

MAX

overload!



1st ISSUE

Oh NO! It's the...



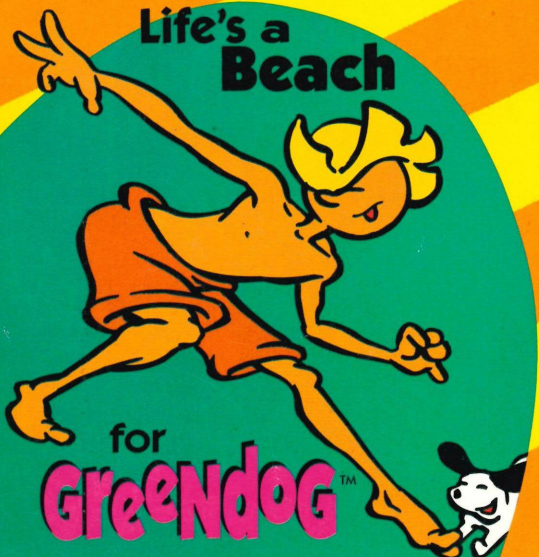
They're **cute**,
They're **cuddly**,
They're **KILLING**
themselves!!

COMICS!
NEWS!
Sega's GENESIS CDX!
SONIC 3! MARIO LAND 3!

CHEATS!
REVIEWS!
SECRET OF MANA, YOUNG
MERLIN, LOST VIKINGS

PRIZES!
Win
TOEJAM & EARL 2

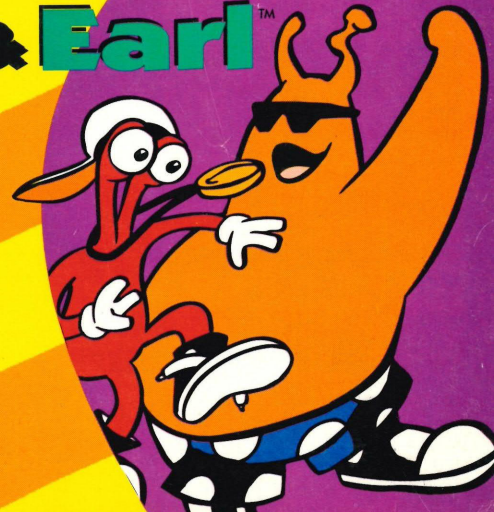
funked-up
fun with
ToeJam & Earl



Life's a
Beach

for
Greendog

stoneage
with
stupidity
Chuck Rock



THE DIRTY PAIR & ARE BACK!! MANGA MANIA'S GOT 'EM!

and look
at the
company
they're
keeping...

AKIRA
the sizzling
cyberpunk
classic

DEMON
a chilling
samurai epic

FREE
DIRTY PAIR postcard
with **MANGA MANIA #9**
ON SALE 10 February 1994



MAX

overload!

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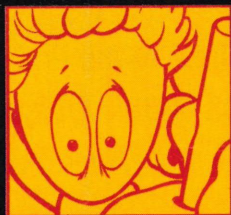
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STRIPS

LEMMINGS 09



Outrageous adventures with the reckless rodents

Story **DICK HANSOM**
 Art **GRAHAM MANLEY**
 Lettering **ELLIE DE VILLE**

TOEJAM & EARL 23



Earthbound escapades with the dudes from Planet Funkatron

Story **ANNE CAULFIELD**
 Art & Lettering **WOODROW PHOENIX**

CHUCK ROCK 39



Stoneage stunts with the cavewoman who gives near-derthals a bad name

Story **CEFN RIDOUT**
 Art & Lettering **DAVID LYTTLETON**

GREENDOG 55



Surf's up with the beached beach bum

Story **IAN CARNEY**
 Art & Lettering **ILYA**

COUNTDOWN

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Hot from the USA! All the latest news from the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas

SYSTEM overload!

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THEME PARK is reviewed on page 47

MAX
overhook!

MAX
overheard!

Sega was keeping schtum regarding the details of the machine it hopes will blast Nintendo right out of the running — the 32-bit Saturn. Although the company had a huge panelled video wall displaying a selection of its new titles and hardware — including a milli-second glimpse at the secret Saturn — staff on the Sega press desk repeatedly denied its existence. When poked with a sharp stick, they admitted that it would be released in Japan this year, but as yet they knew no date for the US or UK. Sega has developed the machine with some help from Hitachi, and at the show rumour has it that some big retailers were allowed a sneak peak. Despite my convincing Rumbelows outfit, I sadly failed to see the Saturn in the flesh.

SLOW BUSINESS

C.E.S. NEWS Every January Las Vegas plays host to the first bi-annual CONSUMER ELECTRONICS SHOW. *Amaya Lopez* checked out the big, the bad and the beautiful (and then she went along to the show).

SEGA'S CDX

Sega was showing its new bit of hardware kit at Winter CES — the *Genesis CDX*, essentially a *Mega Drive* and *Mega-CD* rolled into one. This sleek, compact gizmo, not unlike a *Sony Discman* in size and appearance, weighs in at 1.3 pounds and packs in the power of two Motorola 68000 16-bit microprocessors and a custom graphics processor ASIC. It allows the player not only to play existing *Mega Drive* and *Mega-CD* titles, but also to listen to normal audio compact discs. Its advantages are that it's eminently portable (allowing for the fact that you don't have to lug around a full-size TV on your back as well) and that it's a neat, desirable little machine.

A CDX bundle will go on sale in the US in March and will come with three *Mega-CD* titles: *Sonic*, *EccoThe Dolphin* and the *Sega Classics Arcade Collection* (Super Monaco Grand Prix, Golden Axe, Revenge of Shinobi, Streets of

Rage and Columns), a 6-button Arcade Pad, a Stereo AV cable and an AC power adaptor. The pack will retail at \$400 (approximately £270) — an absolute bargain when you consider that both units independently would set you back around £400 in the UK. But don't hold your breath — console systems are never as cheap over here, although we can live in hope that Sega will price it sensibly. **M**



MAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAX

X-MEN

Game Gear owners are in for a treat as **Marvel Comics' X-Men** will be released in the States this month. The nifty X-people, if we're going to be PC about it, since some of them are actually women, will take on the heinous Magneto and his hideous henchmen in a bid to save the Vice-President of the United States. There are several mutant lovelies to choose from, and the option to link up *Game Gears* with a chum for some head to head action. The tiny detailed



sprites looked great, so, comic-book fans, this is one to watch out for! **M**

TOMCAT ALLEY

Getting almost as much attention in the Sega showcase as *Virtua Fighter* (a brilliant 3D polygon fighting arcade title) and *Virtua Racing* (see page 3), was *TomCat Alley*, the first *Sega Mega-CD* jetfighter combat sim to incorporate full-screen actual flight footage. One of the beauties of this is that the game doesn't stop when disk accessing, but carries on playing film footage. *TomCat Alley* places you in the hotseat of the Navy's most dangerous jetfighter, the F-14X TomCat. It's your job to work with the crew portrayed by a cast of actors through seven death-defying missions against Russian flying ace, Alexi Povich (and there I was thinking that the Cold War was over).



The game looked impressive, although its target shooting section was slightly reminiscent of the snoresville shoot-'em-up, *Sewer Shark*. However, the cinematic combat sequences seemed exciting and for your information, fact fans, the game has been directed by Sam Nicholson of Stargate Films, who was responsible for the visual effects photography in films such as *Star Trek The Motion Picture*. *TomCat Alley* will hit the US in March and carries an MA-13 rating. **M**

RISE OF THE ROBOTS

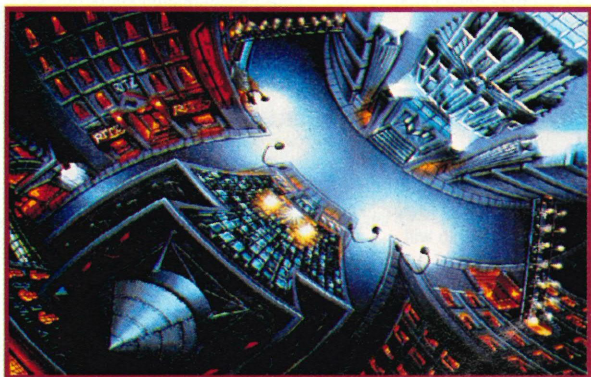
Mirage's eagerly awaited futuristic beat-'em-up looked great on a variety of formats — and here it is on *Mega-CD*, brought to you by **JVC Musical Industries**. The spectacular graphics use special technology to incorporate photorealistic images, seamless polygons and highly sophisticated animation sequences. **JVC** will also be releasing the game on *Mega Drive* and both versions should be available in the Spring. **M**



MAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAX

NOCTROPOLIS

Electronic Arts was displaying an impressive looking PC graphic adventure title called **Noctropolis**. The game casts the player in the role of a comic book shop manager who is sucked into the sinister, surreal comic book world of Darksheer. Here, or in the city of Noctropolis to be precise, you discover that a group of undesirable anti-heroes is plotting to enter the real world. It becomes your task to defeat them with the aid of a super-hero, Stiletto. A



sophisticated new interface has been developed for this game which allows the menus only to be called up when necessary, and so does not interfere as much with the overall look and feel of the game. In addition, each character has been digitally represented and 26 hours of raw footage has been worked into 60 minutes of character interaction on the floppy version, with even more on *CD-ROM*. Keep your eyes peeled for this one which should be released both in the US and the UK in May. **M**



MAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAX

STAR WARS REBEL ASSAULT

After playing the brilliant *CD Rom* version of this action flight sim, it was great to see it at the show in its forthcoming *Mega-CD* incarnation. The game looked very impressive with smooth, fluid animation, digitised sequences from the actual film and a thunderous *CD* soundtrack and effects. As Rookie One, you get to control four different types of Star Wars vehicles in a bid to defeat the dastardly Darth Vader and his cronies once and for all. **Rebel Assault** will be available in the US in March. **M**



STUNT RACE FX

Drawing a lot of attention at the **Nintendo** stand was the company's new racing game, **Stunt Race FX**. The shot here



doesn't do it justice, but it did look good, though not as impressive as **Sega's Virtua Racing**. In fact, **Nintendo's** showcase as a whole was disappointing compared to **Sega's** - and shows the company has a lot of catching up to do, not only in terms of marketing.

But back to the game, **Stunt Race FX** for the **SNES** utilises the Super FX chip, an enhanced version of the original chip used in last year's popular **Starwing** game. In its new incarnation, the FX 2 technology allows almost double the



speed of the original chip, facilitating smoother, more realistic on-screen movement and the creation of 3D polygon objects. **Stunt Race FX** features four different cars, two modes of play and 20 different courses to choose from. The stunt mode looked particularly exciting and the title will be the first *Super FX* game to feature two player action. Due for release in April, it'll be interesting to see how it fares against **Virtua Racing**. **M**

MAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAX

ALADDIN

Following hot on the heels of the highly acclaimed *Mega Drive* and *Super Nintendo* releases, **Aladdin** now has been squeezed onto the *Game Gear*. You play the man himself, complete with whizzo magic carpet ride and beautiful Princess Jasmine (who, surprisingly enough, will need to be rescued). The graphics look scrumptious and extremely finely detailed. Disney lovers will be in their element but unfortunately the game won't be on sale until May in the States. **M**



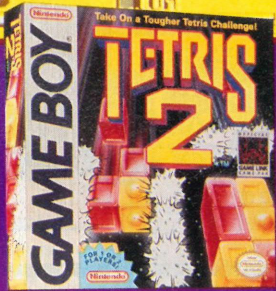
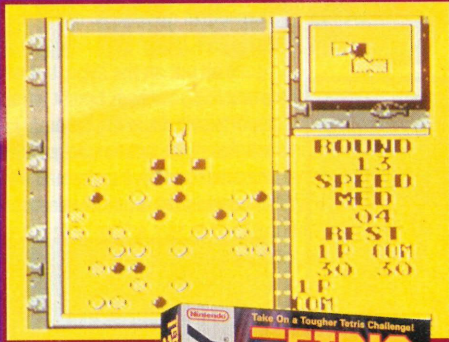
MAX
factoid

Stunt Race FX on the **SNES** has been designed by Shigeru Miyamoto, whose former claims to fame include the **Mario** and **Zelda** games.

TETRIS

2

The sequel to the classic puzzler Tetris was on display in the Nintendo booth on both *Game Boy* and *NES*. The game didn't look much different to the original, but this time it has three modes of play: one player, two player or one player against the computer in a head to head. Also, the blocks must be matched both horizontally and vertically. The game is already out in the States, and although it was the number one selling Christmas *Game Boy* game, it received lukewarm reviews. **M**



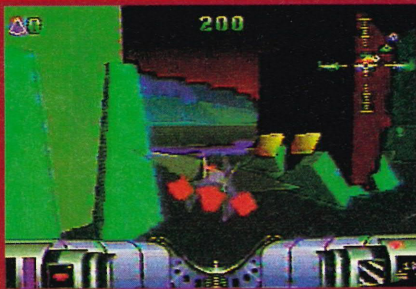
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THE JAGUAR POUNCES

Throughout the show, Atari's *Jaguar* stand received a lot of attention as eager beavers were craning their necks to see just how good the titles for the company's new 64-bit console looked.



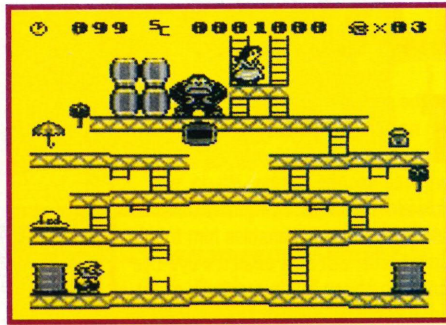
And I have to admit that we were pretty favourably impressed. Amongst the notable selection were *Cybermorph* (which is currently bundled with the machine), *Dino Dudes* and *Crescent Galaxy*, displaying a spectacular richness in colour, animation and sound. The company's CD peripheral will be launched in the latter part of this year, which will



play normal music CDs as well as CD games. It's expected to retail for as little as \$200 (£135), and Atari also has plans to develop a virtual reality helmet. Whilst we're on the virtual hat subject, Sega announced that its VR helmet will be available in the Summer. **M**

DONKEY KONG '94

The classic Donkey Kong game, where everyone's favourite moustachioed plumber made his debut, has spawned a sequel — but this time on the *Game Boy*. Yes, Mario will once again have to pit his wits against his old enemy, the fat hairy ape, in order to rescue the despairing damsel, er ... Pauline. The game looked neat and boasts over a hundred levels of arcade adventure action. It's certainly a *Game Boy* title to look out for — but sadly won't be available until June. **M**



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PROJECT REALITY

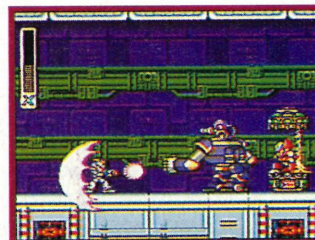
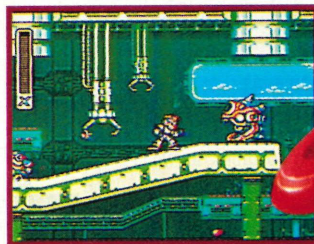
The partnership struck up last autumn between **Nintendo** and **Silicon Graphics Computer System**, known as **Project Reality**, had its own stand at the show, displaying awesome graphics. The technology, which will offer real-time 3D graphics, high resolution video and CD quality sound, will comprise Nintendo's new 64-bit machine. It is due to appear in arcades this autumn, reaching home entertainment systems a year later. **M**

MAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAXMAX

MEGA MAN

X

Capcom has brought one of its most popular characters to the *SNES* - **Mega Man** - who will star in **Mega Man X**. He's a tougher man than before too, which is lucky as his task is to defeat Sigma and the Maverick Replids.



Also on display, and hoping to cash in on the World Cup, was **Mega Man Soccer** which should be out in the Spring. **M**

MAX
overlook!

MAX
overhook!

MAX
overkill

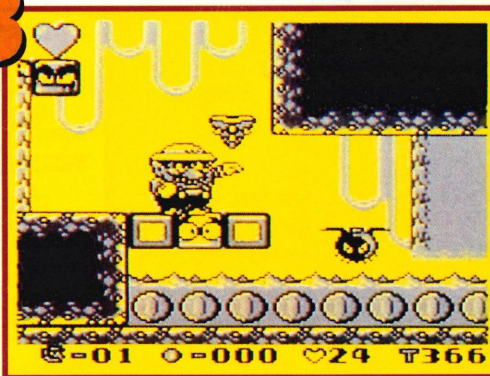
The award for the most irritating song and dance promo of the show was virtually in the bag for Acclaim and its imitable *NBA Jam* (see this page) — until I chanced on Nintendo's offering. A very spooky array of cheer leader-clad boys and gals intermittently pranced around a stage, chanting a less than charming little ditty entitled "The Best Play Here". Hoping to actually witness some demonstration of the "Best Play", I unwisely stuck around, only to hear the kind of rousing chants guaranteed to send you diving headfirst into the Sega booth.

Sorry Nintendo, you goofed that time.

WARIO LAND: SUPER MARIO LAND 3



The sequel to *Mario Land 2*, starting the inimitable Wario, was featured on the Nintendo stand. The new game has the heinous Wario, our hero's arch-enemy, finding a hoard of pirate treasure which enables him to build a castle. But best of all it's bye-bye goody-two-shoes Mario and hello nasty, scheming Wario as you get to play the devil incarnate himself. The game's huge and combines a treasure hunt with some fab adventure action featuring a variety of new skills and power-ups. It comes with a battery-backed memory which stores up

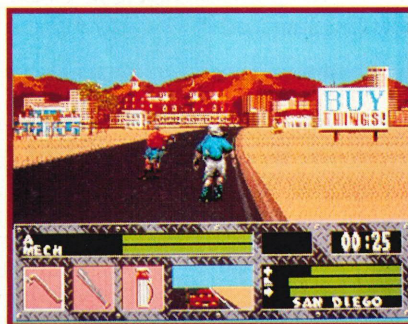


to three different games and will go on sale in the US this month. **M**

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SKITCHIN'

Always wished that you lived in L.A., just so that you could wear roller-blades without embarrassment? Well, *Skitchin'* from Electronic Arts on *Mega Drive* will enable you to do just that. Following in the footsteps of the popular *Road Rash* games, *Skitchin'* places you in a series of rebellious races on the open road where you can take the law into your own hands. Here you merrily skate about à la Torvill and Dean, until a noncey opportunity presents itself — that of grabbing onto the bumper of a passing car in order to get ahead in your race. Tougher tactics may be called for, and you're free to pick up any weapons lying in the road, such as nunchakus and clubs, in order to hammer down opponents. My favourite bit was that you can even get to do little dances on the spot, but then I'm easily pleased. Getting knocked down by a passing car is also a bit of a hoot, despite the fact that it lessens your chances of winning.



There are 12 different cities, and competitors receive cash prizes (no, not real ones) for their finishing positions, as well as bonuses for spectacular stunts, particularly those involving the cops (hem hem). *Skitchin'* boasts some fab two player simultaneous split screen action, and will be released in the US in March. **M**



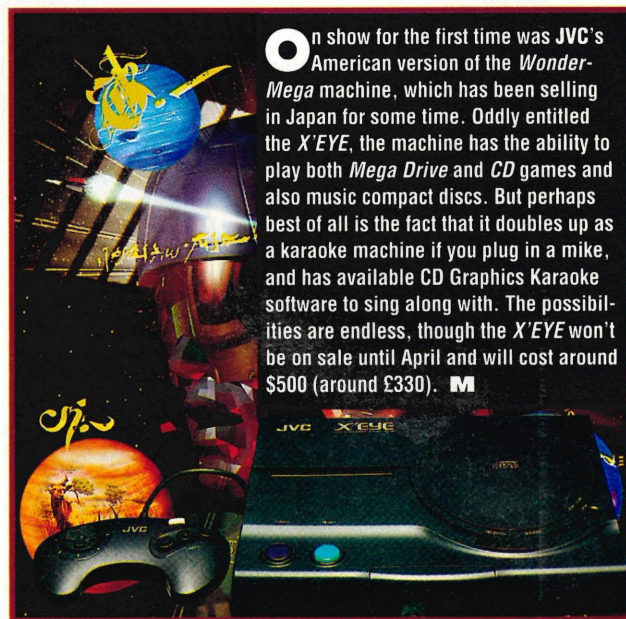
NBA JAM

An almighty din emanated daily from the Acclaim stand, caused by a bunch of California beach boys and babes and professional basketball players, all doing the somewhat irritating *NBA Jam* (man). As usual, the company's gone all out on the hype, but whether or not basketball is your bag, I must admit it looked a top sports sim, flaunting smoothly animated meaty sprites on an action-packed screen. The game has received rave reviews in American mags, but no date is set for a UK release. **M**



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JVC X'EYE



On show for the first time was JVC's American version of the *Wonder-Mega* machine, which has been selling in Japan for some time. Oddly entitled the *X'EYE*, the machine has the ability to play both *Mega Drive* and *CD* games and also music compact discs. But perhaps best of all is the fact that it doubles up as a karaoke machine if you plug in a mike, and has available *CD Graphics Karaoke* software to sing along with. The possibilities are endless, though the *X'EYE* won't be on sale until April and will cost around \$500 (around £330). **M**

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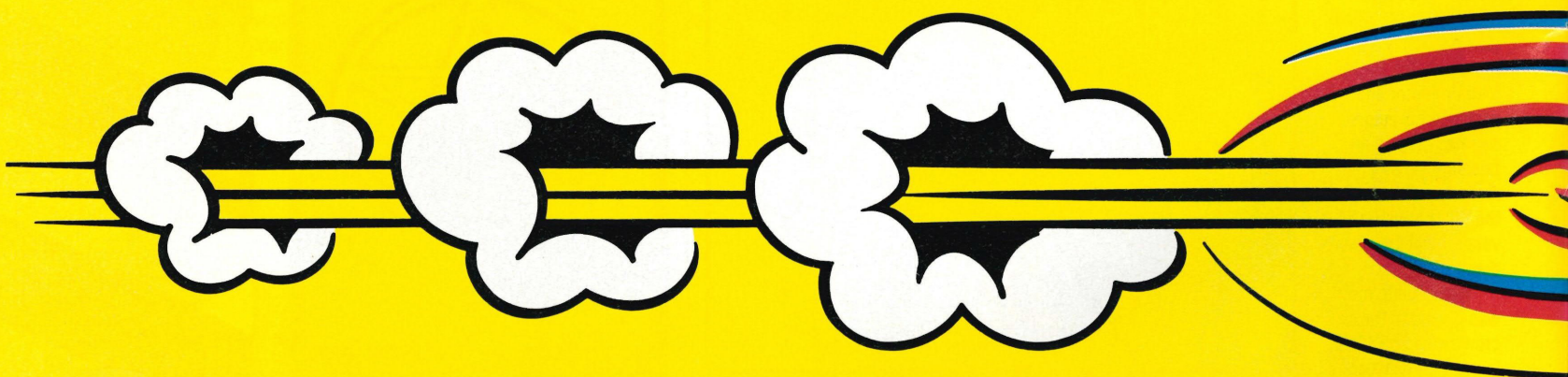
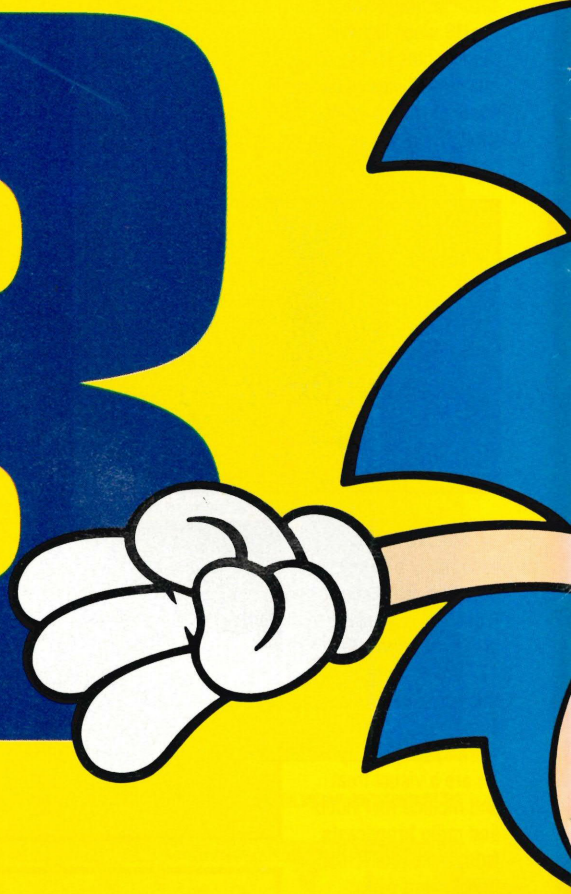
SOUND FANTASY

A peculiar little number on the Nintendo stand was a sort of sound sister to *Mario Paint*, entitled *Sound Fantasy*. Essentially a music package for the *SNES*, the player uses a mouse to compose music on-screen with the help of some friendly bugs who bounce all over the shop, hitting notes wherever they land. I had a dabble at the old music-making and whilst it sounded more like *Mr Ben* than Beethoven, I must admit I soon became hooked. *Sound Fantasy* won't be available until May; but if you can't wait till then, buy yourself some crickets and a xylophone. It has much the same effect. **M**



24

FEAR





Lemmings



GOOD EVENING, READERS. I'M GLAD YOU COULD PUT DOWN YOUR CONTROL PADS LONG ENOUGH TO ATTEND OUR BIOLOGY CLASS.

TODAY'S LECTURE IS GOING TO LOOK AT ONE OF MOTHER NATURE'S MOST RIDICULED, MOST REVEILED, AND PERHAPS MOST MISUNDERSTOOD CREATURES.

WELCOME TO...

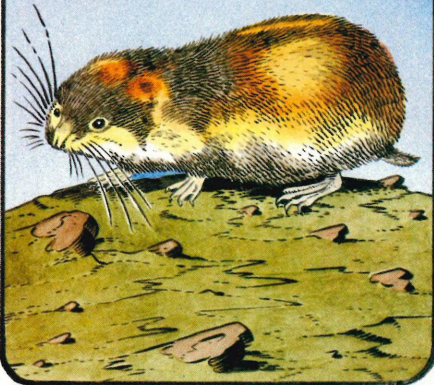
Lemmings which are related to voles inhabit the North and Siberia. They are found in North America. They are found in...

Tales of the Ridiculous Rodents by DICK HANSON Writer GRAHAM MANLEY Artist ELLIE DE VILLE Letterer



"NOW, LEMMINGS ARE COMMONLY DIVIDED INTO THREE MAIN VARIETIES ..."

"THE LEMMUS LEMMUS, OR NORWEGIAN LEMMING, FIRST DESCRIBED BY LINNAEUS IN 1758 AND ALSO KNOWN AS MYODES LEMMUS."

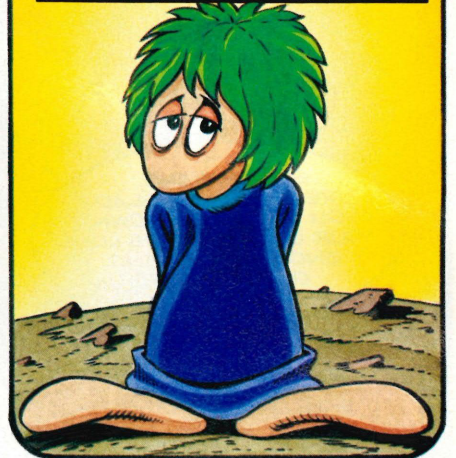


"THEN THERE'S THE LEMMUS SIBIRICUS, OR BROWN LEMMING, WHICH AS ITS NAME SUGGESTS IS FOUND IN THE EASTERN REACHES OF SIBERIA."

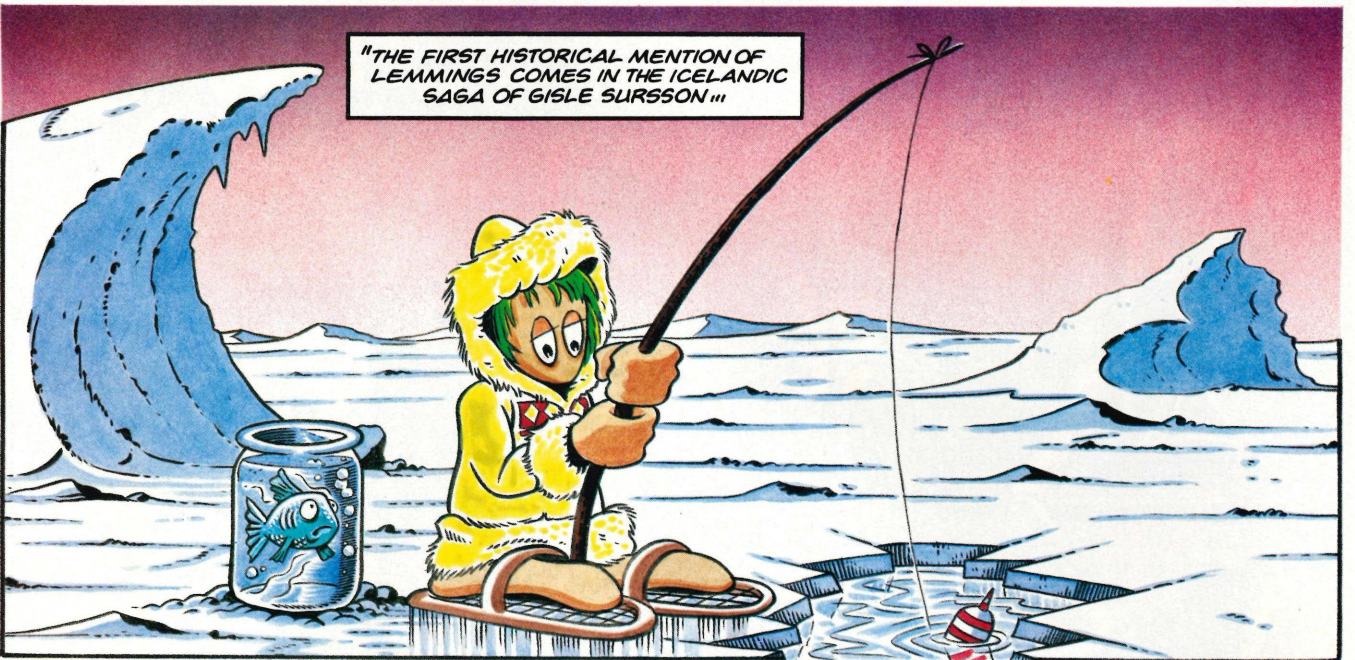


"AND, IF THE RUMOURS ARE TO BE BELIEVED ..."

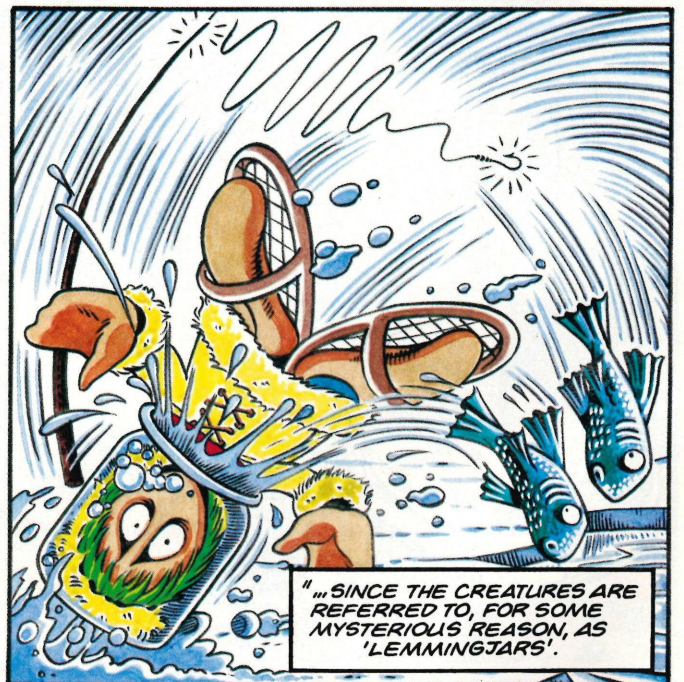
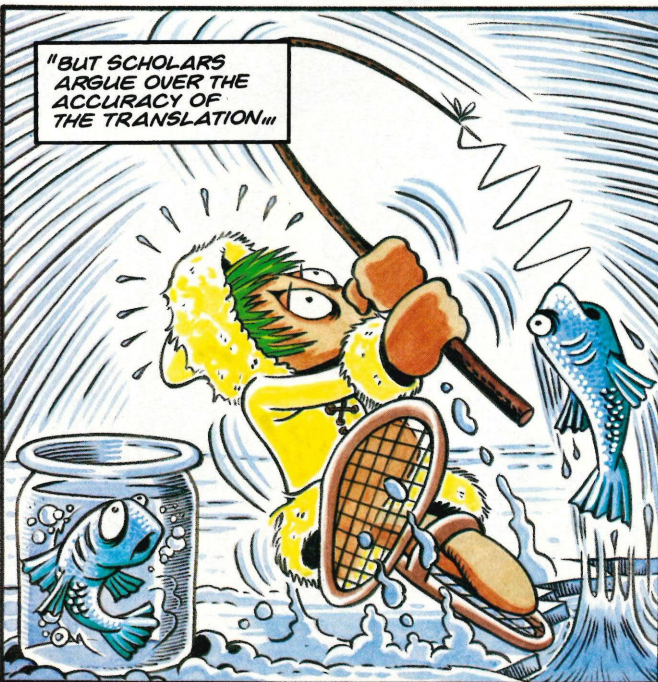
"THERE IS ALSO THE LEMMUS LUDICRUS, OR PLAYFUL LEMMING, WHICH HAS AVOIDED THE ATTEMPTS OF EVEN THE MOST EMINENT BIOLOGIST TO PROVIDE A SATISFACTORY CLASSIFICATION."



"THE FIRST HISTORICAL MENTION OF LEMMINGS COMES IN THE ICELANDIC SAGA OF GISLE SURSSON ..."



"BUT SCHOLARS ARGUE OVER THE ACCURACY OF THE TRANSLATION ..."

