Climax. This terrifying oddity centres around a billionaire who booby-traps his huge mansion and then offers millions of dollars to whoever can get through it alive

Spooks, ghouls and goblins

– naturally you volunteer. All you have to keep you alive is a horror monitor which warns of any approaching mindless zombies or undead skeleton women – we could do with one of those at London fashion week! *Illbleed* doesn't have a UK publisher yet, but an inside source told us that they're looking for one, and the game may well get released here in the summer.

Finally, make sure you keep an eye out for *Soul Reaver 2* – sequel to last year's top vampire adventure. The game sees the return of undead hero Raziel in his continuing battle against evil neck-biter Kain. Eidos promises more weapons, more enemies and gothic locations as huge, dark and foreboding as Daniella Westbrook's nasal chasm. Some hope!

***Soul Reaver 2*... it's fangtastic!**

***Daytona USA 2001*... the legend hits DC**

***18 Wheeler*... gotta keep on truckin' baby**

***Crazy Taxi 2*... will the sequel be online?**

SEGA MOTORS ON

PARTYING AT STRINGFELLOW'S THE OTHER NIGHT, WHO SHOULD WE BUMP INTO – aside from Peter accompanied by a sex-crazed guinea pig – but that groovy couple about town, Denise Van Outen and Jay Kay. As usual, Denise was knockin' 'em back like there's no tomorrow, while the Jamiroquai frontman was wowing everyone with his trademark monkey-dancing.

When we finally managed to pull him down from the rafters and placate him with a tasty banana, Jay was positively bursting to chat about his favourite subjects – cars and racing games. "DC's the place to be for driving games, man," he told us. "Playing *Ferrari 355* is almost as good as racing in the real thing and that *MSR* is just virtual insanity!"

Wobbly

Yes, quite. But what about 2001's driving delights? "Oh man, I've already bought a Dodge Viper and booked my holidays so I can try out *Daytona USA* for real! I've got one of those promo copies and I've been burning it up for weeks. Just like my Denise, it handles like a dream and goes like the clappers! Fans of *Daytona* in the arcades will love it 'cos it's got that same smooth 'n' sexy handling and it's unbelievably fast. And the fact that it's fully playable online will make it even more wicked!"

After that recommendation Dreamcast VIP will be awaiting *Daytona*'s April release with baited breath. But it's not the only cool racing game coming out this year. *18 Wheeler American Pro Trucker* is a totally mad drive 'em up where you race a truck (with eighteen wheels) across America, delivering cargo to four city destinations. The race is against the clock but you've also got a lunatic trucker to contend with, using all kinds of evil tactics to try and deliver his cargo before you. The result is a frantic, crash-happy juggernaut of a game that will delight all

A frantic crash-happy juggernaut of a game

the *Crazy Taxi* fans out there. And what's more, an insider tells us online racing is being added to the Western release!

Boobs

Talking about *Crazy Taxi* (as we were a couple of sentences back) a sequel to the fantastic DC fare 'em up is on its way this year. Expect more of the sensational fare-collecting madness, except this time taking place in Noo Yoik City rather than the hills of 'Frisco. And although we're not ones to spread idle rumours, online *Taxi*-ing is a very real possibility.

WHISPER

WHICH LEGENDARY SEGA racing game could well be driving its open-topped Ferrari onto Dreamcast this year? Rumours have circulated about a possible sequel to this classic ever since DC launched. But we believe it's actually going to happen now the man who designed the original has a bit of spare time since releasing the reigns on his magnum opus. When we spoke to him about updating some of his classic games he was extremely enthusiastic, and with *Planet Harrier* heading for the arcades, this baby could be next.

LOOK OUT for these Japanese import delights in 2K1: Alien life sim *Lack of Love*, VIS's fishing game *Fish Eyes Wild* and cutesy manga game *Cardcaptor Sakura*. We'll tell more soon!

TAKE COVER! IT'S A SHOOTING FRENZY!

Shoot to kill and play to thrill on Dreamcast

ROLE WITH IT

It looks like fans of fantasy adventure role-playing are in for an extremely happy New Year.

EXCLUSIVE

Dreamcast VIP can exclusively reveal that there are more 'RPG'-style games crawling out of the woodwork over the next 12 months than D-list celebs at a second rate film premiere.

Of course the big news is that Yu Suzuki is planning to get the second chapter of *Shenmue* out into Japanese game shops by autumn. Even our top seem to be overworked at the moment – the team also worked on the Paris-based RPG/War sim *Sakura Taisen 3*, a big hit with gamers in Japan that's bound to make it over here later in the year.

Also on the way, of course, is the totally unmissable online adventure *Phantasy Star Online* – just check out the full story on page 10! There are other Japanese delights we could be sampling soon too. According to spods on the Internet, Sega in Japan is supposedly working on a massive multiplayer online RPG named *Far Nation*, and there's the videogame translation of card trading game *Magic the Gathering* due out in Nippon in February 2001 – that's the sort of thing our friends at Virgin are likely to scoop up for Euro release. Yes, it's going to be RPG heaven next year – which is just fine with us: as writers for a national tabloid newspaper, we're used to living in a complete and utter fantasy world!

***Skies of Arcadia*... the sky's the limit**

Living in a complete fantasy world

industry spies can't guess when we'll get it in the UK, though – spring 2002 being a wild stab in the dark.

Jobby

Due to arrive considerably earlier are GameArts' *Grandia II* and the airborne pirate adventure *Skies of Arcadia* from Sega's Overworks team. This is set to be one of the biggest titles of the year, the American Official Dreamcast Magazine recently awarded it 10/10, and the Yanks know what they're doing – except when it comes to voting in their president of course! On the subject of Overworks – they really do

***Grandia II*... midgets do battle**

***Cannon Spike*... old skool larks**

EXCLUSIVE

THE SOS – SAVE OUR SEGA – CHARITY HELD ITS ANNUAL FUND RAISING FETE IN CLEETHORPES ON WEDNESDAY.

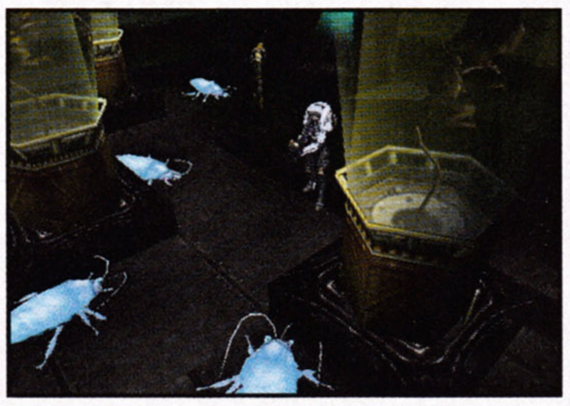
A WHO'S WHO OF SHOWBIZ STARS

And a who's who of showbiz personalities came out in force. 3-2-1's Ted Rogers had a queue of ladies paying to experience his legendary finger trick, Andy Crane was cashing in on the tombola, the dead one out of Milli Vanilli was running the karaoke and 'Mad' Frankie Fraser could be found on the 'I'll Razor Yer Ears Off For A Pound' stall.

Cheeky

Unfortunately, it all turned a bit sour when some PS2 toughs showed up chanting slogans like, "Our console costs twice as much as yours, it's got no decent games, no online access and the DVD playback is rubbish… But at least Sony advertise it! Ner-ner-ner-ner-nerrr!"

Dreamcast VIP saw red at this affront,



***Gun Valkyrie*... kill or be killed**

His legendary finger trick

and attacked the gulible youths with unsold copies of *Smugglers Run*. They quickly fled. Disaster averted, talk naturally turned to the lack of lightgun games on Dreamcast. "I haven't used mine since *House of the Dead 2*," Ralph McTell moaned to a general murmur of agreement from the crowd.

Fear not, we told Ralph and his fellow shooting fans, because 2001 is set to be a great year for the shoot 'em up. On the lightgun front, Sega's excellent new coin-op *Confidential Mission* – which plays like *Virtua Cop* starring James Bond – is expected to make a DC appearance. The lightgun will also be compatible with *Gun Valkyrie*, a thirdperson action shooter from Smilebit (which previously graffiti'd our asses with *Jet Set Radio*). Set in a technologically advanced 1890, you're in charge of the Mercenary Soldiers who must eradicate a bunch of monsters that are plaguing the planet. While the plot doesn't sound revolutionary, the opportunity to use the lightgun in conjunction with a joypad certainly will be. And this mutha's going online too!

Leading the firstperson fragging charge is the much-delayed masterpiece *Half-Life*, the eightplayer online *Quake*-beater, *Unreal Tournament*, and the gory, Rambo-esque *Soldier of Fortune* which also has its sights trained on Net action.

Old-skool shooting fun is represented by two Capcom shooters: the isometric scroller, *Cannon Spike* and *Giga Wing 2*, the sequel to this year's fun-but-short-lived 2D blaster.

Monkey

As if that isn't enough crazy shooting fun for one console, according to industry insider Geri Halliwell – who was going down a storm at the fete on her 'Going Down A Storm' stand – Sega is preparing two more tasty online shoot 'em ups. AM2 is throwing its frenetic, arena-based, coin-op kill-fest, *Outtrigger* into DC's welcoming slot. And later in the year, the hugely promising *Alien Front Online* is invading planet Dreamcast.

You can play as either the Earth's armed forces defending the world against incoming alien aggressors, or turn traitor and opt to play as the aliens; blasting human scum in spaceships and mechanical walkers. Whichever side you play as, *Alien Front Online*'s gripping war of the worlds action will make Independence Day seem like a shallow, B movie-esque travesty with a ridiculous story and stupid characters… Oh, it already seems like that.

***Alien Front*... war of the worlds**

FEELING ADVENTUROUS?

The Dreamcast pop charts are currently dominated by gaming boy bands, bopping and warbling like a bunch of half-witted sex deviants.

Without wishing to name names, spandex-clad hillbilly outfit *WWF Smackdown*, and ginger triplets in camouflage fatigues, *Army Men 3D* are key examples. But thankfully, 2001 will see some rather more talented and adventurous Dreamcast groups hitting the charts: *Floigan Bros.* (see page 20), *Galleon*, *Headhunter* and *Argatha*.

Galleon is the brainchild of pop svengalis Toby Gard and Paul Douglas, who launched the lovely Lara Croft and oversaw her excellent debut – but left before she was reduced to fronting tired old cover versions. With buccaneering

EXCLUSIVE

Rhama Sabrier at the helm, *Galleon* has something of a sea shanty groove – not surprising since the crew likes to sail the oceans getting into perilous quests and fighting mythical monsters.

"We've been influenced by films like The Matrix with its cool fights, and golden oldies such as Jason and the Argonauts because of its fantasy-themed story," Rhama explained to us, before adding, "Arrrgh, me hearties. Arrrgh."

***Galleon*... sail the high seas**

***Headhunter*... fighting crime**

Galleon has been on a development tour for almost four years but we can expect it to arrive in the DC charts by the summer. Fingers crossed.

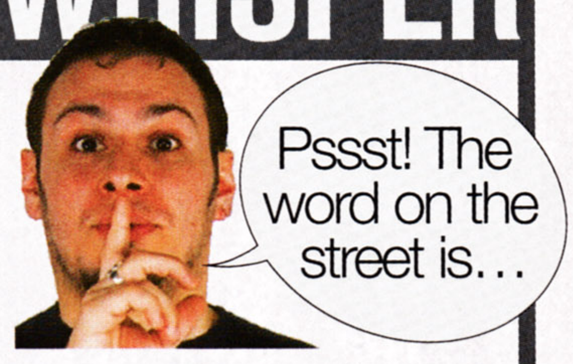
Heavy Metal headbanger, *Headhunter* is another promising adventure band currently holed-up in Sega's Swedish studio, Amuze. With a cinematic sound borne out of the rise of crime syndicates in California, and compromising various stealth-based, puzzle-solving and shoot-out riffs, *Headhunter* could well be a challenger to the *Metal Gear Solid* crowd of plot-driven hit machines. The NME called it: "A thrilling, danger-filled ride that will redefine what we expect from adventures. It makes beautiful music using the unlikely instrument of the grime and crime of street violence." But then, they are a bunch of pretentious fools.

No Cliché, which previously gave us the lighthearted fun of *Toy Commander*, is changing tack completely with the survival horror vibe, *Argatha*. Here's the set up: a landslide in a Romanian village uncovers the ancient subterranean city of Argatha. This lost city is the haunted dwelling place of evil and it's up to grey-bearded adventurer Kirk, to prevent the horror escaping by battling monsters and demons until he reaches Argatha's foreboding heart of darkness.

Sounds like a concept album to us, Marilyn Manson meets Pink Floyd. It should prove a hit with fans of *Resident Evil* and *Silent Hill* and we bet there'll be a few satanic messages if you try playing it backwards. KILL! (Only joking).

WE BET THERE'LL BE A FEW SATANIC MESSAGES

WHISPER



TWO OF THE BEST DC games of 2000 look set to be given the sequel treatment this year. Which makes us happier than a bunch of pigs in swill. One of them involves graffiti, the other revolves around the sport of tennis (hmm, perhaps we've given the game away a bit too easily?). What's more, the sequel to the bat 'n' ball game is expected to have Net play!

SCHOOLGIRLS STRIKE BACK

They're 15 year old babes in micro skirts and sailor tops, but this bunch of hi-kicking harlots are going to be striking fear rather than lust into male gamers everywhere come February.

They're starring in *Rival Schools 3: Project Justice* the latest 'beat 'em up' (computer slang for a game which has two characters 'fighting' on screen) from top producer Capcom. We exclusively met up with some of the stars when they visited the Dreamcast VIP offices yesterday.

***Project Justice*... Grr!**

"I'm very excited to be working with the *Rival Schools* crew again," giggled Hinata Wakana – who

"Do you like my sailor outfit?"

was in the arcade and PlayStation versions of the original game, "15 of us have returned, plus there are six new characters and they're all pretty kinky. Do you like my sailor outfit? You can see my pants if you like." In the game you choose three of the nubile fighters and then pit them against rival school gangs. There are various team special moves, the scenery is amazing and there's even a character edit mode, so you can make your own schoolgirl! Hinata added, "It's more camp and light-hearted than most beat 'em ups... Go on, have a look at my pants when I do this kick." We certainly got a KICK out of meeting the girls!

Funnily enough, later in the same day we learnt about another 'fight 'em up' game coming soon – *Guilty Gear X*, designed by Arc Systems. This one features gorgeous manga-inspired graphics, new fighting modes and 16 crazy characters. Top Japanese Dreamcast magazine, Famitsu DC gave it a punch-tastic 28/30 in a recent review. An insider told us, "We haven't got a UK distributor for the game yet, but it's only a matter of time." Don't expect to see it before March though, fist fans! Oh, that doesn't sound right does it?!

***Guilty Gear X*... 2D art**

Knickers

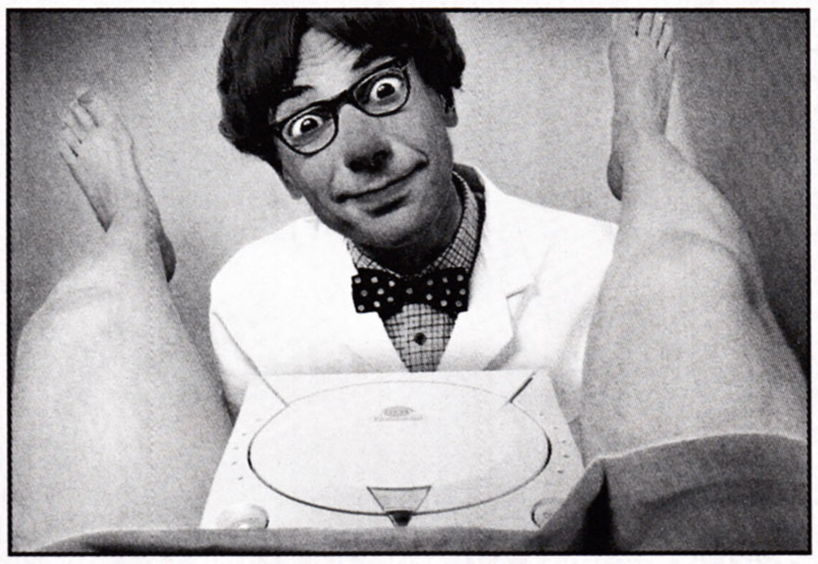
Finally, word has reached us from our contacts in Japanland, that two more 'beating off 'em ups' are coming soon! Check out page 017 for a look at *Fighting Vipers 2*, due out in February, and prepare yourselves for *Capcom Vs SNK 2* later in the year.

***Project Justice*... look at those knickers!**

WOMAN GIVES BIRTH TO DC!!

"I didn't even know I was pregnant" says stunned console mum.

Blonde waitress Elaine Thompson has shocked the medical world by claiming to have given birth to a Dreamcast. Elaine, 23, says she and electrician boyfriend Todd Bunter certainly weren't expecting the arrival. "I fell asleep on the sofa one night and woke up with a Dreamcast beside me. It's strange as Todd had been wanting to buy one for ages, but I wouldn't let him as it's too expensive. Luckily for him, I've now dropped one for free!" "It's a miracle," commented Todd shiftily.



It's a miracle!... a woman giving birth to a Dreamcast. Is this the devil's work?

THE DAILY CHRONICLE MONDAY, JANUARY 15, 2001,

WHEN THE FEELING'S GONE AND YOU CAN'T GO ON IT'S... STRATEGY!

EXCLUSIVE

We've uncovered three new 'strategy' games set for a UK release this year – and as usual we're sharing them with YOU first.

Ever wanted to have your own giant cow or lion with which to terrorise other people? We could certainly do with one to clear out all the hangers-on and wannabes from our favourite London drinking spots! Well, soon you'll get to own one thanks to legendary videogame director Peter Molyneux. His forthcoming game, *Black and White*, stars YOU as a warring god with your own tribe of little people AND a giant pet with its own 'Artificial Intelligence' (computer slang for intelligence that isn't quite real). You can either treat the little folk well or terrorise them into worshipping you – but worship you they must, or you will lose all your powers, like some washed up C-list celebrity. Anthea Turner, for example. Or Bob Holness.

***Black and White*... you'll think you're God!**

We spoke to a close friend of Molyneux, who told us, "Work is coming along well on the game and we're aiming for a May release. The Dreamcast version will have a few exclusive features including a VM download option which will allow you to save your pet to VM and take it around to a friend's house." Online options are also expected, Net freaks!

Sore

But that's not the only buzzin' news for fans of 'strategy' games. A few weeks ago we exclusively revealed that top war game *Commandos 2* would be coming to Dreamcast. Hardcore PC gamers may remember the original World War II thriller which gave you control over a small group of soldiers (each with different special skills) as they carried out hit and run attacks on German bases. A source told us, "The gameplay is very similar in the sequel except now there's a faster pace to the action, there are more vehicles to procure and more weapons and skills to choose from." As for the release date, another Eidos insider said "Between you and me Keith, it will be out in spring, well late spring. Alright then, June."

***Commandos 2*... war games**

Piles

And we're not finished yet. We went out for a couple of glasses of saki with top Sega developers Smilebit and they talked about nothing else but the release of *Hundred Swords* – their new real-time strategy game which mixes the gameplay of *Command and Conquer* with the monsters, spells and heroes of an RPG. As we reported earlier this year, the game has eight armies to chose from and a variety of vehicles and buildings to create. Your goal, of course, is to destroy all your enemies – we know a few bitchy stars like that!

***Hundred Swords*... strategic**

EVER WANTED TO HAVE YOUR OWN GIANT COW?

THREE IN A BED ROMP FOR SEGA

Sega is planning to release three of its work-based arcade games in one superb package next year, we can disclose.

Brave Fire Fighters, *Jambo Safari* and *Emergency Call Ambulance* are the quirky titles to be featured in the compilation – all of them proving firm favourites in the arcades. Eagle-eyed readers of Dreamcast VIP will know that we have exclusively featured all three games in the past. *Brave Fire Fighters* is a wet and wild take on the old gun game idea made popular by *Virtua Cop* – except here, you don't have a gun, you have a vibrating hose with which to put out a series of house fires! We're sure Sega isn't going to release a special hose peripheral for the game, so a joypad or lightgun may have to suffice. *Jambo Safari*, meanwhile, puts you in the role of a wildlife reserve worker who must drive around the plains of Africa, lassoing various animals – for their own good of course! Again, this one had a funny controller in the form of a gear stick which you used to cast and then pull in the lasso. Only Sega knows how it will reproduce this for Dreamcast.

Jambo Safari... lasso the giraffes, lasso them!

YOU HAVE A VIBRATING HOSE

Last but not least comes *Emergency Call Ambulance* – a *Crazy Taxi* style driving romp in which sick people have to be sped to hospital through heavy night traffic. Sounds like an average evening out for Billie Piper! Allegedly!

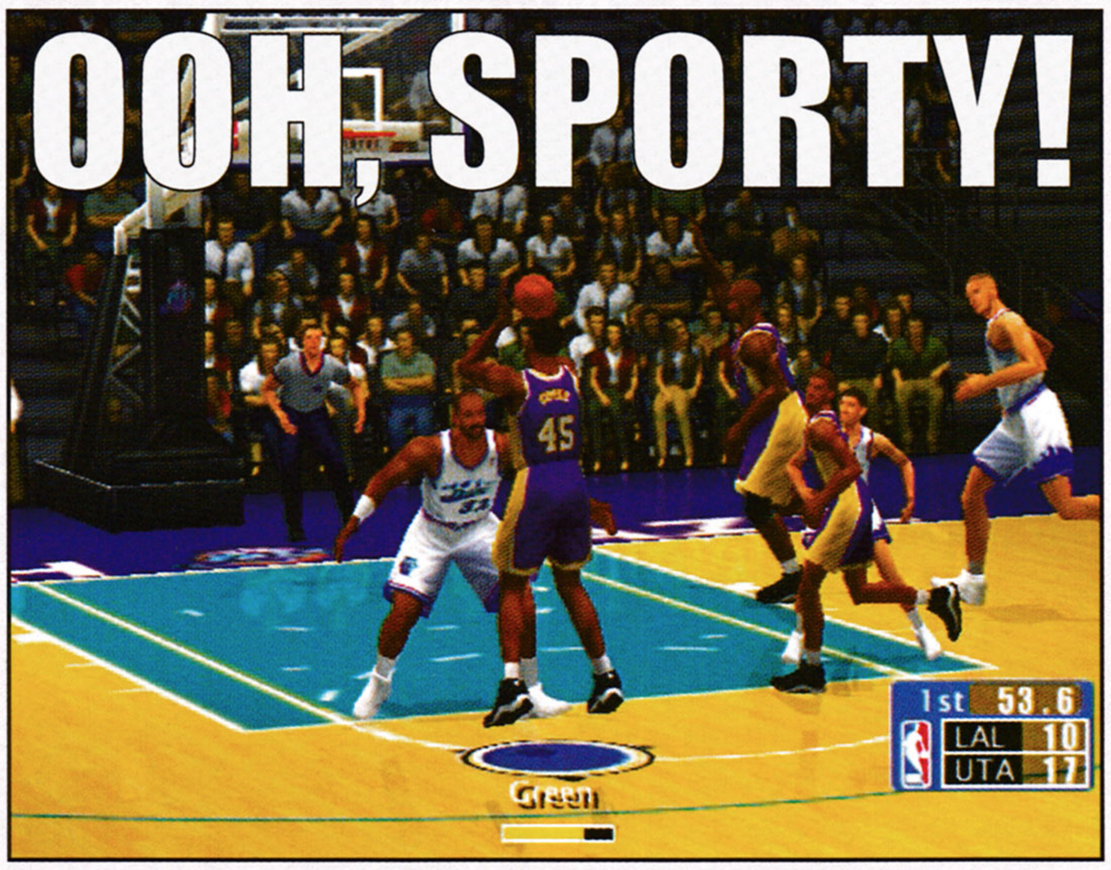
***Brave Fire Fighters*... smokin'**

AND THEY call it robot love. Japanese gamers have always had a penchant for giant robot battling games and 2001 will not be without some splendid droid smacking action. Yes, Hitmaker's *Virtual On 4* is certain to come over from arcade sometime later this year. Go straight to www.hitmaker.co.jp for screens of the forthcoming 'bot battler!

WHISPER

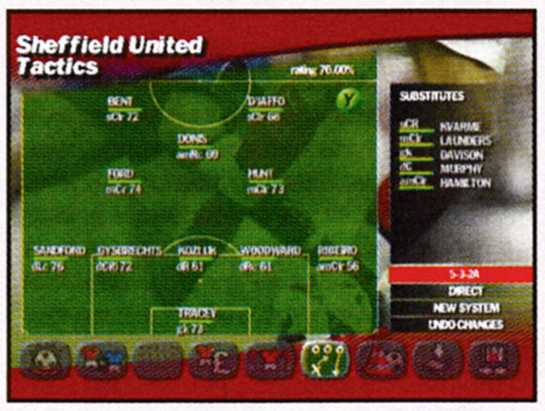
THE BEST PC GAME of 2000 is expected to be ported across to our beloved console later this year. Set in the near future, this firstperson action adventure title rewrote the rulebook of the genre by incorporating RPG elements into the gripping conspiracy theory plot. Playing as a genetically engineered special agent fighting to uncover a global trail of deceit and corruption, it's action-packed and great fun. Hint: it begins with a D.

OOH, SPORTY!



WE USUALLY PREFER TO LEAVE ANY ACTIVITIES MORE STRENUOUS THAN LIFTING CHAMPAGNE BOTTLES AND SNOGGING ROUGH BIRDS TO OUR CHUMS ON THE SPORTS DESK.

But when it comes to getting all athletic playing on our Sega console thing, Dreamcast VIP is well up for it. *Virtua Tennis*, and *Tony Hawk's* have been keeping us fit and toned over the past few months and 2001 will provide fresh excuses (as if we need them) to wear our plimsoles and legwarmers a bit more often.



***Giant Killers*... can it manage?**

Moist

Down at the gym the other day, Ruby Wax wouldn't shut up, no change

"It's a daft bloody game for daft bloody yanks..."

there you might think, but the subject she wouldn't stop bending our poor ears about was the US sports games heading for DC. The sequel to the best basketball game ever, *NBA2K*, is poised to shoot a glorious three-pointer from downtown. The imaginatively-titled *NBA2K1* somehow improves on the magnificent original with an even smoother, more realistic version of b'ball that includes full online action for up to eight players. Looks like our hoop dreams will come true this summer.

That other Yankee sport, American Football, will also be represented on Dreamcast in the butch shape of *NFL2K1*. It's predecessor was rightly hailed as the greatest simulation of the sport yet seen by our American cousins, but it never saw the light of day over here. That unfortunate state of affairs is expected to be rectified with *NFL2K1*; a UK release is far more likely for this baby because not only is it even better than the original, but it also includes online gridiron fun. *NFL2K1* is the fastest selling DC game yet in the US and it would be extremely foolish of Sega not to bring it across the Atlantic.

A spokesman for a Northern football team was overheard at a party bemoaning, "Why that bloody Dreamcast VIP goes on about bloody American football is beyond me. It's a daft bloody game, for daft bloody Yanks. Stick to real football, that's what I bloody say."

And so we shall, because a couple of footie titles have already been announced for 2001. DC's first management sim, *Giant Killers* will be shouting at us from the touchline in February and *European Super League* should also be warming up before kick off at around that time.

Regions

But the most exciting news in the football world – apart from that rumour about Dennis Wise and his pet sheep Flossie - is the story that a spin-off from Konami's masterful *ISS* series could be tying up its DC boots. The word on the footie grapevine is that team members from the original *ISS* squad have been poached by Sega bigwigs and are currently hard at work in a training camp, developing a football game that will be heavily influenced by their previous works. Oh, and it may well feature online play (oops, soiled trousers).

***NFL2K1*... gridiron action for Blighty?**

COIN-OP CONFIDENTIAL

Arcade games we've spotted heading toward Dreamcast in 2001 (possibly).

Sports JAM, the multiple sport game

***Sports JAM*... multi-event fun**

from Wow Entertainment is a likely Dreamcast convert. We've seen it loitering around a few choice London arcades and the football/ basketball/ golf/cycling/ice hockey/ American football/ tennis/ baseball thrills are bound to impress sports-mad console owners everywhere.

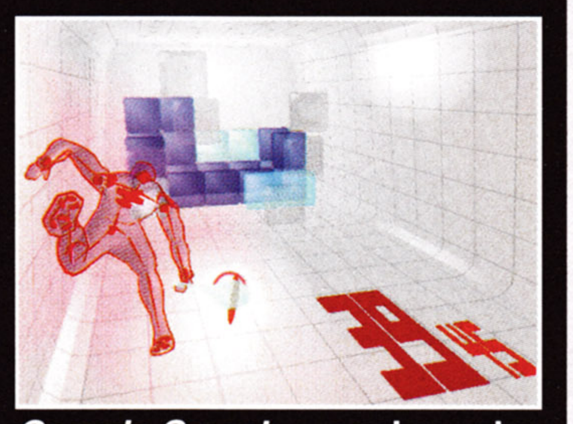
Plump

Confidential Mission, the good-looking James Bond-style shooter from Hitmaker, is another safe bet for later in the year, as is weirdo *Breakout*-alike *Cosmic Smash*, recently plastered all over The Face magazine. That's by Sega Rosso and it certainly gets the Dreamcast VIP thumbs up. Less likely to appear perhaps are the last games to use Sega's high-end arcade hardware, Model 3.5: *NASCAR* and *Planet Harriers* – that machine is just too damn powerful for Dreamcast to match. Elsewhere, our international spies have heard it said around certain Tokyo drinking dens that the forthcoming Naomi 2 titles, *Virtua Fighter X*, *Virtua Striker 3*, *Wild Riders* and *Club Kart* – all by Sega teams – could find their way to DC in 2K1.

Bottom

There have even been whispers that Sega might release an add-on peripheral for Dreamcast that will give it the extra power needed to do these mega-games justice. Sounds like Nintendo's 64DD drive for N64 – and look what happened to that! Nothing! It's good to know that the videogame biz is as crazy as ever!

THE VIDEOGAME BIZ IS CRAZY



***Cosmic Smash*... cool puzzler**

***Confidential Mission*... kill bad guys in a lightgun shoot-out**

Tomorrow in Dreamcast VIP

EXCLUSIVE: "My Morolian love shame" – Ulala comes clean over secret intergalatic tryst; "I'm not embarrassed about S&M spanking film revelation" – *Soul Calibur*'s Voldo speaks out. "We're not embarrassed that you can see our knickers everytime we kick someone" – the gal stars of Japanese beat 'em ups defy their critics. Also, Sonic Team announces morris dancing sim, Yu Suzuki reveals *Shenmue 2* mini-game entitled 'Get Ryo a decent haircut'. And so much more!

UP TO 6 BILLION PLAYERS!?

Sega launched Dreamcast in the UK with the ambitious promise of 'up to 6 billion players', courtesy of the console's online capabilities. Well, it's been a long time coming but that premature claim is finally beginning to bear fruit.

Sonic Team's classic puzzler *ChuChu Rocket!* led the way this summer with the proud distinction of being the first ever network console game, and now the trickle is turning into a full on torrent as the majority of Sega's biggest games in 2001 will be playable online.

Here we examine how all of Dreamcast's online games perform in Net action (having finally played them against you, the paying public) and look ahead at the online delights in store for us this year ■

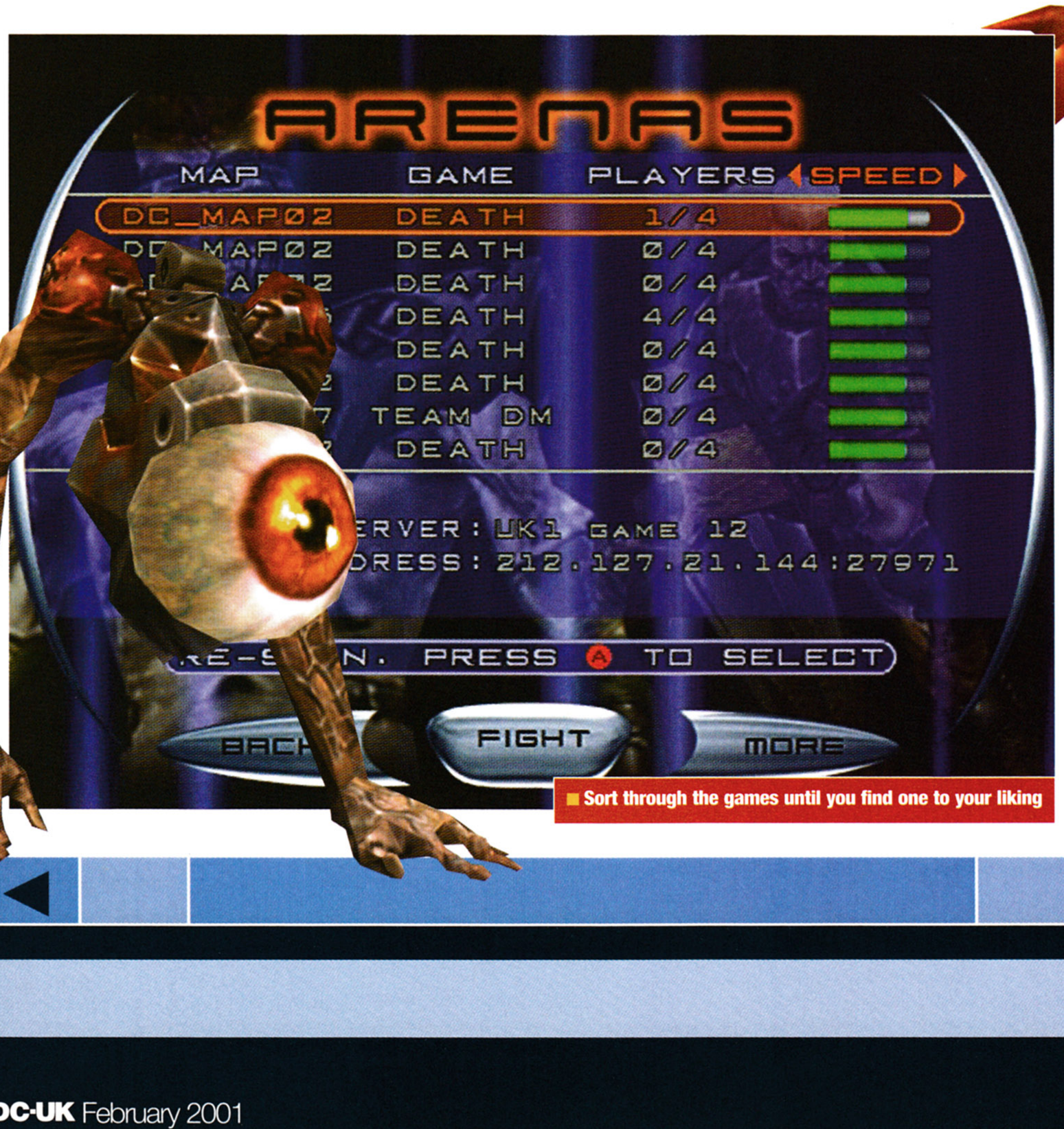
QUAKE III ARENA

Yes, it's a great game offline and we knew it was going to be good online, but the finished product is better than we could ever have hoped. Connecting to the Internet is simple and painless compared to its PC big brother, and its performance, despite much derision of DC's modem, is quite simply stunning. Move over *GoldenEye* there's a new console deathmatch daddy in town. And its got its Railgun trained on you.

On loading and choosing the Internet mode, a huge list (around 950 at the last count) of games is displayed according to certain criteria: players, connection speed, map and game type. Challenges on offer are straight, free-for-all Deathmatch, Team Deathmatch and Capture the Flag. Not as many options as the upcoming *Unreal Tournament*, but *QIII Arena* is about no messin', bare bones hardcore fragging. No other firstperson shooter comes close in this respect. The list of options can be sorted to suit exactly the type of game you require and there's even a facility to specify a server address that's not listed, should you wish to do so. The one drawback to this otherwise simple to navigate menu system is that there's no easy way to search for friends online, and trawling through hundreds of games to find the one you want can be cumbersome. But once you've found one to your liking, enter the arena, get tooled up and let the bloodshed commence.

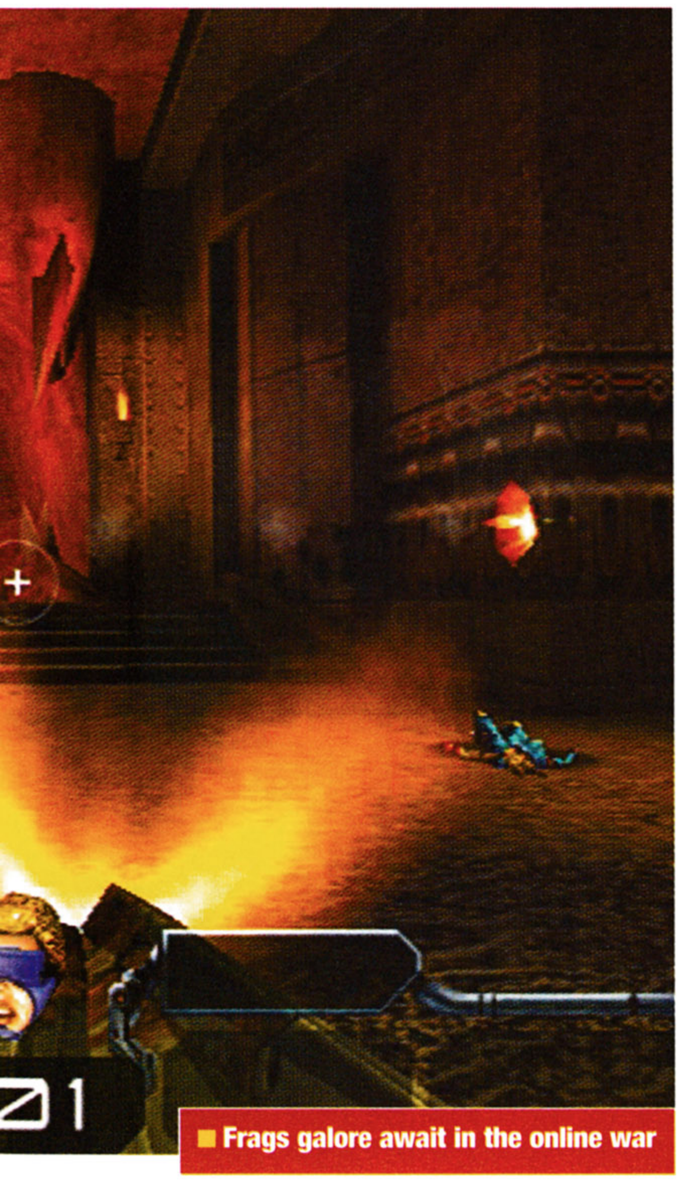
Online, our *QIII* experiences have been nothing but positive, suggesting Sega has been totally vindicated in pioneering the

"QIII Arena is about no messin', bare bones hardcore fragging"



■ Sort through the games until you find one to your liking

■ Performance is easily as good as it's PC sibling



Frags galore await in the online war

way for networked console gaming. Broadband? Who needs it when gaming through a normal modem is this good? The game is just as fast as it is offline (which is stupidly fast) and smoother than Kojak's shiny slaphead. Latency problems (lag) where there's a delay due to the speed of the connection, weren't an issue in any of the online battles we've had, putting paid to our major fear about network Quaking. On a couple of occasions we have come across connection problems, where the server cut us off mid-game, but this really is an extremely rare occurrence.

On the whole, *Quake III Arena* is a remarkable feat of programming by both iD (which created the PC original) and Raster Productions (which did a superb job on the conversion) and shows exactly what DC is capable of online. The only downside is the huge phone bills that will undoubtedly be racked up over the coming months until Sega sees fit to give us unmetered Internet access ■

Online Score: 9/10
Game score: 9/10 (Issue 17)

DC-UK takes on a rather friendly American citizen – and kicks ass

The racing is simplicity itself, but it's good fun and extremely smooth

Get to know the hidden shortcuts to beat the opposition to the finish

POD 2

Having been disappointed by the offline performance of Ubi Soft's futuristic racer in issue 17 of DC-UK (where it scored a measly 4/10), we weren't particularly looking forward to testing it on the Net. But we're glad to say that online *Pod 2* is an entirely different proposition and proves a surprisingly enjoyable experience.

There's a handy facility allowing you to search for your mates by their online nickname (something which is sadly lacking in *Quake III*) and an instant messaging system so you can insult them. While these have no bearing on the game's performance during a race, they do help to make the experience a more social affair.

The network itself is truly global as it isn't running on Dreamarena, and we found some very sociable Americans to chat with before we whupped their backsides good 'n' proper. The game also offers a classification facility so you can check your standing against the rest of the world. Every time you take part in a game you score points that are registered in a league, with wins and points and track records racked up.

The actual online racing action is extremely slick. Everything runs at an incredibly fast pace, we didn't encounter any latency problems at all and there were no graphical glitches. So, *Pod 2* is a game that comes recommended in an online capacity, but unfortunately, its limited and mediocre offline performance means it's only worth considering as a purely Net-based game. And at forty notes, that's a fairly large drawback ■

Online score: 7/10 **Game score:** 4/10 (Issue 17)

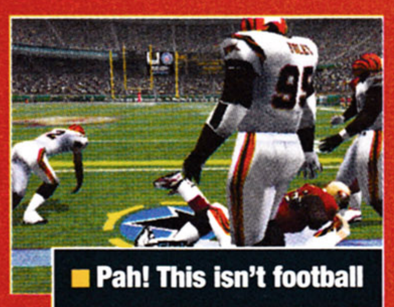
ONLINE IN THE USA

Across the Atlantic they're going mad for a couple of Internet sports stars...

NFL 2K1

Improving on the fantastic original with an even more realistic simulation of the gridiron action and providing the very large bonus of full online play, *NFL 2K1* is the greatest American football game ever made and the fastest selling DC title in the US.

The game works perfectly online with only the slightest hint of lag, meaning you have to make plays a fraction earlier than in an offline match. But the overall speed and flow of a network game is incredible. Although the original was never released over here, we expect this to touchdown in the UK by the summer. It's simply too good not to ■



Pah! This isn't football

NBA 2K1

Improving on the fantastic original with an even more realistic simulation of the b'ball action and providing the very large bonus of full online play, *NBA 2K1* is the greatest basketball game ever made and... hang on, is this starting to sound a little familiar?

Yes, *NBA 2K1* is just as good as its gridiron cousin and with b'ball being a more popular sport over here, is arguably even more keenly anticipated. Online hoops is outrageously enjoyable, it does suffer a bit more slowdown than *NFL* – due to the frenetic nature of the sport – but again, this is essential stuff. We want it in the UK now! ■

Nothing but nylon!

CHU CHU ROCKET!

Sonic Team's fantastic puzzler has been doing the rounds on Dreamcast for ages now, but we felt it was only fair to include it here, seeing as *ChuChu* was the pioneering title for online console gaming. It's fast, furious, incredibly addictive and – if our experiences online are anything to go by – still popular with DC gamers across the globe.

To start, simply choose the number of players you want on your DC then hook up to the network. Once connected, select a chat room from and enter to see who's around. From here, you can join a game or set up your own. Either way, it's easy to get to grips with. Hanging around in the chat rooms is a good laugh but you'll need to get stuck into the game if you want to beat the best on the Net.

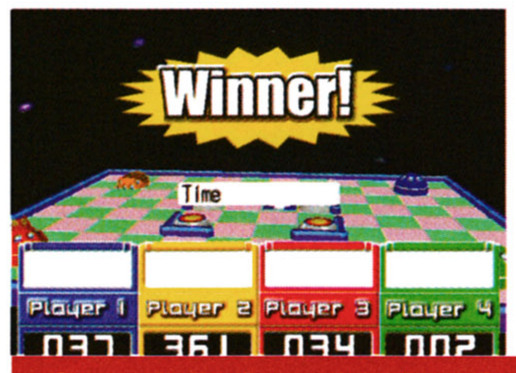
Online rocketeering is fun once you become accustomed to the slight delay between pressing a button and the action occurring. Initially, this is annoying, but once you plan your actions around the lag you'll have no problems. Overall, a great introduction to the world of online gaming – and it's free! ■

Online Score: 7/10

Game score 9/10 (Issue 10)

There's a slight lag between pressing a button and your arrow appearing

"You'll need to get stuck into the game if you want to beat the best on the Net"



Some online rocketeers have been playing for months and will take some beating

In the lobby you can view all the racing options and chat to your opposition

4X4 EVOLUTION

This offroad racer is extremely lacklustre when played offline, its bland tracks and serious lack of speed and excitement making it a rather dull experience that pales into comparison with Midway's all-terrain daddy, *4 Wheel Thunder*. But played online, *4x4 Evolution* redeems itself to a certain degree.

