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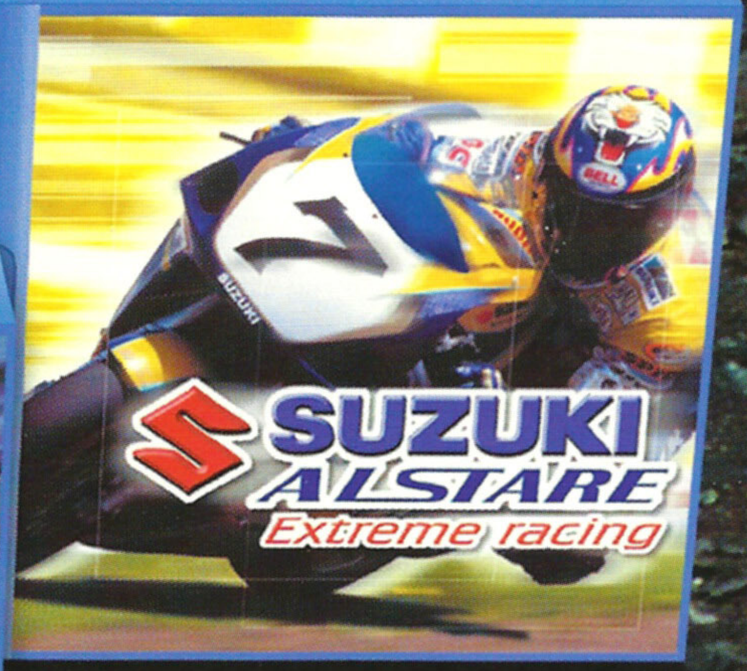

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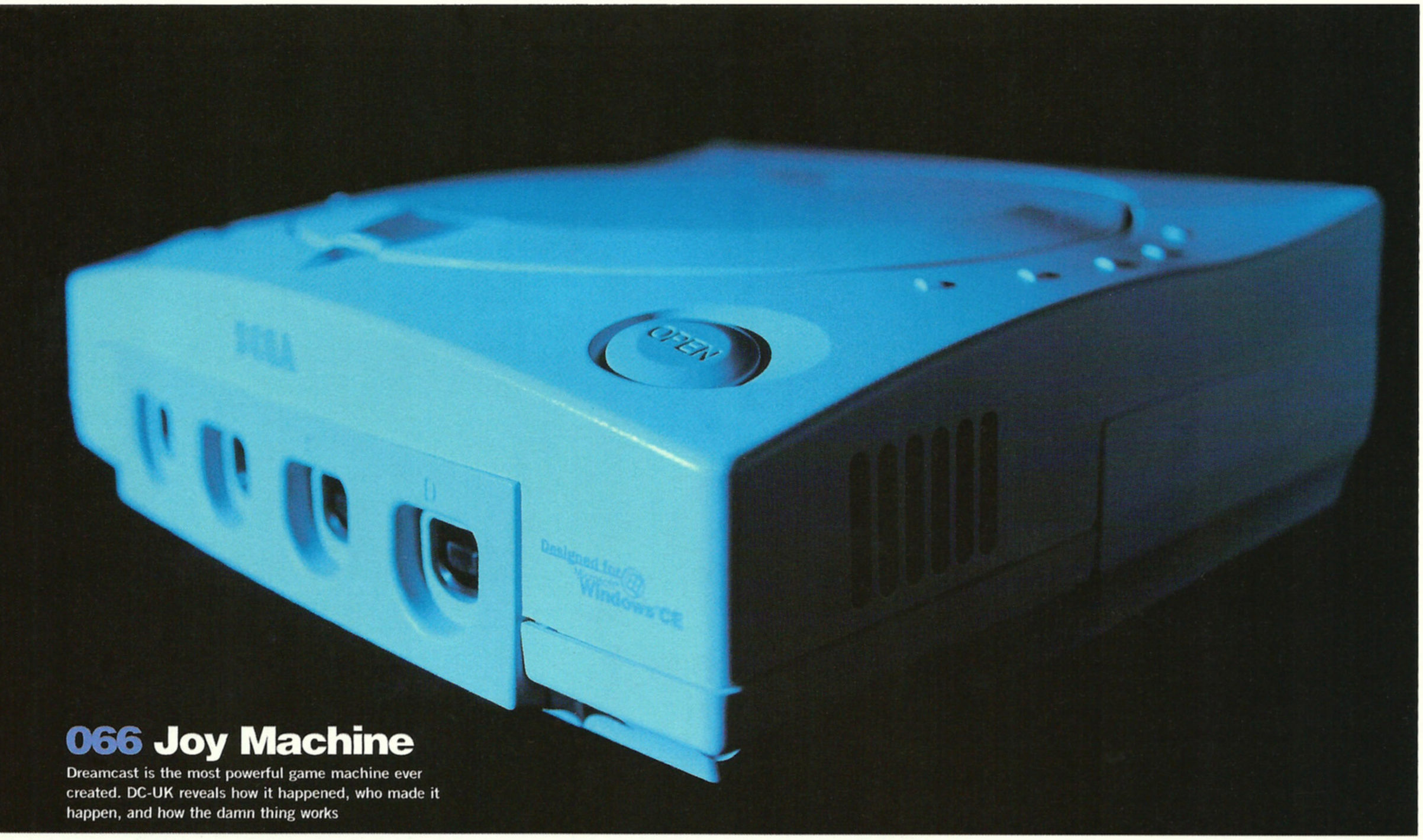

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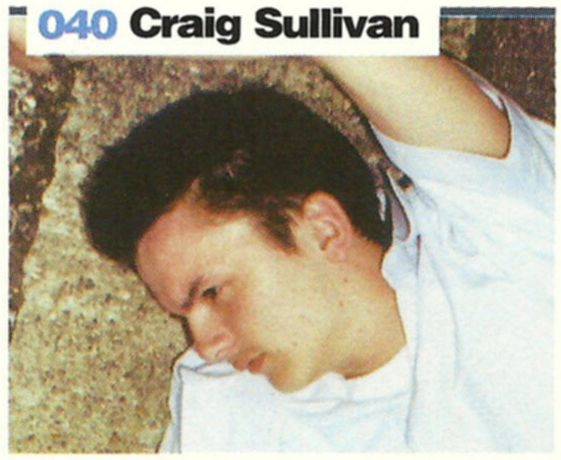

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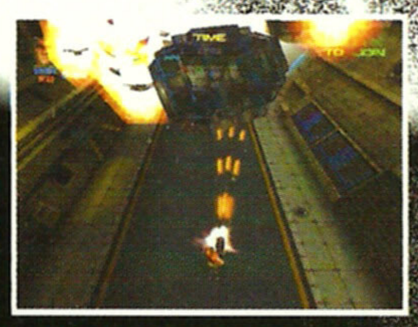

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DC-UK
THE BEGINNING

CASPAR FIELD
EDITOR

Hi, thanks for coming along, we were just beginning – you haven't missed anything. Grab a chair from back there, help yourself to a drink (and a piece of cake). No smoking, though, it's bad for you. Apparently.

Just in case you hadn't heard, Sega's new console, Dreamcast, is coming. I can reel off a stream of facts and figures about the console that will impress you: 128bit processor, three million polygons per second, modem for online play and the Internet, 64 channel surround sound, Windows CE compatibility, 26Mb RAM, blah blah blah...

But that's not what Dreamcast is about. It's incredible to realise, but over the last four years, the videogame scene has been dominated by a company that doesn't know a thing about games. I own a PlayStation and there have been a few games that I've been hooked by (Konami's *Castlevania: Symphony of the Night* springs to mind), but there's something a bit soulless about Sony's console. It's like buying a car made by a company that doesn't understand anything about driving.

Which is where Sega comes in. Just the name evokes a bloom of rosy gaming memories. From tyre-screaming classics, such as *OutRun* and *Daytona USA*, to *Sonic* and *Virtua Fighter*, Sega's credentials as a game maker are impeccable. Sony's are not.

Dreamcast is an amazing game machine. I've owned one since they first went on sale in Japan back in November '98. The new types of gameplay that Dreamcast has made possible, from *Sonic Adventure*'s vast levels to *Power Stone*'s free ranging combat, are enough to start the blood flowing in even the most hardened gamer's veins.

September 23 is when Dreamcast goes on sale. Go on, try some. I promise you'll like it. ■

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THE TEAM

KEITH STUART
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

> Ex-Edge person as featured on TV's famous Wise Up. Actually believes Man City has a chance to get back into the Premiership. Plans to usurp Caspar and to start a thousand year reign of terror on **DC-UK**. Has no discernable interests, apart from eating, drinking and breathing. Hates Man United.
Favourite game: *Sega Bass Fishing*

ESTHER WOODMAN
DEPUTY EDITOR

> Financially insolvent reader of OK! magazine. An odd mixture of middle class attitudes with Cockney aspirations. Fancies David Bowie, Paul McCartney and Jack Nicholson – basically anyone over 50 with lots of money. Couldn't give a toss about football, but hates Man United anyway.
Favourite game: *Chocolate Monopoly*

STEPHEN LAWSON
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

> Edits The Message, a hip-hop fanzine, but we have been wisely informed that his own CD collection is largely made up of Crystal Gayle and Garth Brooks. When he becomes rich and famous, his ambition is to buy pre-prepared chicken breasts from Marks and Spencers. Hates Man United.
Favourite game: *Virtua Fighter 3tb*

LEE HART
WRITER

> This is his first proper job, so he's getting paid bugger all, but we feed him scraps and let him sleep under his desk. He boasts that he can play football like a demon, so it must be true. Hails from Macclesfield, which almost excuses him from being a a Man United fan. But not quite.
Favourite game: *Sensible Soccer*

CHRISTIAN DAY
ART EDITOR

> Used to do very little on PlayStation Power. He spends his days eating bananas and playing football. Goes snowboarding in Birmingham to avoid the blizzards in Klosters. Claims to have four girlfriends despite coming from Bristol. Listens to BB King and Perry Como. Hates Man United.
Favourite game: *Naked Twister*

KARL JAQUES
DEPUTY ART EDITOR

> Self-proclaimed Star Wars freak. Although just 'freak' serves as an adequate description, frankly. Mind you, his resemblance to Chewbacca is uncanny. Enjoys pretending to be a drummer in his spare time, and he honestly believes Steps, Billie and S club 7 are the sound of the '90s. Hates Man United.
Favourite game: *Power Stone*

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REVIEWS YOU CAN TRUST

Trick Style

Welcome to *Trick Style*, **a cyberpunk future where people ride on ultra-smooth hoverboards**. Leave your car in the garage – **four wheels are sooo last century**

Despite this being a review of a stunt-based hoverboard racing game we aim to get through it without once using the term 'radical'... Damn.

Still, if you ignore the baggy trousered connotations of the word and concentrate on its dictionary definition ("favouring or tending to produce extreme or fundamental changes"), it is actually a perfectly acceptable description of *Trick Style*.

You see, the game is much more than a simplistic *Wipeout*-on a-hoverboard racer; it uses highly sophisticated physics to replicate human movement and seamlessly blends two distinct gaming styles – high-octane racing and freestyle stuntery. This combination goes together like fish and chips and makes for a ▸

► refreshing expansion on the usual tear-arse formula.

Innovation requires inspiration, and the influences on *Trick Style* are clearly evident. The image that immediately comes to mind is the cool as ice hoverboard sequence in Back to the Future 2 and the opportunity to replay the scene interactively is compelling.

Game-wise, its closest relatives are *1080° Snowboarding* for its stunt action and the aforementioned *Wipeout* for its futuristic design.

Arguably there's a marked resemblance to the old *2000AD* comic strip, Chopper, where the titular character took part in illegal hoverboard races in Mega City One. Hmmm... (cue the distant sound of lawyers rubbing their hands together with litigious glee).

Regardless of these obvious influences, what makes *Trick Style* stand out from the crowd is the way all the tasty ingredients have been mixed together to bake a deliciously appetising cake. Fancy a slice?

The year is 2260. Global warming has transformed the planet: a tropical rainforest has sprouted in New York, Tokyo has been submerged and rebuilt above the ocean and the UK has an unhealthy-looking yellowy atmosphere (no change for Birmingham, then). Automation controls all aspects of life, leaving the populace bored with nothing but leisure time. Nightmare.

Luckily, gravity-defying hoverboards have been developed and are the latest craze for all self-respecting listless humans. The competitive spirit lives on with these new toys, providing the perfect excuse for extravagant stunt contests and races through the futuristic cities. And that's where you come in.

The game is structured around a velodrome from which you can access three stuntparks, the three racing locations (UK, USA, Japan) and the character/hoverboard selection screen.

At the central hub of the velodrome is a guide who updates you on your performance, provides instruction and has sixteen challenges for you to attempt. On completion of each challenge you are rewarded with a new trick to add to your repertoire.

The stuntparks provide the location for the challenges and are great for mastering control of your board and practising new tricks. The real meat of the game is the racing. While it's fun to practise pulling off elaborate stunts,

There are five tracks and a boss race in each country. You begin in the UK and when you've won the five races you can either take part in the boss race to win a new board, or move on to the US. After tackling the significantly harder American courses (and winning another board in the boss race) the ultra-tough Japanese level remains.

The tracks are expertly constructed, both in terms of graphics and design. ►

Trick Style uses highly **sophisticated physics to replicate human movement** on the hoverboards

- Publisher: Acclaim
- Developer: Criterion Studios
- Price: £39.99
- Release date: Sept 23
- Players: 1 to 2
- Extras: VM
- **For:** Triumphant combination of two gaming styles. Looks fantastic, plays even better
- **Against:** Disappointing two player game. Run-of-the-mill music

GuideMe

Luke had Yoda, Daniel-san had Mr Myagi; you've got this fella

Meet your guide, an ex-*Trick Style* champion and an irascible but helpful old geezer. Go to him to take part in the 16 challenges and he'll reward you with a fancy new stunt for each challenge you successfully complete.

All the tasty ingredients have **been mixed together to** bake a deliciously appetising cake. Fancy a slice?

01 The BBC really splashed out on the new Eastenders set
02 Liam Gallagher blatantly ignored the highway code
03 Eddie Edwards' hi-tech costume made all the difference
04 Blimey, where have all the pigeons gone?
05 Father Christmas had to update slightly for the 23rd Century
06 Playing 'Chicken' with a train is mad and wrong

TheFallGuy

If Colt Seavers had a hoverboard these are the tricks that would really float the 'unknown stuntman's' boat.

01 Complete challenge six and you'll be given the Kickflip, press A+X in the air to perform it **02** Once challenge 11 has been conquered, you can quickly tap A+X for the supercool Gyro trick **03** The reward for challenge eight is the Handswitch. Double-tap Y from the luge position or B from the boogiedrill to perform a handstand move **04** Win the first challenge and you'll be given the Backflip, simply press A+A

01

02

03

04

05

06

▶ Some recognisable landmarks remain from good old 1999 (such as London Zoo, Big Ben and the Statue of Liberty), but, ostensibly, the environments are from the Blade Runner school of post-millennial architecture. The hi-tech, high-rise reconstructed cities are the perfect playground for irresponsible activity, and with multiple routes available for each of the 15 courses you'll never tire of playing them.

Gameplay variety extends to a choice of nine playable characters split into three types of rider – Racer, Stunter and Bully. The individual you select and the board you put them on has a major bearing on the way you approach the races, as different types of airsurfer are suited to different aspects of the game.

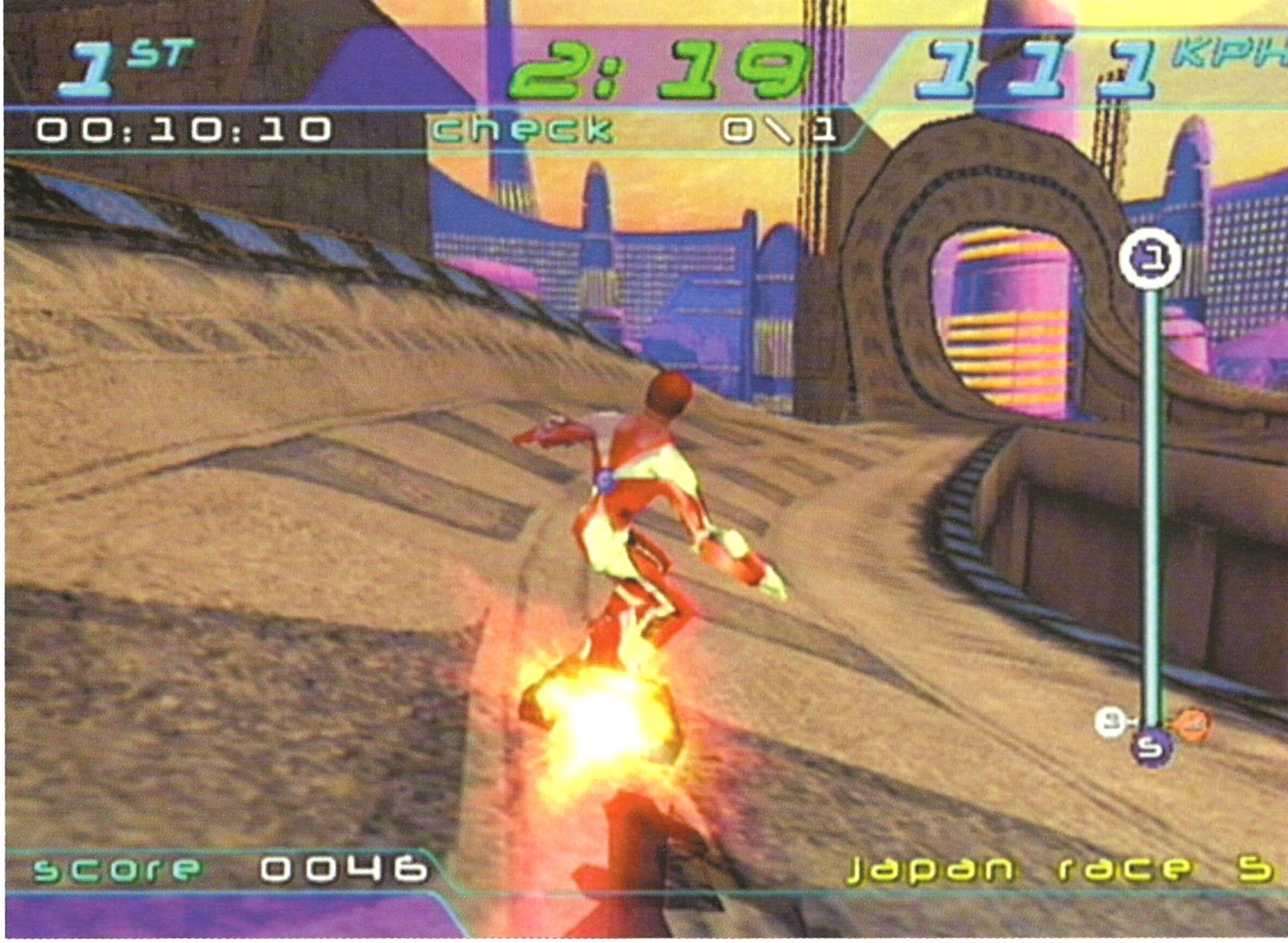
Points are handed out for the tricks you pull off during the contests and, although stunts aren't a prerequisite for finishing first, they do help you reach some of the more desirable short-cuts.

Trick Style's learning curve is also spot on. Not only do the tracks get progressively harder (as you would expect) but the order in which you undertake the game is especially well-structured. For example, in order to win the later races you need better hoverboards – to get the superior boards you have to complete the boss races – to succeed in the boss races you have to use cunning stunts – to get the flashy stunts you have to take part in the sixteen challenges. This inter-weaving between gaming modes successfully prevents linearity and ensures all of the features must be attempted to progress.

Despite waxing lyrical about the quality of the environments and gameplay, the most impressive facet of

Automation controls all **aspects of life, leaving the populace bored** with nothing but leisure time. Nightmare

01 The bus company's strike blockade put paid to the fat guy's chances
02 So where did everyone go?
03 Oooh, look at the pretty light trails
04 Even the skid marks look pretty
05 Stop! Thief!
06 Catalogue modelling remained much the same over the years



2nd Opinion

"Now that Criterion has sorted out all the slow-down problems we saw in earlier demos, this really is a showcase for Dreamcast, both in terms of new gameplay experiences and sheer graphical verve. Once you've started learning the tricks, it's great fun to zoom through the amazing landscapes.
Keith Stuart

The hi-tech, high-rise **reconstructed cities are the perfect playground** for some irresponsible activities

Trick Style is the revolutionary application of in-game physics. Apart from the fact that the basic premise of a hoverboard goes against all Newtonian laws and couldn't possibly exist, the physics are some of the most realistic ever seen in a videogame.

Gravity, velocity, force and drag have all been modelled correctly and, although that doesn't mean a thing on paper, the hard work is clearly evident on screen.

When you first take control of an airsurfer you'll drop your bacon butty. The relationship between rider and board is utterly convincing; the way he leans to maintain balance and bends his knees as the board negotiates the gradient of the ground are exactly as a real-life hoverboarder would behave.

The Animation system for the riders is a mixture of preset sequences coupled with real-time physics-calculated motion. This hybrid provides an unlimited range of poses depending on speed, direction and altitude and gives the appearance of realism in an unreal world.

In plain English, it is quite simply the slickest, smoothes racing game we've ever seen.

To break off from the plaudits for a moment, there are a few maggots in the *Trick Style* apple.

The main bugbear is the disappointing twoplayer game which suffers from slight slowdown and has no computer opposition – a surprising omission considering the size of the Dreamcast's pants.

The music iş also a bit of a let-down compared to the quality of the licensed tunes featured in its distant cousin *Wipeout*. The tracks are supposed to be the future sounds of London, New York and Tokyo but are too clichéd and repetitive and soon become tiresome.

Graphically, the game is almost faultless save for a touch of fogging to hide the draw distance. At this solar-obsessed time it must be pointed out that the image of the sun is about as convincing as the one we used to draw as kids with m-shaped birds flying by. However, if the sight of a fried egg sun gets your goat you're seriously short of something to worry about.

When the faults are as minor as the above you know you have a quality game on your hands. The hype for *Trick Style* has been escalating rapidly since it was first announced and, brilliantly, it has more than lived up to it. The radical (!) combination of stunts and racing has worked better than anyone could have hoped and resulted in a state of the art next generation title. The future is bright: the future is *Trick Style* ■
Lee Hart

DC-UK 9
AIRSURFER'S PARADISE

EXPERT WITNESS
So how would a master rate *Trick Style*? We hand the reins to pro-skater, Flynn Trotman, to see if he does better than us.
PAGE 40

PLAYER'S GUIDE
The ultimate guide to *Trick Style*. With our hints and cheats, you'll get the hang of that board in no time.
PAGE 109

Sonic Adventure

The Dreamcast is here and **a certain blue, spiky mammal is along for the ride.** This is one hedgehog you'll never see **squashed on the road**

- Publisher: Sega
- Price: £39.99
- Developer: Sonic Team
- Release date: on sale now
- Players: 1
- Extras: VM
- **For:** Great graphics, new adventure elements + tried and trusted gameplay, six games for the price of one
- **Against:** Not as ground-breaking as we hoped.

Sonic the Hedgehog has come a long way over the years – and has now made it into the 120-bit arena. As you would expect, his latest outing surpasses all the previous Sonic games in every department: the Master System, Mega Drive and Saturn precursors look ancient and play badly compared to this baby. But for all the increased oomph encased within the Dreamcast, simple advancement is the least to be expected from Sega's mascot. The real question is, have Sonic Team made the most of the new console's vast possibilities and created a true next generation game?

The answer to that is neither an emphatic, 'yes', nor a crestfallen 'no'. And, unfortunately, there are a few nagging criticisms that lessen enjoyment of the game. For every moment of genius there is a jarring example of mediocrity; totally out of place within such a powerful package.

If this seems somewhat downbeat, it's because expectations were impossibly high for Sega's flagship title and anything less than perfection was always going to prove a disappointment. The truth is, the positives far outweigh the negatives in *Sonic Adventure* and, although the bad news must be acknowledged, in the spirit of Martyn Lewis, we'll start with the good news.

Plot is a far more important component of *Adventure* than in any of our friend the hedgehog's earlier excursions, ie, it has one. The evil Dr Robotnik has returned accompanied by an aquatic horror named Chaos, and Sonic must prevent the doctor from acquiring the seven Chaos Emeralds needed to empower his new pet.

Admittedly, it sounds like the usual videogame gubbins, but it's the way the central narrative intertwines with the various storylines of all six main characters that shows true innovation. Sonic has to defeat Chaos and Robotnik in the main thread of the story, Tails helps his hedgehog pal along the way, Knuckles searches for fragments of the Master Emerald, Amy protects her pet bird, Big the Cat tries to catch his frog buddy and E-102 goes on a journey of self-discovery to gain freedom from his creator, Dr Robotnik.

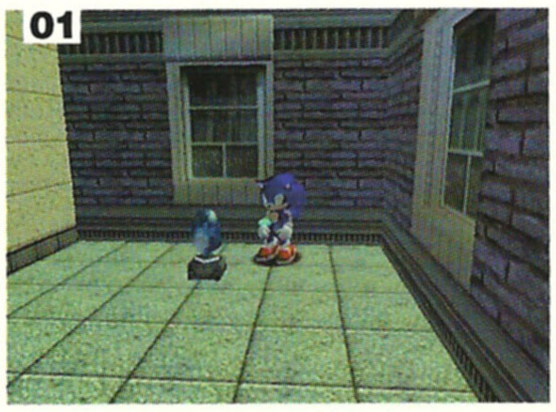
The stories influence each other in numerous clever ways and come together to form a satisfying whole. This 'adventure' aspect of the game is also bolstered by the fact that, for the first time, the Sonic posse have been blessed with the gift of speech. As well as interacting with each other, the protagonists are able to communicate

RetroSonic

The secret history of the plumber and the hedgehog

Sonic first bounced on to the scene in 1992, starring in the titular *Sonic the Hedgehog*. The brainchild of Yuji Naka, Sonic was designed to do for Sega what Mario had done for Nintendo. Only much, much faster.

Gameplay-wise *Sonic Adventure* **has more to offer than all the** previous *Sonic* titles put together

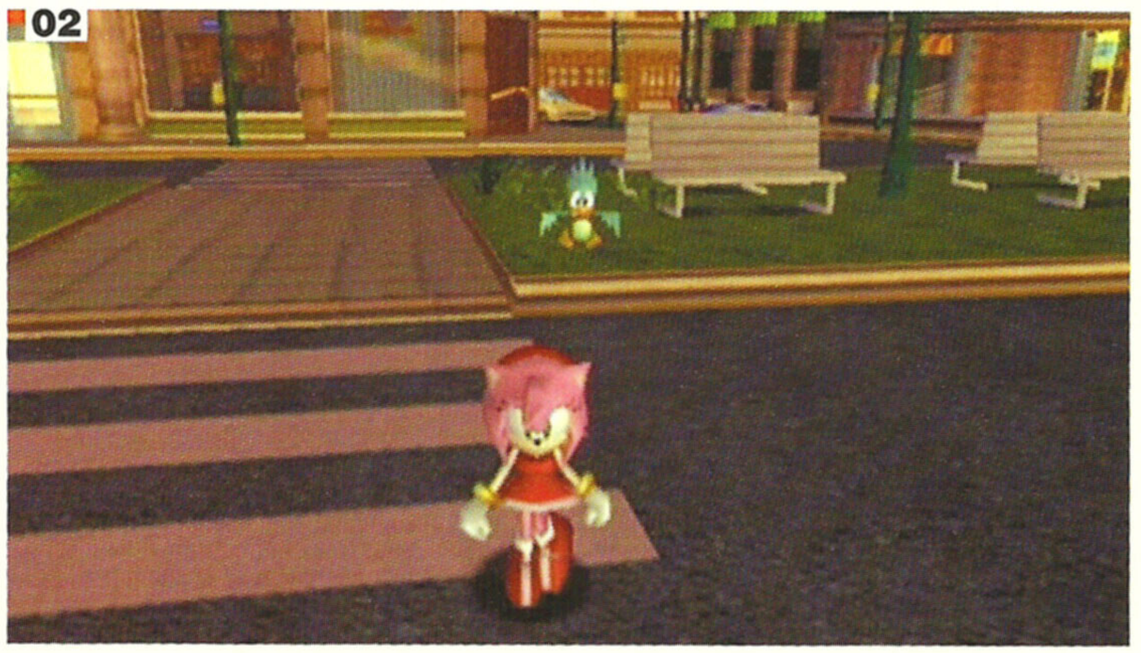


01 The Egg of the Year Award was misplaced after the ceremony
02 The search for Mallory's camera spread far and wide
03 Knock-and-run was still a popular prank in Sonic world
04 The fairground was empty, apart from one solitary blue hedgehog
05 I'll nick it, I will. I'm hard, me. A little bit wuuur, little bit waaay
06 Oh yeah, he's having a whale of a time. Sorry
07 Okay, Robotnik, you've got a cool ship but check out these trainers

with various humans dotted around the world and this added RPG element gives the player a far greater sense of involvement than merely whizzing through a bunch of levels.

Visually, *Sonic Adventure* more than lives up to its next generation billing. From the moment the game begins, there is no question that you're looking at probably the greatest graphical finery ever seen on a home console. The stunningly realistic environments are breathtaking and the high-definition characters are crystal clear 3D incarnations of the 2D front-end artwork.

Not all in the graphical garden is rosy, however. The thorns come in the shape of our old enemy, the dreaded pop-up. While distant scenery is generally updated smoothly, the redraw distance for closer items can be decidedly dodgy. Pop-up is especially noticeable in the high-speed sections where rings and enemies will sometimes not appear until you're almost past them. This can only be described as shoddy workmanship in the ▶



01 The robot's red-eye ruined the photograph
02 Look, birdy, it's over. Just accept it and stop following me
03 I'm the *Space Harrier* monster and I'm on fire
04 The new Olympic sport of frog lifting was won by a cat
05 I really don't mind, fishing's a noble sport

For every moment of **genius there is a jarring moment of mediocrity;** totally out of place in such a powerful package

▶ Dreamcast age. It doesn't ruin the game, but you have to ask 'why'?

The camera is another bad news item. There are too many occasions when the view has to be manually adjusted so you can see what you're doing and it is not unknown for the camera to get stuck behind scenery, leaving you stranded and unseen on the other side.

While we're dishing out the horror stories, the in-game music is a prime candidate for a grisly death. Sonically (sorry) the game leaves a lot to be desired with its irritating mixture of traditional platform game tunes and godawful prog rock.

Flaws in the game engine are also evident with poor collision detection in certain stages (most annoyingly, in the Emerald Coast stage, where you can actually fall through barriers) and it is even sometimes possible for your character to become snagged on part of the gaming environment. However, Sega assures us that this will be fixed in the final UK version.

Gameplay-wise, *Sonic Adventure* has more to do and see than all the other *Sonic* games put together. The expansion from 2D to 3D has, literally, added a new dimension to the gameplay with the increased exploration and expansion of narrative that is the adventure part of the game.

If these extra cerebral pleasures are not your cup of tea, you needn't worry because the classic Sonic gameplay that you're already used to – indeed, the *raison d'etre* of all Sonic titles – remains firmly intact. Speed.

If you like nothing better than legging it through stages at eye-popping speeds while collecting rings and smashing baddies then, as Harold Wilson once said, "You've never had it so good." The game runs at a near-constant 50/60 fps update, which means, basically, it goes like shit off a shovel and makes PlayStation games look pitiful in comparison.

There are ten different stages accessed through the two main areas of Station Square and Mystic Ruin. The stages are visited in sequence but, once discovered, can be played as often as you like to beat previous times and ensure that every nook and cranny has been explored.

In addition, there are several sub-games that crop up intermittently such as a cool snowboarding section, a trip round Twinkle Park racing circuit and shoot 'em ups in Tails' plane.

If ten massive stages plus sub-games aren't enough for your gluttonous belly, then the real cherry on the *Sonic Adventure* cake is that once Sonic meets up with the other five protagonists during the course of his story they immediately become playable. Each character has their own different abilities, story, cut-scenes and routes

2nd Opinion

Our editor has been playing *Sonic* since its Japanese release

Adventure takes a while to get going, but as its story unfolds and the added characters are revealed, it's hard not to fall for the game's many charms. Lee's right; Knuckles has the best game, although Amy's is definitely the toughest
Caspar Field

GO THERE!

CHAT WITH BIG
We get deep down and personal with the purple cat himself.
PAGE 52 >

BAR SONIC
Drinking, the supersonic way.
PAGE 54 >

PLAYER'S GUIDE
The complete Player's Guide to *Sonic Adventure*. Including walkthrough, bosses and tips.
PAGE 102 >

through the game. When you have completed the game with all the characters, Super Sonic becomes available for a final showdown with Perfect Chaos.

In effect, Sega has provided six games for the price of one, because the sheer quality and variety found in the separate adventures put most full-blown titles to shame. The robot, E-102, has a shoot 'em up game where he trundles along blasting everything that moves or stands still. Big the Cat has an entertaining, if slightly mad, *Sega Bass Fishing*-style fishing game. Most impressively, Knuckles is able to climb, glide and dig through the stages and – ironically – it is the excellence of the echidna's adventure that highlights a major flaw in the game.

Sonic's adventure (unquestionably the most important aspect of the game) is frustratingly linear compared to the freedom available in Knuckles' route through the stages. While as fast and exciting as anyone could hope, for much of Sonic's action stages you travel along a fixed path that seems rather limited alongside the scope and invention of the Knuckles game.

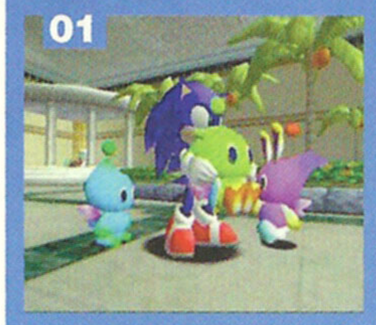
The fact that there is so much to do when playing as the other five characters more than makes up for any shortcomings in Sonic's adventure. However, it is unfortunate that the main part of this flagship Dreamcast title fails to push back any boundaries in terms of gameplay.

Ultimately, the flaws in *Sonic Adventure* do not prevent it from being an excellent game. The new adventure elements added to the traditional, visceral thrills of *Sonic* gameplay will delight fans of the hedgehog and newcomers alike. *Sonic* haters may not be so easily persuaded by what is essentially more of the same with knobs on, but when you consider the different forms of gameplay provided by the other characters, there really is something here for everyone. Thanks to the Sonic Team, we have a modern classic ■

Lee Hart

DC-UK 9
A BEAUTIFUL THING

Virtual Chaos



A Chao is a Tamagotchi-style creatures who can be downloaded to the VM unit for a plethora of mini-games and breeding shenanigans.

Simply take the eggs that are found in the game to one of the three Chao areas: Chao park – use the lift in the Hotel; Chao cave – through the tunnel near Tails' house in Mystic Ruin; Chao island – accessed using the lift in the Egg Carrier.

Hatch an egg by picking it up with the Y button then hold the button down and move the analogue stick to gently coax the Chao out.

Save your new pet to the VM and the little feller is yours to do with as you please. The general idea is to use the various options to train your Chao and boost its statistics. Just treat it well and make sure it's in bed before dark.

01 Pick up the adorable Chao **02** Take it to the Visual Memory system **03** Save to the VM and you've got yourself a new pet.

Virtua Fighter 3tb

It's the **Muhammed Ali of fighting games – oozing style,** grace, speed and loads of class

Some think it is poor form to begin an appraisal with superlatives, but what the hell – *Virtua Fighter 3tb (team battle)* is bloody brilliant. Actually, scrub that. It's ace. Only enthusiastic, exclamations can do it justice. And for good reason.

It's a sad fact, but coin-op fighting games have become rather safe and tedious in recent years, with few significant exceptions. While *Tekken 3* (deservedly, it's argued) has its fair share of exponents, *Virtua Fighter 3tb* has injected new elements into a tired genre. Visit an arcade stocked with beat 'em up games, and it stands proud, an innovator amid countless inferior makeweights. As accomplished as its combat engine is, it's actually not *how* you fight that makes *Virtua Fighter 3tb* such an impressive fighting game. It's *where* you fight.

Rather than placing combatants on a flat, featureless plain, *VF3tb* allows you to scrap in lavishly-realised locales. You aren't simply superimposed onto a backdrop; you're actually in the place that you see on your TV screen. If there is a slope, you can gain an advantage by placing your fighter at a higher or lower level, according to preference and personal style. If a stage contains a wall, you can manoeuver your opponent into a position where their back is, in more ways than one, against it. And, of course, if the scenery contains a cliff of any description, you can throw or pummel your rival over the edge – swiftly winning the round in the process. The choice, as it's said, is yours – and the importance of that can't be understated.

Obviously, this would be a superfluous (and, potentially, unfair) addition if both pugilists were to be stuck on the traditional horizontal axis. *VF3tb*, however, pulls a second consecutive ace from its sleeve in the form of a 'dodge' button. By pressing it and the appropriate direction on your d-pad, your fighter can rotate round his or her rival. It's a simple, yet brilliant feature. Not only can you evade your opponent's attacks, you can jockey into position to gain a tactical advantage.

Like every beat 'em up, *VF3tb* is an entertaining but soulless experience until you get around to learning a few moves. At that point, its possibilities expand like a mushroom cloud. Watching experienced players ducking, weaving and diving around one another is a wonder to behold. Getting to the point where you could be defined as 'adept' is fun, too. *VF3tb* has a steady learning curve. Find yourself low on energy, and on the defensive? Have a look at your current stage. Can you take to the high ground and defend your

- Publisher: Sega
- Developer: In-house
- Price: £39.99
- Release date: Sept 23
- Players: 1 or 2
- Extras: VM
- **For:** King of fighters. Strategic approach to fighting. Polished and attractive
- **Against:** Not enough options

RingOut

Most of *VF3tb*'s arenas feature a sheer drop of some description. From a few inches to several feet, being knocked over these precipices leads to a 'ring out' – instant defeat. The wise *VF3tb* player learns how to use these to their advantage. Sometimes, a near-suicidal assault can work, too. If your opponent is by a ledge, and you have the space to make a run-up, a jump-kick can be an effective way to knock them off. It doesn't matter if you fall too – as long as they plunge first, the round is yours. Watch out for people dodging just before you make contact, though...

Virtua Fighter 3tb is **arguably the best fighting game in the arcades.** And now, naturally, the home

01 Go, girl. Sarah Bryant gives Lau a beating
02 A familiar sight: the drunken master hits the gutter again
03 Think you're bad, homeboy? Have some of that old 'Crazy Legs' style
04 Never mess with a guy with no neck. Or a sweaty thong
05 The ninja, Kage, will have you locked to the floor before you can blink
06 Wolf Hawkfield is the game's camp cowboy. A bit like that bloke out of Venga Boys, actually

position with cynical leg sweeps? Or would a quick jink to the left provide an opportunity to knock player two from a tantalisingly close ledge?

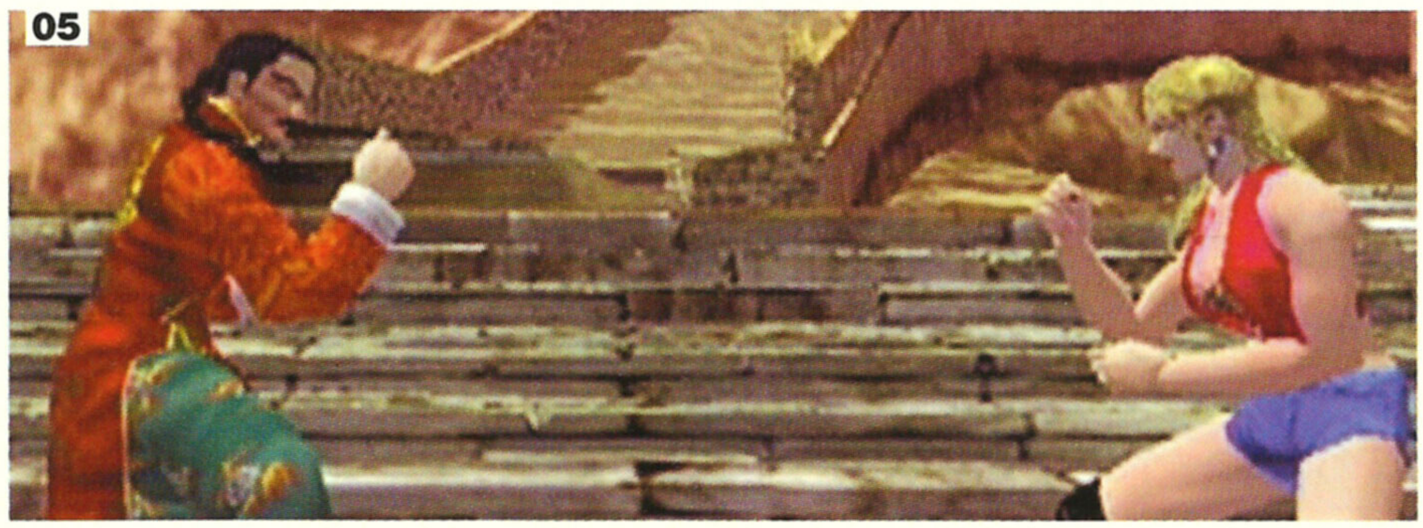
There's a pleasing duality to *Virtua Fighter 3tb's* moves and fighters. Many other beat 'em ups are unduly fixated with combos and *Simon Says*-like button sequences. *VF3tb*, by contrast, is not. That's not to say that it's shallow and lacks complexity. With practice, you can master multi-move attacks that are the rival of any other fighting game. No, it's the fact that *VF3tb's* control system is geared towards quick, responsive attacks. Every fighter has a catalogue of moves that can be performed with a press of a button and a d-pad direction. Once you begin to master those, you can get the hang of combining attacks. Above all, it's an intuitive system that can be learned through practice, rather than demanding attention to over-long move guides – like certain games we could mention...

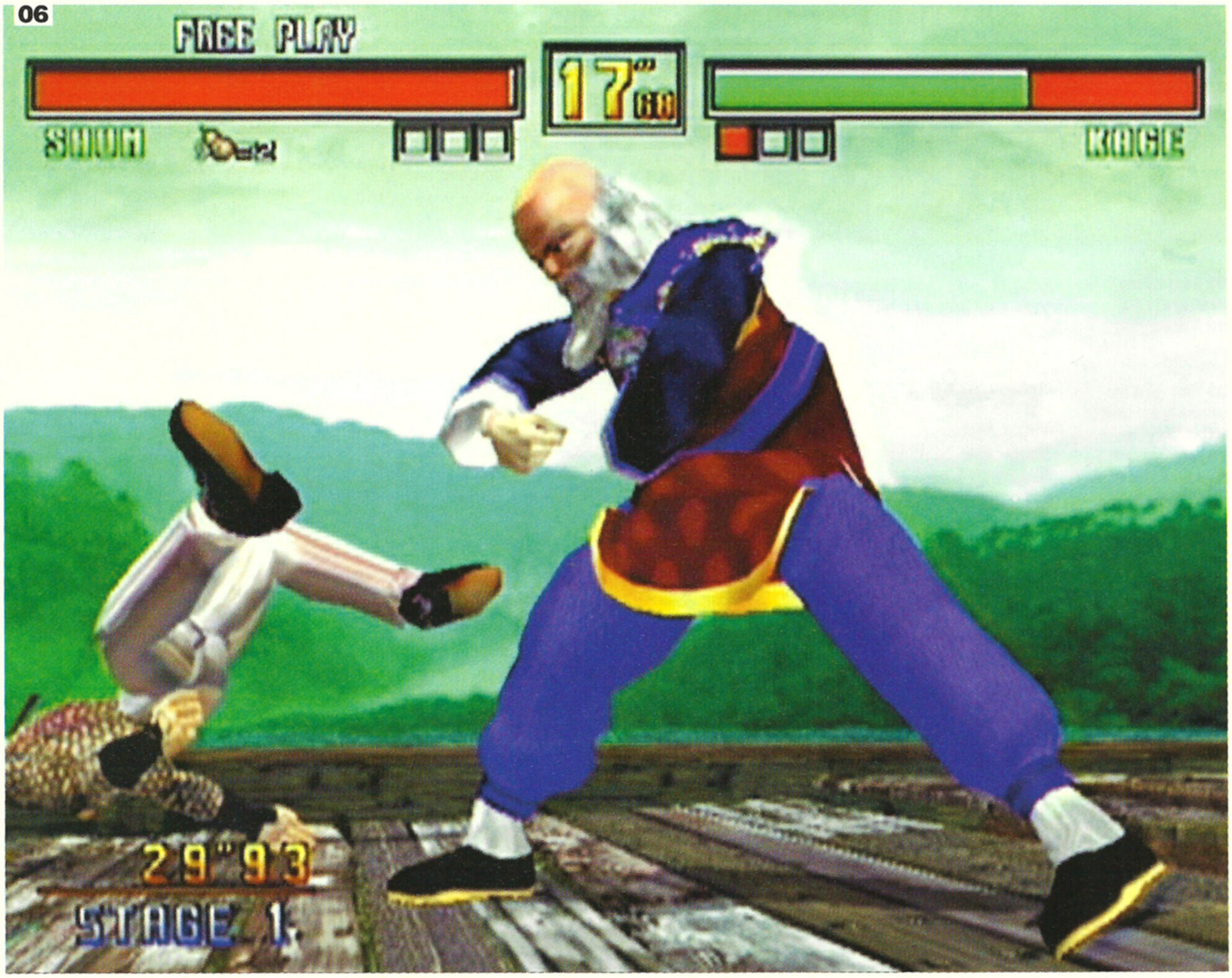
The above reasons – amongst many, many others – are why *Virtua Fighter 3tb* is arguably the best fighting game in ▸

View to a Kill

A number of developers have, in the past, considered the possibility of a fighting game played from a first-person perspective. *VF3tb*, supplied with that very option, demonstrates why the idea needs a lot of refining (or, really, redesigning from scratch) in order to work. With a press of a trigger button, you can observe proceedings from the 'eyes' of your fighter. You perform moves in the same manner, but sadly, it's no more than a passing curio. The feeling of 'weight' that accompanies blows in the traditional view disappears, and it becomes difficult to anticipate certain combos or sweep attacks. Still, like the accompanying (and, possibly, equally throwaway) bird's-eye view, it's a nice touch.

Right: Kage Maru sidles up for a face full of first-person perspective fist





01 Raasclat! Akira goes crashing onto his batty
02 One of *VF3tb's* greatest moments: flinging your opponent into the icy precipice below the ring
03 Grapple with your opponent and the camera swoops in to capture the following throw
04 Cat fight! Wait a minute, those two lasses look kind of similar
05 Lau and Sarah face off in front of one of *VF3tb's* impressive vistas
06 Smacking your opponent can result in them landing with a crunch at the other side of the ring
07 You have to be bloody fast to sweep Pai Chan off her considerable legs. That girl must go through a ton of Immac, you know

2nd Opinion

Sega's beat 'em up takes some adjusting to if you've played a lot of *Tekken*...

But once you do make the necessary mental leap, *VF3tb* reveals itself to be unrivalled in its depth and precision. Among the coin-op cognoscenti, little else is viewed with the same respect, other than some SNK arcade fighters. But none of those can match *VF3tb's* visuals. Of course, you could always wait for Namco's riposte, a certain *Soul Calibur*...

Caspar Field

Unless you really, really hate fighting games – and, maybe, **even then – VF3tb is an essential purchase**

▶ the arcades. And now, naturally, the home. When Sega announced that the Dreamcast conversion of *VF3tb* was to be entrusted – under close supervision – to a third-party developer, industry observers held their breath. The company responsible, Genki, has done fantastic work, but there are slight differences between the arcade and home versions.