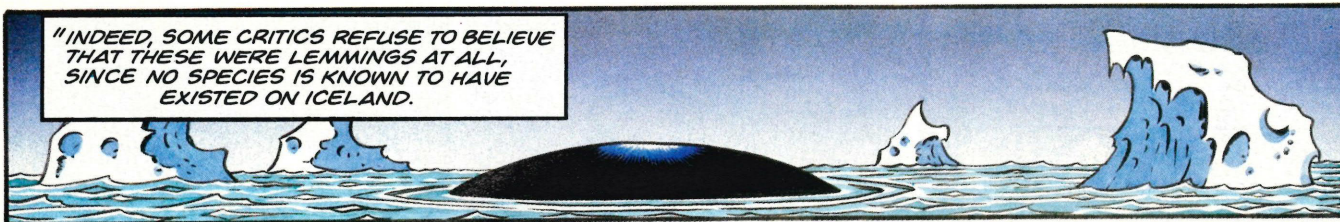


"... SINCE THE CREATURES ARE REFERRED TO, FOR SOME MYSTERIOUS REASON, AS 'LEMMINGJARS'."

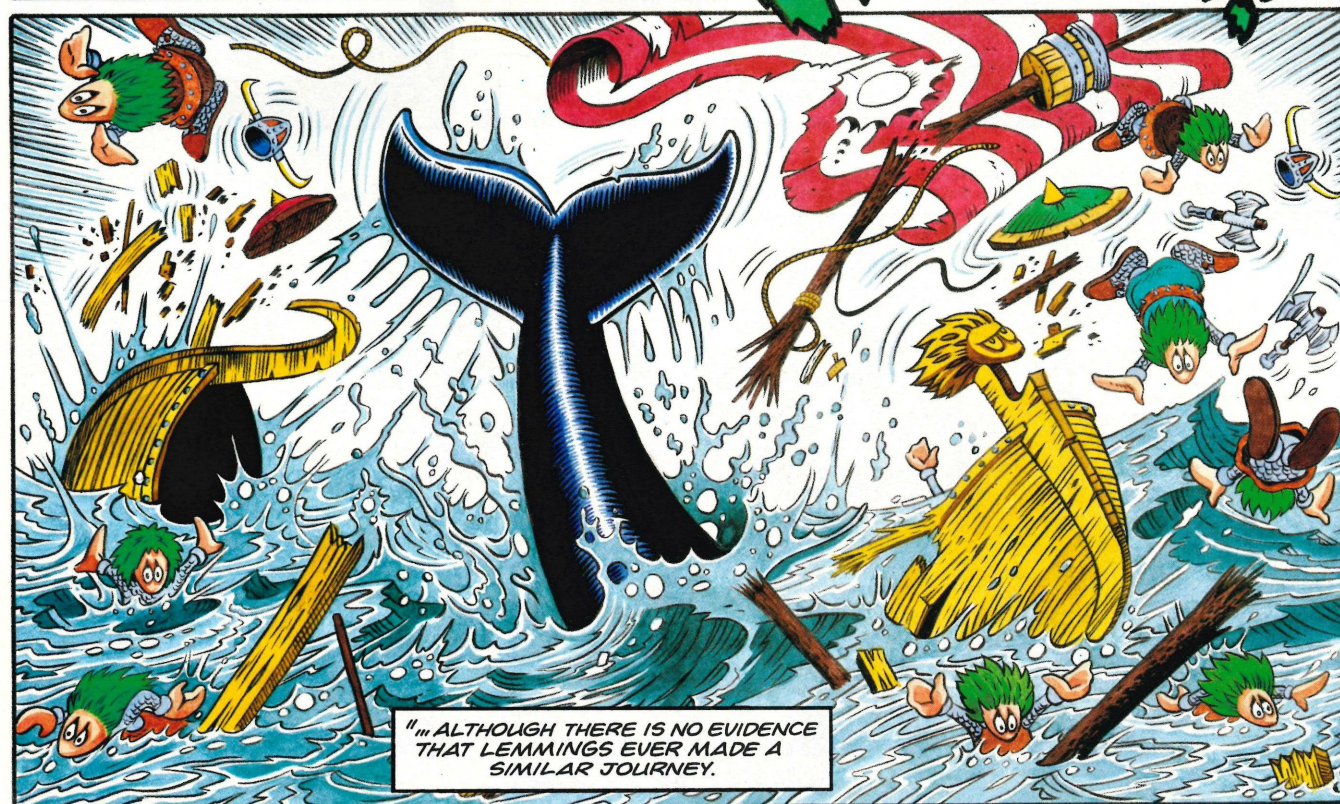
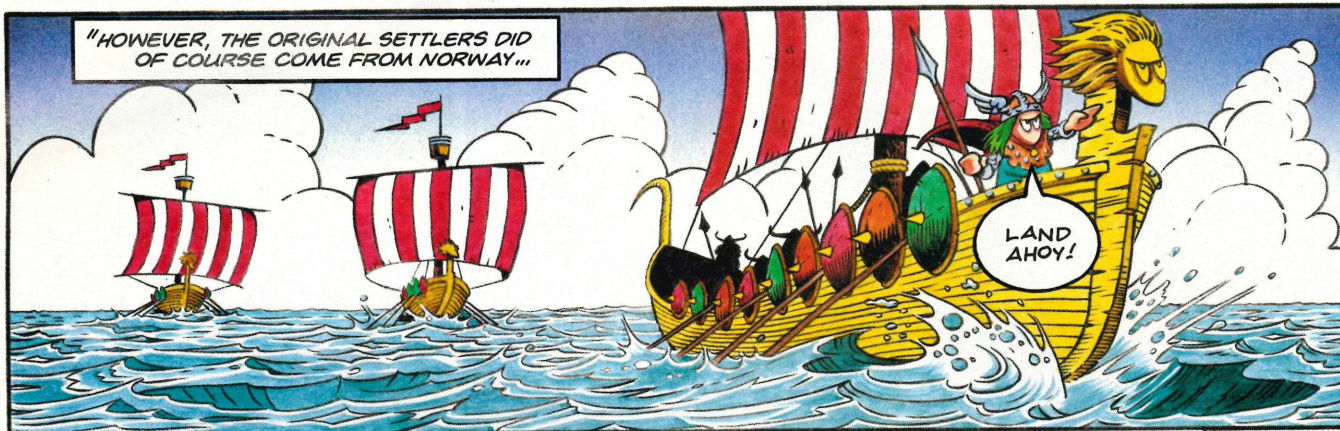
It's all true! If you don't believe us, read *The Lemming Year* by Walter Marsden



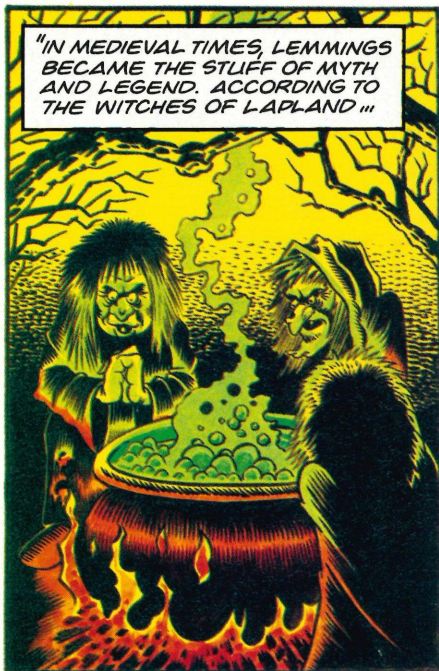
"INDEED, SOME CRITICS REFUSE TO BELIEVE THAT THESE WERE LEMMINGS AT ALL, SINCE NO SPECIES IS KNOWN TO HAVE EXISTED ON ICELAND.



"HOWEVER, THE ORIGINAL SETTLERS DID OF COURSE COME FROM NORWAY..."



"...ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT LEMMINGS EVER MADE A SIMILAR JOURNEY.



"IN MEDIEVAL TIMES, LEMMINGS BECAME THE STUFF OF MYTH AND LEGEND. ACCORDING TO THE WITCHES OF LAPLAND ..."



"... LEMMINGS WOULD FALL, FULLY GROWN, FROM THE CLOUDS."

SPLASH!

EEEK!

SQUEAL!



HMMM ... NEEDS MORE SALT ...



"IN FACT, AMONG CERTAIN TRIBES IT WAS CONSIDERED GOOD LUCK TO BE STRUCK BY A PLUMMETING LEMMING ..."



BONK!

MEEP!

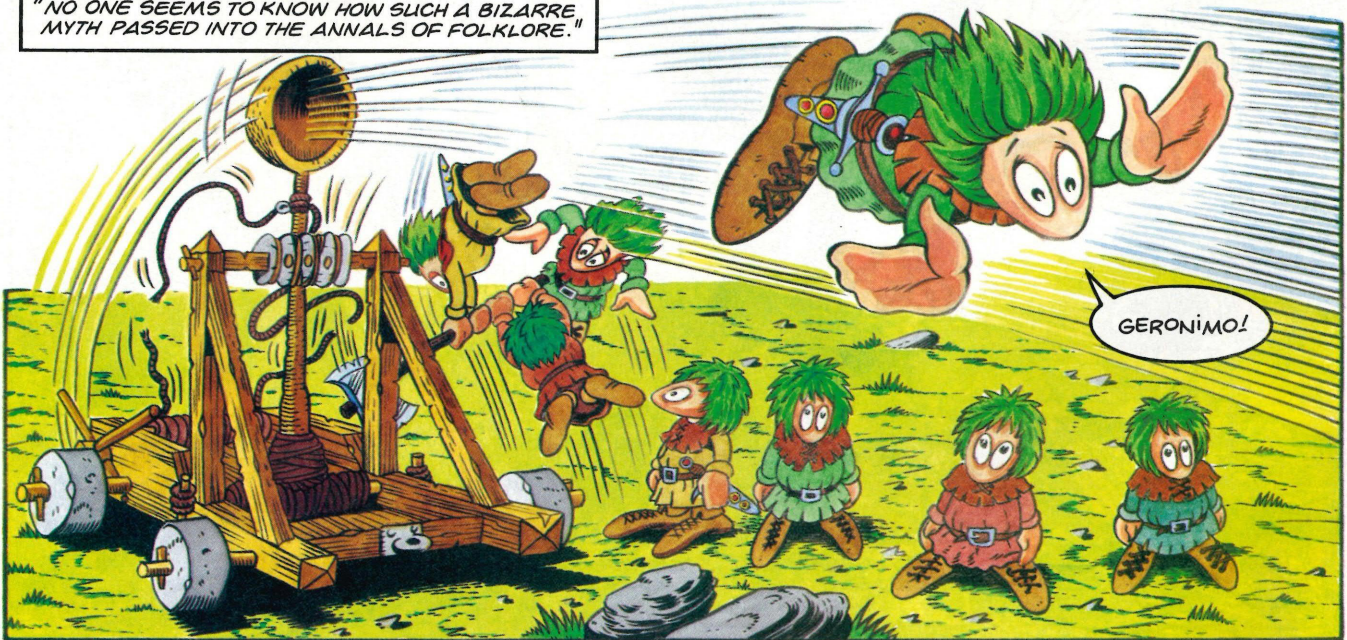
"... INVESTING THE RECIPIENT WITH THE STATUS OF SHAMAN ..."



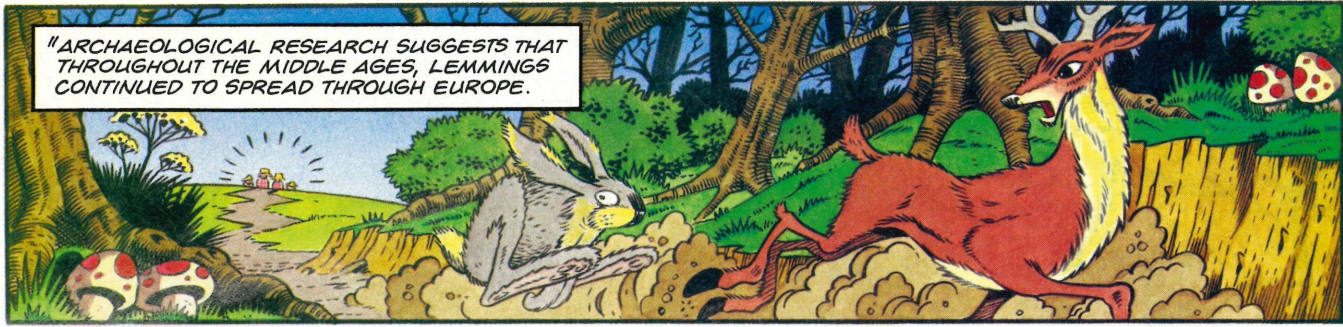
"... AND IMBUING HIM WITH STRANGE LEMMING-LIKE POWERS."

WHOOAA!

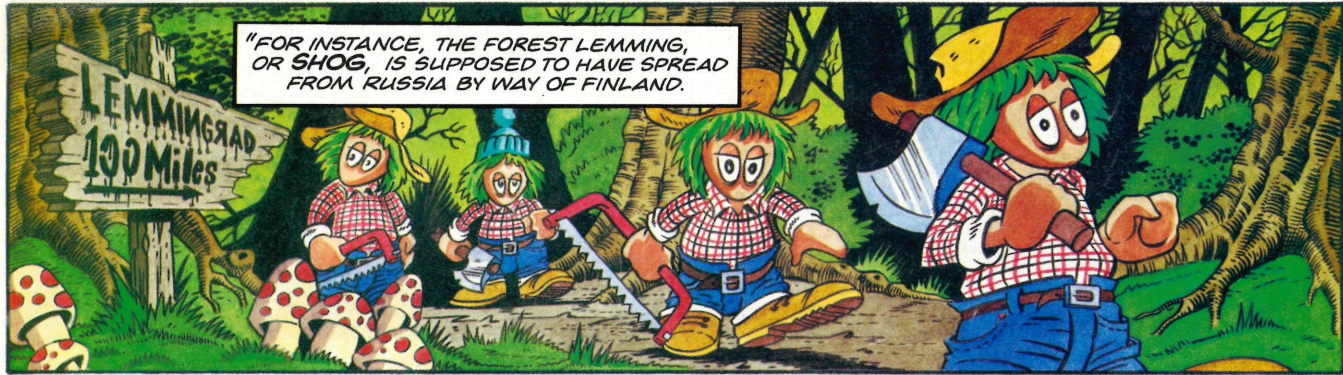
"NO ONE SEEMS TO KNOW HOW SUCH A BIZARRE MYTH PASSED INTO THE ANNALS OF FOLKLORE."



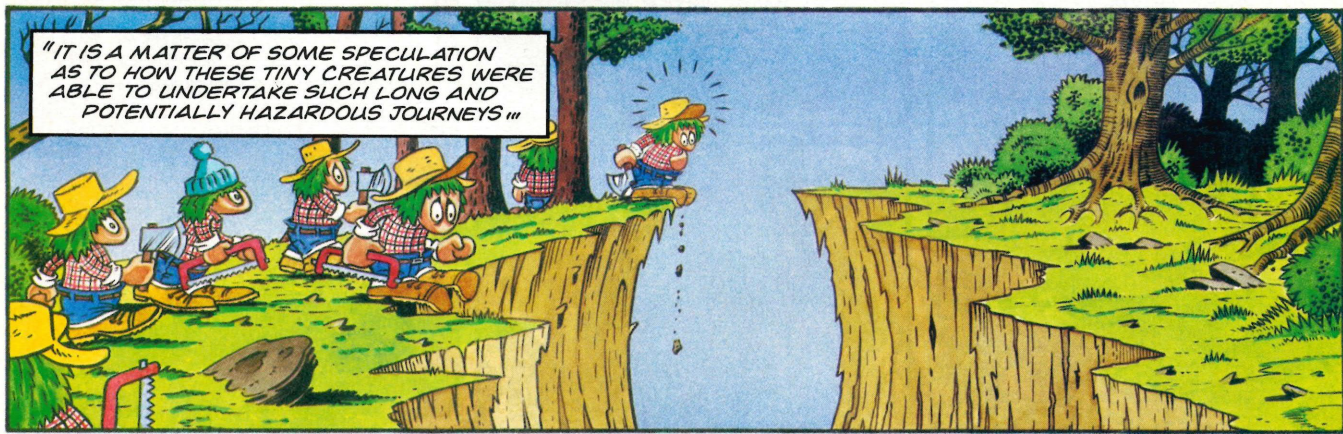
GERONIMO!



"ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH SUGGESTS THAT THROUGHOUT THE MIDDLE AGES, LEMMINGS CONTINUED TO SPREAD THROUGH EUROPE.



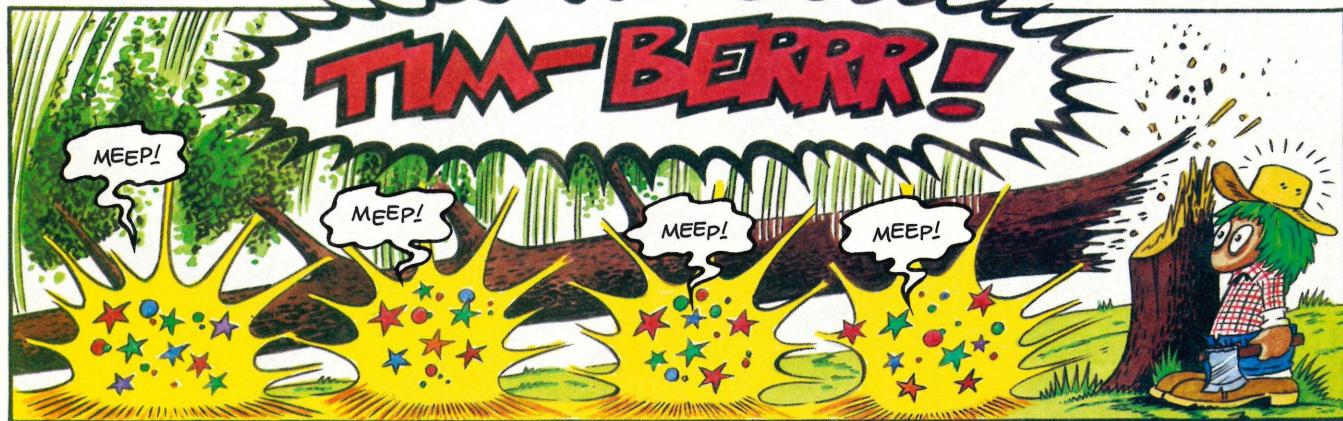
"FOR INSTANCE, THE FOREST LEMMING, OR SHOG, IS SUPPOSED TO HAVE SPREAD FROM RUSSIA BY WAY OF FINLAND.



"IT IS A MATTER OF SOME SPECULATION AS TO HOW THESE TINY CREATURES WERE ABLE TO UNDERTAKE SUCH LONG AND POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS JOURNEYS"



"... WE CAN ONLY CONJECTURE THAT THEIR DETERMINATION AND INGENUITY HELPED THEM OVERCOME ALL OBSTACLES IN THEIR WAY."



TIM-BERR!

MEEP!

MEEP!

MEEP!

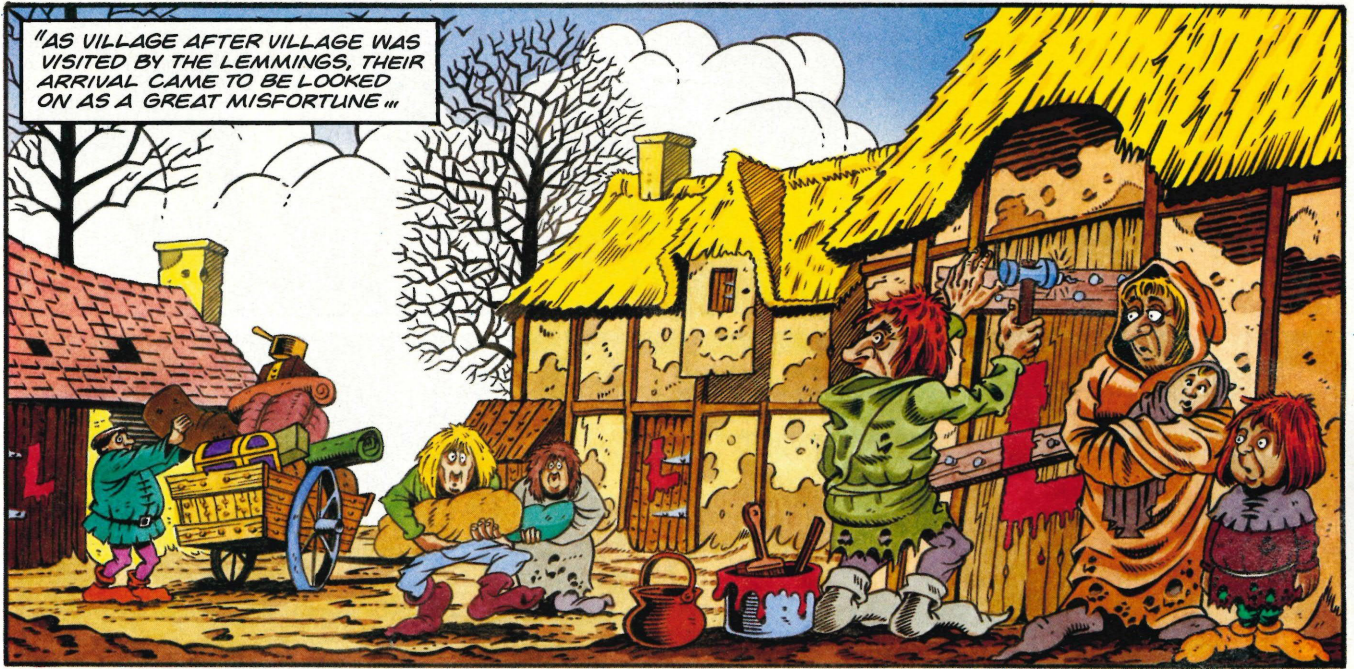
MEEP!



No, really! They are called Shogs. Would we lie to you?



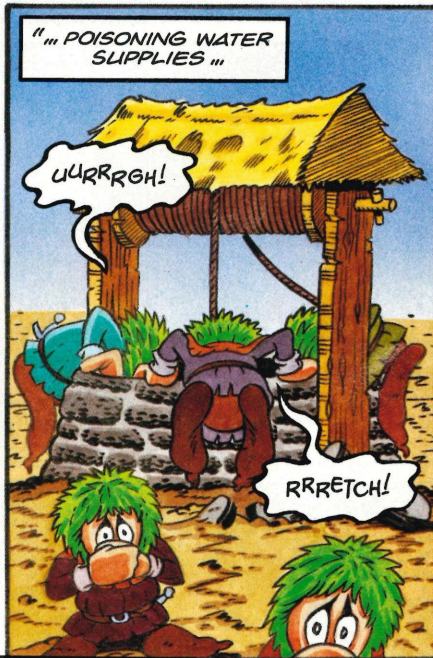
Don't want to blow up a Blocker? Get a Basher to cut out the floor from underneath him. This will change the Blocker back into a Walker, allowing you to save 100% of all Lemmings.



"AS VILLAGE AFTER VILLAGE WAS VISITED BY THE LEMMINGS, THEIR ARRIVAL CAME TO BE LOOKED ON AS A GREAT MISFORTUNE ..."



"THEY WERE BLAMED FOR DESTROYING CROPS ..."



"... POISONING WATER SUPPLIES ..."

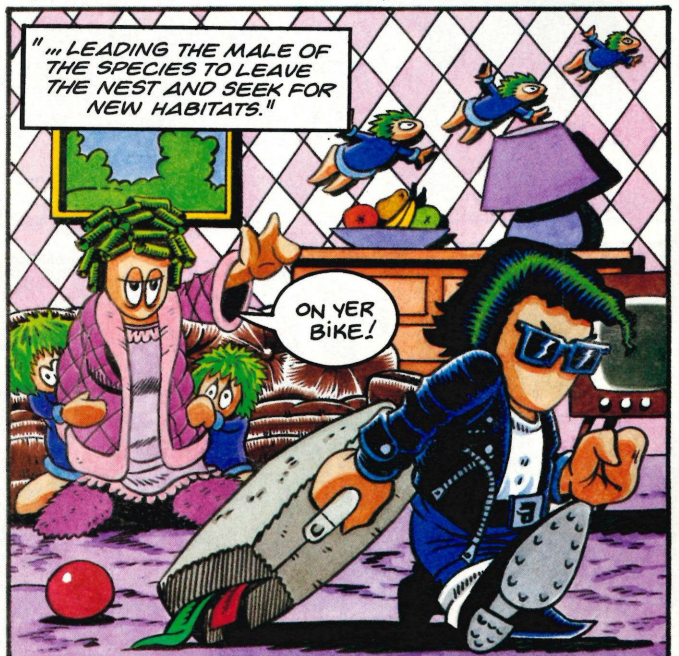


"BUT WHAT LED THE LEMMINGS TO MIGRATE IN SUCH LARGE NUMBERS?"

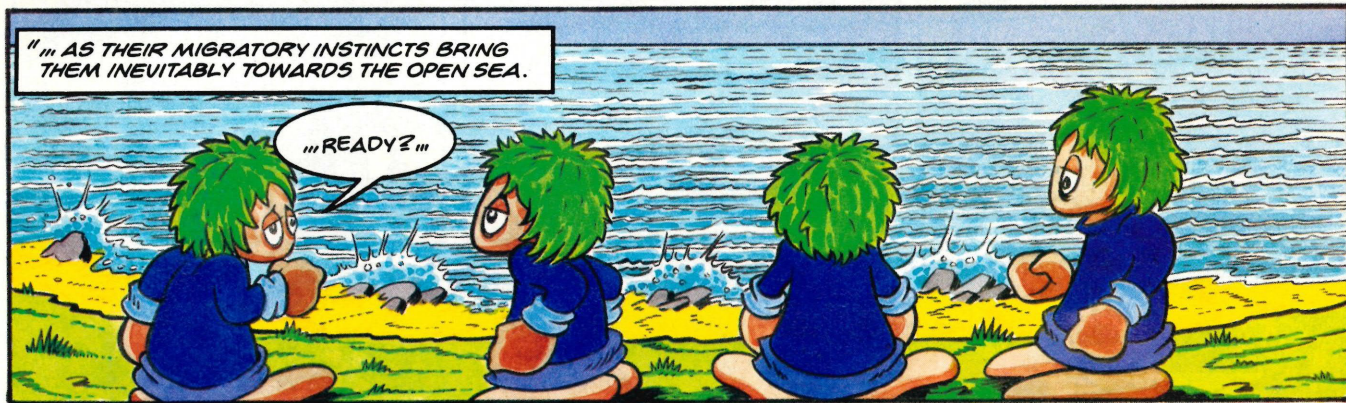
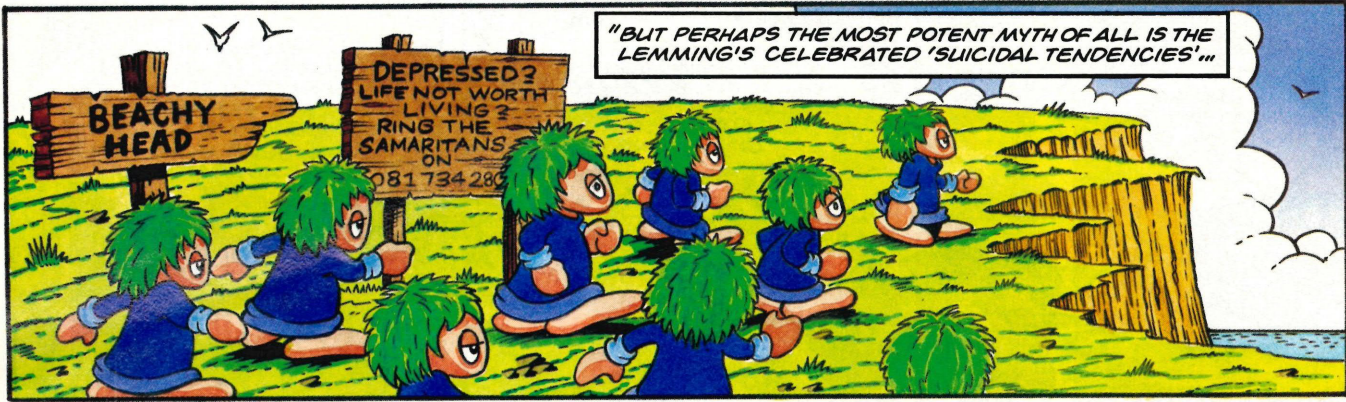
"THE BALANCE OF EVIDENCE SEEMS TO INDICATE THE CAUSE WAS OVERPOPULATION. LEMMINGS ARE VORACIOUS AND ENTHUSIASTIC BREEDERS ..."



BENEFIT OFFICE

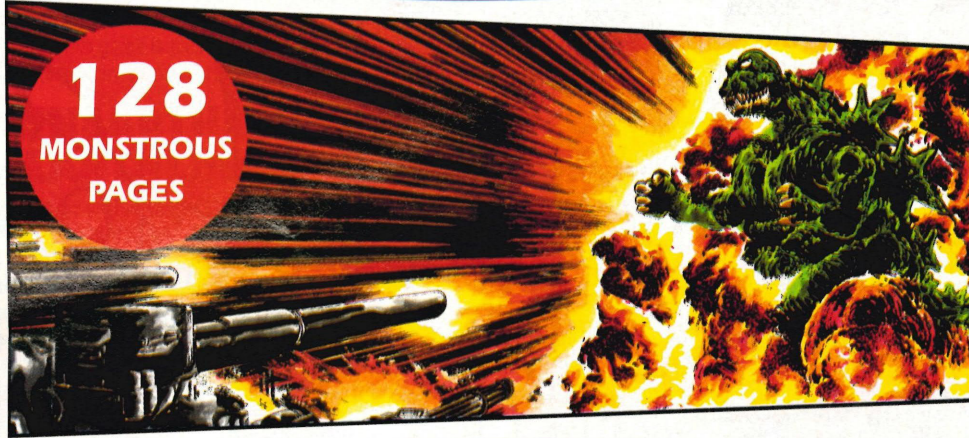


"... LEADING THE MALE OF THE SPECIES TO LEAVE THE NEST AND SEEK FOR NEW HABITATS."



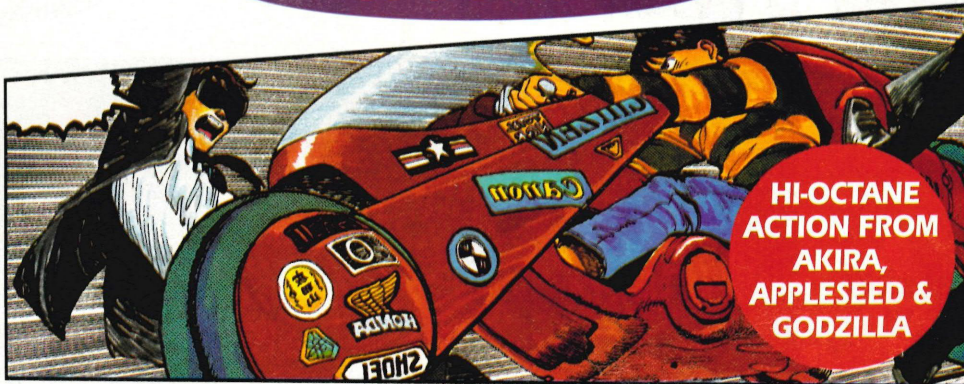
IT'S BIG!

128
MONSTROUS
PAGES



Godzilla is™ and © 1993 Toho. Co. Ltd.

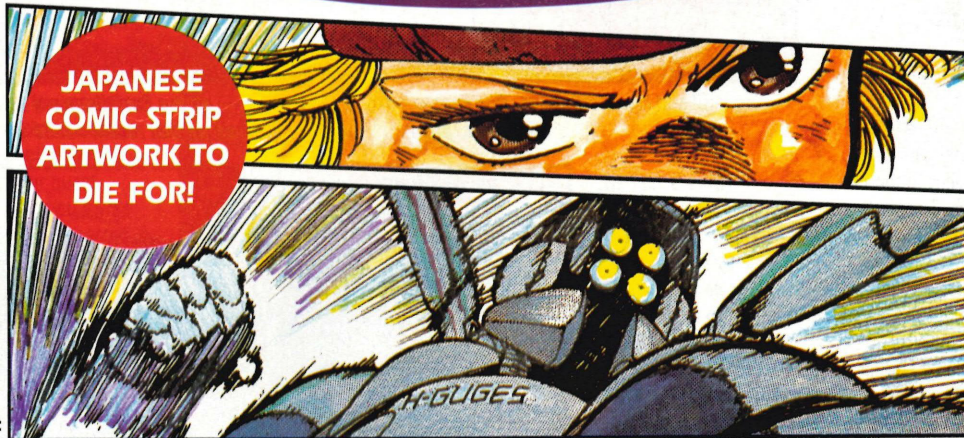
IT'S BAD!



HI-OCTANE
ACTION FROM
AKIRA,
APPLESEED &
GODZILLA

Akira is © 1993 MASF+ROOM. Co. Ltd.

IT'S BEAUTIFUL!



JAPANESE
COMIC STRIP
ARTWORK TO
DIE FOR!

Appleseed is © 1993 Masamune Shirow and Seishinsha

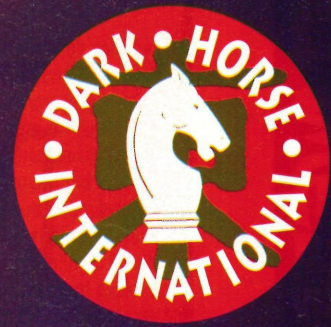
IT'S ...

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SYSTEM breakdown

TOEJAM & EARL

SOUND

92%

Brilliant sound including some speech and effects and twelve different funky tunes.

GRAPHICS

91%

An Alien setting gives tons of scope for bright surreal graphics. Great animation too.

GAMEPLAY

90%

It's big, it's varied, it's lowdown mean and funky.

ADDICTIVENESS

90%

Well, it had me hooked. It's the variety that does it. Watch for the dudes dancing!