After logging on and entering a chat room you can view a detailed list of all the available games – showing track, trucks, ping, laps and players already in a game. Simply select which one of these to join or host your own and decide all the settings yourself.

Once four players have joined the game, it's time to break out the yorkies and get ready to roll. The online racing is exactly the same as the singleplayer offline game; which means fun for a short while but rapidly losing any charm.

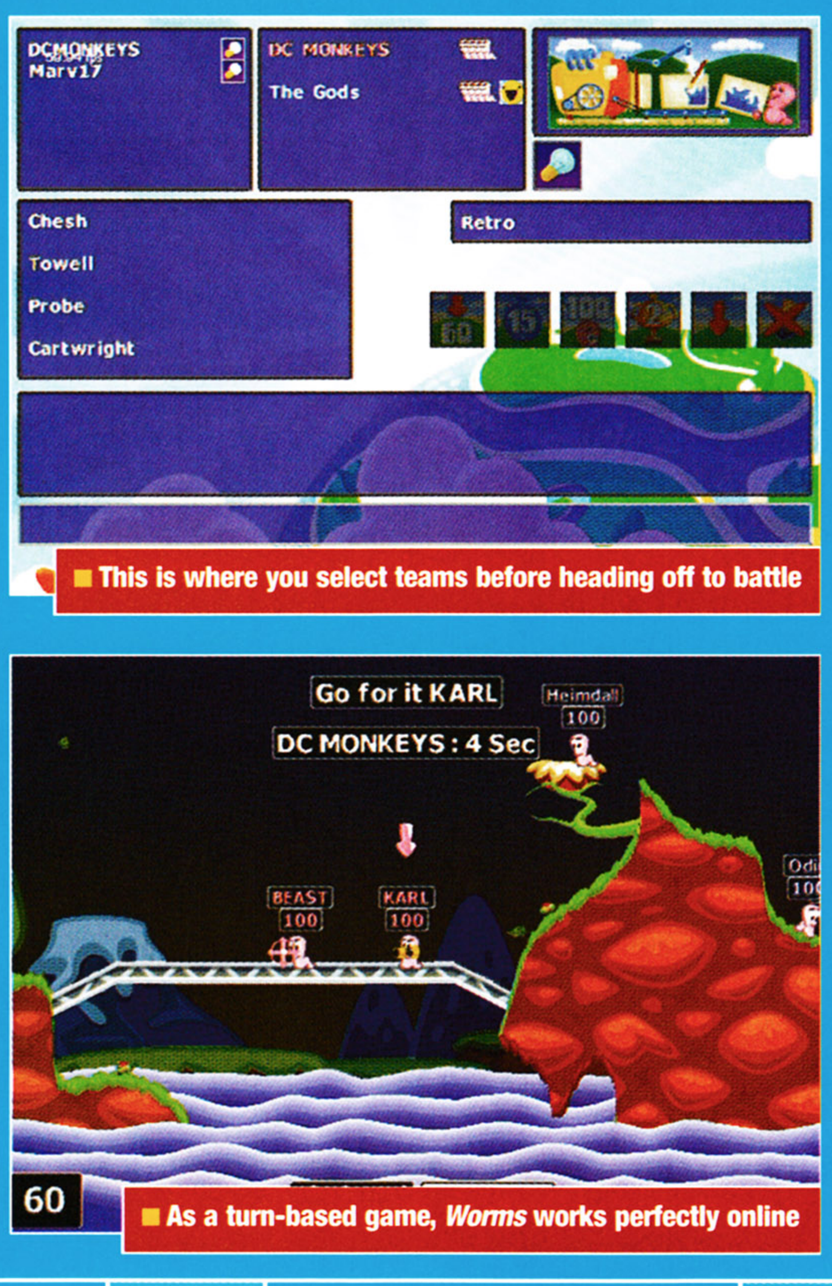
However, playing online is far, far better than the slowdown and fog-plagued twoplayer split-screen mode, and with its multi-national, cross-platform compatibility, you have the opportunity to race against (and thoroughly humiliate) both Americans and PC spods. Which is always a bonus ■

Online score: 6/10

Game score: 4/10 (Issue 18)

We thrashed the pants off some US PC gamers, they called us rude names...

"Race against [and thoroughly humiliate] both Americans and PC spods"



This is where you select teams before heading off to battle

As a turn-based game, *Worms* works perfectly online

WORMS WORLD PARTY

Scoring a highly respectable eight in the last issue of DC-UK, *Worms World Party* is already a firm favourite with us and we're pleased to say that the hilarious online larks mean this game is an essential purchase for all you budding invertebrate murderers.

The menu system is simple to navigate and once logged on, you enter the lobby where you can use the messaging system to chat and arrange games. Once you've decided which rules you want to play by, such as Classic (all the weapons from the original *Worms*) or Blast Zone (explosive weapons) you then enter the relevant channel, where you can either join an existing game or host one of your own. Performance online, as you'd expect with a turn-based game, is very smooth, with no latency issues to worry about, making this an excellent network title. Now where's that exploding sheep gone? ■

Online Score: 8/10 **Game score:** 8/10 (Issue 18)

TOY RACERS

A spin-off from DC launch title *Toy Commander* (see News for more) *Toy Racer* offers *Mario Kart*-style antics for up to four players. It can be played in offline split-screen mode, but primarily it's designed for network play. So how does it measure up in cyberspace?

Connection is quick and easy – enter your Dreamarena password and wait for your DC to locate the network. Once online, you're presented with a list of servers, choose one and a list of games appears, along with a chat room.

Hosting a game is as easy as joining an existing one. Choose a name, pick-ups, track, car and number of laps and racers. When everyone's primed, the action starts.

Performance online is generally good, but one problem we encountered is the strange way opposition cars behave. They have a habit of disappearing briefly, then reappearing in a slightly different place, giving a strange juddering effect which some players may find annoying. While this obviously isn't ideal, it doesn't detract from the fun too much and it's still possible to target your weapons at them effectively.

As it's only £4.99, *Toy Racer* is obviously limited in its scope but it's surprisingly addictive and provides a good, light-hearted alternative to the likes of *Quake III Arena*. The vehicles are nicely varied, the weapons are amusing and for less than a fiver, you can't really go wrong can you? ■

Online Score: 7/10
Game score: 6/10

Victory! Now we're off to the chat room to gloat

Reaching the power-ups first is vital

THE NEXT WAVE

2001 is the year of online gaming. Here are its stars

PSO – multi-national RPG larks

PHANTASY STAR ONLINE
The world's first console online RPG will allow players from across the globe to team up and play the adventure together.

DAYTONA USA 2001
The legendary arcade racer burns onto DC with the massive bonus of online driving. Sega is really spoiling us with this one.

OUTTRIGGER
AM2's frenetic arena-based shoot 'em up will offer some super-fast, super-violent online blasting fun.

18 WHEELER AMERICAN PRO TRUCKER
The mad juggernaut racer is out in Japan without online play but us lucky Westerners will be truckin' on the Net!

Unreal – fragging fun for eight players

UNREAL TOURNAMENT
The classic PC firstperson shooter with eightplayer online fragging is coming to DC perfectly intact. *Quake III* beware.

BLACK AND WHITE
Peter Molyneux's long-awaited god game will see us raising giant cows and monkeys and battling with them online. Cool.

ALIEN FRONT ONLINE
Space invaders are targeting planet Earth and it's up to us to go on the network and blast the muthas out of our stratosphere.

GUN VALKYRIE
The latest from *Jet Set Radio* creator Smilebit will be a storming online shoot 'em up with a strong adventure theme.

Can't wait?

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Computer and video games, DVD and movie news, as it happens.

DC-REVIEW

The only review section you can really trust

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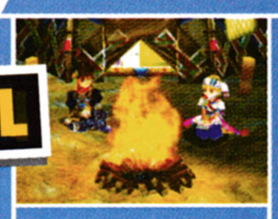

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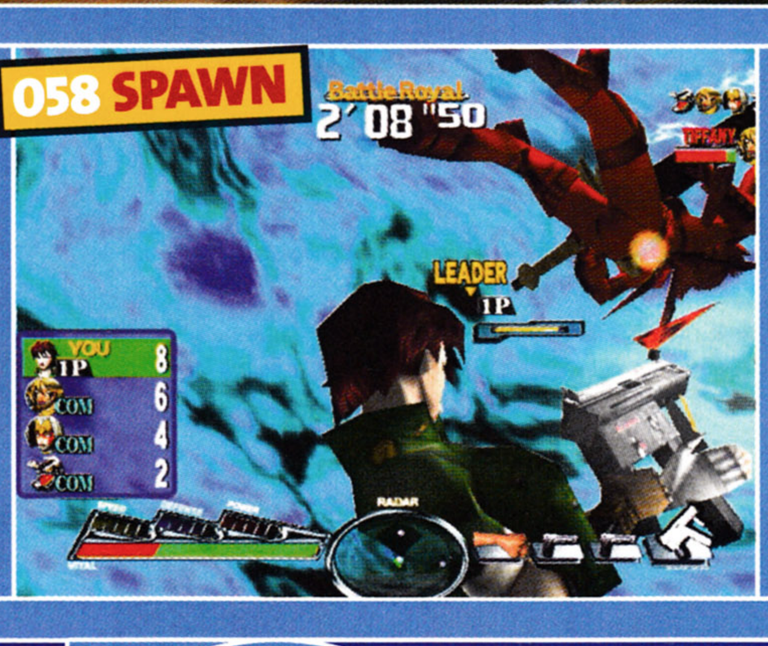
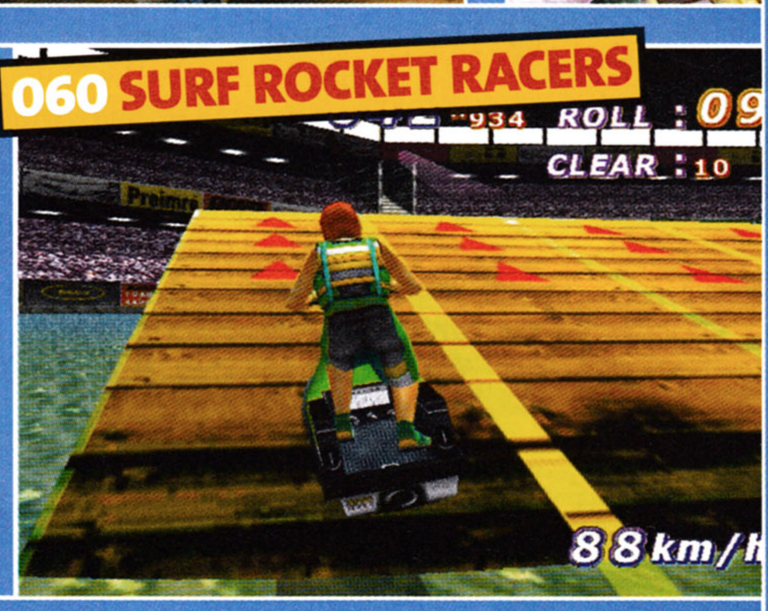
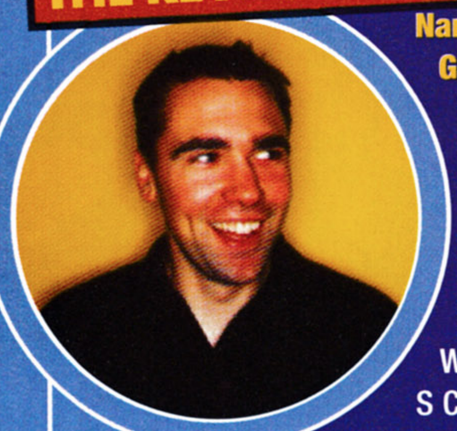
058 SPAWN



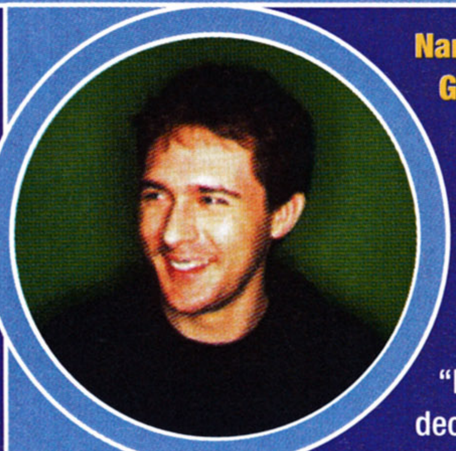
060 SURF ROCKET RACERS



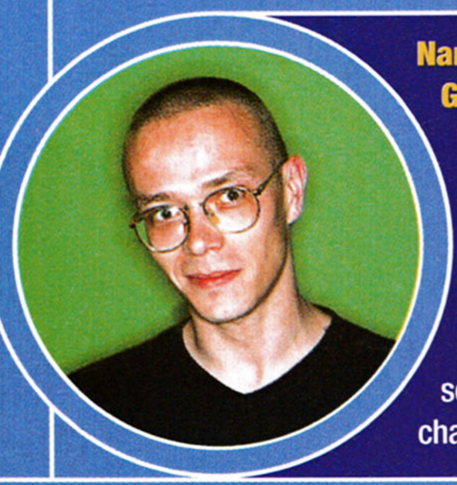
THE REVIEW PANEL



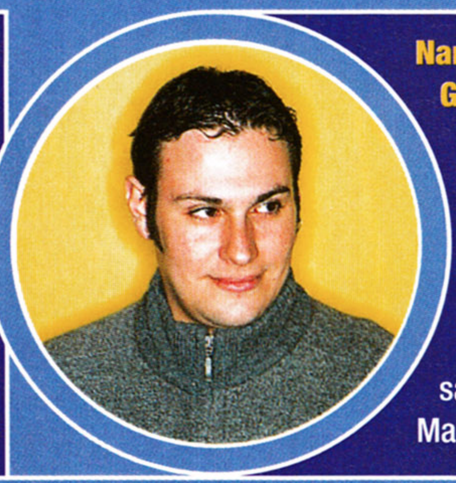
Name: Keith Stuart
Games of the moment:
This month, the majority of Keef's time and energy have been spent imagining ever more devious ways to kill Lee's and Ade's invertebrates in *Worms World Party*. His Worm team is named after S Club 7 members by the way…



Name: Lee Hart
Games of the moment:
Apart from turning to the dark side to review *SW Demolition*, Harty has also been occupied with his *Worms*. 'Lee's Dinners' they're called and very proud of them he is too. "Peas is my John Rambo," he declared after one brave victory.



Name: Adrian Lawton
Games of the moment:
Threepio (as Ade is now known) has mostly been advising us, "I suggest you let the Wookie win," when playing *Worms* against the Beast. He's also become something of an online *Quake III* champ, he'll be that shiny gold one.



Name: Neil (Maximus) Randall
Games of the moment:
Super-charged racer *Daytona USA 2001* made our Maximus all hot under the collar, and we'd only just scraped him off the ceiling when *Project Justice* arrived flashing its saucy schoolgirl knickers at him. Max is currently in intensive care.

WHAT'S THE SCORE?

DC-UK is committed to delivering the most honest, accurate and comprehensive Dreamcast review section anywhere, anyhow. Which means we never review half-finished games or try to pass off a review of an NTSC game as a PAL one (our import reviews are clearly marked as such).

DC-UK marks out of ten, as that is the clearest, fairest method of scoring. And, since halfway between nothing and ten is five, so five is an average mark. That doesn't mean that a game isn't worth investing in if it scores a five, only that it's, well, average. If a game scores a ten (which isn't very often, by the way), that doesn't mean it's perfect, just exceptionally good ■

DC-UK RECOMMENDS

If a review sports this icon it means the game is hugely enjoyable and jam-packed with great features. Usually a fine example of a certain genre or a game that's particularly innovative.

DC-UK ESSENTIAL

An absolute must-buy, offering lasting depth, beautiful visuals, originality and charm. This one won't crop up every month – we're reserving it for games you simply cannot be without.

This is the Great Rift canyon that separates Light from Dark

"Keeping the gamer's interest after battle number 2240 is quite a feat for any RPG to accomplish and *Grandia* achieves it"

Grandia II

Traditional RPG fun is here to consume your every waking moment. Prepare for a *Grandia* day out!

DETAILS

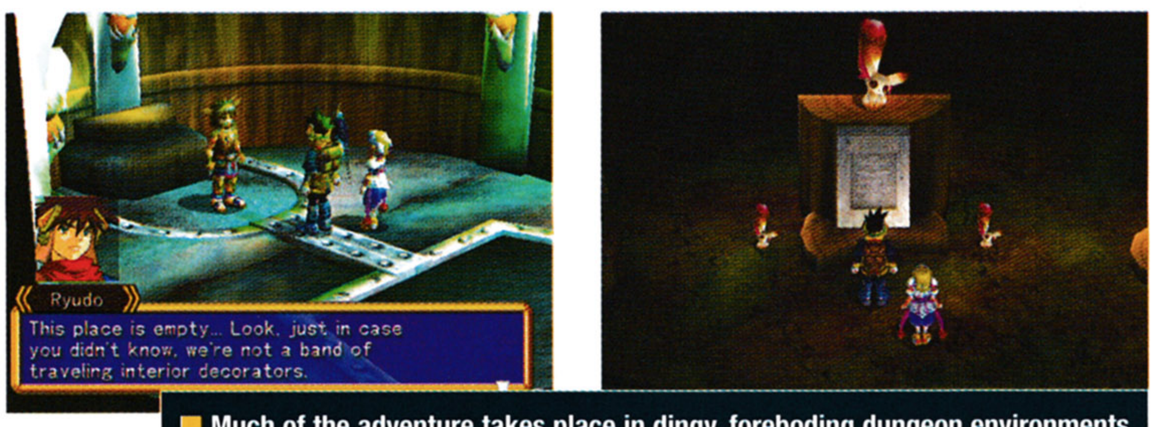
Publisher:	Ubi Soft
Developer:	Game Arts
Price:	£39.99
Release date:	February
Players:	One
Extras:	Vibration

The original *Grandia* was received with wide open arms and a cheeky kiss on the cheek when it was released on Saturn back in 1997. Hailed as one of the best role playing games ever by fans of the genre, *Grandia*'s innovative battle system, groundbreaking visuals and memorable story-line have seen its reputation grow over the intervening years and a sequel has been highly anticipated to say the least. Now, take a deep breath and throw that petition to Game Arts in the bin, because four years on, the sequel is finally here.

Taking its cue from the *Final Fantasy* series, *Grandia II* is a totally separate game from its predecessor; set in an entirely different world with an entirely different cast of characters. The hero whose role you play during the epic adventure is Ryudo; a typical RPG protagonist, he's a spiky-haired little feller with a big sword and a bad attitude. A mercenary soldier willing to accept any job as long as it pays well, the story begins with Ryudo

DC-UK ESSENTIAL

Visuals are of an incredible standard throughout with an unrivalled detail and vibrancy

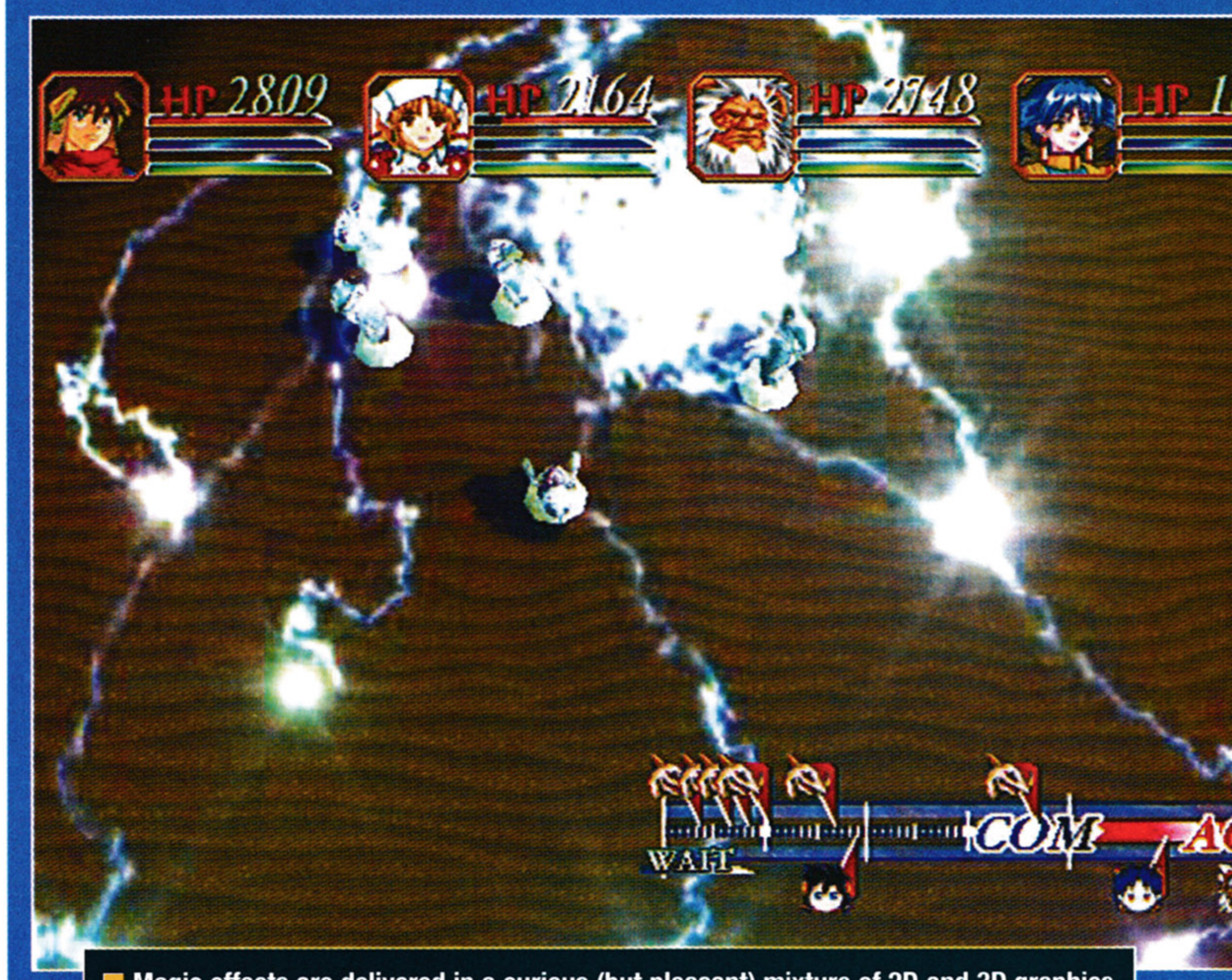


Much of the adventure takes place in dingy, foreboding dungeon environments

Elena and Millenia are your love interests. Sadly, neither of them appear to have a mouth

At first it seems Valmar is your enemy, but there's a greater evil lurking in the world...

THAT SPELLS TROUBLE



Magic effects are delivered in a curious (but pleasant) mixture of 2D and 3D graphics

***Grandia II*'s skills and spells boast some of the most impressive graphical effects we've ever been treated to – for instance, Ryudo's plethora of sword savvy moves (Purple Lightning), or Elena's magical holy destruction (White Apocalypse) are flasher than Del Boy's sovereign ring.**

However, the game's use of pre-rendered 2D effects for some of the big spells can sometimes seem a little out of place in a world of fully polygonised 3D characters and backgrounds. In the end, the visual result falls squarely in the love it or hate category, but we reckon these pre-rendered spells add some flair to the look of the battles; adding an old school flavour to a distinctly next generation game ■

being summoned to a small town deep in the Black Forest to receive orders for his next job: escorting a young religious songstress named Elena to a mysterious ceremony in a nearby tower.

Upon meeting, the two instantly clash: Elena's naïve, pious nature rubbing Ryudo's selfish, cynical personality the wrong way. And when Ryudo fulfils his duty and takes Elena to the tower for her ceremony, something goes horribly wrong. Suddenly, you're plunged into a divine struggle between the people of Light (like Elena and fellow followers of the Church of Granas) and the people of Darkness (those who worship the evil god, Valmar). Irrevocably caught up in this age-old battle, your task from this point forth is to try and heal the divide between the Light and Darkness and bring peace to the mythical land of Surisen.

"We waited a long time before a truly excellent RPG arrived on Dreamcast"

An extremely traditional RPG, *Grandia II* adheres to many of the fine old storytelling clichés that role playing fans know and love: every character must come to terms with something dreadful or painful in his or her past while developing into a more well-rounded person; the entity the party believed to be the root of the evil is, in fact, just a small link in the big chain of all-encompassing Evil (with a capital E); none of the important issues in this virtual life are black and white, merely shades of pixie-tinted grey.

But every role playing fan worth their salt knows that, even though a game may seem like a by-the-book RPG with a predictable range of characters and gameplay ingredients, it's the way the action and the story unfold that can make it something really special. Fortunately, *Grandia II* takes these typical RPG elements and places them in an incredibly absorbing adventure that truly captures the imagination.

Despite the over-riding theme of the game, the real crux of *Grandia II* isn't all about devils and angels or light and dark. At the heart of the story is the relationship between Ryudo and Elena which is complicated by the intrusion of Ryudo's second love interest, Millenia – the wicked, big-busted servant of Valmar who enters Ryudo's life near the start of the game. All three of them are so drastically different from one another that by the tenth hour of the adventure, you just know something's cooking below the surface. Whether it's Ryudo's sharp tongue, Elena's goody-two-shoes schoolgirl demeanour or Millenia's brazen sassiness, there exists such a strong underlying current of tension you'll be able to cut it with a dull broad sword.

As things develop between Ryudo and the two female leads, the story heats up fairly quickly and this is where *Grandia II*'s plot really begins to grip. Alongside similar RPGs like *Final Fantasy VII*, it's the romance, relationships and interaction between lead characters that really drive the story. This is aided considerably by a quality translation which – although sometimes clumsily delivered – is able to convey enough emotional impact ▶

STARS OF THE SHOW

Allow us to introduce the leading characters you'll be getting to know all too well through *Grandia II*'s epic adventure

RYUDO

The motor-mouth hero with a king-sized chip on his shoulder, but with good reason. He's immediately taken with Elena, but he'd rather die than admit it ■
NOTE: Big sword.

ELENA

A beautiful, but naïve Songstress of Granas church. Fancies Ryudo and has a curious relationship with Millenia that is revealed early on in the story ■
NOTE: Nice singing voice.

MILLENIA

A portal of Darkness and servant of Valmar, who isn't nearly as evil as she'd like to be. In fact, she's fallen deeply in love with Ryudo and will do anything to help him ■
NOTE: Bra suspended by disbelief

MAREG

An honourable beastman who joins Ryudo's company to try and track down the man who nearly destroyed his village ■
NOTE: A scary, hairy beast but he's got a heart of gold.

TIO

An extremely pale automation who has only recently become sentient through an act of kindness by Mareg. She wishes to have emotions and memories like humans ■
NOTE: Great gravity-defying hair

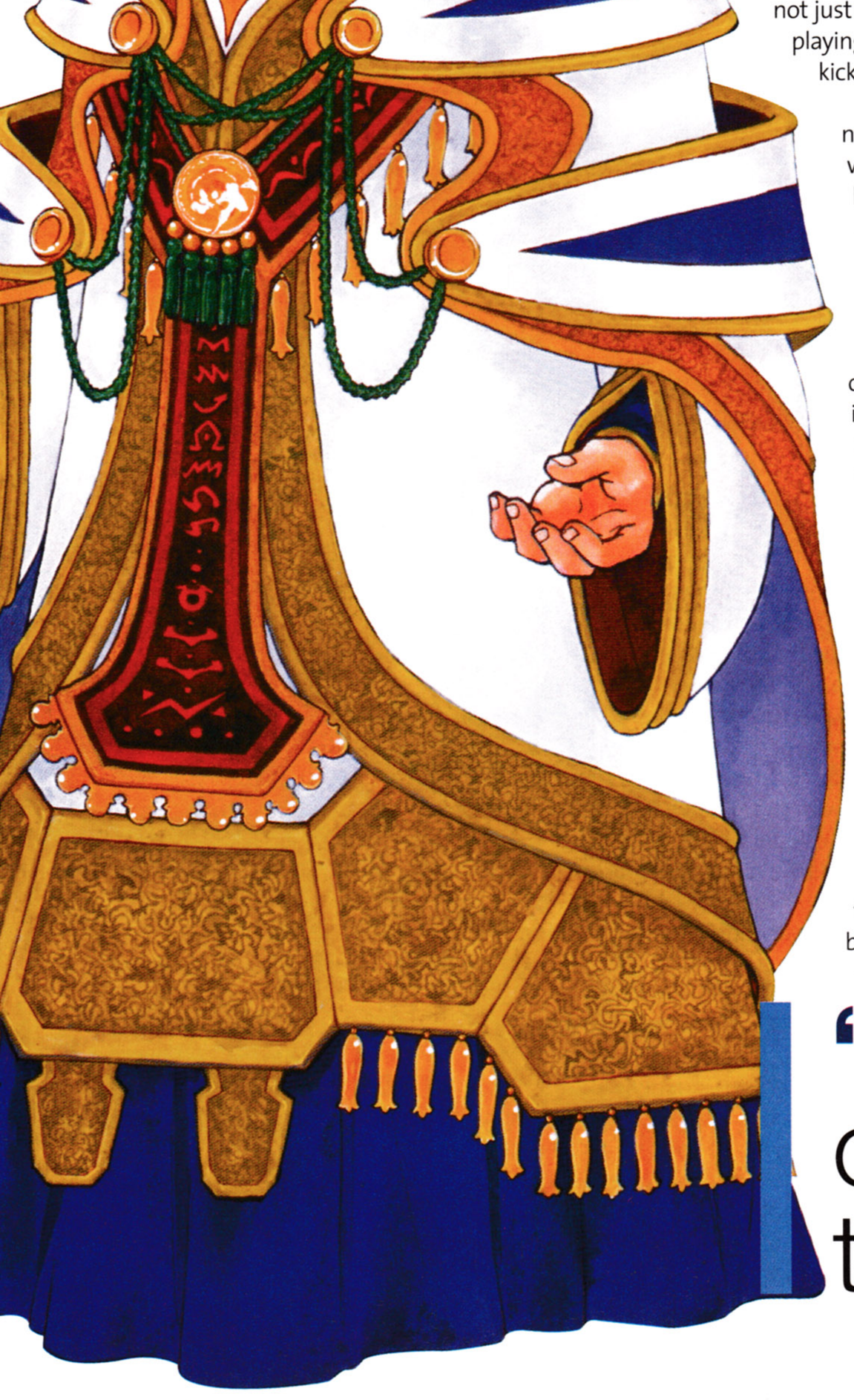
MELFICE

A mysterious figure from Ryudo's and Mareg's past, Melfice is out for destruction at all costs. Why? We won't spoil it. But we can say he's one cool villain ■
NOTE: Great voice

Grandia II has the best battle system ever seen in an RPG

Spell attacks can be powered-up by assigning the Magic Coins

There are loads of cool mini games like this arm wrestling contest



► to completely enthrall. Each character has been given a distinct and engaging personality, meaning you'll always be compelled to play just that little bit longer to see which direction the story will take them in next. But it's not just the plot that will keep you playing – there's a healthy dose of kick ass action too.

Beyond its characters and narrative, the original *Grandia* was lauded for its superb battle system. Why? Because it was so unlike any other RPG's combat engine in the way it forced gamers to use real strategy, planning and preparation. And while some of the conventions introduced in the first game have been modified for the sequel, it's still as fresh and fun as it ever was.

First off, there are no random battles. We'll say that again: there are no random battles... Hurrah! Instead, your enemies are always visible on screen so you can choose to avoid them if you wish, or even attempt to sneak up on them and gain an advantage in battle. Secondly, combat itself is a finely tuned machine which uses a combination of real-time and traditional turn-based battling.

The action is dictated by a battle meter and depending on the move – whether you're casting a spell or simply hacking away – your character's speed on the meter will zip or crawl before the command is executed. Meanwhile, your enemies are constrained by the same clock and the meter will also inform you as to who each enemy is planning on assaulting, as well as their hit points, chances of dropping an item and choice of attack. The information is so thorough it gives you a great platform for plotting effective commands and counter-attacks.

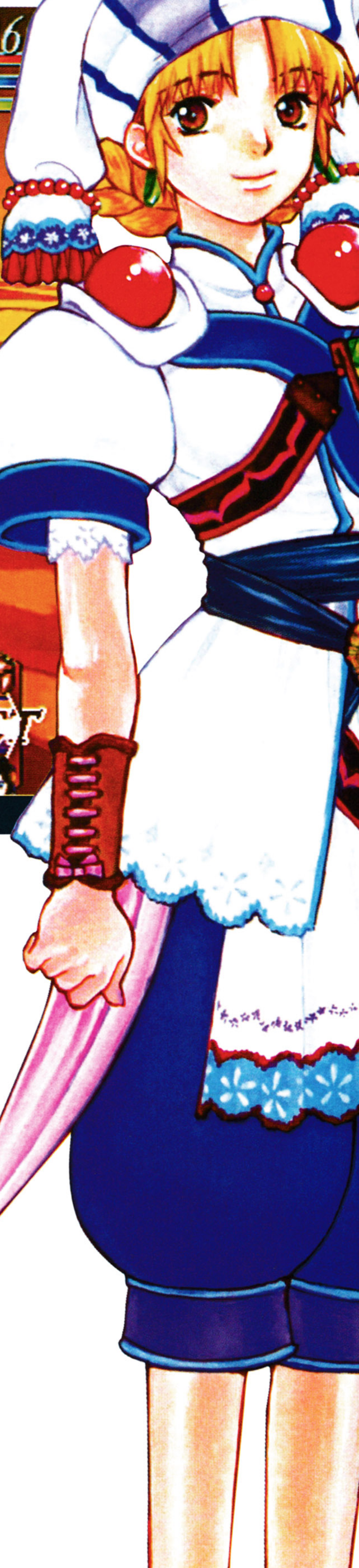
In response to an enemies' foray you can choose to cast spells, perform combo attacks (for higher damage) or go for critical hits, and all of these can cancel or counter enemy moves if timed correctly. Timing your attacks and reading the meter is of utmost importance and the result is an addictive and interactive combat ►

"You'll always be compelled to play just that little bit longer"

Breaking and entering remains a major RPG feature as does shopping for goodies

The quest takes you all around the massive world

There's a seemingly endless supply of spells to collect and it becomes compulsive fun to get them all and power 'em up to the max



▶ system that is a breath of fresh air compared to the usually repetitive RPG scraps.

At the end of a battle well fought you can be rewarded with the usual gold or items, but also with Magic Coins. These can then be distributed among any of your party members to learn new spells, improve existing spells or be saved to acquire more powerful magic. You'll probably find yourself scrambling around forests and dungeons trying to beef up your coin collection in order to unlock every single spell and see what they look like and how much damage they deal. Another original feature involves the skills of your party – by finding Skill Books you can enhance different abilities such as movement, endurance, speed and attack power.

The depth of this character customisation is almost unheard of and actually makes you look forward to doing battle so you can win more points and boost the powers of your team. Keeping the gamer's interest after battle number 2240 is quite a feat for any RPG to accomplish and *Grandia II* achieves it with ease.

The original *Grandia* on Saturn was the first RPG to have fully 3D backgrounds, and its sequel is equally impressive in terms of visuals. Just take a gander at the screenshots and you'll see that the game looks simply amazing. The amount of detail in every nook and cranny is astonishing and every millimetre of the screen seems to have been painstakingly illustrated with complicated textures and vibrant colours. All the environments are completely diverse with loads of bustling little towns to visit, and the super-deformed cast

> "An incredibly absorbing adventure that captures the imagination"

He's a bad-tempered money-grabber but you'd better learn to love him – you *are* Ryudo for 50 hours

Dungeons are packed with secret passages and vicious booby traps, so tread carefully

With good timing you can block an attack then counter strike

Sages are the source of wise predictions to help you on your way

As usual, the hero is the town outcast

"A combat system that is a breath of fresh air"

are wonderfully rendered right down to Ryudo's boot buckles and the eyelets in Millenia's lacy skirt.

On the flip side, the super-deformed look of these characters does dwarf the emotional impact of their actions at times. During some of the more intense moments of the tale it's hard not to wish they were realistically modelled, as their small bodies and oversized heads can detract from the seriousness of their plight to a degree.

In terms of sound, there is absolutely no cause for criticism. The voice acting (accompanied by text boxes) is top notch, and every character has their own distinct speech patterns, choice of words and even dialect. The score is a well-judged, typically Japanese accompaniment to the adventure, ranging from folksy ditties during quiet moments to full on rocking riffs when you burst into action.

All of these positive elements lead us to the inescapable conclusion that *Grandia II* is the best role playing game on Dreamcast (before you argue, *Shenmue* can't really be classified as a traditional RPG). While the narrative may be overly predictable at times, and the progression of events somewhat linear, *Grandia II*'s peerless battle system, exhaustive customisation options, memorable characters and engrossing story easily outweigh any of its faults.

We waited a long time and ploughed through tedious games like *Evolution* and *Time Stalkers* before a truly excellent RPG arrived on Dreamcast, filling our dreams with little people and their spiky hair and pointy pixie boots. Now, at last, we have *Grandia II* and 50 plus hours of glorious role playing fun lie ahead. Better get started, *Skies of Arcadia* and *Phantasy Star Online* are just around the corner... ■

Francesca Reyes

DC-UK VERDICT

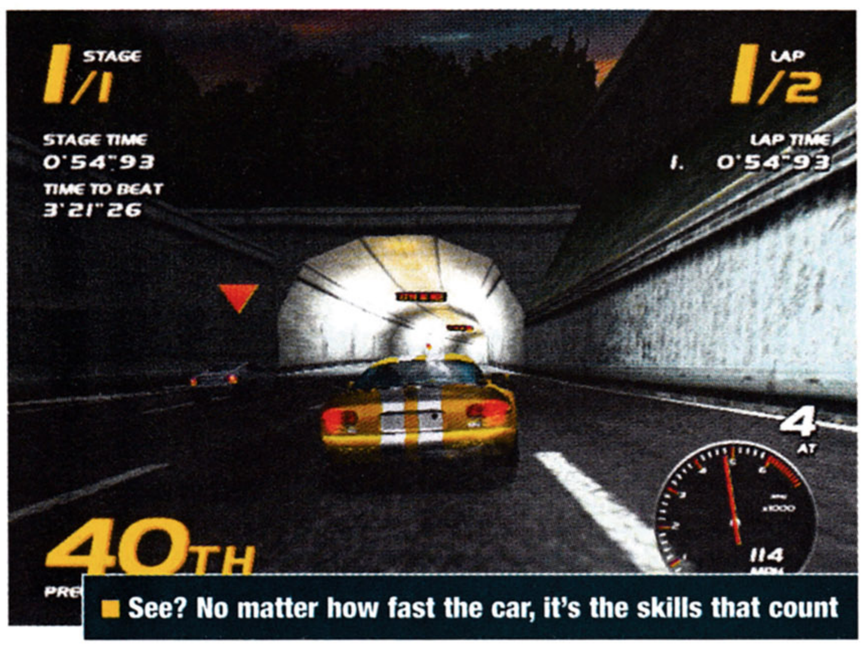
GRAPHICS
Gorgeous environments, luscious lighting and cute midget characters

SOUND
Superb voice acting (making a welcome change) and an effective score

GAMEPLAY
Over fifty hours of RPG fun. You won't want to put the joypad down until the final scene

OVERALL
The best role playing game on Dreamcast. Absolutely essential for fans of the genre

9
OUT OF TEN



See? No matter how fast the car, it's the skills that count

"You'll positively beam when you drive like Schumacher, but it takes just a second to lose the race"

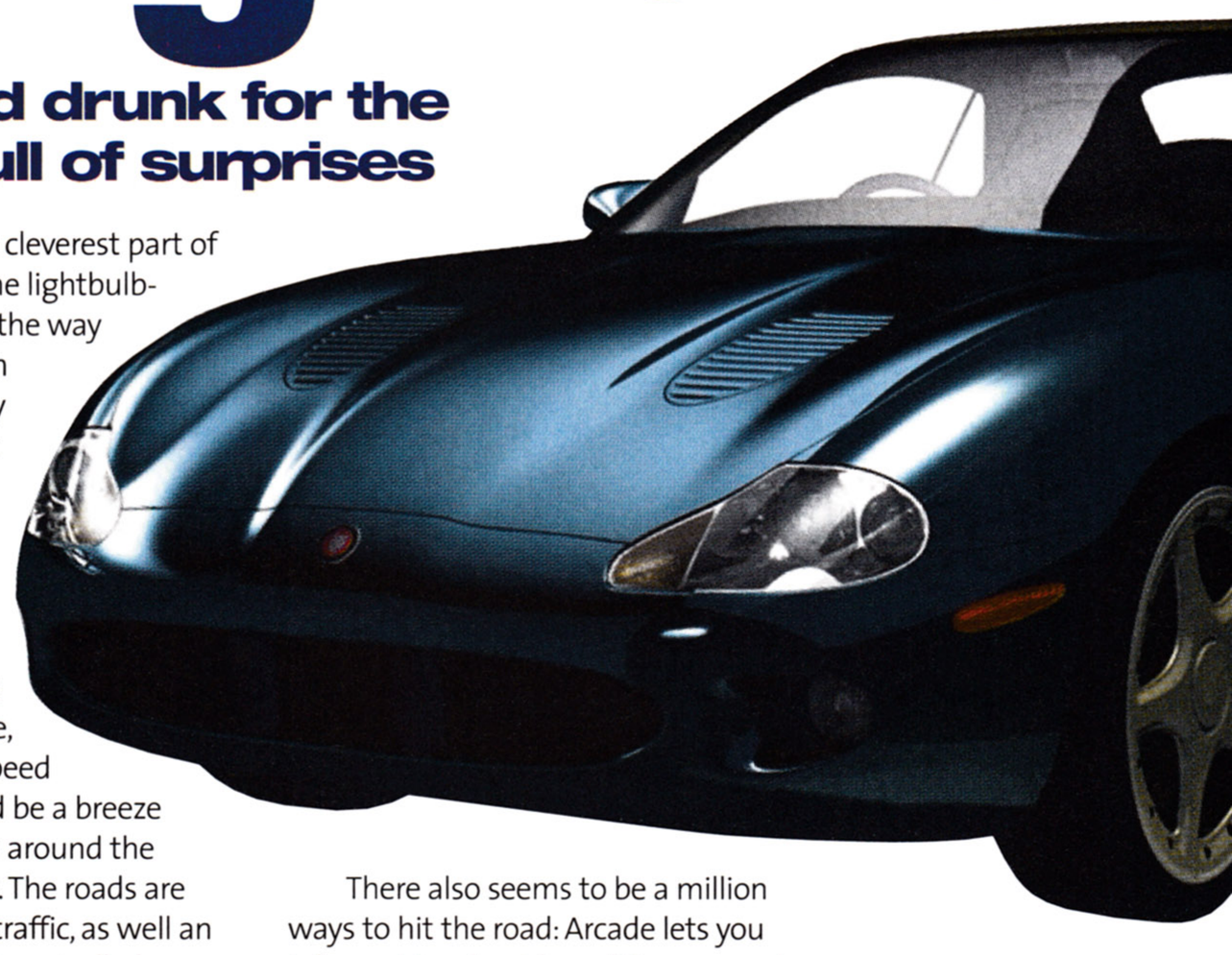
Vanishing Point

DETAILS

Publisher:	Acclaim
Developer:	Clockwork games
Price:	£39.99
Release date:	February
Players:	One to two
Extras:	Vibration, 60 Hz

It's like seeing your girlfriend drunk for the first time – fast, scary and full of surprises

Look, there's simply no point in developing a racing game for Dreamcast these days, unless it blows the competition away, or introduces something new to the genre. *Vanishing Point* certainly doesn't touch the likes of *F355* for quality racing, but it does inject some innovative ideas into an overcrowded market. Oh yes, it offers the usual stuff – gut-wrenchingly fast thrills, a bundle of options, 25 licensed vehicles, a whole subsection consisting of *Crazy Taxi*-style mini games, and some truly fiendish circuits. That's all well and good. We expect all that, we welcome it happily.