Don't jump to the wrong conclusion. *Virtua Fighter 3tb* is a gorgeous game to behold. Its character models are fantastic. Likewise, move sequences are animated well and connect with bruising severity. Scenery, as you can see from the shots on this page, is stunning, while the frame rate, running at a comfortable 50/60 fps is fantastic. *VF3tb* is easily the most polished, attractive fighting game to ever appear on a home console, as all new Dreamcast owners will no doubt expect. But 'arcade perfect'? No. 'As near as really matters to all but the hardestcore fan?' That sounds about right.

Unless you deeply despise fighting games – and, maybe, even then – *Virtua Fighter 3tb* is an essential purchase. Super-smooth, fast, and with an attractive tactical vein, it's a beat 'em up par excellence. It's not *quite* a 'perfect' ten, though. It needs more options – yep, the West-only additions are not enough to appease us (wait until you see *Street Fighter Alpha 3*) – and it could also benefit from a few variations on its basic play modes. And, as we've said, the conversion isn't truly perfect. But it sure is a close call... ■

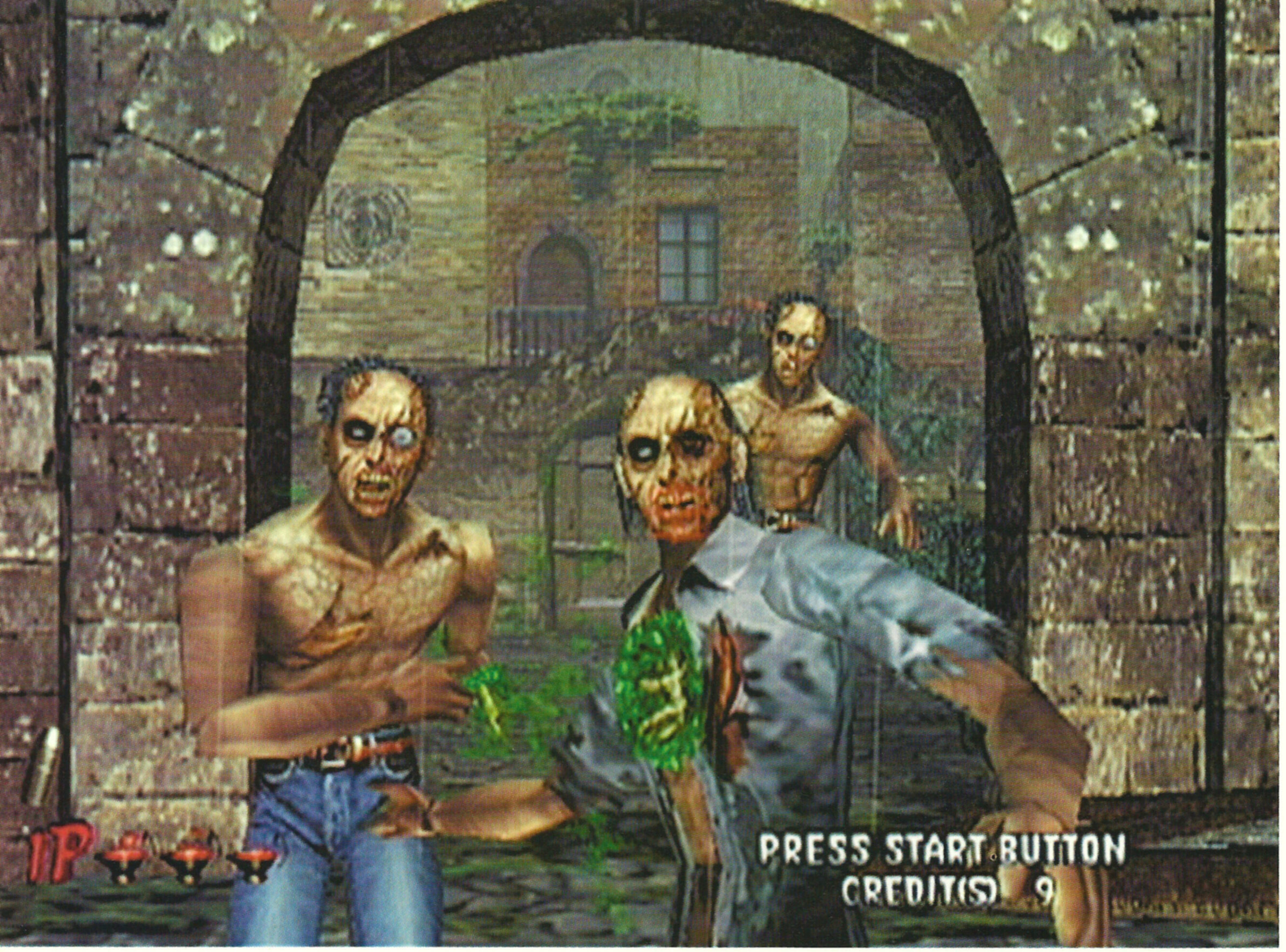
James Price

DC-UK 9
VIRTUALLY PERFECT

The Stages

Dreamcast's 3D muscle is used to create realistic settings for the *Virtua Fighters*, with steps, slopes and bobbing rafts

01 All at sea. In the Japanese version there was a great bug that let you sink the boat on this stage **02** It's a Steps gig. Sorry... **03** But where's Mary Poppins?



The House Of The Dead 2

The most **pant-wetting** house since Amityville **makes a big comeback on Dreamcast**

- Publisher: Sega
- Developer: In-house
- Price: TBC
- Release date: October
- Players: 1 to 2
- Extras: Lightgun, rumble pak
- **For:** Arcade perfect, addictive gameplay, multiple routes
- **Against:** Not particularly mentally challenging

There is a school of thought that suggests that lightgun-based shoot 'em ups occupy the lowest echelons of the videogame evolutionary scale. While other genres have become more sophisticated and dynamic, the lightgun game is akin to an aspiring ape wearing lipstick and a dress – fixated with the aesthetic, and ignorant of other glaring concerns. From the plainly crappy fuzzy photo-realism of early FMV-based efforts, to the polygon-heavy modern equivalent, the list of 'real' advances for the gun-game is fairly brief: multiple routes instead of a fixed path, narrative-based progression and set-pieces, and the 'duck' button (as seen in Namco's *Time Crisis*). "If an infinite amount of monkeys could compose Shakespeare," a cynical, software-savvy wag could exclaim somewhat pretentiously, "how few would it take to design a lightgun game?"

Of course, the problem is that the virtue of lightgun games is that they *are* so simple. You insert a coin, pick up the gun and fire away. Meanwhile, active thought and consciousness nip out the back door for a crafty fag. When you play these games in an arcade, pub or wherever, you pop in three or four quid, get to the third boss, and then call it a day. You might, just the once, attempt a cocky two-gun game, often looking more cock than cocky in the process. But when you buy a lightgun title for a home console, everything changes.

For a lightgun game to work as a console game, it needs: a) a touch of depth in the form of new features; and a) to be bloody good. *The House of the Dead 2* satisfies both criteria. For a), Sega has added a variety of new modes (including 'training' and 'original' which makes things a little easier for the home gamer). As for b), glance at the screenshots that surround this text. Nice, hey? With that simple piece of eye grazing, you have grasped 80 per cent of *THOTD 2's* play content, and should know *exactly* how it works.

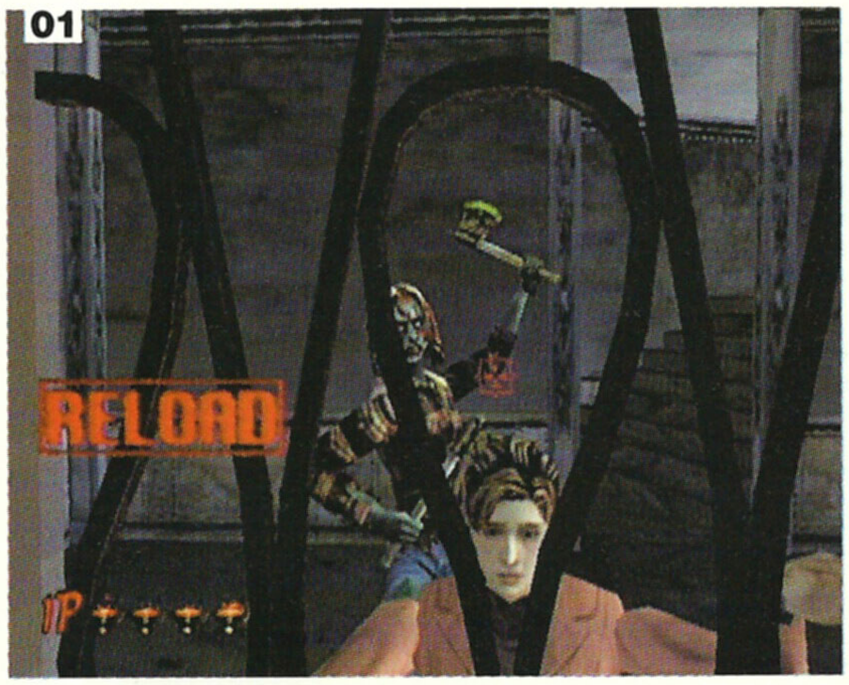
What you can't see is just how well designed its levels and set-pieces are. *The House of the Dead 2's* action is liberally complimented by cut-scenes and incidental animations. Most of these involve civilians being chased by unseemly monsters. If you manage to shoot the beast in question ▸

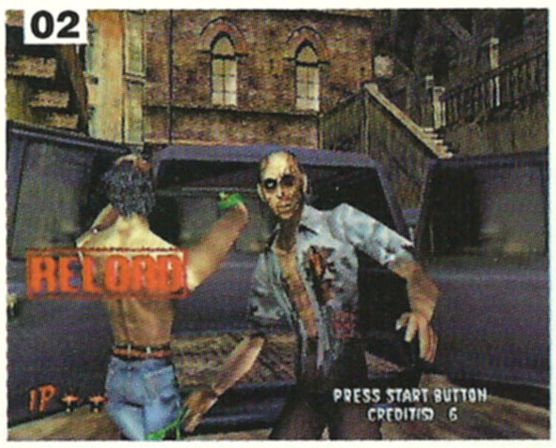
ZombieFear

Mummy, where do the filthy undead scum come from?

Capcom's *Resident Evil* series was a major influence on *THOTD 2*, which has been such a success, there are two more games on the way (catch news about *Code Veronica* next month).

Play *THOTD 2* **on a large TV and you may** as well be playing it in the arcade





01 Rescue the humans before they're cut down by the zombies and you receive rewards
02 "The Venga bus is coming." Run away!
03 If you don't shoot the nasties down in time they take a big chunk out your chin. Mmm
04 Amidst those flames is a chargrilled citizen you failed to rescue from the zombie scum
05 This is the second boss. He's fishy and rock hard. A bit like Free Willy on Viagra
06 These Freddy Krueger/gimp-like characters are quick off the mark and take quite a few shots before they go down

01 Even normally harmless creatures like frogs and these owls have been zombified
02 "I believe I can fly." Have some of that, you sad deluded flesh-eater
03 The first boss and he's armed with a bigger chopper than John Holmes. You have to shoot his winged symbiont to stop his axe attacks
04 It's come to this. Jimmy Sommerville found chart success so elusive after Bronski Beat split up
05 It's amazing the things you'll see down a sewer
06 Good shot! That'll be his head, then

▶ before it makes a telling swipe or bite, you receive a reward – from points to extra health, or even a different route to walk through. Indeed, *THOTD 2's* branching pathways are a major part of its appeal. Once you know where (and what) to do for each, you can use this knowledge to proceed via a different route in each game. This enhances its replay appeal.

It will take a few days of practice before you can begin to get that far, though. Modeled (as it is) to consume coins from bewitched punters, *The House of the Dead 2* is damn tricky to play at first. Even starting on Easy mode, with a full nine credits, a competent gamer will be surprised by its intensity and pace. Fail to concentrate, and you can get through credits in minutes. Within hours of play, you can exceed its retail value with the equivalent number of pound coins you could have spent while playing the arcade machine. Gratifyingly, the two are visually identical.

To elicit coins in the mid to late nineties, coin-ops have to be scaled down theme park rides; their compulsive, instinctive play accompanied by loud FX and crisp visuals. It's the only way they can compete with the desensitized, seen-it-before attitude that widespread console ownership has created. Play the Dreamcast version of *The House of the Dead 2* on a large, good-quality TV, though, and you may as well be playing it in an arcade. If you can litter your living room with surly teenage onlookers, cigarette ends and seedy looking men in tracksuits shouting into mobile phones, that's all the better for authenticity.

The House of the Dead 2 is a game that just about everyone can play – bar, naturally, the youngsters its gory content effectively excludes. And, as a twoplayer game, it's addictive and highly social. With a beat 'em up, or a football game, players need to know which buttons to press, and what effect they have. If they're not *au fait* with a title, or games in general, the mismatch spoils the fun. A copy of *The House of the Dead 2* next to your DC, however, can prove an entertaining diversion for any couch-filling gathering.

Yes, it's split player mode has only mid-term longevity at best. And yes, your intellect is essentially surplus to requirements during play. But *The House of the Dead 2* is an experience first and foremost, just as its arcade parent was, and is. On that positive note, a conclusion in the form of trivia: How much does a *The House of the Dead 2* arcade machine cost? Answers on a postcard, please... ■

James Price

THOTD 2 is a game that **just about anyone can play –** bar, naturally, the youngsters its visceral content excludes

DC-UK 8
TERRIFYINGLY GOOD

GunCrazy

I know what you're thinking, punk. How good is Sega's gun?

A shooting game lives or dies by the quality of the weapon itself. Luckily, Sega has designed a sturdy gun, big enough for even the chunkiest hands. Plus, the built-in dpad may offer new gameplay possibilities...

The website:
www.dreamcast-europe.com

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Dreamcast.

Sega Rally 2

The original *Sega Rally* **drove us to distraction – will its new sibling** be just as fast and furious?

Rallying. If you were to follow the BBC's sporadic coverage of the World Rally event, you'd be forgiven for thinking that the sport has all the organisation of an Italian parliamentary meeting.

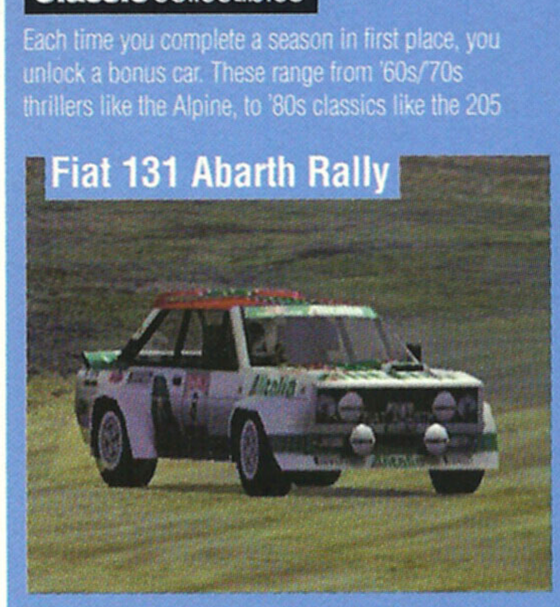
Yet, it may surprise you to learn that the World Rally scene follows a yearly calendar structured similarly to the Formula One season, although the two activities requires different international destinations. A handful of major car manufacturers enter a (massively souped up) version of one of their road-going models and then a handful of superbly talented (yet evidently insane) individuals get paid (a lot less than F1 drivers, mind) to steer them through deserted roads/tracks/dirt as fast as they dare – which is usually very fast indeed. In fact, for many motorsports fans, controlling a car that spends 90 per cent of its time sliding around on roads rather than one that has an uncommon tendency to stick to smooth black stuff like Scalextric requires a higher degree of driving skill. It's a debatable issue, and one you're free to contest at your own leisure.

Sega Rally 2 isn't a simulation of the World Rally circuit. In fact, it isn't a simulation at all (more on this later), which is hardly surprising considering its heritage lies very much in the quick-fix world of arcade gaming. As such, the option of playing the *Sega Rally 2* arcade game is unlikely to induce heart seizures within the gameplaying community. After choosing a vehicle from a prestigious selection of motorised machinery, it's straight into the action: four stages (set in the desert, mountain,

- Publisher: Sega
- Price: £39.99
- Developer: In-house
- Release date: Sept 23
- Players: 1 to 2
- Extras: Online play
- **For:** A playable and intuitive introduction to rally driving with some nice touches
- **Against:** Lacking in handling complexity

Classic collectibles

Each time you complete a season in first place, you unlock a bonus car. These range from '60s/'70s thrillers like the Alpine, to '80s classics like the 205



01 Handling on snow requires deft brake and accelerator control
02 Sky effects are nice, even if some of the other scenery is uninspiring
03 The game's coin-op origins are betrayed by gimmicky visual extras – "Hey look, a helicopter!"
04 The A110 is an Alpine model – light yet fast
05 While the 205 Turbo is a more modern and recognisable Renault

It's your job to **powerslide your way through the competition** and cross the last finish line in first position

snow and the French Riviera respectively) are run in succession with a strict limit imposed. In typical arcade tradition, time checks are posted throughout each of the stages – reach these with a few seconds still on the clock and you're guaranteed more sideways antics. Fail to do so and it's a swift trip back to the menu screen.

Now, in these days of 50 hour plus gameplay, it's fair to say that you're likely to complete *Sega Rally 2*'s arcade mode quicker than you'd like to: it wouldn't be surprising to see an average player clear the last stage within, say, a couple of days of relaxed play. Yet, there are two cardinal reasons why this last statement isn't devastating: firstly, having started life as an arcade experience, *SR2* has been designed to entice individuals to part with their £1 coins in exchange for a few minutes' entertainment; secondly, Sega, being more than aware of the criminally short lifespan of the arcade game once it made the transition into the home, has included a ten year championship mode as well as a twoplayer option. Needless to say, the former is *SR2*'s heart, or engine if you will.

Split into ten seasons, each consisting of four stages, it's your job to powerslide your way through the competition and cross the last finish line in first position, having started the first round in last place. As a reward for finishing a season on the top step of the podium, you receive a bonus car from a pleasing assortment of rallying classics (see box on the left).

Admittedly, it's a structure that is reassuringly familiar to fans of the arcade mode, but there are a few considerable differences. For a start, you're unlikely to have slid around a ▸

Online

Play *Sega Rally* online against strangers! Erm... one day

The Japanese version of *Sega Rally 2* was one of the first Dreamcast games to feature support for online multiplayer gaming. This option is expected to be available to UK DC owners, but you'll have to wait until the Euro gaming network is properly set up in April. We'll update our review as soon as the facility is available

01 & **03** Nightime effects, such as neon signs, lit windows and starry skies are pretty impressive
02 The co-driver gives constant advice, both verbal and visual – a familiar Rallying feature
04 A regular *Sonic* sight – the twisty, turny road to Goodness Knows
05 Scenery has a habit of appearing at the last second, which can be disorientating, and shouldn't happen on a 128-bit console
06 70s superstar, the Lancia Stratos is obviously fondly remembered: it also appears as a bonus car in *V Rally 2*

Negotiating a particularly **tricky section at indecent velocity is one of the game's** more gratifying moments

lot of the stages on offer – with the exception of Riviera (which remains singular), the desert, mountain and snowy tracks get a couple of additional stages each. Furthermore, Sega has added a trio of muddy and isle-themed sections, bringing the total number of stages to a reasonable 16. Throw weather and night/day variations into the mix and there's plenty there to keep you holding the ergonomic joypad (or stylish steering wheel), for a good few times.

The second important difference from the arcade game is the ability to tweak the car between the stages. They're not the most technical alterations ever seen in a videogame, but by allowing your digital fingers to adjust the transmission, gear ratios, suspension stiffness, steering sensitivity, brake characteristics and tyre types, all of the major areas affecting a car's dynamics are covered. Matching the set-up to a particular course (ie, you can have stiffer suspension for Tarmac stages and softer springs for snow-covered sections), inevitably results in quicker stage times, and after a little trial and error you'll be setting up the car not only to ensure its stability over the forthcoming stage, but also to reflect your driving style. The resulting balance can prove surprisingly satisfying.

Which brings us to the rather serious bit about how *SR2* actually plays. It is, as mentioned earlier, an arcade racer, so there's little point approaching it expecting some PC-style simulation – it just won't deliver much along those lines. What it does offer, though, is an instantly accessible driving experience which grossly approximates the way a real rally car behaves when thrown sideways into dirt-covered open corners, or when handbrake turned, tyres squealing, around the tightest of Tarmac hairpins. And it does this by having a very forgiving set of dynamics – allowing *SR2* virgins to pick up the controller and, within minutes, be holding onto an impressive slide around a wider corner with satisfying aplomb. That isn't to say that you can expect all of its cars to drive the same way, however. The physics model is sufficiently advanced to deliver convincingly contrasting driving experiences depending on your four-wheeled selection. If you require proof, compare the road-hugging 306 Maxi with the tail-happy Stratos, for example, or the astounding nimbleness of the Delta Integrate against the Escort's comparative maladroitness...

As the tracks get more complicated your reactions will need sharpening, naturally, but negotiating a particularly tricky section at indecent velocity is one of the game's more gratifying moments.

Yet, despite its many positive aspects, there's something intrinsically missing from *SR2*. Aside from the

obvious criticisms that it would benefit from more tracks and lasting a little longer (despite the commendable championship mode), or that cars occasionally appear to float around the screen instead of displaying a convincing tyre-to-ground connection, the game can sometimes feel a little shallow, no doubt a remnant aspect of its arcade heritage.

Ultimately, *Sega Rally 2* has aged alarmingly swiftly since its original Japanese release last February. Don't get the wrong idea, this is a fine game – at times glorious, even. While not quite the visual equal of its coin-op forebear, Dreamcast *SR2* is easily among the most handsome console racing games ever made. But knowing that there's other racing games out there, offering similar levels of accessibility yet coupled with more rewarding playability, it's hard to avoid the fact that *Sega Rally 2* isn't quite up there with today's best ■

João Sanches

DC-UK 7
OH WELL DONE

01 Cornering should be a real test of driving skill, yet the game's arcade handling allows for some speed-related indiscretion

02 Diverse weather conditions are brought in to add to the challenge

03 As the race continues, a rap group to the right of the track poses for a photoshoot

04 A sturdy modern day Escort takes on the frisky, nubile Alpine in a battle that spans three decades of racing action

Expendable

It's a **flashback to the shoot 'em ups** of your youth. Draw your guns and **take no prisoners**

- Publisher: Infogrames
- Developer: Rage
- Price: £39.99
- Release date: Sept 23
- Players: 1 to 2
- Extras: VM
- **For:** Good graphics. An enjoyable blast. Big guns
- **Against:** Old hat. A bit repetitive

Developers from the West are going to play a significant part in the Dreamcast's future, and Rage Software is one of the first European teams to throw down the gauntlet with this explosive shoot 'em up. Not that the plot really matters, but you (and your mate, if you fancy a twoplayer blast) are the slave(s) of a race of robots in a war-torn future. Your mission is to run around the ravaged city streets doing your masters' dirty work by blowing the fudge out of their robotic rivals. Hey, this is a get-down-and-dirty blast 'em up – who cares about the plot?

Expendable is cast in a similar mould to arcade classics like *Gauntlet* and *Gunsmoke*: you guide your player through the 3D environment from a distant third-person perspective (which used to be called 'top-down'). However, gameplay is pitched heavily in favour of gonzo power-ups, reminiscent of those found in *R-Type*. You start out with a basic blaster, but by blowing up boxes and other items that are dotted around the environments, you can quickly graduate onto some serious shooters.

On route, you come across a few fellow humans who you should save, ie, do not fill them to the brim with lead or lasers. That is, unless they're playing host to the nasty three-legged aliens that crop up occasionally (wonder where they got that idea from?). Hidden cunningly along the way are some secret areas and levels, one of which sees you take on the enemy droids from a *Tomb Raider*-style perspective (check out the boxout on page 34). As you would expect from a game of this kind, after wiping out all the enemies in one level, you're faced with the obligatory end-of-level bosses.

Expendable is fun played with a gung ho mate, but with all the lasers, explosions and smoke, the action can become kind of hard to follow. And, of course, you'll have to wait for your tardier friends to catch up before you can scroll on to the next area. Anyway, you can still have one helluva wicked blast all by yourself.

It's all very much a case of 'back to the old skool'. *Expendable* will take you back to the days of your misspent youth – all those great times you had down your local arcades and chippys, hammering your pocket money into the latest coin-ops.

The game's graphics are impresssive enough – scrolling is smooth, you can bomb about the landscape at a decent speed and the explosions are massive and colourful. The only real defect is when you move from certain areas to others and the camera angle skips unexpectedly to another perspective. With the direction controls ►

01 Things can get messy in the twoplayer mode
02 Blowing up the enemy lab equipment awards you with bonus points
03 This boss is a grateful recipient of your rockets
04 These sky-bound thingies can be a real pain in the arse...
05 ...But a lot less hassle with two of you on the job
06 To open doors and progress to the next stage you have to shoot some big green dome things

Gameplay is **pitched heavily in favour of gonzo power-ups,** reminiscent of those found in timeless coin-op **blasters like *R-Type***

01

02

03

04

05

06

With games becoming more intelligent, it is **refreshing to simply get out there into the action** with your guns blazing

PreSchool

Expendable was predated by the Bitmap Brothers' *Chaos Engine...*

The Chaos Engine was a one to twoplayer shoot 'em up for the Amiga, steeped in the Bitmap's futuristic style. You had to earn your power-ups, though, by picking up tokens and trading them in at end-of-level shops.

► temporarily switched, you can find yourself dithering back and forth between two areas before you realise just what the hell is going on. A small thing, admittedly, but when you consider how much care must have been taken to create *Expendable's* delectable eye candy, it seems like a glaring oversight on Rage's part.

With console shoot 'em ups becoming more intelligent and stealth-based recently, it is damn refreshing to simply get out there into the action with your guns blazing, foam and foul language flooding from your mouth. *Expendable* should provide all the action you wannabe Arnies and Will Smiths need – it's a fast-paced arcade-style blaster made in the old skool tradition. Just how long these nostalgic type of exploits can hold your attention nowadays, though, is quite another matter. ■

Stephen Lawson

DC-UK 6
BETTER THAN FIVE

Aladdin's Cave

Perhaps in a move to provide a break from the monotony of *Expendable's* gameplay, bonus levels have been dotted around the main stages. Time to go shopping...

01 That red sparkly thing in the corner is where you pick up your Brucy Bonuses **02** Of course, these enemy droids are going to try and stop you before you get to the booty **03** The droids spawn from those blue rings at the edge of the bonus room **04** Crikey! That fellow you've just shot looks like he's doing the splits – from the neck down. Ach well, he is only a robot, after all

01 The bosses look mean but if you've played a few shoot 'em ups you'll know how to take them out, no problem **02** Bad guys drop like flies when you get out there blasting with one of your mates **03** One of the game's trickier moments, where you're attacked on two fronts at the same time **04** This chappy's almost dead. Show him no mercy **05** Bigger droids should pose no real threat with two of you blasting away

POWER STONE™

to feel the power is to play the game

"Massively addictive, cleverly realised and simply *beautiful* to look at, Capcom's *Power Stone* is truly a jewel in the Dreamcast's crown." Edge 9/10*

"*Power Stone* is probably the closest any game on a home system has come to the *coin-op quality* that videogames have always strived for." Arcade 6/6*

CAPCOM

Dreamcast.

www.eidos.com

EIDOS INTERACTIVE

* Import/NTSC version reviewed.

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Incoming

We're under attack! Save the Earth from the alien invaders before they take over the planet

- Publisher: Infogrames
- Developer: Rage
- Price: £39.99
- Release date: September 23
- Players: 1
- Extras: VM
- **For:** Beautiful explosions and backgrounds. Kill! Kill! Kill! Loads of vehicles and weapons
- **Against:** Lack of depth. Missions are too similar

Aliens must have loved the '80s. Extraterrestrial screen icons like ET and *Return of the Jedi*'s cuddly Ewoks wooed mankind with their lovable other-worldly ways. For the briefest of moments we were willing to extend our hand across the cosmos to our distant cousins. And then came *Independence Day* – and in 'real life', those mysterious Greys, as featured on *South Park*. Once again aliens were evil invaders, to be feared and brutally eliminated.

Incoming takes its cue from Hollywood's current hostility to all things alien and was originally released on PC last year to show off the new 3Dfx technology. The plot is simple: they're alien, they're here, and if they're not stopped they're going to take over the earth. And so it's up to you to rid our planet of wave after wave of invading interplanetary scum.

Gameplay is equally straightforward. Most of the time you'll find yourself simply holding down the fire button and pointing your weapon at the bad guys. Fortunately, there is a little more to *Incoming* than that. You do get to command an increasingly varied array of vehicles, each with different weapons, which becomes more impressive as you progress through the game. One of *Incoming's* most exciting moments is the experience of hunting down enemy craft in your F22 fighter. You also get to drive tanks, helicopters and even alien craft. Very *Independence Day*.

You start the game defending a base with a gun turret. Basically, once you've disposed of one Phase of aliens, you progress to the next Phase, which usually involves a change of vehicle. You are sometimes given basic missions, which are usually no more complicated than picking up a box in your helicopter and dropping it off in another location. It's not quite *Metal Gear Solid*.

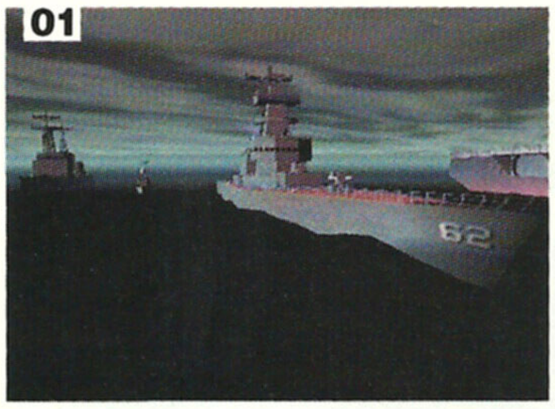
Jaws dropped when *Incoming* was released on PC and there's no reason why they shouldn't now that it's available on Dreamcast. Explosions are fantastic, with dazzling expanding rings and smoke clouds that will make any Millennium firework display seem like a damp squib in comparison. In some levels it's possible to fly above the clouds in hot pursuit of

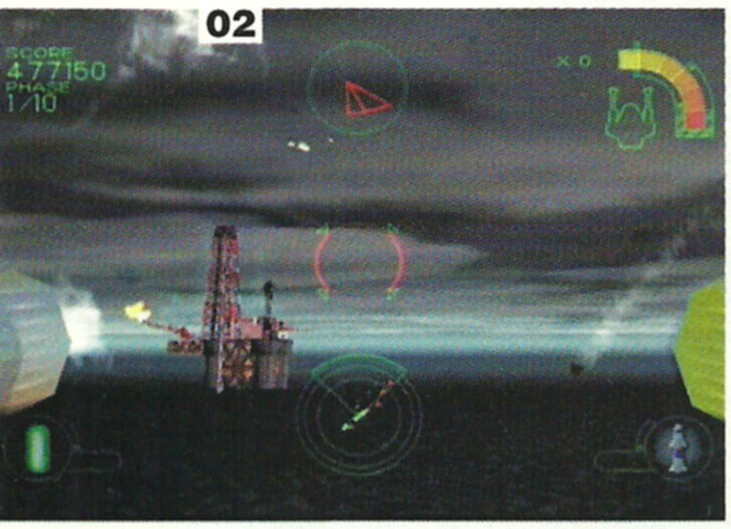
Most of the time you'll **find yourself simply holding down the fire button** and pointing your weapon at the bad guys

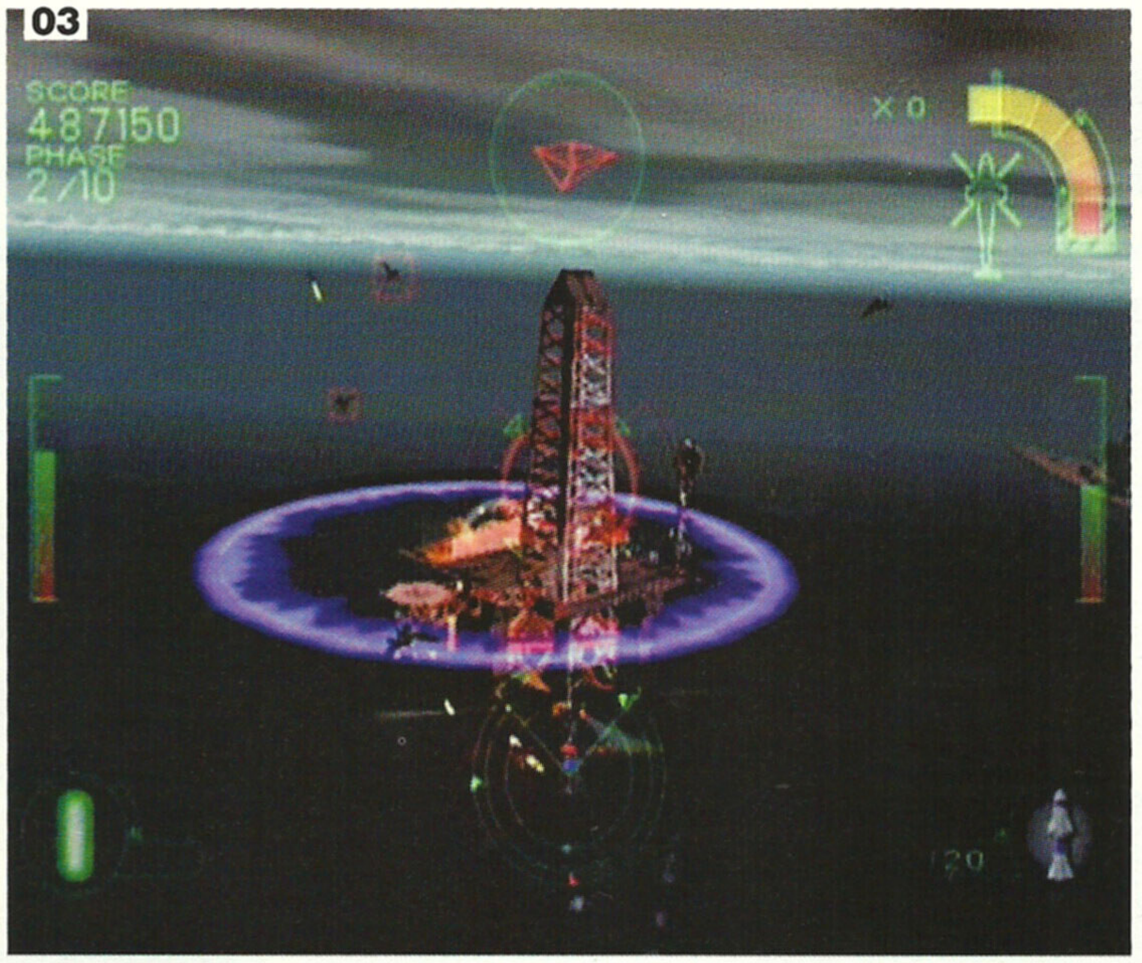
DCHistory

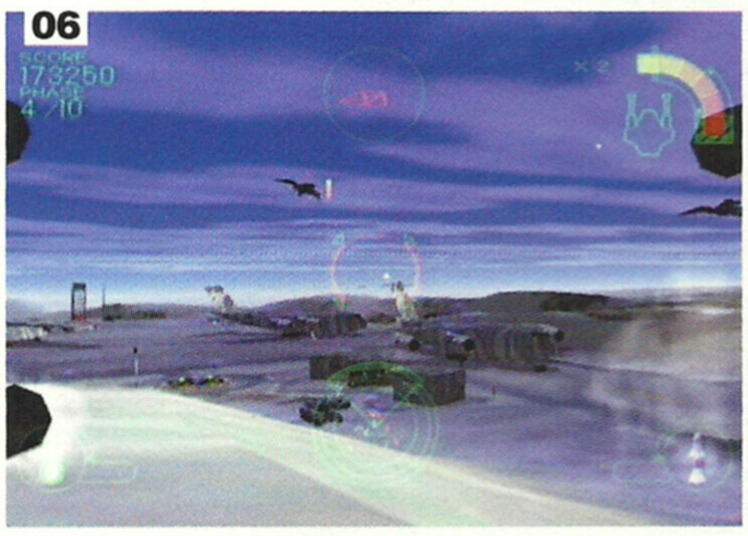
Incoming's shiny graphics have put Rage on the videogame map, but that's not all the company is about...

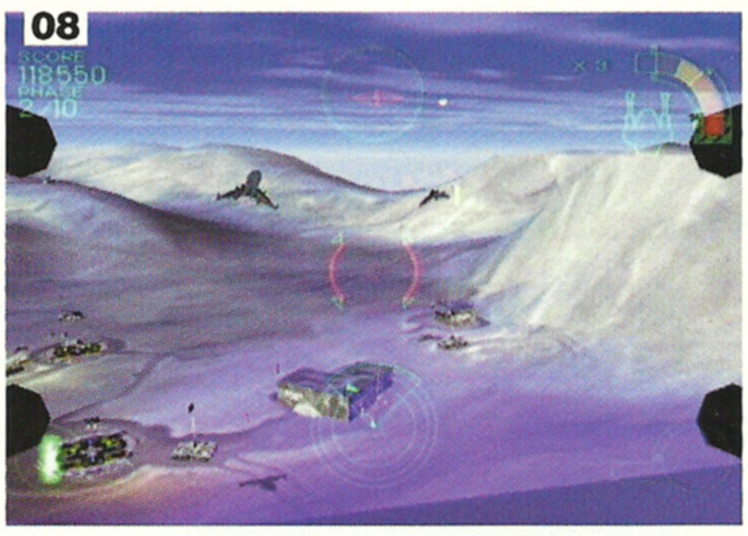
Incoming was originally packaged with PCs as a cut-down demo in 1997. However, the company's history goes back to the 1980's when founder Paul Finnegan cut his programming teeth on 8bit consoles. He was responsible for the original *Striker* games, which are about to make a comeback with *UEFA Striker* (see page 90).











01 One level sees you defending this battleship with a gun turret
02 Use your chopper and chop down those craft threatening the oil rig…
03 It's too late – the rig's gone up in a blue ring
04 Some levels call for a stealthy approach. Here you need to sneak up on the base's defences and take them out
05 Eye candy, scrummy eye candy
06 Take out those dastardly bombers without blowing up your base
07 Flames and explosions can look alarmingly real
08 Too many fighters and not enough guns – things get tough

It tries to gloss over **the repetitiveness of its gameplay** with incredible graphics **and a variety of vehicles**

your enemies. Navigating your way through the cloud, blinded by the sun's glare, is a breath-taking experience and adds a sense of realism to the game's far-fetched scenario. At some points you'll find yourself tempted to put down the joypad and just kick back and enjoy the pretty lights and fireballs.

One of the few complaints about the original PC version of *Incoming* was that the frame rate often slowed down to within a snail's pace. Well, most of the time the Dreamcast's 128bit hardware deals with this problem with ease. There are only a couple of moments in the game where the frame rate drops noticeably, although when it does happen the effect is obvious and it does detract from the game.

Some of the best console games have been based on simple yet cunningly effective ideas. Atari's prehistoric *Pong* and Taito's relatively more recent *Bubble Bobble* and *Bust-a-Move* series spring to mind, but *Incoming* just isn't going to grab you in the same way that those classic games did. At the end of the day, *Incoming* tries to gloss over the mind-numbing repetitiveness of its gameplay with incredible graphics and a variety of vehicles. It's fun for a while but unless you're a big fan of the genre you'll be bored after the first 20 Phases. If you want to show off to your sceptical PC-owning mates, by all means, stick *Incoming* in your Dreamcast and watch them scuttle off with their tails between their legs. But that's not what you bought your Dreamcast for. Is it? ■

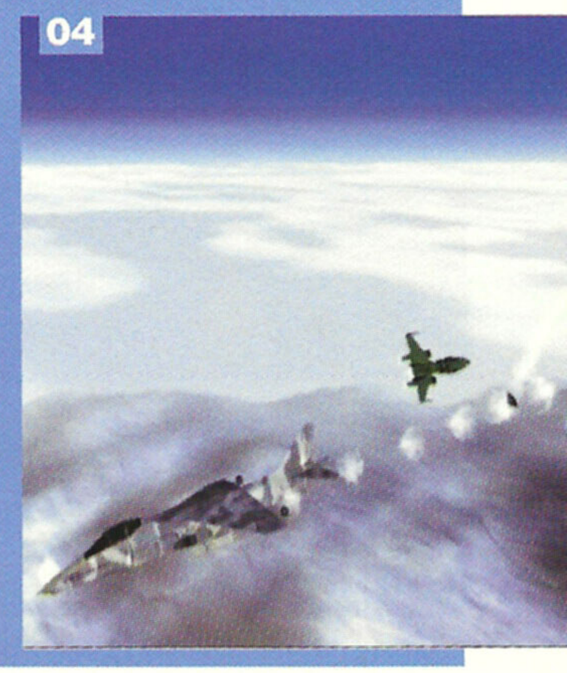
Stephen Lawson

DC-UK 5
PRETTY AVERAGE

Seek and destroy

Hunting down the alien craft while ripping through the clouds in your fighter jet is one of *Incoming*'s most exciting moments.

01 Enemy craft emcompass your sleek fighter. Watch your back
02 Rear of The Year? Baby sure got back. Quite
03 "Incoming!" Dodge, swerve and spin to avoid the enemy fire
04 Time to make trails, then bust a daring loop-the-loop and take out that fighter



Charts

In the absence of a proper UK chart, **DC-UK presents the Top Ten imports** from Japan

CEX Direct import Top Ten

1 Power Stone

Publisher: Capcom **Developer:** In-house

If ever a game deserved the number one spot, this is it. If *Street Fighter* defined the 16bit beat 'em up, then *Power Stone* arguably does the same for the 128bit age. Check out the first official UK review in next month's issue

2 Sega Rally 2

Publisher: Sega **Developer:** In-house

While we reckon this isn't quite as great as it could (or should) be, we reckon the *Sega Rally* brand is strong enough to win the day. But given the choice, we'd go for a second-hand Saturn and a copy of the original game. No lie

3 Virtua Fighter 3tb

Publisher: Sega **Developer:** Genki

One of the original Dreamcast launch games in Japan, and still impressive almost a year later. For the hardcore fellas, the Model 3 arcade version is, apparently, the *VF3* of choice. For everyone else, this is more than good enough

4 House of The Dead 2

Publisher: Sega **Developer:** In-house

Packaged with the gun, as it's likely to be in the UK, *THOTD2* has been a consistent hit on import. Arcade perfect in every way, Sega's shooter has the unnerving ability to glue your attention to the screen harder than, um, super glue

5 Sonic Adventure

Publisher: Sega **Developer:** Sonic Team

A middle-placing for this rollercoaster ride of a game, which probably has more to do with the impenetrability of the Japanese text than anything else. From all reports, the UK version rights all the game's (slight) wrongs, resulting in a truly class act

6 Dynamite Deka 2

Publisher: Sega **Developer:** In-house

Hmm... We're not sure what's landed *Deka 2* a ranking, because to be honest, it's pants. Not just a small pair, either. Down as an October release in the UK as *Dynamite Cop 2*, we're so unexcited about this game that we're tempted not to review it

7 Get Bass

Publisher: Sega **Developer:** In-house

We have one thing to say to you: you've gotta *Get Bass*. Last time it was booted-up round at Caspar's house, the controller had to be forcibly removed from his mate's hands at 7am the next morning. Sad, really. Over here, it's called *Sega Bass Fishing*

8 Buggy Heat

Publisher: CRi **Developer:** In-house

Not bad, but just not good either, *Buggy Heat* is one of gaming's nearly-greats that holds your attention through some indefinable charm but little else. Visually it's quite nice, with chunky colourful buggies, but it's no *Super Mario Kart*

9 Street Fighter Zero 3

Publisher: CRi **Developer:** In-house

Capcom's warhorse rides again. And again. While *Zero 3* (to become *Alpha 3* in the West), is one of the most complete – and complex – beat 'em ups ever seen, there's no doubt that the series has been wrung once too often to get us wet

10 Air Force Delta

Publisher: Konami **Developer:** In-house

We really like this (see right), and its low chart placing is entirely down to having only been on release for a few days before **DC-UK** went to press. The original development name for *Air Force Delta* was *Flight Shooting*, which says it all, really

Charts supplied courtesy of CEX Direct. Call 0171 916 8440 to order. For other import companies see classifieds

Top 5 most requested games

1. **Soul Calibur**
   Publisher: Namco
2. **Virtua Striker 2 v2000**
   Publisher: Sega Enterprises
3. **Virtual On 2: Oratorio Tangram**
   Publisher: Sega Enterprises
4. **Ready 2 Rumble Boxing**
   Publisher: Midway
5. **Metropolis Street Racer**
   Publisher: Sega Europe

DC-UK's list of love

Air Force Delta

Okay, so it's not out in the UK until January, but we hauled in a copy of the Japanese release for a quick playtest. Or so we thought. It might be a fairly blatant rip-off of the *Ace Combat* series, but *Air Force Delta* is more than a match for Namco's flight shoot 'em ups. Keith likes it so much that he's started wearing Rayban Aviators around the office

Soul Calibur

If you're not sure why this is here, turn to page 84 right now – but ready your eyelids because Namco's beat 'em up is liable to pop your eyes right out of your head. With gameplay that will leave you dribbling from every orifice, *Soul Calibur*'s importance is so huge that we can't even fit enough superlatives in this spa

Power Stone

It's fantastic news that Eidos has picked this baby up for launch, because the Japanese version of *Power Stone* has been an office favourite for ages on import – and with everyone else, too, from the look of the chart. Classic Capcom characters coupled with next generation gameplay – fabulous. Check out page 88 for a full preview

We're professional, they're not, but **could they become...**

Dreamcasters

1 Charlotte Brown
Occupation: TV Production Co-ordinator
Comment: "*The House of the Dead 2* was good. It's easier to get into than other shooting games, but it could have been a lot scarier. *Power Stone* made a change from *Tekken* – it's not as fast, so you can see what's going on. I was disappointed by *Sega Rally 2* – it still looks like the car is turning on a single axis'.
Fave: *The House of the Dead 2*

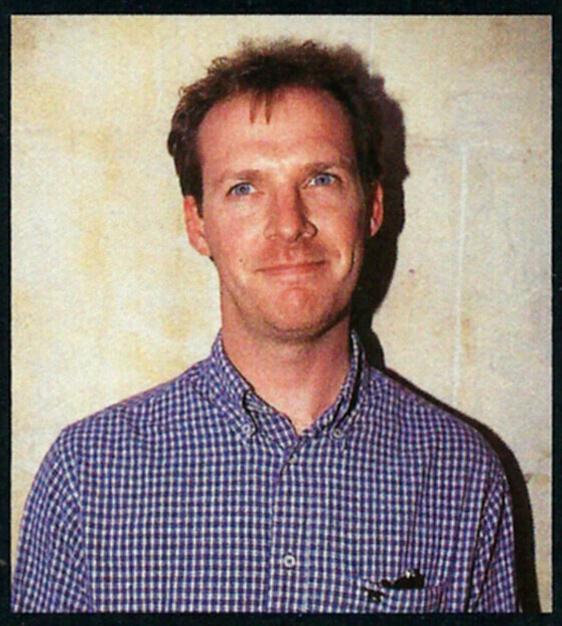
2 Neil Whitehead
Occupation: PR Manager
Comment: "I don't like *Power Stone*," he says while his character is repeatedly hit over the head with a huge mallet. As for *Sega Rally 2*, "The controls are far too sensitive. I don't like this. *House of the Dead* is definitely the best game, although it could have done with some dodgier-looking characters.'
Fave: *The House of The Dead 2*

3 Mandi Samuels
Occupation: Stage Manager
Comment: "I like *Sega Rally 2* actually," Mandi commented while swerving wildly and erratically across the road, seemingly aiming at spectators. "*House of the Dead 2* was good, I don't usually hit anything with these games – this seemed easier to get into. *Virtua Fighter 3* is a bit slow, isn't it? It looks like they forgot to finish the graphics at the back of the beach stage.'
Fave: *Sega Rally 2*

4 Katia Montella
Occupation: Ski Instructor
Comment: "The car's just doing its own thing. The roads are too open and it moves too fast," complained Kat during *Sega Rally 2*, before adding, "I think you should have telepathic videogames." *The House of the Dead 2* fared better, if the yells of "Get him!" and "Oh, you bastard!" are anything to go by. "10/10. Fantastic" is the conclusion.
Fave: *The House of the Dead 2*

5 Dan Goodleff
Occupation: Script writer
Comment: "I've had some games experience," Dan offered, "Well, I have played *Pong*." Oh dear. *Sega Rally 2* was first up and Dan was instantly impressed. "It's amazing; it's beautiful." It was *The House of The Dead 2* that really floated his boat, though. "This is more my kind of thing," he assured us. "Things have come a long way since *Manic Miner*." No question.
Fave: *The House of the Dead 2*

6 Annelise Coomber
Occupation: Semi-pro BMX Rider
Comment: "This is wicked," Annelise enthused, while bombing into one of *Sega Rally 2*'s hairpin bends. The excitable lass practically had to be dragged away from *Power Stone*. "I love this; it's like *Tekken*, except with bigger and smoother graphics." This girl knows her stuff, it seems.
Fave: *Power Stone*



7 Alan Green
Occupation: Beautician
Comment: "Die zombie filth, die!" Could you keep it down a bit? Our neighbours in Internet Works are trying to work. "Oh, yeah. Sorry." Alan went bonkers over *THOTD2*, and we had to sedate him with elephant tranquillisers, which put his *Sega Rally* driving skills well under par. "This is great. Where's the road gone?" But by then he'd missed the checkpoint and it was too late.
Fave: *Sega Rally 2*

8 Robin Brant
Occupation: Catering manager
Comment: "Oh, yeah. This is proper stuff here," Robin exclaimed over *Power Stone*. "The graphics are so good. I haven't seen anything like this, except maybe in the arcades." Quite. "I like *House of The Dead 2*, but it's a bit hard, isn't it?" You have to reload by shooting off-screen. "Oh, right. That's better."
Fave: *Power Stone*

"They've got everything in **there from skating to snowboarding** – it's all blended in really well"

Flynn Trotman VS Trick Style

How would a **pro-skater rate Criterion's hoverboard masterwork?** **DC-UK** dishes the dirt...