MAX overall

91%

PANIC on funkatron

ToeJam and Earl were just too darn funky to only have a single outing on the *Sega MegaDrive*. Now the coolest of spaced out alien dudes are back in this, their second escapade — **TOEJAM AND EARL in PANIC ON FUNKATRON**. *Simon Grant gets on down.*

Everyone knows about the adventures of these two loveable aliens — why, you can even read about them exclusively in the hallowed pages of this very publication. ToeJam's the slim, red guy with the baseball hat, jewellery and three legs; Earl is fat, orange — a bad dude with attitude sporting Bermuda shorts. Together they crashed on Earth (when ToeJam let Earl take the controls of their spaceship), scattering pieces of their craft all over the planet's surface. Their first adventure had you controlling either of the funky pair as they roamed the planet looking for the various parts of their ship to reassemble and take them back home. This time around, the duo are back on their home planet of Funkatron — but everything is far from funky dory.



Uh-oh! You don't always get a goodie when you shake a tree, part a bush or lift a manhole cover. Sometimes a trashcan, tyre, or ball falls out — looks like Earl's just learned the hard way.



Great job, Homeboys. Our heroes clear another level — all the Earthlings are in Trapomatic jars, and all the jars are stashed on that rocket bound for Earth.

There's just so much in ToeJam And Earl 2. Here the funky duo embark on some aquatic antics in their quest for Earthlings. You only have a limited time to swim underwater, but if you can snog a Puffa Fish you can get extra air... Weird!



HOME ON THE STRANGE

It seems that, unbeknownst to our heroes, when they left Earth they also transported a large number of human stowaways. Now these Earthlings are causing havoc all over Funkatron — kids are running wild, road workers are using jack hammers, tourists are popping flash bulbs at the local inhabitants — all in all causing severe disruption to the peaceful-if-you-don't-count-loud-hip-hop planet's populace. We learn about this around the same time as TJ and Earl do in a brilliant and lengthy animated Intro. A newcaster — kind of like Nicholas Witchell except green and with three eyes — imparts the bad tidings to our heroes and names them as the culprits. Somewhat dismayed to learn this, our homey pals set off to right the wrongs, to trap the Earthlings in their Trapomatic Jars and ship them back to Earth.

This, then, is your task in this stylin' sixteen level platform romp. Yep,

unlike the prequel which was played from a sort of top down isometric viewpoint *ToeJam 2* is a left to right platformer. But don't let that put you off, because this game is packed with surreal graphics, funky tunes and crazy gameplay.

UNEARTHING EARTHLINGS

Hunting for the Earthlings isn't that easy. You need to find them first, and that entails rummaging in bushes and shaking the odd tree. Getting distracted from your task is easy, though. There are loads of weird alien-type pushbuttons and parking meters that can teleport you or take you to secret levels called Hyperfunk Zones. These are the Funkatronian equivalent of winning one of those five minute dashes through a supermarket. *ToeJam* or *Earl* gets to speed across an undulating landscape, collecting goodies as they run. There are energy-draining fields and early exits which you can avoid by a swift warp action, and tons of extra gifts to collect. On your travels, you'll also come across your friends, like *Sharla* or *Peabo* – either in their houses or standing with their beat boxes. You can call on them at home and they may give you clues or advice, or you can jam with them in a groovy subgame. A coin in the meter lets you try and mimic your friends' new dance. Each button on the controller becomes a beatbox noise and a funky move. Hitting the same combination as your homeboy pal wins you a healthy 'awesome' on the Funkometer and several coins to help you in your quest. See? I told you it was easy to get distracted.

You can play as either *ToeJam* or *Earl*, or if you get a friend and a second controller you can both join in the fun together



This sweet demure child packs a vicious kick to the shins. When you've got three legs, like ToeJam, you don't want to waste any time getting her safely inside a Trapomatic Jar!

– just like the first game. There's also that neat option of the hi-five to share extra lives, in case one of you is struggling.

COOL TOOLS

As if all this wasn't enough, you'll also find that both *ToeJam* and *Earl* have several special

weapons at their disposal. You can call these up by using the Start button. A *Funk Scan* enables you to see the screen in psychedelic X-ray mode. Any hidden traps, gifts or Earthlings on screen will be revealed. *Panic* makes our heroes do just that. They speed around the screen throwing out Trapomatic Jars and waving their arms in the air! This is very effective if you're faced with a screen full of Earthlings. Finally, the *Funk Vacuum* is a giant Hoover that sucks up any errant Earthlings from those tiny nooks and crannies. But remember, all of these power ups are limited, so use them wisely.

The game's sixteen levels provide tons of gameplay variety with different graphics and methods of control. You can swim underwater to find secret gifts and an underwater cavern, you can slide down the snowy slopes — you never knew there was so much in it! *ToeJam And Earl 2* is an amusing and entertaining romp that'll keep you off the streets for ages. The first game was good, but that was just a taster compared to this outing ... *ToeJam And Earl 2* is kicking, jamming, stylin' ... er... really rather good.



These are your energy bars. ToeJam's doing much better than Earl right now. Maybe they should think about doing one of those energy sharing HI-lives.

This is how many Panics the guys have remaining. As a last resort you can go into panic mode and run around the screen like crazy throwing out Trapomatic Jars. Weird but effective.

This handy pointer shows you the way to the next Earthling.

This is the number of Funk Scans the dudes possess. Use these for a special X-ray view of the screen revealing any hidden goodies, traps or Earthlings.

This is the Funk Vacuum. Use this for extracting those hard-to-get-at humans - just when you thought it was safe to hide under a rock!

These are your coins. The Funk is the standard currency on Funkatron.

This is Earl making the most out of the snow on this level. Now that's what I call cool.



Earl may have a big beer belly, but it won't protect him from that flying tomato. That kid is a menace to all decent Funkatronians!

MAX ovation

**TOEJAM & EARL 2 IS...
GAME OF THE MONTH**

SYSTEM Overload

TOEJAM & EARL 2

System: **Sega Megadrive**
 Publisher: **Sega**
 Price: **£49.99**
 On Sale: **Jan 1994**

NOW WE ARE THREE



What's special about February 14th 1994? No, forget all that Valentine's stuff, this is the official Third Birthday of LEMMINGS, the reckless rodents who have now sold over two million games worldwide. To celebrate, we sent to our resident animal expert **Patrick McCarthy** (who has always been extremely fond of small furry animals, and has a long police record to prove it) to talk to DMA DESIGN, the top-notch Scottish development team behind the hugely successful series.

In the same way that **Populous** was the first God-game and **Titanic Blinky** was the first Oh-my-god game,

Lemmings was the original save-'em-up that all others have copied. It's been released on just about every format known to humanity, from the PC, SNES and Amiga to Arkwright's Spinning Jenny, and is so addictive that you'd think it would have been made illegal by now. I spoke to three of the developers behind the original **Lemmings** - Gary Timmons, Mike Daley and Scott Johnson - about the forthcoming **Lemmings 2** and the rumours of **Lemmings 3**. Since it's difficult to tell who's who on the phone, the three individuals have cruelly been merged into a generic person called **DMA**. To make things fair, I have become **Max O**.



Max O: When **Lemmings** was first released, there'd never been anything like it before. How did it come about?
DMA: Mike was working on D-Paint animations during lunch breaks, with little characters being hurt in different situations — squashed by a weight, falling off the edge of a cliff, and



so on. We saw the humour involved and liked the possibilities with having so many characters on screen at once. Gary made some more

traps, like rotating

devices that threw them against a wall, then took the graphics and changed the characters until they looked like they do in the games, and that was basically how the idea first appeared.

Max O: Were you surprised at how successful it was?

DMA: Yes, we were - pleasantly surprised. Across all the formats, it's sold over two million copies now.

Max O: So has it changed your lives? Are you all millionaires?

DMA: (Much laughter)

Max O: I take it that means no.

DMA: Yes, the quick answer is no ...

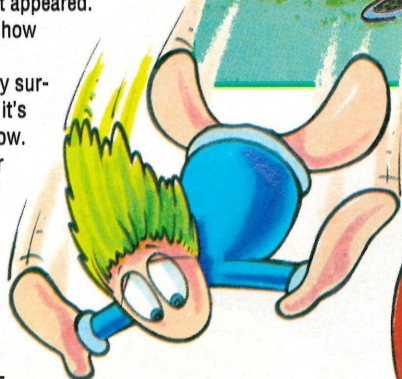
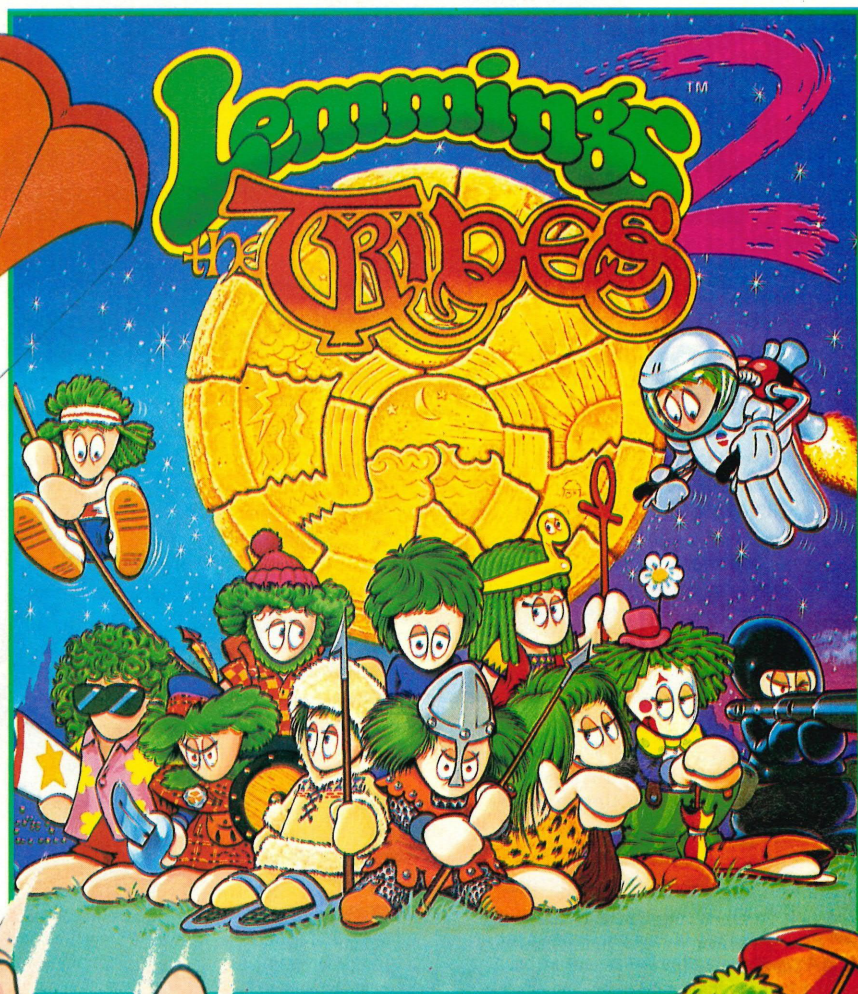
Max O: It started a whole new genre, now known as the save-'em-up, and since then there's been **Humans**, **Troddlers** (the most obvious rip-off) and several other games that have imitated the idea. How do you feel about all these imitations?

DMA: We don't really mind about other games that have possibly "been influenced by" **Lemmings**. What happens is that when a rip-off game's reviewed, the review will usually compare it to the original **Lemmings**, and it's all more advertising for us. If people like that game, they'll say "Right, I'll try out this **Lemmings** game that's supposed to be the original, then." So we don't mind.

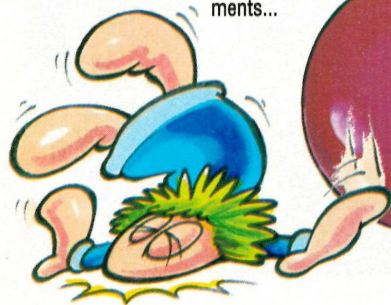
Max O: Are there any imitators that you actually like, or think are good games?

DMA: I don't like **Humans** or **Troddlers**, they're pretty boring really.

Max O: What about, say, **Cannon Fodder**? Although it's not the same kind of game, you could argue there are elements of **Lemmings** in that, in the way you have a supply of people to get through hazardous environments...



DMA: We had a very similar idea to **Cannon Fodder** ourselves, but obviously we're a bit late now. I'd say **Cannon Fodder** is more influenced by **Syndicate**, actually.



Max O: Do you have favourite games? Do you get time to play them?

DMA: We play games quite often. The current favourite around the office is the network version of **Doom**... [An absolutely brilliant first-person shoot-'em-up on the PC - see page 36 - Ed.]

Max O: Are there any companies or developers who you think produce good work on a regular basis?

DMA: The stuff that **Nintendo** write themselves is always very high quality. And **Sega's** in-house stuff, too. As for anyone else, well...

Max O: **Lemmings 2: The Tribes** is out on the **SNES** soon. Can you tell us a bit about it?

DMA: It was originally done by a team of programmers for the **Amiga** and **PC** virtually simultaneously. On the **SNES**, most of the game programming has been done by Mike Daley, with certain parts of the game, like the intro display, programmed by Adam Fowler.

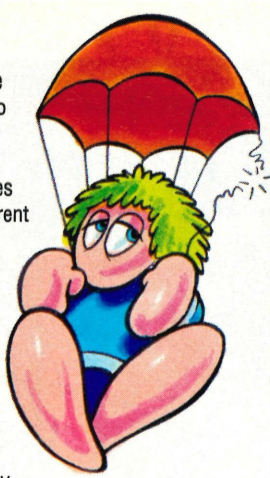
It's more or less the same as the **Amiga** one, but the levels have all been reworked to make them a bit nicer. The original **Amiga** version was a bit rushed as far as the levels were concerned, so it wasn't as easy to play or as well-organised as we'd like. And with the **SNES** we can't rely on everyone having the luxury of a mouse, so we've had to change all the levels so that they'll work equally well with a joypad. We came up with a new control method for the joypad as well, so that it's easier - you can lock-on to Lemmings, basically. It looks better, too. We've put in a nice parallax background and there's snow on the **Polar** levels. The sound effects are in stereo as well, so you get a better idea of where the Lemmings are dying.

Max O: There's talk of a **Lemmings 3** being on the way as well, isn't there? And there was even a **Christmas Lemmings**. How many Lemmings games are there going to be — are we going to see a **Lemmings 50** in 20 years' time?

DMA: There was a special Christmas edition, yes. Instead of their normal little blue suits, **Christmas Lemmings** were in red suits and little red hats with white pompoms on the end. (Laughs). As for **Lemmings 50**, we don't think it'll go that far ... it depends when people stop buying them, I suppose.

Max O: Can you tell us anything about **Lemmings 3**?

DMA: It will be different from the **Lemmings** games so far... we've decided on graphically larger Lemmings... but there's not actually much in the game that's been decided on at this



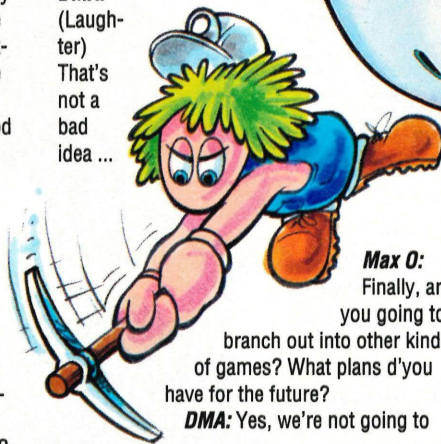
DMA Design team. Back row, left to right: Mike Dailly, Martin Good, Andy Whyte, John Whyte, Brian Watson, Russell Kay, Steve Reid, Raymond Usher, David Osborne.

Front left to right: Dave Jones, Garry Timmons, Graeme Anderson.

stage.

Max O: You haven't thought about using Lemmings in any other kind of game? Say a one-on-one beat-'em-up where you have to lose ...

DMA: (Laughs) That's not a bad idea ...



Max O: Finally, are you going to branch out into other kinds of games? What plans do you have for the future?

DMA: Yes, we're not going to

concentrate on **Lemmings** all the time. We are working on other ideas, and we've already produced other non-Lemmings games, such as **Walker**

and **Hired Gun**. We're develop-

ing new ideas all the time, and hopefully most of it should lead to some good finished product. ■



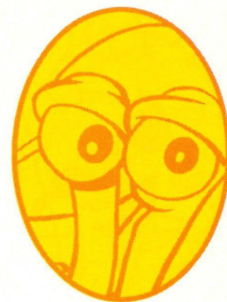
SO WHAT'S THIS NEW LEMMINGS ALL ABOUT, THEN?

Lemmings 2 takes the original game and multiplies it by 12. The story goes that the original **Lemmings** tribe has long since been split into 12 different ones, each having learnt different skills and living in different environments. But something is threatening their existence (apart from their naturally suicidal tendencies, that is). It's your job to bring them all together again by getting each tribe through all its levels until they're re-united again.

There are different hazards in each level - for example, the **Polar Lemmings** have slippery ice to contend with, the **Cavelems** have dinosaurs and the **Space Lems** risk being sucked out of an airlock. There are 43 new skills to learn as well — while the first game only had nine different types of lemming to use, the new game has 52. Blimey.

On the formats in which we've seen it, it achieves the almost impossible task of improving on the original game and from what **DMA** say about the **SNES** incarnation, they've pulled out all the stops to make it the best version of the lot. Start saving those pennies now.





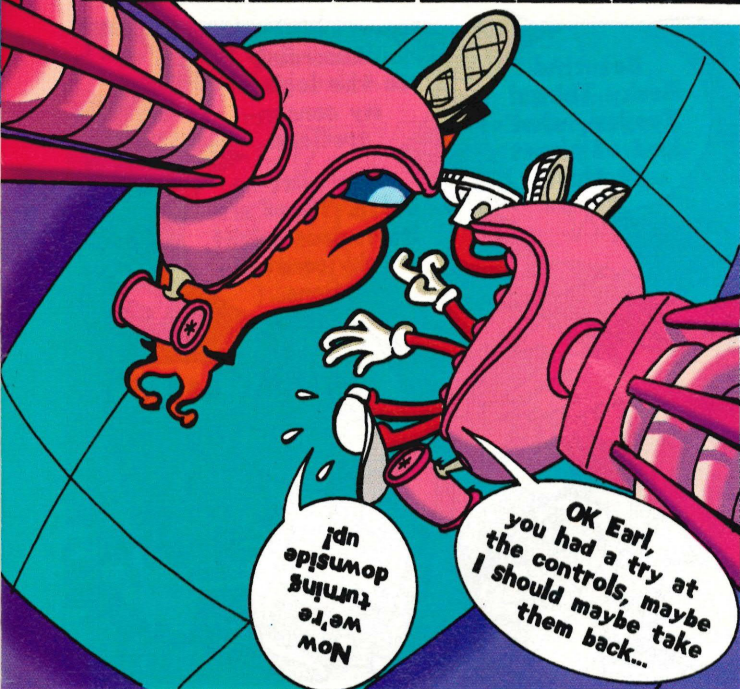
**ToJam
&Earl**

From the Planet FUNKATRON...



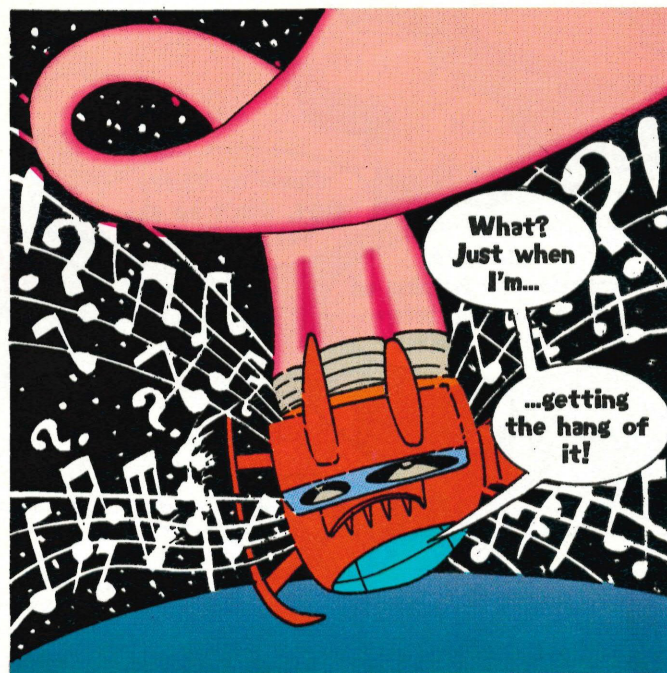
...The **RIGHTEOUS RAPMASTER ROCKETSHIP** was cruisin' a whole new Galaxy.

Let's spread some funk across the universe... Hold on TJ we're gonna swerve...



Now we're turning upside down!

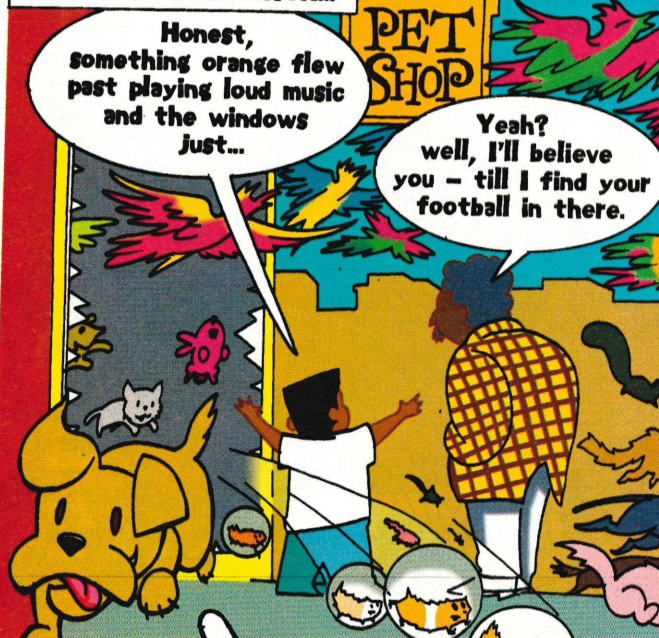
OK Earl, you had a try at the controls, maybe I should maybe take them back...



What? Just when I'm...

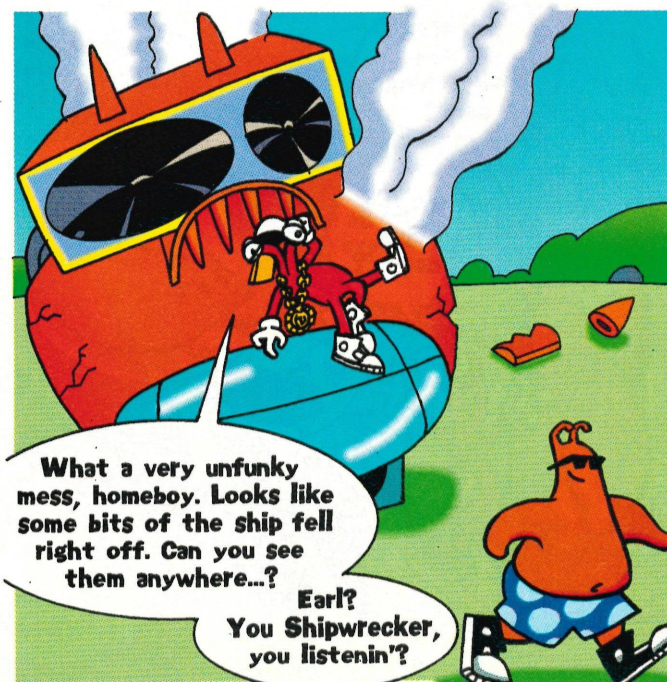
...getting the hang of it!

A small town on EARTH...



Honest, something orange flew past playing loud music and the windows just...

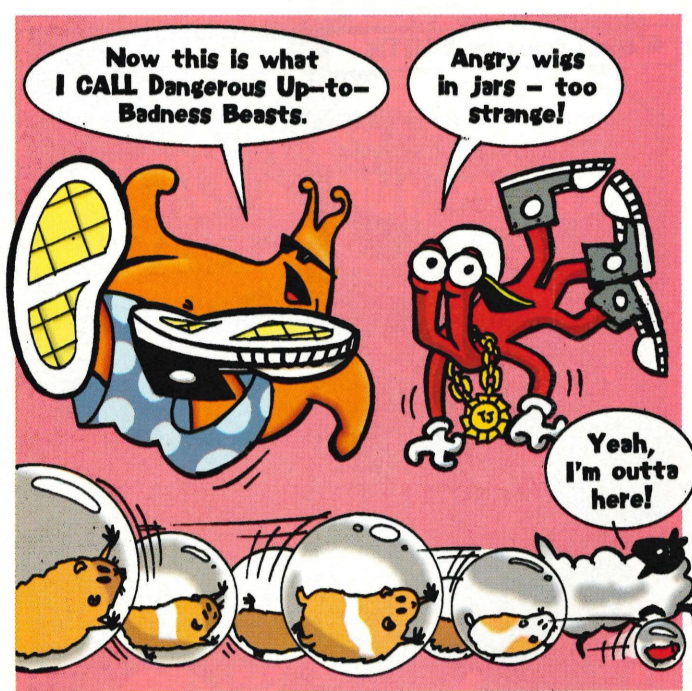
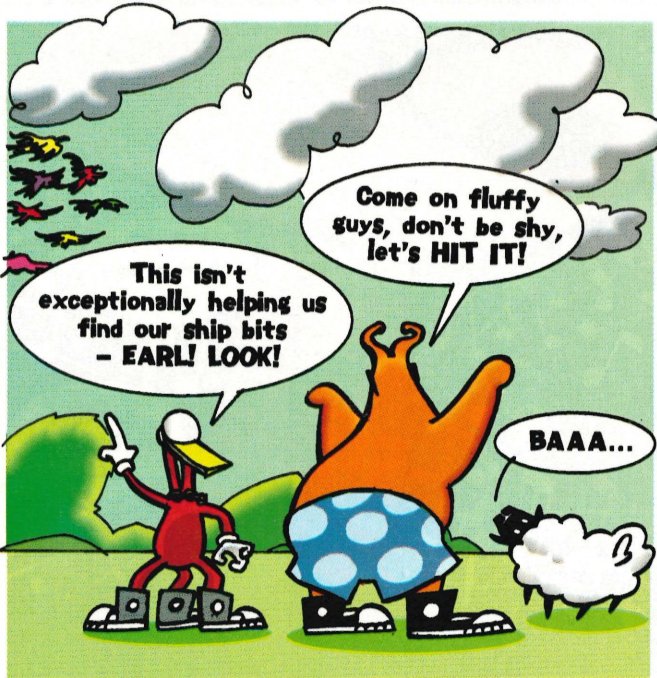
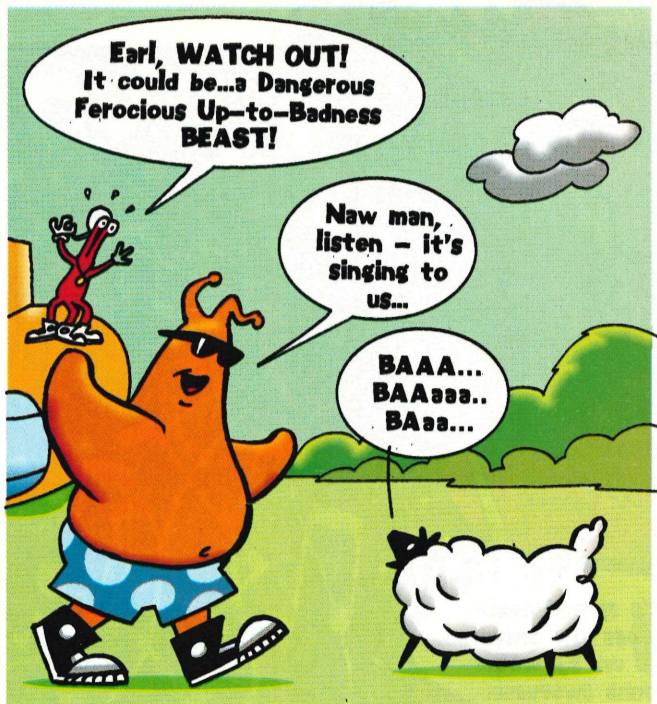
Yeah? well, I'll believe you - till I find your football in there.



What a very unfunky mess, homeboy. Looks like some bits of the ship fell right off. Can you see them anywhere...?

Earl? You Shipwrecker, you listenin'?

The Boys Who Put The Funk In Funkatron, brought to you by **ANNE CAULFIELD** Writer **WOODROW PHOENIX** Artist

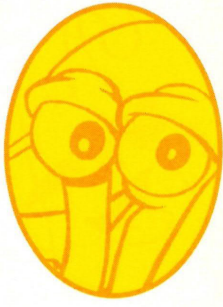
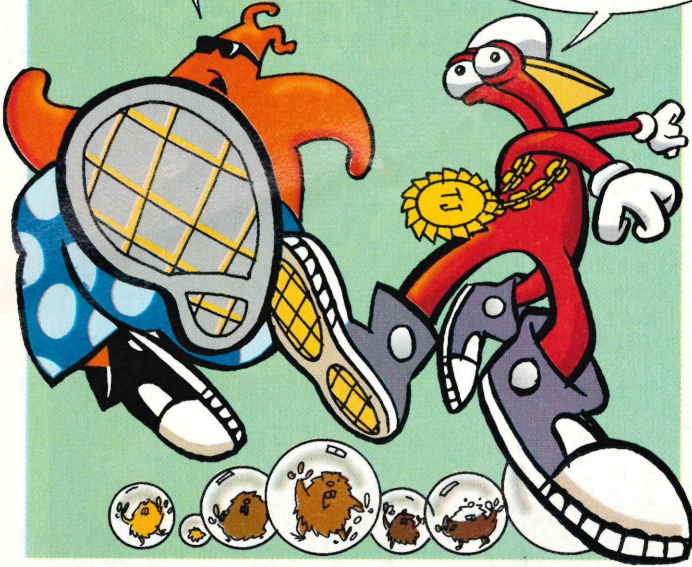


Maybe the wigs want to escape to go on heads. If I was a wig in a jar I'd be angry because...

Just RUN, Bro! This is no time to practise Hairpiece Psychology.

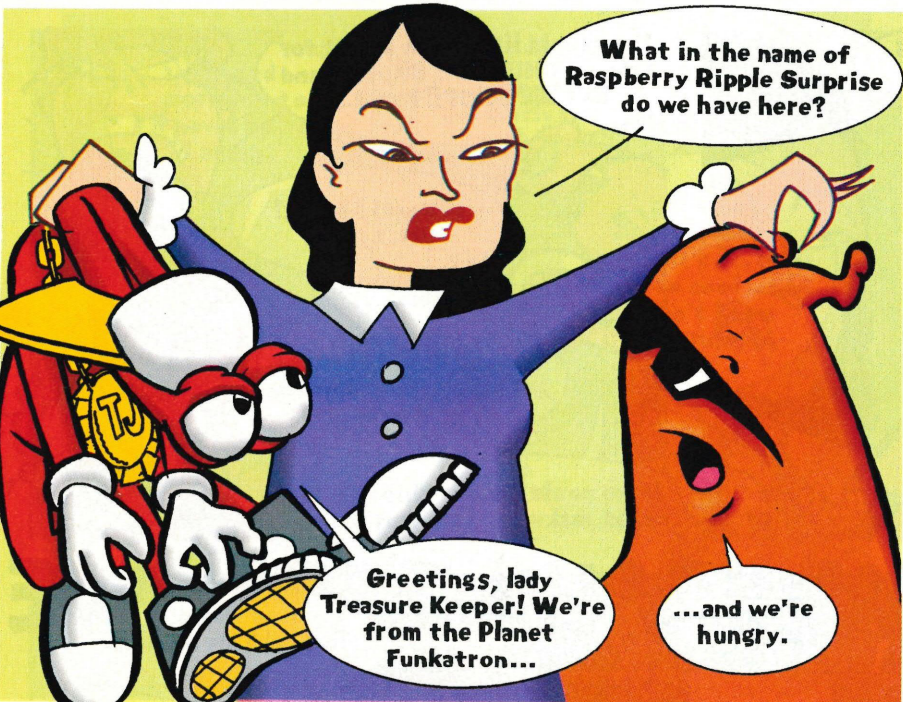
Sorry Guys, but we're proud to be bald on Funkatron.

And proud not to be SQUASHED FLAT. You nearly let them get us, you crazy dawdling DISASTRO.



Sorry, I'm such a fool I forget I'm a fool. Anyway, all that dawdling has made me RAPaciously hungry.

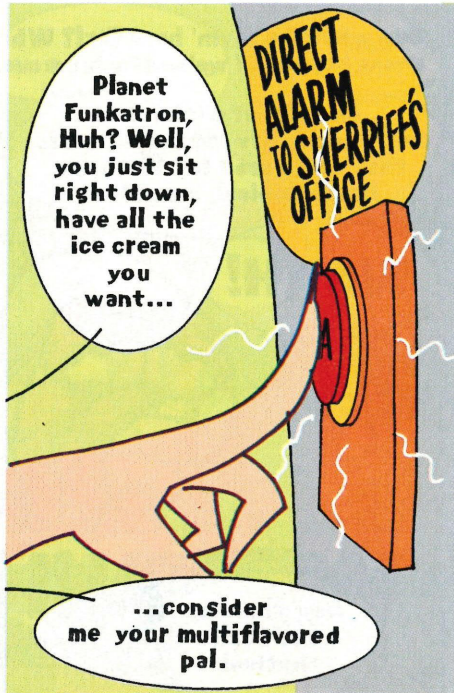
I think we've located the megabase foodwise of this strange planet.



What in the name of Raspberry Ripple Surprise do we have here?

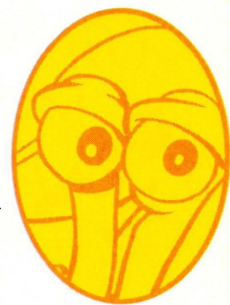
Greetings, lady Treasure Keeper! We're from the Planet Funkatron...

...and we're hungry.