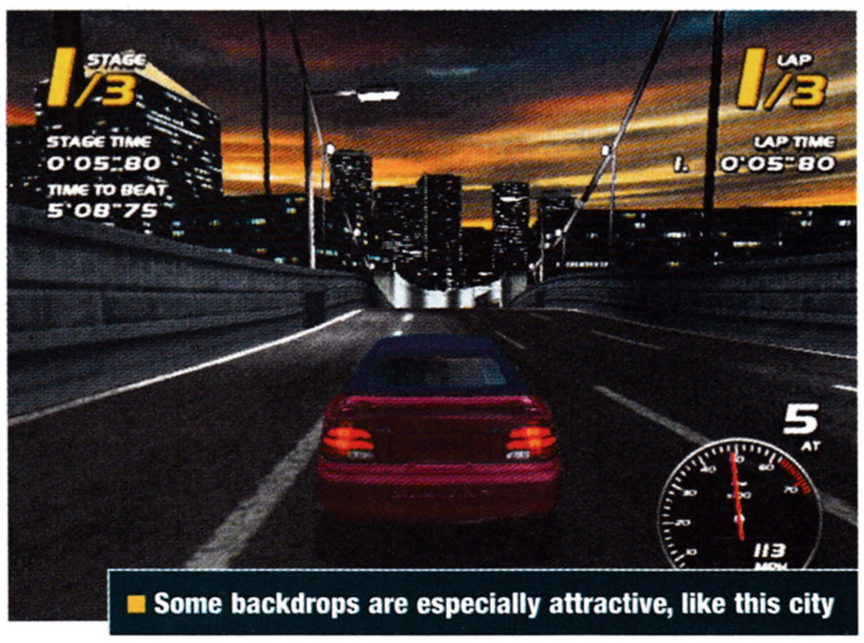
But that ain't the cleverest part of *Vanishing Point*. No, the lightbulb-over-the-head idea is the way in which you win each race. Instead of simply passing a set amount of cars to move up to first place, you have to race between checkpoints as fast as you can, each one adding or subtracting from your overall time, dependent on your speed and driving skill. This'd be a breeze if you had a free reign around the circuits. But you don't. The roads are filled with incidental traffic, as well an infinite supply of CPU-controlled opponent vehicles. Touch any of these other cars and you'll lose valuable seconds, leaving you to plummet down the rankings. Driving skills and reaction times will be your greatest friends.

So what's on the disc? Well, from the time you fire it up, to point of ignition, *Vanishing Point* is perfectly realised. The front end is unfussy and easy to negotiate, the intro movie both amusing and impressive. You'll be offered all manner of options for controls, visual and audio tweaks, as well as steering sensitivity, display centering and the like. Add to that a 50/60 Hz selection and you're sorted, options-wise.

There also seems to be a million ways to hit the road: Arcade lets you take part in a heat-based Tournament, a Single Race, a Time Trial and finally a Stunt Driver mode, (see The Fall Guy Revisited). There's also an Internet Time Trial Challenge, a twoplayer head-to-head and a knockout-type Multiplayer Mode, (deep breath) as well as a Tune Up Shop, where you can obtain juicy upgrades for making your motor handle like a bullet train. When you eventually tire of all this, the extra folder contains

Crashes set your car bouncing around all over the place

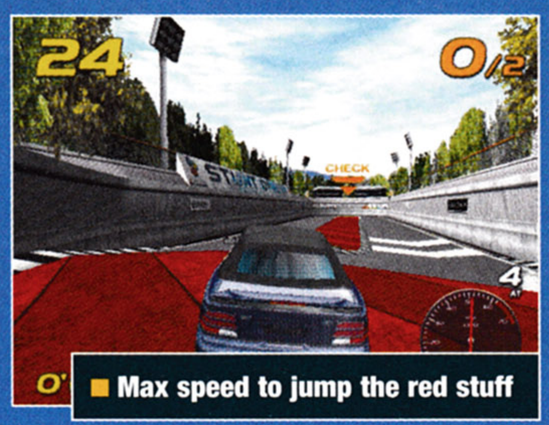
"Even with six or more cars on screen the speed never let's up"



Some backdrops are especially attractive, like this city

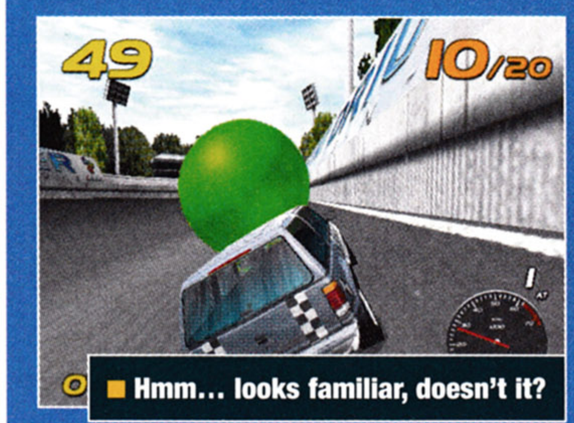
THE FALL GUY REVISITED...

The Stunt Driver section of *Vanishing Point* adds a great deal to the main game, allowing you to drive even more recklessly that ever. Running along the same road as *Crazy Taxi*, there is a stack of mini games that require speed and precision: Crossing out-of-bounds areas, performing huge jumps, negotiating slaloms and popping balloons are all in a day's work for the skilled stunt driver – get practicing

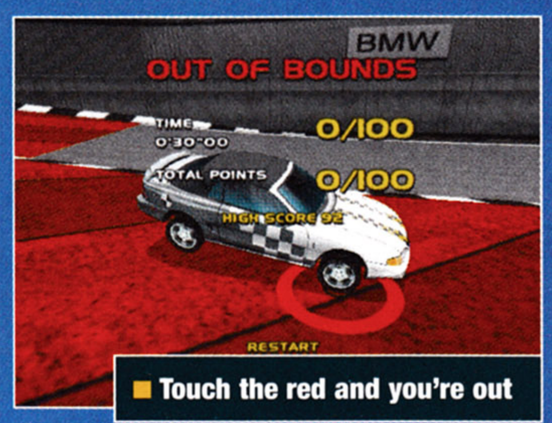


■ Max speed to jump the red stuff

■ Barrel rolls are great fun – see?

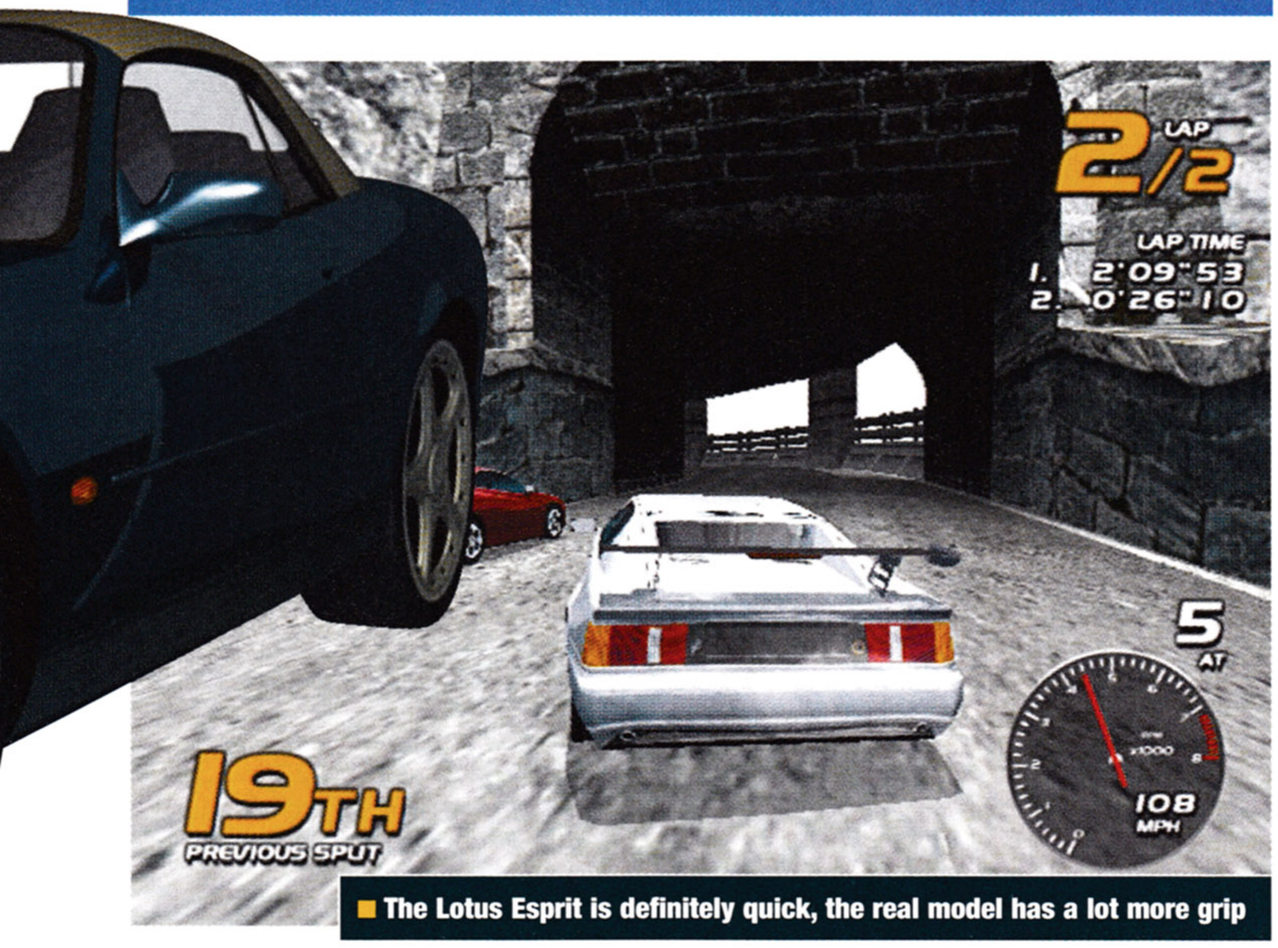


■ Hmm... looks familiar, doesn't it?

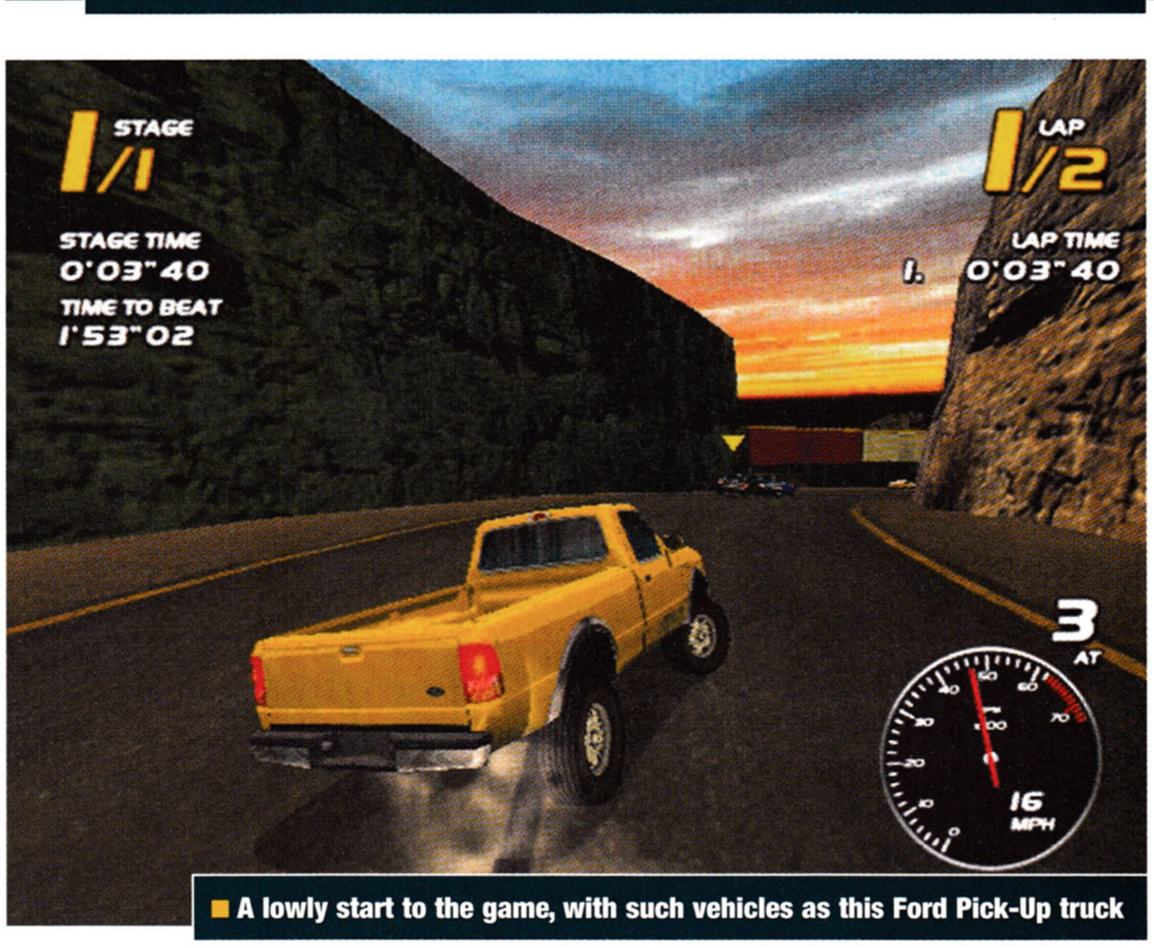


■ Touch the red and you're out

■ No matter what the manufacture of car, they all handle like they're driving on oil



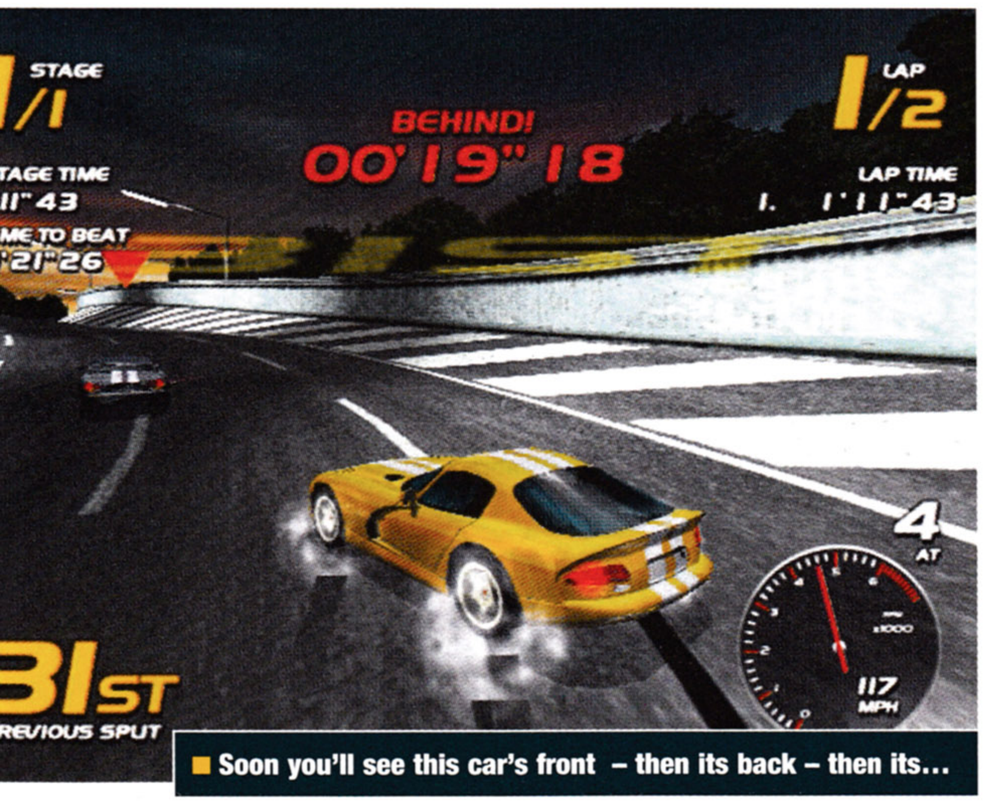
■ The Lotus Esprit is definitely quick, the real model has a lot more grip



■ A lowly start to the game, with such vehicles as this Ford Pick-Up truck

nine unlockable movies, two secret modes, a collection of slides, game stats and credits, and an initially hidden selection of 23 cars.

Having spent ten minutes getting things just the way you like it, you should be raring to hit the road. What'll strike you during your pilot trip is the visuals: Clockwork has achieved a blazing 60 frames per second refresh rate, accompanied by a high-resolution display that makes for very crisp, detailed cars and environments. There's no judder or pop-up and even with a good six or more vehicles on screen at once, the speed never lets up. What's more, cars appear to move with all the authenticity of the real things. Body roll, oversteer, weight distribution – it's all here and more. You can even see rear wheels spin convincingly or lock up when you apply the handbrake. Add to this a great selection of circuits from busy city flyovers to beach-lined tracks and you've got one fine-looking game.



■ Soon you'll see this car's front – then its back – then its...

Until now, things have been *exactly* as you'd want them. Clockwork has laid down the most tempting of bait and any gamer even remotely interested in DC driving games will want to put the pedal to the metal straight away. And we don't blame them. Press Start, choose Arcade, choose Single Race, pick

■ Car detail is incredibly accurate

a motor and prepare yourself for a shock, as it'll take you 'til *Vanishing Point*'s first corner to discover the rather painful truth about the handling – it sucks.

The back end of each car (and it does seem to be each and every model, from the crapola pseudo-classic Austin Mini to the thundering Dodge Viper GTR) will slip out at the slightest provocation. Imagine a *Sega Rally* or *Ridge Racer* powerslide, except ▶

■ 21st. Not good. Obviously

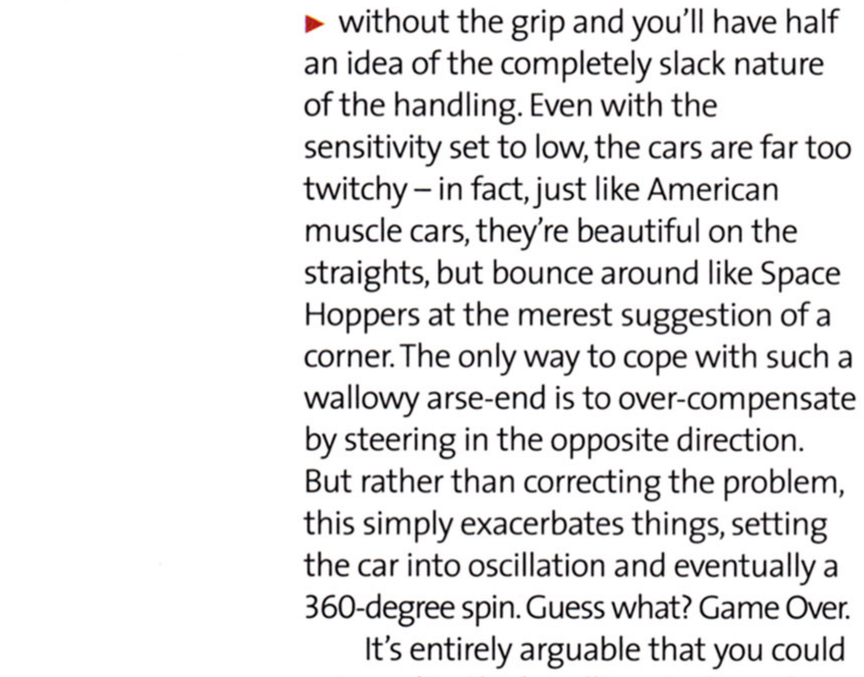
■ At least the cars *look* as if they're moving properly with body roll wheel spin etc

■ Get ready for a bad landing!

■ Old style sports cars also star

► without the grip and you'll have half an idea of the completely slack nature of the handling. Even with the sensitivity set to low, the cars are far too twitchy – in fact, just like American muscle cars, they're beautiful on the straights, but bounce around like Space Hoppers at the merest suggestion of a corner. The only way to cope with such a wallowy arse-end is to over-compensate by steering in the opposite direction. But rather than correcting the problem, this simply exacerbates things, setting the car into oscillation and eventually a 360-degree spin. Guess what? Game Over.

It's entirely arguable that you could get used to the handling. And you do. But you'll never learn to love it; you'll never feel comfortable constantly wrestling to stay on the road. Yet, ironically, it's *Vanishing Point*'s strongest feature that highlights exactly how poor the cars feel – namely the speed: this baby flies. With the exception of *Tokyo Highway Challenge 2*, this is the most dangerously quick newcomer to DC racing. Which is the finest compliment a racing title can receive. You'll be tanking along at ridiculous speeds, performing great jumps, and scaring the pants off yourself with the in-car view. Sticking to the tarmac for an unprecedented 30-second run is an amazing rush, cars zipping past like they're standing still. Make no mistake, when you get it right, you'll feel like Evel Kenieval zooming toward the Grand Canyon on his rocket cycle... moments before plunging into the abyss. Yes, when you misjudge it, by the even the smallest margin, you'll pay dearly.

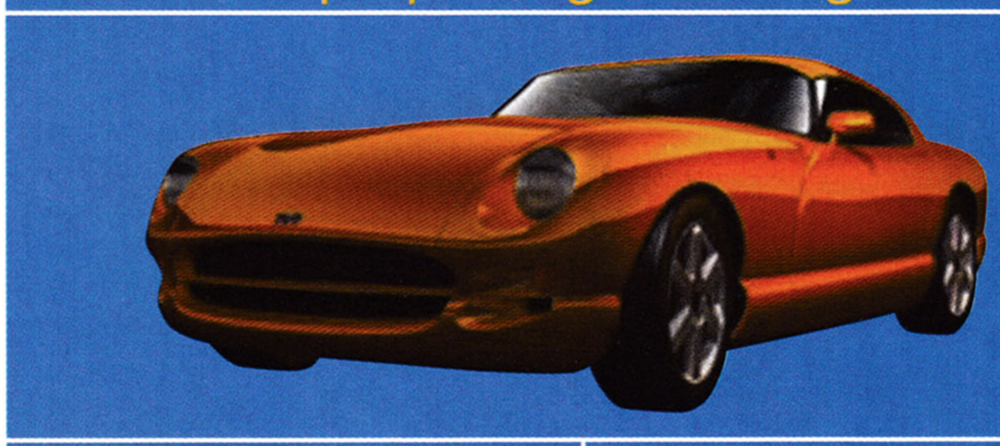


■ Memories of *Ridge Racer* abound

As fundamental a flaw as this is, it could just be part of the game's character, simply demanding you keep your observation maxed out at all times. But there are fissures in the gameplay that confound things further: after having raced perfectly over the nine laps of a Tournament, you'll be in first place and in sight of the finish line, only to collide with another vehicle, sending you through a protracted aerial ballet. The next ten seconds are spent anxiously trying to guess whether you'll end up on your roof or wheels, as you flip end over end. Those ten seconds just cost you the entire Tournament. And considering you can only restart from the first lap of each heat, you'll be thumbing a lift back to

THE CREME DE LA CREME OF MOTORING

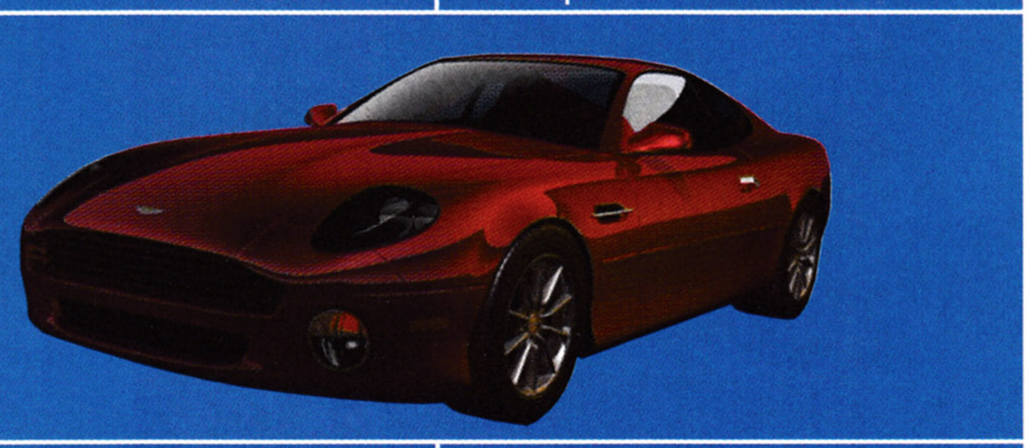
One of the best aspects of *Vanishing Point* is the licensed cars. There's no doubt that this is about the closest most people will get to driving one of these beauties – so do like us, and grab with both hands



TVR Cerbera		Engine size	4475 cc
Top Speed	185 mph	Max power	420 bhp
0-60	6.4 seconds	Max torque	380 lb/ft

Lotus Elise		Engine size	1796 cc
Top Speed	126 mph	Max power	118 bhp
0-60	5.8 seconds	Max torque	122 lb/ft

Audi TT Coupé		Engine size	1781 cc
Top Speed	158 mph	Max power	225 bhp
0-60	6.4 seconds	Max torque	170 lb/ft



Aston Martin DB7		Engine size	3932 cc
Top Speed	171 mph	Max power	355 bhp
0-60	5.4 seconds	Max torque	389 lb/ft

■ Watch the paintwork, now!

■ Dullness will be your only companion during these lonely head to head races

the starting line. Or, like us, you'll hoof your DC through the window.

Wait, there's more. How about pulling off a truly award-winning recovery after that near-terminal impact, only to have random opponent #4 smash into your rear, sending you back into another manic pirouette? Or maybe you'd feel better knowing that when enemy cars whack into you, throwing you off track, they seem to have the inate ability to correct themselves, then zoom off, leaving you to eat their dust? Perhaps the fact that the exterior viewpoints actually obscure the road ahead will annoy you, as the camera lowers to create the illusion of a downward incline? We drove into a car on one particular hill, because we couldn't see it at all. Clever stuff, indeed.

It takes a special kind of design error to trigger the kind of 'love-hate' feeling we experienced while playing *Vanishing Point*. You'll adore the sense of speed and positively beam when you drive like Schumacher, but believe us, it takes but a nanosecond to lose the race and suffering at the hands of another car's erratic driving will make you fly into a rage. Clockwork has tried to make the perfect racing model, but the result is the virtual equivalent of a Lamborghini Contach – a classic supercar that only starts to display its inherent flaws after a few days motoring. The only problem is that by the time you find out, the showroom will be a distant memory and the cheque long since cashed ■

Neil 'Maximus' Randall

> "You'll be scaring the pants off yourself with the in-car view"

DC-UK VERDICT

GRAPHICS
Superbly hi-res, beautifully modelled and incredibly smooth

SOUND
Standard dancey fare, complete with raw engines and squealing tyres

GAMEPLAY
Gets off to a brilliant start, but soon become intolerable

MULTIPLAYER
Good for a laugh, but still plagued by the same shortfalls

OVERALL
Could easily have been another jewel in DC's sparkling crown, but the game is hamstrung by overactive handling, and unjust AI: inherently loathsome qualities that'll ruin your day

6
OUT OF TEN

Low gravity in the Smelter means great big jumps

"Faithful character designs and soundtrack count for nothing if you feel like puking everytime you play"

Spawn
In The Demon's Hand

The hell-sent hero spews out onto Dreamcast bringing the devil's own demented cameraman with him

DETAILS

Publisher:	Eidos
Developer:	Capcom
Price:	£39.99
Release date:	Jan 2001
Players:	One to four
Extras:	60 Hz/Vibration

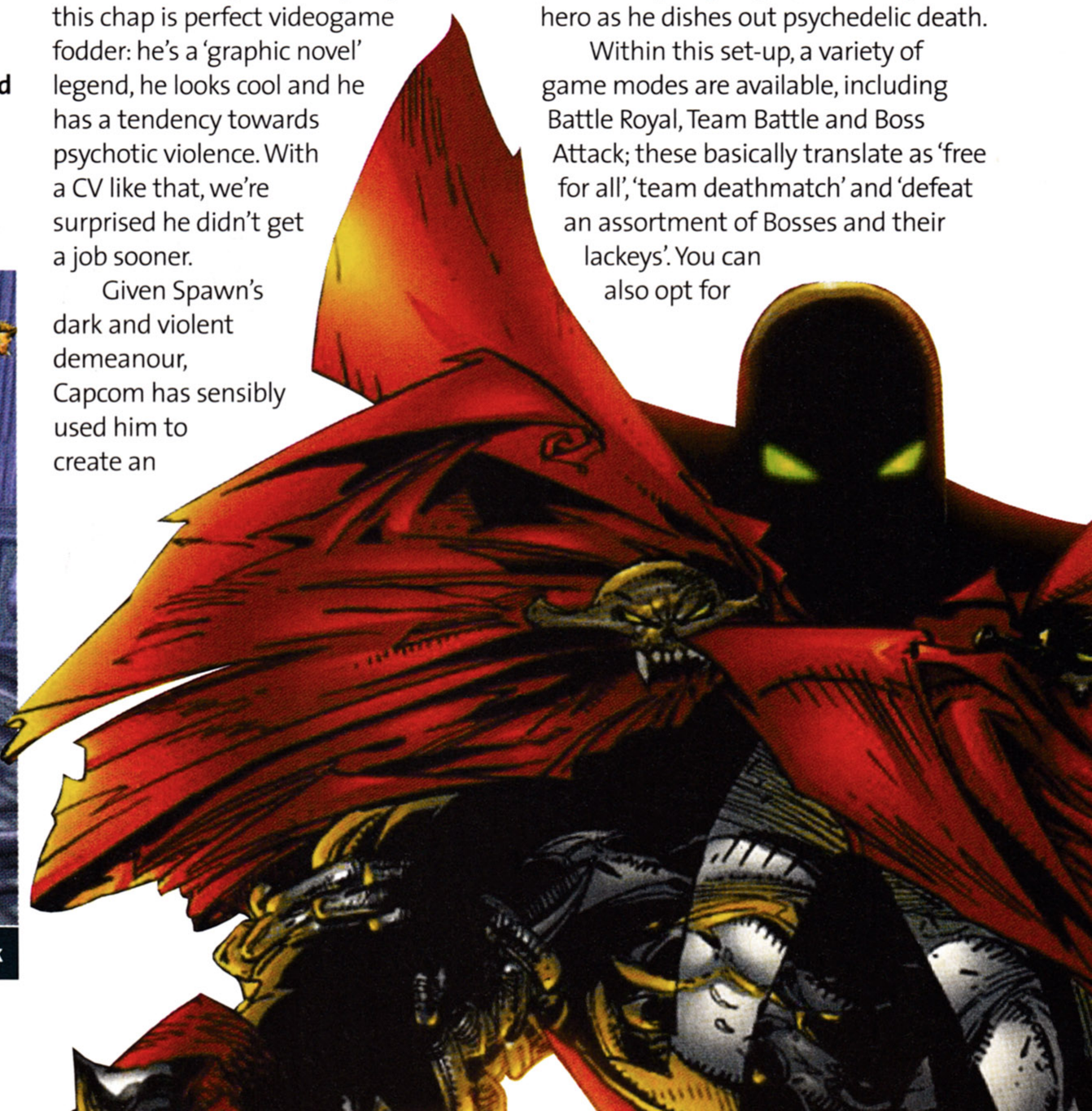
Capcom doesn't often get things wrong. *Resident Evil Code: Veronica*, *Street Fighter*, *Capcom Vs SNK* – these games have contributed enormously to Dreamcast's quality line-up. But there's no such thing as a perfect run and such a prolific company was bound to stumble sooner or later. What's most galling here, though, is how a potentially great game has been ruined by an obvious fundamental flaw. It beggars belief that *Spawn* ever passed alpha testing, let alone final release.

Story first: respected CIA operative Al Simmons is betrayed and murdered by his boss, and then – to add eternal damnation to injury – is sent to hell. Given his life back by the Devil he returns to Earth in the guise of superhero demon, Spawn. Look, it's a comic book and they're not supposed to make sense, okay? And anyway, this chap is perfect videogame fodder: he's a 'graphic novel' legend, he looks cool and he has a tendency towards psychotic violence. With a CV like that, we're surprised he didn't get a job sooner.

Given Spawn's dark and violent demeanour, Capcom has sensibly used him to create an arena-based shooter, throwing in an assortment of hi- octane weapons and recognisable, selectable characters from the comic book's universe. Unlike your typical frag-fest the action is shot from a thirdperson perspective, much like AM2's upcoming *Outtrigger* – this is presumably so you get to watch your hero as he dishes out psychedelic death.

Within this set-up, a variety of game modes are available, including Battle Royal, Team Battle and Boss Attack; these basically translate as 'free for all', 'team deathmatch' and 'defeat an assortment of Bosses and their lackeys'. You can also opt for

Al Simmons just took a rocket in the eye. Which is how he managed this little trick



I THINK I'M GOING TO...

Given that *Spawn* made us feel queasy, we thought we'd dredge up some other activities that'll give you the same effect, but for a lot less outlay. So in reverse order, here are our top three recommendations:

3) Rent The Fly and Braindead and watch all the gory scenes.
Rental of each video – £2
Total cost – £4
Vomit Possibility Factor – 5/10
Sure, it's grisly stuff, but you know it's not real. Disturbing, but not necessarily to the point of retching.

2) Drink six litres of White Lightning cider, then dance the night away at your local meat market.
Two bottles of cheap cider – £4
Club entry – £5
Total cost – £9
Vomit Possibility Factor – 7/10
Most people would be looking green around the gills after all that booze, but some really do have iron stomachs.

1) Go and see Rangers Vs Celtic at Ibrox, wearing a Celtic top – then ask to be seated at the home end.
Ticket – £18
Chips 'n' cheese – £2
Total cost – £20
Vomit Possibility Factor – 10/10
You'd feel a bit ill after the kicking you'd receive and keeping your dinner down would be highly unlikely.

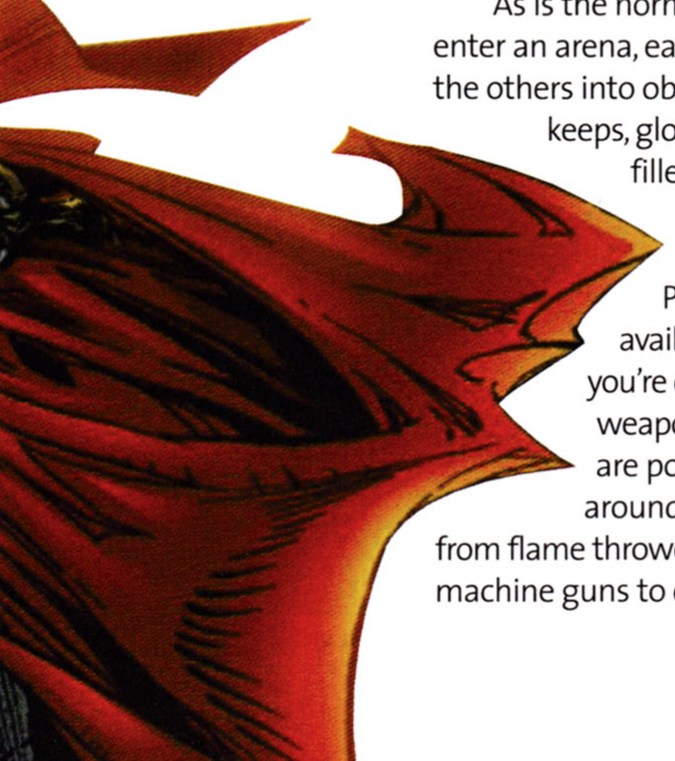
As you can see, we have produced three nauseating alternatives to *Spawn* and they're a lot easier on the wallet. Capcom has got a lot to answer for ■

■ We'd be liars if we said *Spawn* doesn't look good

■ The bosses do tend to be a bit ferocious – see?

■ Ah, Mr Vandalizer, I presume. This hulking fellow presides over the second level of the boss parade

"We can only imagine that the developer was having a bad day"



the Arcade or Tournament version of each of these, allowing for either single bouts of ultraviolence, or a whole batch, forming a crude championship.

As is the norm, up to four people enter an arena, each intent on blasting the others into oblivion. Abandoned keeps, gloomy forests and lava-filled factories feature, each with their own hazards and pitfalls. Pick from twelve initially-available characters and you're off. You start with three weapons, but naturally, there are power-ups scattered around the levels, ranging from flame throwers to rocket launchers; machine guns to chainsaws. The usual pick-up-able speed-ups and force fields are included, but despite all this *Spawn* still plays badly.

It all stems from the camera. There are two selectable angles, close and not-so-close, both of which are dreadful, thereby immediately rendering the game almost unplayable. The problem manifests itself in two ways. First, there's simply too much inertia, the virtual eye constantly sweeping back and forth, zooming and panning, but never really catching up on itself. The second niggle is that at times the screen ends up pointing in the wrong direction, your character running toward you, instead of away, which obscures your enemy. This is almost bearable when you're running around alone, but when the entire vicinity fills up with enemy fire, you'll often get shot time and time again without ever knowing where from and by whom.

We can forgive the occasional lapse in control – espcially if the camera angle isn't essential to the gameplay. However the *Spawn*-o-cam is like a hyperactive brat on a tartrazine bender. Winning a round is more due to luck than judgement and boss encounters are simply farcical. You'll get so sick of taking hits, that you'll just go straight up to the guardian and hammer it until one of you runs out of energy. Which means you'll die twenty times for every time you fell the boss.

Spawn In The Demons Hand's is not without its merits, but gorgeous colour schemes, faithful character designs and a rawking soundtrack count for nothing if you feel like puking everytime you play. This is far cry from the likes of *Power Stone 2*, which manages to contain frantic action through a stable camera angle, so we can only imagine that the Japanese developer was having a bad day. Like we said at the beginning, ruined. And a damn shame it is too ■

Neil 'Maximus' Randall

DC-UK VERDICT

GRAPHICS
Beautifully realised art, with stacks of kinetic energy and oodles of colour. Just pray it doesn't start moving

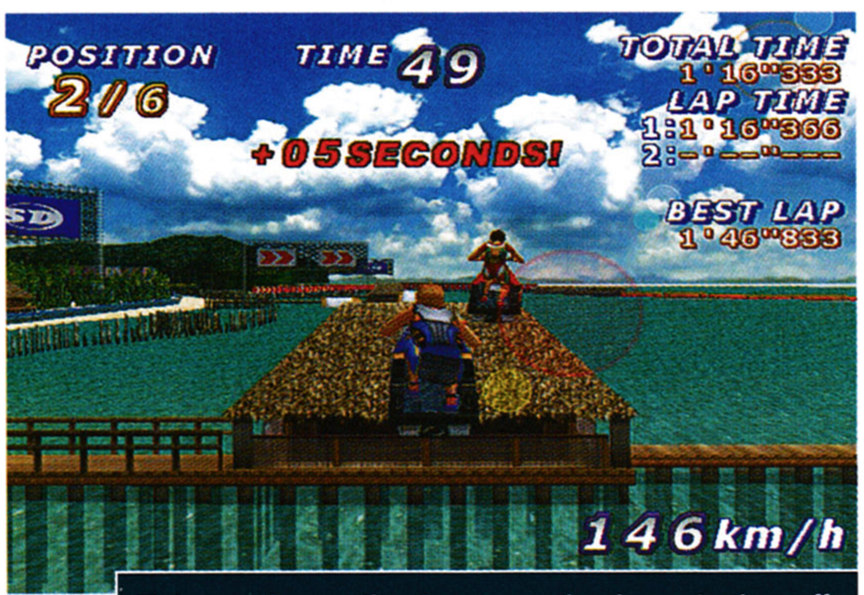
SOUND
Your standard thrashy soundtrack accompanied by the sound of laser death

GAMEPLAY
Frustrating. The intolerable motion prevents a good game from ever achieving the kudos it deserves

MULTIPLAYER
Take it from us – you really don't want it in quadrophonic

OVERALL
A rollicking frag fest that gets totally murdered by the worst camera ever. Messy, stomach-churning and a waste of money

5
OUT OF TEN



Jumps give you time bonuses and a chance to show off

"We should say that *Surf Rocket Racers* screams *Wave Race* from every orifice, which is by no means a bad thing"

Surf Rocket Racers

DETAILS

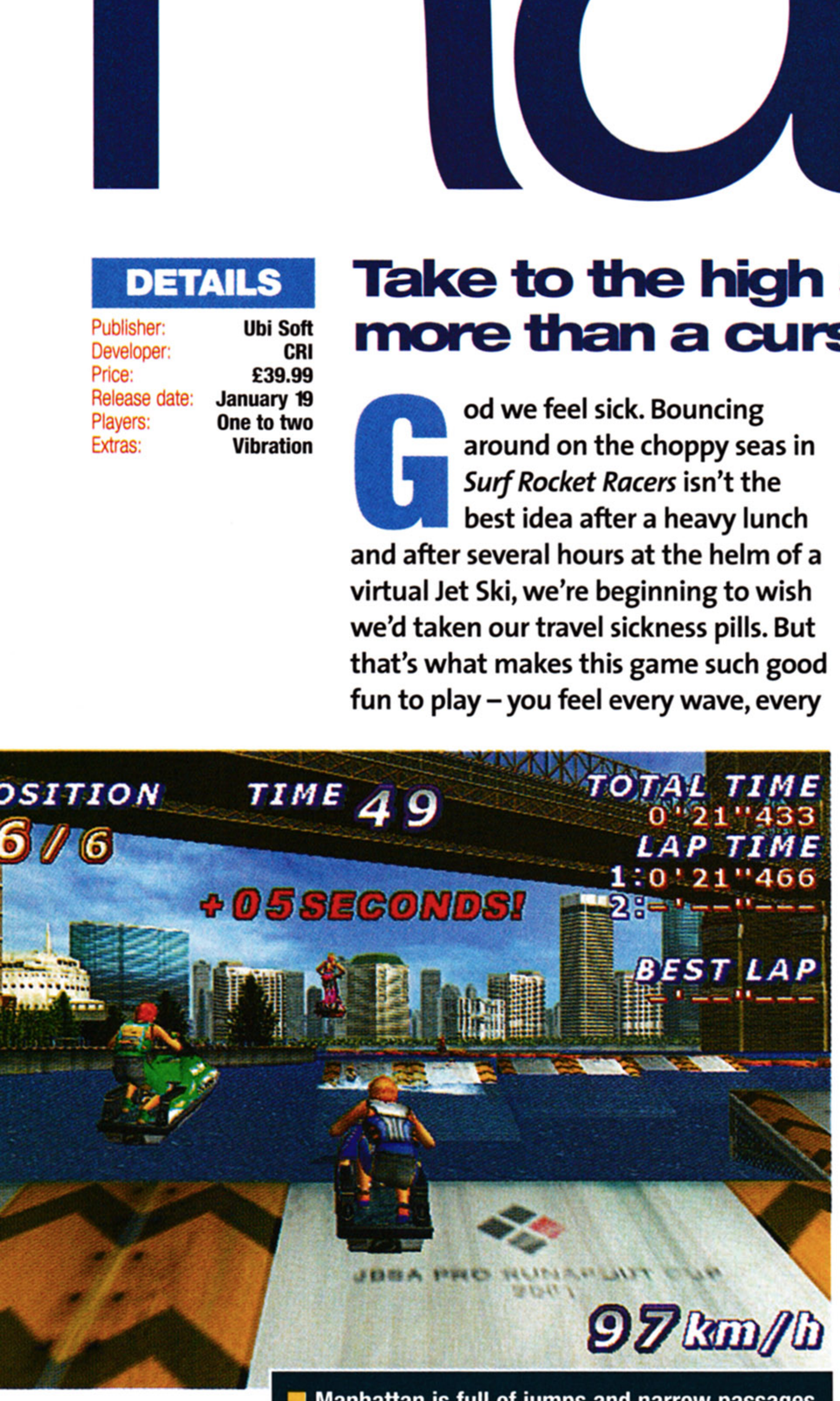
Publisher:	Ubi Soft
Developer:	CRI
Price:	£39.99
Release date:	January 19
Players:	One to two
Extras:	Vibration

Take to the high seas in a Jet Ski racer that owes more than a cursory nod to Nintendo's classic racer

God we feel sick. Bouncing around on the choppy seas in *Surf Rocket Racers* isn't the best idea after a heavy lunch and after several hours at the helm of a virtual Jet Ski, we're beginning to wish we'd taken our travel sickness pills. But that's what makes this game such good fun to play – you feel every wave, every bounce and when you pull off a stunt, the world spins on its head. Water-based antics haven't been this good since *Wave Race* ruled the water on the Nintendo 64 – and we're loving every minute of it.

