

MEAN MACHINES

THE ESSENTIAL SEGA GUIDE

- **THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO SEGA GAMES**
- **OVER 350 GAMES FEATURED AND REVIEWED**
- **THE BIBLE FOR MEGADRIVE, MASTER SYSTEM, MEGA-CD, AND GAME GEAR OWNERS**

*Edited by Jazza Rignall
and
Richard Leadbetter*

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MEAN MACHINES

THE ESSENTIAL SEGA GUIDE



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Julian Rignall is the Managing Editor of Mean Machines Sega, MegaTech and Nintendo Magazine System
Richard Leadbetter is the Editor of Mean Machines Sega

Compiled by Paul 'Dearie Me!' Glancey
Design and Layout by Alex 'Uh-oh!' Patrick
Dave 'Oh no!' Emmett
Major Editorial Assists by Angus 'What A Guy!' Swan, Tom 'What A Guise!' Guise, Steve 'What A Size!' Merrett
Whole Idea Originated by The Mind of Marc Swallow

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Greetings, Sega Fan!

It gives us great pleasure to welcome you to Mean Machines: The Essential Sega Guide.

As you may or may not know (and we won't be too hard on you if you didn't), we've both been reviewing Sega games for the pages of Mean Machines Sega for several years and in that time we've had the pleasure to see just about every game that Sega have released officially on the Megadrive, Mega-CD, Game Gear and Master System – as well as a lot which have only been available from Japan or the USA as imports.

We've tried to cram as many of these games as possible (374 unless our limited arithmetic skills have failed us) into this complete reviews guide. We've included the imported games as well as the official releases, because although they're not widely available in High Street chain stores, dedicated Sega fans will find most of them are well worth seeking out on the shelves of your local games store.

The world of Sega is getting more exciting all the time. Even since we began work on this book we have been swamped with new releases which we didn't have room for in the main reviews, but which we've included in a special section towards the end of the book. Since we launched Mean Machines Sega, though, we've seen the launch of the Mega-CD, Sega's step towards a more advance breed of video games, and even the average capacity of a Megadrive cartridge has doubled from 8 megabits to 16 megabits allowing better graphics and more action. And now that the Megadrive version of Streetfighter II has been launched it looks like massive 24 megabit cartridges are going to be the norm! Who knows what's coming next? Well, we do, but we'll have to leave that for another time...

Happy Gaming!

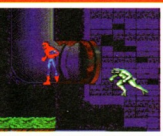
Jaz & Rich.





ON THE MEGADRIVE!

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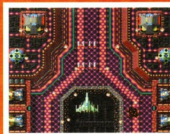
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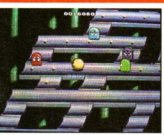
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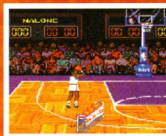
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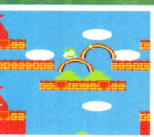
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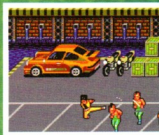
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If you're the lucky owner of Sega's top-of-the-range Megadrive add-on, hurry along to these pages to check out the gen on all the greatest Mega-CD games!

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This in-depth simulation enables players to take control of either the eponymous 688 or a Russian ALFA submarine in a number of missions ranging from a simple training exercise to all-out sub-aqua war!

There are ten missions in all, with varying scenarios, but the objective of every mission is to torpedo some enemy target and escape without being sunk yourself. Your sub is only equipped with a small amount of torpedoes and warheads, so firing off missiles any old how isn't good enough. You could hit a friendly vessel, or a biological target (probably a whale).

688 ATTACK SUB

BY SEGA
PLAYERS 1
GAME DIFFICULTY TOUGH
CONTINUES 0
SKILL LEVELS 2
RESPONSIVENESS DECENT

688 ATTACK SUB

When a blip appears on your sonar, the best thing to do is to hop across to the radio room where a computer study of your target displays exactly what it is. Alternatively you could use your periscope and your own eyes to check out the situation, should your target reside on the surface.