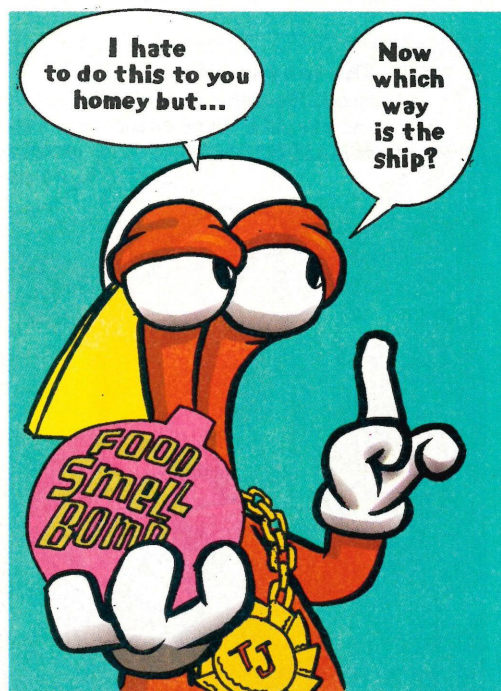
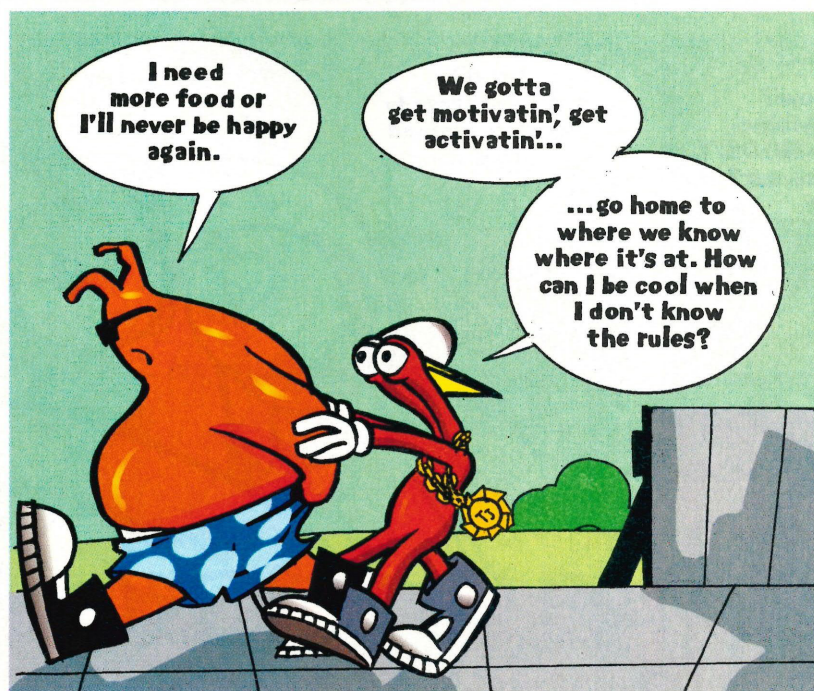


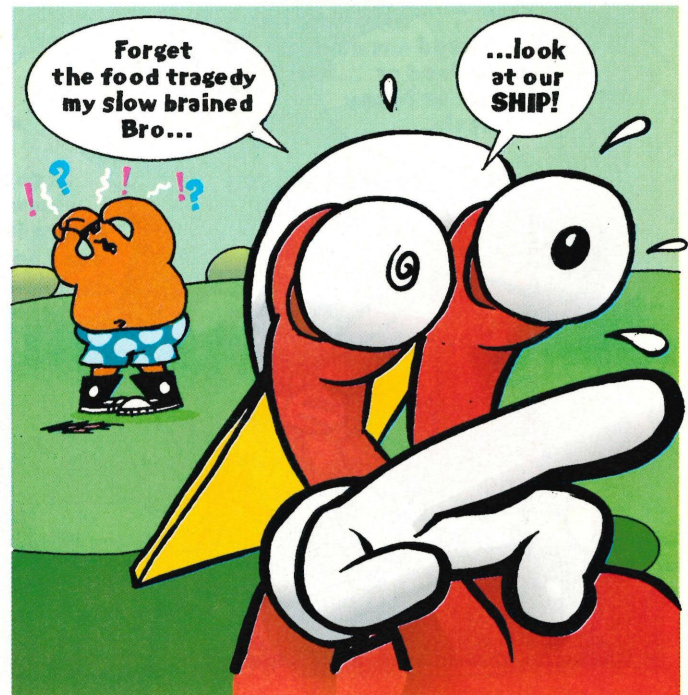
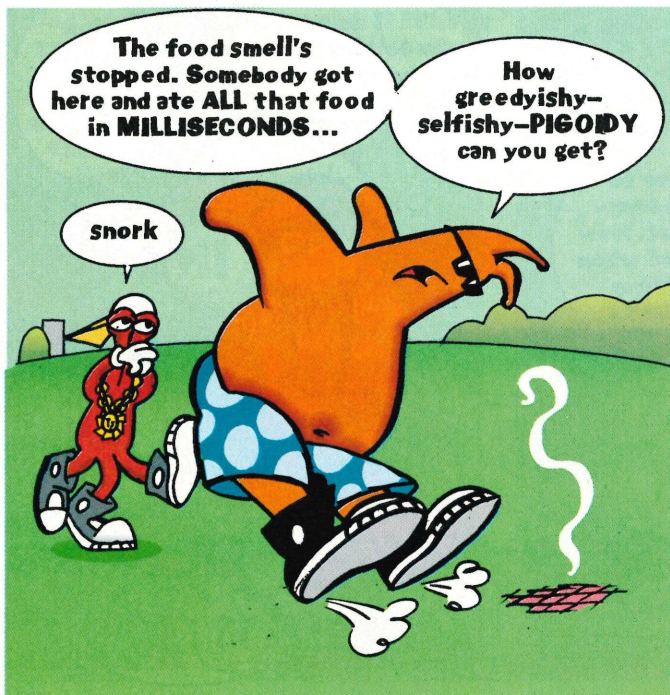
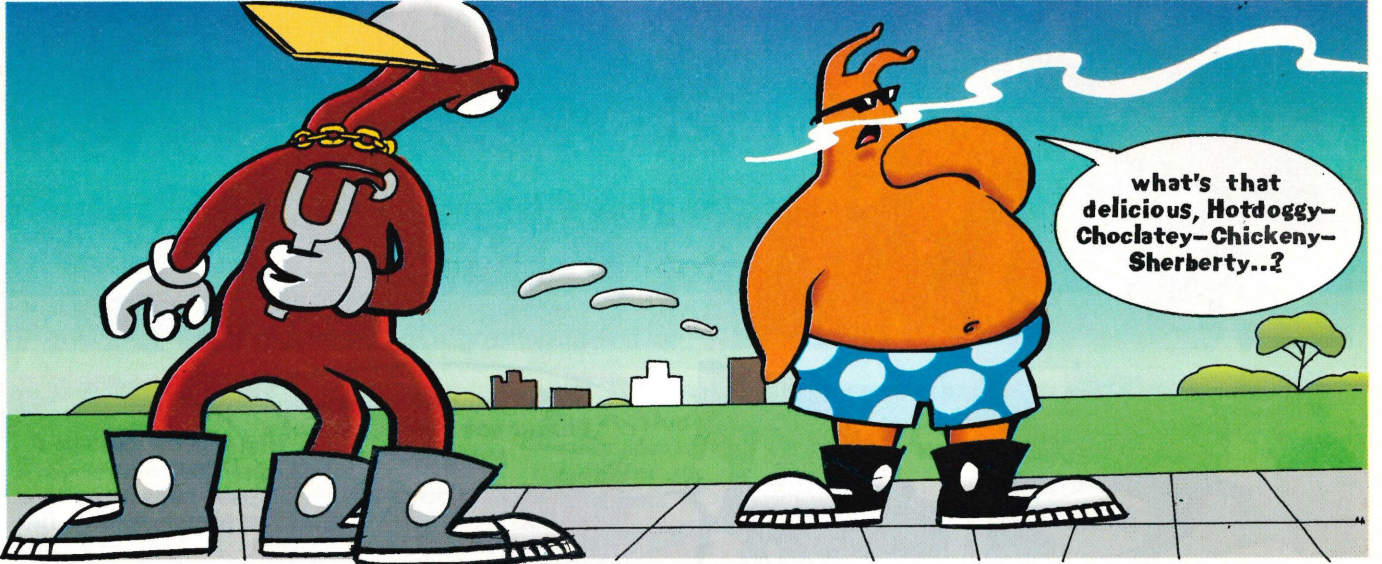
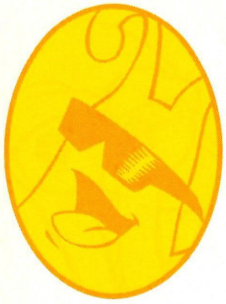
Planet Funkatron, Huh? Well, you just sit right down, have all the ice cream you want...

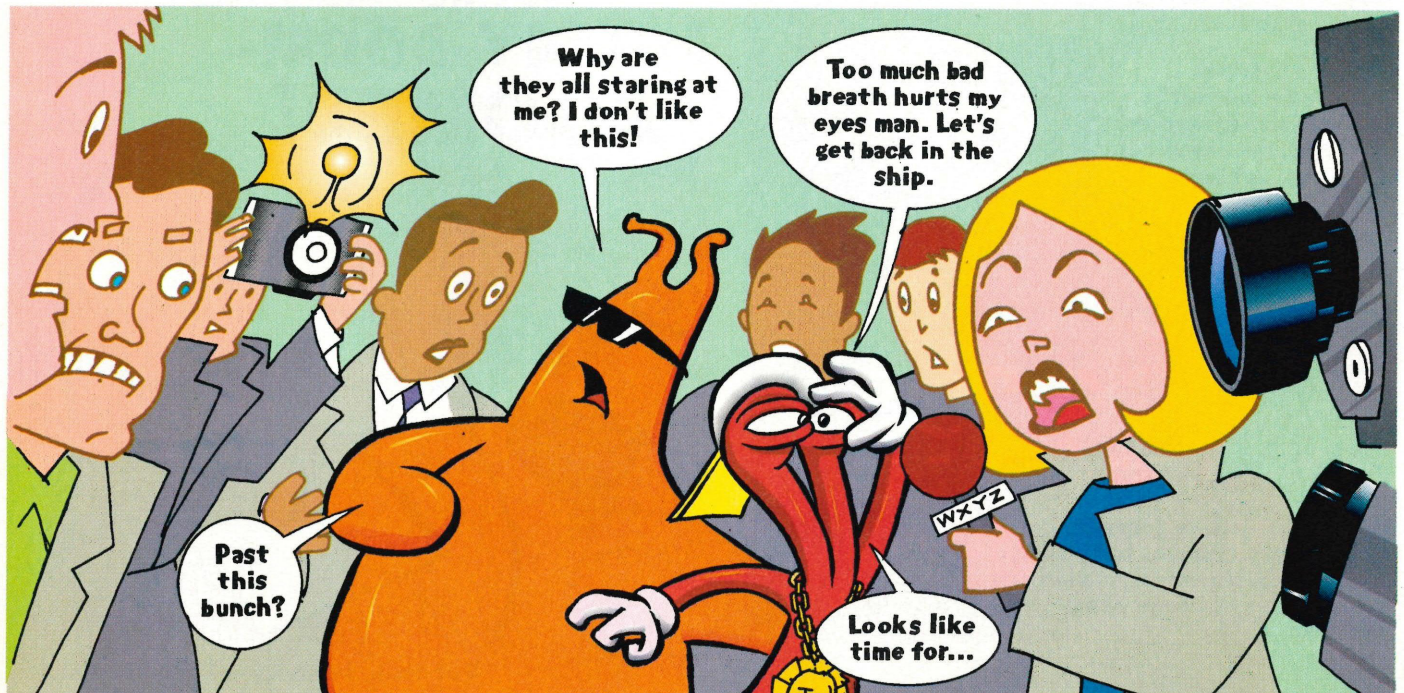
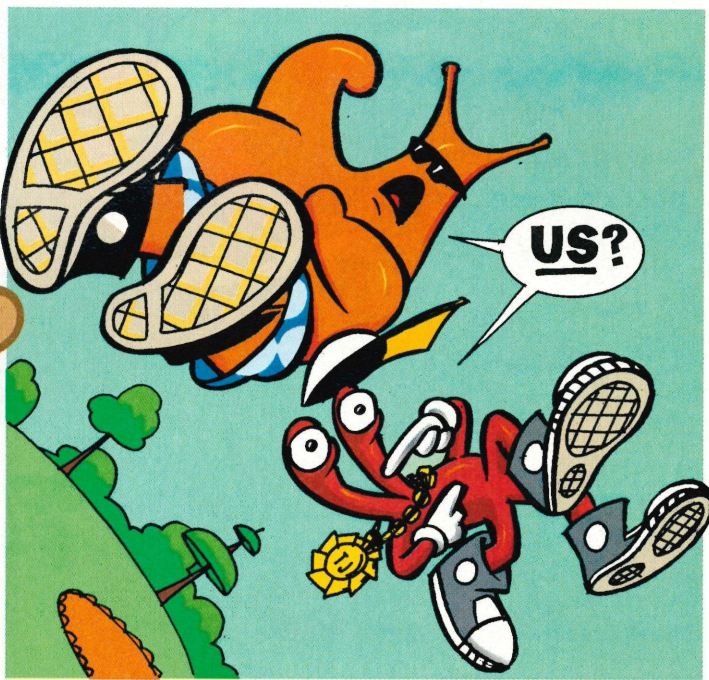
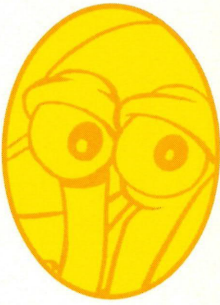
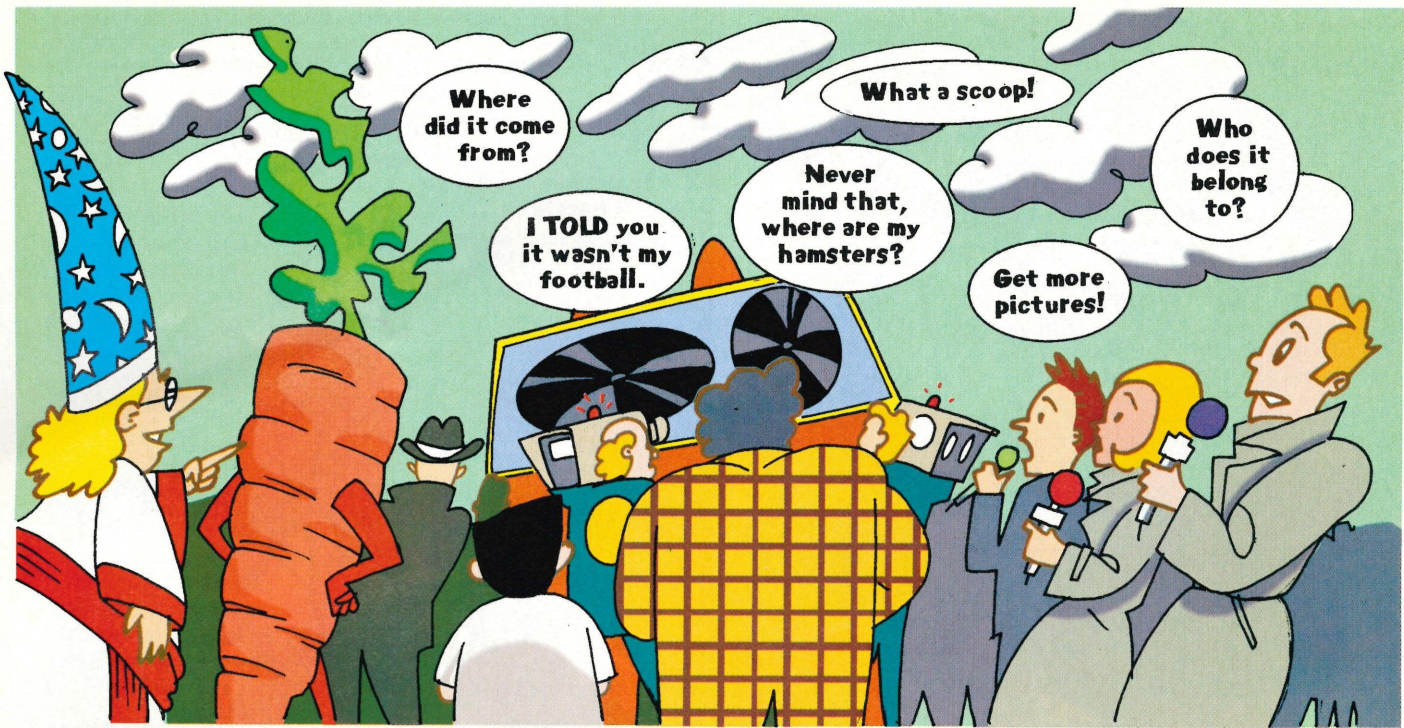
...consider me your multiflavored pal.



... So take a bath, drink some lemonade, then catch the lift. You'll be back on the highest level you've reached and ready for action!









...SPRING SHOES!

WhEEeEE!

SPROYNG! GOYO!NNG!



Keep 'em out Earl! Starey-strange-too-many-of-thems!

Maybe they didn't mean to hassle us...

Bad-breathin'-pushin'-heavin'-parker-nosin!..?

Trust me Earl, if you were as tank tough as me you'd know hassle when it hassles.



Where'd they go?

Come back little guys!

Anyone get a picture?

We scared them.



Not that I'm scared of nothin', never, but these guys are all around us, not scaring me in a scary way...

Maybe they'll go away in a minute.

Maybe they won't!



Nope. No food on the whole righteous ship. How long till we get home?

Oh, a while...

...like forever and ten minutes past dinner time... No way this ship can get us home, homey.



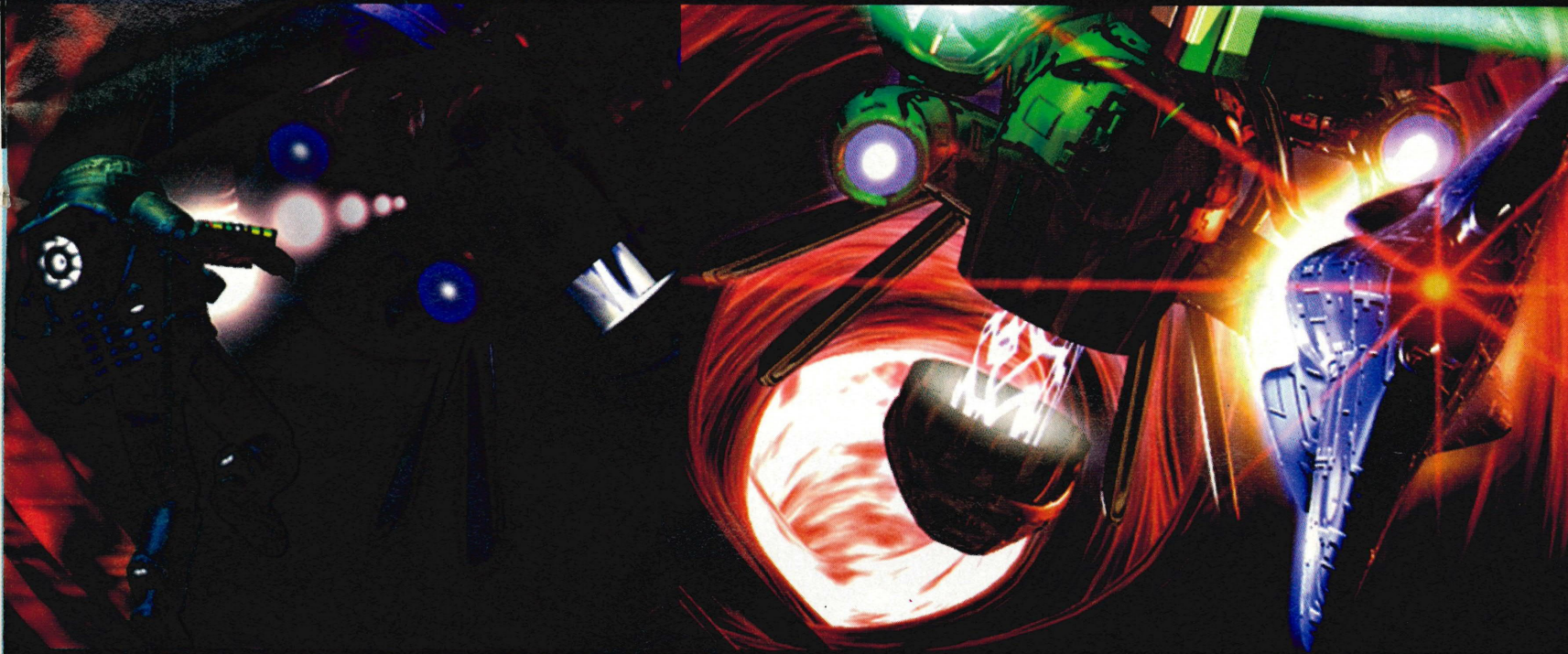
WE'RE DOOMY-DOOM-DOOMED!

But then, funky guys keep keepin'...

THE CD-ROM WAS CREATED FOR ONE REASON...

Microcosm features the most incredible movie sequences - combining some of the world's most advanced graphics with stunning live action footage.

Breaking new ground, Microcosm is the first game ever to use fractal engine technology, which allows the player full interaction with all the superb graphics created by the system. Play Microcosm and you'll be witnessing some of the most stunning computer graphics and awesome gameplay seen on any system EVER!



PRESS TALK

'A new era in gaming and the way ahead for CD.'

'This is THE way forward.'

'This could be the start of something new and very big.'

MEGA DRIVE

'The future today...'

'Quite unbelievable.'

THE ONE

Screenstar Award

CU AMIGA CD32

91% MEGADRIVE ADVANCED GAMING
plus cover mount

90% MEGA POWER

MICROCOSM

NO ONE IS IMMUNE.



SYSTEM breakdown

SECRET OF MANA

SOUND
85%

Good location-specific music

GRAPHICS
90%

Beautiful detailed graphics, matching anything seen on a console

GAMEPLAY
90%

Superb controls make the system easy to use, and it gives 70 hours of play

ADDICTIVENESS
87%

Unputdownable

MAX
overall
89%

DO YOU WANNA LEARN HOW TO KNOW A SECRET?

Patrick McCarthy the rudest person we know, so we thought it would do him good to learn the secret of manners.



This game is brilliant. It's not tremendously difficult, doesn't require blinding reflexes and it's not packed with impossible-to-solve puzzles; it's just totally compelling. The plot concerns the coming-together of a band of three fearless pre-pubescents (well, that's what they look like to me), and their attempts to defeat an evil nation intent on invading their country and destroying it. They come together early on in the game - relatively speaking; well, it takes a few hours of play, but the game is so big this counts as "early on". It's also so big that there's a manual to guide you through the sequence of events that brings them all together - all forty-two stages of it. The heroes are:

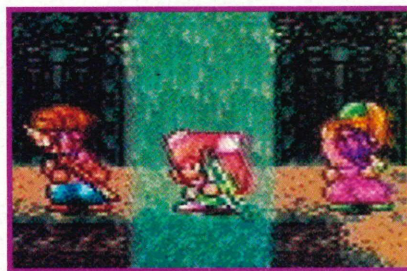
THE BLERK

Who's good at chopping people up. He was banished from his village for removing a magical sword from a stone which was protecting the village from evil creatures. "Be off," the villagers said, "and take your potatoes with you." During the course of his travels, between much smiting of creatures and doing of deeds, he meets and teams up with:

THE SPRITE

Small fur-covered creature, or can of drink that rolled under the fridge last summer? You

decide. This freakishly-short phenomenon's skills are mainly of the vicious, magical variety (in fact if he wasn't so hairy you'd swear he was Paul Daniels). But he also swings a mean pikestaff or effectively picks people off from afar with a bow (as in "-and-arrow," not "theatrical flourish"). Together, they meet...



THE CHICK WITH ATTITUDE

Who's good at chopping people up but also pretty hot at magic. Despite dressing like a bit-

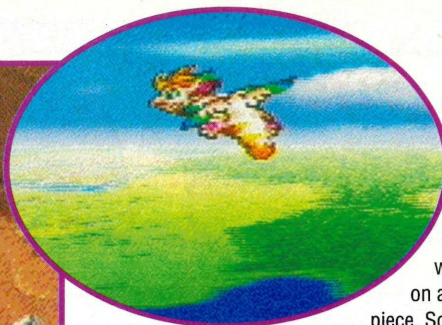
part character from Aladdin, she certainly isn't your stereotypical chick who twists an ankle in the middle of a chase. Refreshingly, she's probably the best character to use, because she combines head-cleaving combat skills with bowel-opening magical ones.



CONTROLS

Once they're together, you control whichever character you like, switching between them at the touch of a button. The computer controls the other two, or if you have two friends and a Multitap, they can be human-controlled, too.

If you're playing alone, the two characters you're not controlling directly can be told exactly how to fight via a kind of "Attitude-O-Meter". You decide what level they'll power-up their weapons to, how close to the enemy they'll stand, and how aggressive they'll be. You can



in real life: you stamp on someone's foot and a big "23" floats in the air next to them; poke them in the eye and "46" pops up. I think we'd all be a little more violent, wouldn't we?)



even target them against a particular individual while you take out someone else, if you want.

FIGHTING

Fighting is performed real-time, but beneath the surface there's a full-blown RPG at work, with Hit-Points, Magic Points and long dirty beards that get caught in your soup. So, when you whack a murderous insect over the head with your axe, numbers appear showing how much damage you've inflicted. (Imagine the fun of that

WEAPONS AND MAGIC

Everything is level-based, RPG-style. The eight weapons in the game can all be powered-up through eight levels, creating 64 weapons. The more you use a certain weapon, the more skilled you become in its use and the more effective the blow you strike. Magic works in the same way: the more you use a spell, the better you become at using it, and the more effective the spell is.

SHOPS

Everything you need to help you on your journey can be bought in shops. (It's easy to get money - just kill something). There are items to boost your health, replenish your magic points and even bring you back to life if you die, while armour and weapons turn you into a dwarfish threshing machine. Some armour can only be worn by certain characters: I'm still bemused as to why the blokes can buy Tiger Suit armour at one point and the chick has to have a Tiger Bikini. (Rest assured, she gets a proper suit of armour later.)

LOOK

Although the game looks like a three-player *Zelda*, playing it is a different experience. *Zelda*'s packed with very tricky puzzles with whole areas you can quite easily miss, and loads of places to become hopelessly stuck. *Mana*'s RPG nature is concerned instead with the development of characters in a story, with you guiding them, and there's no puzzle that will have you weeping into your hankie with frustration in the wee

small hours of the morning.

There's still a whole country to travel (you get about by cannon at first, and later by riding a dragon), but although there are massive castles with complicated layouts, there's usually only one way through them, with the emphasis on a lot of fighting to make it in one piece. Some people might not like the way they're so obviously following the plot (which unfolds with a rapidity that makes *Home and Away* look like a Thomas Mann novel). At first it can be a bit disconcerting: you almost feel that you don't spend long enough in the place to enjoy it properly, before you're off again. Once you're used to it, though, you just sit back and enjoy it.

BOSSSES

The enemy bosses are enormously powerful but, as long as you've saved enough magic during the long battle to reach them (and you use it intelligently), they can be killed relatively easily. If you use up your magic on small fry and don't have items to replenish it, you're in for a very tough battle: it will be long, frustrating and painful, and will end in tears.



BIG SUMMING-UP

The controls are brilliantly designed and easy to use, especially considering what a complicated system it is, and everything looks and sounds great. Because you're following a plot, it is quite linear; but unlike *Young Merlin*, you don't have to follow it all the time - you can wander off and do other things. It's one of the few games that you really look forward to returning to. It's gorgeous, and utterly absorbing. You can settle down for a mega-session with it, or just put it on for a quick go - it's always handy to wander about the forest killing things and improving your magic, because it boosts your levels and experience - and hacking small furry animals is always fun, anyway. It's not exactly the hardest game you'll play - but then that's not what it's about. It's a graphical treat, the music is wonderful and the gameplay's utterly engrossing. What more could you want?

MAX factoid

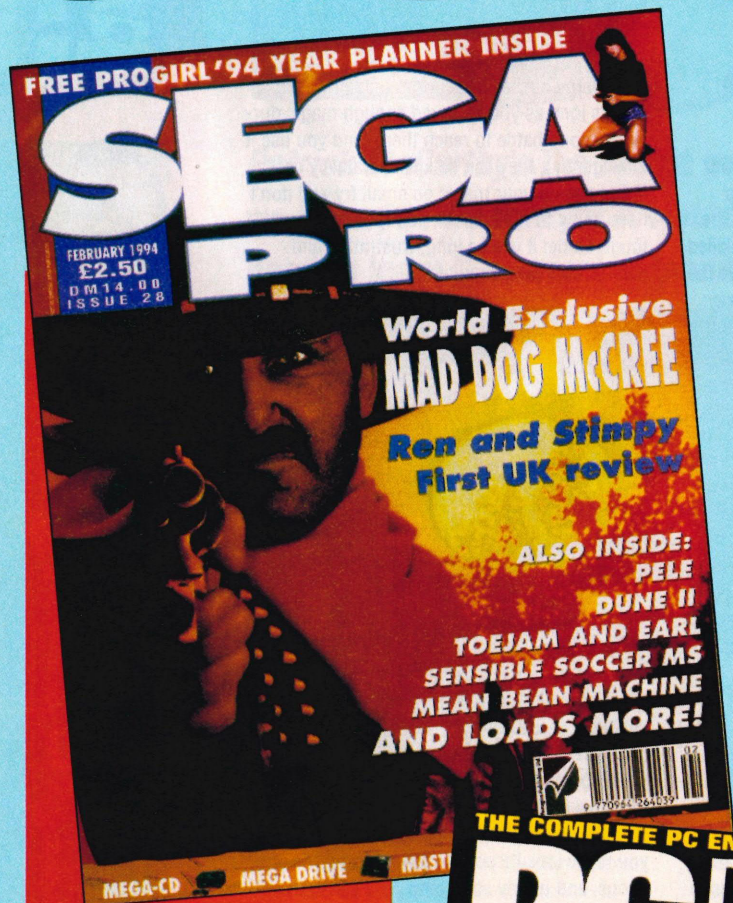
In the latest attempt to stop grey importers, *Secret of Mana* checks to see if your machine runs at 60Hz. If you have a UK machine, you'll need the latest Datel Pro adaptor, or something similar, in order to run it. It should cost you about £15.

SYSTEM OVERLOAD

SECRET OF MANA

System: **SNES**
 Publisher: **Square-soft**
 Price: **£54.99**
 On Sale: **American Import**

THE CUTT OF CONSOLE EN



● SEGAPRO

It isn't hard to see why SegaPro is Britain's Fastest-growing Sega magazine*. With top exclusives in the UK and direct from America, unbiased news and reviews and the best and latest Sega tips, no other comes close.

*Source: ABC results



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ING EDGE

TERTAINMENT...



● SEGA XS

For the very latest hints, tips and complete playing solutions for all the top Sega games, plug into Sega XS. It provides you with the techniques and tactics necessary to beat all the major games.

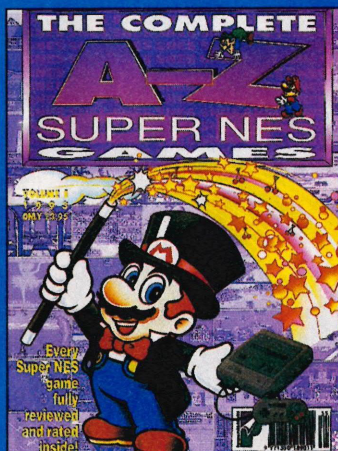
● MEGA POWER

Mega Power is the only magazine to feature fully-playable demos of the very latest Mega-CD and Mega Drive games. It carries massive reviews so you can get all the information on the games you want to read about.



These titles are on sale at all good newsagents, but if you are having difficulty in obtaining any of them call Paragon Publishing on (0202) 299900 or ask your newsagent to order from Seymour International Distribution on (081) 679 1899.

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Doom

with a view

If you have a hard time distinguishing games from reality, don't play **Doom**. It might push you over the edge. On the surface what we've got here is a 3D, first person perspective shoot 'em up set on a moon base.

Man-eating zombies. Fire spitting demons. Texture-mapping and state-of-the-art programming technology. Blood, rocket launchers and twenty five sprawling levels. It's called DOOM and it's set in Hell.

David McCandless is in heaven.



The bigger there are, the harder they fall (especially with a rocket launcher).

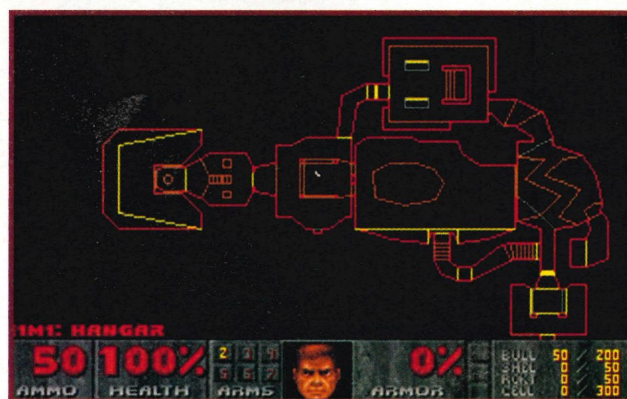
But just imagine you've got a selection of weaponry. Let's say a chainsaw, a pistol, a shotgun, a machine gun and a rocket launcher. Imagine that you and said hardware are placed on a space station — an industrial nightmare of stairways, parapets, walkways, caverns, tunnels and toxic waste rivers. Imagine also that this station is populated not with smiling shell-suited *Star Trek NG* types but with hungry, ugly, man-eating zombies, imps, and cacodemons. Imagine these monsters didn't want to just kill you with their guns, fangs and fireballs, but want to tear you apart and eat you, and then rub their greasy pink tummies and make yum-yum noises afterwards. How would that make you feel? Angry? Violent? Or just that little bit excited?



Doom has given itself a voluntary PC-13 rating (Profound Carnage). Slice a few monsters with the chainsaw to see why.

CONTROL FREAKS

Vent your anger, violence and excitement with full control and full freedom in the **Doom** world. When you turn, the screen doesn't flick or scroll. It turns with you, pixel by pixel. Turn 360



A special map function keeps track of your progress. Can you find all the secret areas on each level?

degrees and the whole level turns with you. Advance forward and the graphics scale, molecule by ugly molecule, towards you. Peer into the distance, miles away, to see an unsuspecting zombie. A dot on the horizon. Aim your gun and shoot him from miles away. In the meantime, climb spiral stairways, fall off gangways, drown in toxic waste, open doors, get flattened by collapsing ceilings. You can do whatever you want. Of course, what you'll want to do is discharge



I love my rocket launcher.