While we're on the subject of Nintendo's masterpiece, we should say that *Surf Rocket Racers* screams *Wave Race* from every orifice, which is by no means a bad thing, but imitations rarely capture the essence of what made the original so great in the first place. And while it comes very close in most respects, this is unfortunately the case here.

But there are so many great things about *Surf Rocket Racers* that it's still hard to find too much to fault. The gameplay is hugely enjoyable, the graphics are beautifully realised and the tracks are varied enough to keep most people entertained for weeks. There's some amazing attention to detail, like



Manhattan is full of jumps and narrow passages

The twoplayer mode is a great laugh and will keep you amused long after you've got bored of the singleplayer

■ The courses are all well designed, each offering different obstacles and opportunities for snazzy tricks

■ There's some beautiful trackside detail on all the circuits

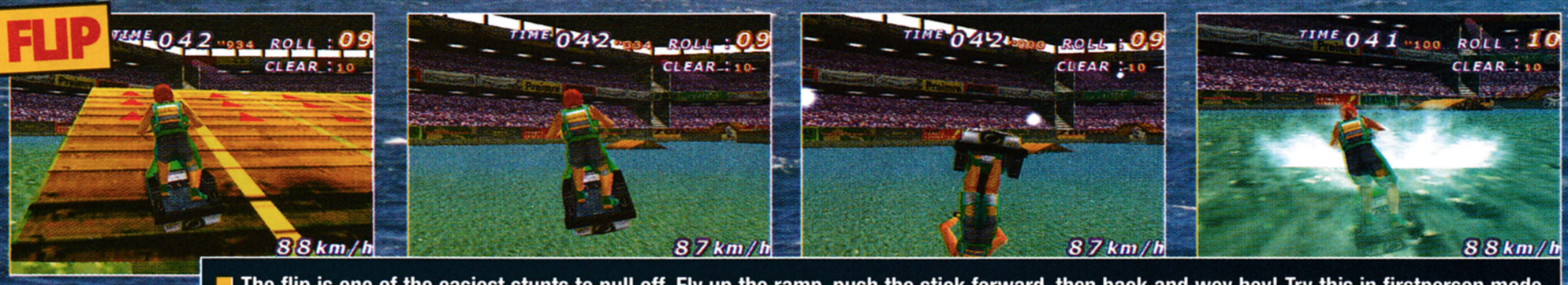
IT'S SHOWTIME!!

Surf Rocket Racers **is packed with stuff to do, including a trick mode and obstacle course. These range from simple to bleedin' difficult but they're great fun. Here's a taster ■**

BALLOON

■ The obstacle course involves racing against the clock to burst balloons and reach the required points. Red will bag you more points than blue

FLIP

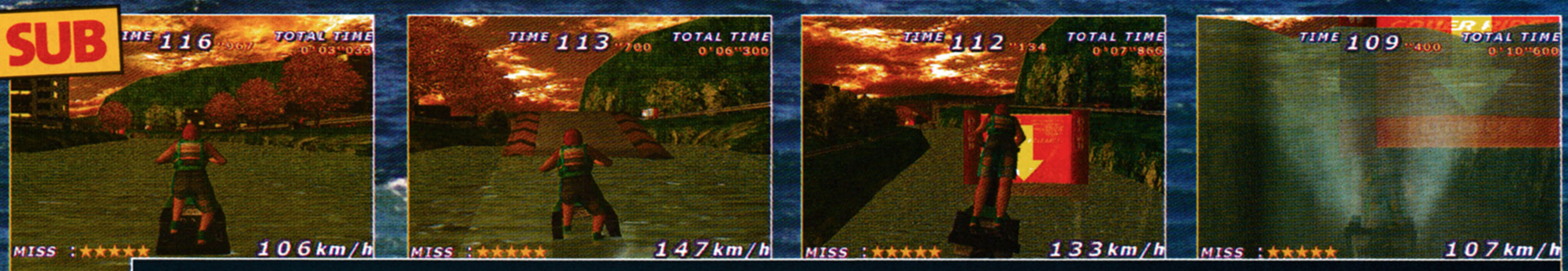


■ The flip is one of the easiest stunts to pull off. Fly up the ramp, push the stick forward, then back and wey hey! Try this in firstperson mode

HOP

■ This challenge requires you to bunny hop against the clock. Approach at high speed, let off the throttle, quickly pull back the stick and take to the air!

SUB



■ The submarine is pretty straightforward, but against the clock, it's a tough challenge. Jump, hold down until you're under the marker, then surface

> "The Titanic eerily looms into shot"

the friendly dolphin that swims alongside you on the Bahamas level, the trains that rattle past in the tunnel in Manhattan and the way the Titanic eerily looms into shot in the frozen wastes of the Arctic. The controls are simple and effective and the other racers show just the right amount of intelligence to make you believe you're up against real opposition. The oneplayer game offers plenty to keep you entertained, including a Championship mode (with more tracks and riders to unlock as you progress) plus trick and obstacle courses where you can really show off your skills, while the twoplayer game adds even more value for money.

What lets the game down though, is that despite the fact that Dreamcast is the next generation on from Nintendo's machine, the water just doesn't look or feel quite as realistic as *Wave Race*. Don't get us wrong, it's still the best water racer yet seen on DC, but there's no real excuse for this shortfall when the developers have so much extra power at their fingertips. And this 'nearly, but not quite' feeling is emanated throughout – the tricks aren't *quite* as intuitive, the gameplay isn't *quite* so fluid and the twoplayer game isn't *quite* so entertaining. It just doesn't live up to the Jet Ski daddy. Taken at face value, *Surf Rocket Racers* is still an excellent title that provides a nice alternative to the road-based racers currently overwhelming the Dreamcast. Just remember to let your dinner go down first ■

Adrian Lawton

DC-UK VERDICT

GRAPHICS
Generally spot-on, let down only by the water dynamics that fail to match up to N64's *Wave Race*

SOUND
Nice sound effects and very cheesy voice over that reminds us of… wait for it… *Wave Race*!

GAMEPLAY
Great fun to play, particularly in the firstperson view. Simple controls and plenty of variety make this an excellent racer

MULTIPLAYER
Enjoyable twoplayer larks, but a fourplayer split-screen or a Network mode wouldn't have gone amiss

OVERALL
An excellent alternative to other racing titles available. If Jet Skis are your bag baby, you're going to love this to bits

7
OUT OF TEN

One shot usually does the job in this realistic warfare sim

Skulking around a mansion trying to find and rescue hostages. But watch out for any nasty terrorists

Rainbow Six

DETAILS

Publisher: Swing
Developer: Red Storm
Price: £39.99
Release date: Out now
Players: One
Extras: Vibration

After much sneaking, sniping and scheming, *Rainbow Six* finally gets its long awaited European release

Hmm, we've just had the strangest feeling of déjà vu. After playing the PAL code of *Rainbow Six* for a few minutes we could have sworn it wasn't the first time we'd experienced it. Ye gods, what supernatural trickery could this be? Well, none to be honest: we did actually review the NTSC version way back in DC-UK 13. As our Shirley once warbled, history has a strange way of repeating itself. Sometimes games come back.

And history, though it rarely is with games, has actually been quite kind to *Rainbow Six*. Seeing as we're looking at a game that's two years old on PC and the Dreamcast import version landed in our laps all of six months ago, it's still as playable and enjoyable as it ever was. The secret of its enduring success rests at least partly in the fact that there really hasn't been anything similar to touch it. Until the release of *Commandos 2* and *Rainbow Six*'s own sequel, *Rogue Spear*, if it's stealthy espionage and tactical action you're after, then this is the on for you. Rainbow Six is the SAS of military strategy titles.

Based on the Tom Clancy novel of the same name, the game puts you in charge of an elite forces group that's called in for all manner of sensitive missions – you know the sort of thing; rescuing hostages from embassies, daring raids on jungle guerrillas, delivering chocolates to bored housewives – and, through planning and deployment, you assign skills, weapons and tactics to each member of your team before setting out to kick some ass.

This isn't a game that will satisfy those craving the insane shoot 'em up antics of *Quake III* or *Half-Life*, as the action sections (although great fun) are only part of the gameplay. The main skills to learn in *Rainbow Six* concern the correct ways to get your team working at maximum capacity. Drilling your platoon in the Training missions, carefully planning the campaigns using a multitude of arrows and maps, and assigning the correct soldiers to the correct tasks (you don't want to give a bomb disposal job to a detonation expert, for example) are just as important here as having a deadly trigger finger.

The action itself is a mixture of *GoldenEye* and *Metal Gear Solid*. Fulfiling your mission objective with the minimal amount of fuss and mess, means plenty of sniping, skulking and peering around doorways. It may not appeal to the more bloodthirsty action fiends out there but it's an unusual and enjoyable opportunity for tactical thinking. And for those who like a large helping of strategy and stealth with their war games, *Rainbow Six* proves that military intelligence isn't always a contradiction in terms ■

Dean Mortlock

DC-UK VERDICT

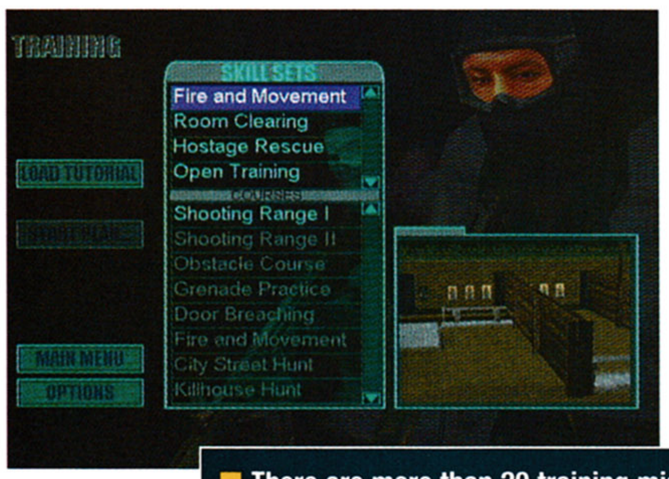
GRAPHICS
Functional rather than jaw-dropping, and the numerous menus are well designed and easy to follow

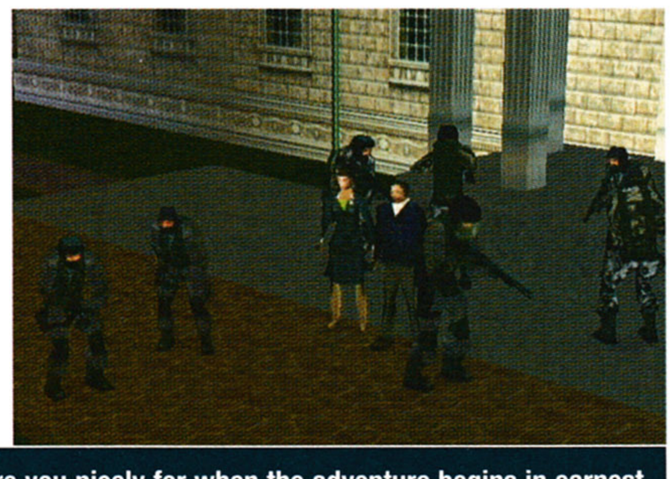
SOUND
Very atmospheric radio communications help put you in the action

GAMEPLAY
In-depth planning followed by stealth and shooting. Slow but fun, a bit like hosting a tortoise race. Err…

OVERALL
Shame about the lack of a twoplayer mode, but still a rewarding and deep game… If you have the patience

7
OUT OF TEN





There are more than 20 training missions which, like the equivalents in *Metal Gear Solid*, prepare you nicely for when the adventure begins in earnest

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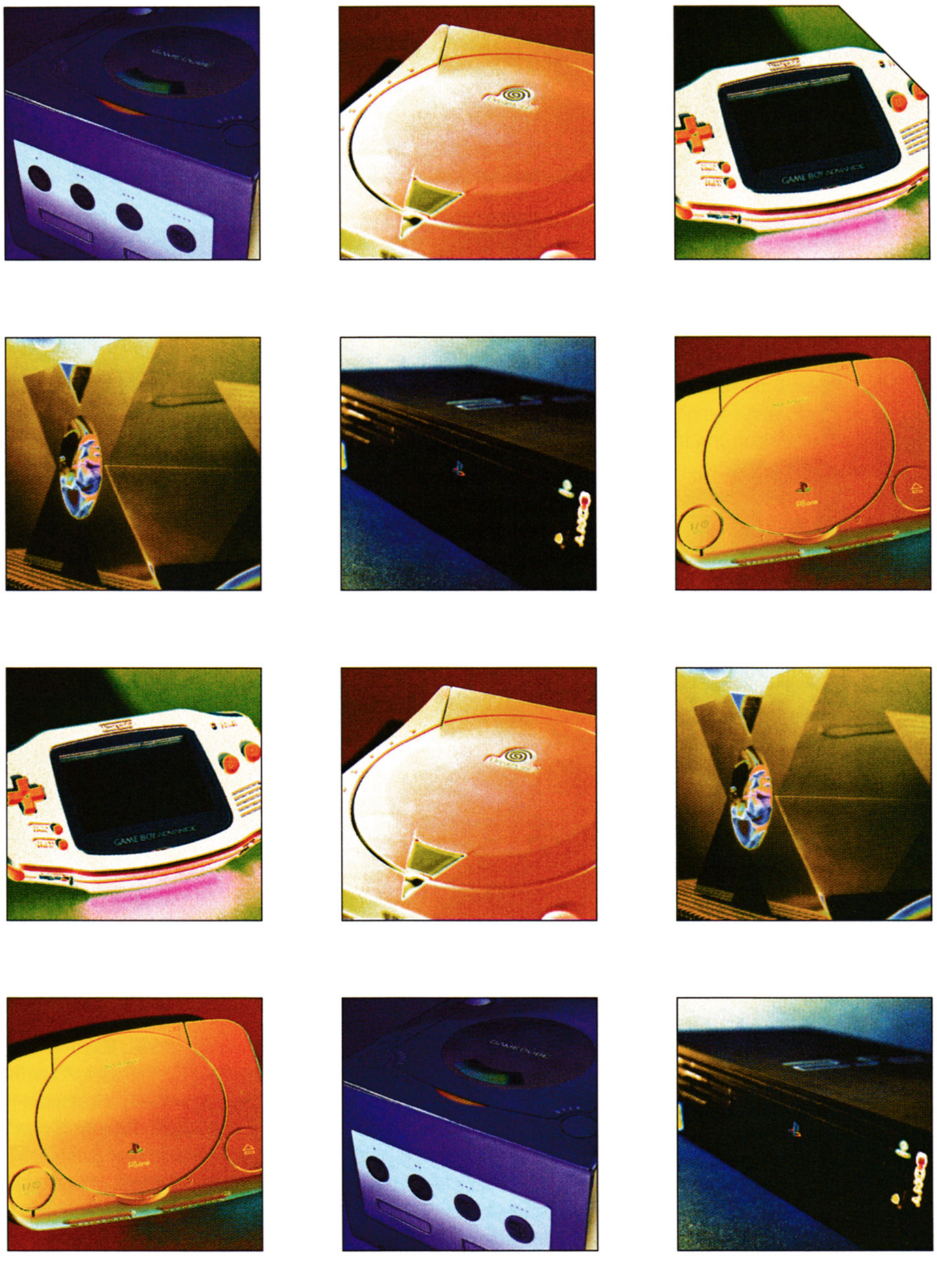

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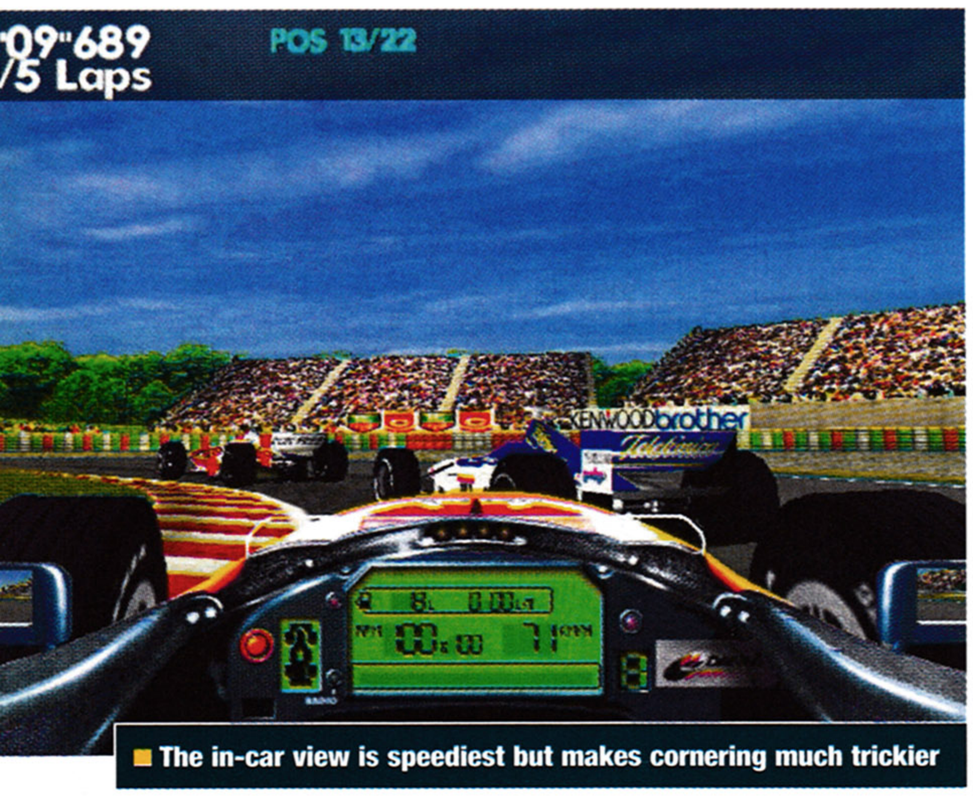


The in-car view is speediest but makes cornering much trickier

The arcade mode allows you to go crazy, ramming cars and leaving the track, without knackering your motor

Michael Schumacher's Ferrari. Boo!

F1 Racing Championship

DETAILS

Publisher: Video System
Developer: Ubi Soft
Price: £39.99
Release date: January 19
Players: One to two
Extras: Vibration, 60Hz

The F1 season may have finished but in the videogame Grand Prix circus, a new contender is lining up on the grid...

Hmm, we've been a bit spoiled lately haven't we? The sheer number of quality racing games speeding around on our console is incredible, with the likes of *F355* and *MSR* only the tip of the motorised iceberg. As far as Formula One goes, currently leading the way is Video System's accomplished *F1 World Grand Prix II*. But there's a pretender lurking in its slipstream, aspiring to snatch the Grand Prix laurels. That young upstart is *F1 Racing Championship*.

The game features everything we've come to expect from F1 titles. There's a 'pick up and play' option for the casual driver and a simulation mode for more serious F1 aficionados. The former provides some knockabout fun for those who don't believe in such niceties as braking,

The rear view is useful for keeping an eye on approaching rivals

Environments are all nicely realised as you can see by these Monaco landmarks

while the latter is a realistic version of the sport with the usual comprehensive options to keep F1 anoraks happy.

You can also customise just about any element, from race length to number of opponents, and tinker with almost every aspect of your car. Choosing the right tyres and race strategy is essential, just like the real sport, and damage can be turned on for drivers who misguidedly feel they can complete a race without smashing their delicate machine to pieces.

But before you head for the grid, your first pit stop should be in the Training mode. This helps ease you into the challenges ahead and gets you used to the twitchy handling of these powerful beasts by helpfully drawing the racing line you should follow, complete with braking points. When you're ready for some competitive action you can choose between Single Race, Championship and Grand Prix modes, along with a decent twoplayer option providing added fun.

Out on the track, *F1 Racing Championship* is a fast and enjoyable game; negotiating the twisty nightmare that is Monaco, or going hell for leather around the speedier tracks like Hockenheim is always exciting whether you're an F1 fan or not. There's little sign of pop-up, the frame-rate holds up well and as far as audio goes, engines sound realistic and there's a helpful commentary from your pit crew.

In the end though, the game doesn't quite have enough to take the F1 crown. The handling is over-sensitive and the whole experience just isn't as polished or exciting as *F1 World Grand Prix II*. Having felt the precise control of *F355*, these F1 motors feel clumsy by comparison and unless someone, somewhere does something radically different with the Grand Prix genre, these games will continue to drop further behind the racing opposition ■

Adrian Lawton

DC-UK VERDICT

GRAPHICS
Nice touches but pales in comparison to the cream of the racing crop

SOUND
Original music from Garbage and good fx and commentary

GAMEPLAY
Basically the same as every other F1 game out there, you'll enjoy it but not as much as *F1WGPII*

MULTIPLAYER
Twoplayer action is decent enough but slowdown rears its ugly head

OVERALL
Grand Prix fans will lap it up but it won't win any new recruits

5
OUT OF TEN

Star Wars Demolition

A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away, LucasArts made enjoyable Star Wars games. Sadly, those days are long gone

Obi Wan Kenobi would have put it like this: "I felt a great disturbance in the Force... as if millions of voices cried out in terror and were suddenly silenced. I fear something terrible has happened... I fear someone has bought (pause) *Star Wars: Demolition*!"

Ever wondered what might happen if a developer was crazy enough to take the dreadful *Vigilante 8*, stick a Star Wars license on it and dress the game in aesthetics from the Star Wars universe in the vain hope that no-one would notice the horrifically cheap and cynical cash-in they were being asked to spend forty quid on? Well, wonder no more!

DETAILS

Publisher:	Activision
Developer:	Luxoflux
Price:	£39.99
Release date:	Out now
Players:	One to four
Extras:	60Hz, vibration

Multiplayer battles are utterly tedious and confusing

Star Wars: Demolition is *exactly* the same as *Vigilante 8*, except, instead of meandering around nondescript environments trying to blow away nondescript vehicles, here you meander around Tatooine, Cloud City and so on, trying to blow away AT-STs landspeeders, and such like. The gameplay really is that basic and it's painfully, almost comically, godawful.

The vehicles creep along at around 0.5 mph and they're about as manoeuverable as a pie van with Jabba the Hutt chomping away in the back. Actually hitting your target is a random process resulting from diverse factors such as not getting stuck on a piece of scenery, and not becoming hopelessly disoriented by the endless explosions and constantly switching camera angles.

"Oh my legs! My poor legs!"

We could go on about the different modes and options available but there's no point. This game is terrible. Don't be taken in by the name on the box because it does nothing but bring shame on the entire Star Wars enterprise. The only slight positive we can take from the nightmarish experience of playing *Demolition* is the hilarious way fearsome bounty hunter Boba Fett hovers above the ground, dragging his flailing, lifeless legs behind him like a maltreated puppet. Laugh? We could have cried ■

Lee Hart

YODA'S VERDICT

GRAPHICS
Mmm, visuals? Bad they are, mmm, yes

SOUND
Good is the sound. Memorable score. 'Ho, ho, ho!' laughs Jabba

GAMEPLAY
Shoot opposition vehicles you will. Over to the dark side it will push you

OVERALL
The force is weak in this one. Gameplay leads to fear, fear leads to anger, anger leads to hatred, hatred leads to suffering. Mmm

3
OUT OF TEN

This is Grinch attacking a boy. Naughty

The Grinch

Bad boy Grinch is out to ruin Christmas for all of us – in more ways than one...

DETAILS

Publisher:	Konami
Developer:	Artificial Mind and Movement
Price:	£39.99
Release date:	Out Now
Players:	One
Extras:	60Hz, Vibration

And still they come. Film licenses that is. You can hardly fail to notice the rapidity with which fiscally-aware game publishers churn them out. Well, now here comes *The Grinch* served up in the style of a 3D platform adventure for your gaming pleasure. As if.

The green meany is an ugly, Scrooge-like character who lives in a cave above the town of Whoville. The Yuletide season is about as bad as it gets for Grinch, so he plots to steal Christmas, but accidently scatters all the blueprints for his evil inventions to the wind. Thus starts his quest to recover the plans and generally dump on everyone elses Chrimbo.

Get ready for the exciting part. You control Mr Misery Guts using the analogue stick, while using the A button to flatten snowmen, mess up the mail and deface the mayor's posters. Pressing X makes you breathe your rancid breath on the humans you encounter and along the way, you take control of Max, your trusty canine sidekick in order to access smaller areas. Coming into contact with any children will make you bellow like a wounded moose – the Grinch despises kindness wherever he sees it.

Aside from the flat, pasty graphics and the poor collision detection, it's the gameplay that offends the most, being about as enjoyable as finding half a cockroach in your turkey. It's tiresome, repetitive and devoid of fun. You'll spend your time aimlessly searching corridors or trying to jump on impossible-to-reach platforms. And do we really need to smash 500 presents per level? Even kids are likely to turn their noses up at this.

This is Grinch in disguise. Sinister

Ironically, the developer has managed to beat the Grinch to a crappy Christmas by delivering such a dire game. While we're aware that this time of year is for forgiving and all that, it's safe to say that the Grinch should be spending the 25th very, very alone. Bah and humbug ■

Neil 'Maximus' Randall

This is Grinch breaking a Chrimbo present. This game is rubbish

DC-UK VERDICT

GRAPHICS
Bland, blander, blandest. Washed-out colours and about as lifeless as DC can go

SOUND
Perfectly good score, with the Apple Pie voice-over and suitable FX

GAMEPLAY
Yawnsome – you'll feel your eyes glazing over inside of minutes

OVERALL
Naff. A very dull, very tastless Christmas adventure that'll make you wish you had a PlayStation. Do yourself a favour and get *Qu@ck Att@ck?*!* instead

3
OUT OF TEN

Sno Cross Championship Racing

Cornering is fast, crazy and thrilling

You skid, you slide, you crash. Welcome to the painful world of snow mobile racing

DETAILS

Publisher:	Ubi Soft
Developer:	UDS
Price:	£39.99
Release date:	Out now
Players:	Two
Extras:	60Hz

Until recently, snow mobiles were the exclusive preserve of rich thrill seekers and eskimos. Now, however, we can all join in the fast, dangerous fun, courtesy of this neat niche novelty.

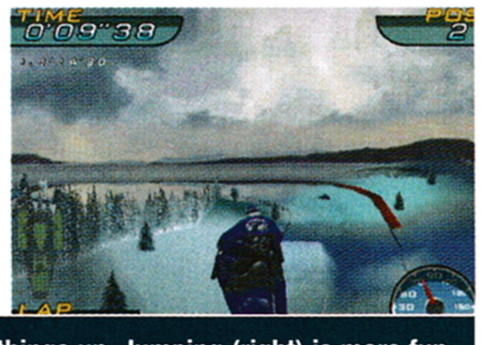
In many ways, *Sno Cross* is a very straightforward racer. You choose from single race, twoplayer, time attack or championship mode, then you choose your snow mobile and then you hit the slopes. Championship provides three successive racing classes each of which put you through a series of snowy circuits. You need to come in at least third to progress through the stages, and with each success you're given cash to mend your snow mobile (à la *V Rally*) or upgrade one of the key components. You can also earn extra cash during the races by performing stunts, although, to be honest, we kept falling on our arses when we tried this, so soon tired of it.

Look, simply driving these beasts is hard enough. Snow mobiles, we have discovered, literally turn on a six-pence, so unless you learn the art of subtlety very quickly you'll be veering about like a drunken loon. And you can forget the brake most of the time too – *Sno Cross* is about anticipating exactly when to turn (at full speed) and when to stop turning - braking is reserved for when you've just been buffeted into the path of an oncoming ski lodge.

The visuals, while not stunning, do everything they can with the various wintry locales (Nagano, Aspen, Calgary, etc). The circuits, too, are quite well-designed, offering a few alternative routes and some nice icy areas where you simply have to slide and pray. We were slightly suspicious of the AI, though, which sometimes instills your opponents with incredible catching-up powers, and other times makes them disappear from the race altogether.

The track editor is a nice bonus though, and the scary handling certainly keeps you on your frost-bitten toes. If you're desperate for a different sort of racing game, this fun little effort won't leave you cold. Ha ha ■

Keith Stuart



Going up hill (left) slows things up. Jumping (right) is more fun

Handling on ice (left) requires decent Snow Mobile upgrades

DC-UK VERDICT

GRAPHICS
Adequate, but a little samey after a while

SOUND
Decent motor sounds give each snow mobile a powerful feel

GAMEPLAY
Offbeat racing thrills, but the AI is dodgy and the handling is eccentirc

OVERALL
Not a classic, but certainly worth a look if you want to try something different

6
OUT OF TEN

Tokyo Highway Challenge 2

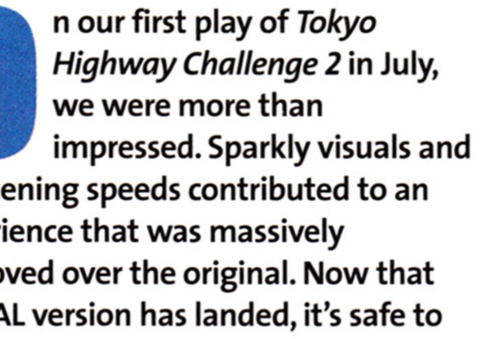
If you feel the need for speed, you've come to the right place

DETAILS

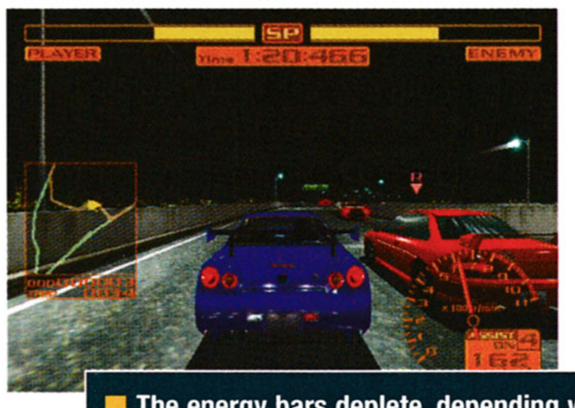
Publisher:	Ubi Soft
Developer:	Genki
Price:	£39.99
Release date:	December 15
Players:	One to two
Extras:	60Hz, vibration

On our first play of *Tokyo Highway Challenge 2* in July, we were more than impressed. Sparkly visuals and frightening speeds contributed to an experience that was massively improved over the original. Now that the PAL version has landed, it's safe to say that although little has changed, things have moved on, leaving Genki's midnight racer to befall a similar fate to that of *Sega GT*.

If you missed the import review way back in issue 13, let us fill you in, Craig David-stylee: Tokyo is well known for its vast stretches of motorway that weave through the city. At night, the roads empty of traffic, providing an ideal race track for all the hip young dudes with their souped-up motors.



The graphics are absolutely astounding, especially in the replays



The energy bars deplete, depending whether you are ahead or behind your opponent

Although this pursuit is illegal, very little is done to curb the practice, leaving the drivers to form clans who attempt to out-drive each other just for the sheer thrill of it.

Taking your first car for a test drive shows off the game admirably. The hi-res graphics are beautiful, real-time reflections giving the cars a dazzling sheen. The handling, while not perfect, has been severely overhauled, allowing the cars to powerslide properly, rather than seemingly rotating around a central axis. And the sensation of speed is phenomenal. Even with *Le Mans* having hit the road, there is nothing – repeat *nothing* – to challenge *Toyko* for its fearsome velocities. Choose the interior view to see just how unnerving this game can be.

But it's not the execution that stalls *Tokyo Highway Challenge 2*. It's the theme: in Japan, the Midnight Club is a well-known thing, but over here the appeal is virtually lost. Much of the game is spent cruising deserted streets, looking for a rival to take on in a race, which normally only lasts a minute anyway. While there's enormous scope for customising your car, squillions of upgrades and tuning options, plus some truly heart-stopping moments, we can't help feel that there's not quite enough to get your teeth into. For sheer speed, *Tokyo Highway Challenge 2* can't be beaten, but for lastability, it'll only ever be a flash distraction ■

Neil 'Maximus' Randall

DC-UK VERDICT

GRAPHICS
Gorgeous and super-sharp. The frame-rate never lets up

SOUND
Jap techno and trance fits the proceedings perfectly and the engine note is superb

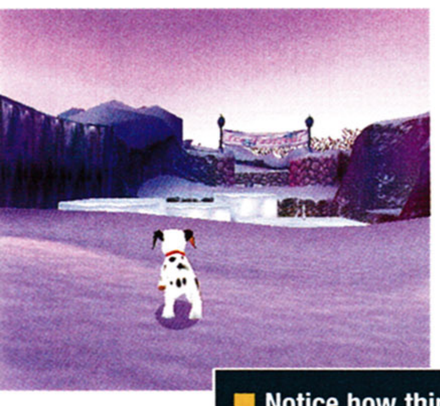
GAMEPLAY
Ginza or Shibuya are fast, but the general sense of emptiness may disappoint some

MULTIPLAYER
Works well, although there is the occasional drop in speed

OVERALL
Unrivalled for its sheer speed, but a very Japanese title that may be alien to many western gamers

7
OUT OF TEN

The levels are pretty enough, but you'll tire of them quickly



Notice how things seem a tad barren? That's 'cos they are

A rare moment of excitement in an otherwise mundane game

102 Dalmations

Some pets are obedient. This one just dumped in your best shoes

After the reeky *Toy Story 2* conveniently slipped past our review net, we were naturally a little suspicious of *102 Dalmations*, which just happens to come from the same stable. So after taking said game out for a walk, we can confirm that another visit to Stinksville seems to be on the cards.

But what can you expect from tacky Hollywood tie-ins? The film rehashes the hackneyed villain/kidnap/rescue plot and the game follows suit like a faithful lapdog. Playing as Domino and Oddball, (the 102nd unspotted Dalmation), you must travel around a number of predictable environments sniffing out your brothers and sisters, while avoiding the intentions of Cruella De Vil and her oafish cohorts. Bash enemies, eat bones, jump around a lot.

The saccharine story wouldn't have mattered if there were some thrills to be had. But there ain't. This is beyond banal. Honestly, the whole thing is uglier than Shane McGowan and simpler than Forrest Gump, smacking of minimum effort for maximum milkage. This is no game. It's an insult to Dreamcast owners everywhere.

While there's probably a handful of kiddies that'll enjoy *102 Dalmations*, it's not half as much fun as other child friendly titles such as *Kao* and *Qu@ck Att@ck?*!* Plus the total lack of innovation, weak graphics and mind-numbing gameplay will not cut it with the other 99 per cent of gamers. This dog isn't even for Christmas let alone life ■

Neil 'Maximus' Randall

DETAILS

Publisher:	Eidos
Developer:	Prolific
Price:	£39.99
Release date:	Out now
Players:	One
Extras:	60Hz, vibration

DC-UK VERDICT

GRAPHICS
Wiry coat, smells, fleas and rotten breath

SOUND
Stop barking, you're giving us a headache! STOP IT! NOW!

GAMEPLAY
Ruddy animal keeps digging up the damn garden and humping the furniture

OVERALL
Look, we can't deal with this mutt anymore. A trip to Battersea dogs home is in order

3
OUT OF TEN

Donald Duck "Qu@ck Att@ck*!"

The malcontent mallard goes back in time to when the world was flat

DETAILS

Publisher:	Ubi Soft
Developer:	Ubi Soft
Price:	£39.99
Release date:	December 15
Players:	One
Extras:	60Hz, Vibration

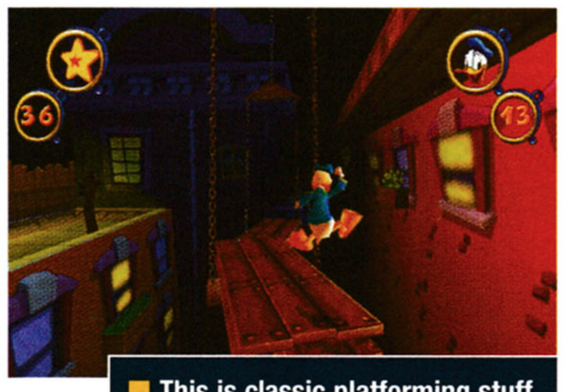
Spin back ten years and you'll find yourself in a golden age populated by 2D shooters, beat 'em ups and platformers. Disney had it going on with such gems as *Castle of Illusion* and *Quackshot* (see Glossary page 071), demonstrating just how good Mega Drive games could be. And it looks like Ubi Soft is trying to replicate the formula this Christmas, as the feisty duck sets out on his latest adventure.

Qu@ck Att@ck?!* may well look 3D, but it plays 2D, irrespective of whether you're travelling into the screen, or along it. All the platforming usuals are here: moving ledges, floating power-ups and a main character who can double-jump and bottom-bounce his enemies to oblivion. Equipped with only a one-two punch and a bad attitude, Donald is out to rescue his nephew's cursed toys, encountering all manner of clichés from the forest landscapes, through token puzzles, to the oversized, but cute boss.

It can't be denied that just about every 16bit title of the same ilk has been paraphrased here: *Aladdin*, *The New Zealand Story*, *Mr Nutz* – the list goes on. And while it's obviously aimed at kids, with colourful graphics and unfussy gameplay, those seeking a bit of nostalgic platforming action could do a lot worse. Firmly lodged in 1991, *Qu@ck Att@ck?*!* has the potential to delight unruly brats and retro-seekers alike – all those still clutching their Mega Drives should form a line here ■

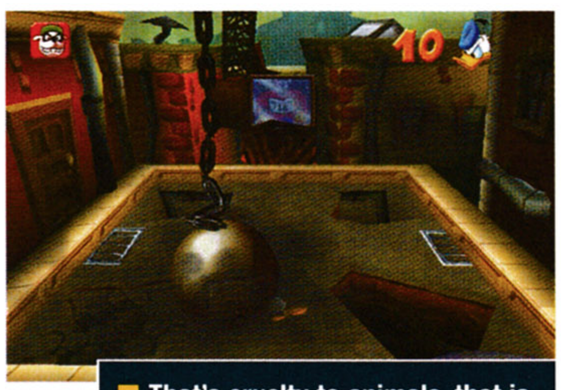
Neil 'Maximus' Randall

Floaty platforms with propellers? This IS *Quackshot*!



This is classic platforming stuff

The obligatory 'Haunted House' level



That's cruelty to animals, that is

DC-UK VERDICT

GRAPHICS
Some nice touches, though nothing outstanding, but has all the retro landscapes and hackneyed enemies you'll need

SOUND
Utterly brilliant tunes and authentic squawking effects

GAMEPLAY
Super old skool run-and-jump antics. Grab that elusive power-up, cross the dangerous bridge, then whack the boss

OVERALL
Starts bland, but soon picks up, offering an easy-to-digest slice of platforming nostalgia. Thoroughly entertaining

7
OUT OF TEN

Reviews

You must stop making your buying decisions based on what that weird bloke down the pub – the one with the dodgy eye – tells you is good.