To add to the realism, 688

Attack Sub uses sampled speech for crew reports, and if you choose the Soviet sub, all of the speech is changed into the fluent Russian, which is a nice touch.

Usually, slow-paced simulations like 688 Attack Sub aren't my cup o' tea, with far too much fiddling around and not enough large explosions

and gratuitous violence for my liking. But this one has a gripping atmosphere which draws you into the action and keeps you playing. It's quite tricky to get to grips with, and the instruction manual has to be read properly, but once you embark on a mission and start sinking enemy boats (not friendly ones like I did), it becomes very enjoyable. If you're looking for an unusual and engrossing game with plenty of lasting appeal, have a look at this.

JAZ



Aeroblasters is another of the Megadrive's most popular genre: the horizontally-scrolling shoot 'em up. Based on the Kaneko coin-op of the late Eighties, this is one of the earliest blasters on the Megadrive, so it's quite hard to come across on the shelves. Like most shooters, you power-up with the plentiful supply of icons, though the extra weapons themselves aren't very dramatic.

Pilots Holly and Mike punch their way through six levels of evil empire action, giving you the chance to play two-players at once. Some of the levels have tight maze sections to negotiate, giving the gameplay

AERO BLASTERS

some variety. The graphics range from very smart to so-so, and the game is inconsistent in parts. The one thing you can be sure of is a gigantic end-of-level boss with awesome weaponry.

The game's major flaw is that it's too easy, especially in two-player mode, so you'll have to resist the plentiful continues. Aeroblasters was hailed in its time as one of the top blasters

in any system, but nowadays it looks a bit tired when compared to younger shoot 'em ups like Biochanger Battle.

JAZ



AEROBLASTERS

BY KANEKO
PLAYERS 1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY EASY
CONTINUES 8
SKILL LEVELS 3
RESPONSIVENESS OKAY

PRESENTATION 61%

Pretty sparse in the way of presentation screens, and the inclusion of foreign text when playing the Russian sub is a real pain.

GRAPHICS 81%

Nothing special, but the functional screens serve their purpose quite well.

SOUND 79%

Robot-like sampled speech and sparse effects. No music at all.

PLAYABILITY 86%

After a while controlling the sub is second nature and there's good fun to be had blowing away enemy ships and subs.

LASTABILITY 85%

Plenty of tough and challenging missions to complete, with two difficulty levels and a choice of subs as well.

OVERALL 84%

A decent enough simulation, but lacking slightly in the thrill stakes to really hit the mark.

PRESENTATION 85%

An adequate array of options for a game of the type. The added bonus is the two-player mode.

GRAPHICS 77%

Not dazzling now, but Aeroblasters retains some effects that still impress.

SOUND 74%

A fitting soundtrack for the ceaseless action, and a good range of destruction FX.

PLAYABILITY 79%

Undemanding and addictive blasting action, with some variety in later levels.

LASTABILITY 72%

Unfortunately Aeroblasters is too easy to complete, and the game's features aren't that fresh.

OVERALL 74%

Once a good shoot 'em up, Aeroblasters has been overtaken, and belongs in the second division.



Tom is the only fighter pilot left in the battle-torn USA and it's his mission to take to the skies and blow away as much of the empire's air, sea and ground forces as possible with the aid of his super-deadly Vulcan cannon and his fire-and-forget Sidewinder missiles. The action is depicted in 3D, with enemy fighters arriving from all angles with Tom's death at the top of their agendas. Things only let up when the F-14 makes a routine rendezvous with a tanker aircraft, where more fuel and extra missiles are given.