Another amazing feature of *Doom* is the ability to link up to four other computers over a network or modem and play a "DeathMatch". All players start in a random location on the level and use the available hardware to stalk and kill the other players.



your hardware and kill those monsters, every single last undead one of them.

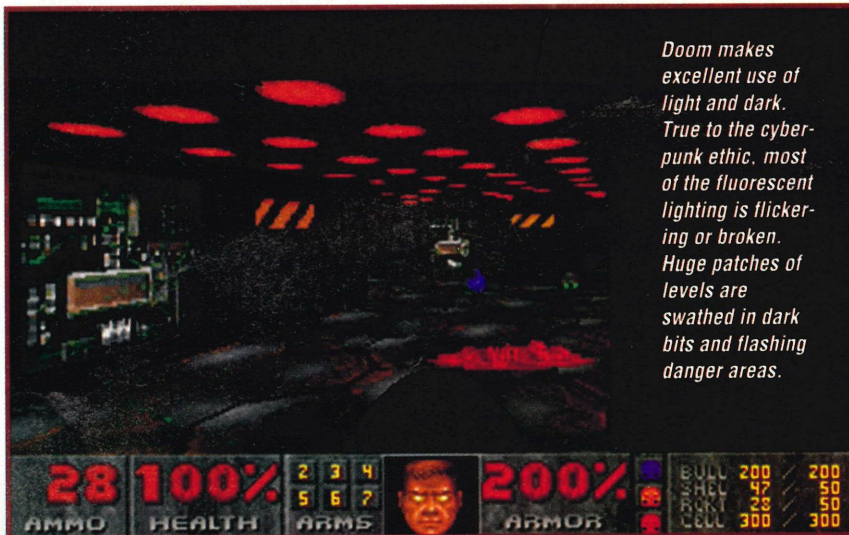
The monsters are tough. Each level is packed with hordes of zombies, armed to the teeth with shotguns and pistols. Milling about here and there are fireballing imps and the very fast, very scary cacodemons and the deadly invisible monsters. They make the backgrounds shimmer slightly as they pass – and that's the only warning before they pounce. The legions of Hell aren't dumb either. Some will run blindly towards you while others zig-zag or dive for cover. If you point the rocket launcher's maw at them, they might run. If a bunch of them get bottle-necked in a corridor, they'll attack each other, starting massive gun fights while you just watch.

HARDWARE

Just as well you're packing all that military surplus. Careful though – the guns react realistically. Fire the rocket launcher and you'll be pummeled back by recoil. Let rip too close to a wall or monster and the afterburn will fry you. The chainsaw judders your controls when it meets meat. Shotgun a zombie at point blank range and see it fly backwards, or topple down a staircase, or tumble from a gangway clutching its gut. Catch a demon in a spray of chaingun fire and see it dance. Shoot a fuel drum near a zombie and the blast will rip it to shreds.

While all this carnage is taking place before your eyes, the stereo sampled sound is in overdrive. You can hear zombies growling and demons snorting in the left and right speakers. Shoot them and they crumple, groaning. Bullets rat-a-tat off the scenery, rockets 'whoomph'

"This is the closest thing to living room virtual reality you're going to get."

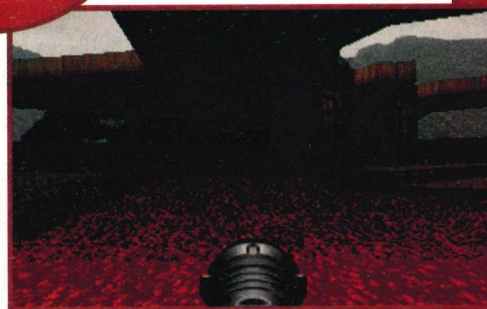


Doom makes excellent use of light and dark. True to the cyberpunk ethic, most of the fluorescent lighting is flickering or broken. Huge patches of levels are swathed in dark bits and flashing danger areas.

down corridors, the chainsaw burrs on standby and then howls as you carve your way through the opposition (literally). Doors sound like portcullises as they open. Lifts clank as they shunt up and down. Explosions sound muffled or thermonuclear (depending on minimum safe distance) – anything caught in a blast is dismembered with the proper schloppy intestinal noises.

DOOMED

The atmosphere is electric. The graphics, the weapons, the sound, the monsters, the damnright feel of the game are incredible. It's scary too.



The huge static mountains of Mars are the rather oppressive backdrop for *Doom*.

SHAREWARE

The most incredible thing about *Doom* is that it's free. Gratis. A giveaway. Because it's shareware. Spawned from some socialist's head somewhere along the line, *Shareware* is free software. You can get it and other shareware games from stockists for the price of the disks or you can download it on your phone bill from a bulletin board. To play it, you need an IBM compatible PC, ideally a 386 DX or higher. Admittedly, most shareware is tosh (stuck somewhere in the early eighties graphically, and as much fun as a skipping rope gameplay-wise), but occasionally there are massive uncut gems to find. *Doom* is one such.

The *Shareware* concept effectively cuts out the middle ground between the programmers and the gamers. No extorting mega corporations or dodgy software houses to go through. The programmers write the game, the gamers get hold of the shareware version, a playable demo if you like (usually about one third of the game). Then you can 'register' for the full version and give all the money to the programmers. Fill in your order form, send £35 (or \$40) and the full version is yours.



Chuck Rock

DEAD OF NIGHT. CHUCK ROCK'S FABLED FJORD CAR PLANT.

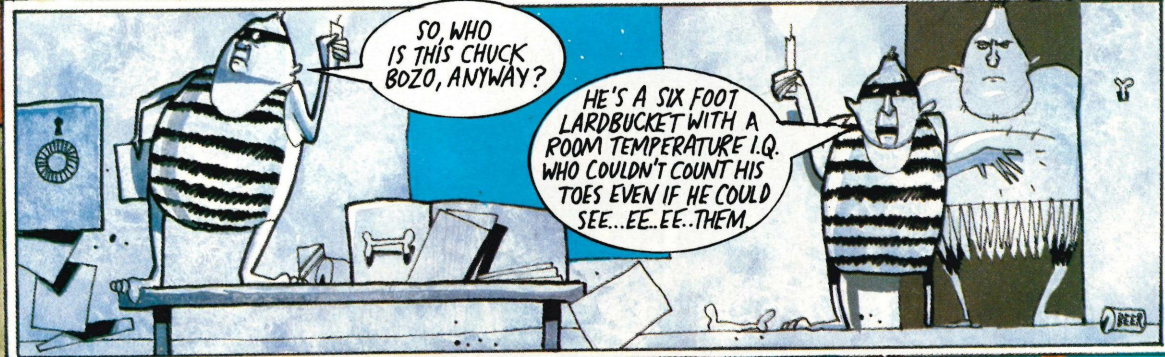


THE BOSS SAYS THE PLANS 'AVE GOTTA BE HERE SOMEWHERE. THE RACE IS SAT'DAY.

IT'LL TAKE US TILL THEN TA FIND IT. IT'S A PIGSTY IN HERE.

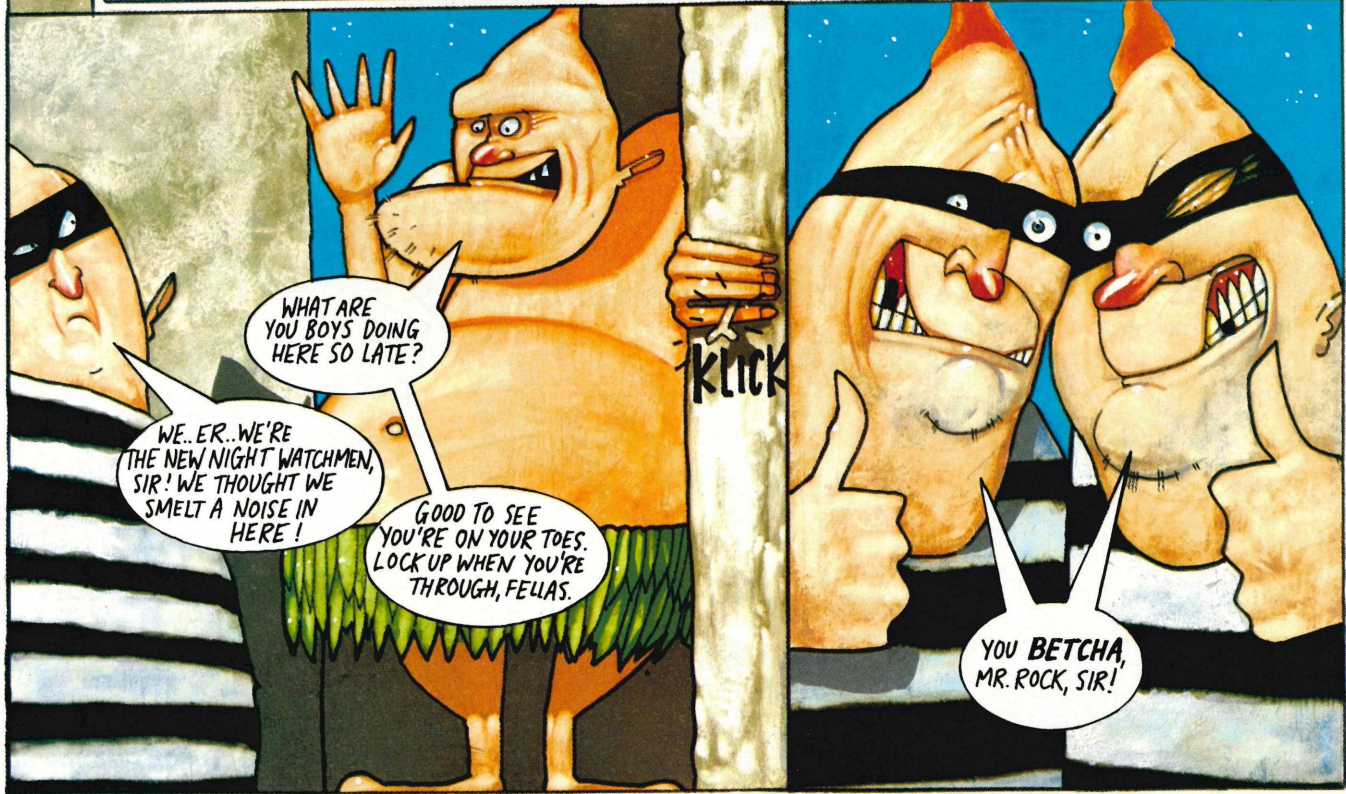


UGH! SURE IS, BUT I AIN'T GOING 'BACK WITHOUT IT. YOU KNOW HOW HE FEELS ABOUT THIS GUY.



SO WHO IS THIS 'CHUCK BOZO, ANYWAY?

HE'S A SIX FOOT LARDBUCKET WITH A ROOM TEMPERATURE I.Q. WHO COULDN'T COUNT HIS TOES EVEN IF HE COULD SEE...EE..EE..THEM.



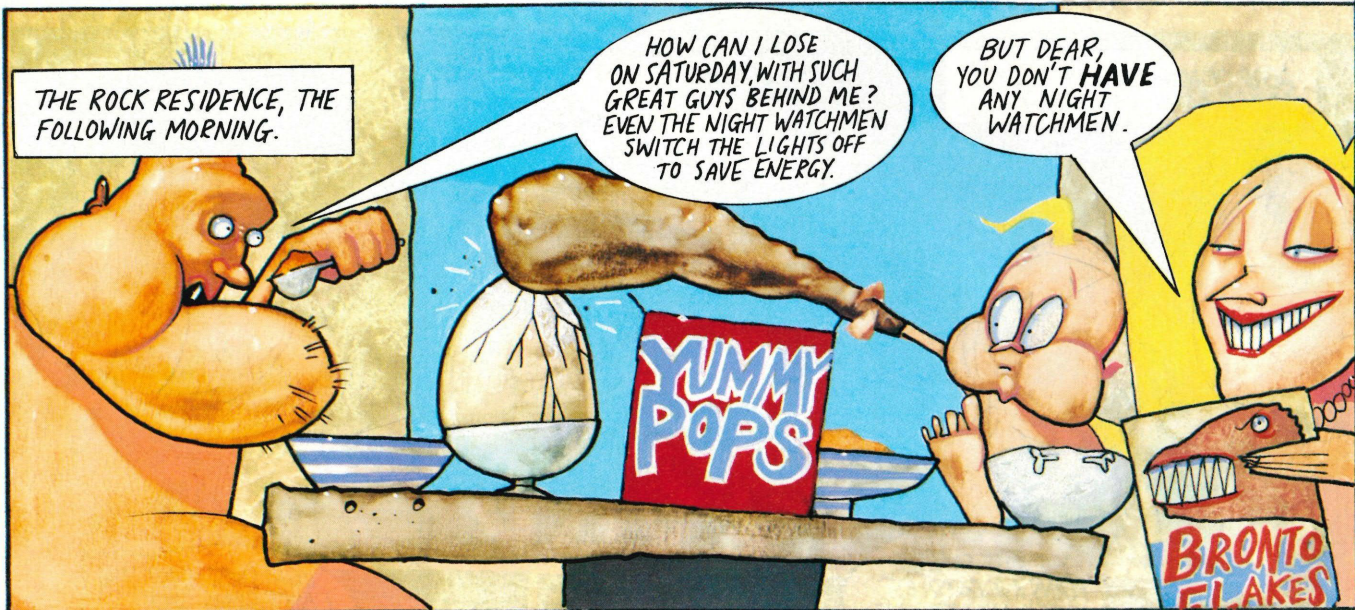
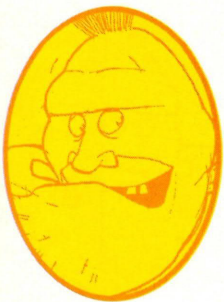
WHAT ARE YOU BOYS DOING HERE SO LATE?

WE..ER..WE'RE THE NEW NIGHT WATCHMEN, SIR! WE THOUGHT WE SMELT A NOISE IN HERE!

GOOD TO SEE YOU'RE ON YOUR TOES. LOCK UP WHEN YOU'RE THROUGH, FELLAS.

YOU BETCHA, MR. ROCK, SIR!

Neanderthal Nonsense by CEFN RIDOUT
Writer
DAVID LYTLETON
Artist



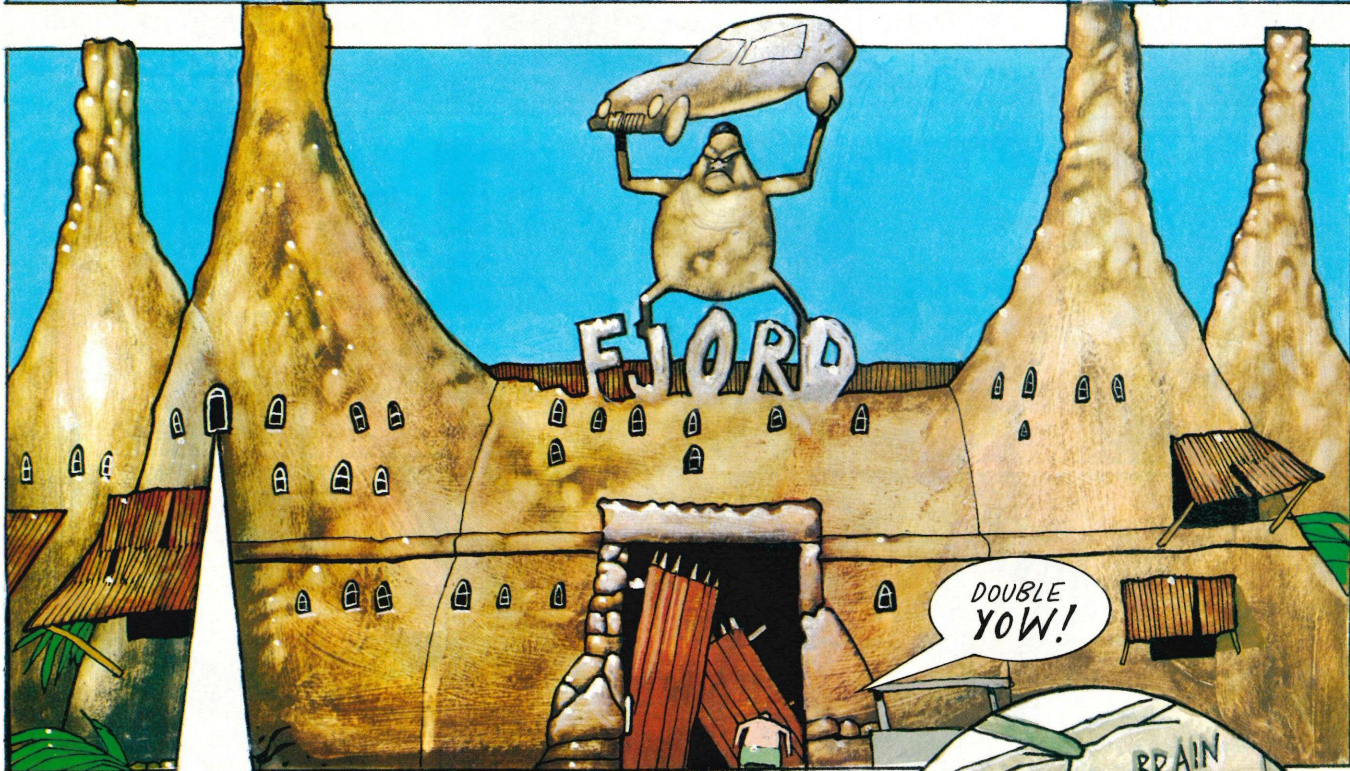
THE ROCK RESIDENCE, THE FOLLOWING MORNING.

HOW CAN I LOSE ON SATURDAY WITH SUCH GREAT GUYS BEHIND ME? EVEN THE NIGHT WATCHMEN SWITCH THE LIGHTS OFF TO SAVE ENERGY.

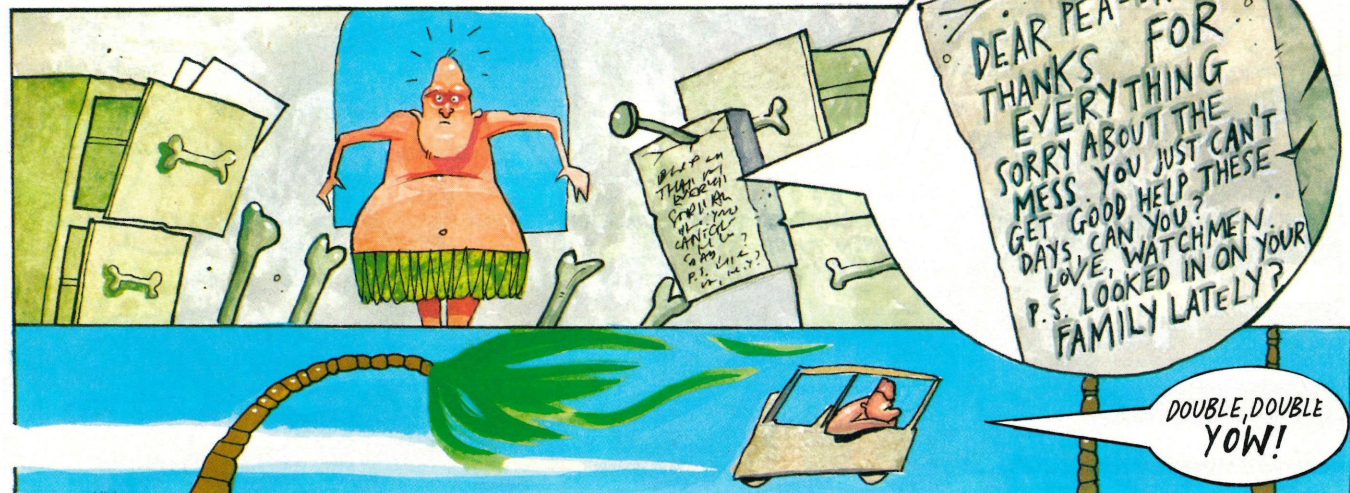
BUT DEAR, YOU DON'T HAVE ANY NIGHT WATCHMEN.



YOW!

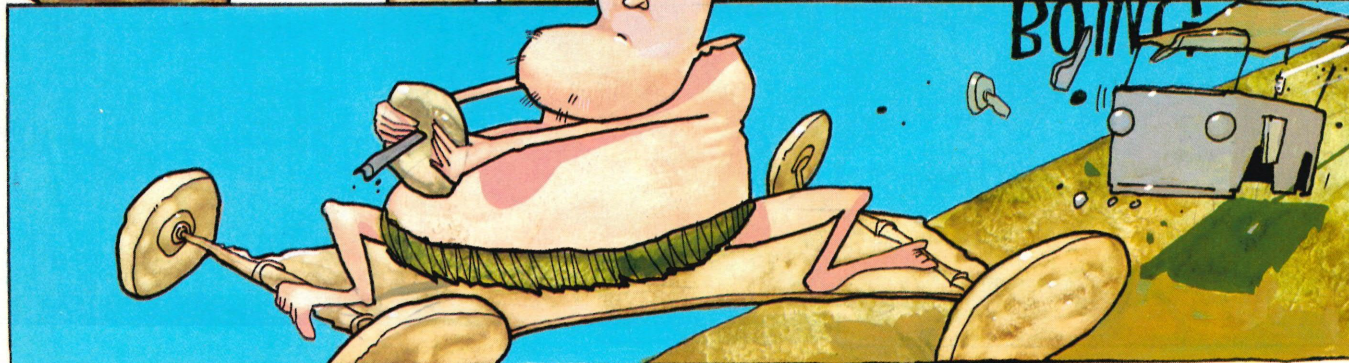
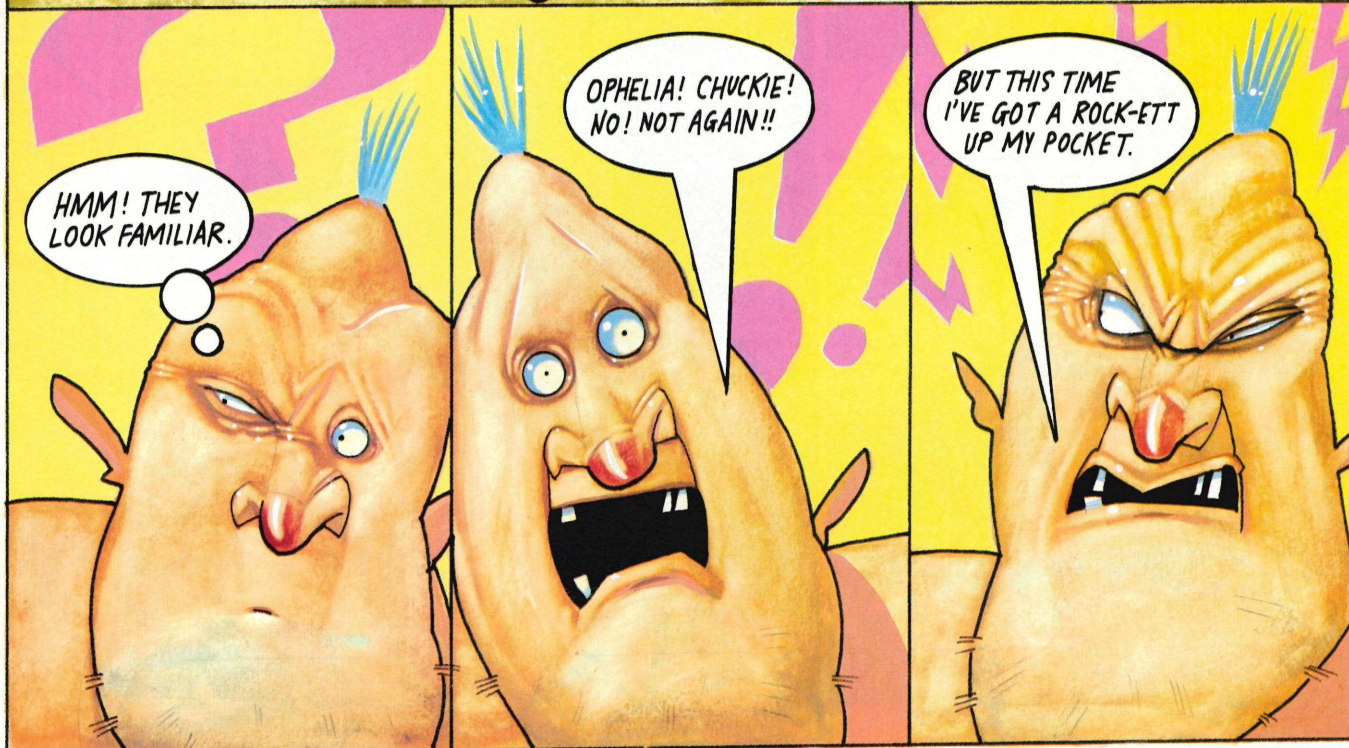
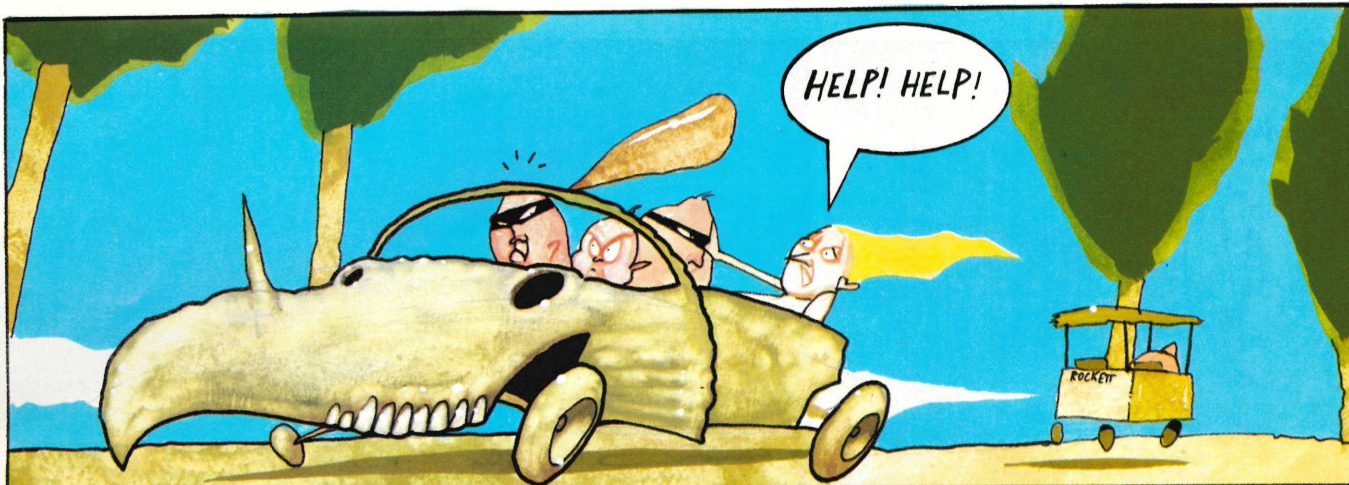


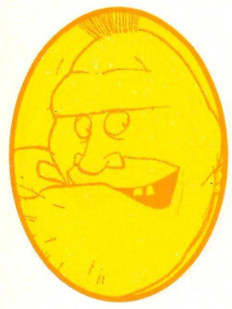
DOUBLE YOW!



DEAR PEA-BRAIN FOR THANKS EVERYTHING SORRY ABOUT THE MESS. YOU JUST CAN'T GET GOOD HELP THESE DAYS CAN YOU? LOVE, WATCHMEN. P.S. LOOKED IN ON YOUR FAMILY LATELY?

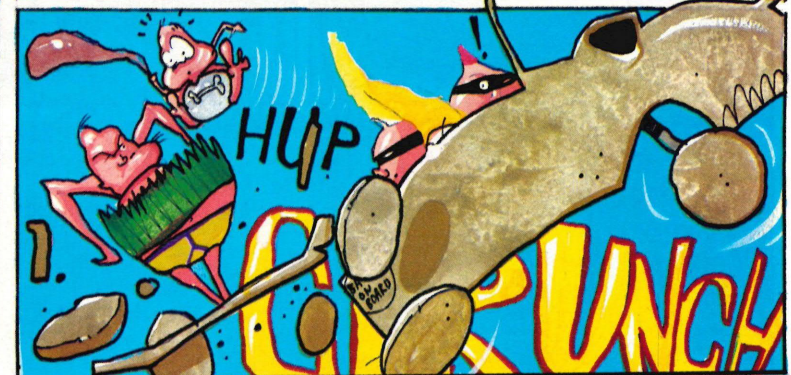
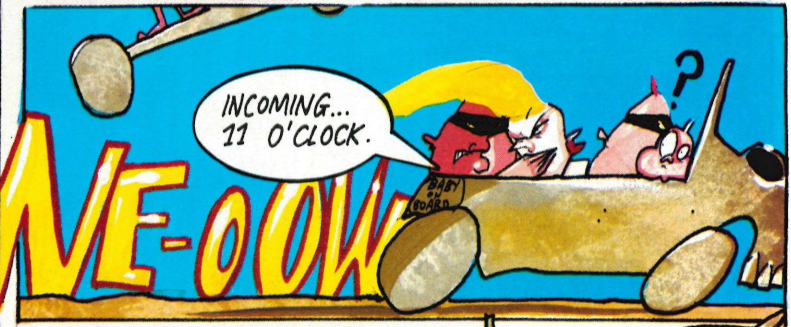
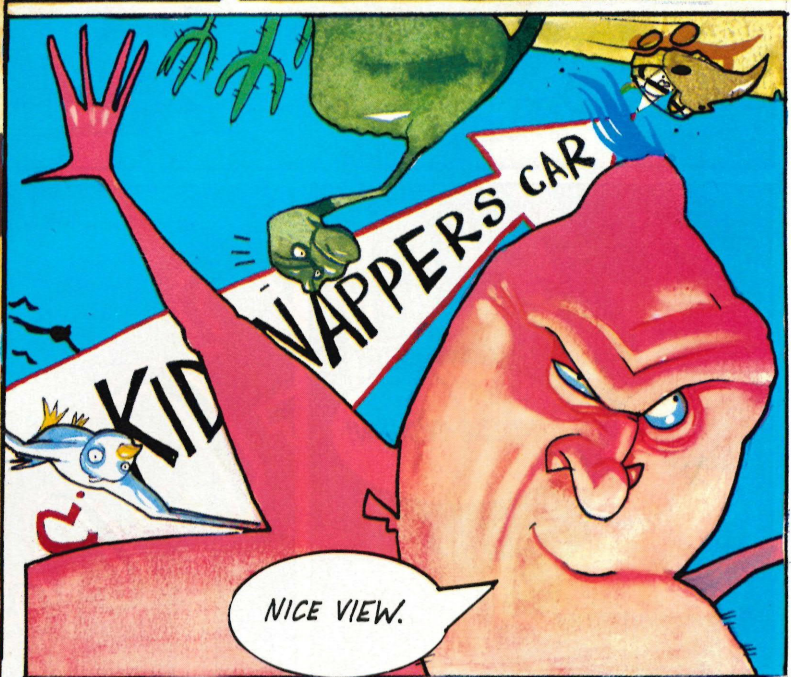
DOUBLE, DOUBLE YOW!