On a blisteringly hot July afternoon in Bath's Victoria Park, a group of skatebrats in the identikit uniform of baggy trousers and baggy T-shirts has gathered round the larger of the park's two half-pipes. Five minutes ago they were caught up in their own activity, but now they're just sitting and watching. Flynn Trotman may have an injured ankle, but his natural assurance on the board is obvious. After this display for **DC-UK's** photographer, it's gonna be interesting to see what he makes of the game.

Trickstyle is not a skateboarding sim, of course. It's the videogame realisation of a fictitious, futuristic sport. However, the game's designer Craig Sullivan is himself a keen skater and has infused the action with recognisable skateboard themes. The question is, how accurate has he been?

Back from the photoshoot, and after 20 minutes of *Trickstyle* racing Trotman is impressed. "The physics aren't really that similar to skateboarding, but I can imagine this is what hoverboarding would be like." Flynn picks the game up incredibly quickly, coming in first after just a couple of races – a factor he puts down to playing snowboarding games.

Perhaps the real test would be the freestyle section. Again Flynn is immediately proficient, pulling off combos from the start. "All this stuff is quite familiar," he offers, "It's similar to ramp-oriented competitions. You pull ollies at the top of the ramp and then spins, kickflips and grabs. And all the terminology in the game is taken from skateboarding." Ultimately, then, the fact that Flynn is so good at the game hints that Sullivan has done well by his skateboarding roots. As for a final verdict, "It's very good. They've got everything in there from skating to snowboarding – it's all blended in really well." Respect. ■

PROFILE

■ Flynn started skateboarding 11 years ago, but went professional in 1995 after spending much of his college career zooming around half-pipes. Sponsored by up and coming skate label Reaction, Trotman has toured Europe and travelled to the States to attend skate events. He is currently resting an injured ankle, but kindly agreed to risk his entire career to perform for our photoshoot. Get well soon!

EXPERT WITNESS

■ Photography: **Nick Wilson**

COMING SOON...

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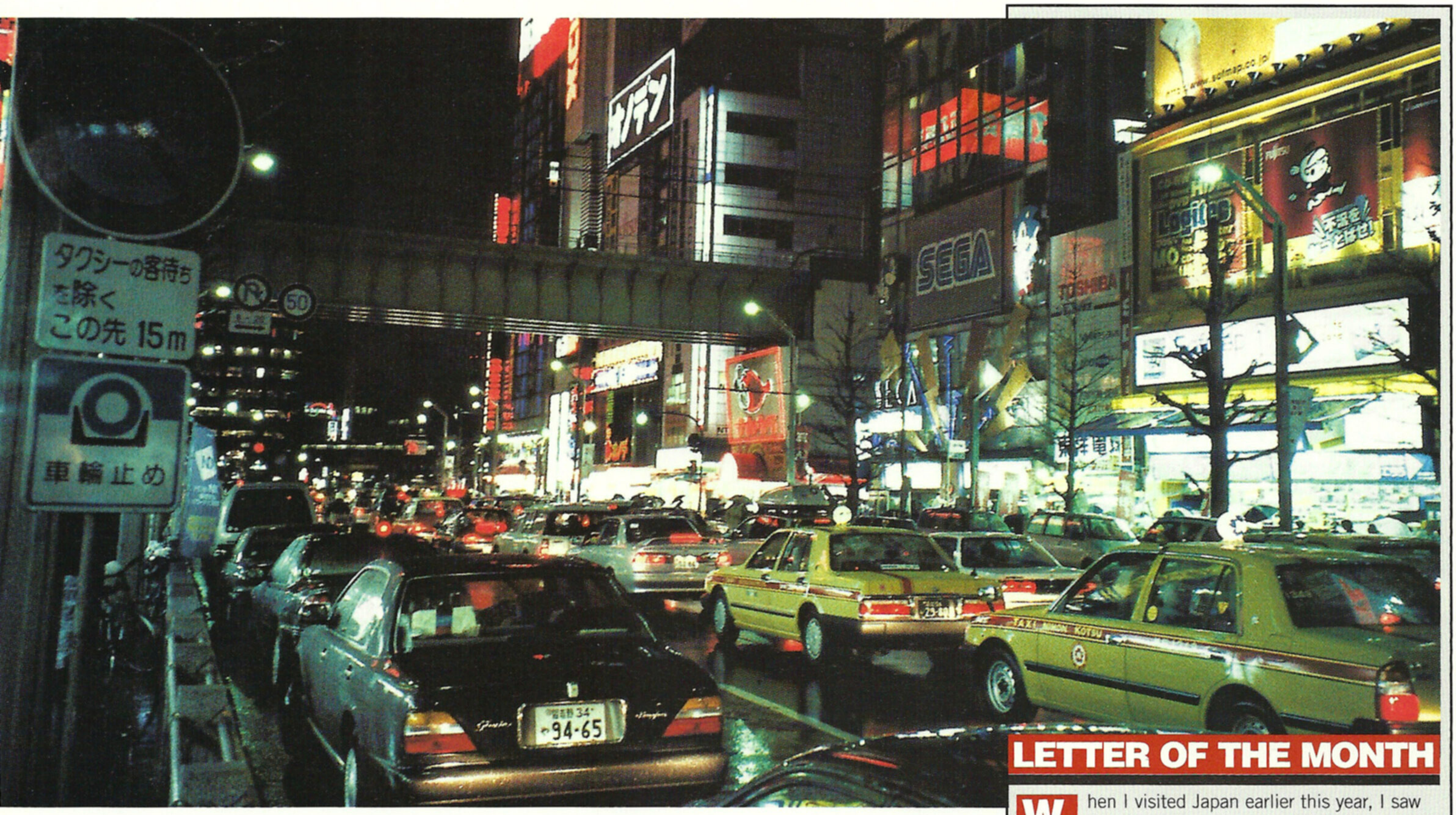


Having played the Dreamcast I think it is amazing. The only problem is, the PlayStation has become a household name and unless Sega market it perfectly the Next Generation PlayStation will come out on top again. I have tried to convince my friends that the Dreamcast is brilliant but most of them haven't even heard of it. However, when I take them to the local game shop and show them the Dreamcast in action, they love it. This shows that with good publicity and good games the Dreamcast can beat the NGPS. Even though the NGPS has better specs, the Dreamcast games will be cheaper because they're not on DVD.

Lynn Dawn Manning, via email

NGPS may well have better 3D performance when it turns up – but last thing we heard, Western gamers wouldn't see Sony's next machine until 2001. Dreamcast is here right now with supercool titles, mind-blowing graphics, online gaming and... oh, just buy one!

Sega doesn't deserve the clattering it's getting at the moment. Many people are still bitter about the rubbish, yet expensive, add-ons for the erstwhile Mega Drive. Also, the Saturn didn't do it any favours. However, people forget the fact that Sega has made some of the best videogames ever and thus deserves some credit.

Nintendo and Sony are desperate to staunch the flood of Dreamcasts into hungry gamers' homes. Obviously, if people have bought a new console in the last eighteen months and, worse, are happy with it then they are less likely to shell out for the next one. The worst thing that can happen to the big two is a contented user base of Dreamcasts. This is why we've seen the blatant spoiling tactics used by Sony and Nintendo. The success of the PlayStation over the technically superior N64 must be very worrying because the Dreamcast could potentially follow the example set by Sony. The number of people who don't mind having a slightly out-teched machine that happens to have a cool image and loads of games is a clear indicator of this.

Early feedback on the Dreamcast is promising, and I would love to see it make a comeback for Sega. Me, I'm sitting on the fence, but I'd have one free!

Michael Foster, Blackpool

Big two? Don't you mean big three? Sega's reputation might have taken a few knocks, but it's about to make a big time comeback, Muhammed Ali style.

As more and more of my friends proclaim their love for all things Sony and declare that they'll wait for the new PlayStation rather than bother with the Dreamcast, it will be interesting to see how many of them eat their own words.

You see, I don't believe that it's a matter of technical abilities. Both machines are extremely powerful and the differences between the two aren't quite as great as they once were. Don't get me wrong, the visual advancements from the original PlayStation to the new Dreamcast are obvious, but if given a screen shot from the DC and another from the NGPS, will their differences be as clear?

I'm sure that to the developers and the tech-heads the NGPS is ten times better than the DC, but will the average games player notice, or even care?

This is not about which one's better, all truth be told, I'll probably end up with them all anyway, It's just

LETTER OF THE MONTH

When I visited Japan earlier this year, I saw the future. Deep in Tokyo, Akihabara, the first thing to greet you after venturing from the underground are the huge Dreamcast ads. In the numerous videogame shops all that can be seen are free-play Dreamcast stands, muscling in on PlayStation's dominance. The difference is remarkable, the five year gap between hardware painfully obvious; Sega's offerings are so crisp, so playable, so cool, so desirable.

The game fans really want these things. Not only is the hardware up to the job, the merchandise is there to back it up. In a number of specialist shops there's even DC fashion. Japan is a cultured country, a country where nothing short of perfection is acceptable – they have defined consumer electronics into the 21st Century in our Western homes, and in my view, Dreamcast is the pinnacle of interactive entertainment, another eastern success story in the making.

This time they've succeeded. I like this console. It has style and attitude. For everything the Saturn got wrong, Dreamcast has got right.

Colin Bailey, via email

WINNER BABY, YEAH!

Nice one, Colin. And a word in the ears of those who sent letters slagging-off DC while trying to win one: Doh!

Below: Sonic's back, which can mean only one thing: so is Sega, and this time they're taking no prisoners. This time it's war, baby.

interesting to see how many people cry technology without understanding it. People don't buy features; they buy benefits.

Jason Quinn, London

People buy, play and love games, and that's what Sega and Dreamcast – and ***DC-UK*** *– are all about. That plus an insatiable appetite for cake. And gin.*

The launch of any new console more powerful than the N64 is bound to catch everyone's attention. Dreamcast is sure to be regarded as having upped the videogame console ante, but the thing to watch is how it changes the way we play. I think it is the multiplayer feature that'll take the Dreamcast to a new level.

As a result of this increase in multiplayer games, could it be possible that the Dreamcast will signify the end of the view that videogaming is bad for you?

Andy Latham, via email

Um... who's view would that be then? Yer Auntie Ethel's?

A new console, huh? Seems Sega wants Dreamcast to give the PSX and N64 a run for their money. The modem sounds great – perhaps now console users can finally feel what it's like to go out and blow people's heads off without needing your friends to be present – I hope the little phone jack doesn't appear for five seconds only to give way to a shot of the floor covered in blood. Let's see if there will be a *Quake III Arena* for Dreamcast, then. And for those who live in a pit, let's hope that there will be decent single player games, as well.

Anton Shafarenko, via email

Playing games online is, without a doubt, the baddest-assed experiece videogaming has ever offered. As for Quake III Arena *coming to Dreamcast, apparently Sega and* Doom/Quake *creators id Software have been 'in discussion' about it for some time. Überprogrammer John Carmack has been quoted as saying that, "You'd get better performance modem-wise on the DC," and that's good enough for us.*

The Dreamcast might not change gaming with its flash graphics, online gaming or sound but it will influence the game designers to make games that will reach higher levels of realism. As we all know, Sega can do this with games like the *Virtua Fighter* series. Now Sega has the ability to make games that'll be arcade perfect.

Anthony White, Southampton

See our coin-op section on page 112 for just how 'arcade perfect' Dreamcast games are going to be...

The Dreamcast will totally redeem Sega for that whole Saturn thing. I mean, seriously, what was that all about? The graphics will blow you away, they are at least as good as a P200 PC with 3dfx Voodoo Rush, and the pad is perfectly comfortable. One of my local game shops has had one in for several months now and I have played *Incoming* and *Virtua Fighter 3tb*, which are both amazing.

Macky, via email

P200 with Voodoo Rush? Try a P500 with Voodoo 3000 and you'd be nearer the mark. At £199 Dreamcast offers more bang-for-buck than anything you've seen before.

The Dreamcast looks pretty amazing, every true gamer wants to play *Sega Rally 2* as much as the next blue hedgehog. If Sega can keep the flow of quality titles coming then it's onto a winner. However, Sega's task has become harder since the announcement the PlayStation sequel. The Next Gen PlayStation will probably be a very competent piece of kit. Sega has a year to gain as much ground as possible before Sony tries to reclaim its PS fans. I am confident in Dreamcast because Sega has something that Sony lacks – the ability to constantly produce triple-A titles from their wealth of stonking arcade experience. Come on Sega – I believe!

Chris Bransden, via email

So much hype goes on when new consoles come out that I don't want to make the mistake of buying another games machine which has a great graphics capability but a dearth of quality games. How wonderful it is that the Dreamcast lives up to, and indeed surpasses, all my expectations in that department. A quality games machine, plenty of games and the Internet, as well. Let's hope the Dreamcast makes the other console companies get off their backsides and start to create better machines with better technology to make it a greater gaming world for all of us.

Chris Dunn, via email

That's nice of you to give away a Dreamcast. The best thing is the modem, which gives you a chance to view porn in a completly different way. But I'm not saying you do view porn over the Net or anything like that.

Scott Murphy, via email

Perish the thought. Just don't tell our mums...

Now, forgive me for being a wee bit protective here, but isn't Sega treading on the toes of PC owners? First we have to cope with the fact that they've included a modem, but then we get all these stats about the CPU and the kick-ass graphics...

I'm bitter. Pure and simple, it looks like they've finally got us. Because Dreamcast represents everything that games consoles aren't. Next thing we know it'll be, "Here, have a mouse! And hey, fancy a game on *Quake III*?" and nothing will be sacred.

But remember: fear of Windows leads to anger; anger at Windows leads to hatred; hatred of PCs leads to the dark side – consoles. Ah, buggrit, I'm turning to the Sega side.

Andrew Redwood, via email

We are not convinced that Sega's marketing department would be overly cheery at being sided with Darths Vader and Maul.

The Dreamcast will be the biggest piece of monkey crap in European history.

GILLT, via email

What, even worse than the Sinclair QL? Be fair, guv'nor.

GAME ON

UK launch bonanza!

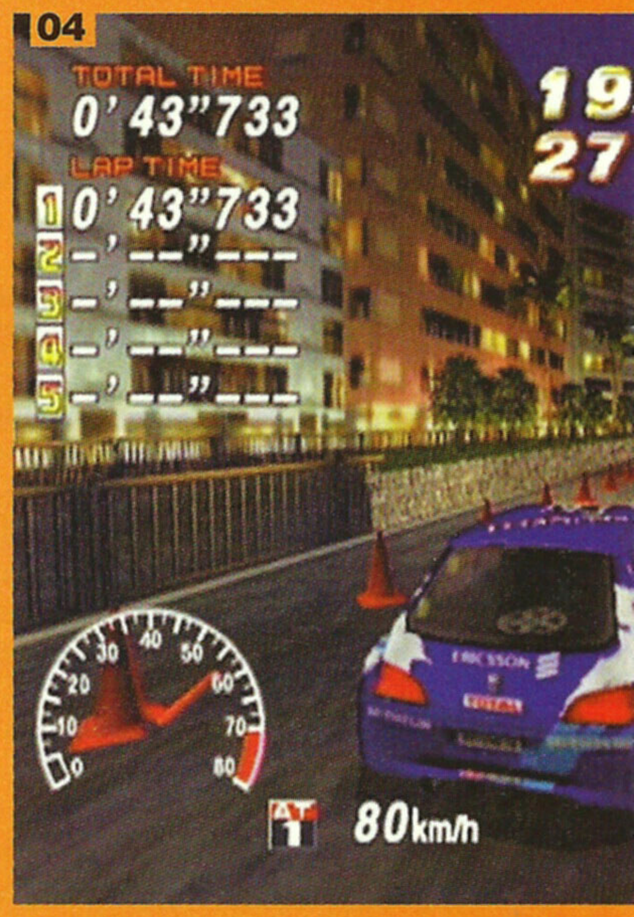
Just as **DC-UK** expected, **Sega has pulled out all the stops** for the UK launch of Dreamcast

This is it! After months of speculation in the media, Sega Europe has finally announced the line-up of games set to appear alongside Dreamcast on September 23. Aside from a couple of surprises, the ten titles are the same as we at **DC-UK** predicted – and reviewed this issue. More than welcome is Capcom's stunning beat 'em up, *Power Stone*, brought to us by those lovely people at Eidos. Look for the exclusive, official UK review of the game next month, alongside *Blue Stinger*, *Speed Devils* and plently more.

Also announced for release before October 23 are a further 15 promising games, including *Red Dog* from Argonaut (responsible for creating Nintendo legend *Star Wing*), and Midway's hilarious afro'd-up boxing title, *Ready 2 Rumble*. Also worth watching out for is *Sega Bass Fishing*, which has gained a massive following in its Japanese incarnation, *Get Bass.* But why the name change, Sega?

Below that we've added a list of 15 more scorching hot releases that are likely to hit the shelves this side of Christmas. Horror fans are more than catered for with gothic 3D adventure *Shadowman* (currently spinning heads on N64 and PC – and Acclaim promises us that the DC version will be best of the lot).

King of them all, though, is beat 'em up *Soul Calibur*, previewed on page 84. A Japanese copy of this instant Namco (*Ridge Racer*, *Tekken*) classic arrived in the **DC-UK** office as we went to press, and nearly stopped us from breathing, never mind working. Get ready to join a very long queue outside your local games shop sometime in November. It looks like it's going to be a *very* good year... ■



05

06

07

01 *Trick Style:* launching boarder games into the next millenium
02 *Virtua Fighter 3tb* kicks ass
03 It's the revenge of the zombies in *The House of The Dead 2*
04 *Sega Rally 2* is nippier than a lobster in a boiling pot
05 Sonic and Tails are back – and they're bigger and better than ever
06 Take to the skies in a sexy fighter jet in *Incoming*
07 *Expendable* should satisfy all your wayward shoot 'em up needs

YOURS FOR THE TAKING...

LAUNCH GAMES	HOW EXCITED SHOULD YOU BE?
Blue Stinger	2
Expendable	3
Incoming	3
Monaco GP Racing Simulation 2	2
Power Stone	5
Sega Rally 2	4
Sonic Adventure	5
Speed Devils	3
Trick Style	5
Virtua Fighter 3tb	5

BEFORE OCTOBER 23	HOW EXCITED SHOULD YOU BE?
Aerowings	2
Dynamite Cop 2	1
House of the Dead 2	4
Hydro Thunder	3
Jimmy White's 2: Cue Ball	3
Marvel vs Capcom	4
Mortal Kombat Gold	2
NFL Blitz 2000	2
Pen Pen Trilcelon	1
Ready 2 Rumble Boxing	5
Red Dog	5
Sega Bass Fishing	4
Tokyo Highway Challenge	2
Toy Commander	4
UEFA Striker	4

BEFORE CHRISTMAS	HOW EXCITED SHOULD YOU BE?
Cool Boarders (working title)	3
Fighting Force 2	3
F1 World Grand Prix	4
Grand Theft Auto 2	5
Hidden & Dangerous	4
NFL Quarterback Club 2000	3
Resident Evil Code: Veronica	5
Re-Volt	3
Shadowman	5
Slave Zero X	3
Soul Calibur	12
Soul Fighter	3
Street Fighter Alpha 3	4
Suzuki Altaire Racing	2
Wild Metal Country	3

BOARD THE EXPRESS

RUMOUR

Rumour: A version of *Sonic the Hedgehog* is set to appear on SNK's Neo Geo Pocket Colour – a new handheld console which boasts compatibility with Dreamcast (see next issue for the full lowdown).
DC-UK: This seems to be true. Take a look at SNK's US home page (**www.snkusa.com**) and there's a page that just says, 'SEGA – SONIC FOR NEOGEO POCKET COLOR 12 /1', indicating that it'll be out in December. You'd think they'd make more of a song and dance about it, though... ■

Rumour: We've written *Trick Style* incorrectly throughout the entire magazine. It should actually be *TrickStyle* with no space between the two words.
DC-UK: Erm, yeah that's true. But it's not our fault – Acclaim made the change just as we went to press. Sob ■

Rumour: Capcom is including a 60Hz option in the PAL conversion of *Power Stone* (see page 73 if you don't know what all this means).
DC-UK: This is true. Eidos just rang up and told us ■

Rumour: Rumours coming out of America at the moment suggest that Sega is in trouble concerning its lightgun controller.

Apparently, someone else had the idea of putting a d-pad on a gun controller and Sega has infringed their patent.
DC-UK: This sounds unlikely, but the fact that all references to the lightgun have stopped appearing in Sega press releases lends it a little credence. Still sounds a bit silly, though ■

Rumour: Sega Enterprises is planning to release a DVD unit for Dreamcast.
DC-UK: Not entirely beyond the realms of reason, but Sega is keeping very quiet about it. Could well make an announcement at the Tokyo Game Show ■

EUROPEAN LAUNCH STORY

Collision course

With anticipation for **Sega's dream machine** building daily, **DC-UK** counts down to impact

Four years after the launch of Sony's PlayStation, the next big leap in console technology is about to arrive on European soil. September 23 will see the UK premiere of Dreamcast, Sega's 128bit follow-up to its sadly ill-fated Saturn.

With a European marketing budget of £60 million and a stunning launch title line-up to whip gamers up into a frenzy, it looks as though Sega may regain control of the videogames industry from comparative upstart Sony.

Until now the buzz surrounding Dreamcast has been aimed squarely at distributors, with consumer enthusiasm limited to avid gamers and gadget-hunters, but the general public is now sitting up and taking notice. A good showing at this year's E3 computer games show in Los Angeles (see p51) started the prepublicity boulder rolling, and, since August 5, Sega's Dreamcast Roadshow has been touring some of the UK's major football grounds, showing distributors and high street store representatives exactly what the Dreamcast has to offer. Of the 40 games likely to appear by Christmas, Sega has confirmed that ten will be available to buy when the console launches. Heading the list are Sega's own *Virtua Fighter 3tb*, *Sega Rally 2* and *Sonic Adventure*, closely hounded by thirdparty titles like *Blue Stinger*, *Expendable* and *Incoming*. "We have worked hard to come up with a launch line-up that will be attractive to a wide range of customers." Sega's UK Marketing Manager Giles

DREAMCAST HAS ALREADY **DOUBLE THE PRE-ORDERS PLAYSTATION HAD** WHEN THAT CAME OUT

Reserve your Sega Dreamcast Hardware with a £30 deposit and get a free preview video NOW

Sega Dreamcast only £199.99

Launch date 23rd September '99

topdogforgames HMV

buy now from over 100 stores nationwide or www.hmv.co.uk or 0990 33 45 78

Thomas told industry newspaper MCV.

Further down the line, forthcoming titles from high-profile developers should keep interest in the machine high. The fact that Namco has chosen to support Dreamcast with *Soul Calibur* (see p84) speaks volumes about the console's prospects. Capcom has also thrown its weight behind Dreamcast with a fresh version of its *Resident Evil* series, *Code: Veronica*. Add patronage from key European publishers such as Eidos, Virgin and Infogrames (thought to be converting *V-Rally 2*) and you get Sega's best international support since the epoch-making Mega Drive.

In the US, pre-orders for Dreamcast are reportedly 200,000 and rising. "A month before its launch on

DREAMCAST ADS HAVE ENJOYED **AN EIGHT WEEK RUN ALONGSIDE THE PHANTOM MENACE, AND WILL BE FOLLOWED BY TV SPOTS** IN THE RUN-UP TO CHRISTMAS

September 9, the Dreamcast already had double the pre-orders PlayStation had when that came out," notes Simon Cox, Editor-In-Chief of America's Official Dreamcast Magazine. "Now Sega is aiming for 1,000,000 units by April 2000. The buzz for the machine is really good here, with 19 games at launch including *Soul Calibur*. The Dreamcast's profile has also been boosted by the fact that Hollywood Video is renting out consoles with *Sonic Adventure* and *Ready 2 Rumble*."

Back here in the UK, momentum is continuing to build. Sega Europe has kick-started its 'Up to 6 billion players' blitz of its own. Attractive demo pods will shortly roll out to high street stores. Dreamcast ads have enjoyed an eight-week run alongside Star Wars: The Phantom Menace, and will be followed by TV spots in the run-up to Christmas. With the added marketing oomph of Sega's sponsorship deal with Arsenal, Dreamcast awareness is rapidly on the up. HMV has already started its pre-order system (a £30 deposit guarantees you a Dreamcast on day one), with Virgin Megastores and EB quickly following suit.

But the biggest hook may be the Dreamcast's Internet connectivity. "To casual gamers, it will offer them email and Internet access," says Giles Thomas, "while hardcore gamers will be excited by the opportunity of online gaming."

With all the possibilities its modem offers, £60 million of advertising, massive industry support, true next-generation 3D visuals – not to mention the strongest line-up of launch games a console has ever seen – Dreamcast will take Europe by storm ■

DREAMTIME

In which a renowned industry journalist loses the plot in a comfortably anonymous way...

This month: Owain Bennallack unleashes his

Animal Spirit Guide

A bright yellow bouncy castle, somewhere in never-never land, a dot in a whistling desert. Opposite me stands Sonic the Hedgehog, bobbing slightly as the floor groans and sighs. Isn't it funny how videogame characters always look bigger in the flesh? His left foot drums an impatient beat on the yellow plastic.

Me and the spiky one aren't the mates we once were. Our years of living dangerously lie far behind us. Once, we'd hurtle down paper-thin mountains at a screen a second, barely bothering to look up at the clock or the oncoming terrain. Now Sonic is back and promising new adventures, like Mickey Rourke in Rumblefish but shock blue with even fewer words. I'm fairly sure we'll run together again, but I want to do the schoolyard showdown bit first.

Of course I skipped the Saturn, but Sonic can't argue – so did he. Actually, he can't talk at all, so we end up communicating in a vaguely telepathic way. I implore him to forget my dalliances with PlayStation – what's good for the goose is good for the gander, I argue, wishing I knew an aphorism holding more interest for a snail eating mammal that sleeps through winter.

And where was he when the nights drew in anyway? He was hibernating in the antique section of Computer Exchange, that's where. Funny that, how Sonic the Hedgehog never sleeps on-screen. He never dodges lorries or comes out for saucers of milk, either.

Sonic says he only sticks his head out for the good times. And you know what? I believe the old bugger. So I let him go. I brace myself and wait for the sound of compressed air exploding into freedom as his spiky blue hair pierces the castle walls ■

LITES

Team 17 has developed a version of its blockbuster annelid battle game *Worms* for Dreamcast. *Worms Armageddon* features around 60 weapons and over 30 different single player game modes as well as loads of hidden power-ups, comic FMV sequences and the like. The game will be followed by two racing titles, *GP500* (motorbikes) and *Stunt GP* (featuring remote controlled cars) ■

DII™

Japanese gamers will soon be able to edit, enhance, organise and store digital photographs on their Dreamcasts thanks to a deal between Sega and Seattle-based technology company Digital Intelligence Inc. DII has developed an imaging technology named Picture IQ which can be embedded in set-top boxes, printers, hand-held appliances and other electric things. Users can then download their photos onto the gadget and manipulate them as they fancy. Sega Enterprises and DII will be releasing a series of Picture IQ peripherals for Dreamcast in the Autumn. Whether or not we'll be getting them in the UK is anyone's guess at the moment. For more info contact **www.digintelligence.com** ■

PLUG ONE

The big sell

The British Dreamcast **advertising campaign hints** at much more to come

Should Sega's scheming have come to fruition, the first two Dreamcast adverts will by now be etched deep inside your brain. Come September 23, you'll be sauntering down to HMV/Electronics Boutique/ the corner shop, safe in the knowledge that a pre-ordered Dreamcast is waiting for you to take it home. In some part of your mind, you will already be among the 'six billion players'.

But while some of Sega's tactics might seem obvious, such as premiering 'Shave' (the one where three guys have their hair buzzed-off), just before The Phantom Menace, making the ads is more complex. As you might expect.

The brains behind Dreamcast's marketing brawn reside within leading ad agency WCRS. These people know what you want. So in order to even things out a bit, **DC-UK** caught up with Dreamcast account manager James Moody to discover how he set about communicating the sacred words of Dreamcast and multiplayer gaming.

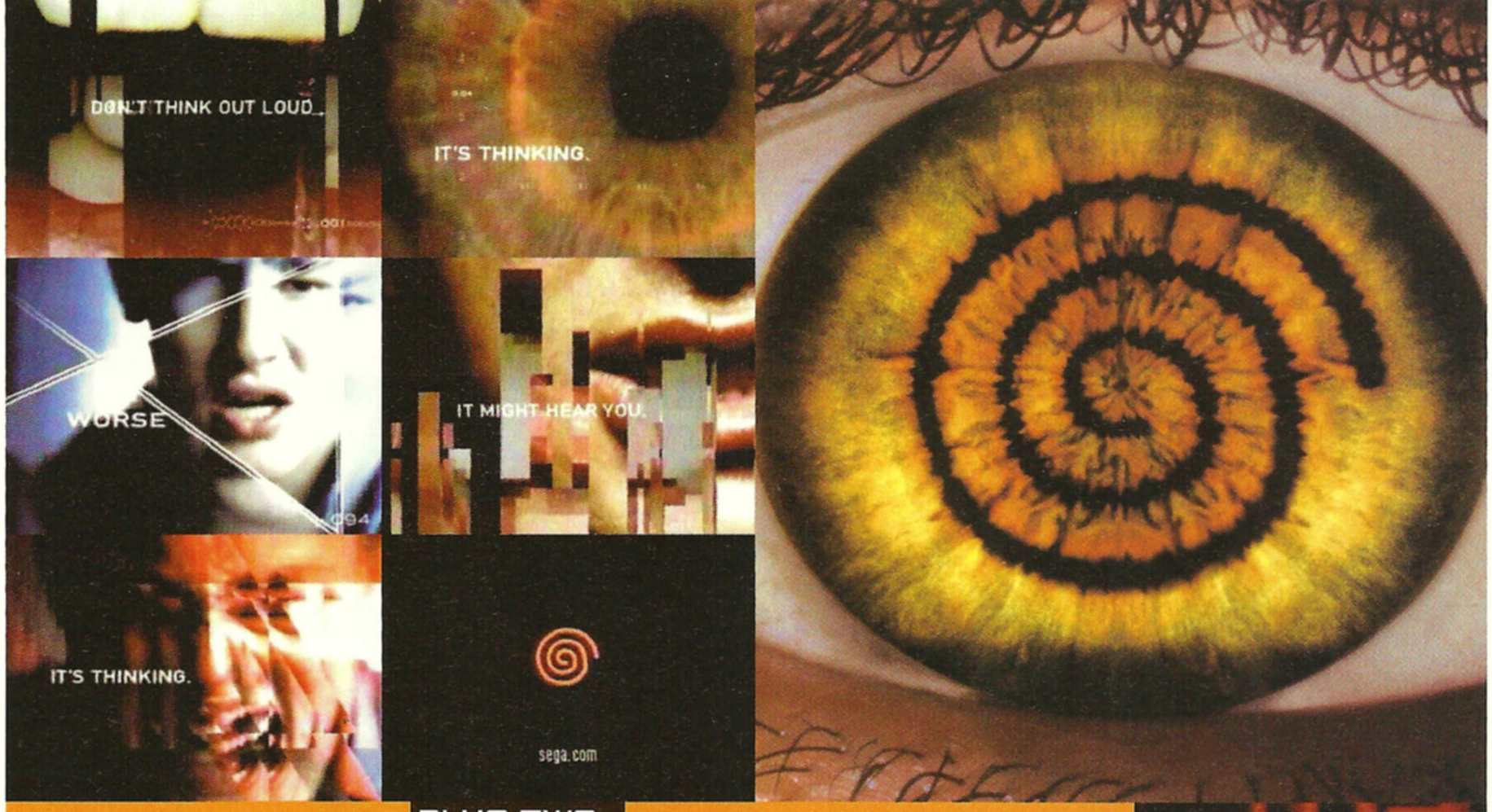
"The fact that it's a new message is a massive strength," he explains, "because it's fresh and one that everyone can understand. Think about the last time you had a laugh with your mates, doing something competitive – I'll bet it was the last time you saw them. I hope we've captured that and we intend to carry on capturing it, too."

Of 'Shave' and 'Buoy' (see caption), the latter is more in line with WCRS intention to make Dreamcast's ads less 'lonely' than PlayStation's. All those Sony sponsored spots and weirdos are okay, but they're not exactly inviting you to come and play. But then again, the console's only fitted with two joypad ports.

"You're right, the two films are different in tone. But Dreamcast has to be for everyone. It's for the hardcore, and it's for people who love gaming, but don't know it yet. You have to be bold to get that message across, especially at launch. And the line itself has legs – it can accommodate all the developments to come."

And there is much more to come, as James admits. "Sega and WCRS are planning for the long term, and that usually means five years," he says. "When it comes to actual ads, we always try to look ahead about 18 months or so." Blimey. By that time, Dreamcast might have those six billion players on board. Well, maybe... ■

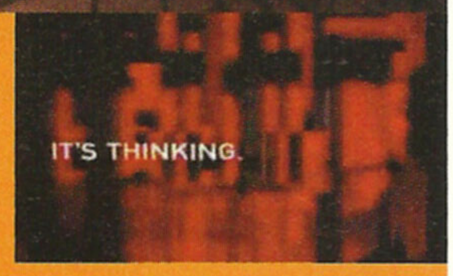
Shave (main) Three rough-as-you-like barbers, one Foreign Legion recruitment centre, and the first of Dreamcast's ads is go. Lots of trendy freeze-framed zooms on each geezer, accompanied by 'Player One' and 'Player Two' captions **Buoy (above, below)** Our favourite of the two ads features a load of kids scuffing about on the beach, skimming stones at a distant buoy. Little girl joins in, speccy kid helps out with a catapult, and it's smiles all round



PLUG TWO

Sega scares America

The American marketing push has **bewildered audiences with a cascade of bizarre imagery** and esoteric messages



Perhaps cashing in on the current craze for horror movies, Sega of America has adopted a 'scare them until they wet their pants' approach to TV advertising. The first three commercials to go out as part of SoA's $100m Dreamcast marketing campaign show jump cut images of confusion and fear, while voices whisper things like, "Its thinking" and "You know it's alive. Worse. It knows it's alive". Out of the trio, 'REM' which shows rapid images of a blinking eye, while a sinister woman claims "Out smarting it only makes it smarter" is possibly the creepiest. 'Anxiety' with its close-up shot of a gamer's mouth as he desperately chants, "I can beat this thing!" is reminiscent of one of those vague mid-'80s anti-drug ads. 'Claustrophobia' is the only one that actually shows someone playing a game, although (in keeping with the theme of the series), the gamer looks terrified, and as if he's about to drop dead from a heart attack.

SoA is keen to show the power of the machine – the message being it's so powerful, it can think. HAL from 2001 springs to mind, although it is unlikely that Dreamcasts will develop sentient awareness and kill their owners. We will, however, keep you posted ■

SHOWSTOPPER

E3 Rocked!

Dreamcast games **shook the game world** in City of Angels

On the videogame social calendar, there's one event that cannot be missed: E3, the Electronic Entertainment Expo, held every May in Los Angeles. Everyone who's anyone is there, along with the biggest videogame stars of the moment.

This year, Dreamcast stole the show. Splashing out $5 million on its stand, Sega of America set out to make the biggest possible impact. It worked: Dreamcast was the talk of the town.

So which games shook LA? *Ready 2 Rumble*, *Soul Calibur* and, unsurprisingly, the US sports games *NFL* and *NBA 2000* all had queues to play. Then again, so did all the other 40 or so on display. No wonder, then, that US pre-orders have topped 200,000... ■

RUMOUR

Rumour: Capcom is working on Dreamcast versions of two current arcade beat 'em ups: *Star Gladiators 2* and *Tech Romancer* – a Robot battle romp.
DC-UK: Yes, this is true. Don't hold your breath waiting for the UK versions, though. Or you'll die. (However, more info will appear in Not The Same Cable in the near future) ■

Rumour: Sega will announce a Saturn emulator for the Dreamcast at this year's Tokyo Game Show. Sat-Cast, as it is to be known, comes on a GD-ROM and simply loads the old Saturn operating system onto Dreamcast – you can then play all your old Saturn games on it. Apparently, Sega wants to take the wind out of the Next Gen PlayStation backward compatibility sails.
DC-UK: This sounds a little fanciful, but it's technically possible. We'll have a Tokyo Game Show report in Issue 3 ■

Rumour: Sega Europe is preparing to launch a range of Dreamcast clothing
DC-UK: This looks as though it could be true – we were in Sega's offices recently, and they appeared to have loads of mock-ups of garments bearing the spiral logo. No Dreamcast underpants, though ■

LITES

Sega will not have a stand at this year's European Computer Trade Show (ECTS), held annually in the Olympia exhibition centre, London. The company has publicity plans coinciding with the event, but will not be forking out for a mammoth showfloor megaplex complete with Dreamcast demo machines, banging trance music and dancing girls dressed as *Street Fighter* characters. This is perhaps due to the huge cost of exhibiting at ECTS (around a million quid for a decent set-up) – Sega Europe is probably saving cash for a huge pre-launch media blitz, involving more B-list actors and popstars posing awkwardly with Dreamcast controllers. See above ■

The UK version of *Sega Rally 2* will feature a slightly different line-up of cars than the Japanese NTSC original. Replacing the Ford Escort WRC and Peugeot 106 are a nippy Fiat Seicento Sporting and a Peugeot 206 WRC ■

Sega Europe has released a price list for Dreamcast peripherals in the UK. Here goes:

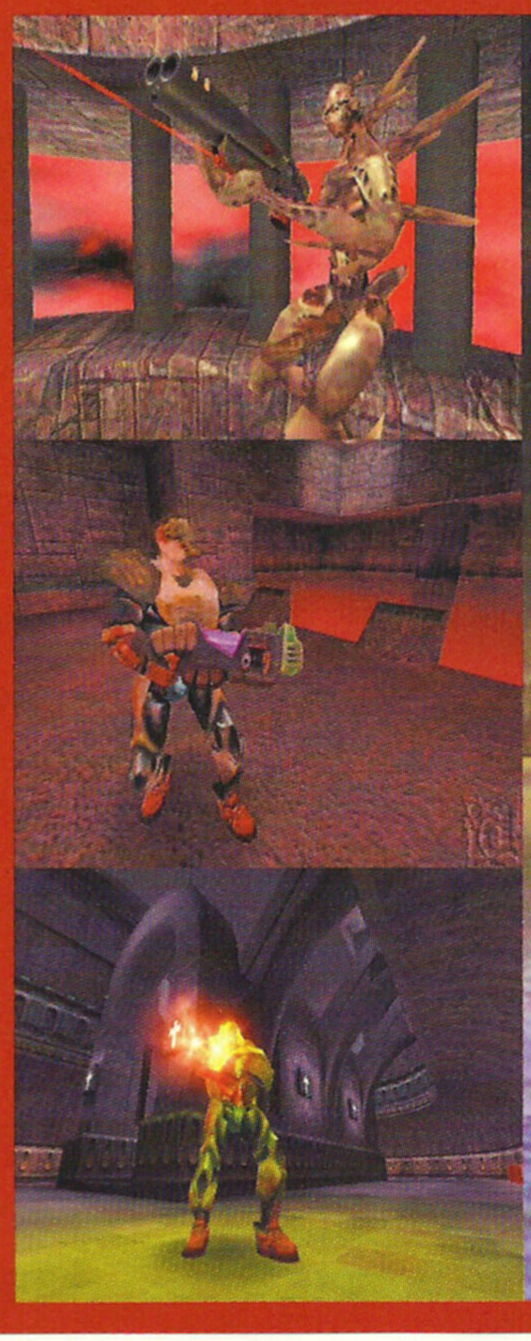
Controller	£19.99
VM unit	£19.99
Keyboard	£19.99
SCART lead	£19.99
Steering wheel	£44.99
Arcade stick	£34.99

The fishing rod and gun controllers are likely to be packaged with the games that require them ■

FRAG ME!

Quake III for Dreamcast?

The ultimate **frag-fest may not be reserved for PC and Mac owners**, after all. Time to get tooled up...



Legendary developer id has been involved in discussions with Sega over converting *Quake III: Arena* to Dreamcast. Initial talks broke down when Sega refused to sign id's Non-Disclosure Agreement, and negotiations have been stumbling along ever since. Word is, the deal is back on, but **DC-UK** can't imagine id moving away from PC development – which means *QIII* could get farmed out to some thirdparty software house – as happened with PlayStation and N64 conversions of *Doom*. Whatever the case, acquiring a licence for *Quake III* would be a major PR coup for Sega, and imagine the online possibilities. Sega of America, if you're reading this – SIGN THE GODDAMN DEAL, IN THE NAME OF ALL THAT'S GOOD AND RIGHT IN THE WORLD. Other PC titles allegedly earmarked for Dreamcast are *Soul Reaver* (dodgy), *Heroes of Might and Magic III* (definite), *Half-Life* (really iffy), *Omikron* (very possible) ■

SOILED

Evil Returns

Dreamcast owners to **smell the fear of** survival horror

Warning – *Resident Evil Code: Veronica*, the Dreamcast-only third instalment in Capcom's survival horror series, will definitely be released in the UK by the end of the year, and if that isn't enough to float your boat, we've uncovered the amazing news that a sequel to the game is already in development and should be ready before the end of 2001. And it's a fair bet that the *Code: Veronica* story will be continued as an exclusive Dreamcast brand.

Code: Veronica carries on where *Resident Evil 2* left off, with Claire Redfield searching for her brother Chris (star of the original game) who is missing in action. The rest of the plot is under wraps but, with just a few months until release, there isn't long to wait before the survival horror phenomenon explodes on to your Dreamcast ■

CHAT TO A NEW BEAT

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Dreamcast Weather Map

HOT SPOTS

The hottest Dreamcast stories around the globe this month

	WHAT	WHY	°C
1	Sega	Dreamcast	100
2	Namco	*Soul Calibur*	99
3	Sega	Western launch	99
4	DC-UK	It's brilliant!	97
5	*Trick Style*	It's brilliant, too!	97
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7	Sega	US pre-orders	93
8	Sega	*Ferrari 355 Challenge*	90
9	Eidos	*Power Stone*	90
10	McDonalds	Milkshake	89

28 DAY WORLDWIDE REVIEW

A Tour of duty

Sega of America is touring the county with huge trucks carrying Dreamcast demo pods. The Sega Dreamcast Mobile Assault Tour will visit over 200 locations, bringing Dreamcast to the people. Yeah.

B PC love

The Dreamcast's close technical similarities to the PC are prompting many US developers to convert their games to Sega's console. *Might and Magic III*, *Quake III*, *Rainbow Six* and *Half-Life* have all been cited.

C Stolar eclipsed

Sega of America's Chairman of Operations, Bernie Stolar, has left the company. He has been replaced by Vice-chairman and CEO Toshiro Kezuka. The question is, did he fall or was he pushed?

D Take Bungie

Giant publisher Take Two Interactive has bought a share in developer, Bungie. Bungie's game *Halo* – which looks set for Dreamcast conversion – drew gasps of awe at the last Mac World event for its visual splendour.

E Show (and no show)

The European Computer Trade Show is being held this month in London. Sega will not be there in person (boo), but plenty of Dreamcast games and announcements will be. Expect a full show report next month.