The joystick buttons allow you to change the speed your F-

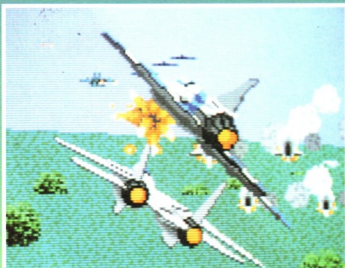
AFTER BURNER II

14 travels at. Travelling at low-speed is essential for the canyon attacks in levels eight and seventeen. When your F-14 is at top speed another stab at the speed button engages the after-

burners for a short burst of extra speed — perfect for the quick getaway. The arcade game on which this conversion is based was an attractive, but brainless, blasting affair with

the thrills coming from the exhilarating speed and 3D graphics. Likewise, playing the Megadrive game is just a case of moving around a bit while keeping the fire button held

down. It's repetitive but the combination of the speed, the pleasing graphics and the thumping soundtracks make it fairly good fun, at least for a while. **RICH**



AFTER BURNER II
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
SUPER-SONIC

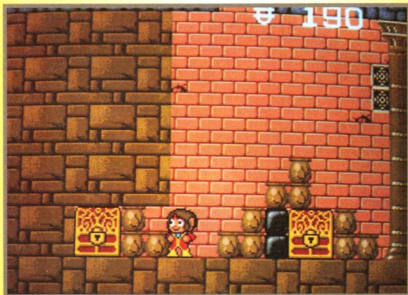
Who he? Well, Alex Kidd had his hey-day some five years back, when he starred in some fine Master System adventures. As Sega's answer to Super Mario, he made a later debut in this, his only Megadrive game. Sadly, the old magic had gone, and a rather mediocre platform adventure is all that's left here. The Enchanted Castle is a mixture of platform jumping and puzzle solving, across a large map of ever-changing scenery. The gameplay isn't that bad, with lots of secrets rooms and bonuses to find, and the game's quite big. The big problem is the game fails to utilise the Megadrive's capabilities, which

Alex Kidd And The Enchanted Castle

leaves Alex Kidd looking and sounding like a Master System game, but with the addictiveness of the 8-bit adventures ripped

out. Despite the cute scenario, Alex Kidd is for fanatics only, and there cannot be many of them left. The only inducement

to buy is the price tag — just under £20 on the budget label. **JAZ**



**ALEX KIDD IN THE
ENCHANTED CASTLE**
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS
UNLIMITED
SKILL LEVELS
RESPONSIVENESS
FAIR

PRESENTATION 73%
A fair selection of options and an arcade-perfect attract sequence.

GRAPHIC 75%
Not much variety, but the excellent 3D sprites whizz around the screen at top speed!

SOUND 80%
Thumpin' good rock soundtracks and explosive effects.

PLAYABILITY 74%
Fast and furious, but not terribly demanding. Fans of the arcade game will love it.

LASTABILITY 69%
Twenty-one levels but they're all a bit samey. You will come back to it now and again when you fancy a fast blast.

OVERALL 74%
A simple but enjoyable shoot 'em up, but even though it's still better than G-Loc and even Afterburner III on Mega-CD it can't be regarded as an essential purchase.

PRESENTATION 60%
Not a great deal in the way of smart title screens, a minimal selection of options but the way the game itself is presented is all right.

GRAPHICS 61%
The Alex Kidd sprite is quite nice, but the whole game has a sort of 'slightly-enhanced Master System' look about it.

SOUND 53%
Some excruciating music, sounding like kid's TV twaddle.

PLAYABILITY 65%
It's not too bad to start with: plenty of locations, plenty of puzzles.

LASTABILITY 49%
Not much in the way of original ideas, and the action soon becomes routine.

OVERALL 50%
Alex's ageing adventure isn't much cop, despite the budget price.

If you've seen the Alien 3 movie you'll know that it's actually all about bald blokes being chased around a rather dreary prison by ONE alien — not a particularly good basis for a hardcore Megadrive blasting game, eh? Luckily, the licensee, 20th Century Fox, didn't insist that the game follow the film too closely, and in fact this is more like a game of the previous movie, Aliens.

Instead of having a stick to beat off the aliens, our heroine, Ripley, is laden with pulse rifles, grenades, flamethrowers, and grenade launchers. Just as well, actually, as there are aliens crawling out of every cranny.