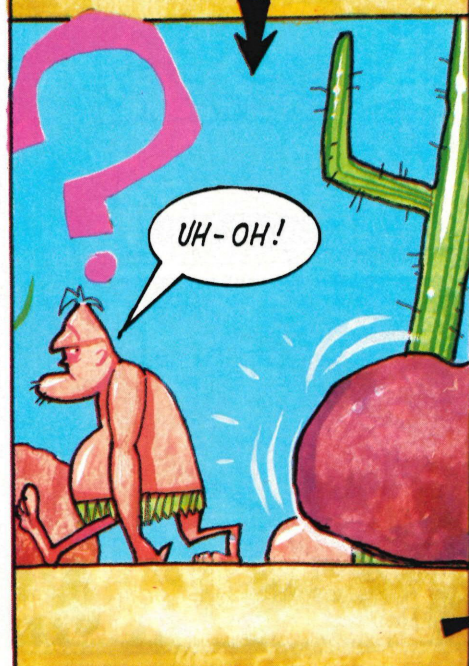
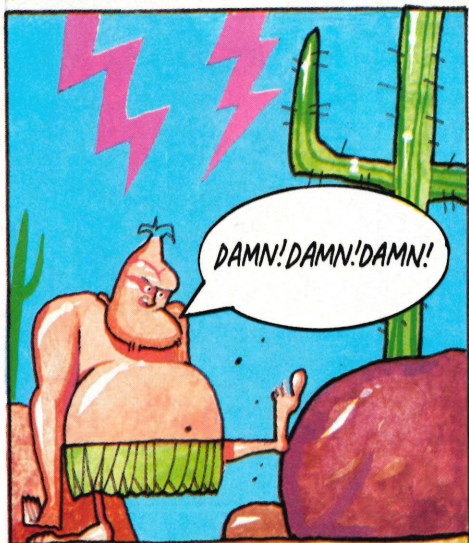
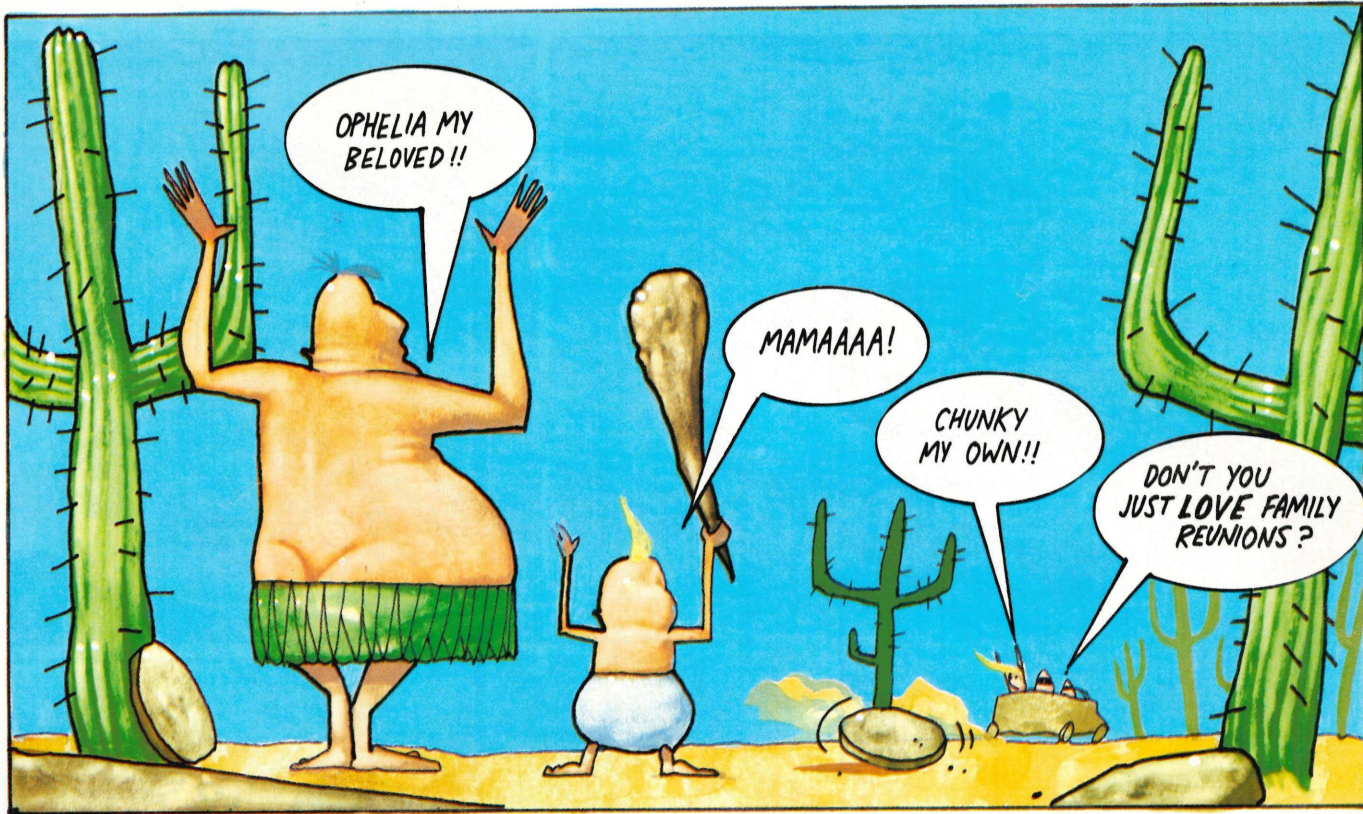


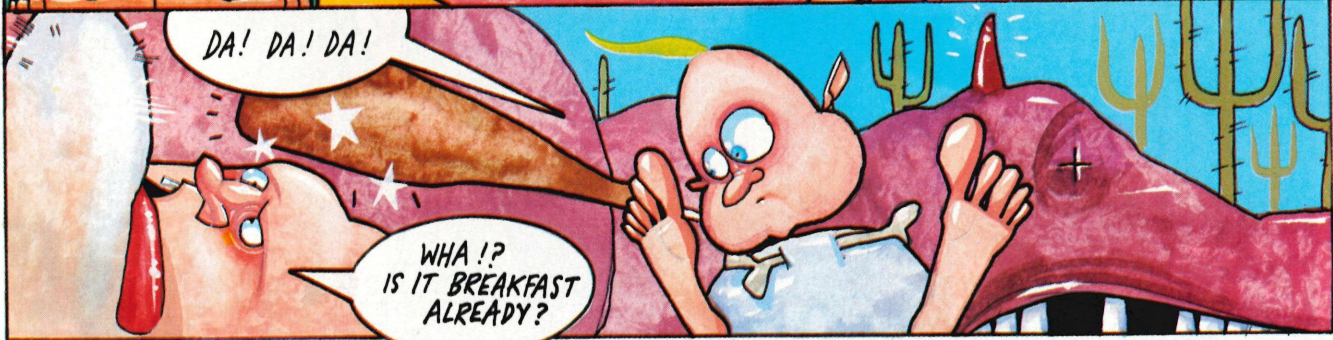
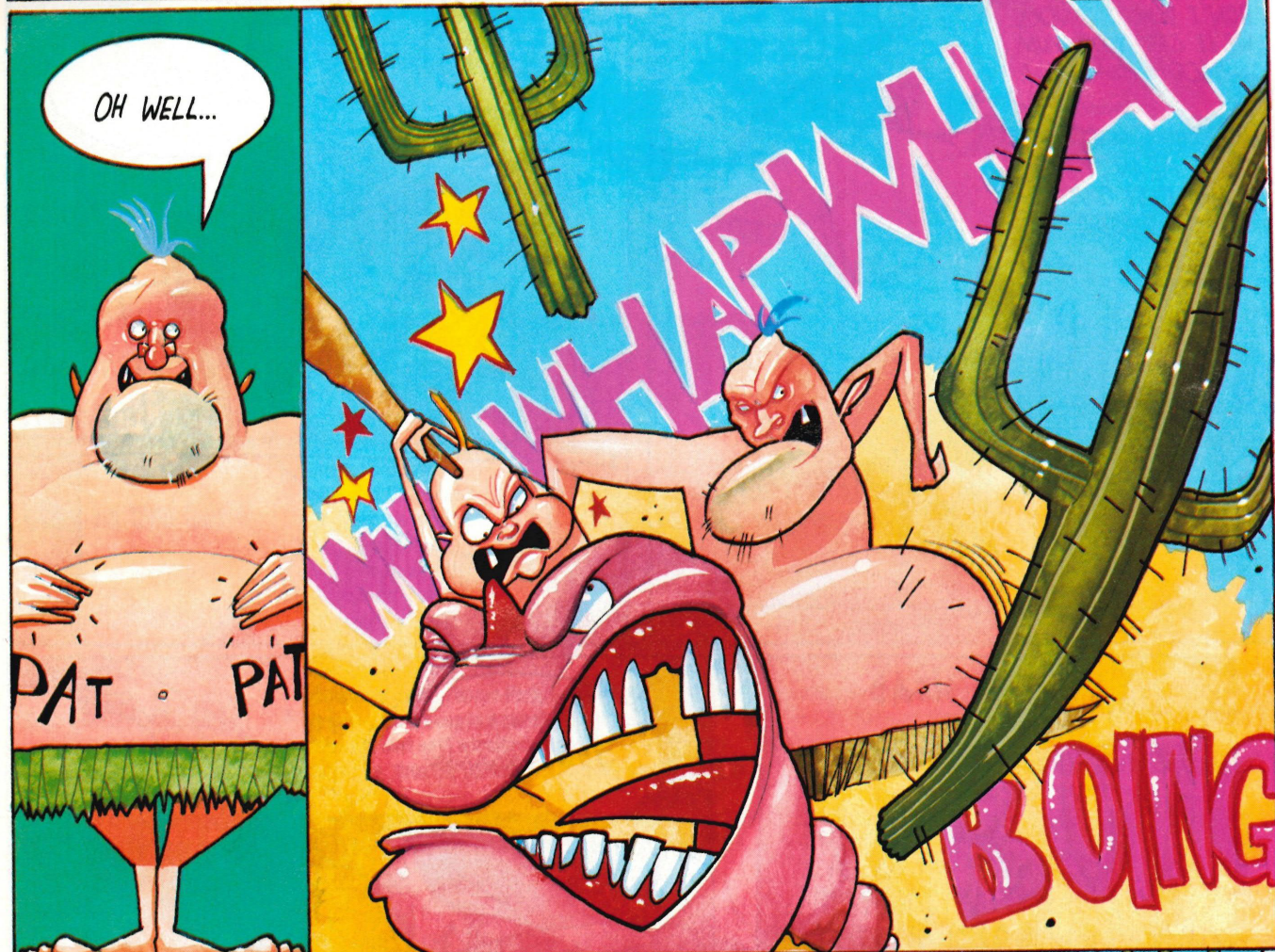
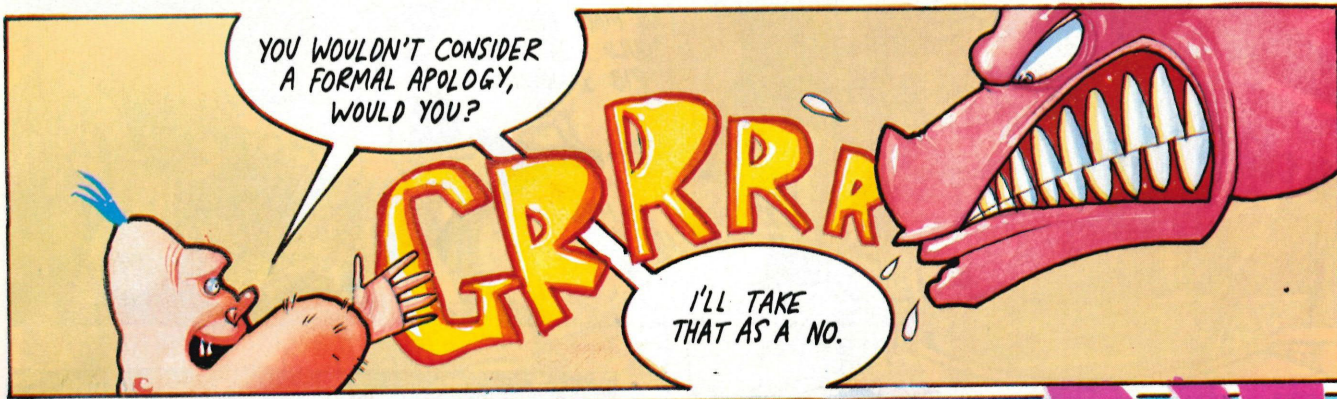




Problems with killer plants? Chuck a large boulder into the middle of them, jump on them and then over and continue on your way ...



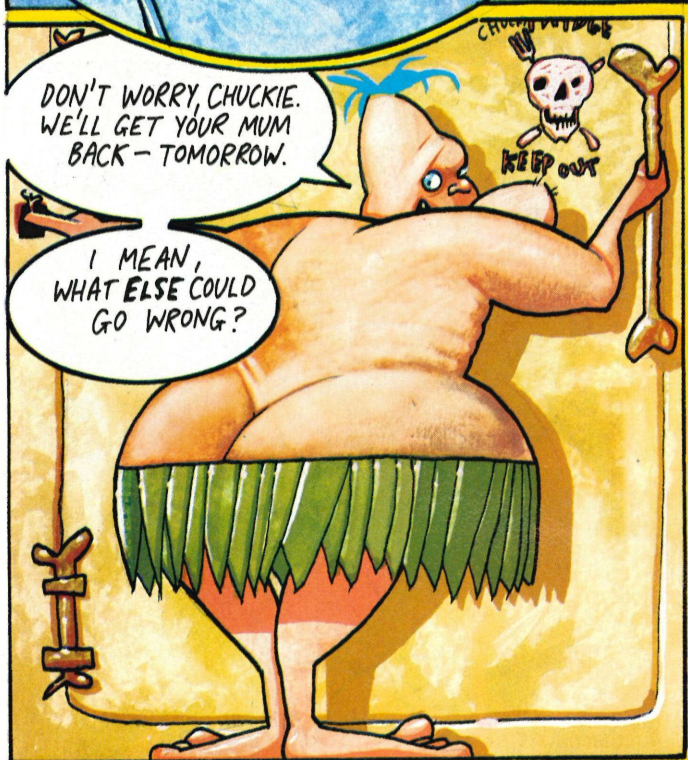






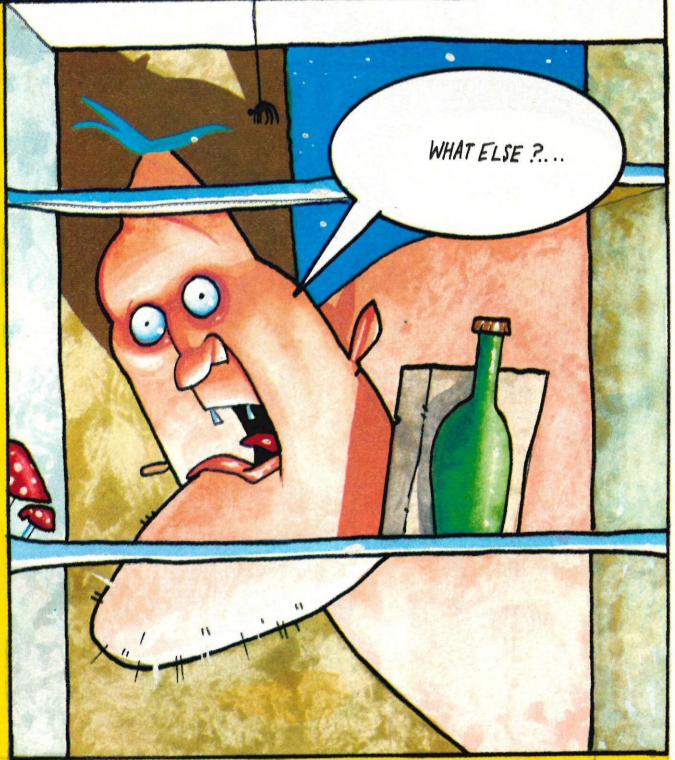
WE MADE IT !
I COULD JUST KILL
A RIB SANDWICH !

NOT TO MENTION
AN ICE COLD BEER
OR SIX !!



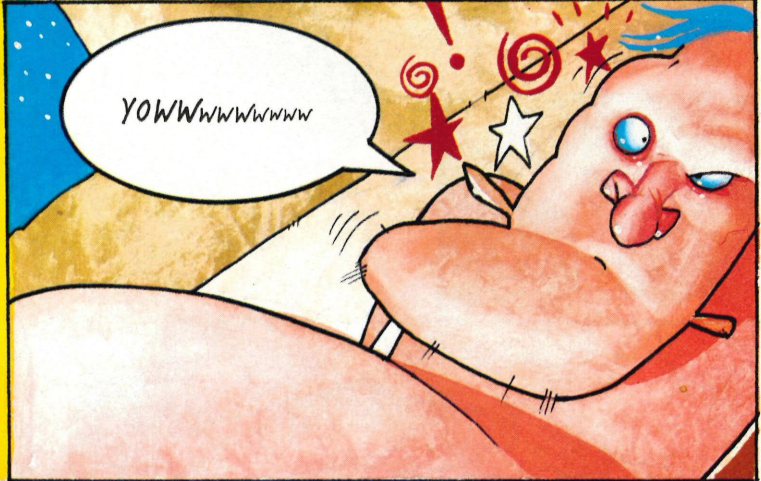
DON'T WORRY, CHUCKIE.
WE'LL GET YOUR MUM
BACK - TOMORROW.

I MEAN,
WHAT ELSE COULD
GO WRONG?

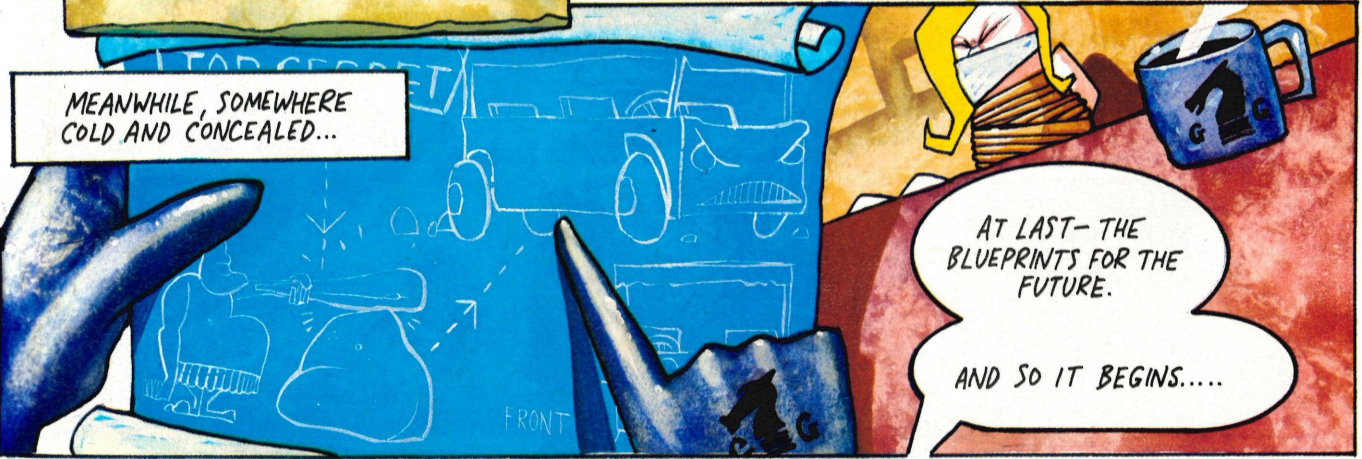


WHAT ELSE ?...

DEAR PIN HEAD
WHILE YOU WERE OUT, I
TOOK THE LIBERTY OF
LIBERATING YOUR FRIDGE.
YOU NEED TO GO ON A
DIET ANYWAY. THANKS
FOR THE HOSPITALITY.
BE IN TOUCH SOON. LOVE,
THE BIG CHEESE
(COULDN'T RESIST)



YOWWWWWWWW



MEANWHILE, SOMEWHERE
COLD AND CONCEALED...

AT LAST - THE
BLUEPRINTS FOR THE
FUTURE.
AND SO IT BEGINS.....

PARK RIDE!

MAX
OVERVIEW!

BULLFROG are fast earning a reputation as one of the most imaginative software companies in the business. *Duncan MacDonald* took a ticket to ride on their latest developments.

How would YOU go about designing your very own real, theme park? Maybe you'd decide to duplicate America's Disneyland and Disneyland, only stick the whole thing near Paris, call it Euro Disney, and then sit back and weep as the punters avoided it in their droves. Or maybe you'd opt for something called Thorpe Park, set in leafy English countryside - you'd bung in a handful of attractions and sit back and wait until somebody drowned on your main water ride: then the punters would really start flowing in.



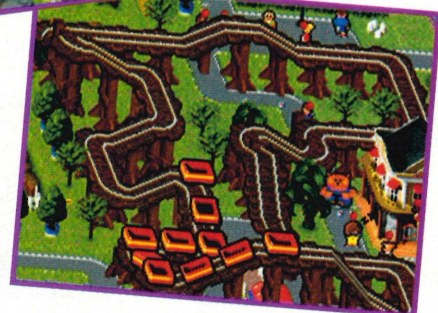
Or how about something like Chessington World Of Adventures? (Or Chessington World Of Complete Yawniness, if you prefer). The idea here would be to keep the number of rides down to the bare minimum and ensure that even these few events were completely thrill-free... you'd still make a profit, after all, due to the fact that your park would be situated right next to the M25,



THE DARK

MAX OVERVIEW!

THEME PARK



MY VERY FIRST THEME PARK...

For the first month in the game (the calendar continuously clicks on as in *Sim City*) absolutely everything you buy is free. Yup, free. Doesn't cost you a penny. Not one single brass razoo. "Then buy everything you can and go crazy," is your probable suggestion, so let's try it. Nice long entrance path with lots of pretty trees (the punters'll like trees - sheer class

from the word go). Let's whop in some balloon vendors near the entrance too... the young kiddies will go a bundle on this, and if you make sure the balloon prices are high, well, you're laughing already, profitwise. Okay, now for a lake. You've got to have a scenic lake, eh? Plus

if you install loads of hot dog

within spitting distance of London and its suburbs.

You see, there are lots of things to think about when designing your own theme park, and *Bullfrog Productions* have included just about all of them in this, their latest game (which is due out on just about every computer format known to humankind). In *Theme Park* building up your mini-empire is simply a case of pointing, clicking and dragging with the mouse (or other pointing device). Menus appear for the more intricate details, and you can even make further 'sub selections' from these. Anyone familiar with *Sim City* (and this will mean 99% of you) will understand the basic concept, but in *Theme Park* it's actually even more straightforward and user friendly.

"I wanted the game to be as simple to use as a paint package," said *Bullfrog* boss Peter Molyneux, and it looks as if he and his team have pulled this off. You want a long path in your park? Righto then, click on the path icon and drag it around the screen... as bendy and windy as you like. Rub bits out if you don't like them. Want a pond or lake? Sure, click on the water icon and drag it around to make the thing as large as you desire - even make it into the shape of a giant parsnip if that's your bag. Whatever. Want to make a Roller Coaster? The same rules apply: click and drag, and you can even adjust the height of the various bits of track. And on and on and on. Hundreds of landscape features and hundreds of rides, all of which are so easy to manipulate that even the person who exhibits the games on ITV's *Movies, Games And Videos* couldn't cock up. Good Lord, even your old Nan could handle the system.

But anyway, back to the original question: namely how would you design your own *Theme Park*? Using *Bullfrog's* game of the same name? Well, here's a sample approach...

stands nearby the punters will move into picnic mode. (Suckers). And how about having some small, crap, boats on your lake? May as well try and squeeze all the money from it that you can, seeing as it's using up valuable space. Small boats ahoy. Smart. Right, let's get some rides going. How about the biggest, meanest, most bitchin', kickin', jumpin' roller coaster the world has ever seen? Excellent. So it's click and drag time... and this is where you can accidentally waste a lot of time, because just drawing shapes is incredibly addictive: especially when you consider that the tiny computer controlled punters actually 'know' how thrilling a ride is. And you want to make this one count, don't you, so you go to town - rubbing bits out, adding bits in, building it all up to impressive heights, bolting on corkscrews, loops and suchlike. Eventually you finish, and then spot a small empty area near its entrance that (a) looks ugly and (b) could easily be filled by a tiny hamburger stand.

So in it goes. Then it's down with some more paths (more time wasted due to anal retentiveness), in with a rather pathetic spinnny teacup ride (for the wee balloon-toting kiddies), in with a bouncy castle, and... er, you suddenly notice that due to spending an unfeasibly long time on your roller coaster and path, your initial month is up. From now on you're going to have to pay for what you buy - and as funds are far from unlimited you'd better open the doors to your theme park straight away. (So the money will be coming in at the same time as you're spending it on continued expansion). Or that's the idea, anyway, so let's look at the sort of problems that might arise.

YOUR THEME PARK AS SEEN BY YOU:

You have a very attractive tree clad entrance path which is densely populated by balloon vendors who are selling their wares with profitability in mind. You have a large picnic area which doubles as a slightly crap (but good for kiddies) boating lake. You have the meanest, most bitchin' roller coaster ride this side of the Crab Nebula... and right next to it you have a hamburger stand. You have a puny tea-cup roundabout which will appeal to the kids, and you also have a bouncy castle (which will appeal to everyone). The admission prices to all your rides, you feel, is non-restrictive. You're ready to earn and expand.

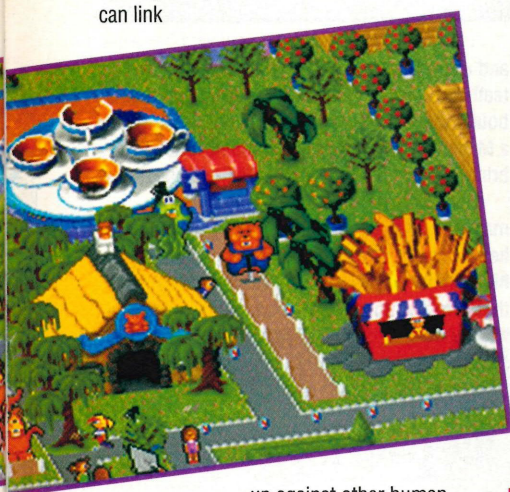
YOUR THEME PARK AS SEEN BY YOUR PUNTERS:

They're not happy. The initial influx is mostly 'family based': in other words grown up punters with small punter children. The small punter children all want the unfeasibly overpriced balloons, while their grown up punter parents feel ripped off at having to fork out the dough. So that's a downward moodswing for those in charge of the purse. Not good at all, because they don't feel much like forking out picnicwise when they reach the lake (and the kiddies are too excited to eat anyway). The boat rides don't go too well either. Still, the Bitchin' Mutha Roller Coaster From Hell is coming up, and that was always going to be the real money spinner, eh? Er, wrong again,

because it's (a) too severe for the kiddies and (b) the grown up punters who do indulge are being flung off the bloody thing right left and centre due to a technical malfunction. (Guess who forgot to hire the necessary maintenance staff?). And what's more, due to the fact that there's a ham-burger stand right next to the ride, half the surviving punters are puking up all over the place (after their stomachs have been subjected to the sorts of g-forces normally only encountered by fighter pilots). Your tea-cup ride is a failure, your bouncy castle isn't faring too well, everyone's knee deep in vomit and litter, and even though you're fixing some of the problems, word has got out. Yes, the families with money to spend are bogging off in disgust and you seem to be attracting a new sort of clientele... undesirables with a deathwish, not much money and an incredibly low boredom threshold. Oh well, even if you can't swing things back again you can always start from scratch.

DIFFERENT STROKES FOR DIFFERENT FOLKS

Theme Park looks like it'll be offering something for everyone. On the surface there's just a lot of fun to be had. Imagine Sim City with an abundance of humour, really fab graphics and a high degree of computer intelligence. We're talking pure addictiveness here, something *Bullfrog* are past masters at generating. Delve deeper, however, and there's even more: not only can you tinker with the amount of salt placed on your hot dogs (the punters will become thirstier and will buy more drinks), but for the serious minded there's a fully working stockmarket hidden away. Pit your skills against the 50 or so other theme parks in the world... protect your stock... buy other parks out... spread your own concern about globally. And on and on. You can link



up against other human players, too. Oh, and a final note: on the 3D0 version of the game you'll actually be able to 'experience' your rides from a first person perspective. You have to see it to appreciate it, but suffice to say that *Bullfrog* are so clever they make Carol Vordeman seem less intelligent than Greg from *Home And Away*.

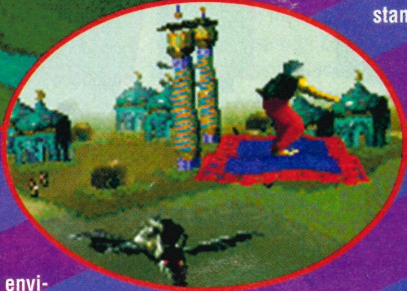
EXPECT THEME PARK ON THESE FORMATS:
May '94: PC and Amiga.
Dates to be announced for Mega Drive, SNES and 3DO.

OTHER BULLFROG GOODIES

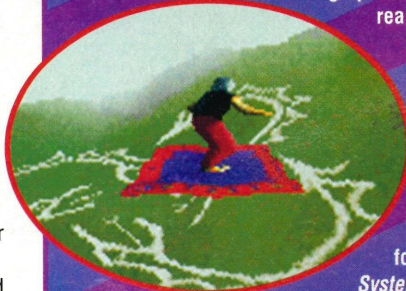
Bullfrog are working on roughly 700 zillion new games as you read this, but here's a sneak preview of a couple that are actually more than 50% formed... the ones that'll be next in the pipeline after **Theme Park** is out in the shops.



MAGIC CARPET
Imagine *Space Harrier*. And then forget it, because *Magic Carpet* blows it into tiny pieces the size of electrons. Look at the screenshot, and understand



that you can go wherever you want... up, down, left, right, turn right round and back again - all within the most lifelike

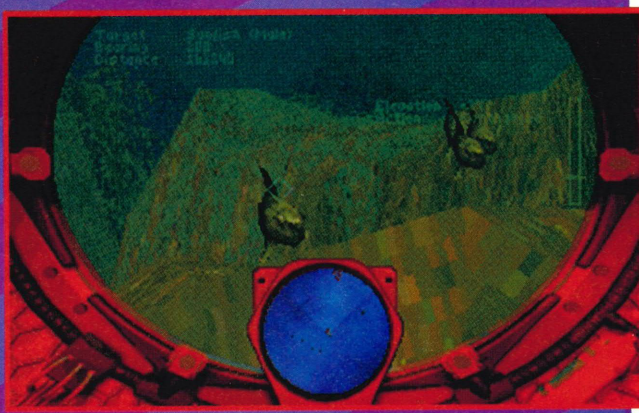


graphically realised environment currently

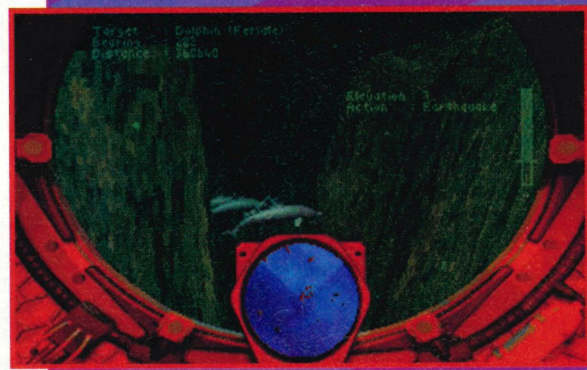
seen outside the arcades. *Magic Carpet* is a shoot'em-up with RPG elements: get off your magic carpet and talk to people. Then take to the skies and blast away the things they told you about. Or something like that. The only problem with the game is that you'll need a powerful computer on which to play it (a 486 PC springs to mind for some reason - in other words don't expect a *Master System* version of the game).

CREATION

The actual 'game-play' of *Creation* hadn't, at the time of writing, been finalised. The sound and graphics, however, had been pretty much sewn up... and if the gameplay (once sorted) hits the same target, then *Creation* is going to be something very special indeed.



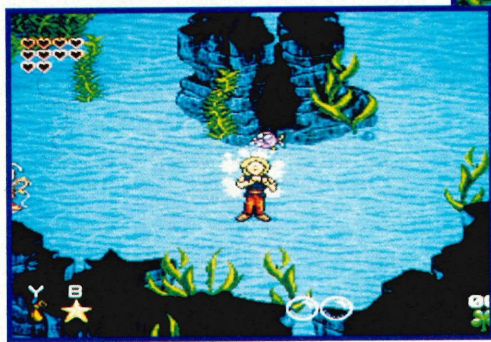
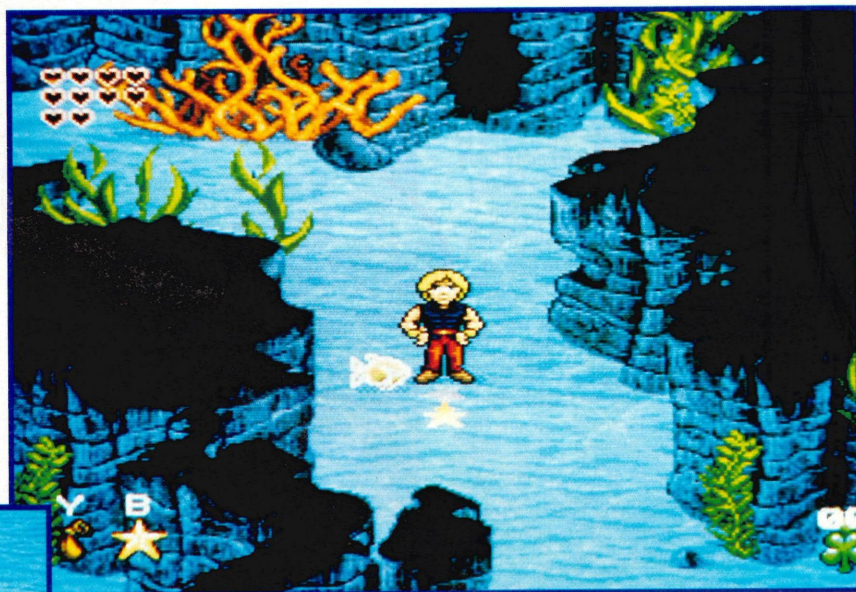
The Plot: You're in charge of a submarine, and you're able to breed (and communicate with) fish and undersea mammals of all types. You can drop bombs on the ocean bed, too, to create mountains and fissures. And then you have to... er, well, as said, the gameplay is uncertain as yet, so who knows exactly what you have to do. The aforementioned graphics, though, are enough to be



going on with for the moment. It's just like being underwater (and that's no overstatement). And the sonics follow suit. Once *Creation* is finally completed, and with a powerful computer (we're talking ninja PCs here once more) at your side, you'll hopefully never feel the need to sit through another episode of *Seaquest DSV* again. ("But I never felt the need to sit through any episodes of *Seaquest DSV* in the first place" - A Reader).

PWIZARDS PRANKS

Young Merlin is based on the adolescent adventures of the legendary magician. *Patrick McCarthy* went straight from bouncy infancy to rickety old age, so we gave him the chance to see what he'd missed.



Young Merlin was in the bushes by the river, busying himself with whatever it is young boys get up to in such places, when he heard the harsh and poorly-enunciated cries of a maiden drowning in the river. Pausing only to re-arrange his clothing, take off the furry gloves, don his nose-

and ear-plugs, spray his hair and brush his teeth, he leapt to her aid with the kind of athletic bound that only five years of gruelling training in a Medieval Synchronised Swimming Team can bring. If only he'd been in the Diving Team.

Hitting his head on the bottom (not the maiden's bottom - that would be unchivalrous), he was swept downstream and awoke to find himself in a pool of water. (Fear does strange things to a youngster.) He had no idea where he was, geography not featuring strongly on the syllabus at Magick Junior School, and there was no sign of the chick. Now read on:

magical mystery tour

It soon becomes clear that he's in a magical land - the dress sense of his enemies alone is enough to convince you of that - and can therefore expect his life to be riddled with absurdity from this moment on. He will find himself attacked by bizarrely-shaped life forms, harangued by monsters with sickeningly cute names and, if he insists on wearing those trousers, probably abused by a pop star too. All you need to know is that the Meanies, Ohkmers and Shroom Goons are the willing vassals of one Mr 'Evil Shadow King,' a man determined to destroy the land, pollute the seas and befoul the air. (Obviously a career in the petroleum industry beckons.)



SYSTEM
breakdown

YOUNG MERLIN

GAMEPLAY

75%

not enough to do, and very little fun-factor

GRAPHICS

78%

big main sprite, but correspondingly less on-screen at once

SOUND

38%

stock stuff, courtesy of sound-effects-u-like

ADDICTIVENESS

68%

only addictive to those with a predisposition to addiction

MAX
overall

75%



(Left) Here we see Young Merlin mid-merl. The villagers look shocked.

(Below) Young Merlin brings new meaning to the words 'Split Personality'.