Instead, peruse this massive list of every game we've ever reviewed (and a few we haven't, for good reason). Remember: your money is safe with us. Kind of... ■

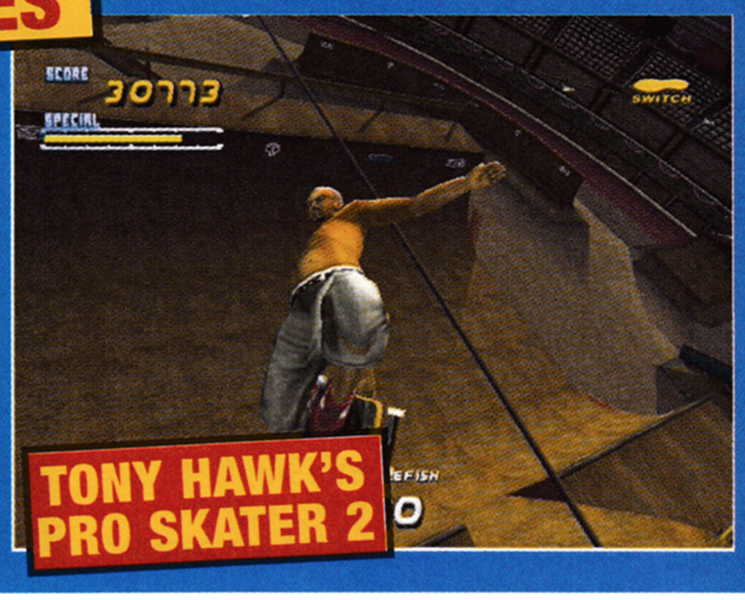
KEY

ACTION/ADVENTURE | BEAT 'EM UP | DRIVING/RACING | MISC | RPG | SHOOT 'EM UP | SPORTS | STRAT/SIMULATION

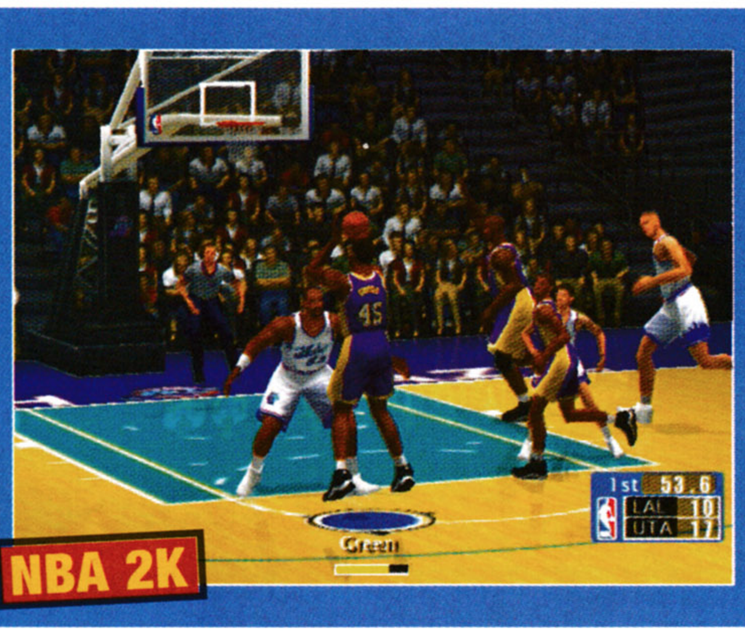
GAME NAME	PUBLISHER		PLAYERS	NET SUPPORT	ISSUE	SCORE
4 WHEEL THUNDER	MIDWAY	Hectic, simple arcade racer, with enough modes to keep you interested. But no fourplayer option.	TWO	✗	09	8/10
4X4 EVOLUTION	TAKE 2	Slow, dull and overall mediocre offroad racer. For all-terrain driving stick with *4 Wheel Thunder.*	FOUR	✓	18	4/10
AERO WINGS	CRAVE	Attractive flight sim, but we'd recommend this one to hardcore enthusiasts only.	ONE	✗	Not reviewed	
AERO WINGS 2: AIRSTRIKE	CRAVE	A vast improvement on the original with excellent dogfighting action added to its flight sim aspects.	TWO	✗	14	8/10
ARMADA	ACCLAIM	Enjoyable, in-depth shooter with relentless action, but there aren't that many different types of missions.	FOUR	✗	06	8/10
ARMY MEN: SARGE'S HEROES	MIDWAY	Those notorious toy soldiers raise their plastic guns at DC. As with every *Army Men* game, this is dreadful.	FOUR	✗	Not reviewed	
BANGAI-O	SWING/VIRGIN	Fantastically addictive retro shooter with constant swarms of enemies and vast environments.	ONE	✗	14	8/10
BLUE STINGER	ACTIVISION	Unoriginal gameplay and too many frustrating moments, but some nice graphical touches.	ONE	✗	02	3/10
BUGGY HEAT	SEGA	Pretty much a dune buggy version of *Sega Rally 2*, marred by limited depth and slow turning speeds.	TWO	✗	03	6/10
BUST-A-MOVE 4	ACCLAIM	Addictive, exciting and mentally challenging. It's the best version yet of Taito's puzzle classic.	TWO	✗	12	8/10
CAPCOM VS SNK	CAPCOM	The most important of beat 'em up franchises have been immortalised in one beautiful 2D fighter.	TWO	✗	17	9/10
CEASAR'S PALACE 2000	INTERPLAY	A Commodore 64-style gambling sim? On a 128-bit Dreamcast behemoth? In the year 2000? Do give over…	FOUR	✗	Not reviewed	
CHEF'S LUV SHACK	ACCLAIM	Boasts a variety of mini-games and enjoyable fourplayer fun, but it won't keep you coming back for more.	FOUR	✗	05	6/10
CHICKEN RUN	EIDOS	*Metal Gear Solid* but with chickens. And not quite as good.	ONE	✗	17	6/10
CHUCHU ROCKET!	SEGA	One of the best puzzlers you'll ever play. It's fast, infectious and hilarious. An online gaming essential.	FOUR	✓	10	9/10
CRAZY TAXI	SEGA	Brilliantly original driving game with completely addictive gameplay and infectious mini-games.	ONE	✗	07	9/10
DAVE MIRRA FREESTYLE BMX	ACCLAIM	Decent mountain bike variant of *Tony Hawk's,* spoiled by dodgy collision detection and slowdown. Shame.	TWO	✗	18	5/10
DEADLY SKIES	KONAMI	Some nicely designed missions and great scenery, but ultimately a short-lived shooter with a lack of depth.	ONE	✗	07	6/10
DEAD OR ALIVE 2	ACCLAIM	The boobtastic beat 'em up is one of the smoothest, sauciest and best fighting games you'll ever play.	FOUR	✗	13	9/10
DEEP FIGHTER	UBI SOFT	Fairly original underwater action ruined by dull environments, zero atmosphere and repetitive gameplay.	ONE	✗	12	5/10
DINO CRISIS	VIRGIN	Survival horror – with dinosaurs. It's no *Code: Veronica*, but worth picking up for the fear effect.	ONE	✗	17	6/10
DINOSAUR	UBISOFT	Disney's hideously expensive animated film becomes a typical game/movie tie-in shambles.	ONE	✗	Not reviewed	
DRAGONS BLOOD	INTERPLAY	A typical hack 'n' slash game that's fun for a while but is too shallow to be an essential purchase.	ONE	✗	12	6/10
DYNAMITE COP 2	SEGA	A dull arcade beat 'em up, with a few humourous touches and little else.	TWO	✗	Not reviewed	
ECCO THE DOLPHIN: DEFENDER OF THE FUTURE	SEGA	Looks beautiful and plays equally well – except it may be a bit too challenging for some.	ONE	✗	11	8/10
ECW REVOLUTION	ACCLAIM	Limp wrestling game with bad graphics, rubbish characters and awful moves. Believe us, it's no revolution	FOUR	✗	09	3/10
EVOLUTION	UBI SOFT	Average RPG with some nice touches, but not much to really get excited about.	ONE	✗	05	5/10
EXPENDABLE	INFOGRAMES	Old-skool top-down shoot 'em up that soon becomes tiresome.	TWO	✗	01	6/10
EXTREME SPORTS	SEGA	Reasonably entertaining multiple sports sim which sacrifices depth for diversity.	TWO	✗	16	5/10
FIGHTING FORCE 2	EIDOS	Satisfyingly violent adventure that disappoints due to its lack of depth and awkward movement.	ONE	✗	05	7/10
FUR FIGHTERS	ACCLAIM	A superb videogaming experience that has a top quality fourplayer mode and glorious graphics.	FOUR	✗	10	9/10
F1 WORLD GRAND PRIX	VIDEO SYSTEMS	Challenging racing sim, marred only by some slow down and an imperfect twoplayer mode.	TWO	✗	03	7/10

THE BEST SPORTS GAMES

VIRTUA TENNIS



TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2



NBA 2K

DC-LISTINGS

GAME NAME	PUBLISHER		PLAYERS	NET SUPPORT	ISSUE	SCORE
F1 WORLD GRAND PRIX 2	VIDEO SYSTEMS	The best F1 game available for DC but doesn't do anything particularly new with the Grand Prix genre.	TWO	✗	15	7/10
FERRARI 355 CHALLENGE	ACCLAIM	The most realistic driving game ever. Totally hardcore, if you can handle it this is virtually peerless stuff.	TWO	✓	15	9/10
GAUNTLET LEGENDS	MIDWAY	Half-hearted attempted at regenerating the magic of the original. It rapidly becomes a tedious affair.	FOUR	✗	12	6/10
GIGA WING	VIRGIN	Enjoyable retro shooter that is outrageously action-packed but a bit too short-lived.	TWO	✗	13	7/10
GTA2	TAKE 2	Worthy sequel that outclasses and will probably outlast the original.	ONE	✗	10	8/10
GUNBIRD 2	VIRGIN	Typically frenzied 2D shoot 'em up that is extremely good fun while it lasts.	TWO	✗	15	7/10
HIDDEN AND DANGEROUS	TAKE 2	War's never been so much fun than in this engrossing, strategic WWII adventure.	ONE	✗	13	8/10
HALF-LIFE	HAVAS	The PC classic works equally well on Dreamcast. You'll need a mouse and keyboard, though.	ONE	✗	16	9/10
THE HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2	SEGA	Arcade perfect shoot 'em up with addictive gameplay, but not much replay value.	TWO	✗	01	8/10
HYDRO THUNDER	MIDWAY	Frenetic racing action that never fails to thrill or infuriate. Great level design but gameplay is a touch shallow.	TWO	✗	03	7/10
INCOMING	INFOGRAMES	This simple shoot 'em up is fun for a while but it'll soon be gathering dust on your shelf.	ONE	✗	01	5/10
INTERNATIONAL TRACK AND FIELD	KONAMI	Disappointingly lack-lustre button basher, seriously letting down its predecessors.	FOUR	✗	16	6/10
JEDI POWER BATTLES	ACTIVISION	Derivative hack and slash adventure with characters from Star Wars Episode One.	TWO	✗	17	6/10
JET SET RADIO	SEGA	Innovative and addictive skatepunk graffiti action game. Thoroughly entertaining.	ONE	✗	16	9/10
JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL	VIRGIN	Above average snooker sim marred by awful loading times and awkward controls.	TWO	✗	03	6/10
JOJO'S BIZARRE ADVENTURE	VIRGIN	Insane 2D beat 'em up offering two games for the price of one. But it's a bit easy with limited moves.	TWO	✗	08	7/10
LE MANS 24 HOUR	INFOGRAMES	Excellent endurance racer with great visuals and slick, exciting handling.	FOUR	✗	17	9/10
LOONEY TUNES: SPACE RACE	INFOGRAMES	Another sub-standard *Mario Kart* wannabe. Replicates everything except the addictive gameplay.	FOUR	✗	16	5/10
KAO THE KANGAROO	TITUS	*Crash Bandicoot* with a kangaroo. Totally average and derivative platformer but kids'll enjoy it.	ONE	✗	18	6/10
KISS PSYCHO CIRCUS: THE NIGHTMARE CHILD	TAKE 2	We want to rock 'n' roll all night and party every day. We don't want to play this mediocre shooter.	ONE	✗	18	6/10
MAGFORCE RACING	CRAVE	Below par futuristic racer that combines *Rollcage* and *WipEout* in sick-making fashion.	FOUR	✗	Not reviewed	
MAKEN X	SEGA	Innovative firstperson adventure that uses swords rather than guns. Difficult but worth the effort.	ONE	✗	13	8/10
MARVEL VS CAPCOM	VIRGIN	Cool characters and attacks but most players will try this once or twice before dashing back to the shops.	TWO	✗	03	6/10
MARVEL VS CAPCOM 2	VIRGIN	Fantastically competitive 2D fighter. The graphics will have you drooling all over your Dreamcast.	TWO	✗	12	8/10
MDK2	INTERPLAY	With an imaginative three-character set-up and a great sense of humour, it's far superior to the original.	ONE	✗	09	9/10
METROPOLIS STREET RACER	SEGA	Totally deserving of only the second **DC-UK** perfect score. Arcade-style racing taken to a new stratosphere.	TWO	✓	15	10/10
MIDWAY ARCADE CLASSICS	MIDWAY	These are 20-year old titles and it shows. The gameplay is embarrassing by today's standards.	TWO	✗	12	3/10
MOHO	TAKE 2	Interesting but flawed attempt at the much-maligned 'futuristic sport' genre.	TWO	✗	17	6/10
MONACO GRAND PRIX	UBI SOFT	Detailed simulation, enjoyable arcade mode, but more than a little unrewarding.	TWO	✗	02	6/10
MORTAL KOMBAT GOLD	MIDWAY	Beat 'em up fans are spoilt for choice with DC's line up of fighters. This dated offering is not one to opt for.	TWO	✗	02	6/10
MR DRILLER	VIRGIN	Excellent, old-fashioned puzzle game plays like a cross between classics *Boulderdash* and *Mr Do.*	ONE	✗	18	8/10
MTV SPORTS SKATEBOARDING	THQ	Diabolical poor man's *Tony Hawk's.* Under no circumstances purchase this game.	FOUR	✗	18	3/10
NBA SHOWTIME	MIDWAY	Not much longevity in the oneplayer mode, but fourplayer hoops is superbly addictive.	FOUR	✗	04	6/10
NBA 2K	SEGA	Standard-setting visuals, arcade and simulation modes. It's the best basketball sim ever. Need we say more?	FOUR	✗	07	8/10
NHL 2K	SEGA	Good looking title that's perfect for ice-hockey fans, but may not appeal to newcomers to the game.	FOUR	✗	12	7/10
NFL BLITZ	MIDWAY	Fast, fun and outrageously violent American football game. Ideal for anyone who's into instant sports fun.	FOUR	✗	04	8/10
NFL QBC 2000	ACCLAIM	Appalling American football title. Even grid-iron fans should avoid this stinker.	FOUR	✗	Not reviewed	
NIGHTMARE CREATURES	KONAMI	A great storyline and atmosphere have been wasted on a game engine that just isn't up to the job.	ONE	✗	11	5/10
THE NOMAD SOUL	EIDOS	Graphically flawed sci-fi adventure that allows you take control of other peoples bodies.	ONE	✗	09	7/10
PEN PEN TRIICELON	INFOGRAMES	Weird racing game that looks fantastic but is let down by horribly repetitive gameplay.	ONE	✗	Not reviewed	
PLASMA SWORD	VIRGIN	An average weapons-based fighter that gets its head cleaved in by the mighty *Soul Calibur.*	TWO	✗	13	5/10
POD II	UBISOFT	*WipEout* again. Has online play but that's not enough to persuade anyone to check this out.	TWO	✓	17	4/10
POWER STONE	EIDOS	Groundbreaking beat 'em up featuring giant arenas and eye-popping power-ups and weapons. Excellent.	TWO	✗	02	9/10
POWER STONE 2	EIDOS	A superb sequel that adds much to the original, but its big new feature, fourway scrapping, is a bit of a mess.	FOUR	✗	14	8/10
PSYCHIC FORCE 2012	ACCLAIM	Beat 'em up with a difference: the action takes place in the air. That really is it. Avoid.	TWO	✗	Not reviewed	
QUAKE III ARENA	SEGA	Superb Dreamcast conversion of the epic PC frag-stravaganza.	FOUR	✓	17	9/10

DC-LISTINGS

THE BEST DRIVING GAMES

METROPOLIS STREET RACER

FERRARI 355 CHALLENGE

LE MANS 24 HOURS

ACTION/ADVENTURE | BEAT 'EM UP | DRIVING/RACING | MISC | RPG | SHOOT 'EM UP | SPORTS | STRAT/SIMULATION

GAME NAME	PUBLISHER		PLAYERS	NET SUPPORT	ISSUE	SCORE
RAILROAD TYCOON II	TAKE 2	DC's first real strategy game is a trainspotters dream, but is probably too slow and dull for most.	FOUR	✓	14	6/10
RAYMAN 2	UBI SOFT	Challenging platformer with stunning scenery, huge levels and lasting appeal for those who persevere.	ONE	✓	08	8/10
READY 2 RUMBLE BOXING	SEGA	One of the best box 'em ups ever with hugely enjoyable play and superstar characters. Hilarious.	TWO	✗	02	8/10
READY 2 RUMBLE BOXING: ROUND 2	SEGA	Better graphics and more varied fighting, but if you have the first game you may feel short-changed.	EIGHT	✗	17	8/10
RECORD OF LODOSS WAR	VIRGIN	Enjoyable retro-style RPG, packed with battles and stat-heavy resource management.	ONE	✗	18	7/10
RED DOG	SEGA	Futuristic shoot 'em up with diverse locations, superb missions and great multiplayer games.	FOUR	✗	07	8/10
RESIDENT EVIL 2	VIRGIN	Still scary, still absorbing, but still a half-hearted PC port of an old game.	ONE	✗	06	7/10
RESIDENT EVIL 3: NEMESIS	CAPCOM	Yes it's a PC conversion of an ageing game but the classic *Resi Evil* action remains gripping.	ONE	✗	18	7/10
RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA	EIDOS	Doesn't stray too far from the *Resi Evil* formula, but is the best yet in the series. Survival horror genius.	ONE	✗	11	9/10
RE-VOLT REVOLUTION	SEGA	Remote-controlled car racer with plenty of variety, but the handling is a bit too tricky.	FOUR	✗	05	7/10
ROADSTERS	TITUS	Awful driving game that pales in comparison to the likes of *MSR*. Spend your cash elsewhere.	TWO	✗	Not reviewed	
SAMBA DE AMIGO	SEGA	Genius rhythm/action game where you shake maracas along to groovy sambatastic sounds. Arriba!	TWO	✗	12	9/10
SAN FRANCISCO RUSH 2049	MIDWAY	Enjoyable arcade racer with big jumps and bigger crashes. Boasts loads of cool extra modes, too.	FOUR	✗	15	7/10
SEGA BASS FISHING	SEGA	Novelty arcade fish 'em up that's great fun for the first few cast-offs. Gets repetitive quickly though.	ONE	✗	03	7/10
SEGA GT	SEGA	Decent attempt to remake *Gran Turismo* for Dreamcast, now superseded by *MSR* and *Le Mans*.	TWO	✓	17	7/10
SEGA RALLY 2	SEGA	Playable and intuitive rally driving game with some nice touches, but it lacks handling complexity.	TWO	✓	01	7/10
SHADOWMAN	ACCLAIM	Great visuals and plenty to do in this massive, atmospheric adventure title. Magic.	ONE	✗	04	9/10
SHENMUE	SEGA	Absolutely essential adventure epic that takes videogaming in a whole new direction. A true work of art.	ONE	✗	17	10/10
SILENT SCOPE	KONAMI	Hardcore arcade shoot 'em up with a great console adaptation of the famous coin-op sniping system.	ONE	✗	16	8/10
SILVER	INFOGRAMES	The sort of RPG that will appeal to the casual gamer. It's fun to play, but not overly engrossing.	ONE	✗	10	7/10
SLAVE ZERO	INFOGRAMES	Linear mech shoot 'em up with a poor multiplayer experience. It's got rather large guns though.	FOUR	✗	07	6/10
SNOW SURFERS	SEGA	Badly designed tracks with no sensation of boarding and no opponents. Appalling.	TWO	✗	04	3/10
SONIC ADVENTURE	SEGA	Excellent new adventures mixed with tried and tested gameplay in *Sonic*'s impressive 128bit debut.	ONE	✓	01	9/10
SOUL CALIBUR	SEGA	Possibly the greatest beat 'em up ever with an addictive oneplayer mode and twoplayer action to die for.	TWO	✗	03	10/10
SOUL FIGHTER	MINDSCAPE	Approach this below par scrolling beat 'em up with extreme caution. It's repetitive and boring.	ONE	✗	04	4/10
SOUL REAVER	EIDOS	Truly magnificent visuals, fangtastic design (sorry) and you can't die either.	ONE	✗	07	9/10
SOUTH PARK RALLY	ACCLAIM	Comedy racing action in a perfect conversion from TV to DC, but only avid *South Park* fans will hold it dear.	FOUR	✗	12	5/10
SPACE CHANNEL 5	SEGA	Ulala is the undisputed Dancing Queen in Sega's fantastic boogie 'em up. Utterly irresistible while it lasts.	ONE	✗	15	8/10
SPEED DEVILS	UBI SOFT	Great fun to play and unique looking, but it's marred by a lack of opponents and few tracks to race on.	TWO	✗	02	7/10
SPIRIT OF SPEED	ACCLAIM	Dreadful racer in which you drive 1930s F1 deathtraps. Or don't, because no-one should ever play this game.	TWO	✗	Not reviewed	
STAR WARS: EPISODE 1 RACER	LUCASARTS	A very entertaining but limited hyperspeed racing game. It hasn't got a fourplayer option either.	TWO	✗	11	7/10
STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3	VIRGIN	Capcom's allstars have never played so beautifully or or looked so good on a console. Loads of options too.	TWO	✗	04	8/10
STREET FIGHTER 3: DOUBLE IMPACT	VIRGIN	The definitive sequel to *SF2*. It lacks *Alpha*'s options, but the gameplay and controls are pure *Street Fighter*.	TWO	✗	08	8/10
STREET FIGHTER III: THIRD STRIKE	VIRGIN	Hopefully the final title in the *Street Fighter* series. Already superseded by *Capcom vs SNK*.	TWO	✓	16	7/10
SUPER MAGNETIC NEO	CRAVE	Enjoyable old skool platformer with great magnetic gameplay, but may be too hard and frustrating for many.	ONE	✗	14	7/10
SUPER RUNABOUT	VIRGIN	Poor sequel to a cult PlayStation game. It's *Driver* mixed with *Crazy Taxi*, but it doesn't work too well.	ONE	✗	17	4/10
SUZUKI ALSTARE	UBI SOFT	This motorbike racer is a lazy PC conversion that lacks charm and originality. Rubbish twoplayer mode too.	TWO	✗	03	5/10
SWORD OF THE BERSERK	EIDOS/ASCII	Incredibly bloody hack 'n' slash adventure with overlong animated story sequences. Fun for a while, though.	ONE	✗	10	5/10
SWWS 2000	SEGA	Fun footie game with more depth than *Virtua Striker*, but poorer visuals. Some find it lacks pace.	FOUR	✗	05	7/10

DC-LISTINGS

GAME NAME	PUBLISHER		PLAYERS	NET SUPPORT	ISSUE	SCORE
SWWS: EURO 2000 EDITION	SEGA	Quality update which boasts all the Euro 2000 teams and faster, more fluid gameplay.	FOUR	✗	10	8/10
SYDNEY 2000	EIDOS	The best button-basher on DC so far is spoiled by some irritating control problems.	FOUR	✗	14	6/10
TECH ROMANCER	VIRGIN	Manga-style robot fighting game, filled with standard Capcom touches. Not one for the 'casual gamer'.	ONE	✗	09	7/10
TEE OFF GOLF	ACCLAIM	Approachable golf game modelled on the PlayStation title *Everybody's Golf*. Not quite as good.	FOUR	✗	06	7/10
TIME STALKERS	SEGA	Interesting RPG from Climax Entertainment. Similar to *Evolution* in many respects, but not as good.	ONE	✗	12	4/10
TOKYO HIGHWAY CHALLENGE	CRAVE	An admirable attempt to create a totally new style of driving game, which unfortunately fails.	TWO	✗	Not reviewed	
TOMB RAIDER CHRONICLES	EIDOS	Another entertaining outing for Lara Croft, this time taking in four periods of her exciting life.	ONE	✗	17	7/10
TOMB RAIDER: THE LAST REVELATION	EIDOS	Challenging if lazy conversion of the PlayStation and PC hit. Formula fatigue is definitely setting in.	ONE	✗	08	8/10
TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2	ACTIVISION	Superb skate 'em up that improves on every aspect of the original and adds some tasty new features.	TWO	✗	18	9/10
TONY HAWK'S SKATEBOARDING	CRAVE	Excellent conversion of the PlayStation hit with intuitive controls and compulsive gameplay.	TWO	✗	11	9/10
TOY COMMANDER	SEGA	Innovative mix of gaming styles and challenges which may frustrate those who lack the patience of saints.	FOUR	✗	02	7/10
TOY STORY 2	ACTIVISION	It's another case of buy the DVD and avoid the game with this poor platform adventure.	ONE	✗	Not reviewed	
TRICKSTYLE	ACCLAIM	Futuristic hoverboarding stunt racer with fine visuals. The last few tracks are gut-wrenchingly hard.	TWO	✗	01	9/10
UEFA DREAM SOCCER	SEGA	Disappointing sequel to *Sega Worldwide Soccer*, knackered by the dodgy player animation.	FOUR	✗	17	6/10
UEFA STRIKER	INFOGRAMES	Decent football sim which, like the England Euro 2000 squad, is let down by dodgy throughballs.	FOUR	✗	03	8/10
ULTIMATE FIGHTING CHAMPIONSHIP	CRAVE	Surprisingly decent US beat 'em up based on the violent pay-per-view sport of the same name.	TWO	✗	16	8/10
URBAN CHAOS	EIDOS	Quality action/adventure set in a massive metropolis with loads of missions and combat.	ONE	✗	15	7/10
VIGILANTE 8	ACTIVISION	Poor car combat title with extremely average visuals and one-dimensional gameplay.	FOUR	✗	06	3/10
VIRTUA ATHLETE 2K	SEGA	Disappointing button-basher hamstrung by a lack of events and some dodgy control methods.	FOUR	✗	15	5/10
VIRTUA FIGHTER 3TB	SEGA	The expert's beat 'em up. More depth than the Marianas trench – and just as inaccessible to most people.	TWO	✗	02	7/10
VIRTUA STRIKER 2	SEGA	Limited football game which provides more twoplayer fun than it really ought to.	TWO	✗	06	6/10
VIRTUA TENNIS	SEGA	Smashing tennis 'em up that will thrill you with its blisteringly quick and addictive action. An ace.	FOUR	✗	13	9/10
V-RALLY 2	INFOGRAMES	Excellent rally game with slick handling but dodgy collision detection.	FOUR	✗	10	8/10
WACKY RACES	INFOGRAMES	Poor handling and unimaginative design make this only an average use of a great licence.	FOUR	✗	11	6/10
WALT DISNEY	EIDOS	A dreadful *Mario Kart*-clone that handles like a nightmare and trumps in the face of its Disney licence.	FOUR	✗	14	3/10
WETRIX+	TAKE 2	Hectic puzzle game which could have been a classic if it weren't for a couple of design flaws.	TWO	✗	08	7/10
WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE?	EIDOS	The entire attraction of the TV show is lost in the game because you can't actually win any money.	FOUR	✗	Not reviewed	
WILD METAL	TAKE 2	Tank battle game with some cool features and decent design. But the lack of diversity soon palls.	TWO	✗	08	5/10
WORMS ARMAGEDDON	HASBRO	Decent Dreamcast outing for the long-running battle puzzle series. Excellent multiplayer longevity.	FOUR	✗	05	8/10
WORMS WORLD PARTY	HASBRO	Timeless *Worms* gameplay with the added bonus of full online play. Hugely addictive in multiplayer.	FOUR	✗	18	8/10
WWF ATTITUDE	ACCLAIM	Typically average wrestling game which aims at appeasing fans of the 'sport' and achieves nothing more.	TWO	✗	04	6/10
WWF ROYAL RUMBLE	THQ	Average wrestler with one saving grace – a mad feature enabling nine fat blokes to be in the ring at once.	FOUR	✗	15	5/10
ZOMBIE REVENGE	SEGA	*Streets of Rage*-style scrolling shoot 'em up with gameplay too limited for most console owners.	TWO	✗	05	6/10

DC-GLOSSARY

Confused by something we've mentioned in this Issue? The answer may well be here...

Streets of Rage 2

Platform – Mega Drive
Genre – Scrolling 2D Beat 'em up **Year** – 1993
Developer – Sega

As far as this rather oversubscribed genre was concerned, there was only ever two worthy contenders – *Final Fight* and *Streets of Rage*. Sure, *Double Dragon* had been around years before, but to put it mildly, it sucked in comparison. No, the real King was undoubtedly Sega's astonishingly playable sequel to the groundbreaking *Streets of Rage*. Graphically, the game surpassed all others – think *Shenmue* for Mega Drive and you'll be close. The range of characters was the other strong point, from the hulking but sloth-like Max to knicker-flashing Blaze. Pausing the game just right in order to get that elusive patch of white was an art in itself.

Even without such gimmicks, *Streets of Rage* will be remembered not for its perfectly balanced gameplay, not for its grin-inducing twoplayer mode or even the huge array of weapons and moves. No, the coup de grâce was Yuzo Koshiro's utterly brilliant soundtrack, so much so, that Sega has just re-released it, the rumour of a DC incarnation of the game growing ever-stronger. Known as *Bare Knuckle 2* in Japan and from the same team responsible for the classic *Shinobi* series, *Streets of Rage 2* is the pinnacle of the genre. Accept no substitutes.

Quackshot

Platform – Mega Drive **Genre** – 2D Platformer
Year – 1991 **Developer** – Sega

No arguments, please – Disney's games peaked during the 16bit era, quite simply because of a trilogy of titles that encapsulated 2D design godhood: *Castle of Illusion*, *World of Illusion* and *Quackshot*, the latter of which was possibly the most masterly. The world-spanning storyline saw Donald Duck visit such places as Egypt, Antarctica and Mexico, all in the name of mallard love. Beyond the dazzling artwork and stunning animations, there was a real challenge, demanding pinpoint accuracy and control, not to mention a good deal of puzzle-solving. A well-realised score and spot-on Disney characterisation added immeasurably to an enormous adventure that has never been bettered. With an 'invisible platform' ending lifted straight from The Last Crusade, Sega crowned Donald Duck as Indy Jones for the gaming age, hat and all. Witness its delights and you'll understand what true gaming genius is all about.

Wave Race

Platform – N64 **Genre** – 3D Jetski Racer
Year – 1995 (Japan) **Developer** – Nintendo

Despite the quality of *Mario*, *Mario Kart* and *Zelda*, Nintendo proved it could also do arcade games with its rather groundbreaking *Wave Race 64*. The power of the machine afforded the programmers a new graphical high, water sparkling under the late afternoon sun, skis bobbing authentically up and down. Playing it was something else. Completely intuitive controls and an amazing sensation of aquatic physics helped power the game to that perfect place between realism and enjoyment.

Add to the mix a brilliant line-up of aerial tricks to pull off and a devilish twoplayer mode that saw friends bashing into each other mid-air and you were in the presence of another Nintendo classic. Ignore the poor PAL conversion and you'll be fine.

Virtua Fighter 2

Platform – Arcade/Saturn/PC **Genre** – Beat 'em up
Year – 1994 (Arcade) **Developer** – AM2

After having set the world alight with the first true 3D fighter, AM2 piled on the texture maps and created a monstrous sequel that improved on the original tenfold. Aside from the wonderful visuals, the speed was upped considerably, making for some ferociously quick bouts.

Virtua Fighter 2's premiere attraction was as always, it's depth of play, a fact borne out by the Japanese preference to it over the comparative lightweight, *Tekken*. Namco's title, while supremely playable, was far more restrictive, *VF2*'s relative open-ended nature allowing the hardcore gamer to mix combos and dodges as they saw fit.

The real success story was the conversion to Saturn, a more blinding port you are unlikely to ever see. Given the plain nature of its predecessor, the threat of a good home version was considered slim by many. The same naysayers were eating their words inside of nine months. *VF2* for Saturn is still an incredible game, offering the pinnacle of 3D brawling to date, *Tekken Tag* and *DOA2* included. Expect great things for *Virtua Fighter X*

Reader Reviews

Have you bought a real undiscovered treasure? Tell the whole world about it!

GET INVOLVED!

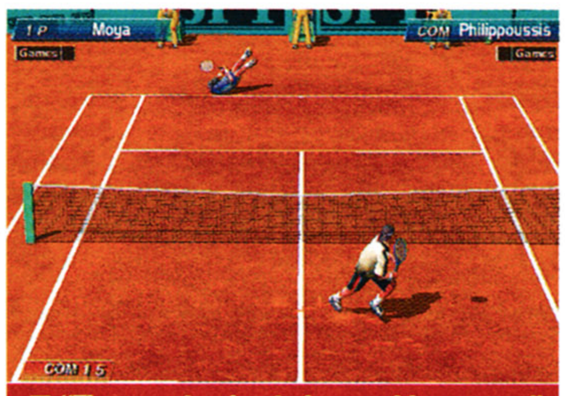
This month we've delved into Lee's sack of games and plucked out a random treasure for each of our featured reviewers. If you want to be in the next issue of **DC-UK**, simply send your review (no more than 240 words please) to the usual address (or email it to us on **dcuk@futurenet.co.uk**). At the moment we're changing the prizes every month so you never know what you might win if you give it a go!

Virtua Tennis

Hayley Peacock

The best sports game... ever? No way! It's not even the best ball game ever. Lets be honest now, has *Virtua Tennis* really lived up to the hype that everyone (including me) expected after the high review scores? Is it really worth forty bloody quid? In my view, nope.

I pre-ordered this sports title on my gorgeous Dreamcast and when it arrived I was so excited about playing it, but soon after starting the disc up I was very disappointed. In the close up views of the players it look like they are quite literally replicas of the zombies in *House of the Dead 2*. Their awfully sunken eyes and static T-shirts make this the worst animated game I have ever seen. Work out the tricks (which isn't hard), and you can beat the game so easily. For



"The worst animated game I have seen"

instance, I managed to complete World Circuit Mode within just one week and I had a couple of respectable high scores, including an embarrassingly easy six-nil win against the supposed 'King' and 'Master' (which may I add, have really un-original names).

The intro sequence is far too silly, long and disappointing, the crowd are completely flat – it's as if they are dead and the players run around as if they are walking! Crazy. I'm hoping that *Virtua Tennis 2* will be a massive improvement on the original game as it is dreadful, boasting lazy close-up graphics, ball boys and line callers with painted-on faces and a crowd so flat it looks as if they have been blown over by the wind.

In my view Sega's *Virtua Tennis* is on an overall par with *Nightmare Creatures II*, which isn't a compliment if you didn't know already. New balls and game please! **3/10**

Metropolis Street Racer

Paul Dohoney

This is a fast, action based driving game giving you the opportunity to race around London, Tokyo or San Francisco at anytime of the day or night. The difficulty level in the game rises slowly, giving you a chance to get better and better. Within five minutes you will be throwing a car around the roads without any effort as the control system is well, sublime.

The game uses a kudos system. This is where you gain points for how well you drive. Bonus points are awarded for style. If you do hit something, then some of your kudos points will get deducted from your overall total. You can then gamble what you have just won, to have a chance of gaining more kudos and hence opening more chapters in the game. It sounds complicated, but it's really straight forward. The game has 25 chapters, each with ten stages.

What makes a game aren't just the graphics or the sound, but the gameplay, and *Metropolis Street Racer* has it in bucket loads. The graphics are incredible too, if a little dark. The sound is also fantastic. You can have the radio playing with traffic and weather reports

"Little touches of magic" says Paul

or you can have music playing instead. As they say, the choice is yours. The designers have also added little touches of magic to the way the game looks. You have light reflections on your car windows, you can see your driver changing gears and when it's raining your rear lights light up the rain, turning it red. The list really does go on and on. Go out and buy this game. Don't rent first just buy it right now! You'll not regret it. **9/10**

House of the Dead 2

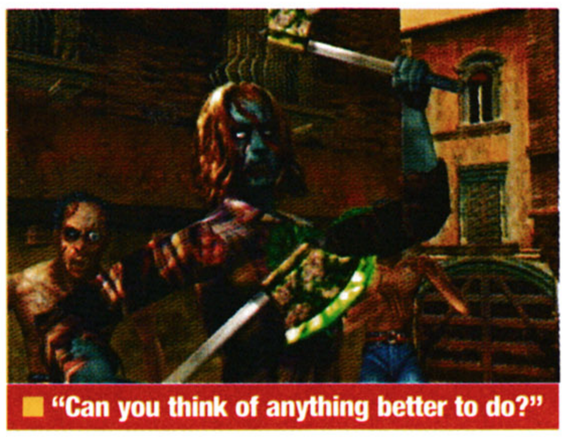
Daniel Baker

Can you think of anything better to do in this world than shoot zombies and other monsters? I certainly can't. I saw this game in the arcade and liked it so much I just had to go out and buy a Sega DC and a console copy of *House of the Dead 2*. The graphics are excellent with great detail. Something different

"The graphics are excellent"

happens every time you play as shooting at certain things or rescuing someone might take you on another route. The highly detailed bosses are brilliant. The last boss is so hard I can't beat him yet!

Thankfully, *HOTD2* is also compatible with the DC gun. It's a fun game but is even better in twoplayer mode. There are lots of different zombies and monsters too, from knife throwing zombies to a suit of armour as big as a house. Great modes like boss and training mode will keep you coming back for more. You play as either James Taylor or Gary Stewart, who are both AMS special agents. Your aim is to find out who Goldman is. I won't give it away but here's a tip: if you get this game don't go into the mansion alone! **8/10**


"Can you think of anything better to do?"

Carrier (import)

Toby Skinner

Having polished off a generous helping of survival horror action with the latest *Resi* title *Code: Veronica*, I found my hands aching for more head popping action. Instead I found *Carrier*.

Now I've played some horrifically bad games in my time that tried to be something they're not, but when I purchased *Carrier* from my local importer I hoped for some cool action... I couldn't have been more wrong. Admittedly your adventure starts off with some fine FMV, stirrings of a decent plot, and some delicious cut-scenes to kick off the action, but then your character speaks. The dialogue is so bad that even *Resi* fans would cringe. Your character moves like he's on steroids; which makes it so hard to move accurately that it would be a challenge to get through a barn door.

Carrier tries to do what *Resi* did but with a lot less finesse. An example: a dark corridor screams 'make me jump', you clench but... wait... nope, it's just another dark corridor. The only thing, which came close to suspense, was when the game froze mid-speech and the mouths kept moving, how spine tinglingly boring... snore. A warning to everyone: do not buy this game, it is the bane of the survival horror genre and should come with a notice screen: "Warning, this game contains scenes of explicit boredom, play at your own risk." You might as well burn 40 quid, it would be far more entertaining. Then again, so would putting your head in the oven. **2/10**

DC-TIPS

Gorge your stomach on our cheat treats

074 QUAKE III ARENA

Thanks to our in-depth guide you can learn all the dirtiest tricks and strategies and stay alive longer than your stupid friends.

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THE GATEWAY TO GAMES

076 JET SET RADIO

A quick and easy guide to Sega's skate stunt spray chase romp. Learn all about the different districts and characters, and find those *Jet Set Radio* emblem things!

082 SHENMUE

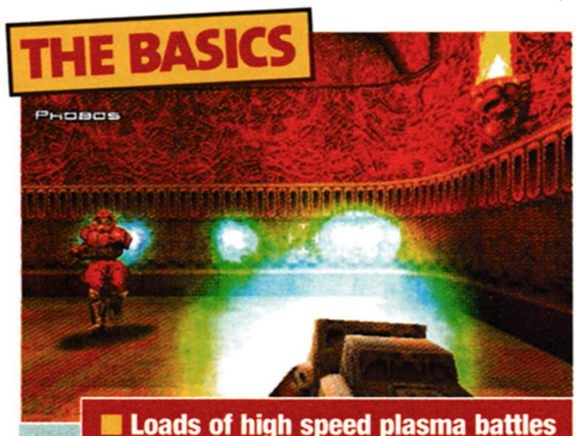
The final part of our guide takes you all the way through disc three to the very end of the game. Remember though, completing it is only half the experience...

QUAKE III ARENA PLAYERS GUIDE

One of the best firstperson shooters the world has ever seen is currently blasting from the hip on DC. It's called *Quake III Arena*, it's a perfect conversion to Sega's white box and it's fully playable online. Yes! But if you haven't already bought it you're already lagging behind the Internet frag-boys. Luckily, we're here to help.

Learning the maps is necessary to be a winner at *Quake*, but there are also certain techniques you'll need to employ to put that knowledge to use. This game is a lot more than point and shoot, it's a game of skill, timing and judgement. Here we present the abilities and power-ups you'll have to learn to become a true *Quake III* master. Pay attention and you'll soon be fragging with the best of 'em! ■

THE BASICS



■ Loads of high speed plasma battles

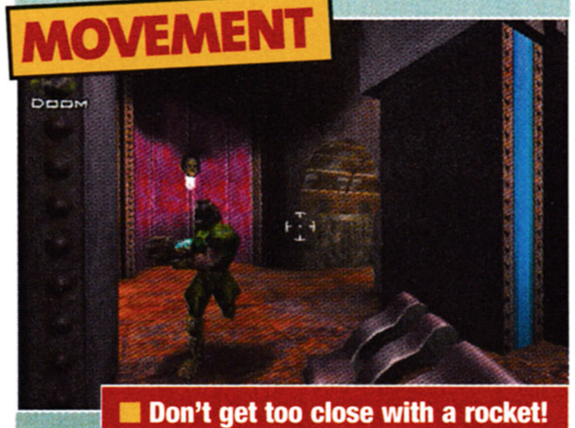
Quake III is a game based around deathmatch skills. These skills differ slightly between game types, but certain rules will always apply. These are like the laws of physics and cannot be broken unless you're supernaturally good. Pay attention and you'll soon start to master this dark art.

Okay, well first things first. How are you playing the game? There are a few options – you play on your own versus the Dreamcast or online versus other players. Either that or you're going to be using a group of controllers to play on the split-screen mode.

Obviously the split-screen mode is a different game from either single or online play, there's no stealth and no possibility of genuinely outwitting your opponent. Some of what's said here still applies in split-screen mode, while some tactics will only ever be useful if you have the screen to yourself.

If you've been watching the goings on in the world of *Quake*, then you'll notice that the mouse and keyboard option is, at the moment, by far the best control method. If you haven't bought these additional controllers then do so. They're essential to *Quake* mastery. You might well have become accomplished at shooters using a joypad, and feel pretty unsure about this geeky, PC-boy control method, but believe us: it's the only way.

MOVEMENT



■ Don't get too close with a rocket!

Once you've got the keyboard and mouse, set the keys up so you feel comfortable. The mouse should be used to look around and shoot, while the keys should be used to move back and forth and strafe left and right. WASD is the usual option. Once you get used to this you might want to try changing weapon keys to the keys around WASD, aiding that essential quick weapon change. You might find it tricky to use the keyboard and mouse in front of your telly, so try setting them up at a table or desk.

Once you're in the game the number one thing on your mind should be 'keep moving'. Move erratically around the maps, never stop to let your enemies get a lock on you. If you stop then a quick snap railgun shot or well placed rocket will see you close to death.

In a fight you have to learn to 'circle strafe'. This is the method of keeping your crosshairs over the enemy as you run sideways to avoid being hit. Become skilled at this and you'll be halfway to getting your *Quake* movement up to a competent level.

You're a fragile beast in *Quake III*, just two railgun shots will see you almost certainly dead, so make sure to plan your routes so that they cross over the armour. When you start playing it'll seem like getting a gun is the most important thing, it'll also seem as if the armour makes very little difference. But ultimately it's this little difference that will see you dominating a level by not dying and keeping your growing collection of weapons intact.

Try and learn the timing of when the armour appears, if you can rule the armour pick-ups, especially one on one, you'll dominate the level.

Also be careful on jump pads. They're great ways of getting around a level, but when you're at the top of the jump you're effectively stationary. If someone has a railgun in the vicinity, you can expect to get a pasting. But remember – you can do the same thing to them.

Speaking of jumping, it's worth mentioning that the safest fastest way to get around a level is constant leaping. It looks fairly silly and it's hard to pull off when you first try it, but it reduces the likelihood of you getting hit and will get you out of a fair few tricky situations. Start jumping everywhere once you get used to the feel of the game. Skillful jumping gets you among the hardcore of *Quake* players, but you'll have to master the Rocket Launcher to do the best jumps.

WEAPONRY

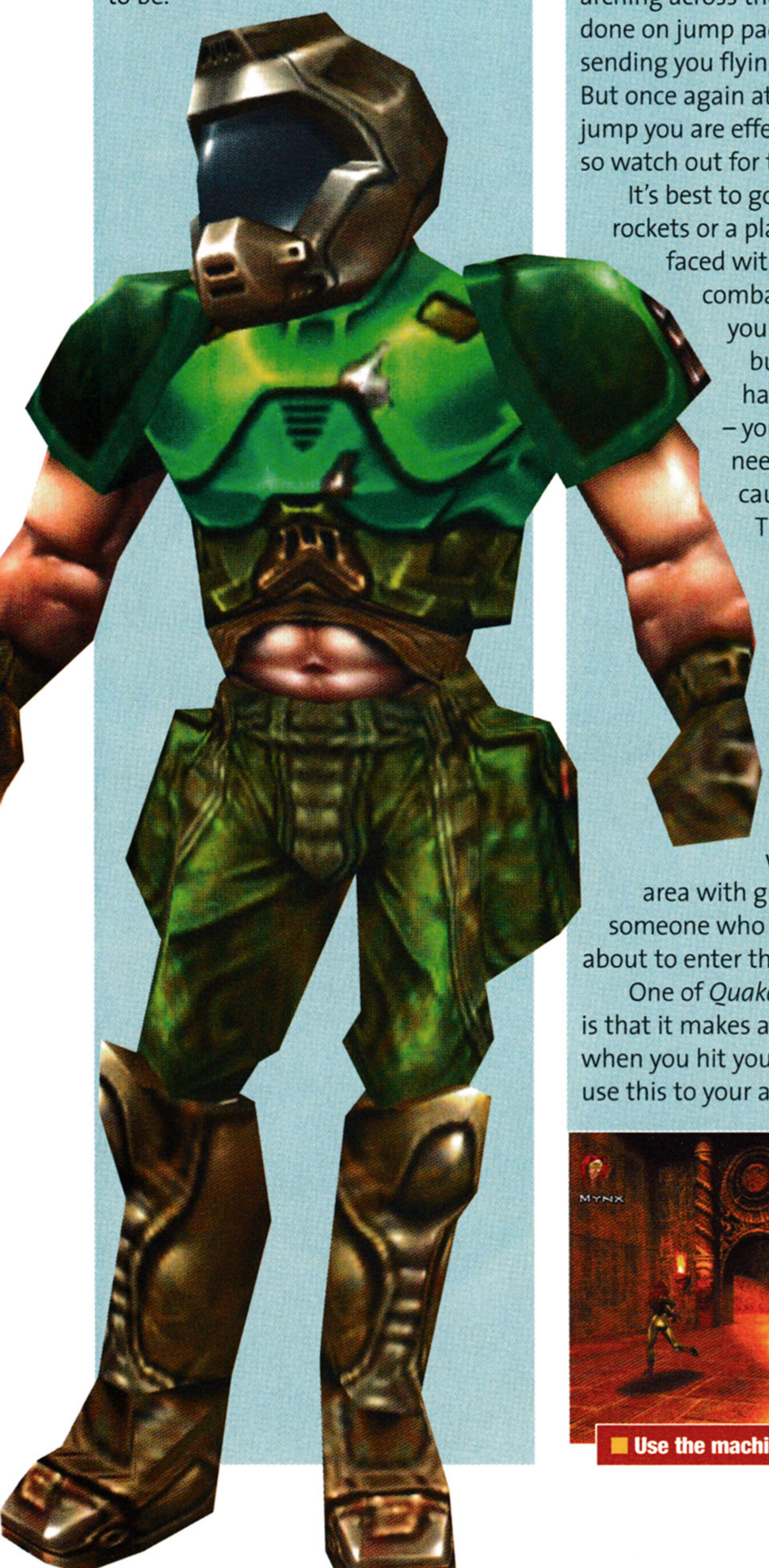
■ You need to be a lightning ace...