F Celebrity footie

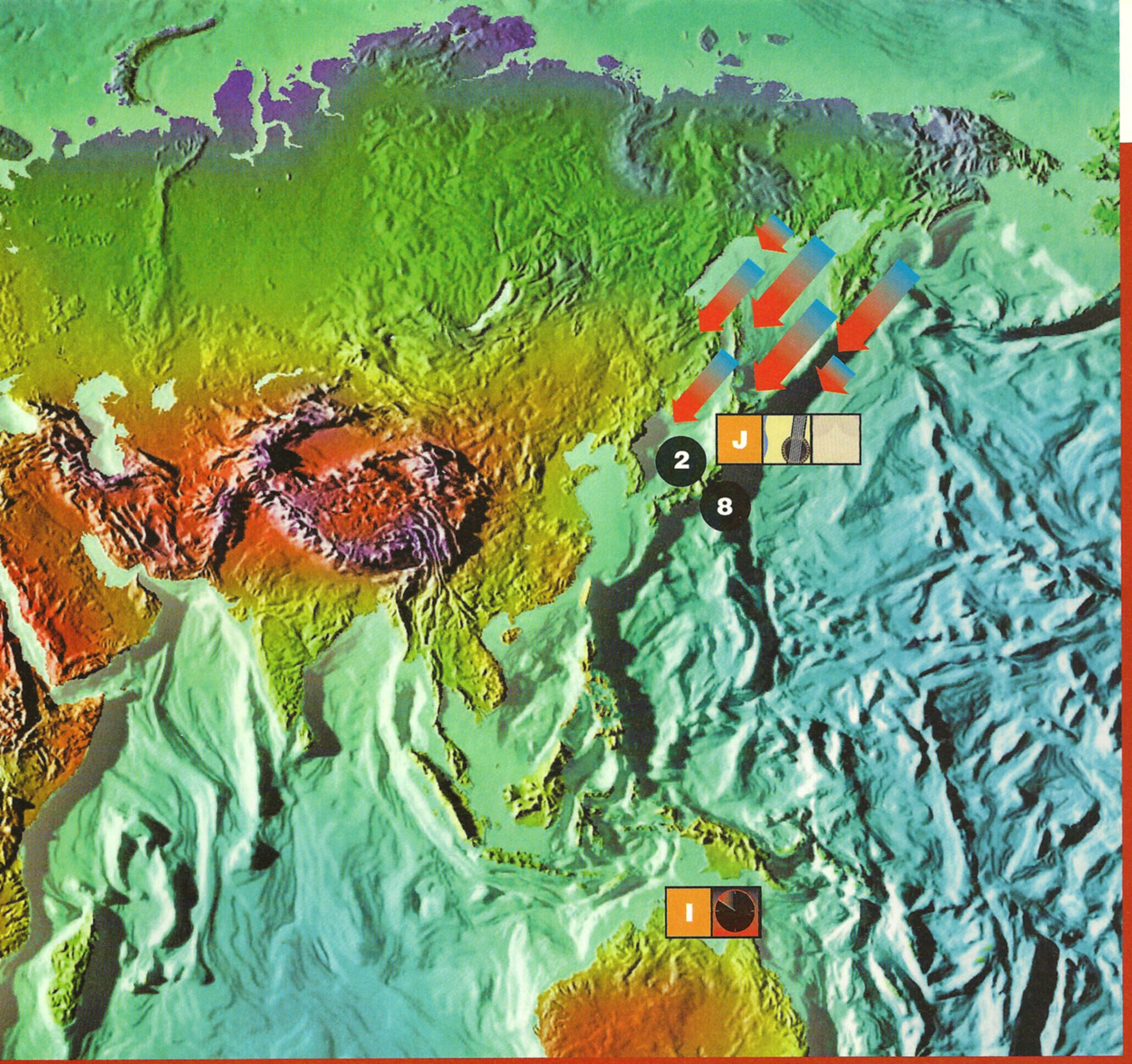
Cast members from the likes of TFI Friday, The Bill and Eastenders met up on August 13 for a five-a-side footie tournament arranged by Sega. We'll have a full report and celebrity photos next month. OK!

G Sky deal

Sega has agreed to a cross-promotion deal with Rupert Murdoch and Sky Broadcasting. Sky's digital TV decoder will be part of a special bundle with Dreamcast when the console launches in September.

H Gold rush

The major European publishers are battling to secure distribution rights to Japanese Dreamcast games. Virgin, Eidos and Infogrames are all scrambling for the likes of *Power Stone* and *Pen Pen*. They smell money.



I Aussie delay

The launch of Dreamcast has been delayed in Australia and New Zealand, mostly due to problems getting the modem to work with the territory's phone system. Launch is now expected in late October.

J Girl pop

The first Dreamcast multimedia GD-ROMs have been released in Japan. One is the latest single by raunchy girl group, Deeps. The disc features music, video footage and Weblinks. Steps might be next!

Storm fronts

The earth-rocking events in the Dreamcast world this month

PRE-ORDER FRENZY

Americans hungry for hot Dreamcast action have pre-ordered over 200,000 machines in just six weeks, completely shattering the PlayStation's record of 100,000 pre-orders. Sega's excellent showing at E3, together with a tidal wave of developer support has worked US gamers up into a hurricane of excitement. This counteracts the wet weather Sega has faced in Japan, where sales washed out after launch.

HIGH CALIBUR

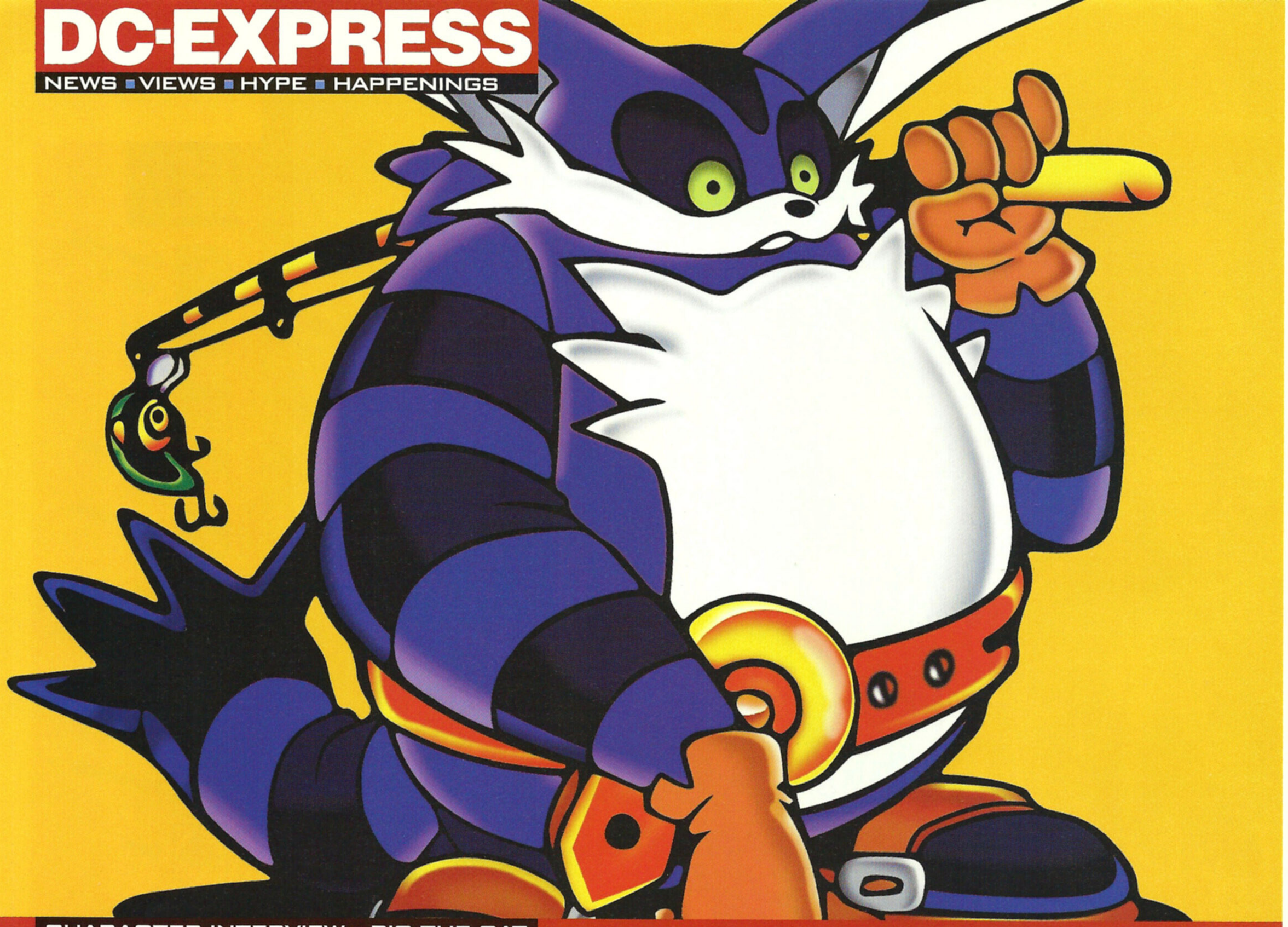
Influential Japanese game mag *Famitsu Weekly*, recently gave Namco's *Soul Calibur* a perfect score of 40/40 – the first time this has happened since *Zelda*. *Famitsu* is read by around 200,000 gamers a week – all of whom will now flood videogame shops to order copies of the thunderous beat 'em up. This should give a boost to the Dreamcast's damp sales in Japan. Yes, it looks like the sun has finally come out and shone for Sega.

DC-UK LAUNCHES

UK gamers only just recovering from the solar eclipse have now been exposed to another once-in-a-lifetime event – the launch of an exceedingly good Sega magazine. **DC-UK** is a tropical torrent of news and views in the scorched, arid desert that is videogame media. And, whatever happens, don't forget to check out our Website, **www.dc-uk.co.uk** for even more Dreamcast-releated mumbo jumbo. That's enough weather.

KEY

- Commercial suicide
- Delay
- Crap
- News flash
- Movie tie-in
- Sex
- Cunning stunt
- Bad language
- Partnership
- Oops
- Music
- New!
- Sport
- Event
- Fight
- Cool happening
- Sheep
- Mad behaviour
- Rude
- Internet stuff
- Money



CHARACTER INTERVIEW ■ BIG THE CAT

Feline groovy

He's chubby, he's purple and he enjoys a spot of fishing. Meet Big the Cat...

Big has been plucked from relative obscurity to star in Sega's new hit, *Sonic Adventure*. Big's aim in life is to find his friend, Frog, who has been swallowed by a Chaos Emerald, and save him from the clutches of Dr Robotnik who is desperate for the gem. Yet still he finds time away from his busy work schedule to chat to us about how he's dealing with the pressures that fame and fortune affords.

We meet in the Savoy. Big is refreshingly free of any of the pretensions that he could easily have picked up while working with Sonic.

In fact, he looks decidedly out of place in this heavily ornate suite. He's perched on the edge of a huge plush armchair, with his legs dangling about a foot off the ground. He nervously looks down at his boots, kicking one into the other. He gulps from a large chocolate milkshake, unaware that a blob of whipped cream has settled above his right eyebrow.

Firstly, there's one thing we have to know. Your name – Big the Cat – is it a stage name?
Uh-huh. Don't like it, neither. I'm just big-*boned* is all.

Okay, so what do you prefer to be called, then?
Maurice.

Okay, then, Maurice, what's it been like working with a huge star like Sonic?
Uh, you know... He's my hero and all. But he's so goddarned small. Keeps getting under my feet. And those blue spikes get everywhere. I keep finding 'em in my food.

Speaking of food, what's your favourite meal, Maurice?
Fish.

And how would that be cooked?
Uh, cooked? Ah no, I don't do nothing fancy with it – like cooking. I just make sure it's clean, y'know? I like the big ones best.

Right. And what do you do to relax?
Weeeell, go fishing and eat fish, I s'pose. I don't go out much. Sonic is the one who goes out – he likes parties. But people don't invite me, so I don't go. I prefer to stay in anyway, just in case I miss something good on telly. Like *Grange Hill* or *Batman*. *Batman's* my favourite. He's really strong.

And is there a special lady in your life?
Um, Amy Rose is kind of pretty, but she's Sonic's girlfriend. I don't hang round with girls much. They pinch me and stuff. I like to play with Frog mainly, but he's gone now. He's got an emerald in him.

That must have been harsh.
Yeah. I really miss him. He's my best friend, y'know? I've been trying ever so hard to get him back. But it's a bit difficult, because that Dr Robotnik is real wily.

So could you describe your perfect day for us?
Um, well I'll wake up and comb my fur, you know, the usual stuff. Breakfast before anything, though – it's the most important meal of the day. And then I go fishing until I get peckish, so I'll have elevenses. Sometimes I have elevenses while I'm fishing, but not very often, as I get confused. Then I might play for a bit, or fish for a bit more, or maybe just sit and wait for lunch. Sometimes I sit and wait for tea, too.

And finally, could you describe yourself in five words?
Oooh. Um, well, Frog says I'm brave, Sonic says I smell of fish, and Amy says I'm cute. Oh yeah, and I'm purple. That's five, isn't it? ■

This season's sharpest accessory, the battle-axe, is an evergreen in the game world

01 The axemen cometh – *House of the Dead 2* **02** "Take that!" – the famous *Gauntlet* throwing axe

GREAT VIDEOGAME THINGS: PART ONE

Axe appeal

Despite considerable handicaps – like the inability to fire grenades or explode – the battle-axe has hacked itself an enduring niche in the world of videogame weaponry. Wherever there's a *Dungeons and Dragons* theme, you can be sure there'll be an axe lurking somewhere close by. Highlights of its career include Sega's classic *Golden Axe*, *Gauntlet*, and Namco's PlayStation beat 'em up *Soul Blade*, which featured axes so large they were almost characters in their own right. The axe has already left its bloody mark on Dreamcast, appearing in *House of the Dead 2* (see page 24) and *Soul Fighter* (preview page 92).

The weapon has an impressively grizzly history. Over 5,500 years ago the Sumerians were using narrow-bladed axes to slice into the armour of enemy warriors. Later, Ghengis Khan's armies carried hand axes as they rampaged across Asia killing everything in sight – the ultimate celebrity endorsement.

In cinema, when a character reaches for a gun you hardly flinch; when they reach for an axe you sit up and take notice – Jack Nicholson in *The Shining*, anyone? The axe is the preferred weapon of choice for those deranged homicidal moments. Its place in the videogame hall of maim is therefore assured ■

01

BAR

The characters in Sonic Adventure are so damn funky, **DC-UK** knew **they could inspire some excellent cocktails.** So we visited chic local hangout The Hush and persuaded manager and **top-notch mixer Phil Westoby** to invent some for us...

NAME: Knuckles
INFO: Sonic's mischievous rival. He's fast, frisky and a little bit dangerous. Dammit, he was made to be a drink

THE KNUCKLES DUSTER

RECIPE: Take two whole shots of decent bourbon (you can use Jack Daniels, but Phil prefers Maker's Mark, a fantastic Kentucky overproof) and mix them with a large splash of lime, a dash of sugar syrup and an optional dash of Bitters Orange (available from posh off-licences). Top up with a dash of cranberry juice and you're away. Literally. "I think just one of those would be enough for an evening," says Phil sternly.

TASTE TEST: The bourbon comes at you like a mad bastard gripping an axe (see page 53), but it is subtly waylaid by the cranberry juice. A challenging but not unpleasant combination.

NAME: Sonic
INFO: The main man. Make that hedgehog. Fast, cool, chic and bluer than a Swedish adult channel

SONIC TONIC

RECIPE: Mix two shots of tequila with a half or full shot of Blue Curacao. Add a generous splash of lime and top up with lemonade. "I did toy with the idea of using Red Bull to emulate Sonic's endless energy," explains Phil, "but every pub you go to these days is doing vodka and Red Bull. Besides, the tequila gives you quite a kick itself."

TASTE TEST: At first, the sweet Curacao and bitter lime flavours tussle playfully on your tongue. Then the tequila rushes in from behind and kicks both their heads in. Lovely.

NAME: Big the Cat
INFO: As his name suggests, Big is a big fat cat. He's also dopey and laid back. Chill

COOL CAT

RECIPE: Start with one shot of Havana Club rum and add half a shot of Blue Curacao and half a shot of Malibu (or coconut cream if you're feeling a little limp-wristed). Mix in a dash of lime and a touch of sugar syrup and top up with pineapple juice.

TASTE TEST: The rum and coconut flavours give this drink an exotic Jamaican vibe, which perfectly encapsulates Big the Cat's laid-back nature.

NOTE: These drinks are designed to be enjoyed in a 300ml glass filled with crushed ice. Always use fresh lime juice rather than cordial. Sugar syrup is simply sugar boiled in water – but you can buy it in cordial form. If you can't be bothered to make the drinks yourself, take the recipes along to any decent bar. If you live in Bath, go to The Hush – Phil has added these Sonic cocktails to his mixed drinks menu.

NAME: Amy Rose
INFO: Sonic's lady friend. A soft, cutesy gal who, none-the-less, packs quite a punch

NAME: E-102
INFO: Named after an additive they put in orange squash that makes kids run around the settee until they pass out and wet themselves. Not really. E-102 is a battle robot: big, bad and deadly

NAME: Tails
INFO: Sweet and friendly, yet looks a little odd due to possession of two tails. Possibly victim of radiation poisoning

WILD ROSE

RECIPE: Mix one shot of vodka with one shot of Passoa – a passion fruit liqueur from France (you could use Archers instead). Add a dash of lime and one of sugar syrup, then top up with orange juice. Now, pour grenadine slowly and carefully down the side of the glass (the inside of course, not the outside). It will pour down to the bottom and create a syrupy layered effect.

TASTE TEST: Fruity, girly, and cheeky. The liquid equivalent of Gail Porter.

FORMULA 102

RECIPE: Begin with one shot of Absolut Kurant (that's blackcurrant-flavoured vodka, of course) mixed with one shot of Cointreau. Add a dash of lime and a splash of sugar syrup then top the lot up with cranberry juice (the fruit juice mixer of choice with barmen at the moment, apparently). Serve. Stand well back.

TASTE TEST: Very fruity, very drinkable. So fruity and drinkable, in fact, that it lulls you into a completely false sense of security. "This is a very strong drink," warns Phil, as he points to the fact that it contains two 40 percent proof spirits. Things could get very messy.

TAIL SHAKER

RECIPE: Take one shot of Bacardi (or any white rum) and pour in a dash of Bols Creme de Bananes (don't over do it, this stuff is sickly sweet) and half a shot of Galliano – an aniseedy Italian liqueur, somewhat similar to Pernod. Top it all off with some pineapple juice.

TASTE TEST: A sugary sweet dessert-like slurp with the disconcerting look of a cloudy urine sample. Don't even think about it if you don't like bananas. Or if you want to look hard.

Thanks to Phil Westoby for spending a week experimenting with alcohol in order to research this article. The Hush is open from 8.30pm to 2am Monday to Wednesday, and from 6pm to 2am Thursday to Saturday. Free entry before 10pm. Man, you've got to try the Sonic Tonic...

SONIC

DC-UK DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

Background
- **Nationality:** Japanese
- **Occupation:** Kung fu teacher
- **Hobby:** Kung fu

Vital Statistics
- **Height:** 1.8 metres
- **Attack distance:** 3
- **Weight:** 79kg
- **Ease of use:** 2/5
- **Speed:** Medium

AKIRA YUKI

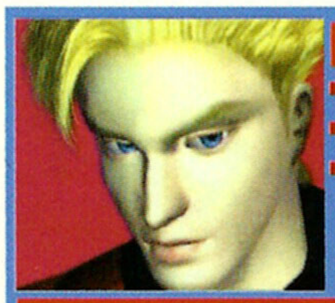
DC-UK DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

Background
- **Nationality:** Japanese
- **Occupation:** Ninja
- **Hobby:** Mah-Jong

Vital Statistics
- **Height:** 1.68 metres
- **Attack distance:** 5
- **Weight:** 66kg
- **Ease of use:** 3/5
- **Speed:** Medium/Fast

KAGE MARU

DC-UK DREAMCAST MAGAZINE



Background
- **Nationality:** American
- **Occupation:** Indy car driver
- **Hobby:** Training

Vital Statistics
- **Height:** 1.82 metres
- **Attack distance:** 3
- **Weight:** 75kg
- **Ease of use:** 5/5
- **Speed:** Fast

JACKY BRYANT

DC-UK DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

Background
- **Nationality:** American
- **Occupation:** College student
- **Hobby:** Sky diving

Vital Statistics
- **Height:** 1.73 metres
- **Attack distance:** 3.5
- **Weight:** 55kg
- **Ease of use:** 5/5
- **Speed:** Fast

SARAH BRYANT

DC-UK DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

Background
- **Nationality:** Chinese
- **Occupation:** Chef
- **Hobby:** Chinese poetry

Vital Statistics
- **Height:** 1.72 metres
- **Attack distance:** 3.5
- **Weight:** 77kg
- **Ease of use:** 2/5
- **Speed:** Medium/Fast

LAU CHAN

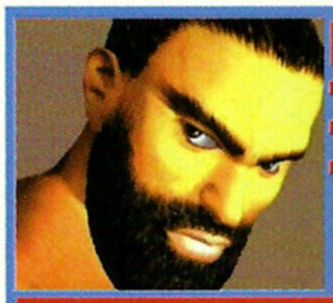
DC-UK DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

Background
- **Nationality:** Chinese
- **Occupation:** Action star
- **Hobby:** Dancing

Vital Statistics
- **Height:** 1.67 metres
- **Attack distance:** 3
- **Weight:** 48kg
- **Ease of use:** 5/5
- **Speed:** Fast

PAI CHAN

DC-UK DREAMCAST MAGAZINE



Background
- **Nationality:** Australian
- **Occupation:** Fisherman
- **Hobby:** Reggae Music

Vital Statistics
- **Height:** 1.83 metres
- **Attack distance:** 2.5
- **Weight:** 112kg
- **Ease of use:** 2/5
- **Speed:** Slow

JEFFRY McWILD

DC-UK DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

Background
- **Nationality:** Canadian
- **Occupation:** Woodsman
- **Hobby:** Karaoke

Vital Statistics
- **Height:** 1.82 metres
- **Attack distance:** 2.5
- **Weight:** 104kg
- **Ease of use:** 3/5
- **Speed:** Slow

WOLF HAWKFIELD

DC-UK DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

Background
- **Nationality:** French
- **Occupation:** High school student
- **Hobby:** Collecting knives

Vital Statistics
- **Height:** 1.74 metres
- **Attack distance:** 3
- **Weight:** 63kg
- **Ease of use:** 4/5
- **Speed:** Medium/Fast

LION RAFALE

DC-UK DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

Background
- **Nationality:** Chinese
- **Occupation:** Herbal doctor
- **Hobby:** Drinking

Vital Statistics
- **Height:** 1.63 metres
- **Attack distance:** 3
- **Weight:** 63kg
- **Ease of use:** 1/5
- **Speed:** Fast

SHUN DI

DC-UK DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

Background
- **Nationality:** Japanese
- **Occupation:** Sumo wrestler
- **Hobby:** Shougi (Japanese chess and consultation. Or prostitutes.)

Vital Statistics
- **Height:** 2.02 metres
- **Attack distance:** 2.5
- **Weight:** 198kg
- **Ease of use:** 2/5
- **Speed:** Slow

TAKA-ARASHI

DC-UK DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

Background
- **Nationality:** Japanese
- **Occupation:** High school student
- **Hobby:** Ikebana (Japanese flower arrangement.)

Vital Statistics
- **Height:** 1.62 metres
- **Attack distance:** 3
- **Weight:** 47kg
- **Ease of use:** 4/5
- **Speed:** Fast

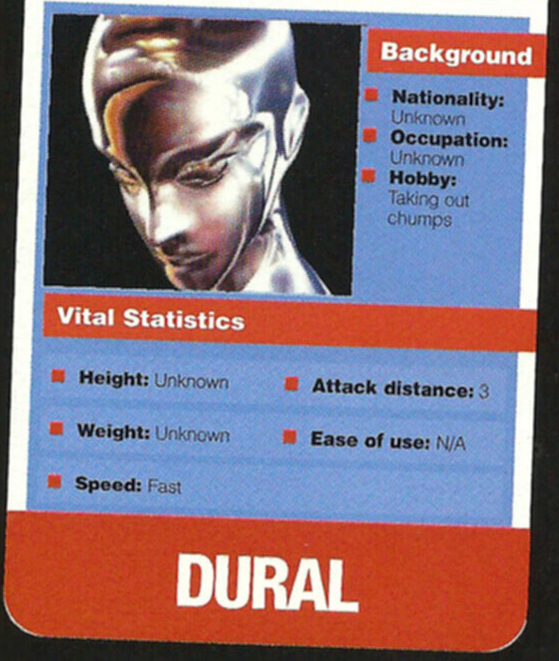
AOI UMENOKOUJI

Trumps

Cut 'em out and **stick them on the back** of cereal boxes

We can all remember playing trump cards in the school playground. In the days before chasing members of the opposite sex and consuming ridiculous amounts of alcohol became our preferred forms of recreation, it was sexy jets and fast motors that stoked our pre-pubescent desire. So what better way to introduce you to the characters, weapons and vehicles of Dreamcast than with pretty pictures and fascinating stats?

This month it's the characters of *Virtua Fighter 3tb*'s turn. A few are worth a special mention. Dural is *VF3tb*'s wild card: very little is known about this mysterious metallic madam. Okay, so that makes her useless as a super trump, but she can kick ass. The sumo Taka-Arashi claims his hobby is shougi, which translates as Japanese chess, consultation and prostitute. So this big chap either plays chess or invites people to lie on his couch. Finally, think of Shun Di as a Chinese Rab C Nesbitt – a drunken master whose hobbies include drinking meths and swearing at passers-by. Enjoy. ■



OPINION: HARDCORE SCIENCE

IT FIGURES

Dave 2000 hits the streets and **gets the lowdown on why Dreamcast is bound** to be a success in Europe

Pods! Demo Dreamcasts are popping up everywhere! It's so satisfying to see Sega getting its act together and spending some money at last. Okay, so giving Dreamcasts away to the more obscure members of Boyzone might be taking things a bit too far, but at least Sega has understood the reason why PlayStation took off – Sony spent money until it did.

Want to know why Dreamcast is going to be a success? Money, plain and simple. Shops pay around £160 for their Dreamcasts, which they sell on at £200. Add in a couple of games (pay around £27 and sell for £40), multiply that by, say, 100 units, and you've got enough beer money for the next 50 years.

The shops have become used to raking in the cash with PlayStation. However, its falling sales figures are causing the grubby-fingered till-hounds to panic. They want to sell Dreamcasts.

No doubt the odd shop assistant will try to look clever by telling people to wait for the Next Generation PlayStation (reply: "If you're so clever, how come you're working in a shop?"). Ignore them. Dreamcast is available now, it works on your TV, comes with a plug and plays *Sonic Adventure*.

Most of you probably own PlayStations, or at least have a friend who has one. Some of my best friends are PlayStation owners. You can't spot them easily. They dress just like us, lead normal lives and do normal jobs. Some of them have moustaches, some wear dresses, some go to school, some drive buses and some work in margarine factories. They're everywhere.

But the PlayStation is old now. The problem is, if you suddenly tell everyone that their beloved games machine (which they've invested hundreds of pounds in) is now obsolete, they're pretty damn likely to give up on their gaming altogether and go back to just watching the telly.

Sony is helping Dreamcast to delicately win the minds of gamers by filling the shelves with cheap sequels, gradually making PlayStation owners associate their machines with tedium, expense and things they've played umpteen times before.

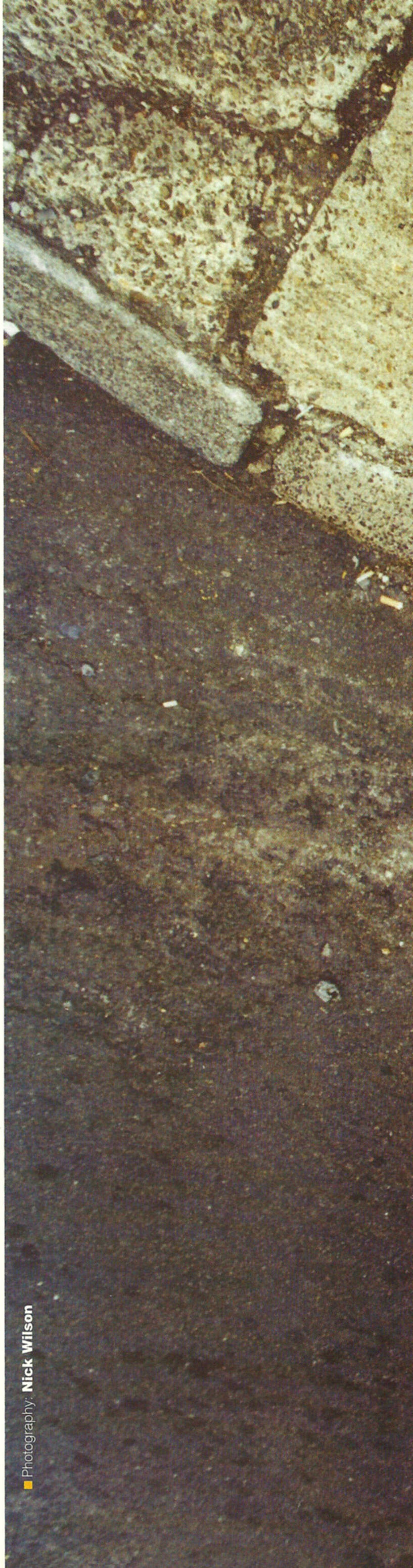
Dreamcast has come at the right time – the shops are gagging for something to halt the apathy, the punters are getting fed up with Sony's cash-cow sequels and everyone's looking for the new ideas that so many modern games lack.

As the PlayStation did before it, Dreamcast could save the games industry from destruction. ■

"SEGA HAS UNDERSTOOD WHY PLAYSTATION TOOK OFF – SONY SPENT MONEY UNTIL IT DID"

Craig Sullivan

Trick Style's **designer and skateboarding nut** talks shop about boards, ramps, pixels and **hoverboarding OAPs**



PROFILE

- Name: Craig Sullivan
- Age: 25
- Job Description: Designer Of Criterion's *Trick Style*

He's been into skateboarding for, "quite a long time," he'll be 26 by the time Dreamcast comes out, he's looking forward to an all-expenses-paid trip to Thailand with his co-creators, and he thinks your Grandma will like what he's been working on. Ladies and gentlemen, **DC-UK** presents Craig Sullivan, designer of Criterion's hoverboarding extravaganza, *Trick Style*

A lot of people might say you have a Very Cool Job Indeed. How did you become involved in this game-making malarky?
I moved out of my parents' house in Cardiff and started off as a tester at Millennium in Cambridge on six-and-a-half grand a year. First game I worked on was *Defcon 5*, which *Digitiser* [Channel 4's teletext game magazine] said was the worst PlayStation game ever.

But everyone has to start somewhere, right?
I worked loads and loads of hours, because I thought that if I just caned it I could become a game designer. So I used to go into work on Thursday and go home on Monday, cos I had a shit home to go to anyway. Then I realised that even as a game designer I was going to be on 11 grand! But by then I'd already been to five interviews for other jobs, including the one here, and I was like, "See ya!"

So how did you start making Trick Style?
The first thing we did was spend about two or three months, before we even had characters on the board, Ed Hayden – who came up with the basic idea to do the game – designed this skate park with a really simple board that you could control. Basically it was a skateboard with the wheels missing – it was really clanky. Then Ed built a loop-the-loop. You could see it but you couldn't go around it, so we started fiddling around with the physics and stuff, and one day someone said, "I think we can do it." So we all crowded round, and we were like, "yeah, this is going to work".

What's been most difficult to put into the game?
We stuck a character on top and it was clear that it wasn't in control of the board. If you watch someone who's a skater or a surfboarder, all of the movement is generated by the way they move their body. So we really went to work on the character – what would happen if they're leaning left, slowing down, going up a bank *and* facing the wrong direction? Snowboarding games don't have to deal with that.

This is the first Criterion game with a dedicated designer from day one. Has it been worth the investment for the company?
From the point of view of keeping my job, it should be apparent that it is! We've a lot of talented programmers here, but the first few games that we did, like *Redline* and *Sub Culture*, were technically impressive but they needed the input of a designer. *Trick Style* and *Deep Fighter* [Criterion's next big Dreamcast game] have very good designers at their core.

What do you reckon people will really go for about Trick Style?
You can play it in a lot of different ways. Maybe you're sitting with your Grandma on Christmas day and she wants know what you got, and she can have a go on it. Because 3D is so accessible, especially if you have nice visuals that convey the world in a convincing way, you should be able to give it to anyone. They can just pick it up and fly through the centre of London, across Piccadilly Circus, through St James' Park and smash out of the face of Big Ben. Show that to anybody and they'll think it's cool! ■

"I worked loads of hours, **because I thought if I just caned it I could** become a game designer"

■ Photography: **Nick Wilson**

Above: Craig Sullivan gets back to his street-level roots. When he's not designing brilliant games, he still loves to get out on his board

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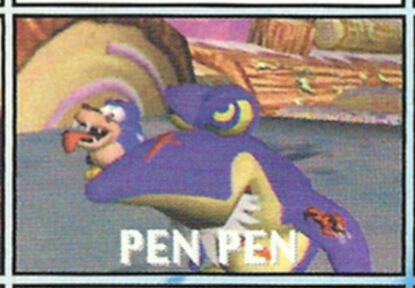

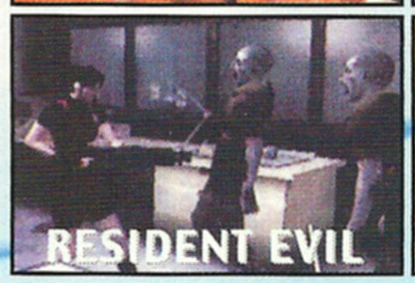

UK DREAMCAST GAMES

Due to the immense extra pleasure that you will get from your Dreamcast by playing games online, we strongly advise against buying imported games or machines. You can ONLY play online with a UK machine and UK games.

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Cue Ball	£ CHEAPEST	r.r.p £39.99
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DAWN OF DREAMCAST

On May 21 1998, around 400 reporters and developers gathered for a Sega press conference at the opulent New Otani Hotel in Tokyo. The atmosphere was predictably electric, a blend of the kind of fizzy anticipation usual for hardware launches and a darker undercurrent of cynicism. Every attendant knew why they were there – to witness the unveiling of the company's latest home console, the follow-up to a dying Saturn. But the murmured question on everyones' lips was, what can Sega do now? What can they possibly do to assail the dominance of Sony?

As the house lights dipped, Sega President Shoichiro Irimajiri was first to take the stage. Standing at the podium in front of three gigantic video screens emblazoned with the spiral logo, he introduced the console by its new name, Dreamcast, and promised, "a revolutionary new brand in digital entertainment". Dreamcast, he assured, had been designed with three objectives in mind: to provide the best graphics and sound, to provide an intuitive developer environment and to provide completely new interactive experiences for users. At the back of the arena, a bustling line of press photographers shot reams of film, their continuous camera flashes providing the strobing ambience of a movie premiere. So far, so good, it seemed.

Isao Okawa, the Chairman of Sega Enterprises Limited, was next up. His mission: to point out the importance of Dreamcast's built-in modem. "Significant advances in network, communications and satellite technologies in recent years have changed our social infrastructure, speeding up the way we all interact," he said. "As part of this change, peoples' desires have shifted – they want things that are both artistically creative and functional". The implication was obvious: there is no room anymore for a simple game console. As we hurtle into the 21st Century, people are demanding more from the boxes that they place beneath their TVs – multifunctionality, Net access, email... Many can't afford a PC, many simply don't want one. But everyone has heard about electronic communication. Everyone wants to surf.

To many in the audience, though, it seemed strange that a sermon on keeping up with the times should come from Sega. Rewind four years and this was the company that chose to build the

01 The Dreamcast – as presented to the press at Sega's New Challenge conference in May last year

02 "I have a dream(cast)". Sega President Shoichiro Irimajiri addresses the crowds. Later he claims that Dreamcast would bring "a revolutionary dream game world for the 21st Century"..

"PEOPLES DESIRES HAVE SHIFTED – THEY WANT THINGS THAT ARE BOTH ARTISTICALLY CREATIVE AND FUNCTIONAL"

■ Isao Okawa, Sega.

WHAT EXACTLY IS A 'DREAMCAST'?

Loved by some, loathed by others, the name Dreamcast has at least provoked controversy and debate – if only because no one is quite sure what it means. Until now. Dreamcast is actually an amalgamation of two words: dream and broadcast. The dream part insinuates fantastical magical experiences – something Sega wants Dreamcast users to have. Indeed, the press release handed out at Sega's New Challenge press conference last May says, "Dreamcast can offer experiences beyond the limitations of both time and space." No, we're not quite sure what that means either, but it sounds fantastic. 'Broadcast' represents the modem element of the machine – it implies Sega games being beamed through the ether like radio waves to a community of gamers (or, in other words, it implies you'll be able to play online games with other Dreamcast owners). 'Dreamcast' also stands for 'Dream Cast', representing the cast of top companies involved in the project: Microsoft, Yamaha, Hitachi, NEC, Namco, Capcom, Konami, etc. There. Now you know.

As for the logo, Sega is remaining curiously tight-lipped about exactly why it's gone for a swirly line – it's probably something to do with longevity and expanding possibilities. What we do know is that in Japan, the spiral (as well as the box Dreamcast comes in and much of the publicity material) is coloured orange because the fruit is traditionally meant to bring luck while the hue itself represents happiness and love (bless). Sega Europe, however, has changed the colour to sky blue, allegedly as a result of 'market research', although there was rumoured to be a small legal tussle earlier this year with a German software company named Tivola which has been using an orange spiral as their logo for four years. So it's blue swirls for us, then. Didn't like orange, anyway... ■

01 "Actually I'm a ballet dancer" says roly poly sumo wrestler guy. Well the TV interviewer found it funny
02 Smart Sega executives pose with champagne
03 *Sega Rally 2* producer, Tetsuya Mizuguchi, attempts to strangle himself. The excitement of the event is just too much for him

Saturn – its 32-bit console – as a 2D games machine, when the rest of the industry was 3D. Even the last minute inclusion of a second graphics chip couldn't get the console up to par with the PlayStation. The Saturn was a mess. A loveable, occasionally brilliant mess, but a mess all the same, failing miserably everywhere but Japan and damaging the company's reputation. Sega was living in the past. The future appeared to lie with its competitors.

Undeterred, however, Sega regrouped. In late 1996 rumours began circulating that the company was working on a new machine, a follow up to its much-maligned Saturn. In fact, it was working on two consoles. Sort of. In Japan, the R&D (Research and Development) department had started sketching out a machine, which was codenamed Katana, built around an advanced graphics chip manufactured by electronics giant NEC and designed by UK company VideoLogic. Meanwhile, Sega of America had its own design – a machine known as Blackbelt, using graphics technology developed by a US company named 3Dfx.

In hindsight it's obvious what Sega was up to. It was covering its bets, playing the angles, working on two designs at once to see which worked better before committing itself to a single machine. At the time, though, this dual-development system caused great confusion in the videogame industry as the rumours that leaked from Japan clashed head-on with those emanating from American sources. The press got caught up in the crossfire, one month announcing that Katana was the name of the new Sega machine, the next proclaiming

THE SATURN WAS A MESS. **A LOVEABLE, OCCASIONALLY BRILLIANT MESS, BUT A MESS ALL THE SAME**, FAILING EVERYWHERE BUT JAPAN

Blackbelt as the future – only to revert to Katana as fresh Nipponese rumours clambered up the grapevine.

To make things even more interesting, 3Dfx and NEC/VideoLogic were also rivals in the PC market. In 1995, both companies had produced 3D graphics accelerator cards which PC owners could slot into the back of their machines to speed up and improve game visuals and both were working on sequels to their technology. Now they ►

01 "I love, you. You my bestsh mates"
02 Yukawa Hidekazu, star of Sega's excellent Dreamcast ads in Japan, and the guy on the box, lifts a Dreamcast above his head. Passers-by fall to their knees in awe
03 "Behold, behold the mighty Dreamc… Hey! Get off it! Wait! Come back! Stop! Police!"

found their battle had somehow extended to a second front. Things were getting messy. But messy in a good way – all this confusion and controversy ensured Sega and its new project remained a top story for game mags worldwide throughout 1997.

But the mess wasn't good for everybody. Dual development meant there had to be a loser somewhere, and that loser was 3Dfx. Unfortunately, by mid-1997 the company was so sure it had the Saturn 2 contract in the bag that it revealed its involvement with the project prior to floating on the New York stock exchange. Imagine the company's surprise, then, when SOA vice president Bernie Stolar called up one July afternoon and told 3Dfx that the deal was off. Sega Enterprises, together with NEC and VideoLogic, would be building Blackbelt. And it wasn't Blackbelt it was Katana. Actually, come to think of it, it wasn't even Katana. It was Dreamcast.

Back to the press conference, and Isao Okawa was followed on stage by various delegates representing each of Sega's partners – Hitachi, Yamaha and NEC – all explaining their part in the Dreamcast

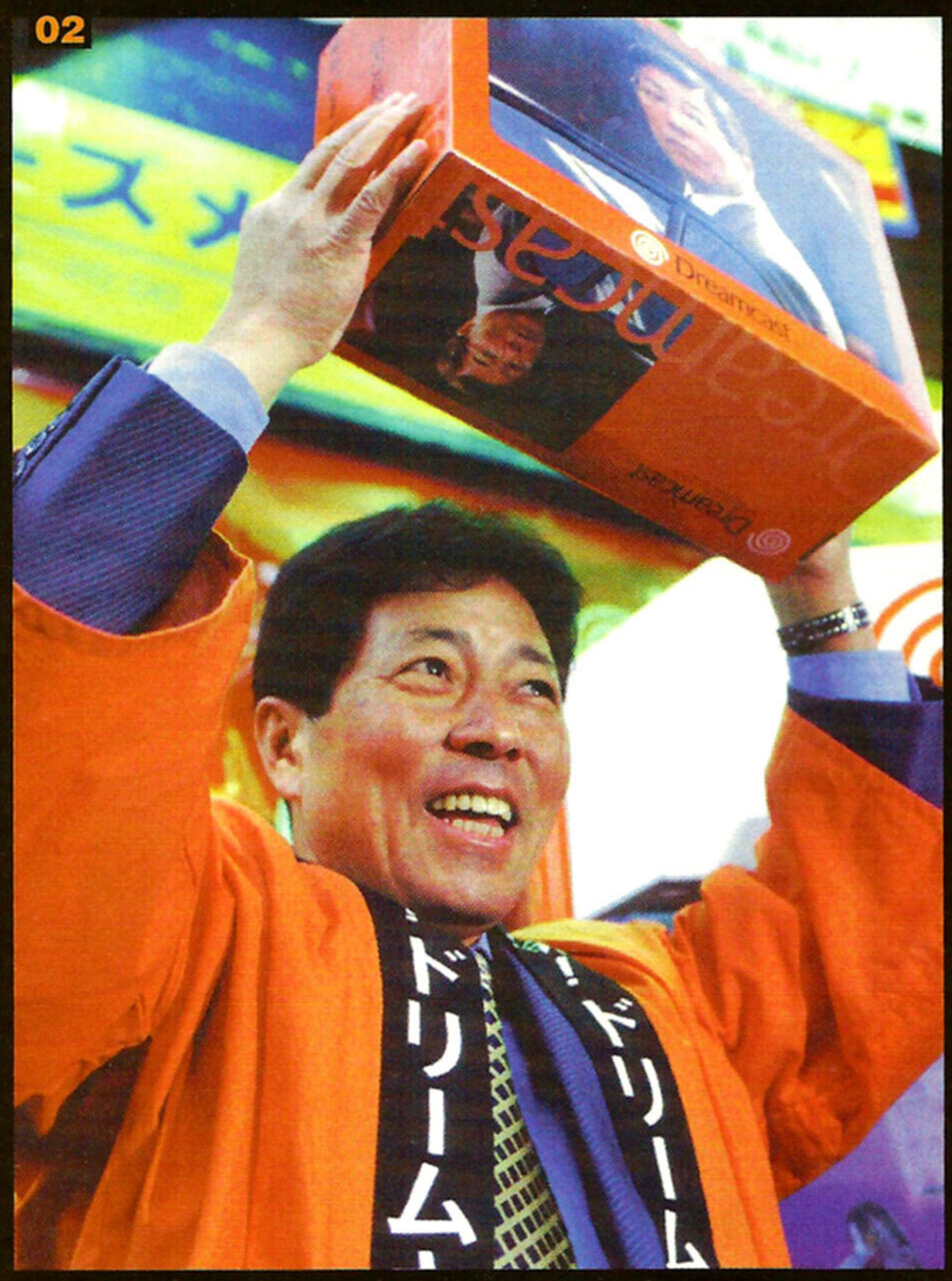
THE JAPANESE LAUNCH OF THE CONSOLE SAW **ALL 150,000 BOXES DISAPPEAR FROM THE SHELVES** IN A MASS DREAMCAST FRENZY

puzzle. Even Bill Gates had his say via a pre-recorded video transmission, eulogising about Microsoft's involvement in the project (ie, the Dreamcast's use of Windows CE operating system) and expounding on his plans to take over the galaxy – all the while stroking a fluffy white cat in his lap.

But the best was yet to come. After a couple of excellent Dreamcast demos presented by Irimajiri-san, a huge samurai character appeared on the middle monitor bank behind the stage. The samarui walked menacingly, confidently toward the audience and then thrust his sword downward, as though cutting the screen in half. Simultaneously, the videowall parted in the middle just as a gospel choir waiting behind the wall began to sing. As the wall of monitors drew further back, a banqueting hall was revealed, the tables piled lavishly with food and drink. Finally, the delegates were invited to walk through and take their places for dinner, accompanied by several Japanese pop stars and a top sumo wrestler brought in to give the event some *Hello!* Magazine-style glamour – akin to having Becks at your table, one presumes (journalists looked on in horror as he proceeded to eat all the pies). Suddenly, among all this excess, the Saturn seemed a very distant memory indeed.

Eighteen months since this event has seen a flurry of activity. Namco surprised every one by crawling out of its Faustian exclusivity deal with Sony, joining the likes of Capcom, Konami, Activision, Acclaim and Hudson as a Dreamcast developer. Later, the Japanese launch of the machine on November 27 saw all 150,000 boxes disappear from the shelves in a mass Dreamcast frenzy.

Which, unfortunately, didn't last. Several key software delays (*Blue Stinger* and *Sonic Adventure* were both set back) together with a relatively high price tag meant that sales slowed over the next six months. Sega's financial losses and a low placing on the Nikkei stock exchange compounded a bad start to 1999, but June saw a Dreamcast price drop to ¥19,900 (£108) which has provoked a second rush for machines. The user-base is now well over a million and counting. The US launch on September 9, followed by a Euro ship-out on September 23 should see this swell significantly. Game well and truly on ■



JOY MACHINE

"ADVANCES IN TECHNOLOGY HAVE **CHANGED OUR SOCIETY, SPEEDING UP** THE WAY WE INTERERACT"

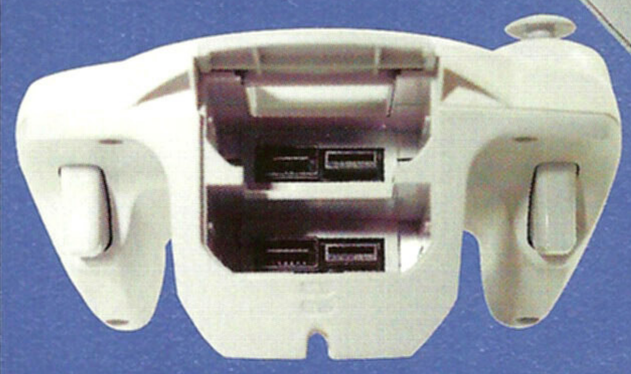
ISAO OKAWA, SEGA

PLAYING DREAMCAST

WHEN DREAMCAST FINALLY ARRIVES IN UK SHOPS LATER THIS MONTH, IT WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY A RANGE OF WEIRD LOOKING GADGETS AND GIZMOS DESIGNED TO ENHANCE YOUR GAMEPLAYING EXPERIENCE. JOIN DC-UK AS WE RUN THROUGH THE MAJOR PERIPHERALS, AND POINT OUT SOME OTHER WAYS TO, AH, HEIGHTEN YOUR PLEASURE

TheJoypad

Obviously inspired by the rarely seen Saturn Analogue pad (ie, it's a bit round and chunky), the Dreamcast controller is a hefty, yet comfortable device. It takes the popular 'prong' theme from the PlayStation, N64 and Saturn pads, but makes the whole thing big enough for great, fat western hands. On the top you'll see two direction controllers: one analogue (complete with non-slip bath mat-style pimpled surface) and one digital. In case you were very drunk and missed out on the recent analogue revolution, an analogue direction pad can read gradients of movement, which means if you nudge it a little to the left, your onscreen character will move a little to the left – giving you fine-tuned control over the action. Digital control is either on or off, left or right, up or down – there's no monkeying around with softly, softly movements. In the middle of the pad is the hole through which you'll be able to view your VM screen – and more about that later.