(Right) He's young. He's Merlin. And he's easily confused.



the point

Although **Young** (as I feel I can call it) has pretensions to the arcade adventure game, being basically of the wander about, pick things up, kill stuff, use accumulated rewards to solve puzzles-type, it's a little out of its depth given the competition. Graphically, for example, it's fairly good, but doesn't match its most obviously similar competition, **Soul Blazer**. And it doesn't come anywhere near emulating the outstanding atmosphere of **Zelda**. The sound effects are a bit naff and the music rapidly irritates to the point where you switch it off before you find yourself kicking your monitor in the teeth.

the scrolling

The screen scrolling is flawed, lagging behind the main character so that you can't see enemy sprites quickly enough, and they hit you while they're still off-screen. Luckily, there are so few of them around that this doesn't matter most of the time, but in areas where you're frequently attacked, it's infuriating. Anything involving fast movement is completely spoilt. In the mine-cart section, for example, you're riding about on damaged rails which interlink in a complicated way; you have to pick your route by learning one way or another, but most of the time you can't see far enough ahead to react. Heading south, you literally can't see more than one cart's length ahead of you.

the lowdown

Virgin seems to be trying to promote the idea that

this is 'an RPG for people who don't normally play RPGs', and one of the features that's supposed to woo non-believers is the absence of dialogue. Unfortunately this just means that people speak to you in reams of icons and symbols instead, so rather than thinking, "Oh no, not more talking," you think, "Eh??". It's good gameplay that wins the unconverted round, not gimmicks.

What won't win anyone around, or attract hardened adventurers, is the fact that the game is so linear. Each problem that arises has only one solution, and if you can't figure out the solution there's nothing else to get on with. You can't wander off and try something else because most of the pathways not directly connected to the problem at hand turn out to be dead ends. This

ALTERNATIVELY...

ZELDA - A LINK TO THE PAST (Nintendo: 8MBit £39.99)

If you still haven't seen this and are thinking of buying an action/adventure game, they don't come any better. Graphically superb and brilliantly designed and implemented, it's got gameplay by the articulated lorry-load. And just when you think you're getting somewhere, the game doubles in size. Unputdownable, and a joy to play.

SECRET OF MANA (Square Soft: 16MBit US Import £55-69)

Any game that gives you a 42-stage walkthrough of the first few hours of play is fairly confident that it's big enough to keep you going for ages after that, and this is gargantuan. It's nearer to being a full-grown RPG than the others (hit points and magic points improve your characters), but still has real-time arcade fighting and spell-casting.

The playing area is vast; there are 64 weapons, 58 armour types and 40 spells to use and it's playable by up to three people at once (or one player can control all three characters). Currently only available on import and playable only with 60Hz machines (or PAL machines with one of those naughty adaptors), it could set you back more than the cost of your SNES, if you add the adaptor and optional Super Multi-tap. It's worth it.

SOUL BLAZER (Enix: 8MBit. US Import £35-45) 88

Soul Blazer is slightly slower-paced than **Zelda**, but matches it for slickness. The graphics are amazing by any standards and the gameplay is nearer to that which **Young Merlin** aims for with a series of linear problems to be overcome. It's much more entertaining, though and there's twice as much to get involved with. Don't buy **Soul Blazer**, the Japanese version, though, as it's too text-heavy to follow.



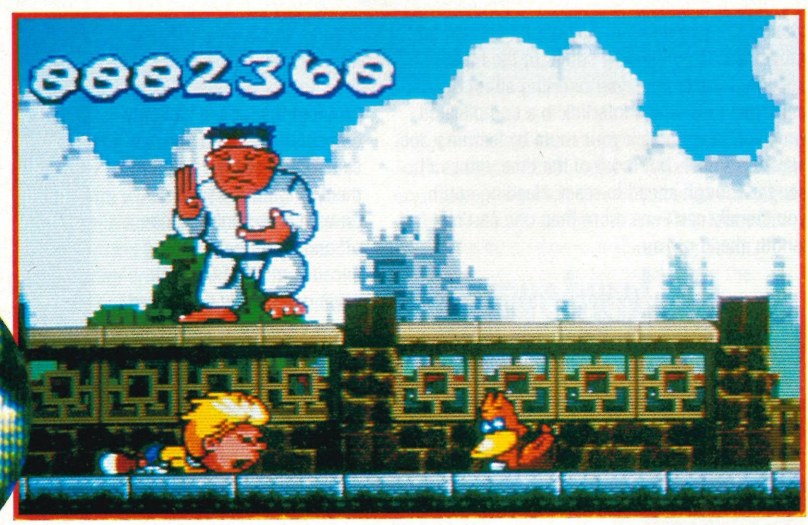
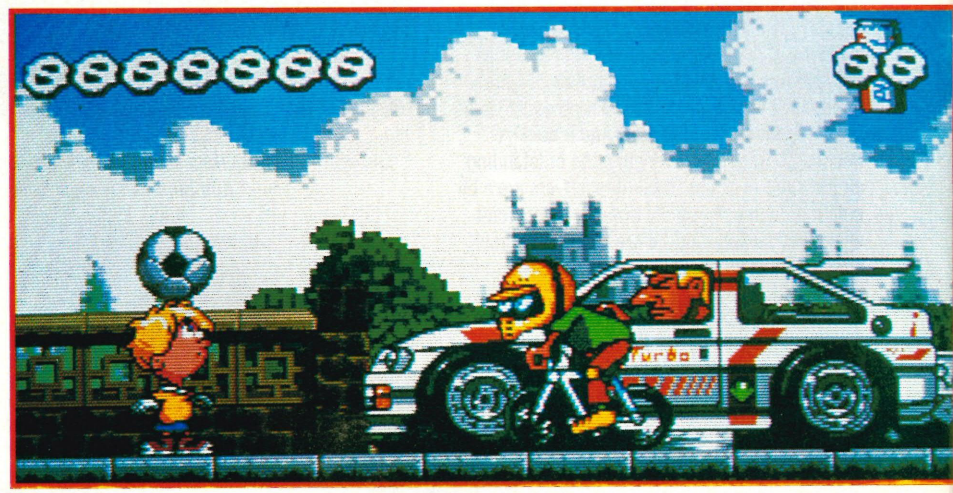
Older readers will recognise this as a mine; younger ones should consult a history book.

System: **SNES**
 Publisher: **Virgin**
 Price: **£59.99**
 On Sale: **Late February**

MARKO OF THE DAY

The first thing to say about Marko is that he could never play for England, reports talent scout *Paul Lakin*. He's far too skilful; with that silky ball control he could stroll through any defence in Europe. Mind you, while the English game is in turmoil, things are not yet so desperate that we need to pick sprites from Mega Drive games. Then again...

MARKO'S MAGIC FOOTBALL



Marko's Magic Football is a platform game. With a football in it. And why does a platform game have a football in it? For that, you have to understand the weird and wonderful workings of a marketing mind. A couple of years ago someone at *Domark* was thinking about games. His thought process went something like this — "Football games sell a lot of copies. Platform games sell a lot of copies. So if we do a platform game with a football in it, we'll sell ... a lot of a lot of copies." You can do A levels in this sort of stuff. Having got this far with the idea, nothing much happened except a lot of people scratching heads and saying, "Well, perhaps we

could do it like that." And the people whose heads they were scratching became understandably irritated, saying, "No, that's a daft idea. Oh and by the way, did I ever tell you about my highly contagious skin disease?" Then about 10 months ago a team actually started working on the game. Since they've been working on the project, another footballing platform game has been released: namely **Soccer Kid**. Which is a bit of a choker and goes to prove that there are no new ideas anymore. Except perhaps for the idea I had for the bicycle pump, the jar of marmalade and Lisa Stansfield — but I don't think that'll ever catch on.



Santa's little helpers were never like this. Marko faces something grotty in the grotto.



order to do defeat the Colonel. Mind you, his football's been splashed by sludge, so he's obviously very cross.

IT'S A FUNNY OLD GAME

So then, how on earth do you get a kid with a football into a platform game? You do it with a scenario like this: in North Sterling, the town where Marko lives, there is a sinister looking tower. A tower so dark, so dripping with evil that it could only be the home of some terrible environmentally unfriendly heavy industry. In fact, it's the Sterling Toy Factory; the architect was either having an off day or he misunderstood his brief.

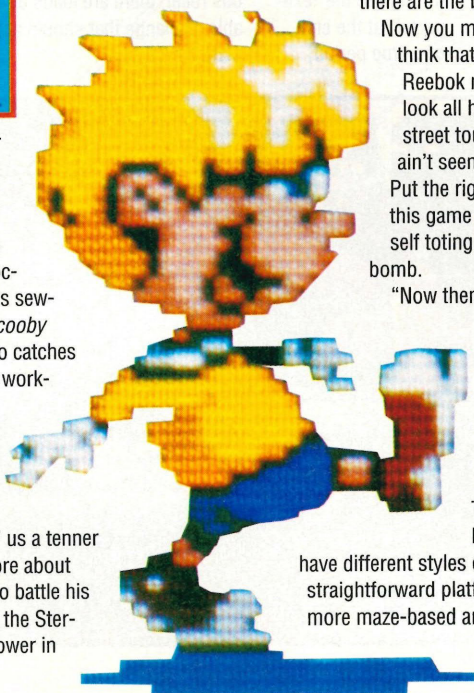
Mind you, this is not your common or garden 'Let's be happy, happy, happy' sort of toy factory. The owner, Colonel Brown, has a refreshingly realistic approach to the sweet, innocent little angels who buy his goods. He hates them. Besides, he's realised there's more to life than producing dolls which wet themselves. His plan is devilishly simple. His plan is to rule ... to rule North Sterling. Well, even great dictators have to start somewhere.

Fortunately for the evil and twisted Colonel Brown, he has in his hands the essential component to world (or town) domination. An evil scientific genius. This maniac in a white coat has created a terrible genetic slime, contact with which will turn any living creature into a



mutant sludge monster (a sort of green Bernard Manning).

The Colonel has already poured tons of this potent concoction down the town's sewers when, in best *Scooby Doo* tradition, Marko catches some Sterling Toys workers red- (or, rather, green-) handed. Rather than adopt the obvious approach of "All right lads, gi' us a tenner and we'll say no more about it", Marko decides to battle his way across town to the Sterling Toys Factory Tower in



LONG BALL GAME

Having followed all this malarkey through a smart looking intro' sequence, it's time for you to put down your coke and pick up the joypad. You, as Marko, have to dribble your way through suburbia, an industrial centre, a canal, a construction site, sewers, a forest, a circus and, of course, the Toy Factory itself.

Your key weapon is



the football, which you can kick in a variety of spectacular ways in order to take out the Colonel's side kicks and the townsfolk, who see you not as their saviour

but as the irritating oik who smashed their greenhouse last week. Although the football can be punctured and even eaten, it always comes back. In fact, when he's lost it, Marko simply raises his foot and the ball appears at his toes. Not even Chris Waddle can do that.

As well as the ball, there are the boots.

Now you might think that Nike or Reebok make you look all hard and street tough, but you ain't seen nothing yet. Put the right pair of boots in this game and you'll find yourself toting a machine gun or Smart bomb.

"Now then Mr Jordan, about that last basket..."

GAME OF TWO HALVES

The various levels in **Marko's Magic Football** have different styles of gameplay. Some are straightforward platform romps. Some are more maze-based and there's a plan to make one a continual

scroller, where you have to work your way up the screen as the sludge rises up towards you.

In most levels though there'll be a green element (that's green as in environmentally friendly, not as in sludge; do try and concentrate). As well as the traditional stars to collect for extra lives, you need to collect a certain number of coke cans for recycling. If you get to the end of the level and don't have the right number of cans, then it's back you go. Environmentalists, dontcha hate 'em?

Whatever the style of gameplay though, each level is a visual feast. Cool, clean and colourful, with some nifty parallax backgrounds and a different theme for each location. The music is also intended to change for the end-of-level bosses, even making a slight change each time they're hit.

WHEN SATURDAY COMES

Marko's Magic Football is due for release on the **Mega Drive** in early April on a 16 Meg cartridge. It's already looking well smart, and if colourful, arcadey platform action is what you're after, then you should be in for a treat. As for Marko himself, well, his best bet is to buy himself a one way ticket to Milan and get himself into Serie A.



HANDBALL

Marko's exploits will also be available on the **Game Gear**. Although basically the same game, some changes have had to be made. As you can see from the screen



shots, nothing has been lost in terms of graphics quality, but screen size means that there'll be no big baddies but more small ones, making the game more of a Mario style 'jump and avoid' game. There should also be more emphasis on puzzles and mazes than in the Mega Drive version. But why am I telling you all this? You'll be able to judge for yourself when the game's released around about May.



LOST
VIKINGS

System: **Sega Megadrive**
 Publisher: **Virgin**
 Price: **£44.99**
 On Sale: **Mid-March**

SOUND
85%
 Groovy stuff.

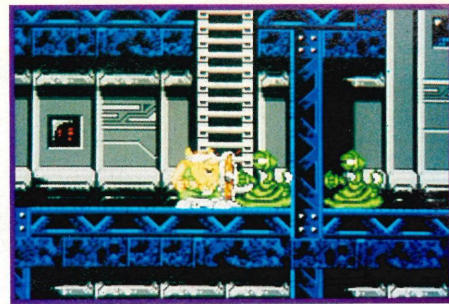
GRAPHICS
88%
 Looks smart throughout.

GAMEPLAY
85%
 Great, but with occasionally fiddly controls

ADDICTIVENESS
88%
 Friendly password system keeps you trying.

MAX
overall
85%

LOST VIKINGS



Vikings are big and hairy and spend their time getting drunk and beating up cows. Patrick McCarthy, on the other hand, likes to press wild flowers. Unfortunately he's the hardest person we know.

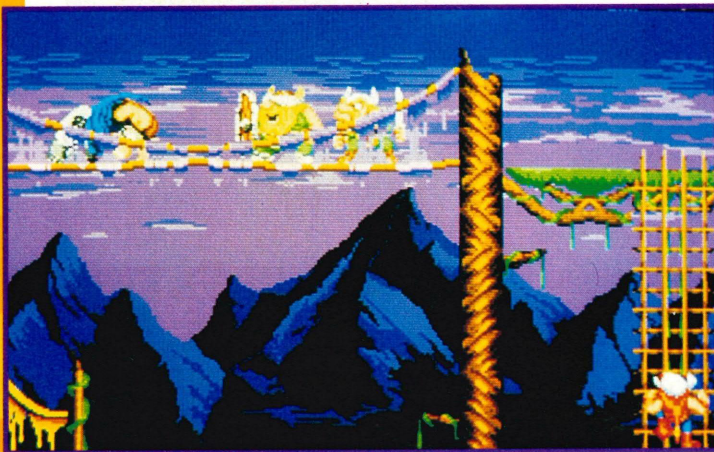
You have to guide them through a series of levels comprised of platform-based puzzles and traps, avoiding or killing enemies until you meet and defeat the evil Tomator himself. To help you there are plenty of weapons, shields and power-ups to collect. To hinder you, each Viking has only one ability. Erik can run, jump and bash walls down with his head (this behaviour ruined his stage career as Marvo the Memory Man). Baleog can slaughter with sword or bow-and-arrow and Olaf's ability seems to be making Mike McShane look like Kate Moss. All right, he's got a huge shield to hide behind and use as a hang-glider — but that's hardly an *ability*. All the credit's due to the Viking boffin who invented this



scientific marvel. (Since he's not using it himself, presumably it was the Norse Steven Hawking.)

If one of the warriors dies, you have to re-start the level. Levels progress through time, starting in the Stone Age and ending in Tomator's HQ. Get the Vikings through to the "exit portal" at the end of a time period,

and it warps you off to another exotic location — like *Wish You Were Here*, but with a lower nipple-count. Puzzling is the major part of the game, but as you get further, arcade elements increase, baddies become quicker and smarter and fighting becomes necessary — there's even some intricate platform leaping to do. The characters are large and well-animated and the backgrounds atmospheric. Even the music is good, with tunes you'll leave switched on. The game's only weakness is the controls: sometimes flicking between characters at the speed necessary to make it past a trap is very fiddly. This doesn't really detract too much from the game, though. The spectacular and gory deaths provide humorous relief, there are loads of levels and a reasonable challenge that should appeal to puzzlers and platformers alike.



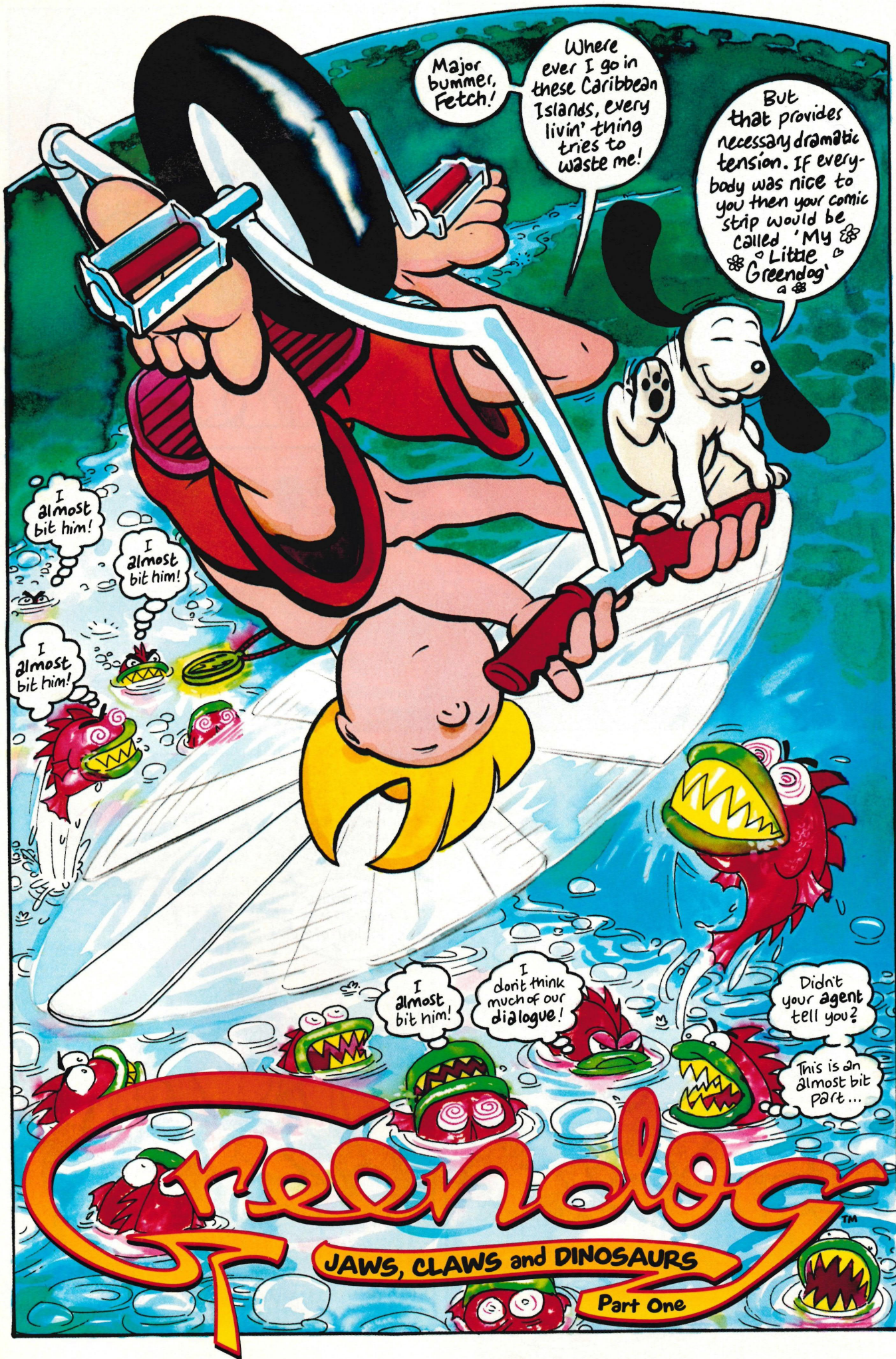
There are all kinds of alien in the universe. Good aliens and bad aliens. And there are those large-breasted aliens to whom Captain Kirk is compelled to demonstrate the meaning of love. Tomator the intergalactic life-form trader is a bad alien. (And small-breasted, in case Captain Kirk's a reader). He earns his living by whizzing around the universe collecting specimens to sell back on his home planet.

Olaf the Stout, Erik the Swift and Baleog the Fierce are three lovable Vikings, sound asleep after a hard day arm-wrestling elk. Imagine their consternation to find themselves beamed into the alien spaceship owned by the aforementioned Tomator. Imagine the culture shock. How would you explain neon lights? And the shortage of rollmop herrings? Needless to say, they badly want to escape and make it back to their homes, their ginger-haired children and ugly wives. (Remember, these men don't know the meaning of fear). It's your job to get them home.





Greendog



Major bummer, Fetch!

Where ever I go in these Caribbean Islands, every livin' thing tries to waste me!

But that provides necessary dramatic tension. If everybody was nice to you then your comic strip would be called 'My Little Greendog'

I almost bit him!

I almost bit him!

I almost bit him!

I almost bit him!

I don't think much of our dialogue!

Didn't your agent tell you?

This is an almost bit part...

greendog

JAWS, CLAWS and DINOSAURS

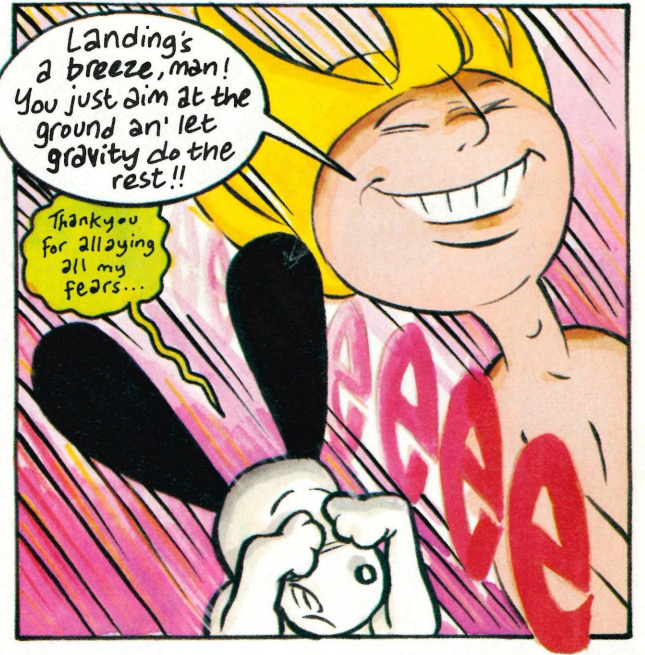
Part One

He's not green, and he's not a dog courtesy of
IAN CARNEY
Writer
ILYA
Artist



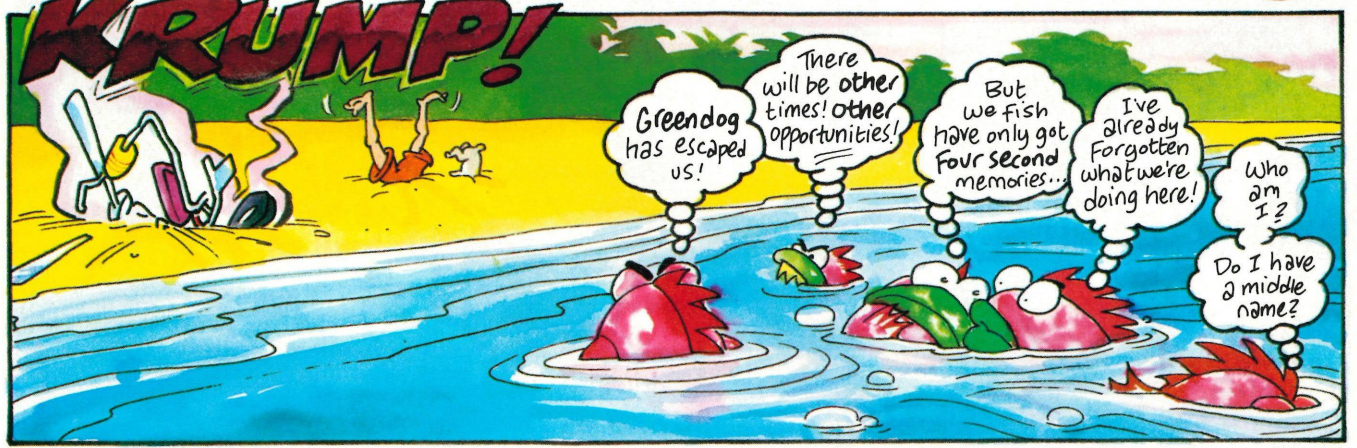
Island a-hoy!
We'll shake these
nutso fish if I c'n
just land on
that beach!

It's the
landing I'm
worried
about!



Landing's
a breeze, man!
You just aim at the
ground an' let
gravity do the
rest!!

Thank you
for allaying
all my
fears...



KRUMP!

Greendog
has escaped
us!

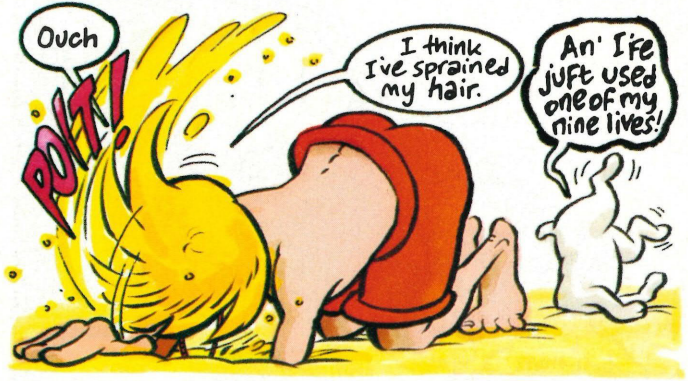
There
will be other
times! other
opportunities!

But
we fish
have only got
four second
memories...

I've
already
forgotten
what we're
doing here!

Who
am
I?!

Do I have
a middle
name?

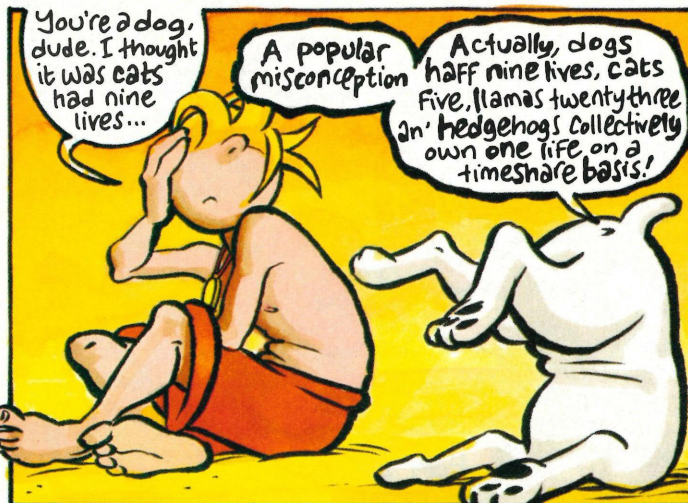


Ouch

PAIN!

I think
I've sprained
my hair.

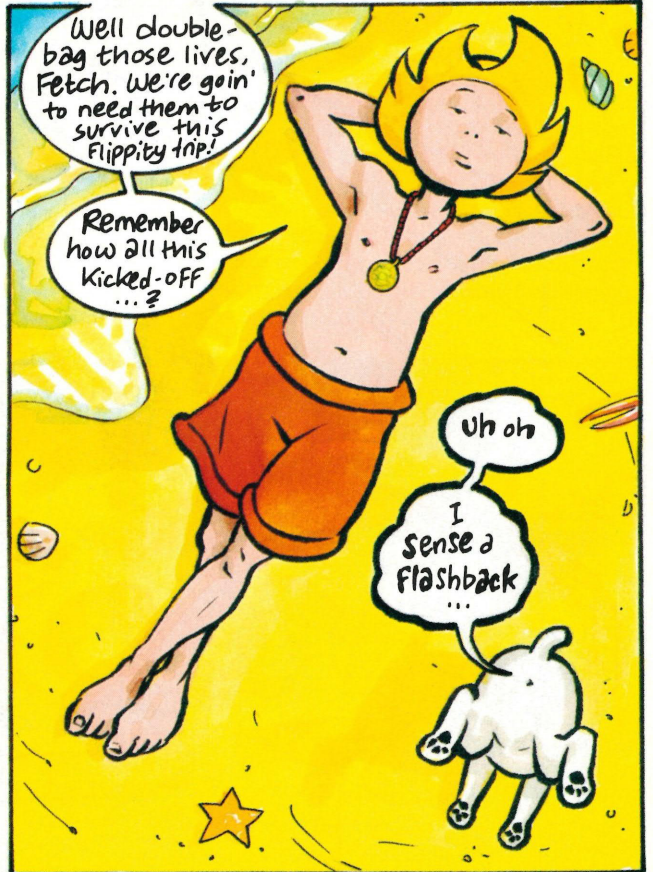
An' I've
juft used
one of my
nine lives!



You're a dog,
dude. I thought
it was cats
had nine
lives...

A popular
misconception

Actually, dogs
haff nine lives, cats
five, llamas twentythree
an' hedgehogs collectively
own one life on a
timeshare basis!



Well double-
bag those lives,
Fetch. We're goin'
to need them to
survive this
Flippity trip!

Remember
how all this
kicked-off
...?

Uh oh

I
sense a
flashback
...



Flashback courtesy of CNN

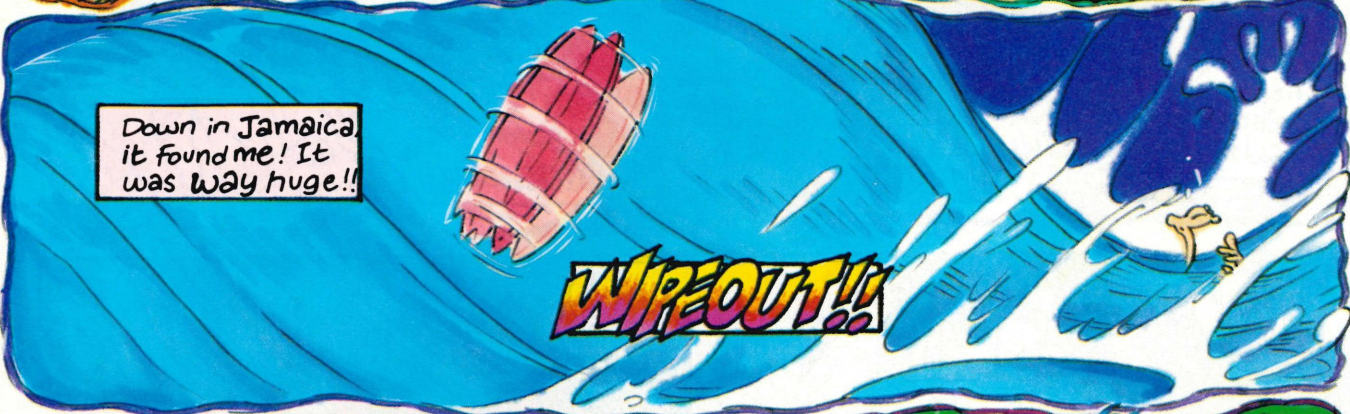
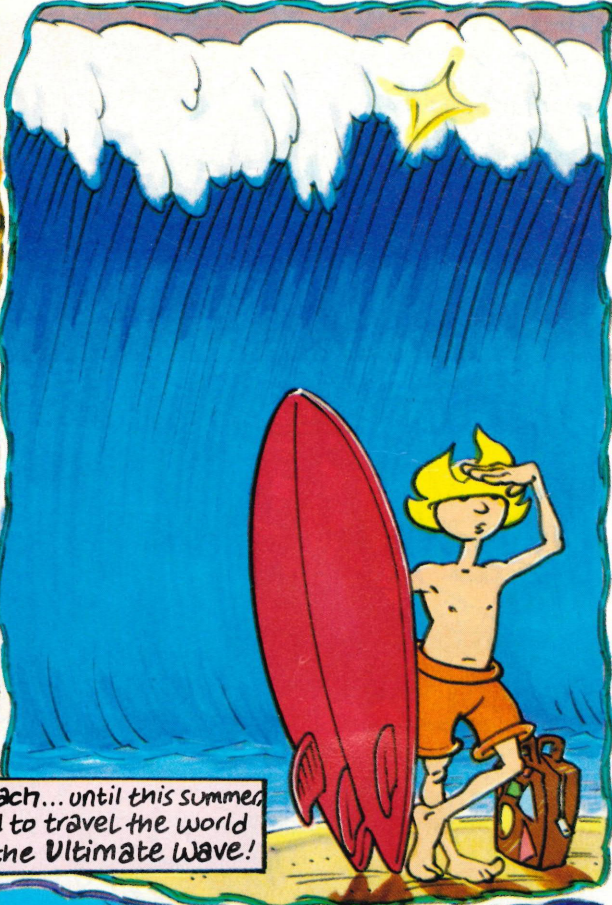


I was once just a typical Californian teen dude.

I surfed. Hung out. Surfed. Went to school some. Listened to backwards messages on heavy metal albums. Surfed.

It was during this time I copped th' name **Breendog!**

Life was a beach... until this summer when I decided to travel the world searching for the Ultimate Wave!



Down in Jamaica it found me! It was way huge!!



Washed up on a remote shore I found that I'd somehow snagged a Mystic Pendant that I couldn't remove!!!

From that moment on I was hexed!



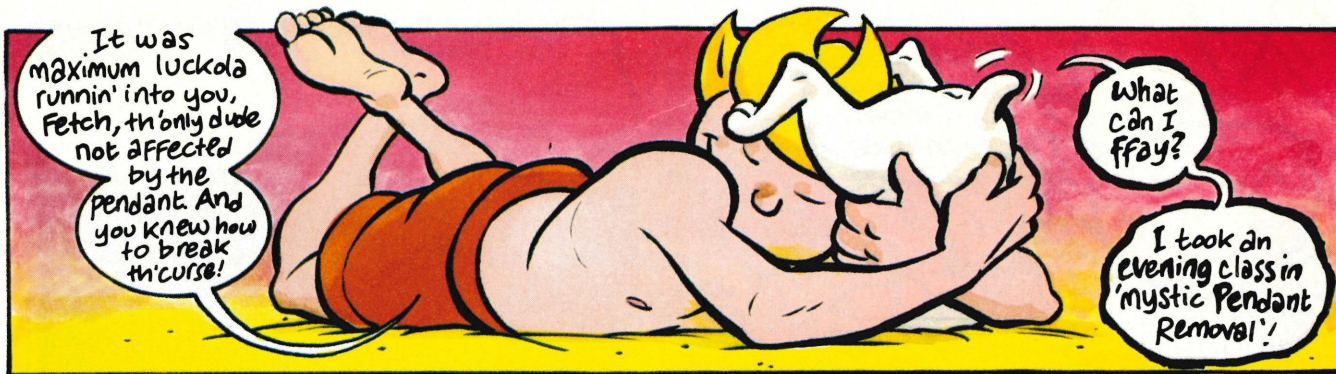
All creatures that come within ten feet of me go berzerk-o.