The big boys are twofold: the rocket launcher and the railgun. The rocket

■ Make the most of your height advantage coming off these jump pads. Fall too far and you'll do yourself a lot of damage

Master the railgun for real success on the *Quake* servers, it's a bit tricky!

launcher is fairly easy to get to grips with: make sure you use rockets to hit the scenery around your enemy as much as hit the figure himself. If you aim to hit the moving target you'll probably miss, so try to predict his movements and make sure you've put a rocket where he's going to be.



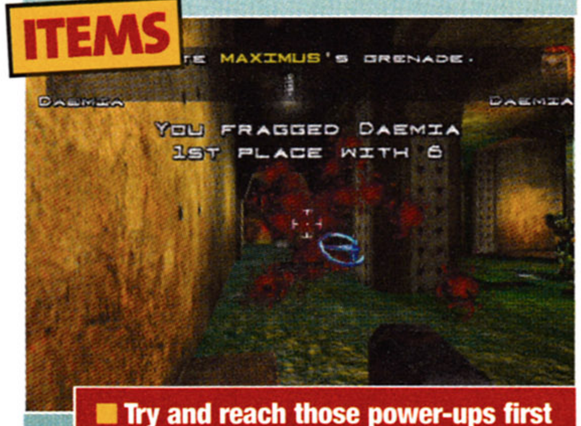
The rocket launcher has another use too. The rocket jump is a perfect example of the kind of trick that the ace *Quake* player has to master. To accomplish this feat you have to fire a rocket at your feet while jumping. If you get it right then it'll cause you minimal damage and send you arching across the level. This can be done on jump pads for comic effect, sending you flying across the level. But once again at the top of your jump you are effectively motionless, so watch out for that railgunner!

It's best to go into a fight with rockets or a plasma gun if you're faced with close quarters combat. You might cause yourself some harm, but these weapons have 'splash' damage – you won't necessarily need a direct hit to cause some damage. The same goes for the grenade launcher, but that's a bit more random and takes real skill to use successfully. Remember that you can always use these weapons to flood an area with gunfire, fragging someone who might be hiding or about to enter that room.

One of *Quake*'s clever subtleties is that it makes a tiny 'dink' noise when you hit your enemy. You can use this to your advantage, for example, if you know that you've just connected with a railgun shot, then don't go for the next one, use a finishing weapon, such as the lightning gun, the plasma gun and the shotgun. They might do much less damage, but they're more likely to guarantee a hit. If your opponent is weak don't give them any let up. Hunt 'em down and kill 'em.

Use the machine gun to finish her off!

ITEMS



Try and reach those power-ups first

The one less important aspect of *Quake* is the power-ups. These can turn a match, but don't always dominate a level. The teleport is nice for getting out of a fix, particularly if you fall into one of the pits of death. The big boys are the Regeneration, the Quad and the Haste.

The Quad is almost always the most significant of the power-ups, providing you with incredible killing power. Just one rocket or rail will inflict 400 points of damage. If you get this power-up you'll become a supra-violent killing machine for 30 seconds, just be careful with the rockets, at close quarters you'll blast yourself into meaty fragments. It's best to use the plasma gun or the lightning gun if you can.

The power-ups respawn around every two minutes, so try and be in the area when they appear. If your enemy manages to get hold of one before you, then you can count on being hunted through the level, it might be an idea to keep running, or simply find somewhere to hide. In this game, 30 seconds is a long time.

THE FINAL WORD

Use the rocket to jump and retreat

There are tons of little hints and tips and tricks you learn as you put time into becoming an ace player, but we've just listed the most important ones here. Remember to play clever. Make sure you have a high sensitivity on your mouse, and have all the weapons at your fingertips – every little adjustment helps.

You've got to play smart to win. If you find that you're being beaten with one weapon then try harder to dominate it and don't give your opponent the chance to put their best skills into action. Use your hearing too, a pair of headphones will give you an advantage in telling where the enemy is coming from. You can walk, so if you want to surprise your enemy, then use slower means of movement for stealth. This is especially useful in closed spaces and corners that people could be hiding behind.

But remember that the railgun and the lightning gun hum loudly, your enemy can hear it when you have one of these weapons, he can hear weapon changes too, furthermore you can remove the noise made by a fall if you crouch as you land. It's these minor points that can save you from being caught alone and unarmed.

Ultimately you have to practise. This is a game of prediction and accuracy of aim. These will only come with hours of practise. So get stuck in and get practicing. Somebody out there has a rocket with your name on it ■

The blue glow of the Quad turns you into an awesomely powerful killing machine

JET SET RADIO PLAYERS GUIDE

With its unique look and 'groovy' skating and spraying gameplay *Jet Set Radio* naturally deserved a top-notch guide detailing each of the missions in the adventure. After you've taken some time to get to grips with the control system and how the game works it's on to the main quest where a story of gang warfare and corporate satanism quickly sucks you in.

Strapping on your blades and going off to the park for mischief-making is one thing, but taking on mafia-esque '70s rejects with machine guns is quite another! And that is why you need us. Here at **DC-UK** we have been grinding hard in the moonlit hours to bring you this comprehensive guide to one of Sega's proudest achievements. Now get on and read it while we go for much needed lie down... ■

LEVEL 1

SHIBUYA-CHO (SHIBUYA GG)

■ The buses are prime targets for paint

DESCRIPTION OF MISSION:
The Love Shockers are attacking your home turf around the bus depot. Chase 'em out!

POLICE: Onishima, Baton Officers

TAGS: 10 **DIFFICULTY:** 1/10

TIPS:
> To reach the billboards dash up the sloping vehicle and jump.
> Use the rails to grind and speed away from police. Dash beforehand and you'll escape easily.
> Since this level is short don't worry too much about the cops, just get spraying!

TOKENS:
#11 On the roof of the shops.
#15 Get on a shelter roof and grind along the traffic lights then jump.
#41 Grind along the rail past the car and van that require painting and jump.

■ The better at spraying you are, the bigger your points total will be. Keep practicing...

#45 Jump on a car and ride it to the overhead walkway, then jump.
#71 Same technique (hop on moving car) to grab this.

LEVEL 2

SHIBUYA-CHO (LOVE TRAP)

■ Come back later to spray the wall

DESCRIPTION OF MISSION:
More Love Shocker graffiti needs to be covered up. Grinding is essential to reach it all.

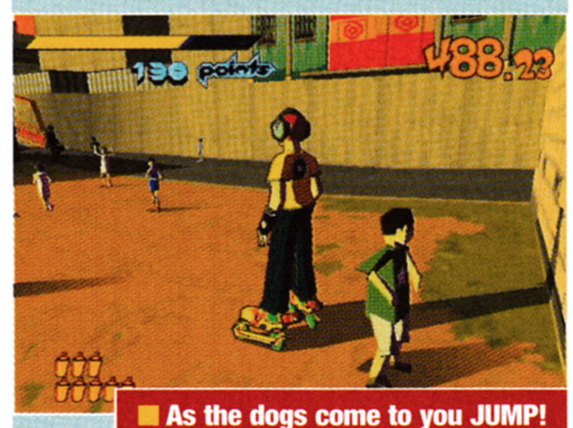
POLICE: Onishima, Tear Gas.
TAGS: 13 **DIFFICULTY:** 3/10

TIPS:
> To spray in half-pipe, ride up the side, jump, then tap L. There are a total of five places to mark.
> From the half-pipe go up steps to a large highway construction and jump behind the police line to grind along the crane (hop along it if you lack momentum). Jump across to the two graffiti markings on the road and quickly cover them.
> There is a large cache of spray paint in the playground, grind along the winding walkway to get it. There are also a few posters to paint on either side.

TOKENS:
#13 Jump from the barrier to the rooftop of the building overhanging the water pipe.
#16 You need to jump down onto a moving bus as it passes and ride it.
#43 Grind along the elephant slide in the playground and jump.
#46 Right at the end of the crane jump off. To get the required speed use the barrier in the middle of the road.
#72 Stand to the right of the crane and look down.
#73 From the last token get into the fenced off area.
#75 This token is above a signpost, so dash away and grind along the bridge and jump off as you come back down.

LEVEL 3

KOGANE-CHO (THE MONSTER OF KOGANE)



■ As the dogs come to you JUMP!

DESCRIPTION OF MISSION:
Pursued by those pesky police you find yourself on the edge of your turf. You've gotta get back, but on the way you may as well leave your mark...

POLICE: Onishima, Dogs, Helicopter with Tear Gas
TAGS: 12 **DIFFICULTY:** 2/10

TIPS:
> From the start make your way up the steps and then left, along the fencing and

guard rails to a building you can enter on the left. Smash through the walls and doors and go up the staircase on the right to find the graffiti that needs seeing to.

> Dogs are a pain as they grab hold and stop you spraying. If you see them coming dash away, then turn and jump over their heads back to your painting.

> As for the choppers ignore them, you'll be able to take a few rounds of tear gas without suffering too much. Just keep painting away until the level is complete.

TOKENS:

#18 After number 20 (see below) perform a dash jump to the rail and jump off it.

#20 At the beginning go forward and grind along the pipe to the island.

#22 To get into the alleyway you have to dash jump onto the bar and let yourself grind along the wire.

#48 In one of the shops this token is hidden in a corner.

#51 It's behind the large wall in an alley (upper area). Search through the boxes.

#77 At the top of a double stairway turn and grind along the fence. Then jump off.

#79 Same as above, but jump to the tower instead.

#80 Get to the fifth step at the start and do a wall grind.

LEVEL 4

KOGANE-CHO (NO 540)

Leap off and spray for the high one

DESCRIPTION OF MISSION:
In a wasteland the Poison Jam gang are up for some skating action. Spray their den for the ultimate insult.

POLICE: Onishima, Parachute Troops, Helicopters with Rockets
TAGS: 13 **DIFFICULTY:** 5/10

TIPS:

> Choose Garam for this mission as he has more stamina than the others, essential for withstanding rocket attacks.

> Bump into the Poison Jam member at the start to get some useful canisters, then cover up his graffiti nearby. To get to the graffiti on the walls just below, you can get there by jumping off the small mounds and spraying

For the really BIG points, grind all the way from the bottom of the stage to the beginning. Leap off and spray the hard-to-reach areas

simultaneously.

> For the symbols on those high walls in the pit at the bottom of the area jump off the ledge and spray on your way down. It may take a few attempts but if you repeatedly pull the L Trigger you should succeed.

> There's a paint stash in the warehouse at the bottom of the level. Remember to spray the inside walls there as well.

TOKENS:

#17 At the start, run and jump to wall grind, then leap off.

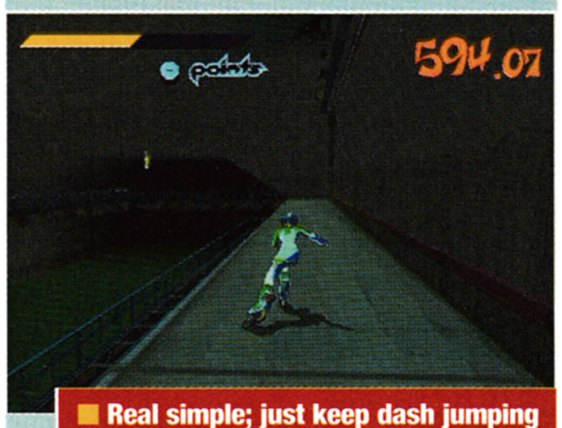
#21 In the warehouse it's situated high above you.

#50 Grind along the crane then onto the wire.

#78 For this, jump down onto the roof of the warehouse.

LEVEL 5

KOGANE-CHO (KOGANE CIRCUS)



Real simple; just keep dash jumping

DESCRIPTION OF MISSION:
Chase three members of Poison Jam and tag them a set number of times.

POLICE: None
TAGS: 30 **DIFFICULTY:** 4/10

TIPS:

> At the start you're facing the gang members without paint, so turn around and grind along the railings to get some. Enter the tunnel up top and grab all the paint – by the time you exit, the blue fools will be skating so chase after them.

> You can take shortcuts by jumping across corners and even from one side of the sewer to the other so long as you are grind fast enough along a guard rail.

> When close enough to an enemy the graffiti symbol will appear in a speech bubble. Spray rapidly to land multiple tags.

TOKENS:

#19 In the southern section look for a secret passage (past boxes).

#47 Dash jump from the walkway.

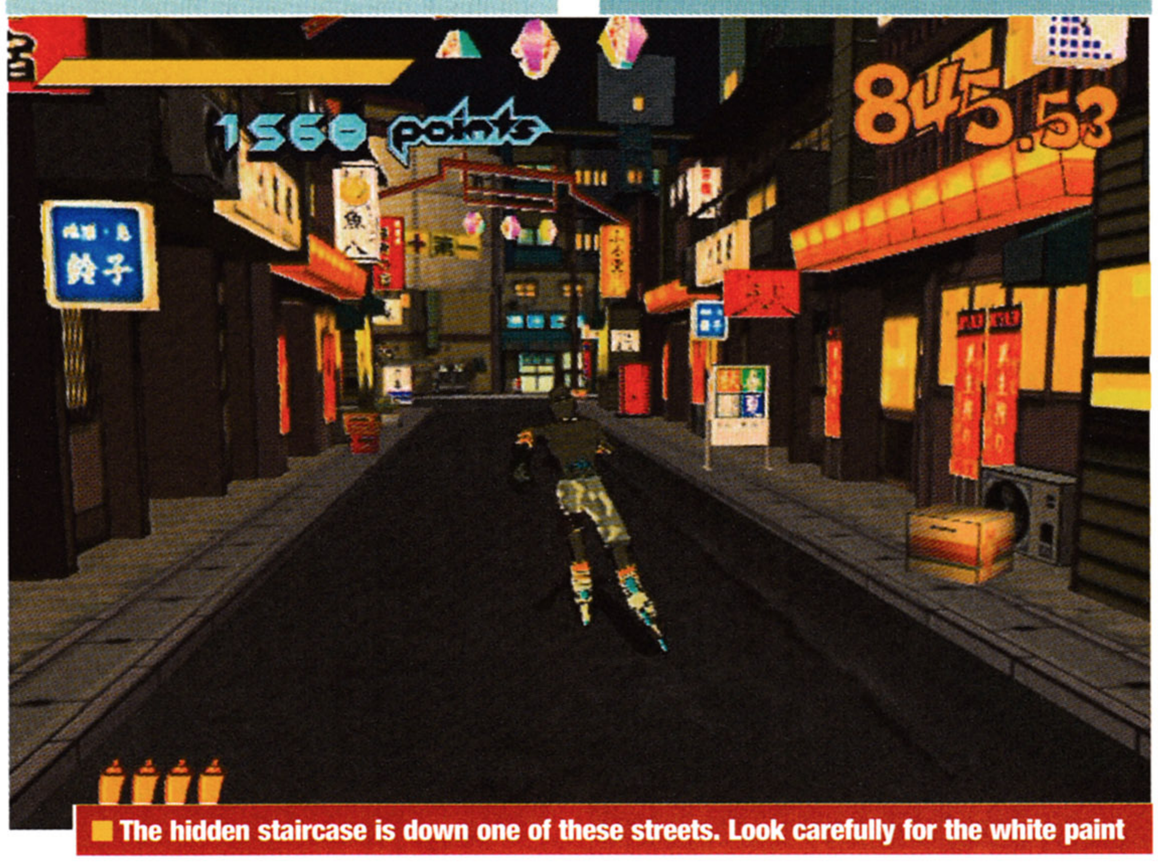
#76 In the northern part of the map stand on the grating to drop through onto the token.

LEVEL 6

BENTEN-CHO (BENTEN BOOGIE)

You can use the vans as big steps

DESCRIPTION OF MISSION:
Set above the narrow streets of Benten-Cho you've got plenty to spray, as well as a few hidden



The hidden staircase is down one of these streets. Look carefully for the white paint

JET SET RADIO PLAYERS GUIDE

passages to find.

POLICE: Onishima, Baton Officers, Tear Gas
TAGS: 16 **DIFFICULTY:** 5/10

TIPS:
> Get as much paint as possible from the higher levels, as you don't want to be searching for it with the cops around.
> If you end up on the street but need to get back onto the roofs you can hop onto the orange vehicle and jump onto the roof, or head up the sloping truck and leap onto the rooftops that way.
> Beware of dead ends! The subway and the street to the left of it are both blocked off, although by the truck there is a railing you can grind up to escape.
> Where all the canisters are on street level in a line there is actually a doorway leading to some graffiti as well as a few health pick-ups.

TOKENS:
#24 From the beginning dash jump to the bar then leap left.
#52 Grind along the downward spiral and leap at the end.
#82 On top of the subway entrance. It's an 'S' shape on the map.

LEVEL 7

BENTEN-CHO (GRAFFITI HIGH)

Mum would be so proud of you kid

DESCRIPTION OF MISSION:
It was those techno freaks, the Noise Tanks who took the pooch hostage. Time to retrieve the hound and de-tune the noise-boyz.

POLICE: Onishima, Parachutists, Tanks
TAGS: 19 **DIFFICULTY:** 6/10

TIPS:
> Start by grabbing ALL the yellow spray cans along the tracks and head off towards the graffiti marked in a circle on the map. Exit through the gate on the right to get to the local hangout where you can spray the walls by grinding along the adjacent handrails. Once you've hit them, grind up the ramp and leap to the platform, then slide to the final two for this section.
> The easiest escape route is grinding up the pick-up truck (on the ground) and onto the cable which takes you to a hidden walkway.
> The tanks will appear in the street sector once you've sprayed a few walls. Do a round circuit anti clockwise to make things easier.

TOKENS:
#25 From the central platform grind along to the octopus.
#54 In the street with the cars it's high above. Use a car to get the boost you need.
#55 From the high street find the second walkway (lowest) to the side and grind along it before jumping.
#83 From the central platform grind along a wire.
#84 At the high street look for a rooftop on the right. Grind along the rail and leap off.
#85 By the stationary train. Wall grind to it.

LEVEL 8

BENTEN-CHO (NOISE REDUCTION)

The giants will deliver a hefty blow

DESCRIPTION OF MISSION:
You've managed to track down the Noise Tanks – time to tag 'em and show the people of Benten-Cho who the greatest gang in Tokyo-To is! This is harder than the previous tagging session in the sewer as you have multiple routes plus the traffic to contend with.

Grinding is always the preferred mode of transport around this and indeed any stage

POLICE: None
TAGS: 30 **DIFFICULTY:** 6/10

TIPS:
> Don't approach them at the beginning, go off and grab some paint instead. Now roll towards them but face in the opposite direction, and as they skate off you should be able to move alongside and paint their asses!
> It's essential to utilise the railings when chasing those nasty Noise Tanks, otherwise they'll simply skate away leaving you to play catch-up all the time.
> Once you've tagged a member and they've come to a halt remember that you'll still suffer damage if you manage to collide with them so avoid at all costs.

TOKENS:
#23 Up the stairs go to the flyover and get on the red platform. Hop onto the coloured truck and you'll travel to the token.
#56 The one in the tall tree. Use the stairs to get onto the wall high above and then down you go.
#27 Between two staircases. Grind and jump.
#86 Find the two corridors that link the buildings on both sides of the road and get on top of one. It requires a hefty amount of speed to grind up onto the wire and get across. You then have to wall grind to the token.
#87 Again at the sealed corridor use the moving platform to get the level's last token.

LEVEL 9

SHIBUYA-CHO (LOVE ATTACK)

Grind hard when chasing the gang

DESCRIPTION OF MISSION:
With two pieces of the record it's time to ask the Love Shock gang if they know anything about it... You've got to give chase and tag each member of the group before they'll start to talk!

POLICE: None
TAGS: 30 **DIFFICULTY:** 5/10

TIPS:
> Grab some paint at the start and approach the girls. As they skate downhill grind along the railings to increase your speed. They will head towards the main road so grind along the next set of railings to close in and start spraying.
> Chase the girls until they are back at their starting point and then follow them right down the hill. When they go left instead of straight on they'll slow right down as they struggle to get up the steep road ahead.

Instead of struggling uphill dash after a car and hold the R trigger to catch a ride up!

2 FUNKY 4 U BOYZ?

Waz up? Meet the phat GG posse

BEAT

He's the default character, hence labelled as 'Mr Average'. His graffiti is simple to perform and he can hold enough canisters to get you through most stages, but he's best suited to beginners.

TAB

Tab is a coneheaded blue guy with pretty bad treads and in poor health to boot. He can hold plenty of paint though, and is quite fast due to his small stature. Good for stages with low-level enemies.

GUM

She appears to be the most intelligent of the three GGs. She can't carry many paint canisters and her health is low too, but she's quite nimble and thus useful if going for the elusive tokens.

GARAM

Strongest of the first characters Garam should be called upon to complete level 4. He's quick and can out pace adversaries and hold a fair amount of paint. His downside is a lack of technical prowess.

MEW

She's more of a showboater than anything, as Mew doesn't have much to offer except her fancy flips. Her health is too low for the later missions and she isn't especially fast. One to leave alone.

CUBE

When you're given the choice between Cube and her partner Combo, the female half only becomes of use on level 10 but still isn't strong against the assassins in the stage. Another average player.

COMBO

The main man for most of the later stages due to his stamina. This guy can take almost anything and walk away without so much as a scratch. His graffiti skills make up for his lack of manoeuvrability.

YO-YO

He looks like a freak and plays like one too, Yo-Yo is basically rubbish all round. He's weak, slow, and can't hold enough spray cans to compensate for it. Steer WELL clear!

PIRANHA

She's a little average really, with no redeeming features other than a little more health than most characters. Not worth bothering with, especially as she lacks technical skill.

SLATE

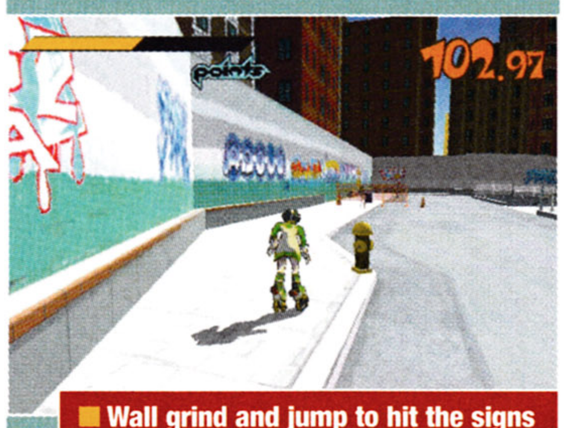
Slate can hold a LOT of paint canisters making him handy for stages such as level 14 as his health bar is high. He doesn't have much skill but is good to choose if you're used to the game.

Grind along this railing and at this position jump off to the right and spray as you fall

TOKENS:
#14 By the side of the road, knock over a few boards.
#42 In the middle of the street, near number 12.
#44 Along the path off the main road jump from the steps to the token.
#74 The junction at the bottom of the hill is a token high above. Grind along the barrier and jump.

LEVEL 10

BANTAM STREET



Wall grind and jump to hit the signs

DESCRIPTION OF MISSION:
Two months ago, here's what happened on the turf belonging to your new friends.

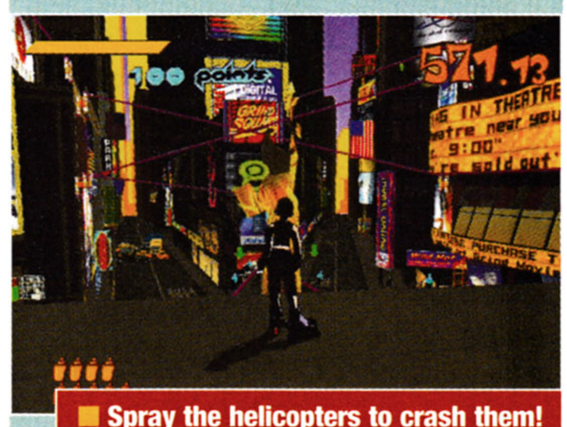
TAGS: 16
RHINO GANG: Suit Guys with Machine Guns and Knives, and Assassins
DIFFICULTY: 8/10

TIPS:
> To spray all the graffiti on the white wall you need to grind along the wall and somersault off it to gain the extra height needed. The one near the corner is tricky but if you can start from there and do a quick wall grind it can just be reached.
> One of the hidden markings is on a wall too high to grind and jump to, but you can reach it from the railtracks above. Grind right along the railing and jump off (right) to spray as you descend.
> When spraying you may see those assassins closing in fast. Don't think you can just stand there spraying and get away with taking damage – their whips knock off a huge amount of health with each hit and you won't last long. Better to lead them away then come back to the wall/poster.

TOKENS:
None

LEVEL 11

GRIND SQUARE



Spray the helicopters to crash them!

DESCRIPTION OF MISSION:
The neon lights set the stage for this escapade. The suit guys will stop at nothing to clear you off the streets – show 'em you're no pushover.

RHINO GANG: Suit guys with Knives, Electric Enemies, Helicopters with Rockets.
TAGS: 14 **DIFFICULTY:** 7/10

TIPS:
> Choose Combo for this mission as the rockets launched from those helicopters sure do pack a punch. Speaking of which, to disable them grind along the pink scaffolding nearby and spray as you pass. They'll suffer a mechanical failure and fall to the street below.
> For some much-needed paint, go up the elevator on the left side of the street. This should be your first port of call for this stage as the rhino statues are easier to spray without the electrical enemies around. As you grind past them you'll change direction and if you jump you'll reach a fourth statue on a rooftop, just make sure you have plenty of paint.

JET SET RADIO PLAYERS GUIDE

Dude it's a crazy-ass Rhino! Be quick to spray these as snipers will be aiming at you

> Across the other side of the street is more paint, and also look out for a stairwell that leads to more on a higher rooftop. From here, if you grind along the wall and time your jump well you can reach the building in the centre.

TOKENS:
None

LEVEL 12

SHIBUYA-CHO (EXPLOSION)

The fastest route up any staircase

DESCRIPTION OF MISSION:
A freaky gang is bombing Shibuya! Now who could this possibly be?

RHINO GANG: Bombs, Suit guys with Machine Guns, Pyromaniacs, Helicopters with Rockets.
TAGS: 23 **DIFFICULTY:** 8/10

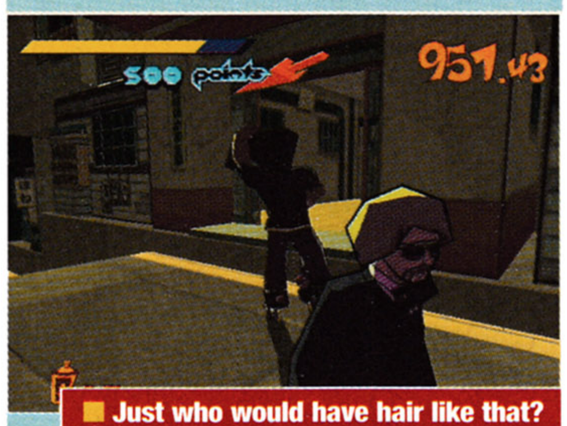
TIPS:
>It's best to pick Combo for this, as his strength will see him hold his own against all enemies.
>There are explosives hidden in this level and all are proximity-triggered. Once you get near you'll hear a bleeping noise indicating the fuse has been lit, so it's advisable to skate back the way you came to stay clear of the blast.
>Looking at the map you'd be forgiven for being puzzled – 23 targets but considerably less appearing on the screen. The next set are at the bus depot (training area) and you can get there by heading along the half-pipe and up the steps. And the final few are scattered around the steep hill, get here by turning left out of the depot (so the view changes) and use the map to guide yourself.
>If you're pressed for time remember it's only the red targets that are important. The green ones in the half-pipe and other areas are only for bonus points.

TOKENS:
None

To get up here grind down the road on rails and leap off at precisely the right moment

LEVEL 13

KOGANE-CHO (FIGHT OR FLIGHT)



Just who would have hair like that?

DESCRIPTION OF MISSION:
A rocket-propelled gang is terrorising the streets of Kogane. Time to make a stand against them.

RHINO GANG: Suit Guys with Knives, Snipers, Rocket Pack Guys (with guns)
TAGS: 24 **DIFFICULTY:** 9/10

TIPS:
> Once again Combo is essential for this mission.
> The first few are on the rooftops so stay on them. Fall skate to the end of the alley and spray the rhino before climbing up the car onto the roofs.
> Once you've done that go back up the alley and at the foot of a slope is a door that opens (on the left). This is a passageway into the sewers which is filled with rocket-propelled enemies. In here go for the large picture on the wall before the aerial guys find you.
> Leave here through the northern passageway and spray the graffiti in the scrap yard (there is some above the doorway to the outside). Return to the sewer.
> Exiting through the southern passage in the sewer climb the steps outside and follow the walkway through the building on the left – it'll take you to an area that needs spraying. Jump onto the rooftops from above to make things simpler. If you need health look behind the giant sphere, as well as directly opposite down an alley.

TOKENS:
#49 Grind down the telephone wires and jump off.
#81 Search the rooftops at the start (about halfway down) for this token.

LEVEL 14

BENTEN-CHO (BENTEN BURNING)

Grind past giants and spray fast

DESCRIPTION OF MISSION:
More gang trouble, this time in Benten-Cho. You're going over previous areas with the aim of tagging all the propaganda you can find.

RHINO GANG: Suit Guys with Knives,

Suit Guys with Machine Guns, Flamethrower Guys, Giant Ninjas
TAGS: 19 **DIFFICULTY:** 8/10

TIPS:
> From the start grab a few cans and turn around to spray the billboard. Follow the road round and get more paint then jump over the car on the bridge to locate a new area.
> Hit the statues with paint and once everything's done (check map) skate back the way you came to collect more paint. Charge to the end and smash through the barricade to find the local hangout. Grind to the platform and then to the two billboards before marking the other targets.
> Escape to the railway track (grind from the centre platform to the gate) and head through the opening opposite to reach the rooftops. The hardest rhino statue to find is hidden on a high building, just go up the steps inside a house in the alley and then grind along the girder to the end where you jump.

TOKENS:
#26 In the subway, wall grind and jump to the central barrier.
#27 Just after the previous one, jump onto the railing, wall grind, jump and onto the platform.

LEVEL 16

SHIBUYA-CHO (FINAL GROOVE)

QUICK, QUICK, QUICK!!

DESCRIPTION OF MISSION:
A demon has been unleashed, and it looks like you're the only one who's brave enough to save the world.

LEVEL 15

BENTEN-CHO (BEHIND THE MASK)

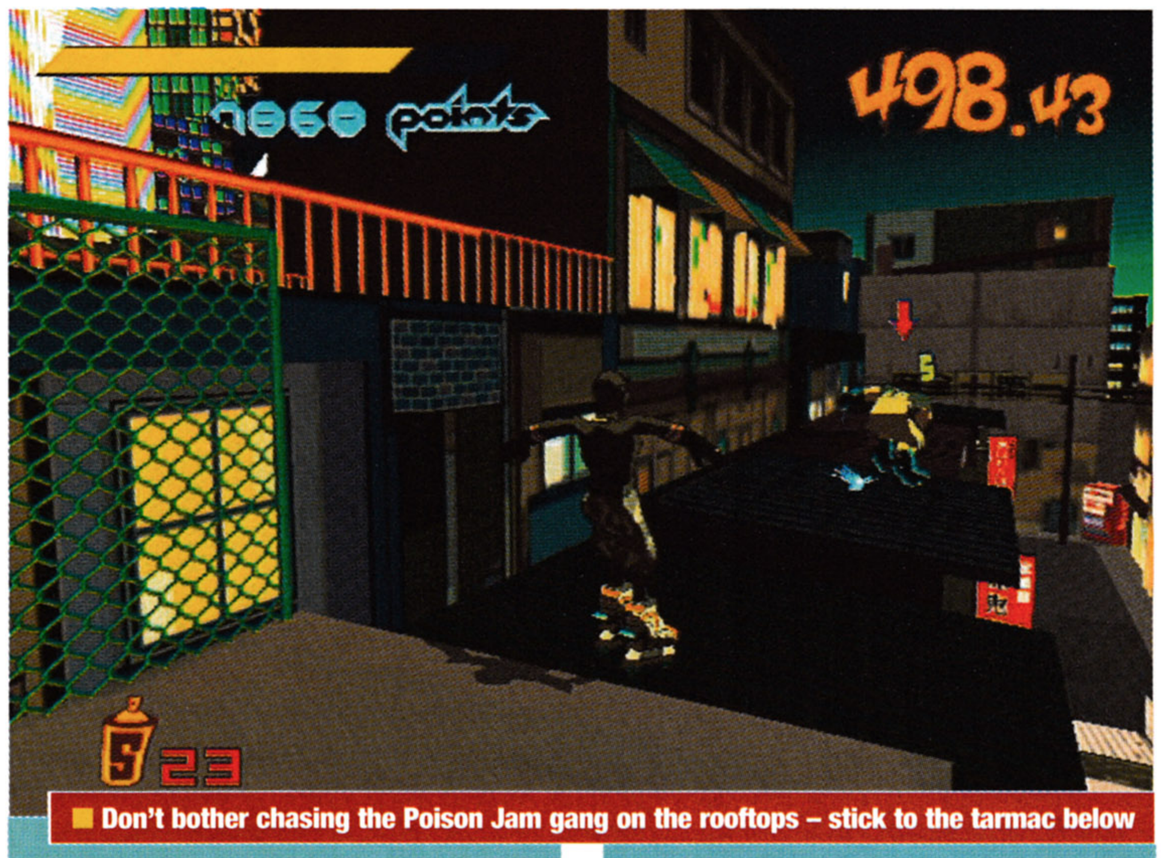
This truck provides a handy ramp

DESCRIPTION OF MISSION:
It's a tagging session with the brainwashed Kogane gang. It's a nice and easy stage, a kind of reward for completing the last one.

RHINO GANG: None
TAGS: 30 **DIFFICULTY:** 4/10

TIPS:
>Very easy. Keep doing round circuits, chasing the creeps and eventually they'll appear on the street. Repeat for all three, no need to chase on the rooftops.
>Make sure you get plenty of paint – Cube is good as she can carry up to 25 cans.

TOKENS:
None



Don't bother chasing the Poison Jam gang on the rooftops – stick to the tarmac below

RHINO GANG: None
TAGS: 5 **DIFFICULTY:** 8/10

TIPS:
>You'll be infuriated with the controls here. When leaping across the cogs don't turn around to get a run up, just dash and jump.
>There are four areas to spray, but the demon will try to stop you. Keep spraying and ignore the fire attacks – Combo can take them.
>Once the demon is beaten you have to spray the big boss. Dash jump onto one of the girders and slide up. Don't jump off, just keep tapping L to spray his bald head.

TOKENS:
None

OTHER TOKENS:
#1 You get this right away.
#2 Copy Gum.
#3 Copy Tab.
#4 Copy Combo.
#5 Copy Piranha.
#6 Copy Grime.
#7 Copy Mew.
#8 Copy Cube.
#9 Beat Yo-Yo.
#10 Beat Slate.
#28 Finish game, play bonus stages.
#29 Finish the game, play bonus stages.
#30 Finish the game, play bonus stages.
#31 You get this automatically.
#32 Copy Gum.
#33 Complete Corn's lessons.
#34 Copy Combo.
#35 Copy Piranha.
#36 Beat Garam.
#37 Complete Mew's lessons.
#38 Copy Cube.
#39 Beat Yo-Yo.
#40 Beat Soda.
#58 Finish the game, play bonus stages.
#59 Finish the game, play bonus stages.
#60 Get a Jet rating on Shibuya areas.
#61 You'll have this automatically.
#62 Complete Gum's lessons.
#63 Beat Tab.
#64 Keep up with Combo.
#65 Beat Piranha.
#66 Beat Grime.
#67 Complete Bliss' trials.
#68 Beat Cube.
#69 Beat Yo-Yo.
#70 Beat Slate.
#88 Finish the game, play bonus stages.
#89 Finish the game, play bonus stages.
#90 Finish the game, play bonus stages ■

Combo demonstrates the latest pyromaniac gear from GAP. G'Blaster sold separately

SHENMUE WALKTHROUGH

PART TWO

Okay. You've played through the first two discs and are suitably engrossed by Ryo's quest for justice. Now its time to see this first chapter of the adventure through to its conclusion. Prepare for numerous battles with the Mad Angels gang and plenty of stacking crates in Ryo's job as a forklift truck operator.

Again, we must remind you that this guide only covers what you *have* to do to finish the game. Don't just play from point to point, wander around, talk to everyone and discover all the extras (such as fighting moves) that you'd otherwise miss. Oh, and don't expect a dramatic conclusion, there are two more chapters to follow before the story is resolved ■

DISC THREE

■ Get your ticket off this nasty little tea leaf

60 Watch the cut-scene where you terrify Jimmy and he gives you a replacement ticket.

61 Go and talk to Nozomi then take the bus to the docks.

62 You'll be spending most of the remainder of the game in the harbour area. At 12:00 pm, wander around between warehouses one and 12 and Goro will approach you and arrange to meet you outside warehouse one tomorrow at noon.

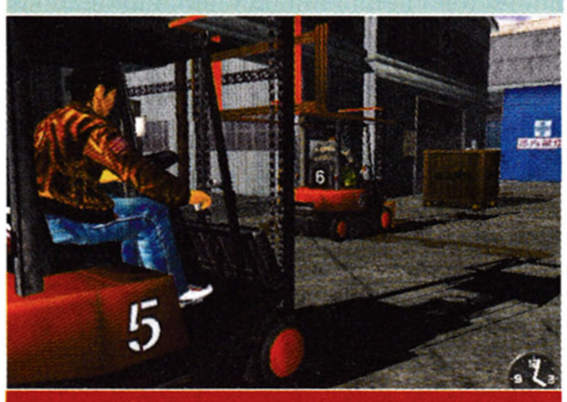
63 There's nothing else to do today so have a stroll around the whole area and get your bearings before leaving for home.

■ Talk to fishermen to find your way around

64 When you're asleep you'll dream about mystery girl Shenhua Rei who you won't meet until the second chapter of *Shenmue*.

65 At noon the next day, meet Goro and his girlfriend at warehouse one and they'll tell you to get a job down at the docks.

66 Go down and left to the small office and talk to the boss to ask for a job. He'll take you to see a guy called Mark who will train you as a forklift truck operator.



■ Pass the simple test and it's forklift time!

67 Complete the four simple manoeuvres in the driving test.

68 Pick up the box in front and take it inside warehouse three, placing it in the white squares. Continue moving the boxes into the warehouse until the horn blows and your working day ends at 5:00 pm.

69 In the cut-scene you'll receive your wages for the day, then go outside and talk to Mark.

70 Hang around until 7:00 pm then return to the office where thugs from the Mad Angels gang are beating up the homeless man.

■ The old tramp becomes a useful ally

71 A Quick Time Event follows where you have a motorbike race. After this go back home.

72 The next morning you'll automatically travel to the docks. From now on every working day begins with a great forklift truck race against four other drivers.

73 Afterwards, Mark hands you a forklift truck toy and instructions for the day's work. You have to take the boxes into warehouse 18, keep working until the hooter sounds at noon which signals the start of your two hour lunch break.

74 You'll immediately have a free battle with two thugs who are beating up Mark. After sorting them out, Mark will tell you about the Mad Angels gang (who you'll be fighting for the rest of the game).

■ Show the Mad Angels who's boss

75 Play games in the cafe until the clock strikes 2:00 pm, then it's back to work.

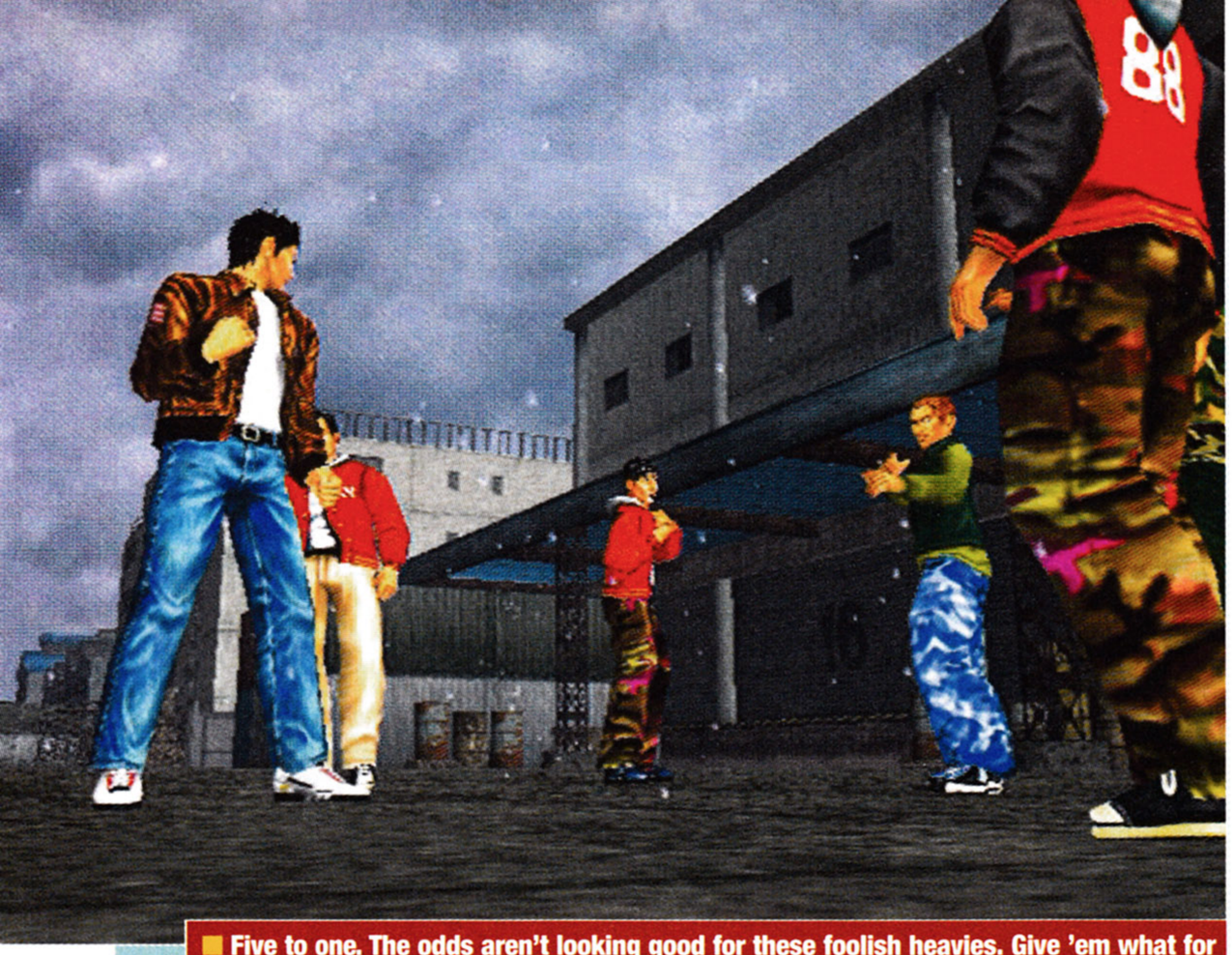
76 In the afternoon your work is interrupted when three Mad Angels pick a fight with you in warehouse 18. Kick their heads in.

77 Carry on moving boxes until 5:00 pm then collect your pay and go outside for a cut-scene with Goro.

78 Go left to meet up with Gui Zhang who will teach you a new kick.

79 After 8:00 pm, wander over to

■ Ryo gets a job as a forklift truck operator, moving crates to and from warehouses. It's a strangely therapeutic occupation...



Five to one. The odds aren't looking good for these foolish heavies. Give 'em what for

The mirrors will haunt your dreams

warehouse 18 to talk to the old tramp who teaches you a new dodge move.