Turn the thing over and you'll see that there are two slots at the front. These can hold either two VMs or one VM and one Jump Pack – which, like the N64 Rumble Pack, vibrates at key moments in a game (like when you get shot, or drive over rough terrain). There are also two triggers down there, one beneath each prong. These are analogue too, rather like Scalextric controllers. But they don't make that scraping noise when you press them. There have been complaints that the controller isn't perfect for beat 'em ups (using the d-pad and left trigger in combination can be painful), but apart from this, it's a versatile, feature-packed controller ■

ThanksForTheMemory

Once in a while a piece of videogame hardware comes along that makes grown men weep with joy and little children say to their mothers, "Mummy, the world is a wonderful place, isn't it?" The VM (Visual Memory) is one example. The fact that it can save game positions and high scores – much like the PlayStation Memory Card – is almost an afterthought. More importantly, it has a 48x32 pixel screen, a d-pad, two fire buttons, and a connection port so that two VMs can be slotted together.

What does all this amount to? Well, straightaway, you have a separate handheld console capable of downloading games from either the Dreamcast or from the Internet. In *Power Stone*, for example, completing the game with certain characters unlocks three different mini-games that can be stored on the VM and played whenever you like. Even better, one of those sub-games is a gambling machine, and if you win more than 1,000 credits on it, you can go back to the beginning of *Power Stone* and unlock extra weapons. Similarly, *Sonic Adventure* features cute little creatures called Chaos that can be downloaded to the VM and nurtured like Tamagotchis. They can then be uploaded back into the game and raced against each other in a special racing area.

There's also the connectivity angle. Attaching two VM units together (via a port at the top of the device) allows players to engage in two player mini-games or to swap cars, weapons, characters – whatever they've downloaded from their Dreamcast titles. Sega also has plans to build VM compatibility into future Naomi arcade games, so you'll be able to download your highscores, hidden characters, etc, from them and, once again, swap all of this stuff with friends. There was even a suggestion at Sega's Dreamcast press launch that VM slots could be included in mobile phones, although they haven't outlined what for (perhaps you could download your best phone calls and swap them with friends! No, that would be stupid).

Another genius feature is the fact that the VM screen is visible when you slot the unit into a joypad, which means each player has a personal viewing field of their own. This opens up a wealth of gameplay possibilities. For example, a football game written to support the VM would allow players to plan set pieces such as corners, free kicks, and dirty professional fouls on the VM screen without their opponent seeing – a major tactical coup. Alternatively, in a first person shooter like *Quake* or *Golden Eye* the VM screen could act like a motion tracker, warning the player of nearby enemies or hazards. On a different note, Ubi Soft is currently employing the VM screen as a radar in *Speed Devils*, instead of opting for a rear-view mirror. The possibilities for gaming are diverse and totally unique to Dreamcast.

So could this be the most inspired and revolutionary piece of kit since the SNES multi-button joypad? Yes, we think it could ■

Extras

TELEVISION

Sega is currently encouraging developers working on the UK versions of their games to support the Dreamcast's 60Hz option – this allows our lazy European PAL machines to run games at the NTSC rate of 60 frames per second (see page 116 for an explanation of what all this means), rather than the slower PAL rate of 50 frames per second. To take advantage of this feature you'll need a dual standard TV, one that can understand both PAL and NTSC signals. Most modern televisions do this, but if you're thinking of buying a new one to play your Dreamcast games on, make sure you check with the shop whether it's dual standard or not ■

CABLES

Although every UK Dreamcast will come with a free RF cable (ie, the basic cable that goes into your TV's aerial socket) to connect your machine to the TV, the picture quality is never too hot through these cheap bits of wire. There are alternatives, though. Dreamcast, for example, has full SCART cable support. SCART is a European technology that splits the image into its component colours – red, green and blue – and sends them to the TV separately, so you get a much clearer, sharper picture. An official Sega SCART lead will be available, but cheaper alternatives will probably be around. You'll also be able to purchase Dreamcast composite leads which have three jacks – audio left, audio right and video. These provide a slightly better picture than RF (and are used in most other countries as the standard lead), but they're not half as good as SCART. Finally, there's the S-video cable option (an alternative to SCART, used mostly in the US and Japan). As with composite, S-video leads end in three jacks – audio left, audio right and video, but here the video jack splits the TV signal into two parts: colour information (Chrominance) and brightness (Luminance). Like SCART, this gives a sharper picture and prevents colour bleeding. Please don't ask about this ever again because it's mind-numbingly boring to write ■

01

02

03

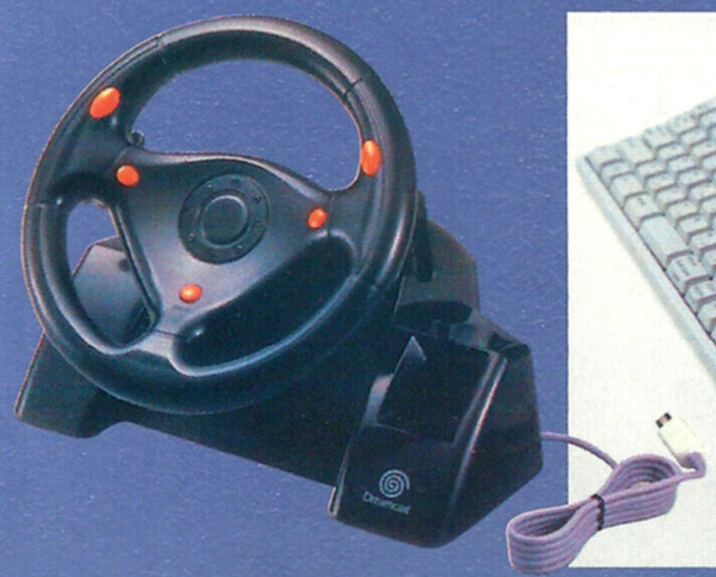
OtherStuff

THE ARCADE STICK

This huge slab of a joypad is about the same size and weight as some bathroom scales, and can be perched on your lap or placed on a table. Sporting a proper joystick and six chunky buttons, the arcade stick is designed for those who want to replicate the arcade gaming experience in the privacy of their own home (for extra authenticity you could always put a couple of cigarette burns on it). Best used for beat 'em ups and shooters, the arcade stick will retail at around £35 ■

WHEEL

Believe it or not, this peripheral has been designed for use with driving games. As well as the five buttons on the front of the wheel, there are two paddles on the rear used for accelerating and braking (or changing gears, depending on how you configure the thing). The stabilisers at the side make it feel nice and solid, but unfortunately there's no force feedback (ie, a rumble pack that simulates resistance), which is a pity. Should retail for £45 or thereabouts ■



KEYBOARD

Sega has already introduced this handy peripheral in Japan and a British version will be available soon after the Dreamcast's launch. It should prove invaluable if you plan to spend a lot of time surfing the net but can't be bothered to enter all those long URL addresses using the cursor/joypad/onscreen keyboard combo. Also good for writing emails, of course – a facility that Sega's online service will be providing. Expect to pay about £20 ■

ARGONAUT SOFTWARE LTD

THE GAMES LOOK GREAT, BUT WHAT'S DREAMCAST LIKE TO WORK WITH? NICK CLARKE, PRODUCER OF FORTHCOMING SHOOT 'EM UP RED DOG, REVEALS ALL

"When Sega came to Argonaut looking for next generation games, we took the Dreamcast in the same way we take any new console, with a healthy pinch of salt: it's easy to lose sight of what a machine can do with loads of rumours floating about. However, we were surprised when the initial claims were very close to the actual performance.

"The limitations are substantially less than any other console I've worked on, which is partly due to how easy it is to develop on. Getting *Red Dog* up and running was a relatively easy process. We were playing *Red Dog* with some basic enemies around two to three months after receiving the development systems, which is pretty good going considering it was a totally new machine.

"What key aspects have we been impressed with? Well, the speed of the development was definitely a big plus – I was very surprised with the amount of groundwork that was achieved in a very short time. Another bonus would be the stability of the dev kits. Every team member has one sat on their desk, and over the life of the project I've only seen two malfunction.

"In fact, we've not had any real difficulties working with Dreamcast. The tools are useful and Sega has been working really hard to create Internet gaming facilities – which I believe is one of the Dreamcast top features. We have, of course, not discounted Internet play, and the success of the multiplayer modes in *Red Dog* indicates that 16 or 32 tanks flying and blasting around would be top fun. So watch this space, cos multiplayer tank action may be seen in another version of the game – maybe a *Red Dog*-NET or something like that."

THE MACHINE

To appreciate the true beauty of Dreamcast you have to take its clothes off. For, beneath that pale, plastic exterior is a body of elegance, proportion and power. Unlike the Saturn, which looks as though it was hammered together by a troop of boss-eyed chimpanzees, Dreamcast is slick and simple, its few components nestling snugly against each other in the darkness. At the base of the arrangement are the heart and soul of the machine: the graphics chip (3), the CPU (4), the audio chip (7) and various other blobs of silicon. On top slots the power supply (2) and the GD-ROM drive (1), and at the side goes the modem (8), which can easily be pulled out, allowing owners to upgrade at a later date. And once we'd had a rummage around inside, the whole thing snapped together again as though made out of Lego. More a work of sculpture than a videogame console...

JOY MACHINE

GDROM

1 Dreamcast uses a proprietary storage medium called GD-ROM, which stores 1,000Mb (or one Gigabyte, if you prefer), unlike CDs, which store only 650Mb. Not only does this mean you get more data on a disc, it's also a great anti-piracy ruse: naughty software pirates often use CD-Writers to copy software, but as GD-ROM discs are incompatible with these, this ploy won't work. The GD-ROM spins at a dizzying 12 times the standard speed, making data access pretty swift ■

POWERSUPPLY

2 Modular. For her pleasure ■

GRAPHICSCHIP

3 Invented by Kings Langley-based company VideoLogic and manufactured by NEC, the PowerVR CLX1 graphics chip is responsible for building, displaying and moving everything you see on screen. As well as handling three million polygons per second, it can do loads of trendy visual tricks like anti-aliasing, fog, light-sourcing and bump-mapping, which only programmers and artists really understand, but game mags insist on talking about ■

SH4CPU

4 (Central Processing Unit) – This is the brain of the machine, where all the game calculations occur. It's been built by Hitachi, the company responsible for the Saturn CPU, but this time they've done a really good job. The 128bit SH4 operates at 200MHz (the PlayStation had a weedy 33MHz CPU) and is capable of 1.4 GFLOPS (thousands of floating point operations per second), which accounts for the Dreamcast's fast polygon manipulation ■

MAINRAM

5 Dreamcast boasts 16Mb of main operating RAM. PlayStation has 2Mb ■

VIDEORAM

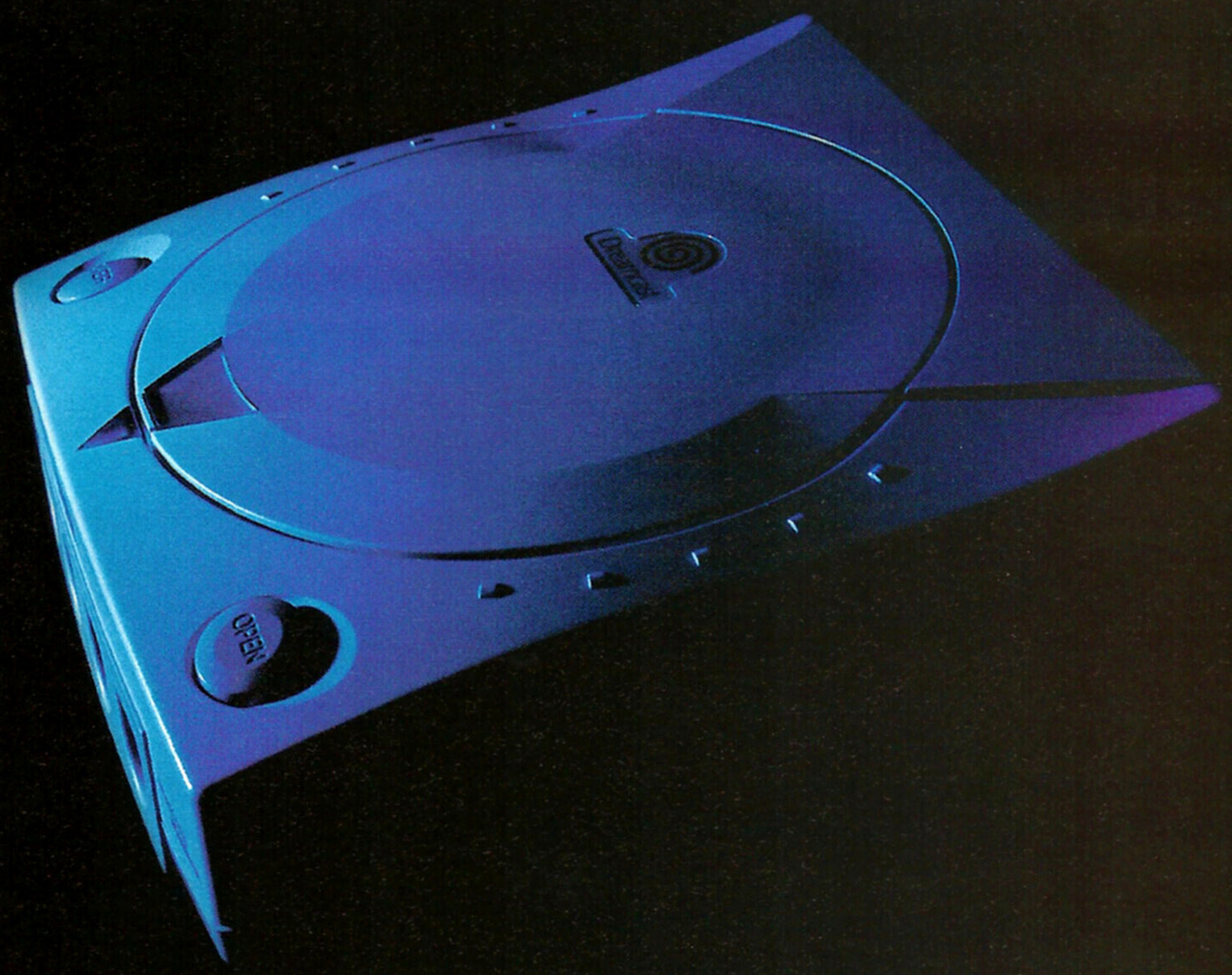
6 This is where all graphics are stored and sorted, prior to being dumped on screen. There is 8Mb of RAM (memory space) available. The PlayStation has 1Mb, and there are rumours flying about that the next generation PlayStation has just four. That's not very much ■

AICASOUNDSYSTEM

7 Yamaha's AICA (Application Specific Integrated Circuit) system is an incredibly powerful synthesiser featuring a dedicated 32-bit RISC processor, 64 channels and support for surround sound. Expect some great, meaty effects and proper game music (rather than tunes streamed straight from the CD) ■

MODEM

8 The UK Dreamcast comes equipped with a 33.6kbps modem – which is a bit disappointing, as the US machine employs a much faster 56kbps model (but don't fret, you'll probably be able to upgrade before long). BT is currently working with ICL to get a European communications infrastructure in place allowing Dreamcast users to get online and surf for hardcore porn. Whoops, sorry, that should be something like 'surf for Dreamcast news' ■



BENEATH THAT PALE, PLASTIC EXTERIOR IS A BODY OF **ELEGANCE, PROPORTION AND POWER**

LET'S.GO .SURFIN'

NOT JUST THE MOST TECHNICALLY ADVANCED AND POWERFUL GAMES MACHINE AVAILABLE, DREAMCAST IS ALSO REVOLUTIONARY IN BEING THE FIRST CONSOLE TO OFFER INTERNET ACCESS STRAIGHT OUT OF THE BOX. "GREAT," YOU SAY. "BUT, ERM, WHAT EXACTLY IS THE INTERNET?" DC-UK EXPLAINS

WORDS: ANDY BUTCHER

The Internet. The World Wide Web. The Information Super-Highway. Email, newsgroups, online gaming, ecommerce. FTP, HTTP, URL, HTML. More and more, these catch words and impenetrable acronyms are infiltrating our everyday lives, from the evening news to magazine articles to cinema trailers to adverts on the side of buses. Even the Starbucks coffee cup I'm currently drinking from has a Web address on the insulating sleeve (**www.starbucks.com**, natch). The Internet is everywhere, it's here to stay and it's going to get bigger.

Which all sounds very clever and interesting, but the simple fact is that actually getting 'online' can be a complicated and confusing process. You need a home computer and a modem. You have to choose and subscribe to an ISP. And you have to set everything up and get it working, which is rarely as simple and hassle-free as the manual makes it sound.

Or at least, you did. Dreamcast is going to change all that. For a measly 200 quid, not only do you get the slickest, fastest and most desirable games console the world has ever seen, you also get simple, hassle-free Internet access. All you need is a phone line and Internet software (see Dreamcast.Stylee box on page 78).

But, of course, this still doesn't quite explain what the Internet is and why everyone wants to get on it. Well, the Internet itself is really two things. On the one hand, it's the largest network of computer systems ever created; a network that spans the globe and even reaches, via satellites, into orbit. However, it's wrong to think of the Internet as a single 'invention' or entity – its actually an interconnection of different networks – hence the word Internet. At its heart, it's simply a set of protocols (ie, programming rules) that allow any computer system to talk to any other and understand what's being said. It's these protocols that make the Internet so powerful, flexible, and, given the vast number of computers involved and the bewildering array of connections between them, so easy to use. >

http://www.dc-uk.co.uk

extreme sport participant

VANS

Dreamcast

The.Internet:Dreamcast.Stylee//

Basically, to access the Internet all you need is a computer, a modem and some client software. Via a telephone line and an Internet Service Provider (ISP), the modem connects your computer to the Net. The client software then allows you to access the information stored on any and all of the computers on the Internet, regardless of their type and location.

The good news is that all of this is set to be easy with the Dreamcast. The machine comes with its own unique internet-access GD-ROM (in Japan it's called The Dream Passport, but Sega Europe haven't finalised the UK package yet) and a built-in modem – all you have to do is plug it into your phone line. Sega has recently announced a deal with British Telecom and ICL to provide Dreamcast owners with the simplest possible Internet access. BT will set up a dedicated Internet service, with a special local rate connection number, while ICL will be responsible for designing and continually expanding the online Dreamcast service. You will, quite literally, be able to plug it in, turn it on, and connect to the Internet, with none of the technical nightmares that all too often crop up when using a traditional home computer and modem set-up. Best of all, there's not even going to be an access fee – apart from the cost of a local rate phone call, the service will be free. As well as Net access, the service will also offer email and online chat with other Dreamcast owners. Sega already has plans to expand this with online gaming and shopping – so you can order the latest titles and have them delivered to your door, all from your living room. Beginning to see why so many people get excited about the Internet? ■

> Don't worry about all that, though. The Internet is a such complicated thing that even those who had a hand in setting it up go pale and shaky if asked to define it. They're not helped by the fact that it's constantly evolving and expanding like some kind of techy coral reef, with new features appearing all the time. The good thing is you don't have to understand the Internet to enjoy it – you just need to know what equipment to use, and where to find things once you've started (we'll be covering that in our Surf's Up section over the next few months). Rest assured, there *is* plenty to find out there.

From local weather reports to scientific treaties on the life cycle of a rare rainforest shrub, to the latest US conspiracy theories involving genetic mutants flying jet fighters, the sheer volume of information available is astounding. Whatever you're interested in, however obscure, the chances are you'll be able to find out more about it on the World Wide Web. Like the Chemical Brothers? Visit a Web search engine like Hotbot, type in the band name and you'll be presented with thousands of sites on the subject.

AS WELL AS MEETING PEOPLE, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO PLAY YOUR FAVOURITE GAMES AGAINST THEM, WHEREVER THEY MAY BE

But that's not all. Dreamcast's Internet connection means that, as well as meeting people, you'll be able to play your favourite games against them, wherever they may be. Several, upcoming titles will allow you to go head to head against other gamers over the Internet, whether they're your friends who live two doors down the road or people you've never met from the other side of the world. And the ability to download files from the Net opens the possibility of free expansions and extra levels for your favourite games.

In short, the Internet will open up a whole new world of gaming and useless rainforest shrub facts for all Dreamcast owners to enjoy. Technology is a wonderful thing ■

The.History.Of.The.Highway//

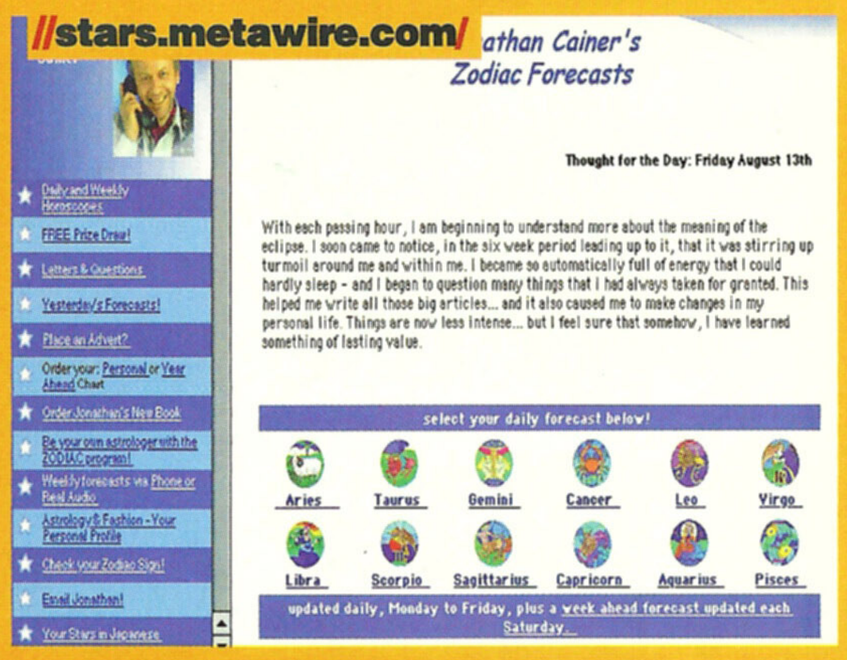
The Internet is an incredibly useful thing, both in general and specifically for Dreamcast owners. You might be wondering where it actually came from – it did seem to pop up almost overnight a couple of years back. One day the Internet was some vague techy thing that computing students used to talk about for hours on end, the next it was all over the TV, radio, magazines and newspapers.

In fact, the roots of the Internet as we know it today go all the way back to the 1960s, when the Cold War between the US and USSR was at its height, and nuclear apocalypse was a very real threat hanging over everyone's head. The US government and military, ever the optimists, decided to develop a communications network that could survive a nuclear attack and allow strategic operations centres to keep in contact. In 1967, the US Department of Defence initiated a pilot scheme linking the computer networks of four sites: UCLA, the University of Nevada, the University of California and the Stanford Research Institute. The idea was to create a de-centralised network which could continue to function even if parts of it were blown to atoms, and the result was the Advanced Research Projects Agency Network – ARPANET. Not only had the seeds of the Internet been planted, but it had also gained its first acronym.

Although ARPANET was restricted mainly to military and government use, computer scientists at universities and businesses across America began to see the potential of the system and developed their own, similar network systems – USENET, BITNET, UUCP and FidoNET. Each had its own communications system, but each was incompatible with the others.

As these networks evolved, various groups hit upon the idea of creating a system that would allow them to talk to each other and create a group of interconnected networks – an 'internet'. This finally bore fruit in the late 1970s with the development of TCP/IP, a protocol that would allow the different systems to integrate their operations.

Then came Tim Berners-Lee, a researcher at the CERN institute in Switzerland. Scientists at CERN had been excited about the communications possibilities of the Internet for some time, but Berners-Lee took the idea one step further. By combining the Internet with the concept of hypertext, proposed by Theodore Holm Nelson in 1965, Berners-Lee and his colleagues proposed an accessible way of using the Internet – they called it the World Wide Web. The result of this idea was the Internet explosion that we're still caught up in today. In 1971, ARPANET still consisted of the original four networks. Following the introduction of the TCP/IP protocols, by 1983 there were hundreds of networks involved. After the start of the World Wide Web, this number quickly became millions – and it's still growing every day ■



WWW.What?//

One thing that you'll quickly notice about the Internet is that there's a lot of jargon and more than a few acronyms that get thrown around willy-nilly by anyone talking about it. Here's a quick guide to the most common terms...

Bandwidth

> Refers to the speed (the rate at which information can be transferred) of a connection between two computers on the Internet. The higher the bandwidth, the faster the transfer and the shorter the time for you to send or to receive data.

Browser

> A WWW client – the software that runs on your computer and allows you to access the World Wide Web. The Dreamcast comes with its own built-in browser software, which works in combination with the built-in modem to connect to the Internet.

Client

> The Internet is based on a client/server model of information exchange. The client is the software you run on your computer. You tell the client what you want and it then requests this information from the server programs that are on the Internet and translates the response into readable text and graphics. At one time you needed a different client for each type of Internet service – e-mail, WWW, FTP, and so on. Increasingly, though, browsers (WWW clients) are integrating all of these functions into just one application.

Ecommerce

> The current buzzword of the Internet, ecommerce (electronic commerce) is a catch-all term referring to the business possibilities offered by the Internet. Online shopping, where you can order goods from a company's WWW site and have them delivered to your door, is the most obvious example.

FTP

> Stands for File Transfer Protocol. This is the standard by which computers on the Internet can transfer data of all types from one machine to another. Originally, using FTP required a dedicated piece of client software, but nearly all the browsers can now deal with it themselves.

HTML

> Stands for Hypertext Markup Language, one of the key elements of the World Wide Web and the modern Internet. HTML is a simple set of commands that tell a browser how to display the information on a Web page – what size and colour to make the text, where to put the picture, and so on.

HTTP

> Stands for Hypertext Transfer Protocol, the standard by which browsers (Web clients) request information from a Web server, via a URL. The development of HTTP was pivotal in the creation of the World Wide Web.

Hyperlink

> Along with the Internet, the client/server model, and the idea of a markup language like HTML, the concept of hypertext and the hyperlink is one of the roots of the World Wide Web. By using hyperlinks, the author of a Web page can connect parts of that page to any other on the Web. The reader simply clicks on the link to be taken to that information, which may be located on the other side of the world on a completely different type of computer system. Hyperlinks are normally represented by underlined text or highlighted graphics.

ISP

> Stands for Internet Service Provider, a company that allows access to the Internet. Your computer connects to the ISP's system via a modem and telephone line, forming a temporary link between your computer and the Internet, which is much cheaper than paying for a permanent network connection. Normally, the ISP servers also handle services such as email, allowing people to send you messages that you can then collect when you connect to your ISP. Dreamcast users will have a unique ISP provided by a partnership between Sega and British Telecom.

Latency

> The bane of Internet gamers, latency refers to the time it takes for information to travel across the Net between your computer and the server. Depending on many factors, including the current level of traffic on the Internet, the physical distance between the two computers and the bandwidth of their connection, latency can vary from the unnoticeable to a significant fraction of a second or more.

Modem

> A device which allows one computer to connect to another via a telephone line, translating data to and from electronic impulses that are sent through the line. Modems are fairly simple devices, and differ mainly in their bandwidth – the speed at which they can send and receive data. The Dreamcast's modem runs at 33.6kbps, which is more than enough for most Internet applications and online games.

Protocol

> In terms of the Internet, a protocol is a set of standards that allow different computers and software to communicate with each other. In many ways, the Internet is nothing more than a set of protocols that everyone has agreed to use.

Search Engine

> The wonder of the World Wide Web is its sheer size – there are literally millions, if not billions of Web sites already, and more are added every day. Whatever you're interested in, there's almost guaranteed to be a Web site dedicated to it. The problem, however, is finding it. This is where search engines (Web sites dedicated to cataloguing the WWW) come in. By connecting to a search engine Web site, you can quickly and easily find the Web sites you're interested in.

Server

> As explained above (see Client), the Internet is based on the concept of clients and servers. The server is the program that runs on an Internet computer system and responds to requests for information from clients running on other computers. There are different types of server for the different Internet services – Web servers hold information about Web pages and sites, email servers deal with, erm, email, and so on.

URL

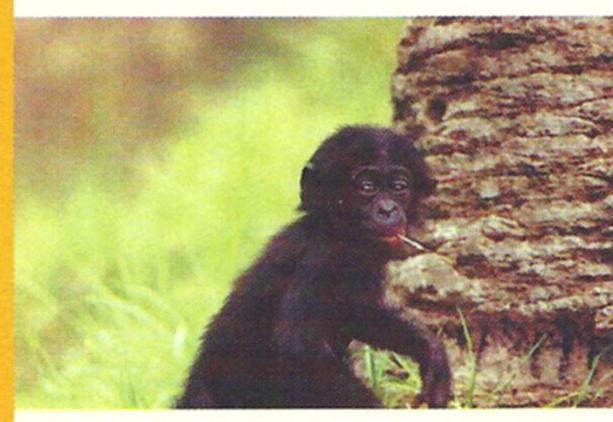
> Stands for Uniform Resource Locator, the part of HTTP (see above) that specifies exactly where a specific page or other piece of WWW information can be found. For example, www.sega.co.uk is the URL of Sega's UK Web site.

WWW

> Stands for World Wide Web, the set of protocols that have made the Internet so easy to use and thus so popular. The WWW allows information to be stored as Web pages, which are normally organised into Websites – collections of pages about the same subject – which are in turn stored on specific Web servers. By using a browser, you can connect to these servers and access the pages of information that are stored on them ■

//www.purejam.com

//www.chimpnet.com



//www.starbucks.com

//www.aint-it-cool-news.com

WHEN IT COMES DOWN TO IT, MANKIND IS STILL ITS OWN BEST ADVERSARY

WIRED 2 KILL

<Multiplayer gaming>

WORDS: TONY PUGLIA

As you'll no doubt have discovered by now, Dreamcast is fitted with a modem as standard, ostensibly for the purpose of email, Web surfing and, most tantalising of all, online multiplayer gaming. But so what – multiplayer gaming isn't new, is it? Networked PCs offer innumerable possibilities for battle. Many a business has crumbled because the staff just couldn't stop playing *Quake 2*. Ah the joys of stomping into a room full of people you work with, rapid-firing a shotgun from the hip as the tea lady chucks a grenade at your feet.

Linking PlayStations together has been feasible for ages, but the real leaps and bounds of multiplayer gaming have been over the Internet, even despite the problems of latency (the speed at which data is transferred between two computers on the Net – it can be hideously s-l-o-w). Some developers sort latency problems out and some don't bother. For those that do, the results are fame and fortune. The Web is awash with *Quake 2* servers hosting games 24 hours a day, while the likes of *Battlezone, Mech Warrior* and *X-wing vs Tie Fighter* all have thriving Net communities of their own.

So yes, multiplayer gaming has existed for ages on the PC and it's huge. But a PC costs hundreds of pounds. A Dreamcast costs just £200 and has games with multiplayer capabilities. Millions of console owners (hopefully) are about to find out for the first time that these online gaming sub cultures exist.

But what's the point? Why not just stick to the singleplayer game and save your phone bill? Well, because the adrenaline charge that results from pitting your wits against human opponents you can't physically see is nothing short of mind blowing. For a start, you can't even confirm they're human, just that they're intelligent. Well usually. Computer-generated baddies or any artificial intelligence that can consistently outwit a human opponent has yet to be invented (or made known). By all means play the game alone and acquire the skills needed to complete the levels. But then jack yourself in, because – when it comes down to it – mankind is still its own best adversary.

Human deathmatches and, especially, team games require high levels of anticipation, communication and timing. In much the same way that a football team can move in sync and perform as a unit. It's a testament to the power of the Internet that it's possible to 'be' in a digital space with other people, not as a passive TV viewer, but able to make realtime decisions and perform complex functions together within that space, while the flesh and hardware intertwine in a distant room... It might sound like sci-fi, but if there was ever going to be a portable deck that could plug you into cyberspace, then Dreamcast could well be the first generation of such a machine. In multiplayer games the players have to project their awareness and meet inside a software constructed world. Any gamer can tell you of being in the 'Zone', when it's impossible to make a wrong move, as the processing of information and appropriate responses are so instinctive the player feels connected to and 'inside' the game. Ever felt that? Now imagine other minds in there with you...

Game skills are directly related to the player's ability to be aware in a software environment and make that world as tangible to their senses as can be. Individuals will be feared, minds competing with minds. Extreme personalities will emerge. Players will be able to hang out in a 'lobby' to meet and socialise with other players (probably text only) or create a private room (password protected?) to plot and scheme, talk shop and whisper gossip. A space in which to organise teams and create games, decide on rules of engagement and confirm results. Or while the time away abusing the inevitable chimp population as some kid logs on and yabbers for attention.

Yes, cyberspace is littered with banana skins, but the buzz from making a flawless manoeuvre while your enemy's ship disintegrates and the howls of frustrated text flicker across your screen makes traditional level bosses seem like tame meat. It's unclear yet as to whether the UK servers will be up and running for the Dreamcast release date of September 23. We'll have news on this in future issues, as well as bringing you gameplay hints and how the coming releases will perform in multiplayer. One thing is for sure, BT's accountants are gonna love it...

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FIRSTCONTACT

SOUL CALIBUR

Beautiful character design. Silky smooth animation. Deep gameplay. Namco has arrived

Soul Calibur has only just received its premiere in Japan, but it is already caught up in a maelstrom of controversy. The game was originally released as an arcade title using Namco's System 12 coin-op format – a technology based around the PlayStation. However, Namco decided to bring it across to the Dreamcast – abandoning a previous exclusivity deal with Sony. And Sony is none too pleased, especially now that Japanese games mag *Famitsu Weekly* has just awarded *Soul Calibur* a full 40 out of 40. Which hardly ever happens.

Following on from 1996's *Soul Edge* (or *Soul Blade,* as it was called for its UK PlayStation conversion), *Calibur* is set in a 16th Century world full of nasty pirate-types and a veritable pantheon of Gods. It's a weapon-based beat 'em up with ten swash-buckling, sword-wielding characters, (plus eight more to unlock along the way). The combat system includes complex attack systems (allowing for motion delayed, shift and link attacks), loads of combos, and several defensive options, improving on *Soul Edge*'s limited interface. And all the character graphics and animations have been vastly improved for the Dreamcast, making the arcade version seem weedy in comparison. Nice one Namco. We'll give you more on this beautiful beast next month. ■

FINEPOINTS
- **Publisher:** TBC
- **Developer:** Namco
- **Origin:** Japan
- **Sharp things:** Lots
- **ETA:** November

02

01 Animation and lighting effects are amazingly fluid
02 The character line-up features old favourites (including Cervantes – left) and new names
03 The protagonists fight in proper 3D, rather than a 2D line
04 Big weapons!

It's a weapon-based beat 'em up **with ten swash-buckling, sword-wielding** characters

01

03

04

LANDINGSOON

TOY COMMANDER

We like toys, you like toys. Toys are great. Here's a game where you get to play with loads of 'em

Toys coming to life is a classic theme in children's entertainment that can be traced right from *Pinocchio* through to *Toy Story*, and in videogames such as *Micro Machines* and *Small Soldiers*. Now French developer No Cliché (wholly-owned by Sega, but once known as Adeline and responsible for creating the seminal *Alone in The Dark*, which was the inspiration behind *Resident Evil*) has updated the theme for Dreamcast in the remarkably impressive form of *Toy Commander*.

We were invited round to Sega's house to tip the game out of its box and scatter it on the living room floor. With Ribena and sandwiches promised for afters, we couldn't resist, but found playing with *Toy Commander* snatched away our attention. Admittedly, having to take the role of bad boy 'Guthy' in his battle to defeat 'Hugolin' the evil teddy bear nearly put us off for good, but we persevered in the name of free booze. Er... good journalism.

It was worth the effort, because beneath Commander's crazy concept beats a technological heart of gold. Polished and ready for an October release date, No Cliché's game boasts one of the most impressive 3D engines yet seen on Dreamcast. The game is played around various 'real' rooms within a virtual house, and the sheer amount of care lavished on modelling everyday objects such as bottles and sinks is amazing.

Even more significant is that many such items are animated with physics to give them realistic movement: knock over a bottle and it will fall according to its weight, not because someone programmed it to animate in a certain way. This is a new kind of virtual reality for the 21st Century.

But enough techno-speak; this is Dreamcast, this is about gameplay, and *Toy Commander* looks likely to put a big tick in that box, too. With 35 different toys to command divided into fighting and transport types, and 50 missions split into dexterity, race, battle, strategy and boss sections, there should be more than enough variety to keep the most avid player busy for many a long hour. Add to that two, three and fourplayer options for those with friends to challenge and Sega could find itself with a surprise winter hit on its books. ■

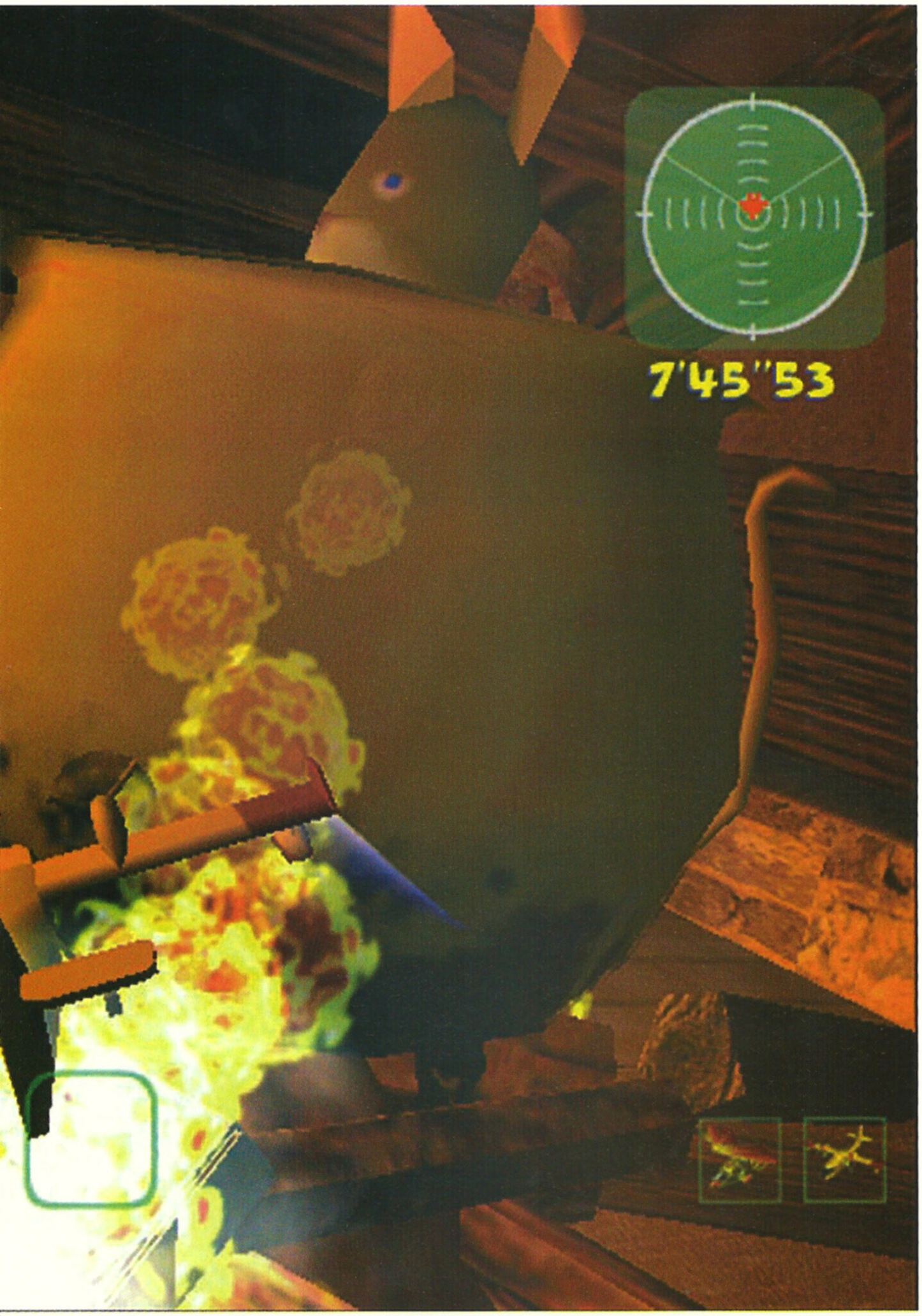
FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Sega
- **Developer:** No Cliché
- **Origin:** France
- **Why:** Toys, man!
- **ETA:** October

01

01 Could this be the most bizarre game ever? We'd consider putting money on it. Don't fancy that rabbit's chances of ever frolicking on the heath again

02 And here are your vehicles, er, toys. Well you do get to command them, anyway, *and* there's a jet in there. Cool



FIRSTCONTACT

HYDRO THUNDER

Row, row, row your boat gently down the stream? Not in this ultra-fast boat racer

Publisher Midway's high-speed motorboat sim is going down a storm in the arcades, if only because of the pounding bass speaker in the chair that vibrates to accentuate the feeling of cruising over choppy water ("Oooooh baby, that's it, right there. Oh yes, you dirty boat, yes!"). Due for a Dreamcast conversion in October, the game crosses the racing thrills of *Wipeout*, with the water settings of *Wave Race 64*, and it does so at blistering speed with gorgeous colourful graphics. There are 13 crafts available, all offering different handling characteristics and designs. To add to the thrills, each of the 11 water circuits is festooned with alternative routes, power-ups and ramps – putting this firmly in the unrealistic yet fun category.

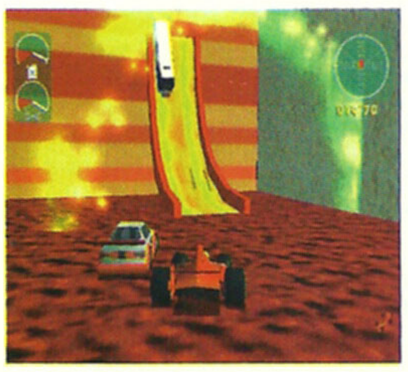
Well, not quite. While the visual style and gameplay may not be particularly believable, the physics behind the action is. Midway claims it has used 'Newtonian Physics' to accurately emulate the feel of high-speed boat racing, so you'll get all the waves, swells, ripples and spurts associated with travelling at high speeds across wet places.

How all this liquid excitement will translate to the Dreamcast is unclear, but Midway promises a very faithful conversion with all the stomach churning speed and bumpiness of the original. Could possibly be renamed *Hydro Chunder*. Ho ho! ■

FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Midway
- **Developer:** In-house
- **Origin:** US
- **Sex appeal:** Booty shake, watersports
- **ETA:** October

There should be enough variety **to keep the most avid games player occupied** for many a long hour



FIRSTCONTACT

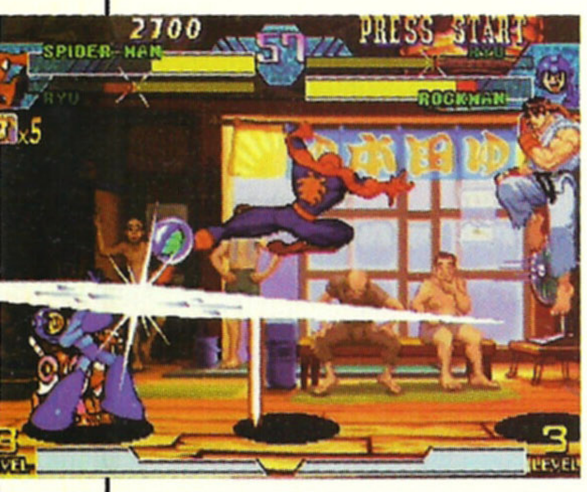
MARVEL VS CAPCOM

Your chance to smack Spiderman and his stupid tingling spidersenses into next week

The whole 2D beat 'em up scene was going a bit stale for Capcom until, in 1995, it had a brainstorm and came up with *X Men: Children of the Atom* – a 2D beat 'em up based on the comic book characters, with suitably mad, screen-smashing special effects and OTT combos. Since then the company has suckled at the superhero nipple for all its worth, producing several titles, and pitting Marvel characters against themselves, their enemies and the *Street Fighter* cast list. *Marvel Vs Capcom* – which features classic characters from previous Capcom games getting into scuffles with Stan Lee's babies – is the first of them to be brought over to the Dreamcast.

And by the look of things it's a fine conversion from the arcade original. Expect all 15 characters, including Spidey, Captain America,

Wolverine, Strider Hiryu and Mega Man, plus 20 helpers who can be brought in when the fight's going a bit dodgy and you need some assistance. Predictably, the battle system allows for some truly extravagant specials and linked attacks, and the animation is as lightning fast as ever. As for game modes, there are five to fight through: Arcade, Versus, Training, Survival and Cross Fever. The most interesting addition to this new translation is definitely Cross Fever – a proper tag team mode that allows two teams of two players to take each other on simultaneously. Yep, that's four players fighting on screen at once.
Oh Capcom, you are a one. ■



FINEPOINTS
- **Publisher:** Virgin Interplay
- **Developer:** Capcom
- **Origin:** Japan
- **2D:** Very
- **ETA:** October

After a heavy night on the Tizer, Venom spews on Ryu's shoes outside Ritzy's nightclub. Ryu, none to happy, literally explodes with anger. A violent confrontation, involving super combos, is inevitable

01

02

POWER STONE

Just another beat 'em? Not likely. Welcome to the crazy, table-lobbing world of *Power Stone*...

Every year the beat 'em up genre gets duller and less accessible. All those tiresome muscle-bound men performing super special combos and hyper bionic mega moves. All those power gauges and ultra power gauges. It's so humourless and anal. Thank god Capcom has taken a look at the whole scene and said, "actually this is pretty off-putting to the non-beat 'em up fan, isn't it?" The result of this Road to Damascus style revelation is *Power Stone*.

Instead of having to learn billions of special moves, you simply run around the arena picking up chairs, tables, lamps, boxes, park benches, or whatever is lying around, and throw them at your opponent. You can kick and punch of course, and pull off combinations of both, but you don't have to learn any spurious moves like The Spitting Cobra Kick or The Floating Eagle Beaky Nipple Tweak. You kick, punch, jump, throw and occasionally swing from the ceiling (all via a simple control interface). But that's it.

Well not quite. At certain points during each bout, three coloured Power Stones appear. Pick them all up and your character transforms into a super guy or girl with a range of super powerful moves. You'll stay in this guise until your Power Stone gauge runs out, which is usually long enough to inflict major damage on your opponent.

Each of the beautifully drawn arenas is also dotted with treasure chests: open these up and you'll find weapons such as the bomb or the bazooka, with which to lamp your foe. Success, then, is more based on effective movement around the screen, fast reflexes and accurate throwing, rather than complicated button combinations.

While there's a Naomi version of *Power Stone*, as usual Capcom has added a few extras for the home player. Beating the oneplayer arcade mode with a selection of the eight characters will free up three hidden VM games, four new weapons and a few surprises – which is a final nice touch to what could well be a key Dreamcast title. And hopefully this radical departure will also bring in a new audience to the beat 'em up. Before it's, gulp, too late... ■

01 If you collect all three powerstones, your character takes on a powerful new guise
02 The scuffle took a darker turn as Wangtang pulled a rocket launcher from his back pocket
03 'Ouch, that smarts'
04 The visual effects are almost as extravagant as the background scenery

> Success, then, is more based on **effective movement around the screen** and fast reflexes

FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Eidos
- **Developer:** Capcom
- **Origin:** Japan
- **3D:** Oh gosh, yes
- **ETA:** Sept 23

FIRSTCONTACT

TOKYO HIGHWAY CHALLENGE

Joy riders apply here: street racing, maxed-out motors and not a copper in sight

From developers Genki, responsible for the *Virtua Fighter 3tb* Dreamcast conversion, comes another port to Sega's new console – the latest installment of Japan's popular *Shutokou Battle* series.