Everyone and everything is out for my blood!

I even get hate-mail from plankton!



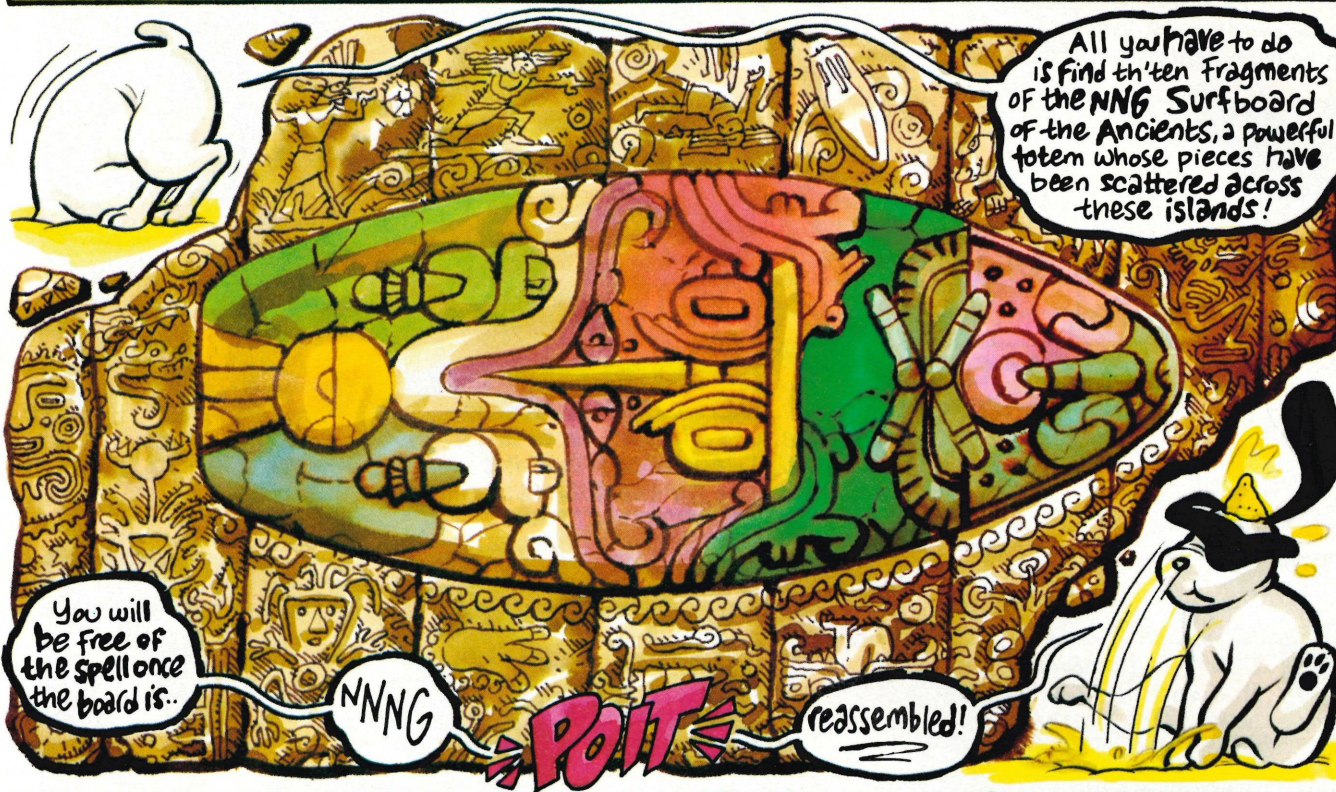
Want a few rapid fire discs? All you gotta do is **PAUSE**, then press **C, A, B, A, LEFT, LEFT**. If the bell rings, your cheat's worked. This is good for any level.



It was maximum luckola runnin' into you, Fetch, th' only dude not affected by the pendant. And you knew how to break th' curse!

What can I ffay?

I took an evening class in 'mystic Pendant Removal'!



All you have to do is find th'ten fragments of the NNG Surfboard of the Ancients, a powerful totem whose pieces have been scattered across these islands!

You will be free of the spell once the board is..

NNNG

POIT

reassembled!



PHtoo!

Then you can go back to the Paradise City, where the grass is green..

And the girls are pretty!

Slammin' Sounds like Heaven to mee!

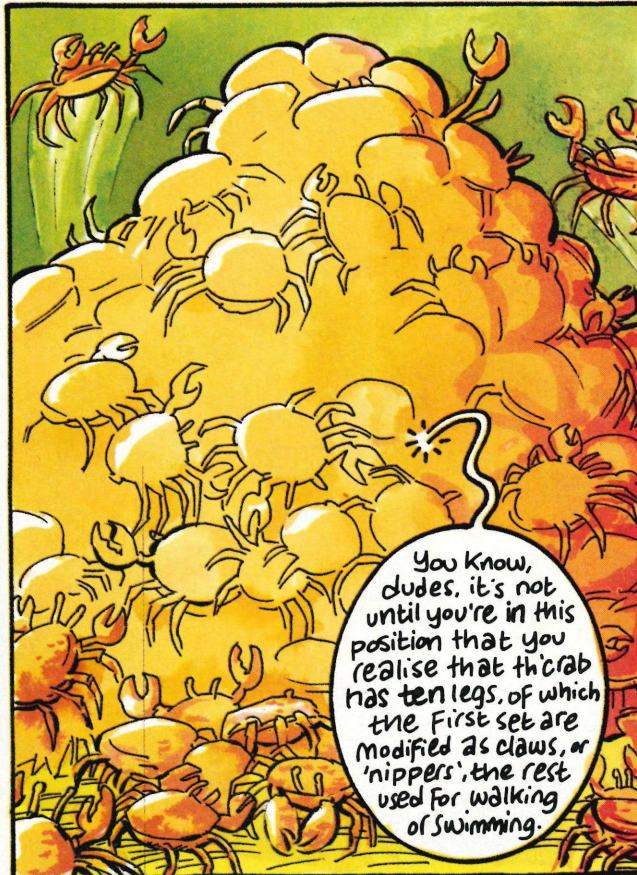
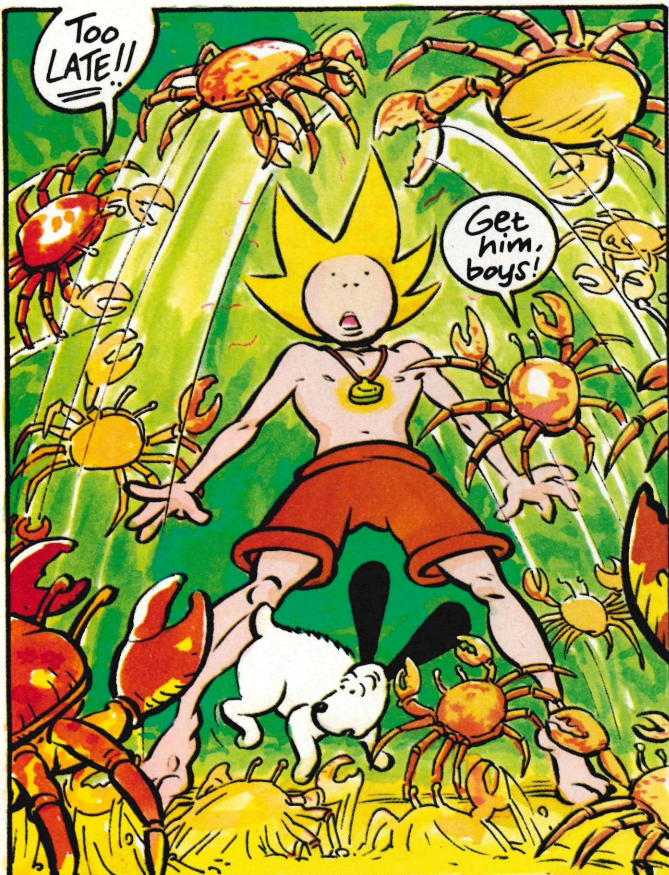
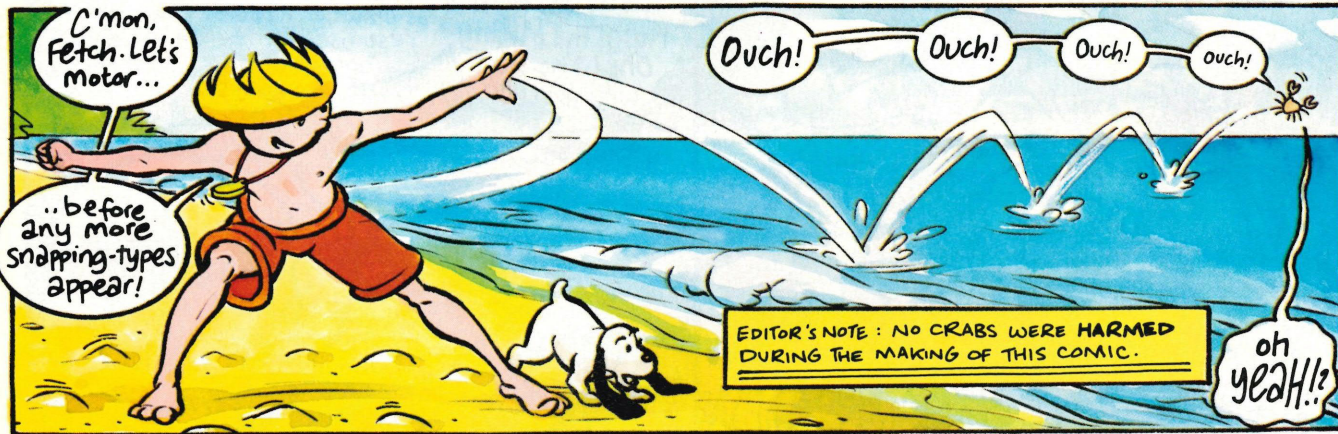
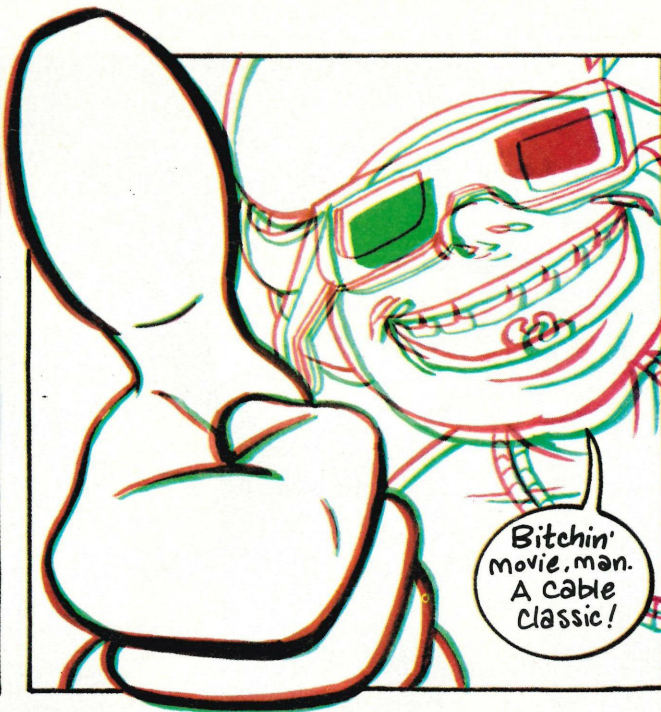
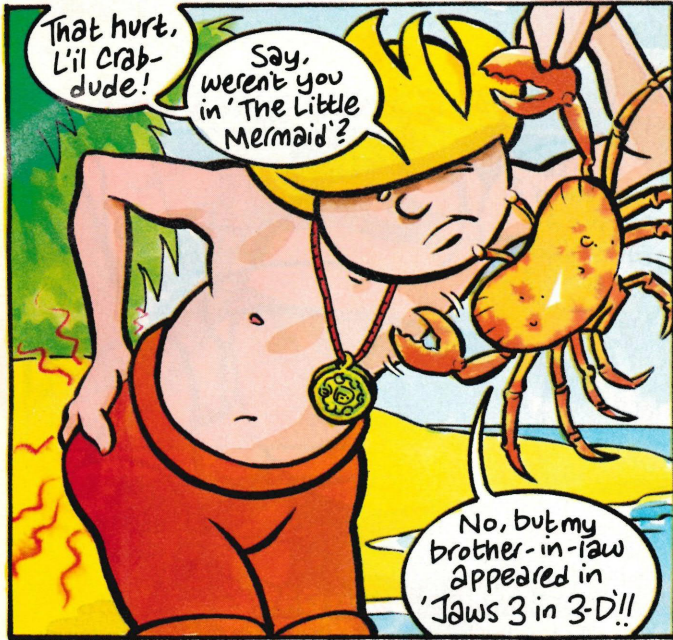
SNIP



MEARRGH!

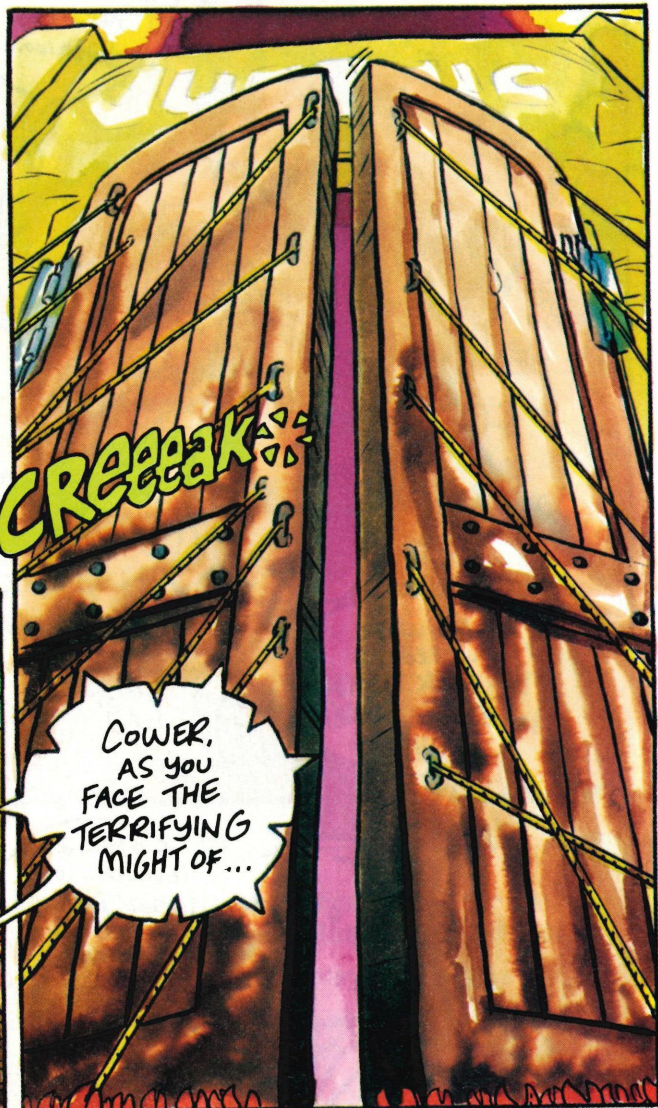
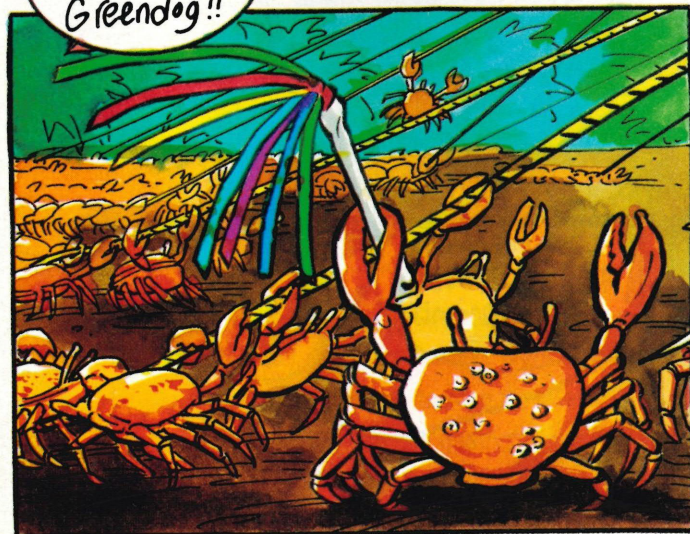
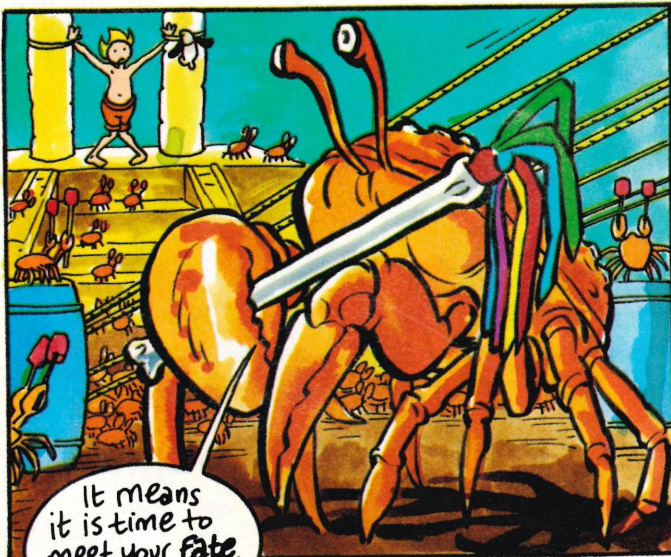
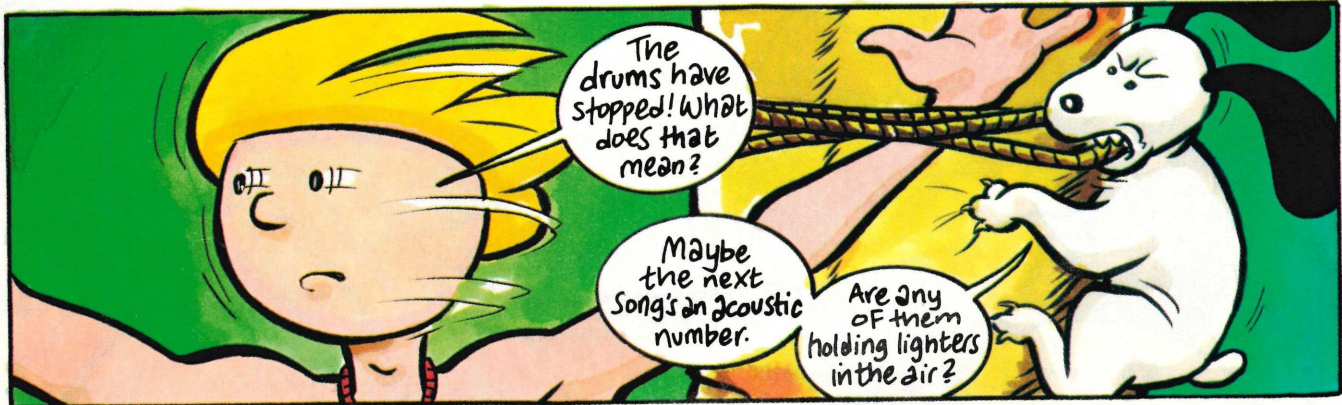
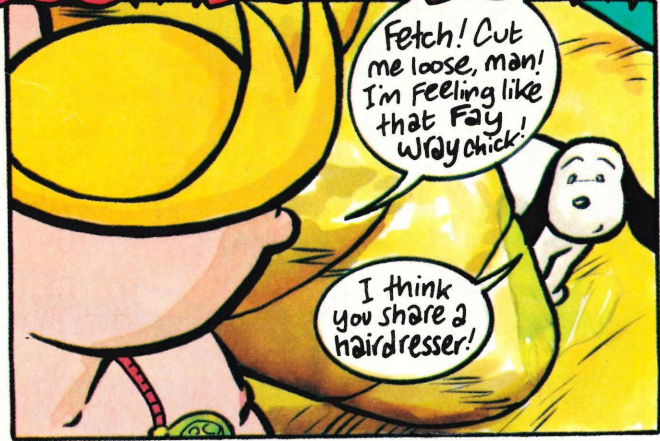
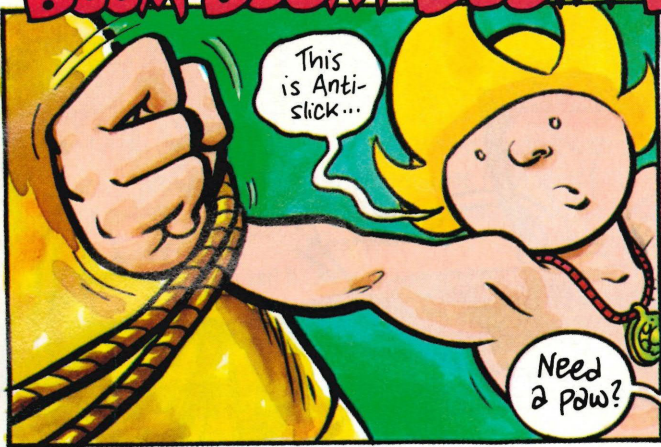
'Sounds like Heaven to mearrgh'!?

Isn't that by 'Anthrax'?

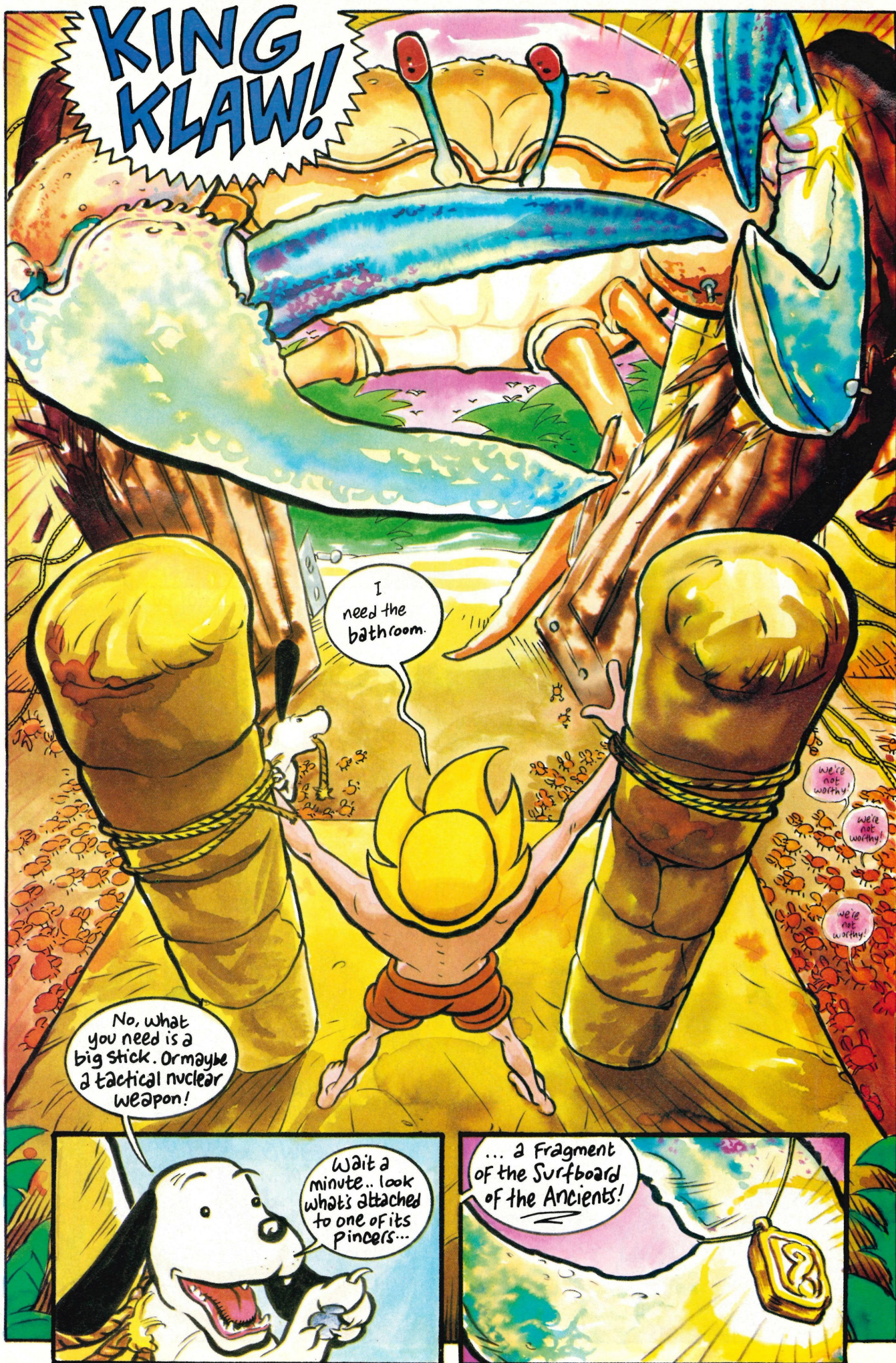


All getting a bit too much? Slow things down by going **PAUSE, DOWN, A, C, UP, LEFT, LEFT** and listen for the Bell. To speed things up again, it's **PAUSE, LEFT, RIGHT, UP, DOWN, A, C.**

BOOM BOOM BOOM BOOMBOOMBOOM



Wait for it...



KING KLAW!

I need the bathroom.

No, what you need is a big stick. Or maybe a tactical nuclear weapon!

Wait a minute... look what's attached to one of its pincers...

... a Fragment of the Surfboard of the Ancients!

we're not worthy!

we're not worthy!

we're not worthy!

DEAR READERS...

Well, this time round we're a bit short on readers letters — not surprising really, seeing as how it's our first issue. So rather than print copies of the messages I got inside my Valentines Cards this year (which you *wouldn't* want to read, believe me), I thought I'd take the opportunity to find out a bit about just who it is who's picking up this magazine.

Below you'll find an Easy To Detach Questionnaire. Fill it in and post it back to us, and you'll be entered in a Prize Draw, from which ten lucky winners will get a year's free subscription to MAX OVERLOAD! Simple, huh?

MAX
overreaction!

LETTERS PAGE

MAX overload! READERS SURVEY

1) How did you find out about MAX OVERLOAD?

- Saw it in a shop
- Got a flyer
- Read about it in a newspaper/magazine
If so, which one?
- Heard about it on TV/Radio
If so, which programme?
- Saw an advertisement
If so, where
- Heard about it from a friend

2) How do you rate the contents of MAX OVERLOAD?

	Great	OK	Naff
LEMMINGS strip	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TOEJAM & EARL strip	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CHUCK ROCK strip	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
GREENDOG strip	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
NEWS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
REVIEWS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
FEATURES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3) What do you like most about MAX OVERLOAD?

.....
.....

4) What do you like least about MAX OVERLOAD?

.....
.....

5) What other game or games would you like to see as a comic strip?

.....
.....

6) Would you like to see more or less ...

	More	Less	Same Amount
STRIPS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
NEWS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
REVIEWS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PREVIEWS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
INTERVIEWS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7) Are you: MALE FEMALE

- ### 8) How old are you?
- Under 10
 - 10 - 12
 - 13 - 15
 - 16 - 18
 - 19 - 21
 - Over 21

9) What Console or other Hardware do you own?

.....
.....

10) How much do you spend on games each month?

- Under £10
- £10 - 20
- £20 - 40
- Over £40

Your name:

Your address:

Postcode/Zipcode

Send this questionnaire (or a photocopy if you don't want to destroy this highly valuable first collector's edition!) to:
MAX OVERLOAD! Readers Survey, Dark Horse International, 16 - 24 Underwood Street, London N1 7DQ

And ten lucky readers will be able to save themselves £1.95 and a trip to the newsagents every month for the next year.

Oh yeah, and we'd really appreciate getting your letters to tell us what you think in more detail, plus any tips you've got for the games on which our strips are based. We'd also really appreciate the odd postal order or Fortnum and Mason's Food Hamper, but we don't want to push things.

So, till next month,

MAX over and out!

Dick Hansom, Editor

MAX overworked!

WE NAME THE GUILTY MEN!

We hesitate to say that the motley crew listed below are actually *responsible* for the comic strips in this issue — because responsibility, it has to be said, is one of the qualities in which they are conspicuously lacking.

However, it can't be denied that they did do the drawings and the scripting. Well, at least it keeps them off the streets ...

IAN CARNEY (Writer, Greendog)

◀ Claiming to be the funniest man in West Wallasey, Ian is the writer and co-creator of *Randy The Skeleton*, and his other credits include *The Cabinet Of Dr Caligari* mini-series, *Heavy Metal*, *Cheval Noir*, *Deadline*, *Nexus* and *Inklings*. His favourite console game is *ON GOLDEN POND*, especially the bit at the end where the screen reads *GAME OVER: YOU FAILED TO RELATE TO YOUR PARENTS*.

ANNE CAULFIELD (Writer, ToeJam & Earl)

Once described by a colleague as 'Eurotrash', Anne admits that she hasn't got ▶
Sinita's bosoms but does write comics, plays, travel journalism and Lenny Henry's scripts and has thirty seven pairs of shorts.

DICK HANSOM (Writer, Lemmings)

◀ Has had a career structure that could be kindly described as 'diverse'; former gainful employment includes international banker, civil servant, greengrocer, theatre director and beach cleaner. Is it any wonder he's reduced to writing comics for a living?

ILYA (Artist, Greendog)

Last year Ilya went Punk in Japan (creating 'Good Sam' for *Comic Morning*, published by Kodansha), and had *his Skidmarks* printed by Tundra too! For 1994 he's turned *Sonic* pink and ugly, and plans to take a walk on the 'Wildside'.

DAVID LYTTLETON (Artist, Chuck Rock)

◀ David has worked for a multitude of magazines and comics in his time, including *Punch* (now cancelled) and *Red Dwarf Smegazine* (now cancelled). His lawyers are waiting to pounce on any implication to the detriment of Mr Lyttleton's character regarding these closures. His book, *Kling Klang Klatch*, released to rapturous (raptorous?) reviews, can be found gracing the shelves of only the finest bargain book shops. His next, '*Was ____, Now ____*' is imminent.

GRAHAM MANLEY (Artist, Lemmings)

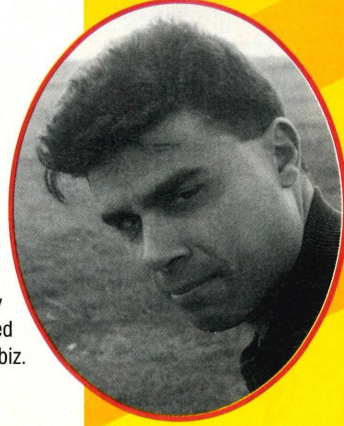
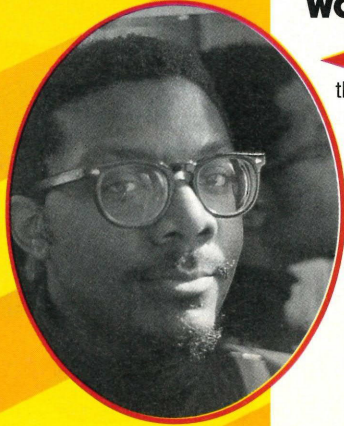
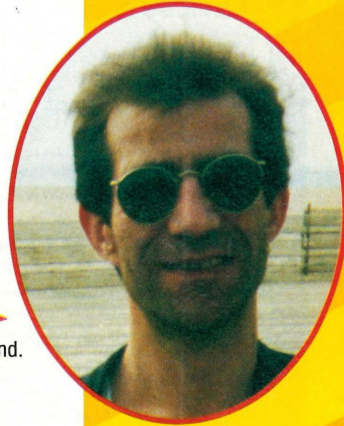
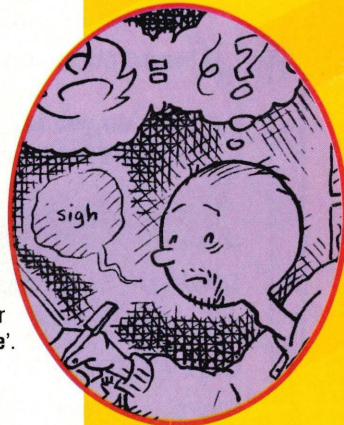
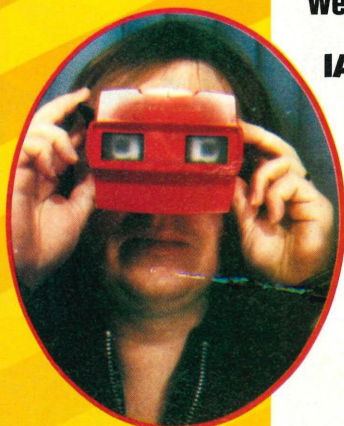
Very little is known about Graham Manley. In fact, his name might well be ▶
an alias. He is believed to be on the run from the police somewhere in Scotland.

WOODROW PHOENIX (Artist, ToeJam & Earl)

◀ Woodrow never thought that the hundreds of hours (and coins) he'd spent in Arcades across the globe would ever be socially acceptable or lead to employment in later life. Yet today, as part of the fabled *TEAM DETONATOR*, he dwells in a fabulous four colour world with Dolphins, Funky Aliens and Blue Hedgehogs and small children call him friend. Hoorah!

CEFN RIDOUT (Writer, Chuck Rock)

Pronounced *Kef-In Rid-Out*, his name sounds just as stupid if you say it ▶
backwards (and means 'light-blue quokka' — look it up!). Confused genealogy and a lengthy sentence in Australia for crimes against the Queen's English paved the way for the perfect job — editorial desk jockey in the comics biz.



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