80 Return home and you'll dream about the Phoenix Mirror.

81 In the morning, have another race and get your work instructions. You have to take boxes to warehouse three.

82 During your lunch break chat to the tramp around the corner from Tomato Mart.

83 Continue working until the cut-scene with some Mad Angels begins inside warehouse three. They surround you and you'll have to free battle five of them then deal with another four who creep up on you.

84 Finish work at 5:00 pm on the dot then head for warehouse 17 to smack around the five thugs who are attacking Mark.

85 Go back to the steps behind tomato Mart to see the old man and he'll teach you another dodge. Now you can head back home.

86 The next day, have a race and collect instructions to take boxes to warehouse 18.

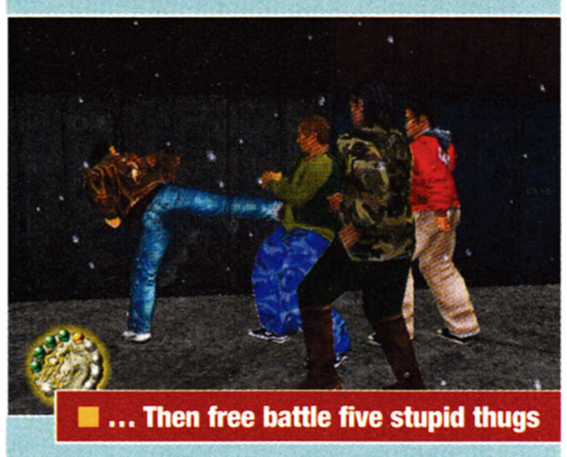
A photo keepsake of Ryo and Nozomi

87 During lunch you'll have a photo taken with the lovely Nozomi.

88 Work till 5:00 pm then hang around until 7:00 pm and go to warehouse 18 for a superb scrap and motorbike race QTE.

Ryo revs up for the cool motorbike QTE...

89 You'll then have to free battle five Mad Angels before facing Charlie (the creep from the tattoo parlour).



... Then free battle five stupid thugs

90 Return home and you'll dream about your father's killer.

91 Have your usual forklift race in the morning and receive the day's work which is to move boxes into warehouse 18 again.

92 After lunch there's a big QTE with Mad Angels inside the warehouse.

93 Work up to 5:00 pm then watch the cut-scene with Mark. Go home after this.

94 The morning brings your final day of employment and sadly your final forklift race.

You'll have a forklift race every morning

95 Take the boxes to the IN area of warehouse eight and take the red-striped boxes from the OUT area of warehouse eight over to warehouse 18.

96 During lunch watch the cut-scene with Goro and talk to Mark and the other drivers.

97 After a spot of lunch, carry on working until a cut-scene with two Mad Angels begins.

98 You will chase after them in a QTE and press either left or right to follow either one. Whichever thug you catch will give you the name of the Mad Angels head honcho.

99 Watch the cut-scene with Master Chen and then go home.

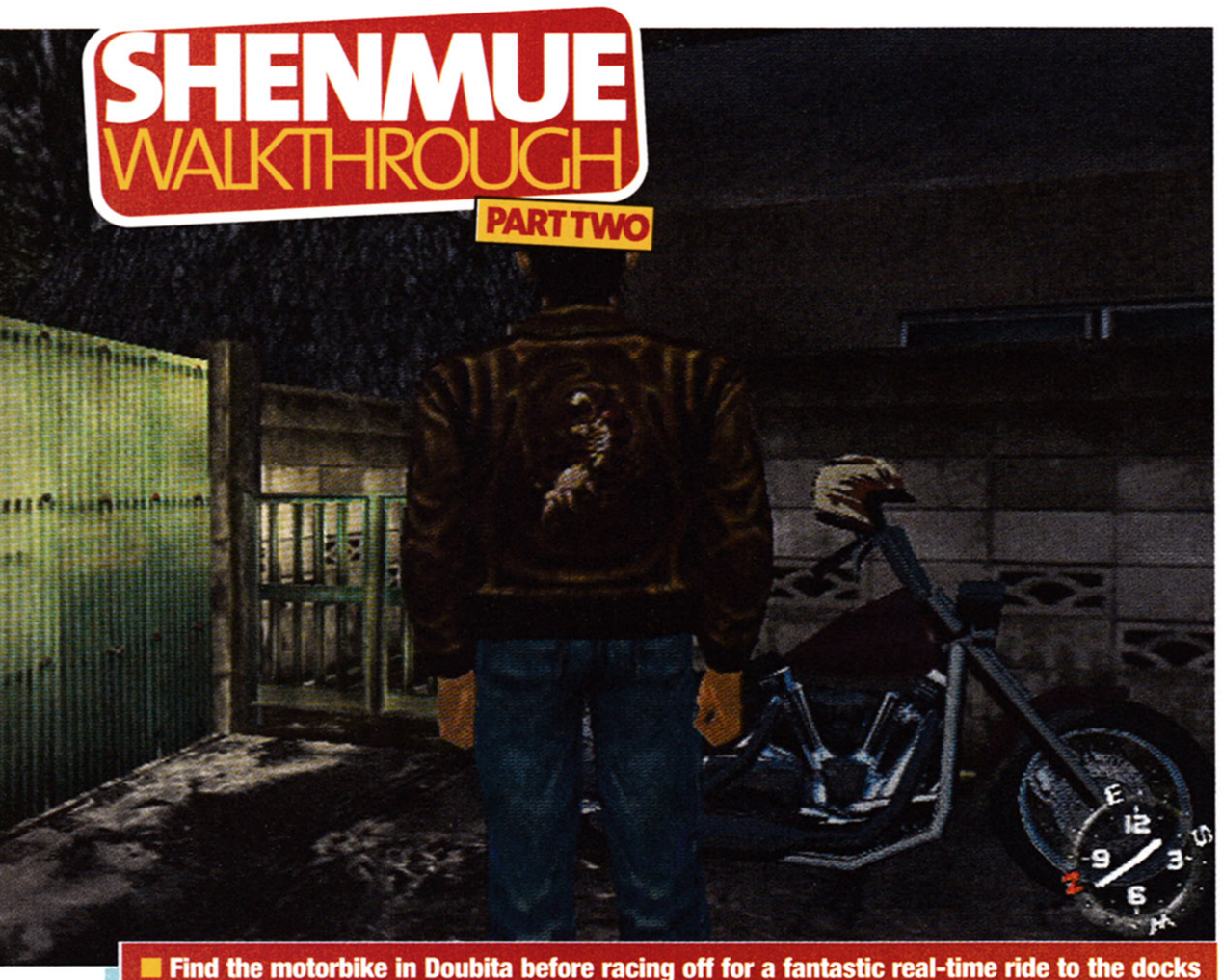
100 You'll be woken at 11:45 pm to answer a phone call. Nozomi has been kidnapped.

101 Run down to the bus stop and discover that you can't catch a bus then go to the motorbike shop and knock on the door. The guy with the white hair will direct you elsewhere.

This is a quality QTE requiring a number of rapid presses to beat the Mad Angels

SHENMUE WALKTHROUGH

PART TWO



Find the motorbike in Doubita before racing off for a fantastic real-time ride to the docks

102 Run back to Doubita and as you leave the trees you can see a new bike outside the first house. Go up to the gate and the bike's owner will come out and allow you to borrow it.

103 There's now an excellent real time race where you have two minutes to ride the bike to the docks.

104 Once there, free battle six Mad Angels and then a further five before you meet the leaders and they release Nozomi.

Sort out a bunch of Mad Angels (again)

105 A brilliant, cinematic cut-scene follows where you take Nozomi back home on the bike.

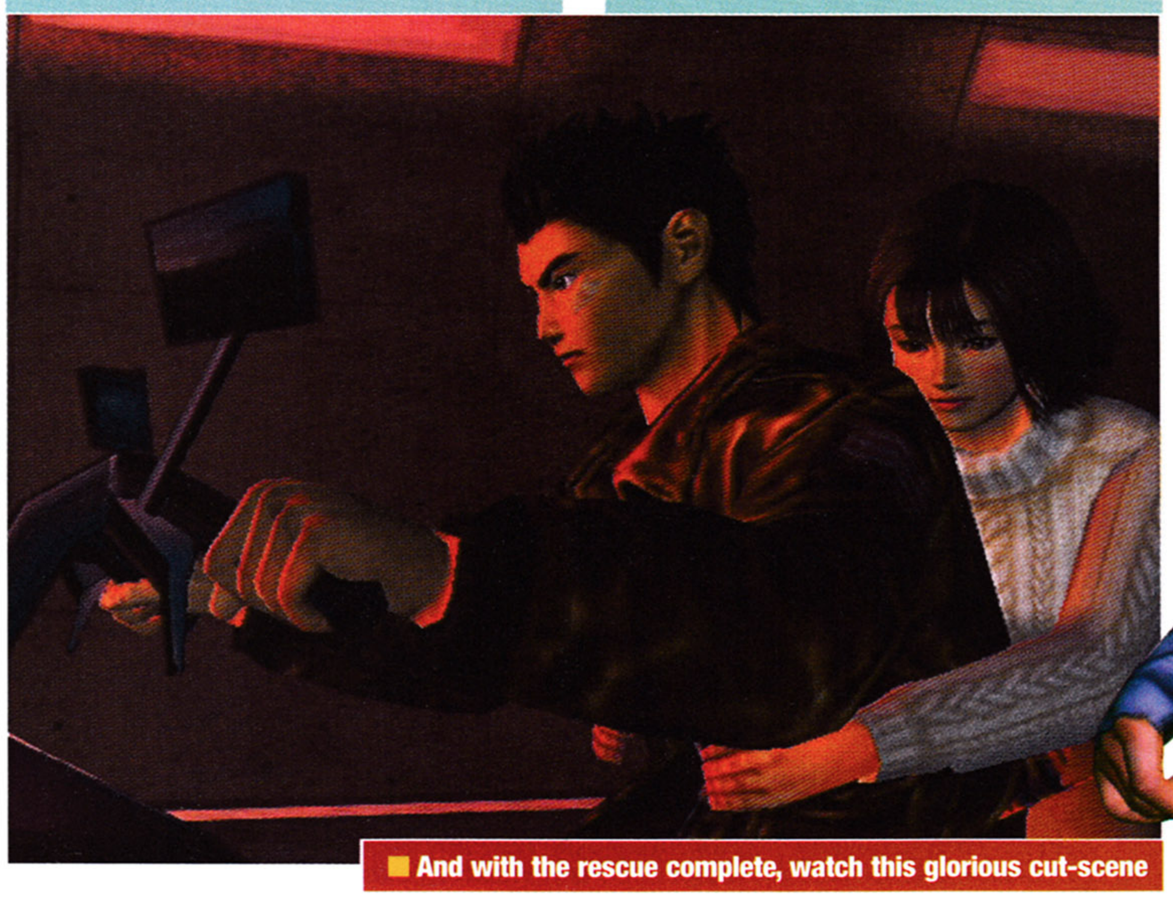
106 The next day, there's a cut-scene in the dojo before you head automatically for the docks.

107 Talk to Tomo to learn a powerful new kick and then watch the cut-scene as he jets off to America.

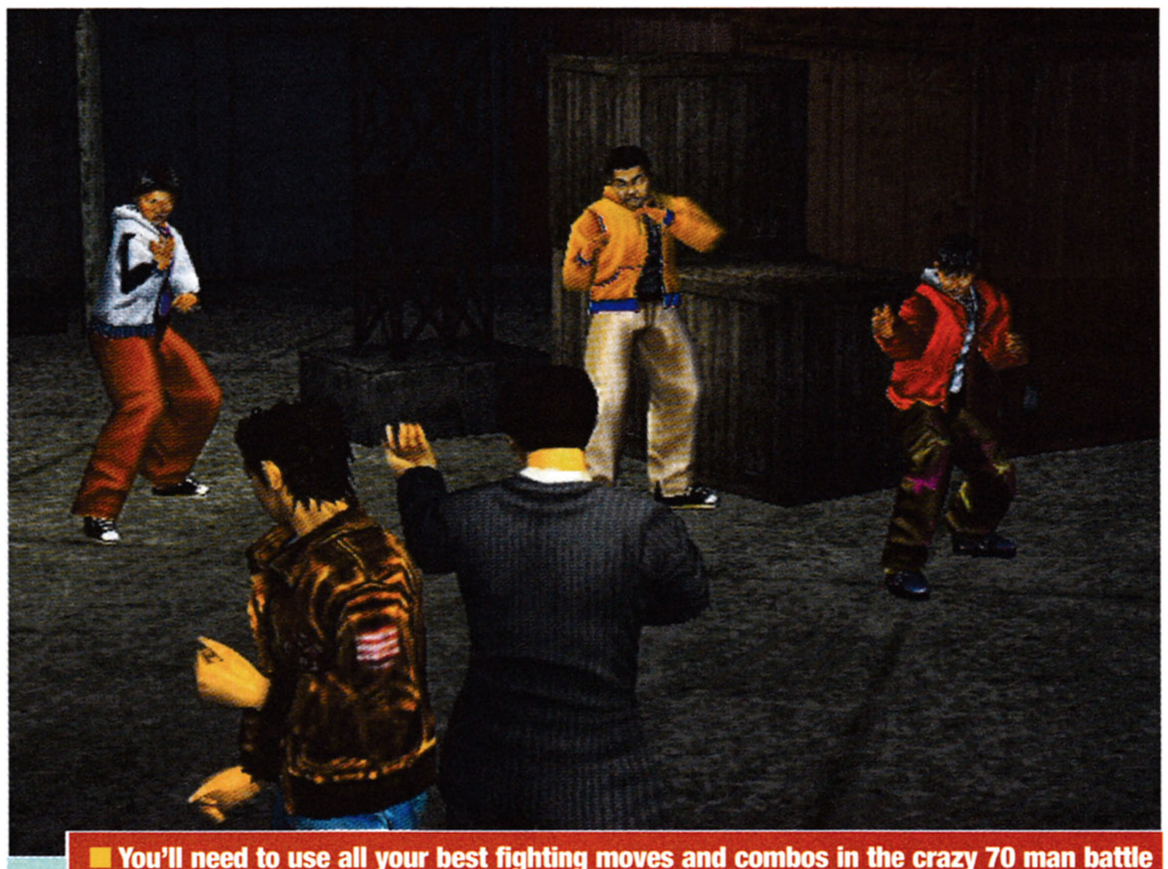
108 Free battle with Gui Zhang, at certain points automatic Matrix-style moves will kick in.

The blurry Matrix influence is evident here

109 When you both hit the ground the Mad Angel boss will swing a lead pipe at Gui and there's a QTE where you have to rapidly move him out of harms way.



And with the rescue complete, watch this glorious cut-scene



You'll need to use all your best fighting moves and combos in the crazy 70 man battle

110 Now you'll have an astonishing 70 man battle with you and Gui taking on a procession of Mad Angels thugs. The camera can play up here but it's still a fantastic set piece. Use the kick Tomo just taught you and the flying kick (left trigger + A) as much as possible.

111 With them all defeated, you then have to face the hard gang leader and his two henchmen. Deal with the lackeys first then fight the tough boss. His throws and kicks are lethal so use the dodge moves and boot him whenever you get a safe opportunity.

112 Follow the QTE with Terry and Gui will beat him up.

113 You will now prepare to set sail for Hong Kong. As you reach the dock Master Chen will teach you a new reversal, practice it on Gui.

114 Weirdo Chai will suddenly appear and drop a girder towards you which just misses Gui.

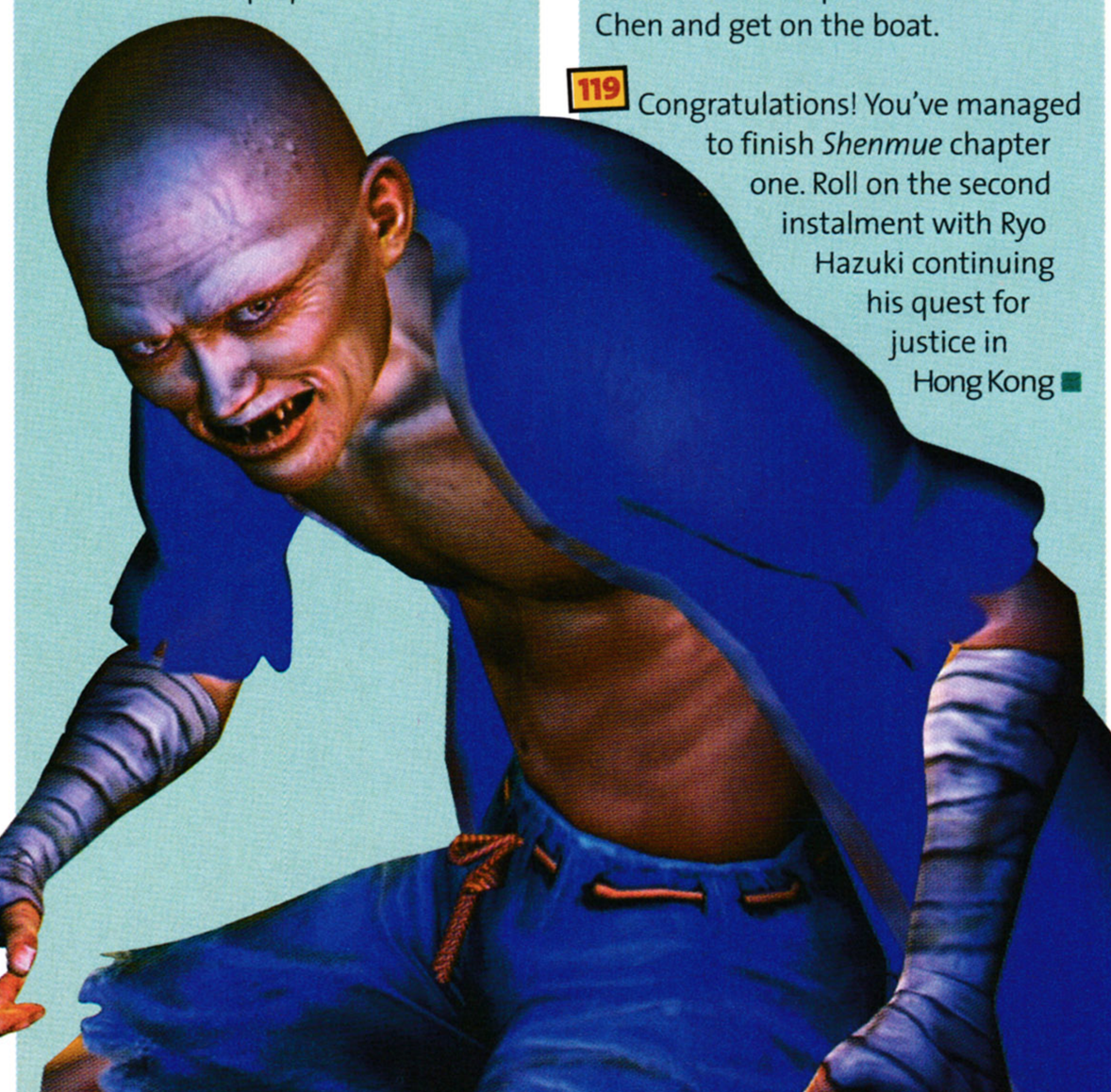
115 Now you'll have the most difficult battle of the entire game as you deal with Chai. He's extremely fast so be on guard and use dodging moves and then hit him while he's off guard.

116 Watch the cut-scene of your father's murderer getting on board the boat.

117 That sodding Chai pops up once more and attacks you, press Down, A, A, B in the QTE.

118 Now watch the ending as you receive an envelope from Master Chen and get on the boat.

119 Congratulations! You've managed to finish *Shenmue* chapter one. Roll on the second instalment with Ryo Hazuki continuing his quest for justice in Hong Kong ■



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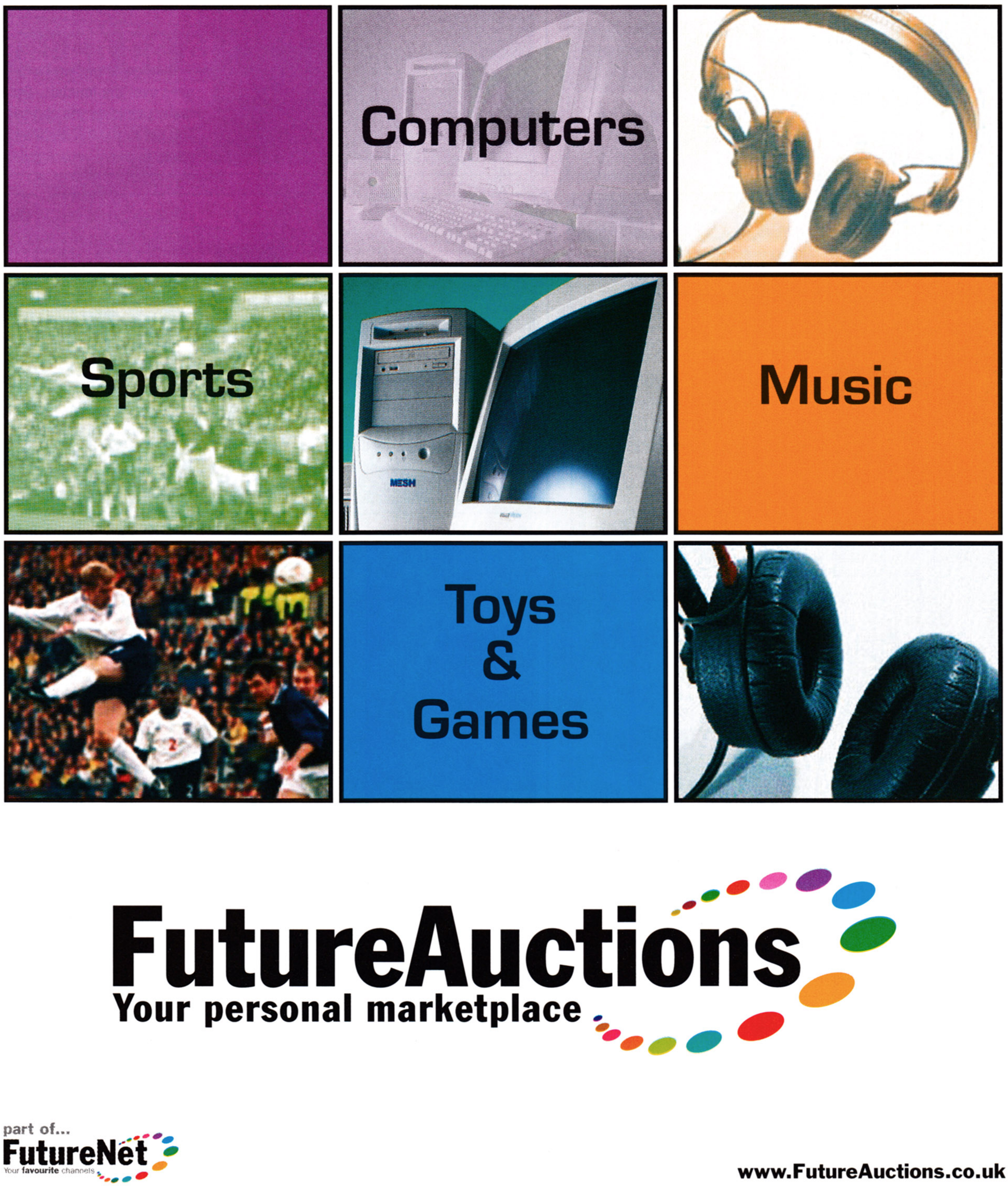

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Challenge

Show the world how talented you are!

Right we've set a couple of new challenges this month, so you can be the first to get up there on the high score table and claim a lovely Mad Catz joypad. Do it now while it's still easy!

Simply grab your copy of the game, stick it in yer Dreamcast and play it 'til you're good at it, then take a photo of your best score. Next, send the pic to us and, if you really are a superstar gamer, it'll end up in print! Come on! ■

SHENMUE

Take a break from Ryo's vengeful quest to try these out

THE CHALLENGE

KING OF THE ARCADE

> Send in your high-scores of any of the games in the arcade

FORK LIFT RACE

> Get the quickest time you can in the fork lift truck race and send us a photo as proof ■

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2

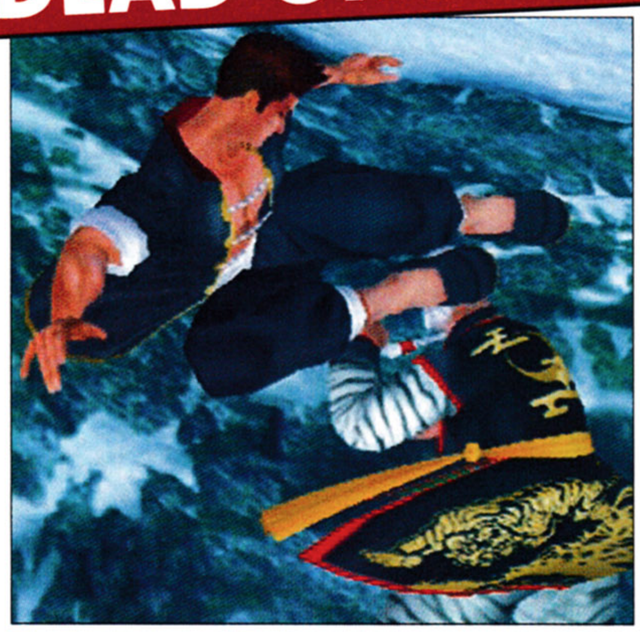
Okay, so you think you're the gnarliest thing on four wheels? Come on then, prove it!

THE CHALLENGE

PHILADELPHIA GRIND

> Grind your way up the pipe that goes over the fountain. Get as many points as you can before you get to the top. Send us a photo to prove your score ■

DEAD OR ALIVE 2



Get to grips with our saucy *DOA2* challenges. Filthy sods...

THE CHALLENGE

TIME ATTACK

> How quickly can you battle past the six opponents to finish the game? To win, beat James Davies' brilliant time of 0'38"86.

SURVIVAL MODE

> Send us evidence of your highest number of consecutive victories in Survival scraps ■

METROPOLIS STREET RACER

Come on, prove your motoring brilliance in Bizarre Creations' superb city racer! Burn rubber and earn those kudos points till you drop!

THE CHALLENGE

KUDOS TO YOU

> Enter any race and get as many Kudos points as you can without a joker. Take a photo of the score and send it to us along with the circuit and chapter info ■

SEGA BASS FISHING

Sega's bass-catching romp provides a decent challenge for the determined angler

THE CHALLENGE

LAND A BIGGUN'!

> Just catch the biggest darn bass you can, then send us a photo of the weight (in metric). You'll *still* have to beat John and Lachlan's 9998g though ■

SOUL CALIBUR

Namco's fighting game has enough depth to keep even the most hardened warriors coming back for more

THE CHALLENGE

TIME ATTACK

> Can you beat **00'25"74**?

Or:

SURVIVAL MODE

> Keep sending in evidence of your highest number of wins ■

FERRARI 355 CHALLENGE

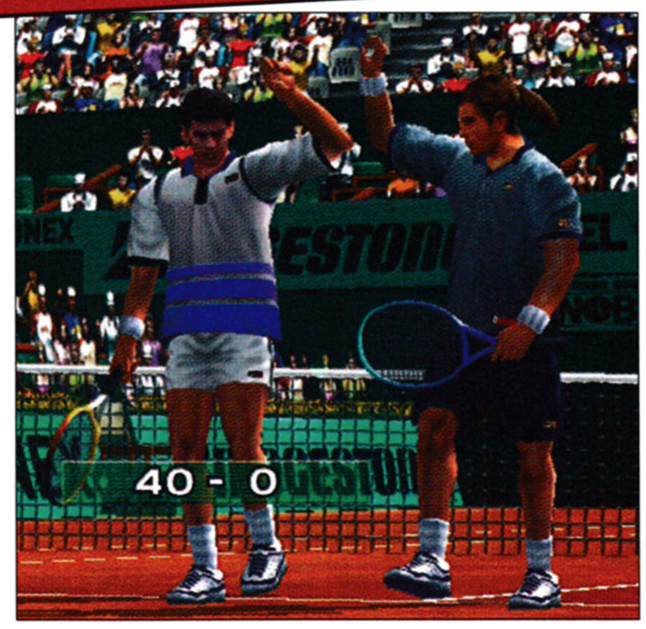
Ferrari 355 Challenge is *extremely* hard to master. Do you think you're up to this?

THE CHALLENGE

BURN SOME RUBBER!

> Race at Suzuka Short with all assistances off, manual gearbox and tuning measurements at default. Choose Single Race, Racing Mode, and do three laps. Go really fast. Then prove it! ■

VIRTUA TENNIS



Prove you're a tennis ace in Sega's superb racquet 'em up by sending us your best times and scores for the Training games

THE CHALLENGE

TRAIN LIKE A PRO!

> World Circuit mode has a selection of eight fantastic Training games. Smash your way to the third stage for each of them, then send us your best scores/times for any of the Training games on level 3 ■

HIGH SCORES

Can you beat this month's top scores?
The three best get a Mad Catz joypad...

DEAD OR ALIVE 2

TIME ATTACK

1	0'38"86	James Davies, *Bridgnorth*	★
2	1'05"84	Stephen Mills, *Leeds*	▼
3	1'16"67	Jon Ashley, *(no address)*	★
4	1'35"75	Neil Hopkins, *Darlington*	★
5	1'41"19	Daniel Moffat, *Rhyl*	▼

SURVIVAL MODE

1	3130217	James Davies, *Bridgnorth*	★
2	1349166	Mark Harriman, *York*	★
3	1293236	Sam Smith, *Surrey*	▼
4	1251784	Jason Ruddock, *via e-mail*	▼
5	1241120	Daniel Moffat, *Rhyl*	▼

SOUL CALIBUR

HIGHEST NUMBER OF WINS IN SURVIVAL MODE

1	109	Kevin Bremmer, *Inverness*	◆
2	109	Jayne Barker, *London*	◆
3	101	Bon Pang, *London*	◆
4	91	Guljar, *Kent*	◆
5	78	Aidan Fitzgerald, *Cheshire*	◆

TIME ATTACK

1	00'25"74	James Davies, *Bridgnorth*	WIN! ★
2	00'35"93	Marcus Butcher, *Surrey*	▼
3	00'39"85	Jon Bexon, *Derby*	▼
4	00'45"15	Sam Smith, *Essex*	▼
5	00'52"62	Mark Culley, *Hartlepool*	★

FERRARI 355 CHALLENGE

RACE LIKE THE WIND!

1	2'46"881	Daniel Moffat, *Rhyl*	◆
2	2'58"934	Alan Buchan, *Via email*	◆
3	3'47"389	Jason Cook, *Via email*	◆

SEGA BASS FISHING

CATCH A BIG ONE!

1	9998g	John Roche, *Co. Cork*	◆
1	9998g	Lachlan Bastiaen, *Scotland*	◆
2	9993g	Graham Massen, *Ashington*	◆
3	9985g	John Tuckey, *London*	◆
4	9984g	Adam Ketley, *via email*	◆

VIRTUA TENNIS

PIN CRASHER

1	$2,580	Mark Wells, *via email*	◆
2	$2,560	Donna Winter, *Aylesbury*	◆
3	$1,380	Freddie Silver, *Cheltenham*	◆

RETURN ACE

1	$6,700	Mark Wells, *Via email*	◆
2	$5,700	Mark Gilmour, *Co. Londonderry*	◆
3	$4,800	Stephen Mills, *Leeds*	◆
4	$3,800	Leigh Brown, *Wakefield*	◆
5	$3,400	Mark Wells, *vie email*	◆

BULL'S EYE

1	$3,950	Raif Simpson, *Tenbury Wells*	WIN! ★
2	$3,450	Michelle Madden, *Manchester*	★

SMASH BOX

1	$9,000	Neil, *Darlington*	WIN! ★
2	$7,000	Damon Murphy, *Durham*	★

METROPOLIS STREET RACER

EARN THAT KUDOS!

1	2,300	Nick Jump, *Leicester*	★
2	2,200	Jason Cook, *Torquay*	★

WIN! WIN! WIN!

A joypad or **DC-UK** T-shirt!

■ Get to number one and an extra joypad or a really creased DC-UK T-shirt is yours!

The THREE best new game scores we receive every month (we write WIN! next to their name, so you know who they are) will each win a Mad Catz joypad – perfect as a second, third or fourth pad for those multiplayer gaming sessions. Other top new entries will receive a **DC-UK** T-shirt. To get on the chart, simply attempt one of our challenges and send us proof of your massive score. A Polaroid will do the trick (or a Game Boy camera pic) – you could either post it to us, or email it. Oh, and for heaven's sake **send us your address** so we know where to send the prize! NB: Chart-toppers only receive one prize each, even if they stay on top for more than a month ■

Send proof of your high scores to one of the addresses below:

Email: dcuk@futurenet.co.uk
Fax: 01225 732275
Write:

DC-UK
Challenge
Future Publishing PLC
30 Monmouth Street
Bath, BA1 2BW

D-m@il

Enlist now for Dreamcast opinion warfare!

"There must be something wrong with *Soul Calibur*, my dad can't keep his grubby mitts off it"

America. However, occasionally a few gems slip through even our investigative fingers – have you seen how many games get released in Japan every week?! We'll keep trying to spot the best titles though and if any new Gundam *titles come up, we'll let you know.*

A LITTLE PS2 RESEARCH

Being curious about what my little off-white box is up against this Christmas, I spent a few hours surfing the Net looking for screens and movies of games from the PS2. But guess what I found out? They're nearly all FMV. Why is Sony and PS2 developers continuing to release FMV shots and footage? Why can't they show what the PS2 can do or will that just destroy the PS2 campaign? After this research I purchased a magazine for its *F355* review and *Half-Life* pics for the DC. When reading through I came across a game called *Seven Blades* for the PS and I thought that the graphics were a bit blocky, even for PlayStation but then I noticed it said "Out 2001: Platform PS2." The DC launch titles graphics were better than these, and so far I've converted two people to DC from PS2 on this fact.

But the best news I've heard is how EB and Hamleys are describing DC sales as "Sky-rocketing" and how the parent company of one of the large US game suppliers has told all its stores to "Push the DC like crazy". So anyone worried about the DC doing a Saturn, there isn't a chance of it happening. The DC will be here for well over two years until the prospected launch of the DC2.

Nick Baker, Carmarthenshire

The great thing about callous and indifferent capitalism is that sometimes it can swing in your favour. The shops know they're not going to make any money out of PlayStation 2 for a while, and they also know there are thousands of eager punters out there who have had their tastes for 128bit gaming awakened by Sony's relentless hype. Of course, no one wants to turn these potential customers away until more PS2s arrive so they are being pointed toward DC. Well, it works in theory, let's see if it happens over the next couple of months...

MORE IMPORT NEWS

First, I would like to praise your excellent mag. But there are a few things that I would like to say. I own an import Dreamcast and I'm glad that I can get hold of any DC game before other people – although they cost more I am definitely willing to pay it. All the previews and reviews in your mag are really good but I think that you need more import news. One page isn't enough! There are a few import games that I'm looking forward to: the best one is *Gundam Side Story 0079*, the game looks really nice and it is also one of my favourite genres – manga. But I've never read about it in your mag which is a disappointment. So apart from the lack of import stuff, I think you are the best DC mag, keep up the good work.

Sisko, from Kent

We have more import news than any other DC magazine and we are one of the only videogame magazines to have proper correspondents in both Japan and Taxi. And I can't wait for *Jet Set Radio.*

We've got something special from Sega: a next generation machine NOW. Quality arcade titles and original games. Add to that the Net access and online games such as *Quake III* and we're laughing! I didn't think I'd be converted at first but I've never had so much fun. So forget the doubters, (jealous methinks) gamers who aren't tuned in to Sega are missing out on something special. Looks like a great Christmas.

Chris Isles, Lancashire

Look Sega, we've told you before – stop sending these letters in, you're not fooling anyone.

I'M HAPPY TOO!

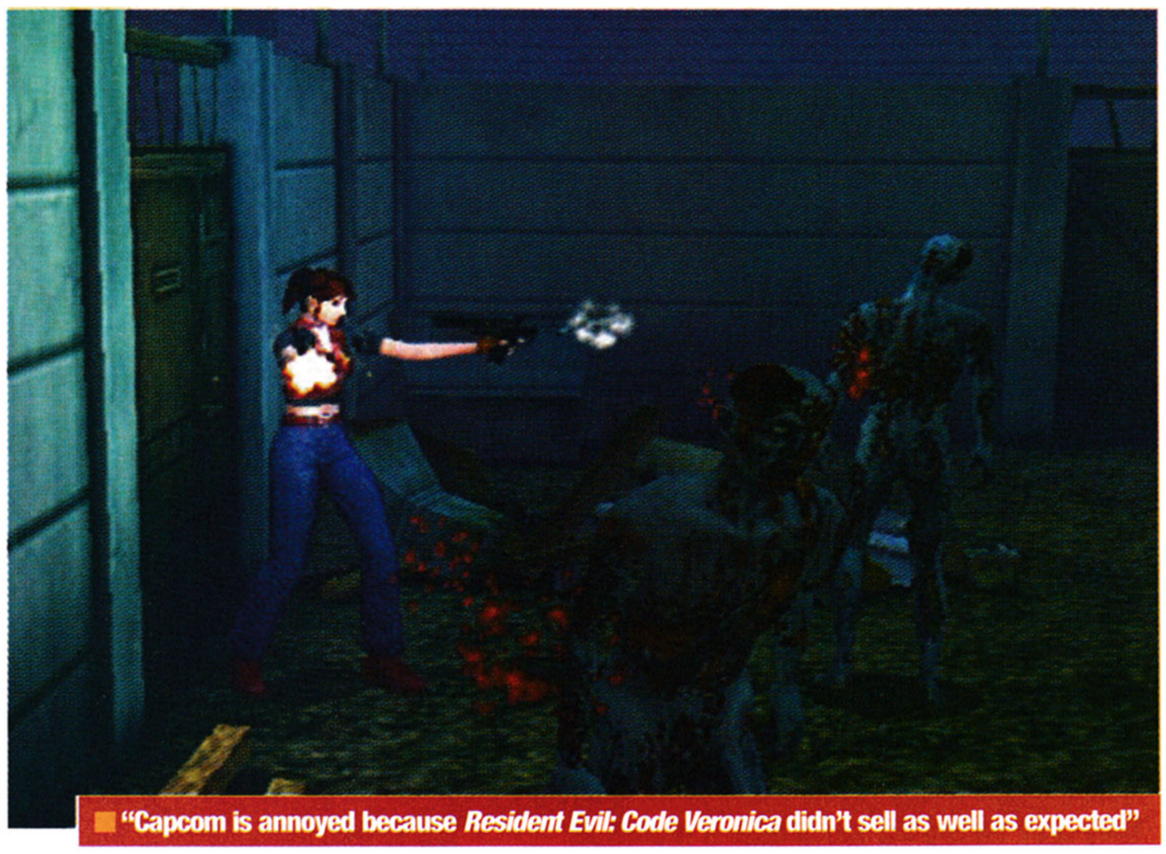
Cheer up people! The DC is a superb console. The quality, innovation and variety of the games available should be enough to prove that, let alone the brilliant graphics and Internet capabilities. My advice is to trust Sega. Okay, some of you may be worried because of the Saturn troubles, but Sega knows what it's doing and has faith in its little white box and we should too.

Kieran Chadha, Huddersfield

We said stop it!

DC CHARTS GET ME DOWN

Sega needs to go for broke, get some money out of its investors and advertise! It may seem like a lot of money to gamble, but look at Sony, it advertises and sells loads of games– even the crap titles. Sega's don't – look at *Soul Calibur*, still arguably the best fighting game available and yet it never gets into the top ten chart. *Virtua Tennis* had big headlines about getting to number one in the all formats charts – where is it now or even where was it after the second week? Capcom is annoyed because *RE:Code Veronica* didn't sell as well as expected I'm not



"Capcom is annoyed because *Resident Evil: Code Veronica* didn't sell as well as expected"

INSIDER KNOWLEDGE

I've got some hot gossip for you. I work for a large electrical retailer, and I have found out that the old multi-tap doesn't work with the new PS2. Do you know if the pads work? Does anything? Is this reality? Do you care? No? I'll shut up then.

Christopher Buxton, via email

Short, sweet and controversial – just the way we like it.

I'M SO HAPPY WITH MY DC

I've only been a Dreamcaster for a few months, but have found myself something refreshing and unique and as a result I have a big smile on my face! I have been amazed by the amount of current and forthcoming grade A titles. I've just bought *MSR* and am a big fan of *Code: Veronica*, *Ferrari 355* and *Crazy*

> "Some of you may be worried because of the Saturn troubles, but Sega knows what it's doing and has faith in its little white box"

surprised! Did you see any adverts for it? It's no wonder Capcom is releasing *RE:CV* on the PS2.

I hate seeing the multi-format chart week after week with no DC games on it. *MSR* got to number five in the first week then went down to number eight. Hardly fantastic is it?

If you're in business you can't wait for customers to come to you – you've got to market and advertise. Sega's catchphrase was 'six billion players online' – perhaps it needs to realise that to reach those players it should advertise more.

Matt, via email

Sega knows it needs to advertise, and it HAS been running commercials for MSR *and other big games. However, as we've pointed out before, Sega Europe has a far smaller budget than Sony – it can't afford to sponsor Champions League coverage or commission past-it avant garde directors to create pretentious ads. It's a chicken and egg situation really; if more people buy the games, Sega will have more money to advertise to get more people to buy the games. If they don't, they don't, so they won't. In other words, life sucks.*

✎ HAS SEGA CAST A SPELL?

I've just bought a Dreamcast with three games for Christmas and it's absolutely amazing. But I do have a complaint. There must be something wrong with *Soul Calibur* because my dad can't keep his grubby mitts off it. Is this some kind of Sega Voodoo magic?

Lee Hazelhurst

No, we suspect it's Sophita.

✎ INTERNATIONAL MOANFEST

To start this letter I would like to say to Wael Halabi (Issue 14 D-M@il) you are a whinger. You said the DC marketing in Lebanon was slow, well, the marketing in Australia is non-existent! When the DC was launched in Australia (after being postponed three times), no firstparty games were available, or VMs, Dreamkey discs or Dream-on demo discs. And since that shocking debacle of a launch not much has changed. To give you an example, we now have to wait until December 3 for *MSR* after four release dates have slipped. *Quake III Arena* is apparently being released in the UK on December 8, so going by the current rate of delays we should get it by the time the next Sega console is released. Now, you might think the reason for this lax in responsibility is just plain laziness that may have been the case earlier on, but now Ozisoft, the company that markets the DC out here is actually distributing PS2 as well. I moved from South Glamorgan (that's in Wales, in case anyone is wondering) in 1991 and I'm now thinking about moving back (at least there'll be some advertising in the valleys) as the games market seems to have dropped immensely.

Mobius, via email

Any letter which begins with the surreal argument, 'you think you've got it bad in Lebanon, what about Australia?!' is welcome in **DC-UK**. *How about some more inter-continental fighting? Would someone from Argentina like to have a bash at a Belgian? Would one of our Welsh readers care to take a crack at Zaire? Come on, let's start a world war!*

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Fax: 01225 732275
Write:
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D-m@il
Future Publishing PLC
30 Monmouth Street
Bath, BA1 2BW

MAIL OF THE MONTH

✎ ARMCHAIR SHOOT 'EM UP TROUBLE

First of all I like to mention how great your magazine is, I've been reading it since issue one. With all the firstperson shooters coming out in the next few months (*Quake III*, *Half-Life*, *Soldier of Fortune* and *Kiss Psycho Circus*) the best control method has to be the mouse and keyboard combo. I'm guessing that as DC-UK work in an office you all use VGA boxes and therefore a monitor, this allows you to use the mouse and keyboard on a desk (as you would use with a computer). The majority of gamers on the other hand, play sitting on a sofa, beanbag, inflatable chair etc. How the hell are we meant to balance the two controllers on our lap? I'll have to probably use a plank of wood. How do you use the combo at DC-UK, do you have any tips?