Shutokou is a famously dangerous motorway in Tokyo (hence the western title) and the game allows you to live out those gridlock dreams of putting peddle to the metal and speeding through the city streets.

The racing system is based on hot-rodding: head-to-head challenges against another car. Options include the usual Quick Race, Twoplayer, Practise and Time Attack modes and a more in-depth Quest mode. The Quest is the most interesting option as there are monetary rewards for the winner that enable you to buy a new car or upgrade your current vehicle; both to improve performance and aesthetics.

On the subject of cars, there are expected to be around 25 Japanese-style sports vehicles in the finished version and, although they look pretty enough, the lack of licensed manufacturers is disappointing. But they will be fully customisable.

Track-wise the game is something of a let down, with only a single, solitary course. Admittedly, it is an extremely long highway with numerous routes accessed through on/off ramps,

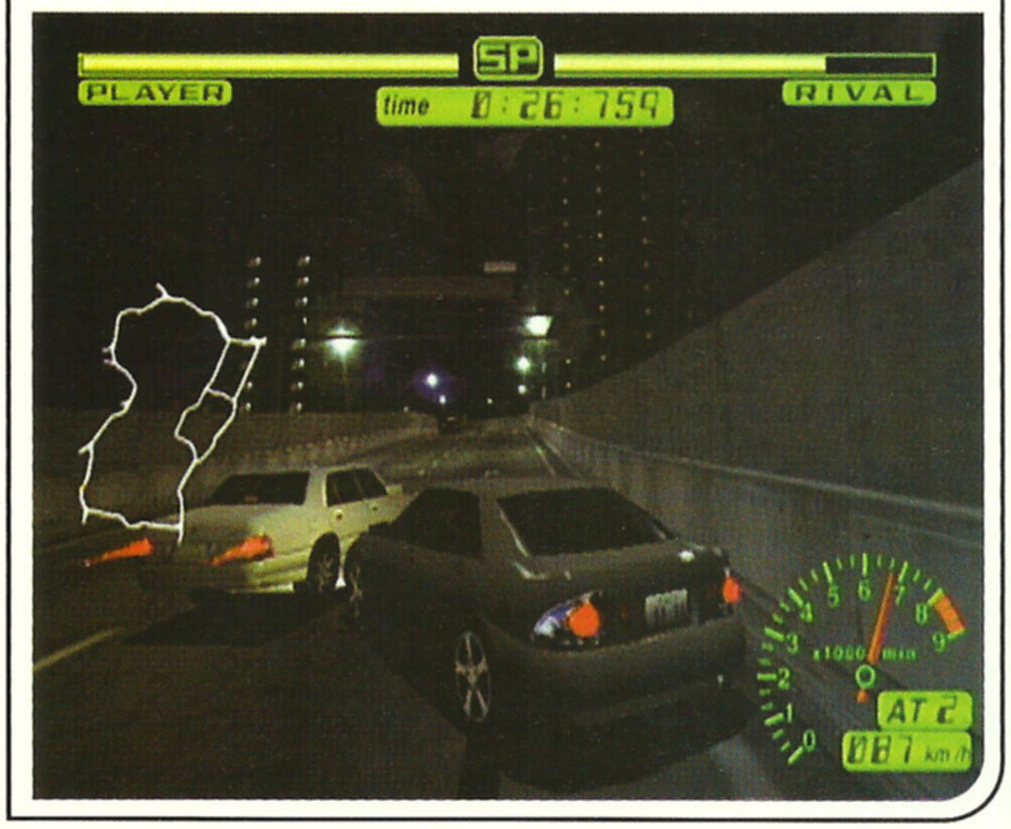
but that doesn't seem enough in this *Gran Turismo* era.

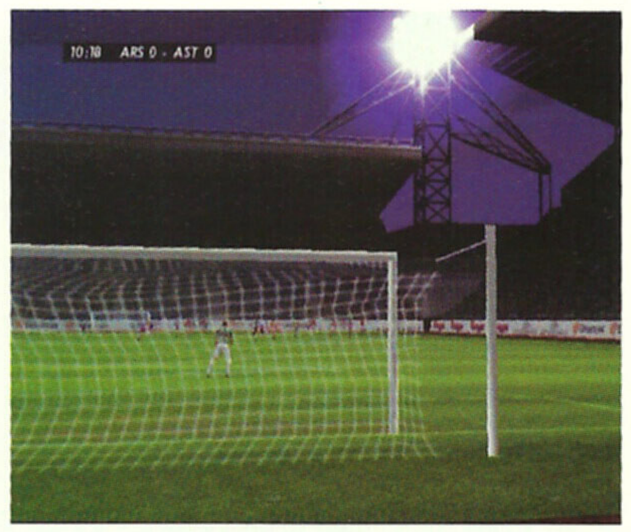
While we're on the subject of what's lacking from *Challenge*, 'civilian' traffic is a little light at the moment, although that may change. in addition, the Japanese version has cars shod with special grip-resistant tyres. But maybe they like them like that over there. Crazy guys...

On the plus side, the game runs smoothly enough at 60 fps and looks nice in action. If all its tweaks are, erm, tweaked prior to release, there's no reason why it should be left behind amid the racing also-rans. ■

FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** TBC
- **Developer:** Genki
- **Origin:** Japan
- **Road:** Rage
- **ETA:** October





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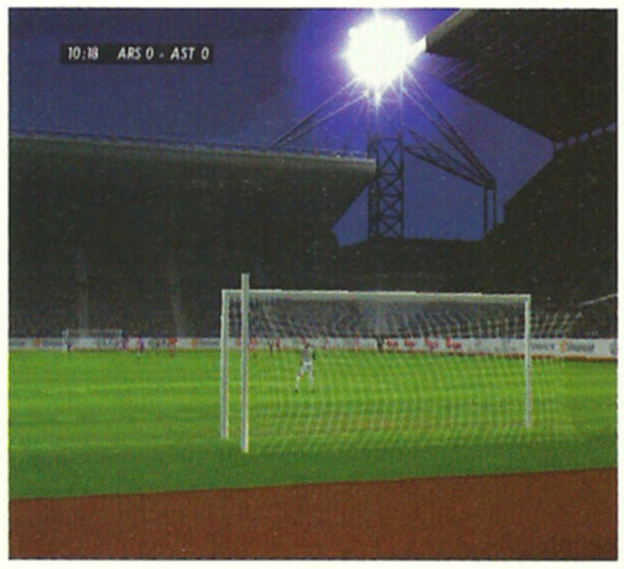


UEFA STRIKER

For God's sake, it's just a bunch of polygons chasing a ball around – it's only a *game*...

At first it seems like an obvious statement that releasing a console in Europe without a football game (especially when big chunks of Sega's marketing spend have gone on sponsoring leading teams. Well, Arsenal), would be tantamount to lunacy. Except that Sony and Nintendo did it.

Unlike their poor relations, Dreamcast gamers' soccer needs are being well serviced by Rage and Infogrames' forthcoming kickabout, *UEFA Striker*. Created at Rage's skyscraping Birmingham office, Striker is packed with all the features a modern football game needs to land it neatly in the back of the net.

Aside from all the usual options to alter team formation, weather, stadium and name of the manager's cousin; Rage has thoughtfully included a 'game pressure' setting. Turn it up and the referee watches every tackle with hawk-like attention; wind it down and you're free to hammer away on the other teams' shins like a blind cobbler on his thumb.

We witnessed Dreamcast *UEFA* running side-by-side with the PlayStation version that's also being developed, and can happily report that it was like watching Manchester United play Crewe. The Dreamcast game is silky smooth and packed with exclusive graphic details – Rage is matching players' skin-tones and haircuts to their real-life counterparts.

As with all football titles, *UEFA Striker* will only succeed if it plays as well as it looks. Rage is hoping that by keeping the basic controls just that, *Striker* will deliver the kind of fast and reactive gameplay that will win the game fans. Two main buttons handle passing, shooting and tackling, while one shoulder trigger activates tighter ball control, and the other increases running speed.

To add to the game's atmosphere, Rage is using Dreamcast's 3D power to increase crowd detail, to the point where supporters will perform Mexican Waves, or stand up if the players come near. Although such things are bonus material, they really add to the sensation of taking part.

With *UEFA Striker* almost here, a conversion of *Virtua Striker 2000* thought to be underway, and EA's world famous *FIFA* series rumoured to be in the works, Dreamcast-owning armchair Beckhams are heading for the premier league this season. ■

FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Infogrames
- **Developer:** Rage
- **Origin:** UK
- **Balls:** Plenty of
- **ETA:** October

01 And Evans sneaks up on the outside...
02 Go on, my son! In there!
03 David Seaman looks a little apprehensive about having to do his job
04 Oi! Ref! Where are you *looking*?

Striker will deliver **the kind of fast and reactive gameplay** that will win the game fans

LANDINGSOON

READY 2 RUMBLE

Will Midway's game prove better than Ant and Dec's song? Seconds out – this is round one

One of the megastars at E3, *Ready 2 Rumble Boxing* is a fast-paced, arcade box 'em up from Midway. Famous for the gruesome *Mortal Kombat* series and a host of men-in-tights wrestling games, Midway's newest entry to the fighting genre concentrates on the finer points of pugilism. The Queensbury Rules, however, are nowhere to be seen.

Ready 2 Rumble promises to be the first truly successful boxing game since *Super Punch-Out!!* on the SNES. Previous attempts have ranged from pure simulations that only simulated fat men swinging at each other veerrrrry slowly, and arcade-style boxing games that lost all similarity to the sport they were trying to recreate.

Midway's game strikes the perfect balance between fast, action-packed gameplay and the depth needed to do justice to the noble art. It is easy to just pick up and play, yet it requires a surprising amount of skill to become master of the ring.

In the finished version there will be twenty boxers to choose from. Each will have their own individual fighting style and strengths and weaknesses based on their sex/weight/height, etc. Your strategy in the ring will vary depending on who you are fighting as – for example: a small, speedy boxer will be able to dance his opponent into submission before landing a lightning-quick combination, whereas a bigger, slower boxer will be able to take more punishment and land heftier knockout punches.

There is a plethora of different gaming options, including an excellent championship mode where you play as the trainer and manager as well as the fighter. The compulsory twoplayer game is fantastic and will probably lead to an outbreak of dead-arms administered by bad losers.

Graphically, the game is bold and beautiful and the large, cartoonish characters are superbly animated. The detail even extends to 120 different facial expressions and damage such as cuts, bruises and spraying blood become visible as the rounds progress.

All in all, *Ready 2 Rumble Boxing* is shaping up in fine style. The knockout blow has been landed, the opponent is on the canvas and all that remains is for the referee to count to ten and declare it champion ■

FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Midway
- **Developer:** In-house
- **Origin:** US
- **Afros:** Large
- **ETA:** Sept 23

01 "I'll stand with my mouth open and you hit me extremely hard"
02 There was uproar as Tyson and his bitch linked arms and went shopping
03 Take that! I simply can't abide spiky hair
04 Cut it out, man. This is no time for Cossack dancing

> It requires a **surprising amount of skill** to become master of the ring

FIRSTCONTACT

SOUL FIGHTER

Pretend to be God and save a few souls. Oh, and beat the crap out of the bad guys

This is definitely an interesting one. *Soul Fighter* is a 3D fighter set in a non-restrictive environment – old schoolers might recognise elements of Sega's classic chop 'em up, *Golden Axe*.

The game should be one to work the Dreamcast's impressive spec to the bone, at the same time eliciting a few 'oohs' and 'ahs' from your mates. The graphics look suitably lush for a truly next generation game – *Soul Fighter* will also be released on coin-op, PC and the Next Gen PlayStation (but if you're waiting for that version we hope you've packed lots of sandwiches and bottles of pop). The chunky motion-captured characters feature skin animations and real-time shadows, while the vast backgrounds, fireballs and coloured lighting effects look equally impressive.

Like *Golden Axe*, the game is set in a medieval fantasy world inhabited by all manner of ghouls, goblins and strange creatures. Rumour has it that French developer Piggyback Interactive is busy putting the finishing touches to the plot, which will see you rescuing the souls of your people who have been transformed into club-wielding nasties. After successfully smacking the errant peasants down, you will collect the released souls in your gourd and save them at the end of each level.

Sounds basically like a good excuse to get out there and smack shit out some of the biggest, most colourful bad boys we've seen since Village People sang *YMCA* ■

FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** TBC
- **Developer:** TOKA
- **Origin:** France
- **Souls:** Saved
- **ETA:** October

Chopped, slashed, clubbed and, ah, burnt at the stake – *Soul Fighter* promises to bring back all your favourite videogaming violent deaths. Well, except for the really sick ones in your head

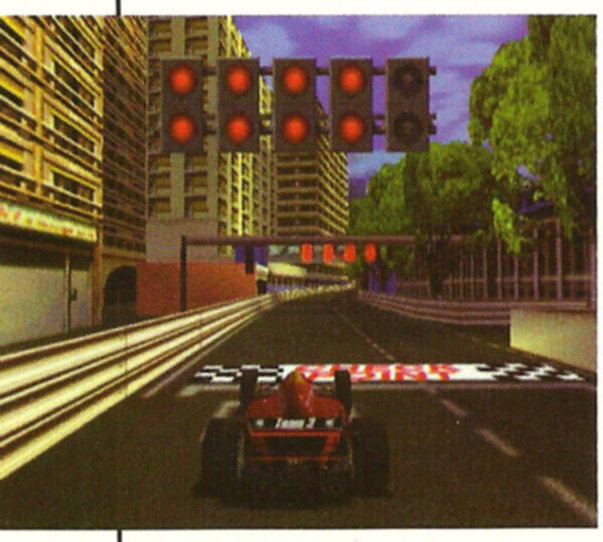
NEWVERSION

RACING SIMULATION MONACO GP

With realism and options by the gallon, the revamped *Monaco GP* is ready to roll

The catchily-titled *Monaco Gran Prix Racing Simulation 2* (or *MGPRS2* for, erm, short) was a Dreamcast launch game in Japan, and did rather well, topping the charts after three days on sale. Since then, Ubi Soft has had several months to update the Euro version of this F1 sim, and it seems to have made good use of the time. The game, which already boasts all 16 circuits of the F1 season and 22 drivers (fictitious, sadly, as Ubi didn't get an FIA licence) now has three times more visual detail, new, more realistic engine sounds, multi-texturing effects on the driving surfaces and an overhauled arcade mode, complete with checkpoints.

Similarly, the sim mode has been rebuilt. You can, for example, use eight set-up options to fiddle with the tyres, brakes, body height, etc, and customise how many things can go wrong with your car during a race. There are also realtime weather reports, so if it's going to start pissing down in the middle of lap 15 you can roll into the pits and slap on the wet weather tyres. The realism is upheld through the gameplay, with suitably tough handling and realistic car movement that treats each of the wheels as a separate entity. Oh, and there's also a retro mode, so you can race about in those old '60s cars that look like cigars on wheels. Très chic. ■



FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Ubi Soft
- **Developer:** In-house
- **Origin:** France
- **Wheels:** Go round
- **ETA:** September (Europe)

Monaco GP will feature all the thrills and spills of Formula One racing with ultra-realistic handling, gorgeous colourful graphics and more options than you can shake a monkey wrench at

01

03

SPEED DEVILS

Proof that they don't make 'em like they used to, this is a racer with a few big differences

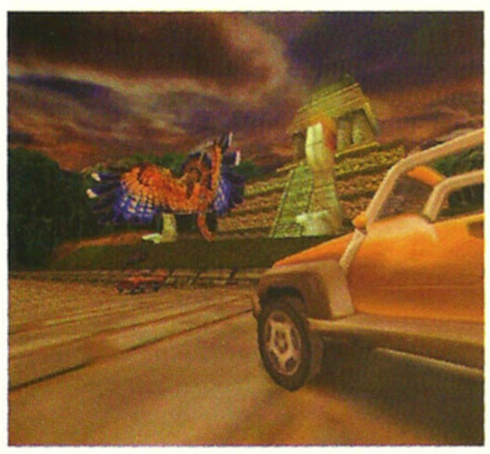
As a name, *Speed Devils* could be easily applied to one of those post-*Trainspotting* Brit flicks about sex, drugs and clubbing. Which, in some ways, is fitting: this madcap racer looks like something director Danny Boyle might come up with if he was asked to design a driving game.

Simply choose a car from ten souped-up beasts then smash it through 13 tracks constructed out of forests, tornado-cursed badlands, mountain ranges and Hollywood soundstages battered by flaming meteors. Each circuit has shortcuts, ramps and traps, and there are obstacles like rolling rocks and swinging axes to knock you off-course when you least expect it.

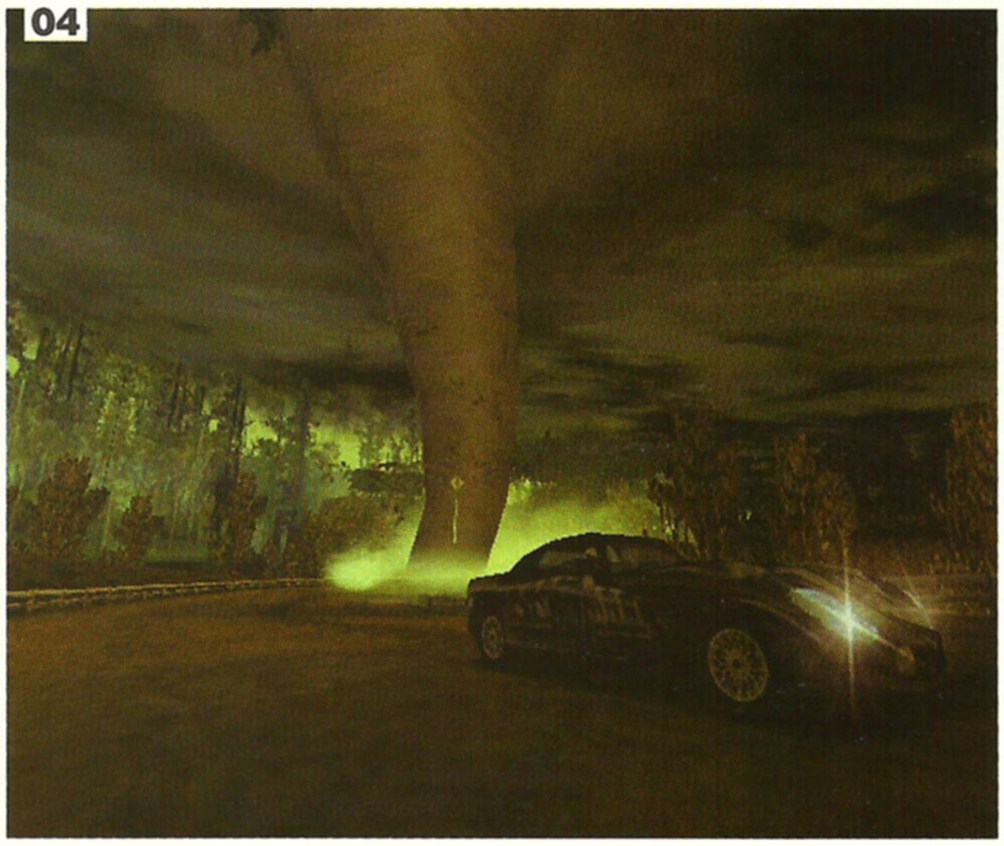
Judging from the near-as-dammit-finished demo we played, the handling is sheer madness. The main brake is sensible enough, but using the handbrake will have you sliding about like a wet fish on a wooden deck, and the nitro booster ejects your car into the distance at neck-snapping speed.

The game structure seems interesting, too. In Championship mode you have to earn cash to buy upgrades and better cars. You can do this by winning races, getting good lap times and reaching super-high speeds. You can also place bets with other racers, presenting each other with crazy dares backed up with cash rewards.

Backing up this main play mode are several other options, including five twoplayer games, a time trial and an arcade mode. There's also plenty of support for the VMS: you can swap cars with other players and even use it as an in-game radar. Add loads of customisation options and some slick visuals, and you get a promising counterbalance to the more sober *Monaco GP* title. ■



Using the handbrake will have **you sliding about like a wet fish on a** wooden deck



Like a sort of *Wacky Races* for the '90s, *Speed Devils* promises to warp our perception of racing forever

01 Dick Dastardly gets a *Jurassic Park*-style makeover

02 While the only pretty birds on offer are definitely of the feathered variety. So no Penelope Pitstop, then

03 Fiery meteor showers will replace your common or garden rainfall

04 It's a twister! Not of the nude variety our errant art editor Christian Day prefers, though. Unfortunately

FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Ubi Soft
- **Developer:** In-house
- **Origin:** France
- **Speed:** Bloody fast
- **ETA:** September (Europe)

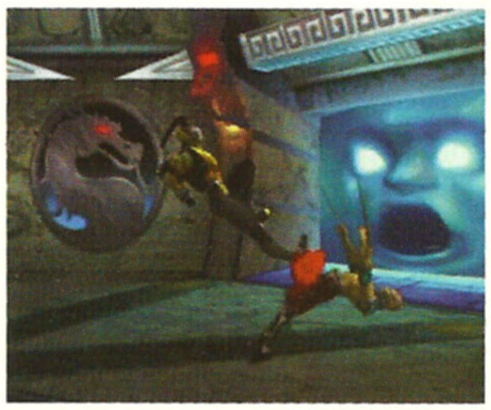
LANDINGSOON

MORTAL KOMBAT GOLD

The most controversial beat 'em up in history is back for yet another bout of bloody fisticuffs. Take your corners...

There can be few videogames in the world as hotly debated as *Mortal Kombat*. Midway's best-selling beat 'em up, which began as a gory repost to *Street Fighter* but evolved into a mythology in its own right, is either the most playable fighting game ever, or merely a scrappy, exploitative mess. Whatever the case, Dreamcast owners will soon get the chance to enter the debate. *Mortal Kombat Gold*, a conversion of the latest 3D arcade version of the series, is set to be an early release in the UK.

Building on the back of the 3D coin-op original, *Gold* promises to employ the full visual capabilities of the Dreamcast to create a blood-spurting fighter for the new millennium. Expect 20 detailed characters attacking each other with a selection of deadly weapons at very high speeds. Expect the return of classic characters, such as Cyrax, Mileena, Kitana and Kung Lao. Expect a new range of fatal moves with more gore than you'd find on an episode of Jerry Springer, entitled 'My boyfriend likes to set his pack of rabid wolves on white trash TV audiences'. Expect amazing lighting effects, brilliant real-time shadows and hidden bonus characters. Expect a review soon. Fight! ■



FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Midway
- **Developer:** Midway/Eurocom
- **Origin:** US
- **Blood:** Oh yes
- **ETA:** September

FIRSTCONTACT

JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL

Jimmy takes his cue and omits any unsightly shots of Stephen Hendry's backside. Phew

1980s game fans look back at the name Archer Maclean with as much nostalgia as '80s pop fans regard Wham!, Duran Duran and Rene and Renato. Through classic games such as *Drop Zone* and *International Karate*, he became one of the most famous (and best paid) designers in the world. And then he started making pool games.

Cueball 2, which appeared last year on the PC, is essentially an accurate simulation of pool and snooker, featuring all the rules and has thoroughly realistic ball physics. Using stunningly detailed backgrounds, such as an Edwardian games room and a 1950s-style American Pool bar, the game seeks to create a compelling and realistic environment for the ball dropping action. You can also play darts and draughts and, best of all, wander over to an arcade machine and play *Drop Zone* – Maclean's fantastic 8bit shoot 'em up. The whole thing is presented in an explorable 3D environment, so you can play a bit of pool, wander out of the room down the hall and take up a game of darts.

Providing they get the controls right (the PC uses the mouse to mimic the action of taking a shot with the cue), this could be a great little two player game for Sega's new system ■

FINEPOINTS

- **Publisher:** Virgin Interplay
- **Developer:** Awesome Developments
- **Origin:** UK
- **Big:** Break
- **ETA:** October

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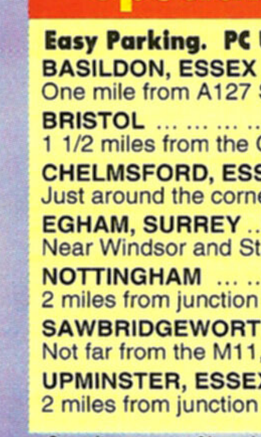

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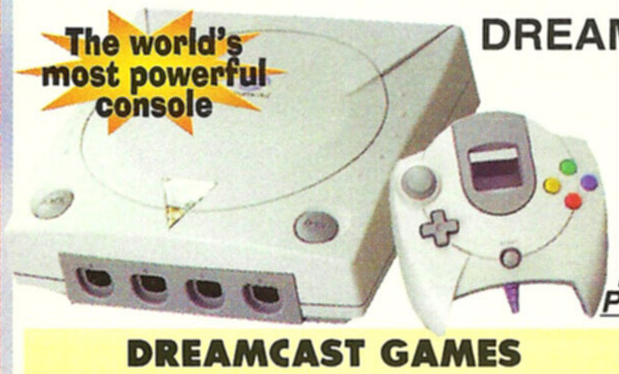

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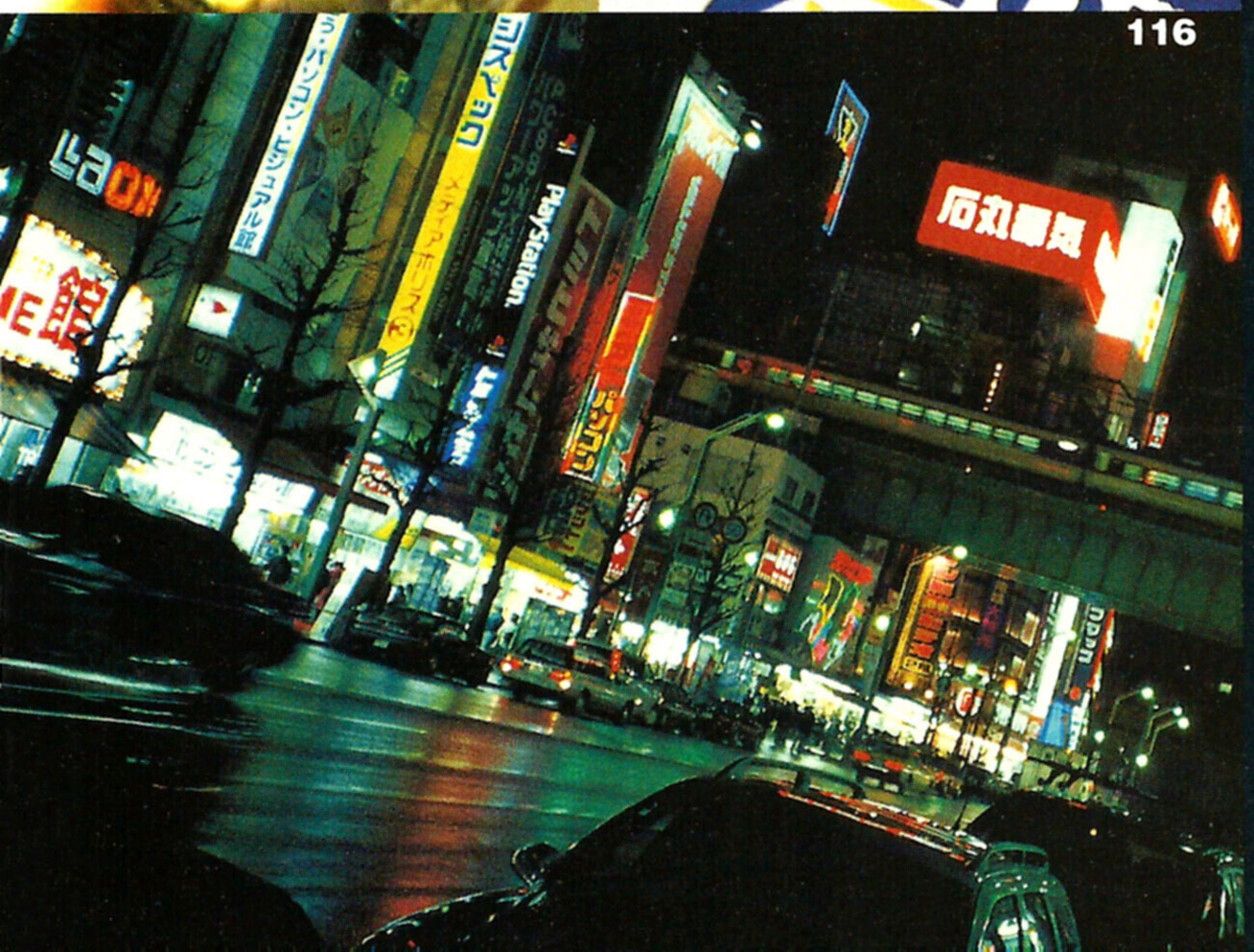
EVERYTHING DREAMCAST



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Frankly, we're bored with the sound of our own voices, so polish off your biro, and check out all the things we want you to write for us

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We're crazy, we are. Actually, we're quite dull, but we thought we'd show you how much effort goes into £2.95-worth of magazine

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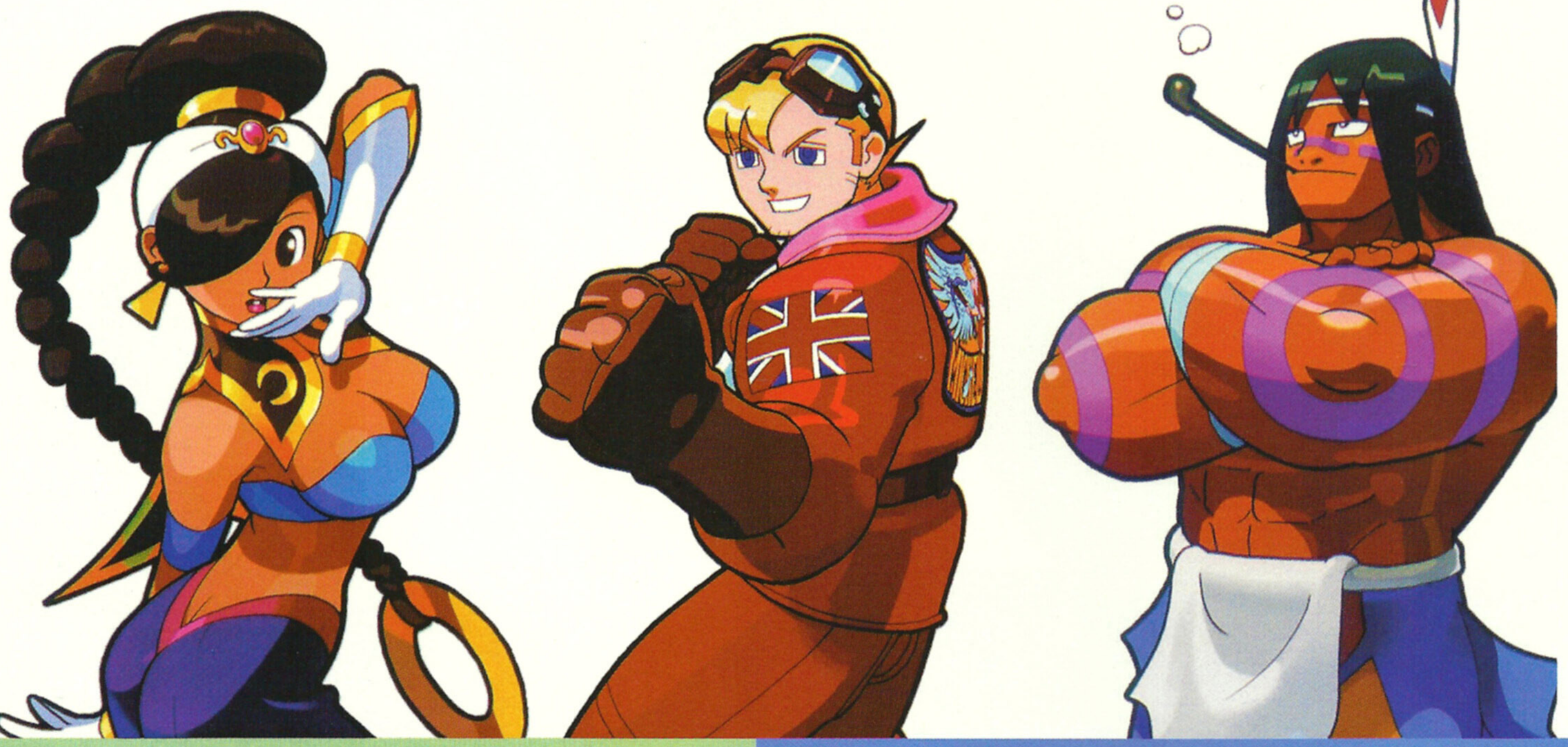
Mark Mazlowicz considers what games he'd play if he was reduced to the sorry state of being a mere brain in a jar. The end

JOIN THE FIGHT!



DROP US A LINE

Fancy a bit of interaction with this here rather smart magazine, do you? Of course you do, and it couldn't be any easier.

Firstly, we want to hear your views on the games that Sega brings out for Dreamcast – are they as good as we reckon they are? Are they easy to play, do they look as good and sound as good as you would expect? Basically, we want you review them in your own inimitable styles and we'll print them right here in DC-World – we want to know what you think, after all. Secondly, there's the classifieds – sell your out of date hardware, buy some magnificent software, try and find a back issue of some ancient magazine and meet like-minded individuals.

Simply email us at the following address, and state exactly what you want us to say, and in what section it should appear. Anything too rude gets printed in bold and sent to your mum.

DC-UK@futurenet.co.uk

YOU NEED HELP

Let's face it. You're probably a bit crap at these magnificent games, aren't you? Ah, don't whinge, everyone can't be as good as us, now, can they? So to help you on your mission to be the best gamer since that bloke who was really good, you'll find plenty of tips and cheats in DC-World – everything on how to get to the next level pretty smartish to how to beat the crap out of that minx in *Virtua Fighter*. But if there's something we've missed out, then ask us in our Q&A section – you'll find us infallible. Almost.

And then there's that other important bit – the Internet – flick through to page 120 to get the best Net advice we could get for you, plus some cool sites for you to point your browser at. And have you missed a review? Never fear, my friends, as of next month we'll be carrying review listings, so you can check your back issues for our witticisms and canny remarks on said game

WELCOME TO OUR WORLD

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NAKED TWISTER

Us probably the only game you think we haven't covered so far. But you'd be wrong. There's loads more, and they don't involve polythene matting and baby oil, either. Sadly. So here we are, carrying on bravely like the martyrs we are to bring you reviews of the best coin-op games to emerge from Sega's loins.

And then there's the long-term tests – we want to know whether our blue spikey friend can still cut the mustard six months after *Sonic Adventure* has come out, or whether *Trick Style* will begin to look dated by Chrimbo. And what about those countries who've been revelling in Dreamcast goodness for far too long already? Bastards, yes, but they're nice enough to export their games to our hallowed shores, so we'll review the ones we manage to grab and tantalise you with a taster of what might be coming to the shelves of HMV in the near future. Great, aren't we? ■

ODDS AND SODS

And then basically there's all the crap we've got left over. Well, it's not crap exactly – but there wasn't anywhere else it could go, so we've decided to plonk it in here.

Fancy re-enacting moments from your favourite game with your mates in your back garden or under your duvet? We bring you a collection of toys that'll help you achieve just that – although possibly not the ones that'll help under the duvet. That's between you and you GP.

What else? Oh, there's the team diary. We don't wish to be faceless names, we want you to see us in all our gory detail, so you can discover exactly how we spend our working days. And when we say 'working' it's in the loosest possible sense of the term, as you can well imagine.

And after that, there's only just about time to tell you what we've got in store for you lucky, lucky people next month ■

SONIC ADVENTURE

PLAYER'S GUIDE

Greetings and welcome to *Sonic Adventure*, a massive 3D world where everything, in true tabloid style, is BIGGER! and BETTER! than ever before. Sega's mascot had a lot of expectations to carry on his spiky shoulders, but the hedgehog has well and truly delivered in a game that encompasses all the best bits from his previous outings, plus a load of new gaming delights that were impossible before the Dreamcast appeared on the horizon.

If you're after a full and comprehensive guide to this awe-inspiring game then you've come to the right place.

13 BOSS – Chaos 0

Unusually, the game starts with a boss battle. Sonic, the nosy bugger, spots trouble and goes to sort it out. You are faced with Chaos the water monster, but at this stage he can't fight his way out of a paper bag and requires just three hits with your jump-attack move before he skulks off with his tail between his legs.

02 STAGE 1 – Emerald Coast

Run on the beach to start the first level; a nice, easy beginning to get you settled in to Sonic's new surroundings.

Collect the rings and kill the first two baddies then move on up the ramp and bounce between the springboards. Run along the pier and use the travelators to boost you over to the next island.

Head up to another travelator and fly over the water before negotiating the hills. Time your move past the jagged gate then run through the loop-the-loop to a super cool bit. See that killer whale? Well he's out to get you, so leg it along the walkways and through the

booster until you land safe and sound on the next island.

Circle the island collecting bonuses then run up the hill and spring up the cliff – stopping to collect an extra life from the platform on your right. At the top, jump over the gaps and head into the cave for the next part of the level.

Sprint along until you reach water and get across using the platforms or simply by running underwater (apparently, hedgehogs have no problem breathing in aquatic conditions). Use the springboards to pick up an extra life before timing your run past a series

of jagged gates and sprinting along the side of the cliff then boosting up to the next platform.

Climb the steps and run down the almost vertical slope to a small outcrop where you can kill the monkey and collect the bonuses. Now, stand on the octagon marked '1' and jump five times to reach Octagon 5 and drop to the platform.

Run past some more gates and boost round the loop-the-loop to land at the end of stage numero uno.

03 Go through the glass doors and head past the doors on your right to the city streets. Run up the steps to Central Station and catch the train to Mystic Ruin.

Once there, head up to Tails' house on your right for a showdown with Dr Robotnik.

04 BOSS – Egg Hornet

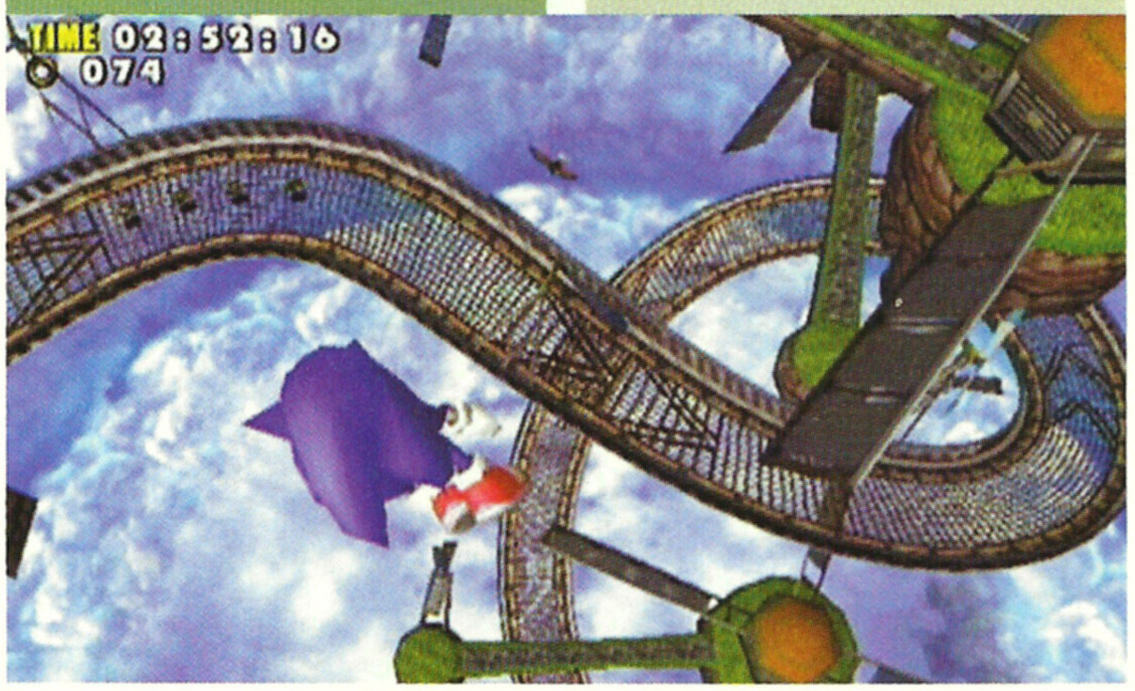
Another easy battle with a boss. Just cunningly avoid his missile attacks and when he flies into the ground, jump-attack the swine. After three hits, he's beaten – soft lad.

05 Collect the green stone from outside the mill and take it to the cave to the right of the waterfall. Place the stone on the shrine and you will be able to jump into the wind and enter the next level.

06 STAGE 2 – Windy Valley

Run along the path collecting rings and killing baddies then stop and reminisce before taking out the *Space Harrier* monster (remember that game, Sega fans?). Stand on the grid and get blown to the next platform, then use the springboards and the wind to carry you up the cliff.

Sprint down the hill and get blown over to a trampoline, bounce on it a couple of times to reach the higher platform. Next, you want to run over the bridge into a stunning tornado that carries you off to the wonderful world of Oz. Actually it drops you down to a new section.



Jump on the springboard and push down to land on the grid then leap through another series of five octagon pads. Bounce on the trampoline until you can reach the bridge, cross it and use the springboards and the wind to carry you to another platform. Fly off the springboard and soar towards the sun before coming safely back down to earth (unlike Icarus, Greek myth aficionados). Sprint through this

incredibly fast section collecting bonuses until you reach a rocket launcher which shoots you across to another cool sprinting bit. Let the wind blow you across the gap and bounce off the springboard to the next platform. Continue along, dodging the spiky ball, travel through thin air up the path of leaves and after another bit of springboardery you'll find yourself on the uppermost platform.

The final leg has you pelting along a spectacularly lengthy and twisty gangway. Shoot off the end and the wind will carry you to the final platform, where a blue gem and the end of the stage await.

07 ITEM – Trainers

Head back to the train and return to Central Station. Exit the station and turn left, following the road until you reach a big hole and drop down it to the sewer.

Turn left and jump to the higher level to collect a pair of trainers that upgrade your dash move to a powerful spindash. Step on the red button to reveal a trail of coins and use your spindash (by holding the dash button), releasing on "Go!".

After flying out of the sewer, make your exit to the street.

08 ITEM – Bracelet

Go back to the building next to Central Station, head up the stairs to the two red buttons and opposite you will see a room with automatic doors. Step on the right button to reveal the rings then stand on the left button, charge up your spindash and release just as the automatic doors close. You will fly across collecting the rings and – if your timing is right – enter the room to collect the bracelet.

09 Descend the stairs and go through the doors straight ahead into

Station Square. Go to the casino and step on the red button outside, now stand at the foot of the path of rings and spindash to collect the rings and open the casino door.

10 STAGE 3 – Casinopolis

There is no set path through this stage; you just have to use the various games to collect the rings and when you have cashed in enough at the Ring Room (about 440) you will be able to jump to the level exit and another gem.

However, when your ball drops three times in the pinball game you will plunge to the depths of the casino and, you'll be glad to know, we can guide you through this part.

Head up the slope collecting bonuses and killing/avoiding the baddies, then dodge past the spiky balls and drop into the next room. As you're blown skyward try and collect the bonuses before entering the tunnel.

Sprint through collecting all the rings and drop into another wind room that blows you up to a choice of tunnels. The lower tunnel has two spiky balls; the upper one has spiky balls and a load of rings to collect. Whichever you choose you'll end up dropping into the final room.

Head past the spikes and the spiky balls to a ladder. Ascend this to reach the exit and you'll finish up in the bathroom where you can stop for a quick wash. No, really!

11 After the Casinopolis stage you will see a cut-scene of a blue stone appearing in an alley. Guess what? That's right, you have to go and collect it. Run down the alleyway opposite Station Square Diner and pick up the stone then get on the train to Mystic Ruin and watch the rockface cracking open.

Enter the newly-revealed cave, place the blue stone on the shrine and the ice will open. Run through the tunnel, jump the water and climb the ladder to the next stage.

12 STAGE 4 – Icecap

Collect the rings, kill the robot and drop down to the snow. Go left and then use the springboard to boost up to a cave.

The idea here is, obviously, to get to the top of the cave. First of all, bounce off the springboard to the stalactites and jump across them to the right. Run over to the next springboard and bounce up to the ledge, jump right and right again to a platform containing an extra life. Jump over to the cave mouth where a rocket launcher will fly you across to another cave. Run ▶

SONIC ADVENTURE

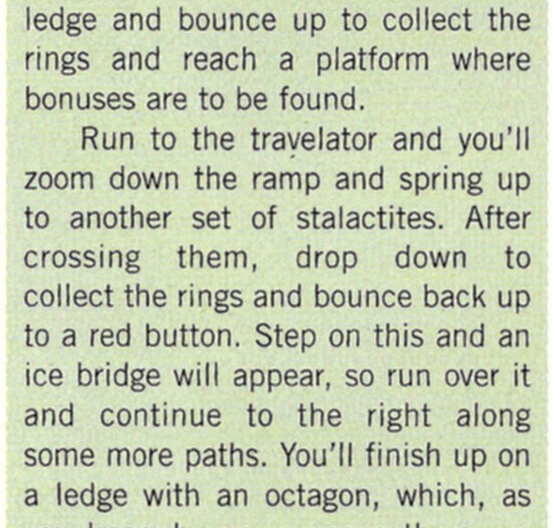
PLAYER'S GUIDE

CONTINUED...

through the tunnel and drop down to the floor of the cave before making your way back up again. Start this process by bouncing off the springboard to the path and catapulting off the next one to reach the stalactites. Leap across them and head up to another springboard. When you land, drop down to the ledge and bounce up to collect the rings and reach a platform where bonuses are to be found.

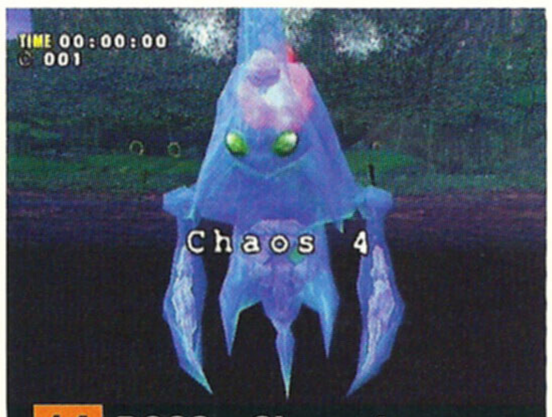
Run to the travelator and you'll zoom down the ramp and spring up to another set of stalactites. After crossing them, drop down to collect the rings and bounce back up to a red button. Step on this and an ice bridge will appear, so run over it and continue to the right along some more paths. You'll finish up on a ledge with an octagon, which, as you know by now, means there are five to jump between. As you land at the top, a drawbridge will drop open and you can run through to exit the cave.

Wait a second... What's that noise? Yes, it's a bloody great avalanche, so hop down to your snowboard and get your spiny hide down that mountain faster than a rat down a drainpipe. When you reach the bottom you'll find a gem and the end of the stage waiting.



13 BOSS – Knuckles

Run back to Mystic Ruin and meet Knuckles near the waterfall. The Echidna is cruisin' for a bruisin', but wait for his attack and dodge it before making your move. After three hits he is beaten, but when you rush headlong at each other Sonic drops the gems and Dr Robotnik swoops in to nab them – setting up another fight with Chaos.



14 BOSS – Chaos 4

Avoid his attacks by hopping across the water lilies and when he sticks his head above water give him what for. It takes five hits to beat him.

15 MINIGAME

Sky Chase Act One

After defeating Chaos 4 head up the steps to Tails' house. A cut-scene shows Tails going into the building and the ground opening up to reveal a runway. Tails comes out in his biplane and it's minigame time.

Shoot incoming planes and fly around the big ship avoiding its missiles and peppering it with gunfire – all to no avail because you're going to get whupped anyway.

Your plane is blown out of the sky and you can only watch helplessly as Sonic freefalls to the ground and lands headfirst in the sand.

His mutilated corpse is then eaten by seagulls... No, he's fine, really. We made that bit up.

16 Go to Station Square and meet Amy then head off for a date at Twinkle Park: the Alton Towers of Sonic world.

17 STAGE 5 – Twinkle Park

Attack the flying dodgem cars whose road safety skills are, frankly, deplorable then jump into whichever

colour car takes your fancy. You can now zoom off in your dodgem for a supercool, superfast trip along the Twinkle Park Circuit (taking care not to come skyrocketing off the track

and plunging to your doom, of course).

When you reach the end of the circuit drop down the hole and then

watch a rollercoaster carry you off to the next part of the level – Twinkle Park, itself.

Run forward and allow yourself to be grabbed by the, erm, 'grabbers' then aim and fire yourself at the pins: yes, it's tenpin bowling, and if

you score a strike, you'll receive a shit-load of rings on the other side of the door.

Carry on through the water to another bowling alley then head up the steps and around the carousel, avoiding the spiky balls. Spring up to the roof and run to a section where you can either take the platform route or drop down and continue at ground level. It makes little difference which you choose, as both lead to the same place – namely, a springboard to some more aerial platforms.

Make the jumps (picking up an extra life), leap across to the roof ledge and run around the building to another springboard which catapults you through a series of bounces until you land in a courtyard. Collect the bonuses alongside the staircase then run up to the end of the stage.

18 As you leave Twinkle Park, pick up the ticket from the traffic island directly ahead then double-back to the building next door to the Twinkle premises. Go through the now open door and take either of the lifts up to the next stage.

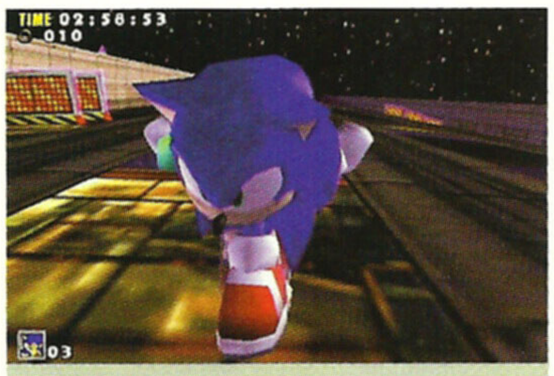
19 STAGE 6

Speed Highway

Sprint along collecting rings then jump up to the yellow platform which carries you to a long series of insanely quick highways. Eventually, you will reach a helicopter pad. Jump

onto the undercarriage of the chopper and it will transport you to the next section of the level.

Use the rocket launcher to fly across to some more roads and sprint along until you reach a second launcher. After flying over the gap, step on the glass and you'll fall into a smart bit where you run down the skyscraper collecting bonuses and



dodging obstacles.

At the bottom, go through to the next section where you can travel through the streets or across the roofs. Whichever route you take just head to the left and eventually you'll reach a fountain that springs you up to the end of the stage.

20 ITEM – Glowing Sprite

Go to Station Square and watch the cut-scene of Amy being kidnapped then get on the train and follow Amy and her kidnapper to Mystic Ruin. After seeing Amy whisked away in the shuttle, scoot up through the cave and let the wind blow you up to the Icecap.

Run past the blue shrine and along the tunnel through the now-open door to a new area. Go down the hill and collect the glowing ball on the rock.

Make your way back to the floating cage by the gate. Spindash into the cage, opening the gate to the next stage.

21 STAGE 7 – Red Mountain

Use the rocket launcher to shoot up to the next level then run round past the spiky balls, across the monkey bars and use the springboard to reach the next platform. Go past the spiky ball and step on the red button to activate the rocket launcher behind you.

After flying up, you can either use the springboards immediately to bounce to the higher platform or you can run around the cliff, past the sacry fire monster and across the monkey bars collecting rings as you go. And then you have to use those pesky springboards.

Go over the wooden bridge, past the spiky balls and either let a geyser throw you across the chasm or avoid them, pick up the extra life and simply bounce across. Once there, use the aerial runway to fly over to the next section.

Jump to the platform and collect rings while avoiding the fire-breathing stone head. Bounce up to the next platform, run over the collapsable

cinder path and dodge the volcanic eruptions. Collect the extra life, activate another rocket launcher and fly up to the next bit.

Leap onto the monkey bars and swing across, jumping off before the end so Mr Stone Head can't fry you. At this point you can either trust fate and drop off the edge of the cliff where a ramp is waiting (honest) or you can spindash and fly into the baddies, wasting them and landing on that self-same ramp in the process. Let the travelator propel you up the ramp and use the springboards and moving platforms to reach the next section.

Run past the obstacles, over the wooden bridge and on to the springboards which boost you over to a bit where you have to dodge a crushing piston before the rocket launcher can be activated. If you manoeuvre the subsequent flight successfully, you can pick up an extra life before continuing along a series of monkey bars and onto another aerial runway. On landing, drop down the hole into the following underground section.

Run down the tunnel and jump off the top of the ramp on the left to reach some bonuses. Move on to the next room and jump down to the lava island to collect an extra life.

Leap back up and continue across the platforms then quickly run over the ground before it disintegrates. Jump from rock-to-rock and kill the fire monsters before you get your short blue arse burned.

Leap over another set of platforms to reach solid ground and immediately kill the fire monster. Now, stop for a moment and smirk at the caged weirdos doing a bizarre and, rather pathetic, soft-shoe shuffle. When you can tear yourself away, bounce off the springboard and hurry over a series of collapsing cinder paths to another springboard which propels you to an area full of lovely rings.

Zip through the tunnel avoiding fire-breathers and other nasties then rocket up to the end of the stage.

22 MINIGAME
Sky Chase Act Two

Watch as Tails picks you up in his new plane and flies off for another bash at the shoot 'em up minigame.

As before, you must blow away incoming planes and bombard the Eggcraft with gunfire. After a bit of action Tails turns his girly-looking plane into an x-winged fighter with attitude and returns for another fly-by.

Shoot and avoid the missiles before facing the ship in a head-on battle. Wait for the 'eye' at the front of the craft to open and then let rip, taking care to avoid the laser beam that fires out.

Eventually, Tails will fly in and land on the big sod. Run up the ship and watch the cut-scene before entering the craft for the next stage.

23 STAGE 8 – Sky Deck

Edge round the column and run down the gangway before it is destroyed. Climb the ladder and bounce onto the spinning columns – jumping between them to reach the path.

Sprint through the next section to get propelled to another column and move round it to the gangway. Boost along the staircases and off the springboards to some bonuses.

Run down the stairs collecting rings and avoiding spiky balls then jump over the travelators so you can continue round the building to collect bonuses, including an extra life. Go back to the travelators and boost along to the ladder. Climb it while avoiding the spiky balls and jump onto the monkey bars. The bars collapse midway but just ignore it and carry on climbing.

Move along the gangways collecting bonuses then jump onto the top part of the column and edge round to ▸

SONIC ADVENTURE
PLAYER'S GUIDE
CONTINUED...

the path (it is possible to search all the levels for goodies at this point but it's really not worth the risk). Circle the craft to the left by running along the gangways at top speed before they're blown up and edging round the columns until you reach column four, where you'll find a rocket launcher to boost you to the top of the ship.

Run across the roof, following the arrows and dodging fire, until you see a big yellow arrow pointing to a path up to a springboard. Bounce up and use the monkey bars.

There now follows an extremely confusing bit where you have to find a rocket launcher amid the chaos of collapsing ground, billowing wind and gunfire. The best advice is to simply run into the screen toward the front of the ship and, eventually, you should find the launcher just behind the cockpits. Fire at the big cannon

in front of you and when it blows up you will access the next area.

Run to the right and get lifted by an elevating platform. Follow the arrows and allow yourself to be propelled around until you reach a ladder, climb it and run to the end of the platform. Jump and grab the swinging cable as it passes over you and go round in a complete circle collecting an extra life. On your next circuit jump off the cable to the platform and pick up all the bonus items. Now, go up the ramp on the left and jump from car-to-car to reach the rolling floor up to the next section of the level.

Drop to the ground and watch everything go weird as the screen turns sideways. The best thing to do is manoeuvre the camera to get the clearest view then follow the arrows – bouncing off the springboards and moving along the monkey bars until you spring up to a staircase. Run along the stairs and stop at the crossroads. Step on the red button in the middle and follow the arrow pointing down to reach the end of this stage. Thank God for that.

24 BOSS – E-102

Drop down to the lift and get taken up to another cut-scene where you meet E-102. This fight is insultingly easy; simply avoid his laser fire, and after a couple of hits the puny robot is beaten.

25 Run forward and, after the cut-scene, go through the door and step on the red button. A line of rings appears and you can spindash collecting the rings and zooming through a hole in the roof as you go.

In the next room jump into the big chair and, as it moves forward, leap out and go behind it to step on the red button and open another door. Pass through, jump up to the gangway and run to the front where Chaos is waiting to get battered.

26 BOSS – Chaos 6

You can't hurt Chaos in his watery form but after a few hits he freezes for a couple of seconds, enabling you to do him some damage.

Avoid his various attacks (don't go near his mouth or the dirty bugger will suck you in and spit you out) and keep jump-attacking until he freezes. After five hits in his frozen form it will be the end of Chaos.

27 STAGE 9
The Lost World

Enter the temple to begin the next stage. Follow the path killing/avoiding the monsters and collecting the rings then speed through the tunnel dodging fire balls. Drop down to another tunnel, run along it and be careful not to land on the spikes as you shoot out the other end. Climb the steps and enter the water room.

Look around and you'll see three shafts of light: they're shining on three square platforms that must be stepped on to open the exit door.

The first one is on the same level as you, so simply run to the left until you reach it – you can't miss it; it's blue, square and surrounded by stone snakes. Now, jump up to the next level where you'll find a circular blue platform, step on this to raise the water level in the room then jump on the stone-snake-boat-thing.

Look for the shaft of light and when you see the second square blue platform jump off the boat and activate it. Next, jump to the level

directly above you and you'll see some spikes in front of a circular blue platform. Leap across, taking care to clear the spikes, and activate it to raise the water level a second time.

You can now reach the third, and final, square platform (a red one) so, as before, jump onto the snake boat and sail around until you see the remaining shaft of light and the red square. Jump off the boat, activate the square and the exit will open.

Finally, get back on the boat and when you see a platform with a big

line of stone snakes leap onto it and go through the door you've just gone to so much trouble to open.

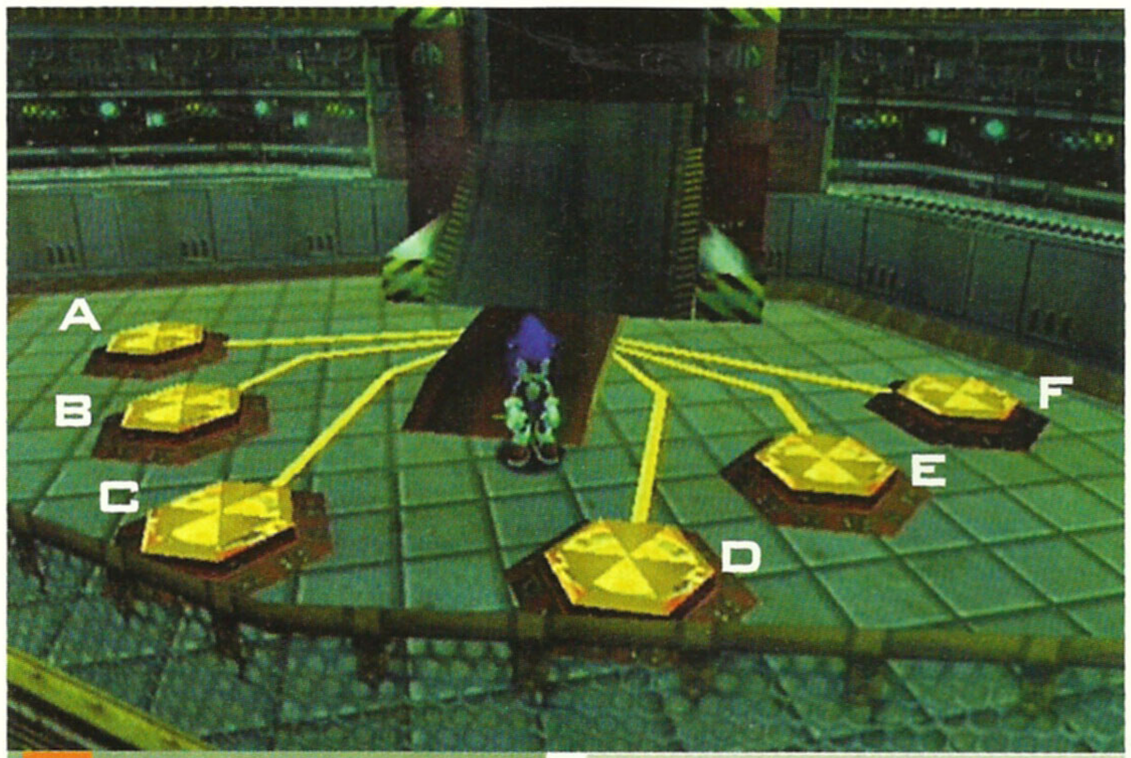
Run along the ledge collecting rings and pass through two doors to another water room. Kill the fire monster and carry on until you reach a mirror. You have to aim the mirror at a larger mirror ahead and slightly to the right (you'll know it's aimed properly when you regain control of Sonic). The path ahead is now illuminated, so move on until you reach another mirror that must be aimed at a larger one just to the left. Jump across and kill the fire monster then aim the next mirror at the massive one right in front of you. Go to the final mirror and aim it then move along until you reach a dead end and a line of coins. You know what to do now; spindash and zoom across the gap to the next room.

There's a cool bit now as you skim down a waterslide and fly down

a waterfall to a small island. Negotiate the platforms or simply bounce across – whichever you prefer – and you'll reach another tunnel. Time your run to avoid the fire and the blocks and carry on until you come to a downward slope.

Get ready to leg it, as you're going to be pursued by an extremely large ball of rock (very *Crash Bandicoot*). It's easy to outrun, though, and you can pick up some bonuses before bouncing up to the next section.

Go through to the beach area and kill the *Space Harrier*-type monster then head to the left and up the slope. Waste the fire monsters, collect the goodies and now you can traverse the room to your heart's content by stepping on the blue platforms until the squares on the wall line up and shine a pink light. This enables you to walk along the platforms and search all over the room for assorted bonuses. Eventually, you need to end up in the top-right alcove, where there is a red button to step on, allowing you to spindash across the room to the end of the stage.



28 After the cut-scene run behind the temple and enter the bridge. Run round to the floor platforms and prepare for a tricky bit because you have to light them all up to open the door. If you can't be arsed with tricky bits just follow this sequence of eight moves and watch the door to the final stage slide open: C-A-F-D-A-B-F-E.

29 STAGE 10 – Final Egg

If you're feeling brave, take out all the baddies. If not, avoid them by moving along the side and jumping the pink beams until you reach a springboard – bounce up to an extra life and a bonus. Carry on and smash into the droids who are shooting the pink beams that block your path. Head for the springboard and bounce up to a higher level.

Charge into the group of droids and you'll collect bonuses, including an extra life, as well as wasting them in the process. Now, bounce off the two springboards to the next platform. Jump across the rolling floors, avoiding the spiky balls, and head through a series of turbines to reach the next part of the level.

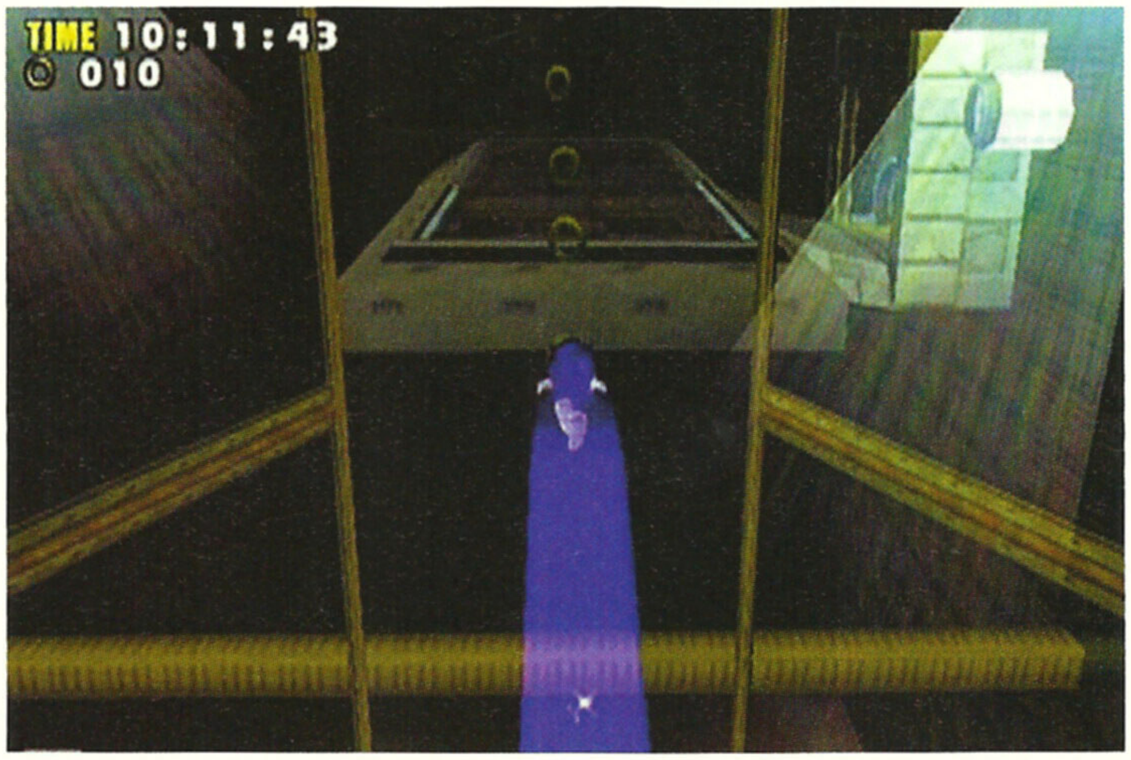
Leap across the platforms and spindash over the gap, killing the baddies and collecting the bonus. Drop into the next room and sprint through a set of tunnels to a room where you have to carefully negotiate a series of moving platforms to reach the top. Drop down and pick up an extra life then sprint through another network of tunnels.

Stand on the red button to activate the lift. Jump across to the moving platform and onto the next one, taking care to avoid the swinging hammer. Now, be very careful as you make a mighty leap across to the exit and a lift to the next section.

Avoid the spiky balls if you value your blue hide, and run to another series of moving platforms, jump down them and across to the gangway. Collect all the rings before entering a lift with legs. No, really.

The next room is full of bonuses, including two extra lives, so pick them up before heading down the tunnel. Ignore the strange purple monsters and climb the ladder to the gangway. Jump onto the fans and let them blow you to the platform then move from fan-to-fan to reach the exit. Use the same method in the next room.

Negotiate the ramp and springboards to reach a set of bonuses before moving through to a travelator and a fan that blows you to another room containing goodies. Take the elevator to meet up with some more of our purple monster ▶



SONIC ADVENTURE
PLAYER'S GUIDE
CONTINUED...

chums, head up the ramp on the right and sprint through a set of tunnels until you come to what can only be described as a Bastard Awful Gaming Moment.

You fly out of the tunnel into oblivion, and it is mostly luck that determines whether you land on a platform at the bottom or plunge into infinity. The best advice is to try and guide your fall to the middle of the room where you should be able to find a platform to land on. If you're fortunate enough to touch down on the highest moving platform you can simply float across the fans to the next room. If not, you'll have to use the springboard to try and reach the platform. Good luck!

Once at the top, run through the tunnel and then drop into a room full of those purple jobbies. Go through the doors and straight ahead to the next room then head up the slope on the right, past the robot and drop down. If you like, you can stop and destroy the cruel dummies of Sonic and his pals before following the path around to the right and stopping at the edge.

See that line of rings? See that big gap? Yes, you know what to do. Charge that spindash of yours and fly across to the end of the final stage and a showdown with the final nasty boss. Hurrah!

30 BOSS – Egg Viper

If the other bosses in the game are too easy, this final boss more than makes up for it and is probably the work of the Devil himself.

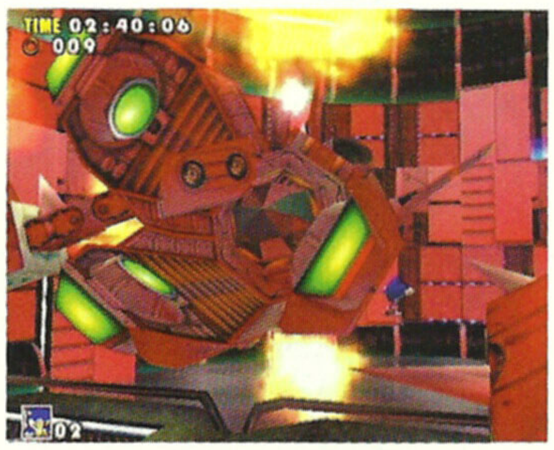
Follow the usual boss method of learning patterns of attacks, avoiding them and getting your hits in at the appropriate time. It takes seven hits to beat Egg Viper (no pun intended). This is the system: ▸

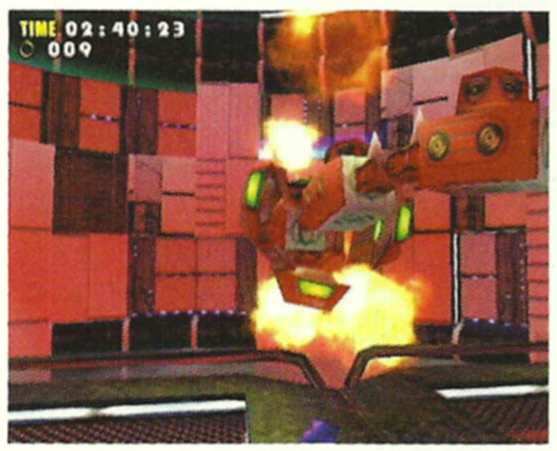
First dodge three attacks, and when Robotnik stops and opens his cockpit use your jump-attack on him.

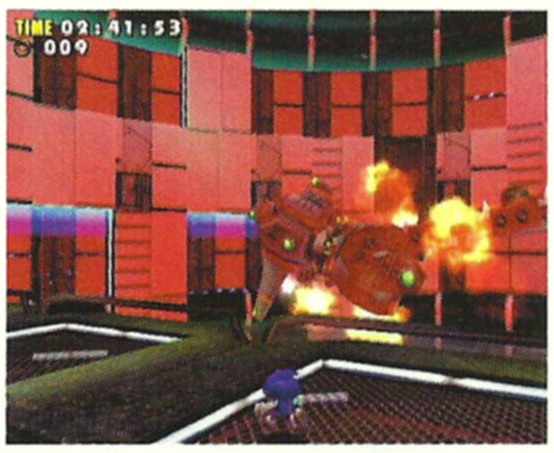
For the next three hits, dodge three Egg Viper attacks and when he extends the ship's tail and opens his cockpit do four consecutive jump-attacks – three on the tail's green lights, the fourth on the cockpit.

With the final three hits Dr Robotnik fires spinning razor discs at you. This bit requires good timing: wait until the disc is almost upon you then jump and you'll land on top of it.

The disc carries you to the Egg Viper and you can now attack it. Do this three times and the ship is destroyed. But beware! As the craft goes into its death throes it can knock you off the gangway, so keep a beady eye on it and make sure that you stay well clear of the plummeting craft.







That's it – you've finished Sonic's *Adventure*. Sit back and watch the end movie with smug satisfaction. Only five more characters to go...

SECRETS

■ Faster Sonic spins
Tap X or B continuously.

■ Two-player Tails
The second controller can be used to play as Tails alongside Sonic on your second run through each action stage. Bonuses and extra lives have no effect on Tails, but any rings he collects are added to Sonic's total.

■ Full Pause Screen
Rather pointless this, but if you want a clear image when you pause the game, press Y and X.

■ Alternate Twinkle Park race views
Press up on the D-pad during the race to toggle between views.

■ Alternate snowboards
If you fancy a bit of colour-coordination, just before starting the snowboarding, press X for a blue board or B for a yellow one.

■ Chao puzzle game
Start a normal game of *Sonic Adventure* with a controller and a VMS plugged into port D. A hidden tile-based puzzle game will appear on the VM screen and you can control it with the Dreamcast pad. After every five puzzles you solve, an animation will play on the VM.

■ Play as Super Sonic
Complete the game with all six characters and you'll be able to select Super Sonic from the selection screen. You will begin as normal Sonic in Mystic Ruin. Go to the green shrine and head round the back until you meet Dr Robotnik. A new cut-scene follows showing fire surrounding the shrine. Run back to the shrine for another cut-scene.

When Tails wakes you up, go to the lake in Mystic Ruin and through the mine-car tunnel. A cut-scene begins that resembles the very first movie in the game. Sonic is faced with Perfect Chaos and the hedgehog's friends gather all the Chaos Emeralds and give them to him so he can become Super Sonic for the final battle of the game.

Note: some of the characters' names may have changed in the final version of *Sonic Adventure*.

TRICK STYLE

CHARACTER GUIDE

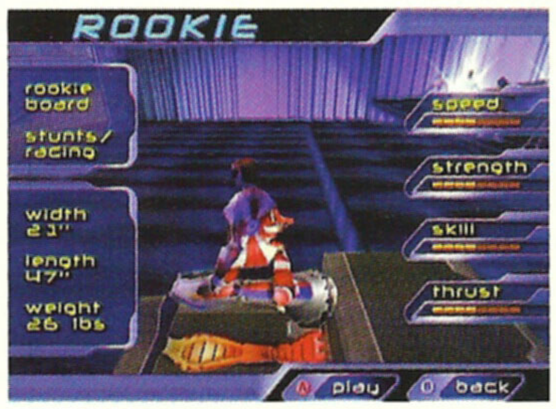
Trick Style is the new kid on the racing game block and, apart from blistering speed, he has a fancy pair of metaphorical kecks in the form of freestyle trickery.

There are nine playable characters in the game split into three categories: Racer, Stunter, Bully. The titles are self-evident with Racers the speediest, Stunters the most skillful and Bullies are the strongest characters, with a tendency to live up to their name.

These separate categories of rider require different racing strategies and your performance is also varied by which hoverboard you choose.

With that in mind, here for your delectation is the lowdown on the runners and riders and the combinations best suited to produce maximum output ■

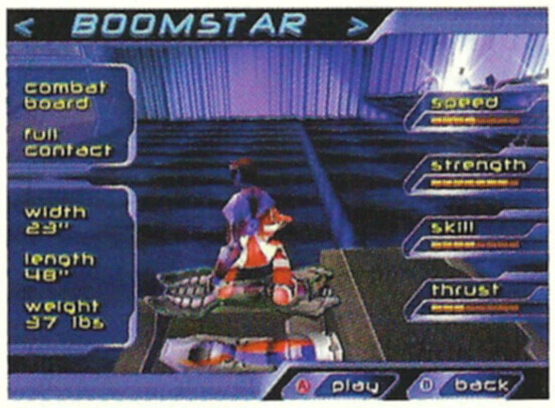
HOVERBOARDS



> **ROOKIE** – this baby is the bog-standard board, balanced in every department and equally suitable for each rider ■

> **VELOCITY** – turbo board, won in Backstreets USA. Raises speed and thrust, decreases strength and skill. Best for Bullies and Stunters, as they benefit from the increased speed and have the strength/skill to make up for losses in those areas ■

> **RIPSLIDE** – stunt board, won in Skydrome. Raises skill and thrust. Ideal for all riders to use in the challenges that require a high standard of trickery and control ■



> **BOOMSTAR** – combat board, won in UK Stuntbowl. Raises strength and decreases thrust. Most useful to Racers and Stunters as it doesn't affect their basic speed/skill yet it increases their muscle ■

RIDERS

RACER

> Racers are speedy devils (surprise, surprise), who, when left to their own devices, could easily out run the opposition. However, true to Trick Style's Nintendo-influences, their pace advantage is countered by a lack of strength that enables aggressive opposing riders, especially the Bullies, to knock them around like feeble insects. The best solution is just to get to the head of the pack – and stay there. If you're up to it.

It is tempting to equip the racers with the Velocity board to capitalise on their speed even further, but a more sensible course of action is to use the Boomstar board. This way you can become as hard as nails while still retaining your speed advantage ■

BEST RACER: Shin

STUNTER

> Stunters are the trick meisters best used on the Ripslide board during challenges and UK Stuntbowl. Their outrageous freestyle antics aren't absolutely necessary in the races unless you're aiming for a virtuoso performance, but slap them on the Velocity board and they'll have the speed to go with their skill ■

BEST STUNTER: King

BULLY

> Bullies are the puffa jacket-wearing bad boyz of the game, who can bang into the other riders and laugh derisively as they land on their arses. And after the race is over, they can be seen hanging round the local bus shelter, bothering innocent OAPs. However, the bulky physiques of these toughs reduces their speed and skill. Bet you didn't expect that...

A way to counteract this is by giving them the Velocity board and with that they'll have the pace to match their muscles – and their opponents. Alternatively, just for a laugh, give them the ultra-tough Boomstar; they'll be slower than a weekend in Macclesfield but a damn sight harder than Arnie in Terminator ■

BEST BULLY: Rose

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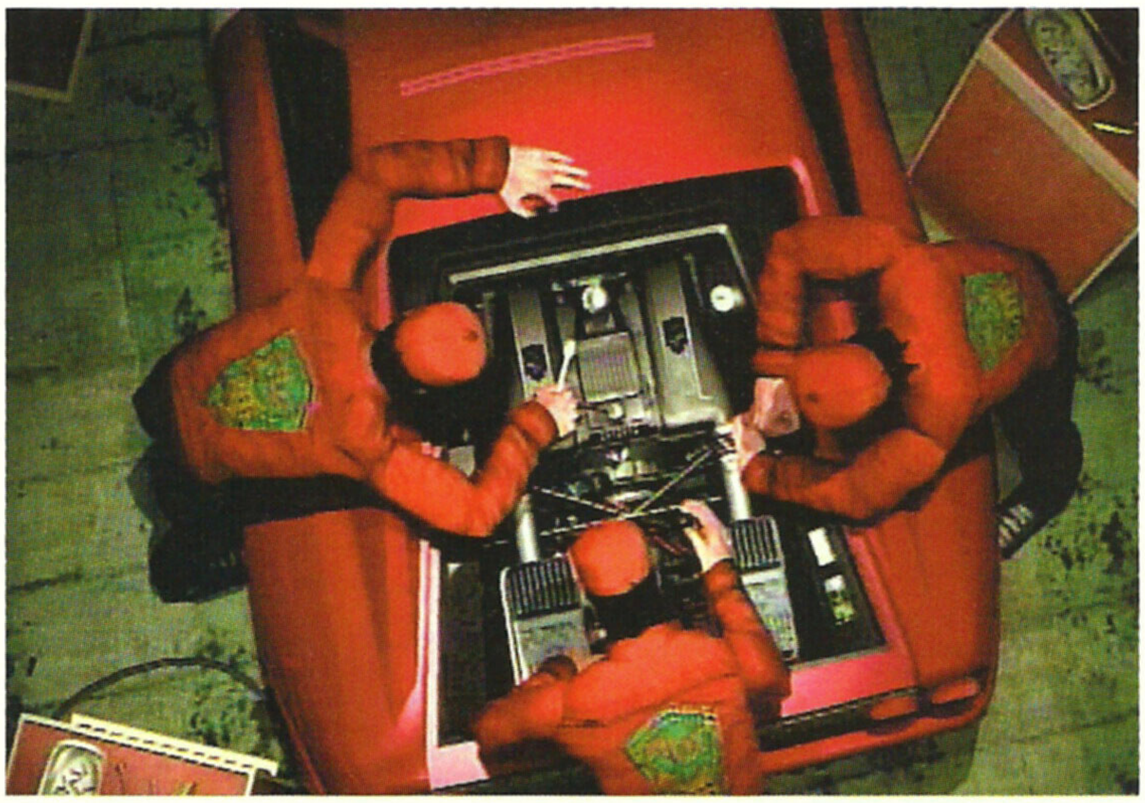
FERRARI 355 CHALLENGE

The latest racing game to pit-in at your local arcade is more than a game; **it's real.** Join **DC-UK** as we buckle up and **take the famous 'redhead' for a spin**



Believe the hype: Sega's *Ferrari 355 Challenge* is the most realistic driving simulation the world has ever witnessed. The response from the controls is unparalleled, the sensation of immersion vivid. Every touch of the pedals, each twitch of the wheel leaves you in no doubt that über-producer Yu Suzuki and his team take their work very, very seriously.

But just what is it that they've created? *Ferrari 355 Challenge* is not really a game in the traditional sense – it's an interactive experience. It treads the same path beaten by Atari's *Hard Drivin'*, the epitome of videogaming's eager scramble towards replicating reality. *Ferrari 355 Challenge* is no successor to Suzuki-san's famed '80s racer, *OutRun*, a hardline proponent of classic 'arcade' race car handling. In fact, it's anything but.

Settling into *355 Challenge's* cabinet, the sheer technical beauty of what Suzuki has fathered seeps under your skin. The three screens saturate your field of vision, loudspeakers wash away the noise outside. A bewildering array of gearstick controls, driving assist switches, semi-automatic gear paddles and pedals indicate that you're about to take part in something special. But novice or Jedi Master, Suzuki-san has catered for your needs; you have the power to decide how complex the challenge will be.

So choose: training, driving or racing; then auto, semi-auto or manual (complete with working clutch); then from one of eight tracks; and then which

driving assists you want on. The temptation is irresistable. Full spec, race mode, an expert track, no traction control, no steering assist. And as any rookie jumping in a fullblown sports car would do, you slip, slide and slither around at the back of the pack, cursing your selections, realising that this isn't a game at all. This is real.

You try again with an easier spec and perform slightly better, and then try again. Much later, soaked in sweat, you climb trembling from the machine, wallet empty. And quietly, irreversibly, you're hooked ■

Soaked in sweat, you **climb trembling from the machine, wallet empty.** And quietly, irreversibly, you're hooked

01 *Ferrari 355's* three screens and detailed graphics are the result of *four* Naomi boards being wired together. The result is the most realistic racing game ever known. And the most expensive, at a cool £18,000 per unit

02 That's a Ferrari, in case you didn't recognise it

What the hell is a Naomi?

Sega's coin-op hardware **enables the big arcade hits** to appear on Dreamcast

Sega's reputation as a leading arcade game producer is unquestionable. Many of the most memorable, innovative coin-ops the world has ever played have borne the mark of Sega's development departments. Anyone who's spent quality time and money in an arcade will know the company's creations: *OutRun*, *Space Harrier*, *Virtua Fighter*, *Daytona USA*, *Virtua Racing* – the list goes on and on.

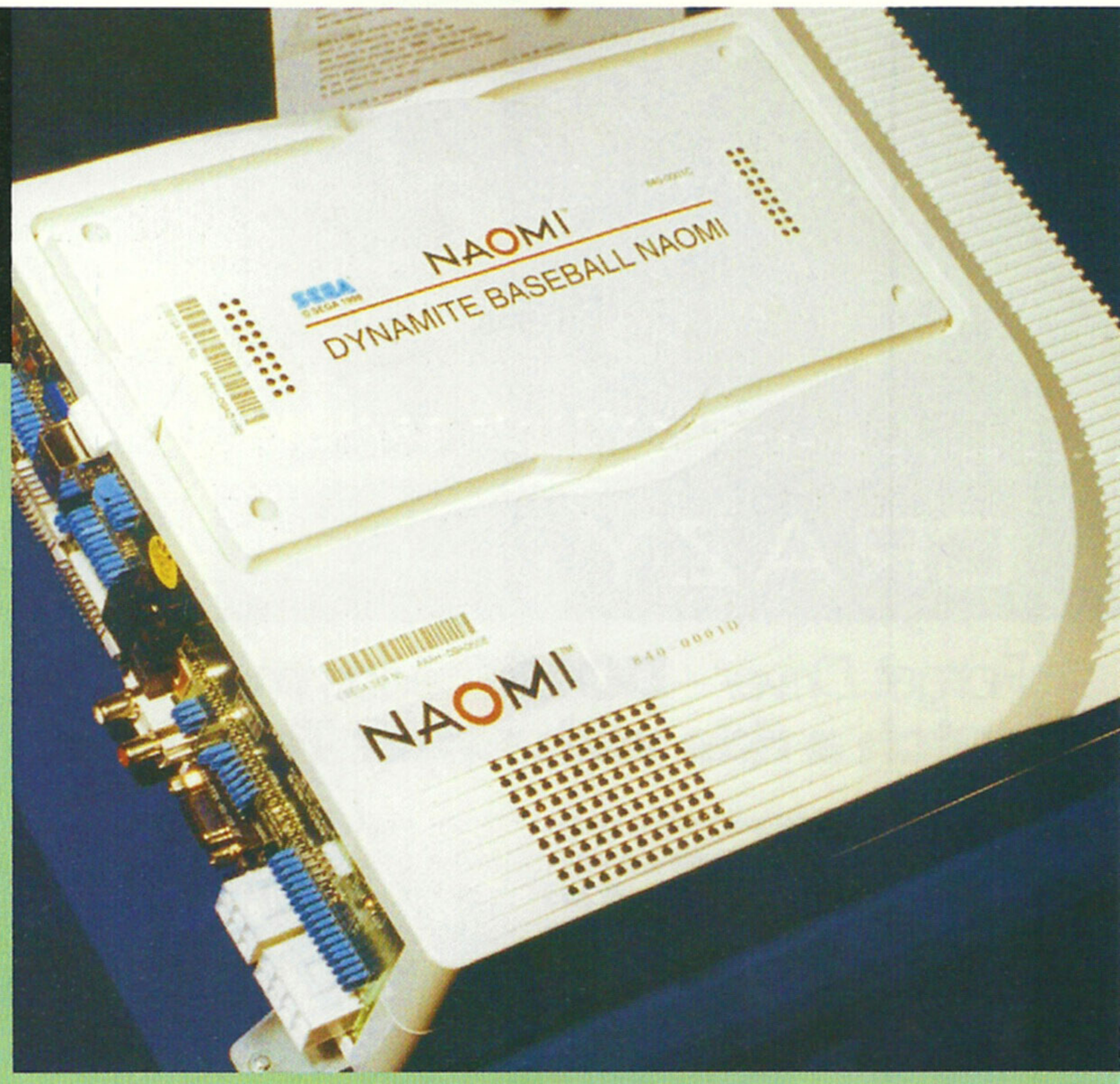
Powering those smash hits has been a collection of mind-blowing hardware that has set the standard for other manufacturers to follow. Perhaps the most famous of all is the 'Model' series, which took Sega's games firmly into the 3D age. Namco, Konami and Capcom had little option but to follow suit after the gameplaying world went bonkers for the first *Virtua* titles.

Naomi is Sega's latest coin-op hardware, and for the dedicated Dreamcaster is probably the ultimate in desirability. That's because Naomi is essentially an even more powerful Dreamcast, with double the amount of main and video RAM (meaning that its graphic performance is increased – anyone who has upgraded their PC's RAM will know exactly what we're talking about).

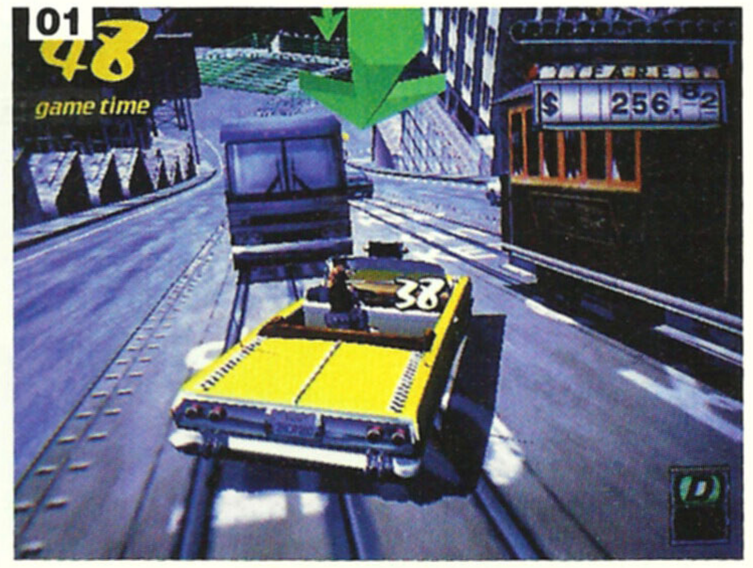
The most significant thing about Naomi is that because it's so similar to Dreamcast, Sega can port the best Naomi games to its 128bit console faster than most developers get out of bed in the morning. So **DC-UK's** killer collection of coin-op's this issue are almost inevitable Dreamcast releases.

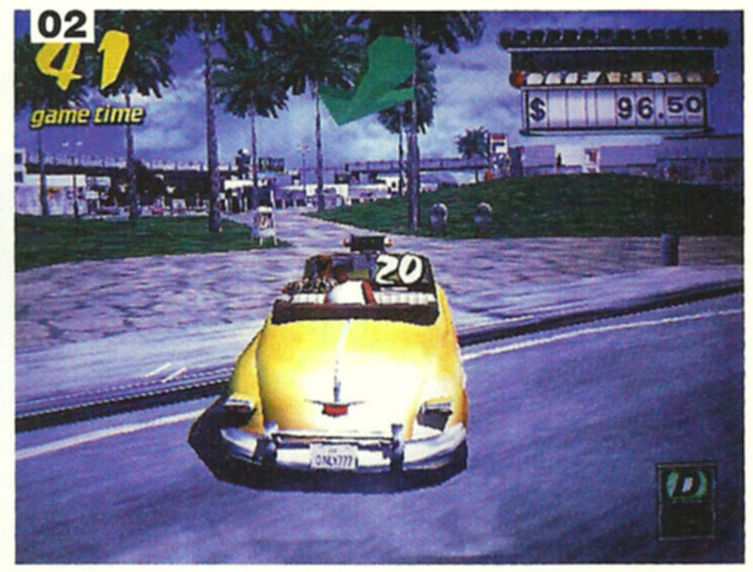
Sega's not the only one making Naomi titles – Capcom has already created the fantastic *Power Stone* (available in the UK for launch), while Namco and others are also interested in the system. Capcom's forthcoming *Spawn* game licence is looking incredible, and there's much more to come.

Naomi is unquestionably a massive bonus for Dreamcast. From *Ferrari 355 Challenge* and *Crazy Taxi*, to *Zombie Revenge* and *The House of the Dead 2*, the quality of Sega-exclusive games is unmatched. And if you want to get some early practise in before the home version of a game comes out, just pile down to your local arcade. Sega is even considering making Naomi compatible with the Dreamcast Visual Memory cards, so you can take your saved games from home and play in the arcade. Naomi: a real supermodel ■



CRAZY TAXI





01 Sega's development team was recruited from a north London Minicab firm, in order to ensure a rock-bottom set of motoring morals

02 Because the environments are so wonderfully open, you're able to take every nefarious shortcut imaginable; across parks, the wrong way up highways, or straight through a multi-storey car park. Fabulous

Forget *Driver* – **DC-UK** recommends you **get yourself down the arcade and catch a ride with *Crazy Taxi*.** Or wait for it to come out on Dreamcast...

Sega's two Naomi driving games prove just how diverse the genre has become. Where *Ferrari 355 Challenge* is all about high fidelity reality reproduction, *Crazy Taxi* is as wacky as they come. The plot's simple enough (this is a coin-op after all): drive around San Francisco collecting passengers and delivering them to their destinations. However, it's often the case that from such simple concepts mighty great games do burst.

If you're looking for points of reference, then try blending Reflections' recent PlayStation monster hit, *Driver*, with a pinch of DMA's equally massive attack, *Grand Theft Auto*. The sense of urgency – which frequently rises to unchecked panic – that makes both of those games such a thrill to play, is even more evident in *Crazy Taxi*. While you play, there's a big bad clock chopping down the seconds you have left to get your fares to their destination.

Control-wise, *Taxi* veers confidently into the lane reserved for classic arcade games. Forget any notions about *Gran Turismo*-esque realism; the tail end of your cab will be powersliding around like a horny Scandinavian mud wrestler on Viagra. And that's fine, because you wouldn't expect a game with *Crazy* in its title to be anything but that. The stand-up cabinet's simple controls are a million miles from *355 Challenge*'s multiple options – you get two pedals, a wheel, a forward/backward option, and... that's all, folks.

Taxi's graphic performance is fantastic; the volume of traffic and pedestrians is simply astounding. In fact, the general level of detail in the game makes *Driver*'s silent streets look post-apocalyptically barren in comparison. When the Dreamcast version of *Taxi* turns up, it's bound to send PlayStation owners' jaws plummeting floorward.

Crazy Taxi is a brilliant reminder of what arcade games are supposed to be: frantic, frenzied, foolish and fun. While it costs £1 a go, rather than the 10p of yesteryear's classics, the sheer addictiveness of *Crazy Taxi* will have you coming back for more again and again and again. Superb ■

ZOMBIE REVENGE

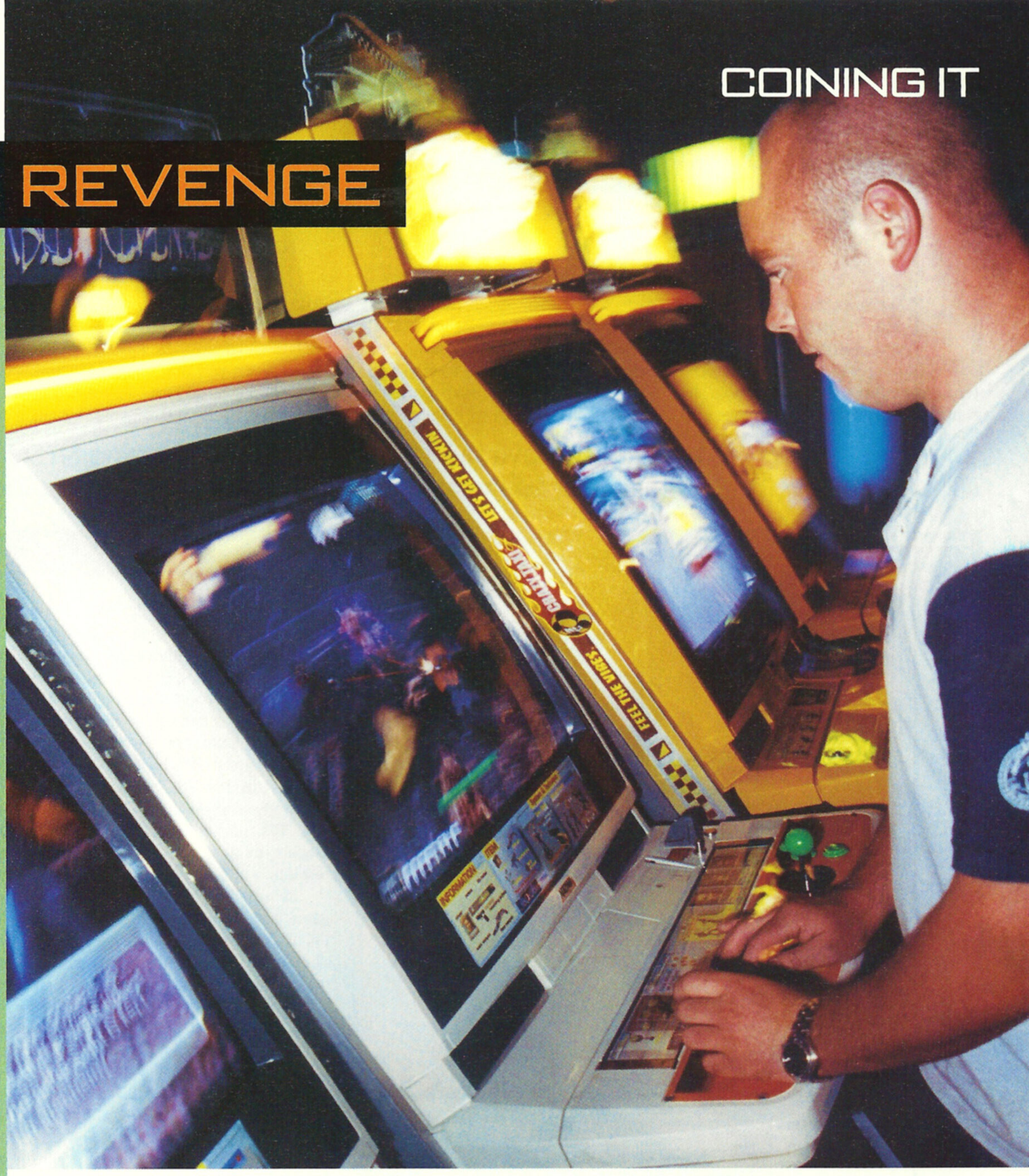
Try to imagine, if you will, taking all the best blood and guts, zombie blasting, stomach-churning action from Capcom's classic gore-fest, *Resident Evil*, and rebuilding it into a scrolling beat 'em up. Welcome, friends, to the messy world of *Zombie Revenge*.