This also leads me to my other problem. Does Sega think we gamers are made of money? How are we supposed to buy a mouse, keyboard and microphone? I am only 14, and at the moment I am currently trying to save 20 quid for a second VM (which is quite a lot of money for a 14 year old). Also, Sega is crazy for selling *Samba De Amigo* for 100 quid (If I start saving now I should have enough money by Christmas 2001!). Christmas couldn't have come at a better time for gamers, as we don't have to buy games at this time of year – we get other people to do it for us. I agree that not all the peripherals are needed, but gamers still want all or most of them. I still think that Sega is the best though, I'll have none of this Sony malarkey. By the way, what happened to Dave 2000?

Ben Davis, via email

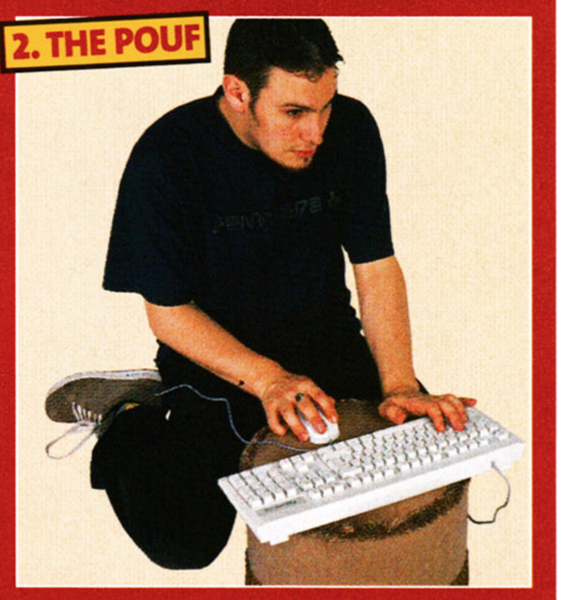
Ben, we gave a lot of thought to your question regarding ways to use the mouse/keyboard combo without a desk, and here are some suggestions. By the way, nothing has happened to Dave 2000 – that's why he still writes for us.

USING THE KEYBOARD WITHOUT A DESK

1. THE PLANK

Found in any garage, planks are good because they can be easily stored

2. THE POUF



Alternatively, every household should have a big pouf that you can rest on

3. THE FRIEND

Or if you lack a plank *and* a pouf, why not rest your keyboard on a friend?

You win... EIDOS

This month, thanks to our friends at Eidos, we are giving away the fantastic *Resident Evil Code: Veronica* to the reader lucky enough to win Mail of the Month. So, well done Ben. And thanks for giving us a chance to humiliate Beast!

Q and A

Sit down, relax and let **DC-UK** sort your gaming life out

"Is it me or is *Hidden & Dangerous* very hard to play and has crap AI?" asks M Smith

IS COMMANDOS COMING?

1) Will there be any of the *Commandos* games on the PC transferred to the DC any time soon? 2) Is just me or is *Hidden & Dangerous* very hard to play and has crap AI? Soldiers stray from planned paths and leg it across enemy infested terrain! (Planning on the map seems to make missions unnecessarily over-complex as well). Or maybe the game requires too much patience...

M Smith, via email

Yes, Eidos is bringing *Commandos 2* to Dreamcast. The game is due to hit the shops in early summer. As for *Hidden & Dangerous*, you're dead right – it's a great game that's hampered by rubbish AI and about a trillion bugs. But practice will eventually make perfect.

WHAT ABOUT TEKKEN?

I was wondering whether there is any chance of *Delta Force* or *Time Crisis* coming to Dreamcast, and I know we have the fabulous *Soul Calibur* but what about Namco doing a Dreamcast *Tekken*? What's the latest on *Age of Empires* and *Unreal Tournament* – both superb PC games. One more question, can you link two or more Dreamcasts or TVs together to play multiplayer *Quake III* or *MSR* in full screen?

Guillaume de Basly, East Sussex

No news on *Delta Force*, Konami was all set to release *Age of Empires 2* for Dreamcast but that seems to be on hold at present. *Unreal Tournament* had a preview in both this and the previous issue, so jump back to page 012 to get some more information. *Time Crisis* is a whole different ball game, Namco so far being slow to develop for Dreamcast. You would be wise to forget about the chances of *Tekken* or any other large PlayStation game name falling into your lap in the near future – Sony's influence still plays strong in the Namco camp. As for your last question, sorry, no you can't. Not yet anyway.

GIRLS IN BIKINIS PLEASE

I was wondering (just off the top of my head) can you get the *DOA2* girls to fight in their bikinis? I'm sure every male would like to know this answer. Also, I've managed to get six costumes for Kasumi and Ayate but only three for Ein. Why?

Darren, via email

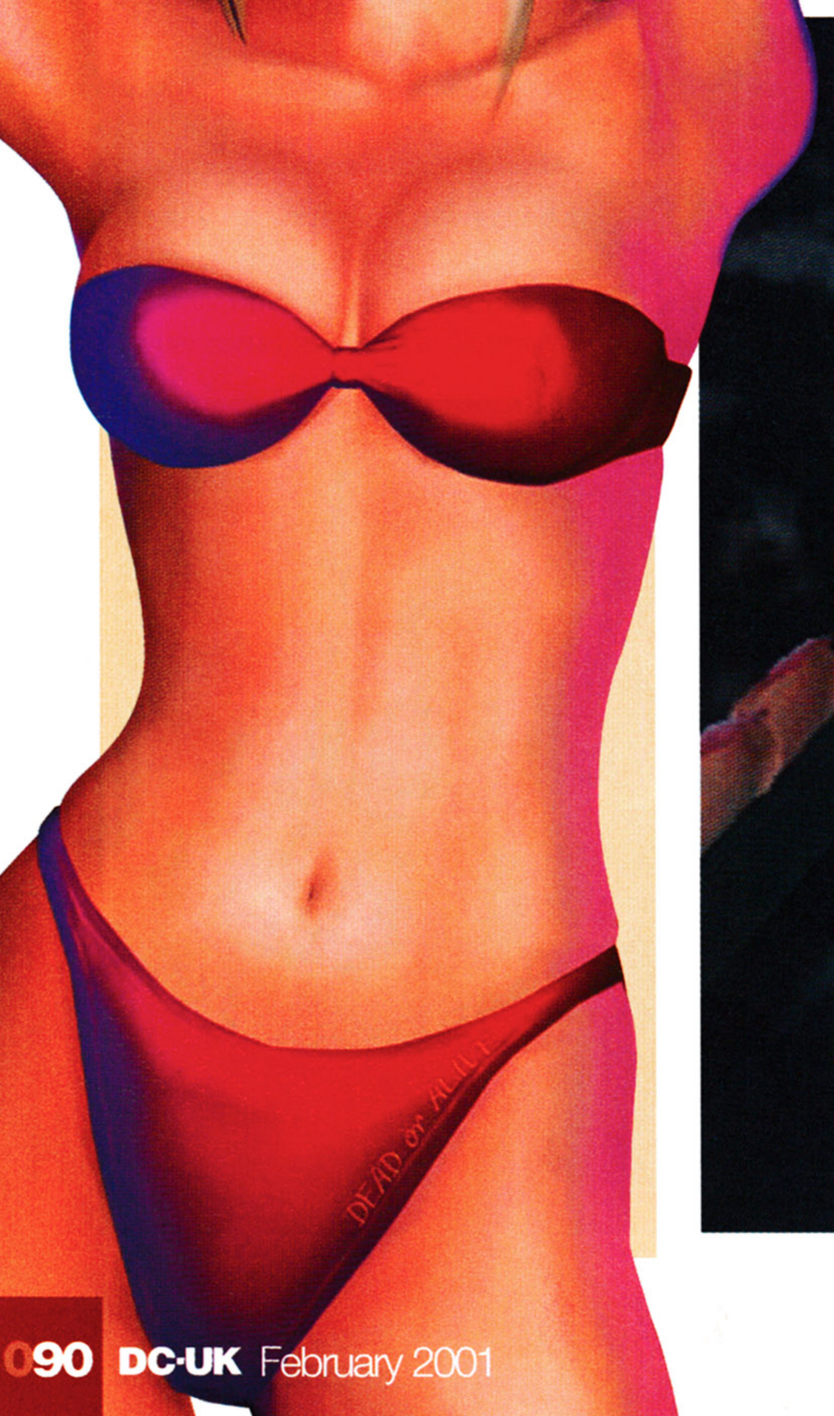
Unfortunately, as far as we are aware, there is no way to get the gals to strip down to those bikinis. Which, as you rightly state, is the eternal quest of every male Dreamcast owner. As for the costume counts, it's no error – each character has a different number. There's no rhyme or reason to it.

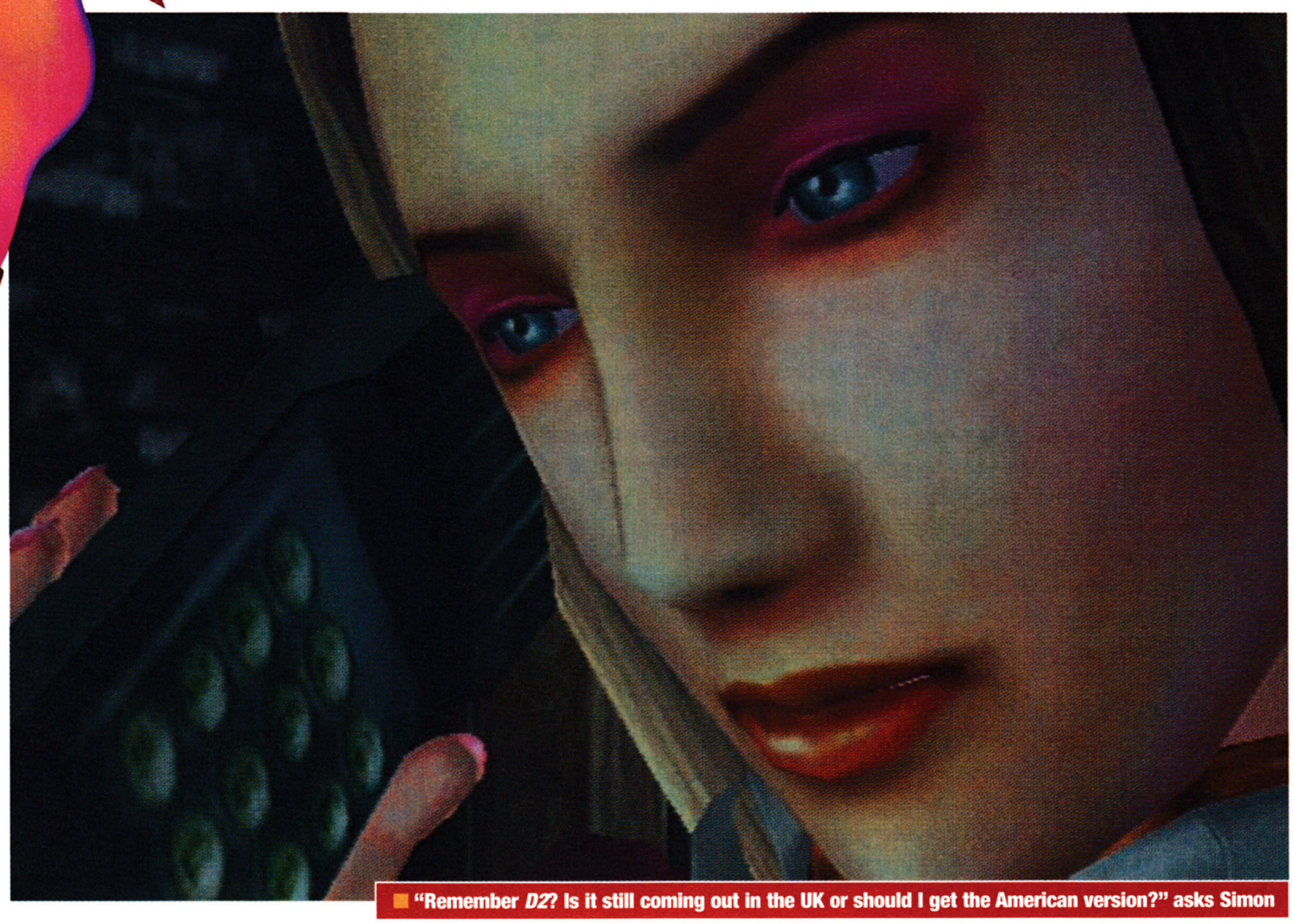
FISHING FOR A ROD

I have just bought a DC and I'm very disappointed to find that the official DC rod is unavailable in the UK. Is there a way I can get hold of one?

Simon Hughes, Essex

Not in the UK. Actually, the 'official' rod in Japan wasn't manufactured by Sega, but by ASCII. The Fission rod, which is supplied in over here, *is* the





"Remember *D2*? Is it still coming out in the UK or should I get the American version?" asks Simon

official rod, as specified by Sega, so you're not losing out. If you absolutely have to have the Japanese ASCII rod, try phoning Dreamware on 0870 443 0387 or The Video Game Centre on 01202 527314, both of which are importers.

WILL I SEE LARA?

Are there any decent cricket games like *Brian Lara Cricket* planned for or coming out for the Dreamcast?

H Z Shah, via email

Ah, *Brian Lara*, a fine, fine game. Actually, the answer is no, at least currently. Unfortunately, it's usually up to EA and Codemasters to supply the majority of sports titles for home systems and as both these developers have shunned Dreamcast, it's unlikely you'll be seeing anything that approaches the quality of Mr Lara, et al.

ARE THE RUMOURS TRUE?

I just wanted to know if the rumour of updates for Yuzo Kosiro's *Streets of Rage* and *Shinobi* is true or just idle gossip. Back during the great Mega Drive days those were two of my favourites games.

Vi, via email

They're just rumours, my good man. Which is a damn shame, at least on paper. As we explained in issue 17, a lot of the reason such games as *Streets of Rage* or *Shinobi* were so good was because of their pinpoint gameplay. Transferring any of the classic 2D action/platformers/shooters to 3D usually yields stinky results – *Castlevania*, *Contra*, *Gradius* and *Fatal Fury* have all suffered. In fact, we seem to remember that *Fighting Force* was billed as a 3D *Streets of Rage* (See Glossary 071) and we all known what kind of game that turned out to be. As much as we'd love to see Axel or Joe Musashi back in action, even the slightest whiff of polygons would be like defiling the corpses of two of the greatest Mega Drive franchises ever.

SCIENCE OFFICER MAXIMUS

Got a question that requires a really lengthy technical answer? Yes? Maximus is the man you need to know…

FRAGFESTING FROM THE USA?

Can I get my import copy of *Quake III* to play online in good old Blighty? There is a dial up number to put in so I am wondering if you could find out the European dial up number for me to log on when the server is launched?

Dean Bourne, via email

As far as I'm aware, there is no way to directly dial the UK servers for online *Quake III*. While the US version has a blank space to enter one's ISP number, this is merely a proxy that hosts the connection. After calling your ISP, the game instructs the Dreamcast to dial the server on a number that is embedded in the disc. Naturally, as it is an American copy of the game, the server number is located Stateside, meaning that your machine will always connect to the American game router.

There is rumour that it is possible to enter the details from an ISP account held on a standard IBM PC, but the actual mechanics of the operation are undisclosed. At time of going to press, it is supposedly impossible to play an US version of *Quake III* on a UK server. More information as and when.

AN IMPORT GAMER IN NEED...

Do games like the US version of *WWF Royal Rumble* that don't work using chipped Dreamcasts or Action Replay discs work on a chipped Japanese DC; seeing as in Japan there would be no reason to want to buy import games as they all come out over there anyway?

Alan Kasim, London

Ah, territorial lockout. Ever-present bane of import gamers. Your assumption regarding Japanese Dreamcasts, while perfectly logical, is misplaced, as regional encryption is identical throughout all territories. An American copy of *WWF Royal Rumble* will be as impossible to run on a Japanese Dreamcast as it is on a European model.

You also state that '[import games]… all come out over there [Japan] anyway', which is not entirely true. Western titles such as *MSR*, *V Rally 2* and *Ecco* all hit the PAL territories far earlier than they did Japan, so there is as much reason to prevent the export of European titles to Japan as there is vice-versa. As bizarre as it may seem, the Japanese were as eager to play PAL *Tomb Raider IV* as we were NTSC/J *Soul Calibur*.

Ultimately, the only proof of compatibility would be to test the game with the appropriate hardware. Unfortunately our Engineering Department isn't equipped with a chipped Japanese Dreamcast, but any information from further research will be posted here in a future issue ■

DC THROUGH PC?

Is it true that you can play your DC though a PC monitor?

Mark, via email

It is indeed. Get yourself a VGA Box for no more than £19.99 and hook up your Dreamcast to your VGA Monitor to experience graphics of a divine quality. The only problem is having to keep unplugging it from the PC or Mac. Which means you should buy a 28" monitor for £2,000 just to play Dreamcast games on. Money well spent, we say.

IS D2 STILL PLANNED?

Remember *D2*? Is it still coming out in the UK, or should I get the American version?

Simon, via email

Certainly do. *D2* is one of the most absorbing, beautiful and over-looked titles ever and having played both the Jap and US versions, it's safe to say that the chances of a PAL conversion is looking slimmer and slimmer. Our advice is to pick up a copy of the US version, as it doesn't appear to have suffered much editing – be aware, though, as it's deeply disturbing, not to mention twisted and overtly violent as well. Don't say we didn't warn you. Try Dreamware on 0870 443 0387 or The Video Game Centre on 01202 527314 for any import enquiries.

"Can you get the *DOA2* girls to fight in their bikinis?"

Q and A

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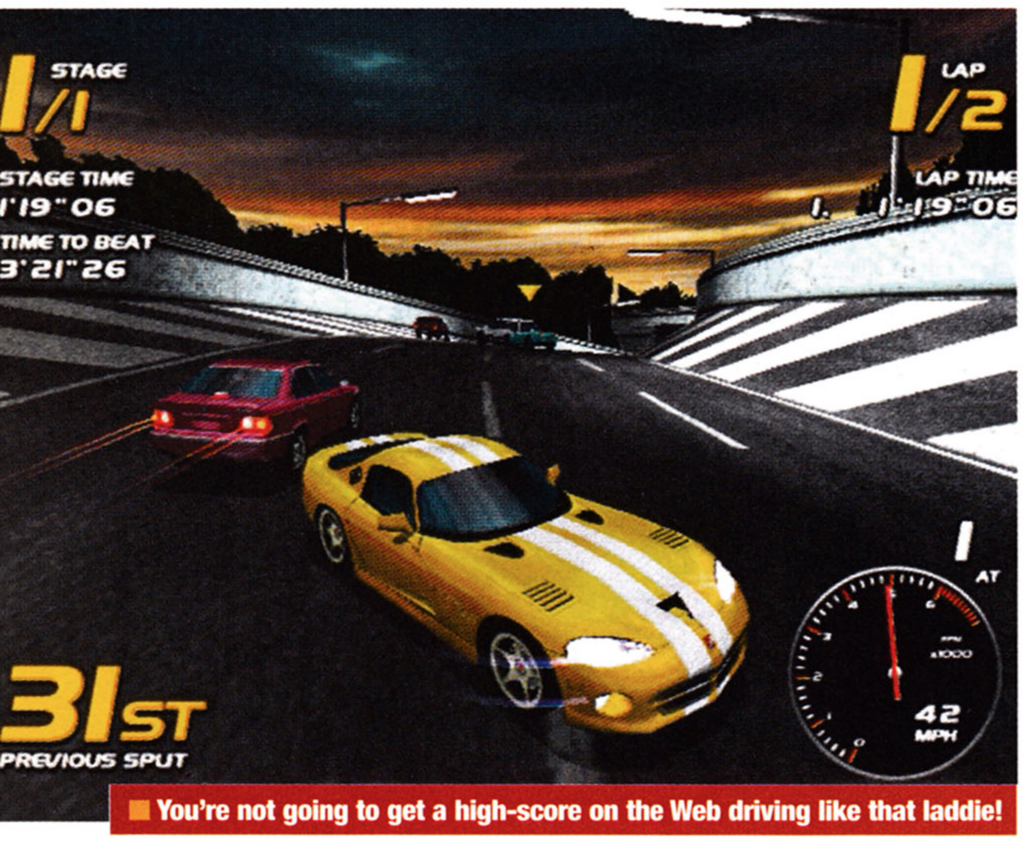
Internet News

DC-UK heads out on another Web surfing safari



You're not going to get a high-score on the Web driving like that laddie!

NetSpine

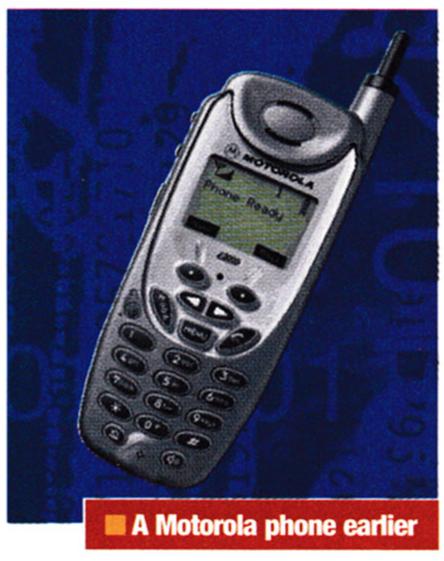
Gamers get a backbone

Acclaim has announced that it's developed a 'set of cross-platform tools and technologies' that will enable gamers to interact over the Internet via next gen machines as well as PC's, wireless devices and interactive TV. Going by the name of NetSpine (yet another one of those fancy online titles that do away with spaces between words), it will debut when DC and PC racer *Vanishing Point* is released in February.

Other than allowing players from around the globe to upload their scores and ratings to a main high-score board, it'll also offer exclusive challenges everytime you log on as well as the standard online play and chat facility. And, of course, one day you'll be able to compete against people using the PS2, mobile phone or PC version of the same game. Of course, you lot should all be leading the tables no problem ■

Sonic Goes Mobile

Our spikey hero runs rings around Motorola



A Motorola phone earlier

Hands up who's addicted to the snake game on their mobile phone? Hands up who thinks it's only fun for about, ooh, four minutes and you'd much prefer to play Sonic? And what if we were to add some hi-res graphics, the ability to download further games from the Net and the capability to store more than one game in your phone?

And what if we told you that, thanks to an agreement between Sega and Motorola, this is going to be available on the next generation of mobile phones, due out sometime in the first half of 2001? We guess you'd be pretty pleased right? Unless of course playing the games drains the phone's battery in a manner akin to using the VM... Check out **www.motorola.com/iden** ■

Mega Drive DVD

Sega's classic console returns!

Attention retro gaming fans: you can now play all of your fav Mega Drive games via a DVD player! That's right, everything from the 2D scrolling beat 'em up king *Streets of Rage 2* to the adventures of *Ecco* via *Klax* and the street-tuff *Toe Jam and Earl*. They could all be yours, again!

Made in Hong Kong (the home of dodgy hybrid hardware), the Shinco 868 machine comes complete with a built-in Mega Drive emulator, as well as DVD and MP3 playback. The only catch is, it's a Mega Drive EMULATOR – it isn't the official hardware which means you'll have to locate the original game ROMs on the Internet and then burn them onto CD – which is of course legally questionable. to say the least.

If that doesn't put you off, check out importers such as **www.lik-sang.com** for more info. Oh, and to show its Eastern roots, the machine also comes with a karaoke facility. You'll be able to invent your own words to all those classic Mega Drive theme tunes! We suspect Maximus already has one ordered ■

The MD bit of the Shinco 828

Re-live the superb original *Ecco*

"Hey man, visit jetgrind.com today!"

Jet Set Site

Get in-line for Net skate action

After the lack of a Daily Mail orchestrated tabloid frenzy over *Jet Set Radio*'s painting on public property action, hop over to www.jetgrind.com to create some controversy of your own.

Far from the usual shoddy fan site, this features a stylish interface and everything from detailed character pics and bios to a forum and trick tips section. You can also sign up for their newsletters (via the EGroup) and there's the promise of music downloads coming soon. Now get your skates on and get over there. Sorry ■

BROWSER

Speedy news snippets from the WWW

Net Basics

As Christmas has been a bumper period for the DC, there's a whole host of new owners out there who are virgins to this Internet stuff. As we've done the beginner's guide thing before (when Dreamarena still had that lo-fi blue background), we'll direct you over to the Netcentre (**www.members.tripod.com/kr23dc/index.html**) – where you can get yourself fully DC Net-orientated.

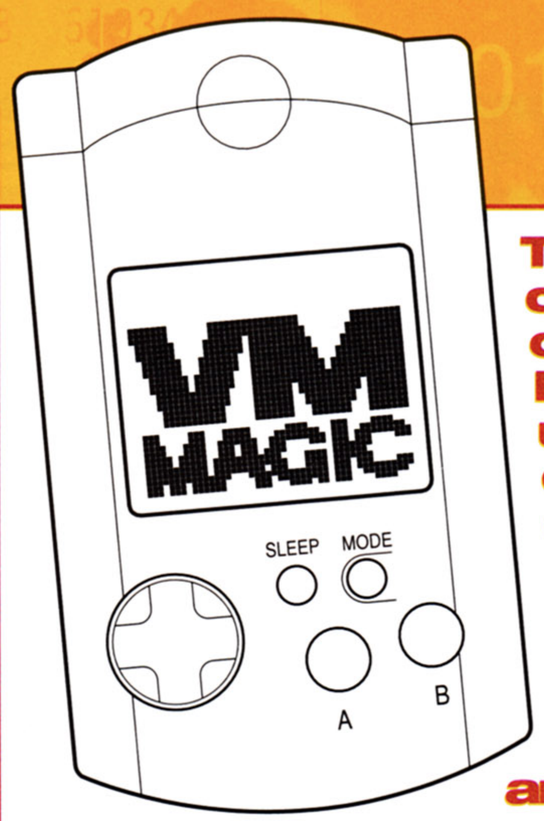
Of most use is the full list of keyboard/joypad shortcuts and the comprehensive section dealing with lower-case acronyms and codes people use in chat rooms. We still think they're all part of a plan for world domination via mental subversion though.

No 56k modem

In the world of multi-territory online gaming, it seems that some countries are treated more equal than others. No, European DC owners are not missing out on some more fancy coloured VM action, this time it's the possibility of getting an upgraded 56k modem, like some of our cousins from other continents.

As for the rationale behind this move, we'll let Sega explain: "There are no plans for an upgraded modem, as a 33k unit works fine in Europe, whereas a 56k modem is needed more in the States."

We'll leave it up to you to decide whether the argument is a convincing one or not. Whatever the case, it looks like we in the UK will have to wait for the mythical broadband service for faster Net access and online gaming. Typical, eh? ■



This month our online experts combed the Net for more useless downloads, only to unearth some good stuff at a new site. We were really amazed

Now you might get the opinion that we are jaded old DC fools who think we've seen it all and like nothing better than to wallow in a pit of sarcasm talking authoritatively about inadequate VM sites. And you'd be right. But this month something happened, we came across the VMU Centre and suddenly regained our zest for VM life. That or the Prozac finally kicked in.

Anyway, how many times have you found a downloadable save, only to discover that it only works on Japanese versions of the game? Well, at **www.vmucentre.co.uk** they handily ask you to select the region you're from before presenting you with a list of saves. Simple but ingenious. Likewise, there are daily updates, with full saves for the epic greatness that is *Shenmue* and the frustratingly realistic *F355 Challenge* when we last checked. Add to this *DOA2* and *MSR* (with a choice of 50 and 60Hz versions), as well as a request function, and the other download sites out there should be hanging their heads in shame. Or linking to this site.

■ No. It can't be! It's a good VM download site!

We were in such a good mood after that we decided to hang around a bit more and chance our luck at the downloadable games. First impressions were not too hot, with a meagre amount of selections greeting us, but then we discovered a tiny little VM version of *Outrun*! Yes, for the bargain price of only 63 blocks of memory you can hold a piece of arcade history in your hands. And to be honest, it's not a bad effort at all. If that's all too retro for you, check out the *Sega GT* mini game (from the Japanese version) and bring yourselves back to the future. Sorry, that pun was awful. But not as bad as trying to play the Japanese text adventure that's also there... ■

NET A DATE...

With Valentines Day fast approaching, why not let your DC help you find that special someone who will complete your life? We spent a Saturday night on the pull DC-stylee...

■ Too ugly to meet people face to face? Then chat them up online!

7.01 PM As we're on DC, we headed straight for the Dreamarena chat rooms. Thinking ourselves the suave and sophisticated types, we headed for The Jazz Bar and promptly set about eyeing up the local talent. CandyGirl sounded like a good bet. After a little small talk, we made our move. She was 12. As we're not keen on the lifestyle change that goes along with a spell in jail, we exited hastily.
Chances: 2/10

7.37 PM After finding that the Excite chatrooms are not DC-friendly (strange, as they provide the search facility in Dreamarena), we went over to the Love Seat for some hot action (**www.chatting.com**). As the room expressly stated that it's 'TV Web compatible!', we thought we could empathise with those surfing the Web via their lo-fi tellies and suffering the deep pain of non-Java browser Net-discrimination. Unfortunately, Cyberminx really did want to talk about browser compatibility issues. We made our excuses and left.
Chances: 4/10

8.16 PM Hyperchat UK sounded a bit more racy and uptempo, so seeing as the room was full of the likes of Tigress and Kat, we entered as LoveBeast (**shuk.hyperchat.com**). After some frantic flirting, with particular emphasis on using those smiley face thingys, we seemed to be talking ourselves into some private ménage à trois action (most chat rooms let you select certain names and hold private chats with them). A result! Until our lack of typing skills frustrated the potential playmates and they went off down the pub.
Chances: 6/10

9.01 PM It suddenly became apparent that we needed a little help so we checked out **www.dream-dating.org.uk/chatup.htm**. Here you'll find all manner of tips from 'Skills For Dating' to 'Ways To Get Rid Of A Date'. We concentrated on the former, then headed into the chat room to put our skills to work (it's hidden away in the bottom left corner). Now past the 9 pm watershed, we hoped things would hot up, especially as the room seemed to be full of lonely single college girls. Drawing on our knowledge of student life, we blurted out every stereotypical student activity we could. Not a wise move in hindsight, as Kisses started to get way too aggressive on the subject of top-up loans. We left, but did get a personal invite to return. Better swot up on loans first, though.
Chances: 9/10 (if a student)

9.55 PM We decided to set our intellectual standards a bit lower and headed over to **www.teenchat.co.uk**. This seemed more like it, reminiscent of hazy days hanging around the bus shelter drinking warm cider. The chat was lively, and we quickly entered into a debate on Britney Spears vs Christina Aguilera. Unfortunately everyone else was actually talking about their music. Shouldn't late teens be out trying to buy alcohol at this time of night?
Chances: 7/10 (if you're a pop-tastic teeny bopper)

10.35 PM Last chance saloon – **www.cheatcity.com**. We were desperate, so honed on to Doris (we reasoned that someone an uninventive name couldn't be picky). Things were going great, until the old a/s/l question came up (age/sex/location). She was called Doris because she was a 45 year old house wife and mother of three from Birkenhead. Not, we thought, our ideal date. We left to catch the end of Match Of The Day (although Doris will be sending us some of her special coconut biscuits – thanks!)
Chances: 10/10 (and food!) ■

FOR ALL YOUR ONLINE SHOPPING NEEDS, TURN TO PAGE 094 FOR THE
DC-UK WEB DIRECTORY

DC-UK SITES

DC-UK Webcam
www.dc-uk.co.uk/dc/land/cam
Yes, the hilarious **DC-UK** Webcam is back online catching all the action from our office at 30 second intervals. The cam is switched on from 9:30 am to 6:00 pm every week day. Come and watch us perform like caged monkeys!

Pet Of The Day
www.petoftheday.com
Some people are so proud of their guinea pigs, rats and rabbits that they groom them, photograph them and display. them for all to see on this frankly worrying site.

Steps
www.stepsofficial.com
Have you been caught time and time again not knowing the latest Steps moves at the local disco? Well visit the band's official sites and they'll take you through each song!

Sega Revolution
www.segarevolution.co.uk/
Dreamcast news site edited by one of our regular tipsters, Jay Filmer. We promised we'd give it a plug. There, we did it.

Lik-Sang
www.lik-sang.com
The place to go for all your technological import needs – as featured in the Mega Drive DVD news this month. Memory cards, Poo-Chi keyrings, suspicious back-up devices. They're all here ■

Been to any good sites recently? You send 'em, and we'll print 'em

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ECW Hardcore Revol.	King of Fighters 99	Ready 2 Rumble	Street Fighter Alpha	Worms:Armageddon
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NEXT-ISSUE

WE KISS YOU!

If Valentine's Day slips by without any romantic cards or snogs behind the bike sheds with that dodgy bird from Form 5B, don't despair, **DC-UK** will be around to provide more good Dreamcast lovin' than you can possibly handle!

For the latest **news**, **previews** and **reviews** of all the biggest DC games of the winter months, you know exactly where to come. And if you're lucky, you might just get feelsies as well!

ISSUE 20 ON SALE FEBRUARY 15

THE DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

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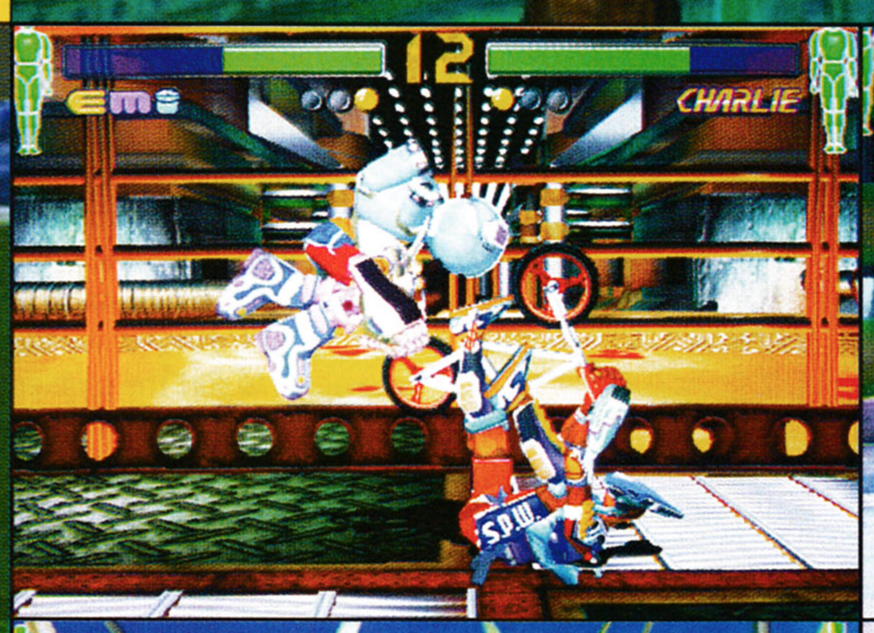
Soul Reaver 2

Project Justice



Fighting Vipers 2

Team Diary

Keith offers another truly fascinating glimpse into the making of **DC-UK**

TUESDAY DECEMBER 5
Right, it's issue 19 – the last one we're working on this year. Spent most of today trying to come up with ideas for our two features: the 2001 preview and the online gaming review. Naturally we were toying with some kind of 2001 a Space Odyssey theme for the former – we even designed the opening spread with a bunch of monkeys standing in awe around a Dreamcast-shaped monolith in the middle of a pre-historic desert. (Hilariously, we asked Beast to find some clip art images of deserts and he came back with a CD ROM full of photos of blancmanges, cakes and tarts. The fool!) In the end, though, we realised that everyone else in the industry would have exactly the same idea, so we grudgingly canned it.

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 6
This was cover video editing day. I, along with Future's creative services person Wendy Smith took all the footage from the various games to a multimedia studio in Bath at four in the afternoon. 11 hours later we emerged with a master tape. Unfortunately we weren't given footage of *Pod*, *Speed Devils* of *Champ Surfer* so I had to play those and film the result – unfortunately I was totally rubbish at *Champ Surfer*, but luckily Maximus turned up later on and pulled a few rad manoeuvres. Then he played the game.

FRIDAY DECEMBER 8
Somehow we're already halfway through issue 19 (19!) – where did those first days go? We frittered them away down the betting shop again, that's where. Anyway, the situation is normal – ie, slightly worrying. We have a few pages laid out, but most of the games are yet to come in and we still haven't secured a lead review.

As it's Karl's birthday on Sunday, we presented him with a birthday cake, a Leeds United FC mug and a Reservoir Dogs DVD. The cheeky art ed quipped, "I must be more popular than I was last year" – a clear reference to when we bought him a pair of edible panties and a wind-up man/sheep interaction toy. On Friday evening, me, Karl, Beast, and Karl's Mancunian friend Michelle hit top Bath night spot Smiths for a bit of Karaoke. Our fantastic rendition of Dizzy drew an ecstatic round of applause and won us a free T-shirt! Next month: Star For A Night!

MONDAY DECEMBER 11
I predictably turned up in my Man City top after Saturday's 5-0 thrashing of Everton. Karl predictably turned up hungover after his mammoth birthday weekend (which included 14 pints and the world's largest Shashlick kebab on Saturday). Claire predictably turned up at around midday ("it's the trains" she complained unconvincingly).

TUESDAY DECEMBER 12
Karl, Lee and I went for a meal with Eidos at Bath's famous Moon and Sixpence restaurant. The other team members weren't left out though: Karl brought them all back a Christmas cracker. How they laughed. Especially as we were gone for three hours.

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 13
Having viewed our cover video the night before, Maximus casually mentioned that it didn't appear to contain *Mr Driller*. After quickly grabbing Edge's VCR, I frantically checked through the tape to discover that, true enough, the clip – which was definitely edited into the video on Wednesday night – had somehow been left out of the master copy we were given. Even more frantic scenes ensued as several phone calls to print services revealed we had about four hours to sort the problem. Wendy belted back up to the multimedia suite to get a new copy while Karl and I hastily designed the packaging. It all worked out okay in the end, though.

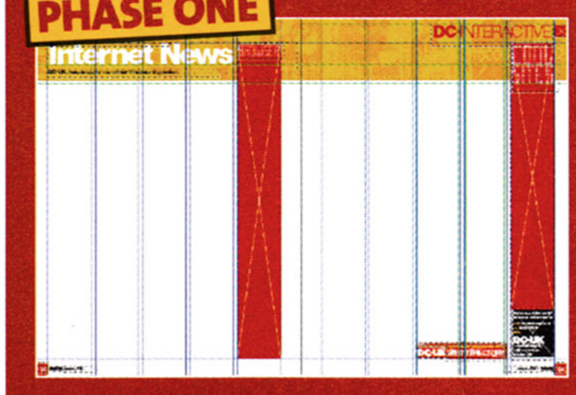
FRIDAY DECEMBER 15
It's the Future Christmas party tonight and as we don't feel it's fair to reveal what might go on at this event (free alcohol all night), we're stopping the diary early. We now have a lead review, the whole of the back section is finished and the features are almost complete. We hope you like our dressing up of the usual 'Preview of the year' feature as a tabloid gossip column. You should have seen the stuff we couldn't print. See you next month! ■

THE ART OF ART

Bonjour, mes enfants, c'est moi, le Beast. Let me show you the creative magic behind **DC-UK**!

"Now, DC-UK may LOOK as though it has been thrown together by a couple of performing chimps escaped from a wandering band of circus performers, but this is not the case. The construction of each page – using a piece of software known as Quark XPress – is actually an art that takes many, many years to perfect. Let me show you how an average page is put together."

PHASE ONE



"This how the page starts, with only the banner (ie, the top bit) and the regular columns in place. The blue lines are the grid lines that tell us where to put stuff on the page."

PHASE TWO

"Here, I've been given the text and images by editorial and now I'm trying to fit them all in. I've also moved the regular 'box outs' to fit in with the extended 'Love' feature."

PHASE THREE

"Right, I've managed to get all the text and images in and they all fit together, but the Browser news and cool sites still haven't been given to me. That is typical – they always come last."

PHASE FOUR

"This is the finished page. Keith changed some things around to show more images on the first page. He's also had time to surf the Net and find some good sites. C'est fin. Au revoir!"

■ **Ah, the feature that never was. Beast still swears it'd look better with a cake in it**

> "We bought him a pair of edible panties and a wind up sheep toy"

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RACE OFFLINE 4	HUGE ONLINE MATCH 5	6	RACE OFFLINE w/ MARC 7	RACE VOLCANO 8 BEST LAP 1:24	9	10
11	RACE 12 ODD ROCK BEST LAP 5:20	13	ONLINE MATCH 14 BEST LAP 3:21	15	16 RACE ALL DAY — CALL IN SICK	17 ONLINE MATCH
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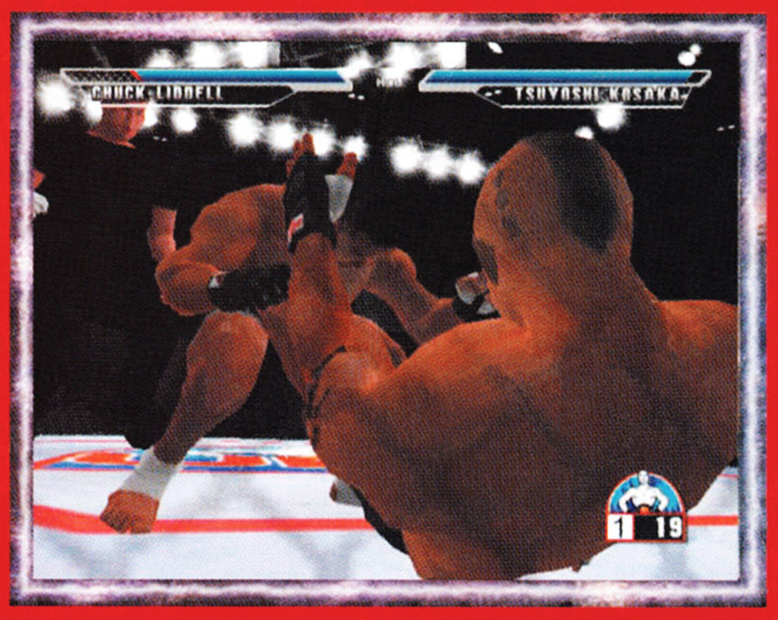

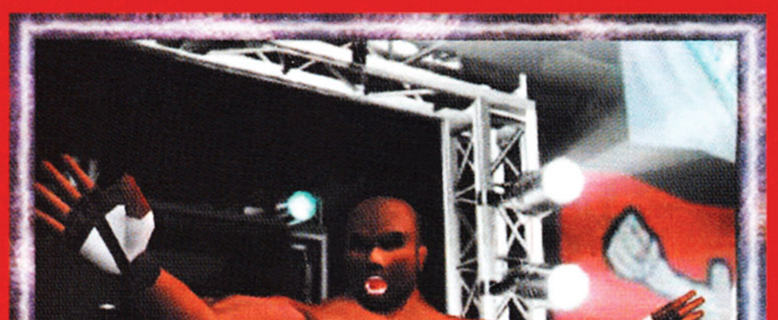

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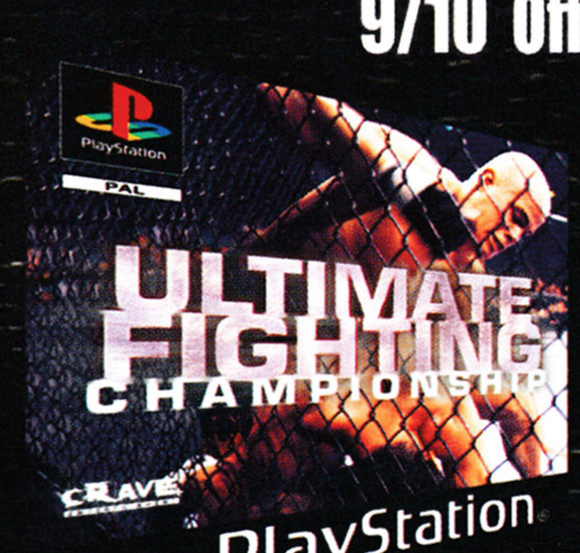

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