Originally titled *The House of The Dead: Side Story* (and then spending a while under the name *Zombie Zone*), *Zombie Revenge* is a neat extension of the *HOTD* franchise. While the game doesn't offer quite the same shock factor that makes its shoot 'em up forebears such a blood-curdling scream to play, *Revenge* is an addictive play in its own right.

Set across a series of suitably dingy levels, the game is a massive improvement over its stablemate *Dynamite Deka 2* (now available on import for Dreamcast – see page 118). Although both occupy the same game genre, *Revenge* is streets ahead in its playability. Neat touches, such as being able to perform combo attacks with the weapons (we'll come to those in a bit), are backed up by dozens of plot events to keep the action exciting. In one section you must guide the characters along the top of a fast-moving freight train, thrashing zombies on the way.

Back to those weapons. While a large percentage of *Revenge's* armoury is yer average guns/bats/explosives-type malarky, the ability to impale zombies on industrial drills and then bore them into dripping chunks is rather thrilling. As with the projectile weapons, successive hits build up a score multiplier, much like a fighting game's combo system. The system is not as complex as it sounds, and gives you a real incentive to try and pull off the more spectacular attacks.

There's loads to see and do in *Zombie Revenge*, and while its core gameplay is as shallow as an infants' swimming pool, Sega's development team has ensured there are enough toys and playgrounds to keep you coming back for more. Which is why *Revenge* is such a goddam coin-cruncher. Bugger ■



The ability to impale zombies on **industrial drills and bore them into dripping chunks** is rather thrilling

01 *Zombie Revenge* is like *Resident Evil* crossed with a beat 'em up, which means that it's very good indeed
02 Go on, finish him with a headshot. Who said videogame violence was bad for you?

NOT THE SAME CABLE

DC-UK'S REGULAR DELVE INTO THE SHADOWY WORLD OF IMPORT GAMING

Ever since the earliest days of the videogame console, manufacturers have tried to split the global market into separate territories. They do this by equipping every machine they make with a lock-out chip or security codes, ensuring that a PlayStation, SNES or Dreamcast bought in Europe won't be able to play a game that's been released in Japan. There are two main reasons for this: to control piracy (if there was one world standard, the thousands of pirated games available in Hong Kong and the Far East could flood into Europe), and to control when and how each game gets released in each territory. To sneak past this rather oppressive regime, various specialist shops in the UK employ various tactics to import NTSC machines and games from Japan and America – just so dedicated UK gamers can get their hands on them. The question you may now be asking is why? ■

So why, when the console makers have put so much effort into stopping NTSC imports, would you still want to have one? The answer falls neatly into three categories: **Better, Late** and **Never**

SONIC: SMOOTHER

POWER STONE: SOONER

BETTER

Heard of NTSC? Or PAL? Disregarding the in-depth technical mumblings of either – this is, after all, a launch issue, and we'd like you back for the second – both represent two different types of television standard. Britain is a devotee of the PAL system. NTSC is favoured by the US and Japan. There are two key differences between them: PAL TVs run at 50Hz, while NTSC models run at 60, and PAL TVs have a resolution of 625 lines, not 525.

In very basic terms, releasing a game in PAL-owning Europe requires a bit of extra coding on the part of the developer. At least, it does if they intend to do things properly. If they disregard this duty – and oh, how they have at times – the physical manifestations of such blatant commercial laziness can be dreadful.

Firstly, there's what is commonly referred to as the 'letterbox' display. Essentially, this is wasted black space at the top and bottom of the screen, which crops up because the programmers haven't bothered to increase the resolution to meet PAL standards. This is a Bad Thing.

The second common problem is a reduction in speed. How significantly will these affect the Dreamcast? At the time of writing, it's hard to say. You can rest assured, however, that we will draw your attention to Japanese or American versions of games that run appreciably better than their UK equivalents. Sometimes, that extra bit of speed can make all the difference...

Finally, there is another spin on the 'better' category. Sometimes, games released in Japan have a few more options or features than the version we get in Europe. Perhaps the companies concerned believe that Western audiences are unable to appreciate the curio or play mode in question.

Alternatively, they might think the extra translation is not worth their while. It's a rare event for the missing elements to actually amount to much, but many hardcore gamers put great store in such things ■

LATE

Despite the odd brief flirt with the concept of the 'global launch', software publishers tend to release software at different times in various worldwide territories. It's no great leap of logic to expect a game to make its debut in its home locale. Thus, a Japanese game first sees light of day in Japan... you get the picture. What can be puzzling (or, indeed, frustrating) is

the delay between its inaugural appearance and its eventual appearance on UK soil. Collect the many cited reasons (or excuses) for this, and you'd have a tome that would make War and Peace look like a pocket paperback.

Even the best games, standard bearers for their proud publishers, are often subject to belated arrivals measured in several months, rather than weeks. The impatient or completist gamer, naturally, will seek a Japanese or US version. You can expect to pay anything between £10 and £50 on top of the UK RRP for the privilege of getting these, though... ■

PSYCHIC FORCE: NOT BLOODY LIKELY

■ NEVER

Software publishers, like their commercial counterparts in other media industries, are not charities. Ultimately, every launch must make a profit; at the very least, they hope to cover their losses. Marginal games – from RPGs to old-school strategy titles – are often perceived as risky prospects, damned to retail obscurity. "Sod that," says your average publisher. "Now how's that generic beat 'em up/driving game/platform game coming on?" Generally, the cost of translation from Japanese to English text is the major reason for not launching games in the UK – 'localising' a medium-sized RPG can cost in excess of £50,000.

There are real gems to be found, too. This, to a large extent, is why **DC-UK** will carry a selection of import reviews every month ■

> See the classifieds on page 128-129 for games importers

IMPORT ESSENTIALS!

■ READ THIS FIRST! TO PLAY IMPORT GAMES, YOU NEED TO ENSURE THAT YOU HAVE THE NECESSARY EQUIPMENT TO PLAY THEM ON...

■ DO YOU OWN: A Japanese or American Dreamcast, or (potentially) an add-on device that allows you to play games from either country?
■ WHY THIS IS NECESSARY: Have you heard of the term 'territorial lockout'? In essence, this is a feature within the European Dreamcast that prevents games from NTSC regions from running. All consoles – from the antiquated Mega Drive, to the ageing PlayStation – have this nasty trick hidden in their metaphorical sleeves. Sega, like other videogame giants, is loathe to condone the existence of the import scene. To get around this, you either need an NTSC machine, or an add-on device that fools the Dreamcast into thinking that it can play any game. Which, of course, it actually can. The latter does not exist yet but, traditionally, thirdparty manufacturers tend to start working on these add-ons immediately after the launch of a new console. As soon as we hear of one, we'll tell you all about it.
■ TO SUMMARISE: UK Dreamcast (sans NTSC-friendly add-on device, whenever it arrives) need not apply. Those with a Japanese or American machines are fine...

■ DO YOU OWN: A TV capable of displaying an NTSC signal?
■ WHY THIS IS NECESSARY: Before you rush out to buy an NTSC Dreamcast, you should take a long, hard look at your TV. Is it a dual-format model, capable of displaying both NTSC and PAL signals? If it's more then four years old, the chances are that it isn't. If it's a low-budget portable, it's also unlikely to fit the required bill. The best way to find out is to ask the store that you bought it from or, better still, the manufacturer. If it's a PAL-only model, you'll need to buy a new TV. Plug an NTSC Dreamcast into it and, at best, you'll get a grainy, stretched and, above all, visually unpleasant black-and-white picture. At worst, you'll get a mess of rolling lines.
■ TO SUMMARISE: You need a dual-format TV. If you don't have one, you'll have to start putting money aside...

■ DO YOU OWN: A step-down transformer, and either a SCART or S-Video cable?
■ WHY THESE ARE NECESSARY: If you buy an NTSC Dreamcast, the retailer in question will prompt you into buying these, too. It's a good idea to consent to both. Japan and the US use different voltages to the UK, and plugging your Dreamcast straight into the mains will, in all likelihood, kill it forever. A 'step down', as they are known, regulates the voltage to a DC-friendly level.

A SCART or S-Video cable is needed to link your TV and Dreamcast. If your TV is happy with NTSC signals, you will have sockets for one or both on top-range models. Generally, people argue that SCART offers a better quality of image, so opt for that if you have it. Some would even argue that bronze, silver or gold-plated versions of these – costing anything from £20 to £60 – offer an even better standard of picture. But do you really want to take things that seriously?
■ TO SUMMARISE: When buying your NTSC Dreamcast, be sure to buy a step-down transformer and the right TV cable.

■ AND THERE'S MORE Read the following checklist

■ **Do you read Japanese?**
It's a fact that the majority of desirable imports hark from Japan, and the language barrier is a big issue. If you answered 'no' to all of the above posers, buying obscure Japanese RPGs is not a wise move. Imagine a situation where an in-game character – a sage, perhaps, says: "Speak to the wise man on the Far Continent. That is many, many moons west of here." Thing is, for all *you* know, they might have said, "My underwear is smiling at you." You have to be pretty confident of your gaming abilities to get anywhere when a game's narrative aspect is as impenetrable as a devout nun. Sometimes, dedicated fans of a particular title will write partial translations, or handy walkthroughs, for reasonably popular titles. You can find these with a quick scout of the Internet. But then sometimes they don't. Buying text-heavy games of an Eastern origin can be a real risk.

■ **Do you understand Japanese culture?**
The Japanese are super-keen on nurturing titles, 'dating sims', complete with hotpant-clad teenager, and other obscure genres, designed solely for their home market. Language is only half the issue with these – the cultural barrier is just as significant. We would advise you that unless **DC-UK** recommends games of this nature, it would be wise to give them a wide berth.

■ **Do you intend to use your Dreamcast's Internet facilities?**
If you invest in a Japanese or American Dreamcast, the sad fact is that you won't be able to use it to access the Internet as you would with a PAL version. The software inside your Dreamcast is specifically written for the telecommunications system in each territory. And unfortunately, there's no way you can import a Japanese telephone network into your house.

IMPORT REVIEWS

King of Fighters: Dream Match '99

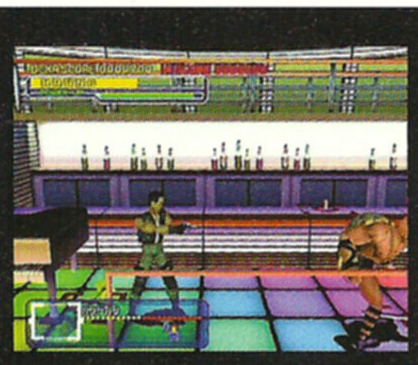
PUBLISHER: SNK **UK RELEASE:** Possible

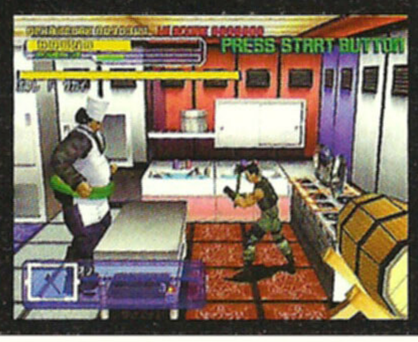
While the many permutations of Capcom's *Street Fighter* have enjoyed a large amount of exposure in the West, SNK's *King of Fighters* franchise is a relative unknown. Although a *cause célèbre* for the hardcore gamer – the beat 'em up devotee in particular, obviously – *KoF* games rarely reach the UK.

King of Fighters: Dream Match '99 has enjoyed a favourable reception in its native Japan, where 2D games often rival their 3D counterparts in terms of popularity. With its inordinately large number of playable characters and superbly-balanced battles, it's not hard to see why. It's a common reviewer's cliché to liken *Street Fighter* to chess, or an equivalent. The logic, or so it is presented, is that the simplicity and consistency of a *Street Fighter* battle often surpasses that of any 3D equivalent out there. Much the same can be said of *Dream Match '99*.

As both *SF* and *KoF* share a common evolutionary path, the similarities between both are many. But, like a mother distinguishes between twins with barely a glance, advocates of both will breathlessly relate the intricacies and quirks that make both worthwhile. To dismiss a *King of Fighters* game as a *Street Fighter* derivative is to miss many points.

Above all, *King of Fighters: Dream Match '99* is incredibly playable, especially with two. Polished, comprehensive and striking to behold, it's a game that can appease both hardcore gamers and the casual player. For those who prefer *Street Fighter*-flavoured 2D fighting, it might be a favourite by proxy – it could be that the forthcoming *Alpha 3* will be the better of the two. For the moment, though, SNK's brawl truly *is* king ■





Dynamite Deka 2

PUBLISHER: Sega **UK RELEASE:** October

Saturn owners of old, or regular arcade-goers may recall *Die Hard Arcade*, a Sega-sired fighting game. Following the classic *Streets of Rage/Double Dragon* design brief, it offered numerous assailants, tons of weaponry to collect and lose, and disposable narrative to glue each set of confrontations together. It was also, to the disappointment of many, alarmingly short. *Dynamite Deka 2* is its successor, without McLaine and its superficial licence.

That *Dynamite Deka 2* is a reiteration of its predecessor is no real surprise. After all, 'sequel' and 'innovation' are hardly analogous, are they? No, the real shocker is that *Deka 2* is an equally short-lived experience. It's fun while it lasts. Offering a carbon copy of its arcade counterpart, its no-brain gameplay has few tricks up its sleeve, but plenty of noise and visual excess. And then, almost abruptly, it doesn't. For those infected with the completist bug, *Deka 2* offers plenty of scope for those high scores and gets you aspiring for a 'perfect' result. Everyone else will get around a tenner's worth of enjoyment, by arcade machine standards ■

Pen Pen Trilcelon

PUBLISHER: Sega **UK RELEASE:** Definitely

You might expect a game released with a newly-launched console to be pretty good. Well, you would, wouldn't you? But while the US and UK Dreamcast debuts are typified by the great games available from day one, the Japanese premiere was rather more inauspicious. *Virtua Fighter 3tb* is, obviously, great. *Pen Pen Trilcelon*, however, was not, and is not.

Trilcelon so obviously wants to offer a new spin on the *Mario Kart* theme. It's a noble sentiment. But it needs to be executed with far greater aplomb. With a handful of different racing styles, this lamentably misbegotten racer attempts to offer a line in variety. Sadly, they rarely work, and seem ill-suited to each other. The stages where you walk and jump over obstacle-strewn courses, in particular, are uniformly dismal. But *Pen Pen Trilcelon* is by no means the worst racing game ever released. Stuck on a desert island with it, Dreamcast, mains supply and your telly, you'd extract more than a modicum of enjoyment out of it. But are you in sandy isolation? Exactly ■

Get Bass

PUBLISHER: Sega **UK RELEASE:** Definitely

There seems little point telling you what *Get Bass* is, or explaining what it does – it's self-explanatory, really. You fish. And guess what? It's fun.

It shouldn't be. Everything about the concept, and the – frankly bizarre – analogue rod peripheral, screams 'gimmick!' You'd think that the arcade original might be worth a few giggles and pounds, although not necessarily in that order. But a console conversion? Surely there's not enough to it?

But there is. Again, there *shouldn't* be. Sit with a group of mates, however, and calls of "Here, fishy fishy!" are interspersed with cries of "Piscine bastard!" and mocking laughter from onlookers. Even past the heady days of novelty appeal, *Get Bass* compels. It's not a classic, must-have game. Dreamcast owners can (and will) live happy, complete lives without owning a copy. And it *can* prove limited past the one week mark. But it's so cleverly quirky, and unassumingly innovative, that you can't help but love it. The UK version is entitled *Sega Bass Fishing*. But God knows why ■

Psychic Force 2012

PUBLISHER: Taito **UK RELEASE:** Unlikely

In Japan, the 'projectile fighting game' – as it is known – is a popular beat 'em up sub-genre (that's projectile as in missile, not vomit). Eschewing constant close-quarters combat in favour of varied ranged attacks, it's a style that meets with polarized opinions. Fighting purists mock the lack of moves and absence of strategic undertones; exponents love it for precisely the same reasons, albeit with a switch in emphasis. It's all down to personal taste, really.

Psychic Force 2012, a coin-op conversion, is one of the more successful projectile fighting games. Its bouts take place within a huge transparent cube, where its combatants float freely in the air. And, despite its 3D appearance *PF2012* is, in effect, a 2D game – you rotate around your opponent via horizontal and vertical movement. You can access projectile attacks – or, if you're close enough, the odd punch and kick combo – by tapping a variety of traditional fighting game move sequences. To stop battles becoming a free-for-all involving endless large-scale assaults, it has a simple, yet effective power bar system.

There's a school of thought that suggests that all great games are built on simple foundations. Alas, *Psychic Force 2012* does not count amongst their illustrious number. It's not that it isn't a stunning game to behold (it's visually average, as a whole). Furthermore, it's not that its oneplayer mode gets repetitive with disturbing speed (that's a criticism you could level at almost every beat 'em up variant). Nope, one fact makes *Psychic Force 2012* eminently less appealing: the very existence of *Power Stone*. Capcom's game sings from a similar hymn sheet, and hits the metaphorical high notes with ease. *Psychic Force 2012*, meanwhile, begins clearing its throat during the first chorus. For fans of the sub-genre, it's probably a reasonably entertaining purchase. But we do emphasize the 'probably' ■

DC-UK's monthly trawl through the Internet ocean

DREAM ACCESS

Finally, the monopoly is at an end. No longer will you have to buy an agonisingly dull computer to get on the Internet. You can buy a bloody fantastic game console instead – which takes up much less space under your telly, is easier to use, and doesn't crash every five minutes, taking your life's work with it.

But using the Internet through Dreamcast is going to be a different experience than surfing the Web on a PC. For a start, you won't need to bother with Microsoft *Internet Explorer* or Netscape *Navigator* – Sega Europe has created its own easy-to-use browsing software, named *Dream Key*, which will come free with the console. If the Japanese version is anything to go by (*Dream Passport*, shown left), it will be incredibly easy to use: just pop the disc in, select which online service you want (from email, Web surfing, chat, ecommerce, etc) then wait for the machine to connect to the Internet and away you go. If you've chosen to surf the Web, you can use the d-pad to control an onscreen cursor, while the buttons input commands and the triggers bring up option menus. There is even an onscreen keyboard so you can enter Web addresses and email messages – although the separate Dreamcast Keyboard (retailing for £20) will make this process much easier.

There will be limitations to surfing with Dreamcast, unfortunately. At the moment, Sega's Internet software can't handle some of the flashier elements of today's Web pages, like Java animations (3D graphics) or QuickTime movies (downloadable film clips). The resolution is much lower as well, because you'll be looking at a TV rather than at an expensive PC monitor. However, you will be able to magnify sections of each Web page to see any of the really teeny text. We've been using the Japanese browser for a while now, and you soon get used to the different way of doing things – plus, features missing from the first wave of Internet software are bound to be included in later versions. We will of course, keep you bang up to date.

As for the other features of Sega Japan's online service, Sega Europe is adopting something of a staggered approach to support. With the help of communications companies BT and ICL (responsible for setting up the European Dreamcast Internet system), Web surfing will be available to UK Dreamcast owners right from the launch day – as will email and chat services. However, online multiplayer gaming support – a really exciting aspect of Dreamcast, and a feature of several forthcoming games, such as *Sega Rally 2* – is not expected to be implemented until April. This is a real blow to Euro gamers, but at least you'll have time to practise the games before you go online and challenge other players. Cold comfort, we know. ■

www.dc-uk.co.uk

DC-UK
DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

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News, previews and reviews, plus links to the hottest Dreamcast information on the Web...

VISIT US!

To celebrate the online power of Dreamcast we've set up a homepage of our own – and it's not just an excuse to reprint all the reviews from the magazine, either – it's a unique yet integrated part of the whole **DC-UK** media empire with its own news, previews, and regular sections. Our main aim is to make the site as interactive as possible. We'll be running online polls, forums and reader top tens to find out what makes you lot tick. There will also be competitions and features of such a unique nature we're not even going to explain, lest we ruin it before you see it. Importantly, PC and Mac users will only be able to access a small part of the site. Dreamcast owners however, will get the full monty. It's an online clique; an accessible playground for the Dreamcast surfer. Look out for the full lowdown next ish ■

SITES FOR SORE EYES

OUR FAVOURITE PLACES TO HANG OUT THIS MONTH.

01 The Onion
(www.theonion.com)
Eternally hilarious news satire. Proof that the Americans do get irony. On the humour front, try also TV Go Home (**www.ntk.net/tvgohome/**) – the TV listings page with a difference

02 Pure Jam
(www.purejam.com)
Britain's number one urban music site

03 Jonathan Cainer's Zodiac Forecasts
(http://stars.metawire.com)
Daily horoscopes. This guy is a genius. How does he do it?

04 Chimp Net
(www.chimpnet.com)
Pictures of monkeys and things. What is this doing in here?

05 Ain't It Cool News
(www.aint-it-cool-news.com)
Up-to-date film news as related by rotund cine-geeks

Been to any good sites recently? You send 'em, and we'll print 'em

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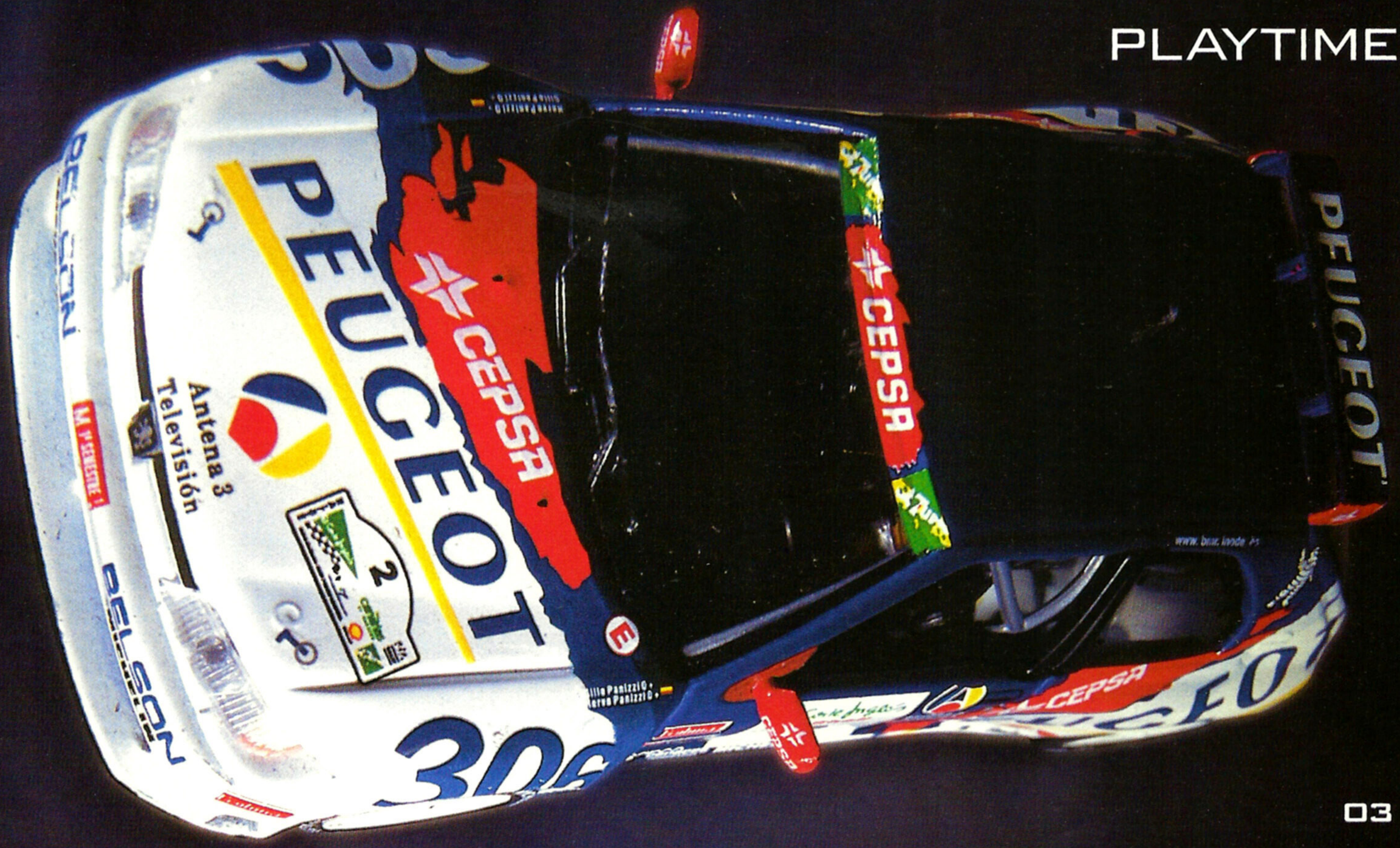
01

LIVE THE DREAM, PEOPLE. 3D IT MIGHT BE, BUT NOTHING COMPARES TO RUNNING ABOUT YOUR HOUSE LIKE A RIGHT TIT, PRETENDING TO BE A CHARACTER IN THE GAME YOU'VE JUST PLAYED. SO, WE'VE BEEN OUT AND BOUGHT YOU A COLLECTION OF ITEMS THAT'LL RECREATE THE LOOKS OF YOUR FAVOURITE GAMES, IN TRUE BLUE PETER STYLE



03

01 THE HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2

Given the choice between gunmetal grey (so last year) and translucent plastic, we know which we would rather have in our holsters. When you're pretending to be an extra from *THOTD2*, you'll find that this is excellent for dissolving would-be zombies into piles of goo and scaring the pants off small children.

SEE-THRU SPACE GUN £2.50

02 INCOMING

Paper planes can't hack the pace anymore. So nip down your local toy emporium (take a younger relation with you to avoid embarrasment) and pick up a couple of these beauties to re-enact scenes from *Incoming*. Just don't chuck them, as they have pointed noses that might get stuck somewhere and hurt.

AIRCRAFT SETS £3.99

03 SEGA RALLY 2

This is a 1/43rd scale model of a Peugeot Maxi Evo 306, the very car that won the Rallye El Corte Ingles. It's also featured (along with a few others) in *Sega Rally 2*. Just the thing for reliving those racing moments across the landing or, better still, try the lino in the bathroom for some real heart-in-mouth stuff.

VITESSE 1/43RD SCALE PEUGEOT 306 £19.79

04 TRICK STYLE

Yo dude! Put your baggies on and get skateboarding. We've heard that the real thing can be quite dangerous, especially if you're floating mid-air, *à la Trick Style*. Best leave it to the professionals. Do tricks with these instead. Race on your own or with friends, and remember to talk in skateboarding speak. Rad.

NEW DEAL TECH DECK £7.99

02

04

BEST JOB IN THE WORLD?

Making game magazines – it really is just an endless stream of free games, free trips and free booze, interspersed with the occasional bit of writing and stuff, right? Read on...

Early July Huge amounts of time have been devoured in just choosing fonts – it's crazy how much difference it makes to the feel of the magazine, writing **DC-UK** in alternate typefaces. Also have long deliberations about what to tag underneath. All sorts of ideas are thrown around, not least one new office favourite that would never have made it past the management: Dreamcast Gonzo Madness. Sigh.

Keith, Stephen and Christian all start, and I feel much less lonely. Euphoria wears off when I realise that they're all waiting for me to tell them what the plan is. Start writing plan.

09/07 Mad day. Photographer Wilson arrived 10am, ready to take pictures of hardware. Can't get PAL system from Sega, so have to use Japanese box – borrow pads etc from those lovely Edge chaps.

Pick up my new suit at lunch – bloody nice, but bloody expensive. Glad that I went for the dark blue and not the black. Girlf was right, as usual...

Afternoon: after 45 mins on the phone to Sega's PR company, sprint over to Futurenet and try to hammer out what we can do with our Website that's 'different'. After long meeting, we seem to have got somewhere – everyone's pretty positive about the direction we're taking. By using *Shockwave Flash* we can create a fast, graphic interface that looks nice but doesn't take ten mins to download. We hope.

Panic now. Have five minutes to pack up, sort out my weekend plans (go to London; see my beautiful lady love; go to stag-do on Saturday daytime; rush back to my mate's birthday bash in Bath; jump in a car at 2am Sunday and spend the day at the British Grand Prix.

And then collapse). Those goddam media scum...

14/07 Things have been going well this week, despite returning from the F1 with only two hours sleep under my hat. The mag is starting to gel, although there's still shitloads to do. The guys have all been stars, really buying into the plan and going at things in a suitably rapid way.

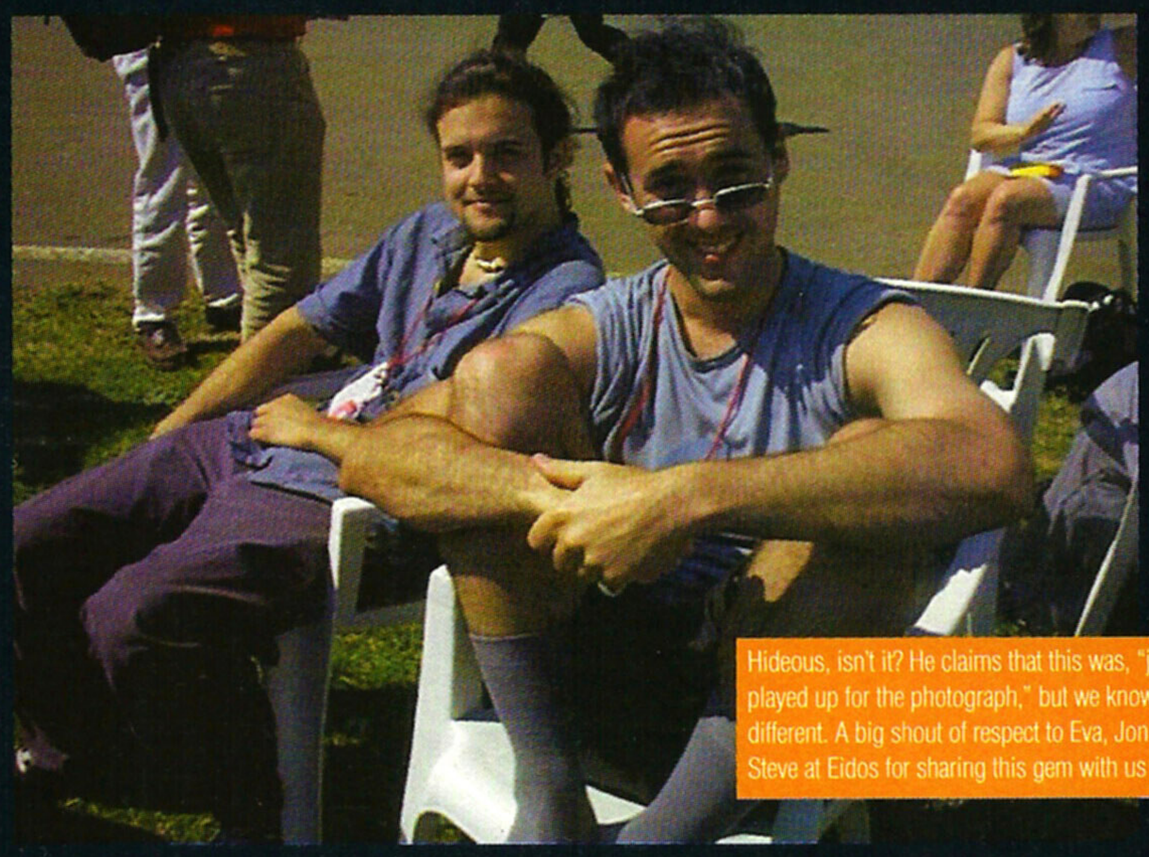
Loads of ideas for the Website, although it's all over the place at the moment. Ant in the Internet department is getting the hang of what we're after – just something that could be called 'different'.

Staff-wise, I'm on the cusp of having a full team, with Esther and Lee due to start on Monday. Cool. Smugly reassuring that our competition is still looking for people...

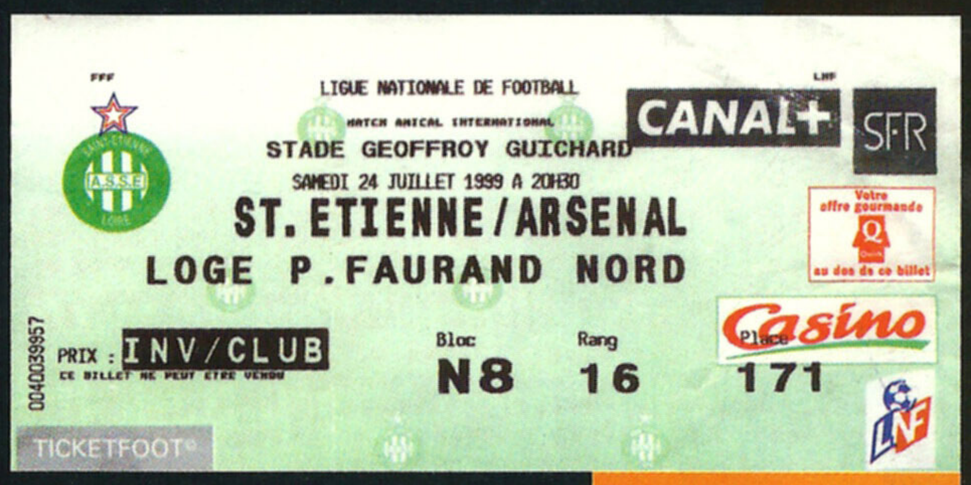
22/07 Bloody hell! I've been out of the office for two days at an editorial conference (no, it was great. Honestly), and everyone's gone and done loads of work. Sneaky buggers. They're all waiting for me to get on with my malarky, which is a bit of a problem for me because I was planning to leave it all to the last minute.

Surrounded by piles of magazines, Dreamcasts, joypads and general paper-stuff at the moment. Need to sort things out. Still, wrote the final design for our World Wild Web presence (aka the Website) this morning, which was pretty satisfying. Hope it works...

10/08 Fair old gap since the last time I updated this, but I guess that reflects on what it's been like over the last couple of weeks. We've been



Hideous, isn't it? He claims that this was, "just played up for the photograph," but we know different. A big shout of respect to Eva, Jon and Steve at Eidos for sharing this gem with us



It may distress several of the more severe fans among you to know that Caspar went to this, and he doesn't even like football. It's just not cricket

through about 50 cover designs, two televisions breakdowns (serious stuff if you're trying to review a game on the bugger), and several cakes. Oddly enough, everything is going a) like clockwork, and b) like the clappers, which is very disturbing indeed.

Finally had the chance to test drive my not-quite-so-new suit over the weekend. A friend of mine in the game industry got hitched – at the Dorchester of all places. Very nice. A lovely time was definitely had by all. Congrats again to those concerned.

12/08 One day before deadline and part of me can't believe it has finally come together. And that was just the eclipse. All the staff at Future celebrated this once-in-a-lifetime celestial event by gathering in the local park and mumbling about how it was, "all a bit crap really, and shall we go and get a sandwich?" Gluttony won the day, naturally.

It's a strange feeling letting go of the magazine and sending it to the printers. The lag between when I write this and when someone reads it will be three weeks. Assuming anyone buys the magazine, that is. Keep an eye out for me – I'll be the jumpy looking guy hanging around WH Smith in Bath, watching you pick up **DC-UK**. Please don't call security, I won't try and talk to you. I just want to watch... ■

Keith, hard at work as usual. We'd hardly even finished discussing this feature and he was down the boozer, "Planning"

TEAM MACHINE

MIX 'N' MATCH

BODY PARTS

Truly, the most hideous part of the entire magazine. Don't try this at home...

So that you can build a better picture of the team – hey, even get to know us (god forbid that you would ever be so unlucky), we've decided to give away a little part of ourselves every month. That's right, just cut out and keep the different shots of sections of our ugly mugs, and one day, you'll have a DC-UK team of your own to treasure.

However, if we were in your position, we'd opt for the far more interesting route of gathering together the various noses, eyes, ears and other bits that will be coming your way. And eventually you'll be able to create a bastardised photofit of 'Mr Dreamcast' with which to scare young children.

Who knows, one day we might even give something away to the most horrific/hilarious/handsome (well, maybe not the last) DC-UK photofit you can create. (There's a cheap incentive to buy the mag if ever there was one.) You have been warned..■

THIS MONTH: THE TEETH

CASPAR FIELD
EDITOR

Caspar's are easily the worst, although Keith's come a close second. Cheesy-grin-of-the-month award must fall to Mr Jaques. Lee simply looks in pain...

LEE HART
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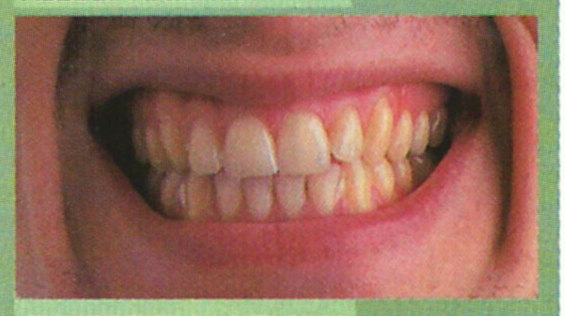
STEPHEN LAWSON
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

KARL JAQUES
DEPUTY ART EDITOR

KEITH STUART
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

ESTHER WOODMAN
DEPUTY EDITOR



CHRISTIAN DAY
ART EDITOR

Next issue...

Power Stone

Exclusive: **The first official UK review** of Capcom's **thumb-breaking beat 'em up**... it's gonna be great!

Plus: Some **other reviews**, a bit of news, **loads of previews**, and a couple of **funky features**

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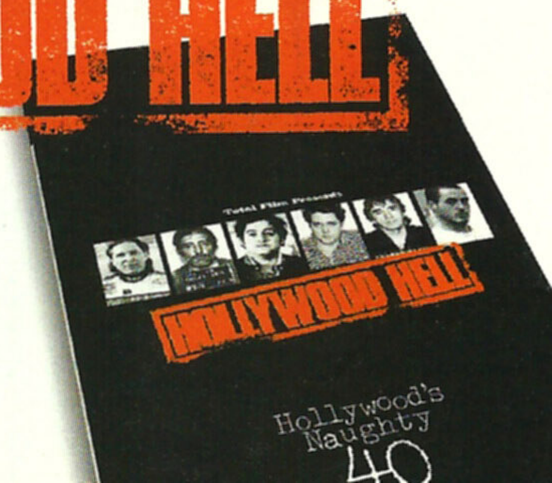

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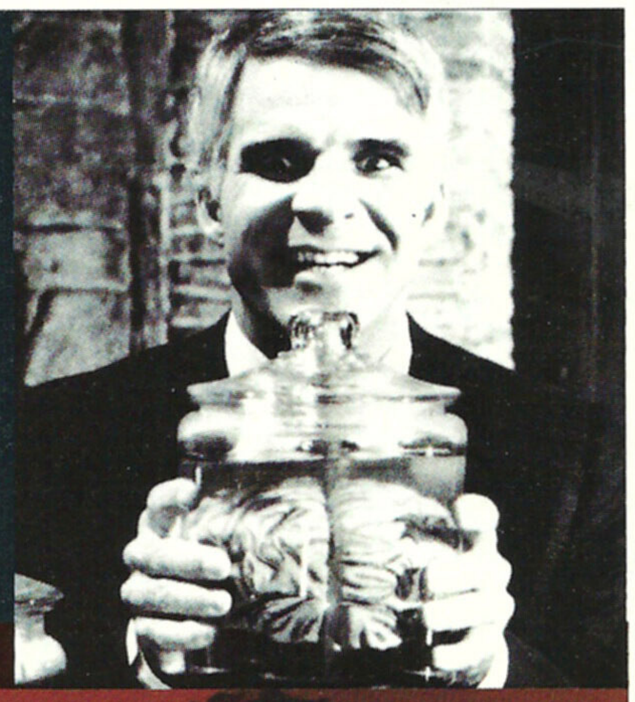
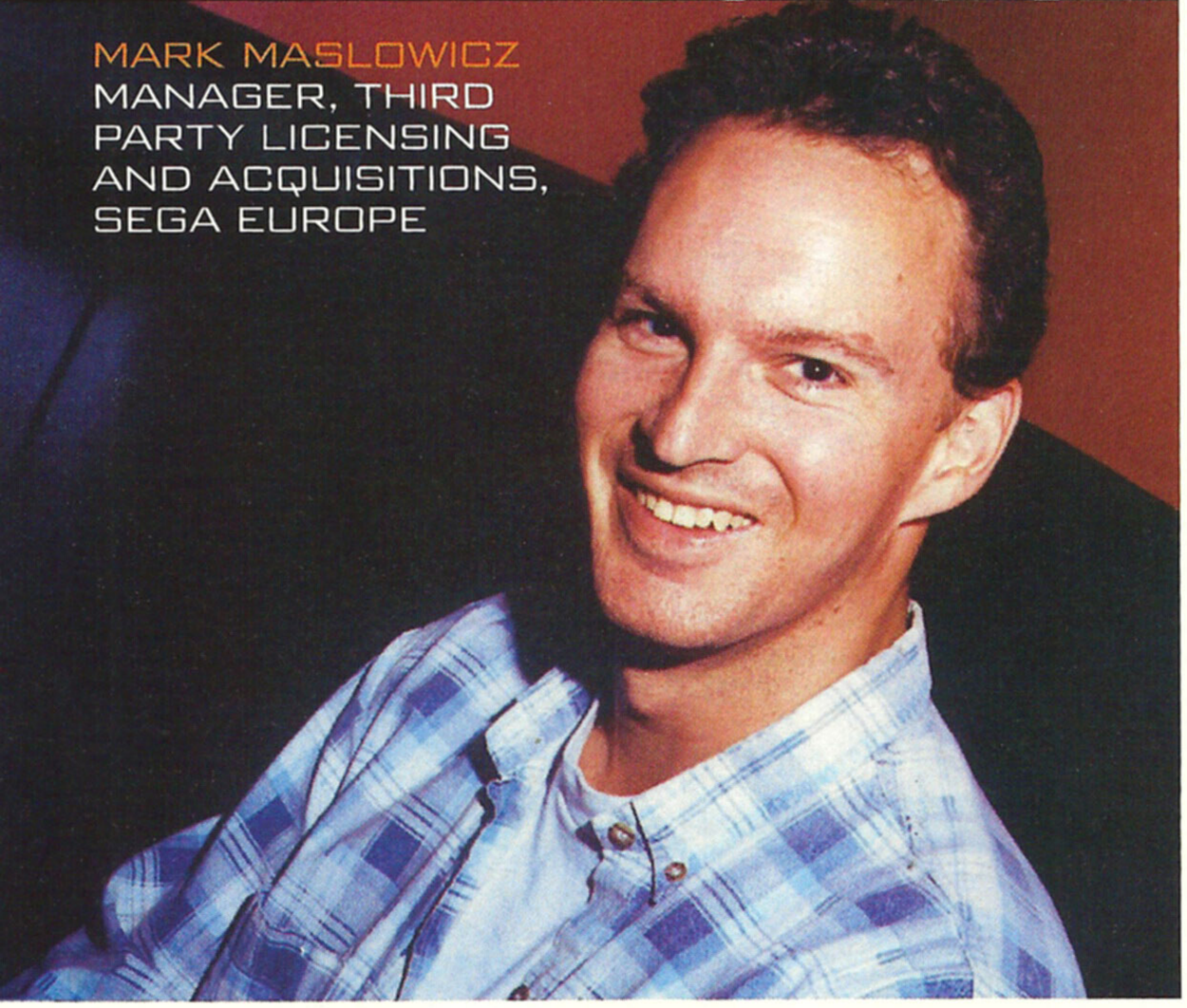
Brain in a jar

Entertaining yourself as a disembodied brain would be a tough job – unless you had five Dreamcast games with you, that is…





The videogame business is littered with shadowy figures, doing shadowy things behind closed doors. Mark Maslowicz is one of those shady fellas, handling Sega Europe's relations with 'thirdparty' developers (everyone who isn't Sega, basically). But it wasn't always so. In his seven years with the company, he's occupied various positions, from Business Manager to Product Manager. For a while, young Mark was a happy-go-lucky PR Manager for Sega, skipping merrily through his dealings with Sega Power and the like. Halcyon days…

Now older and wiser ("I've seen the good times, the not so good times – some would say the bad times – and now the good times again," he grins), Mark's experience of gaming is as vast and broad as the, er, English Channel. Which makes him ideal for, "Trying to get the best games onto Dreamcast." Or at least that's what he told us.

But to the question in hand: if we irreversibly severed Mark's squishy cerebrum from his spine and shoved it in a jar, which five games would keep his consciousness from becoming pickled?

"Over the years I would have chosen games like *Q*bert* [Arcade], *Super Mario Brothers 3* [NES], *Tetris* [Gameboy], *Shining Force* series [Mega Drive/ Saturn], *Doom* [PC], *Death-Tank* [mini-game in Duke Nukem on Saturn], *Super Mario 64* [N64], *Half-Life* [PC], *Championship Manager 3* [PC] and many, many others," Mark reels off.

Luckily for us he works for Sega, and has therefore opted for five Dreamcast titles, saving us loads of work having to find screenshots for some of those obscure games. And so here, Mark Maslowicz, our first Brain in a Jar, chooses his five favourite pinnacles of Dreamcast entertainment ■

■ Soul Calibur

"What can I say? Famitsu Magazine doesn't give away perfect ratings for games easily. This is the best looking fighting game ever made, and while it may not have the technical finesse of some other fighters, the sheer depth of the game in terms of all the missions and story modes is unsurpassed."

■ Sonic Adventure

"I really don't think people outside of Japan have been able to appreciate this properly yet. Now that we've localised the game into all major European languages, people will be able to follow the story better. Also, the game has been improved in other areas too, so this is a must-buy launch title."

■ Ready 2 Rumble

"This has been one of the most popular games in the office so far and it's just so much fun to play. And when you add in the Championship and Training Modes, which most people haven't seen yet, I think you'll see that this deserves to be one of the biggest successes on Dreamcast this year."

■ House Of The Dead 2

"A perfect stress reliever. A great conversion from the arcades and with extra stuff added too. The pace is fast and furious and it's not easy, either."

■ Virtua Striker 2 v2000

"Okay, so I'm cheating a bit here as this won't be out until next year, but *Virtua Striker 2* is currently my favourite arcade game and the latest Naomi version is even better."

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