ALIEN 3

BY
ACCLAIM
PLAYERS

1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS
VARIES WITH LEVEL
SKILL LEVELS

2
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

ALIEN III

What's worse is that they've captured a bunch of prisoners who have been impregnated and are about to give birth to uncute little baby aliens, so Ripley has to chase around loads of platform levels looking for them before the timer runs out and their chests burst. Ammo, energy and time can all be picked up on the journey, but

the priority is finding all the prisoners and getting through the exit before the mission time runs out.

Alien 3 immediately impressed me with its dark, menacing graphic style, amazing parallax scrolling and excellent animation. The sound is also impressive with some skill music — if a tad inappropriate —

and raucous blasting effects. The only problem I can see with it is that the gameplay fails to change significantly between each level. It's always a case of learning where each and every alien and prisoner is, and the game runs to a set pattern, which MUST be learnt to beat the time limit. Still, although not perfect, it's an extremely polished, highly enjoyable blasting/exploration game.

RICH



PRESENTATION: 89%
All the regular options, including joystick configuration, but no password system.

GRAPHICS: 93%
Backdrops drip with doom and gloom. The sprites are superbly animated.

SOUND: 89%
Gun sounds are brilliantly but some of the tunes are a little too jolly and don't match the foreboding atmosphere.

PLAYABILITY: 90%
Getting used to the controls is very easy and straightforward. Gameplay is smooth and responsive.

LASTABILITY: 86%
The three difficulty levels and a lack of a password system make this very challenging.

OVERALL: 89%
An excellent platform game with all the thrills and spills you could ask for.

ALIEN STORM

The most terrifying monsters from outer space have landed, and they're busy eating humans, vomiting smelly entrails into people's underwear, and generally causing a bit of a hard time. Only a hero armed to the teeth with destruction-bringing artillery can give them a right royal kick up the backside and save the world!

There are three distinct sections to Alien Storm, but in all of them the aim is simple. Standing between you and the end of the level are a whole host of creepy ghoules and your aim is to kick alien butt (although the use of high-power lasers is probably going to be a

lot more effective). There are eight levels of alien-busting antics, with the final showdown taking place in the aliens' UFO — in flight!

Every level has a special building that contains humans trapped by the alien menace. Here, the action changes into a 3D Operation Wolf affair, with the good guys blasting the

aliens and completely destroying the scenery!

Alien Storm is a fantastic blast that's virtually arcade-perfect! The graphics are spot-on with a whole host of brilliant aliens and decent backdrops. The action is mega-lust, very smooth and highly addictive. You'll be at this until you've completed it ... which, erm, isn't

very long I'm afraid.

Yes, it's sad but oh-so-true; completing Alien Storm is about as difficult putting on a pair of trousers! It's a real shame that the extra difficulty levels don't really add that much of a challenge to the game. Fortunately, Alien Storm is budget-priced (£19.99), so it's not as if it's a major rip-off or anything, but it is disappointing to find that an otherwise excellent game is let down in the long-term play stakes.

RICH

PRESENTATION: 89%
Loads of options and nice presentation screens make this a very attractive game.

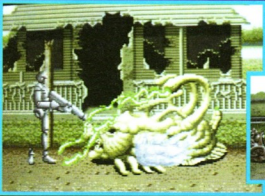
GRAPHICS: 86%
A wide variety of excellent sprites, which look just like their arcade counterparts.

SOUND: 88%
Decent tunes and brilliant blasting effects produce a stunning aural cacophony!

PLAYABILITY: 80%
Blasting those xenomorphs is mega-enjoyable and very satisfying from the word go, especially in two player mode...

LASTABILITY: 50%
...but the eight levels won't keep you occupied for very long at all. And having two players fighting side by side makes it even easier!

OVERALL: 75%
A very enjoyable, almost perfect conversion, spoiled by the fact that it's incredibly easy to finish.



ALIEN STORM

BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
VERY EASY
CONTINUOUS

3
SKILL LEVELS

2
RESPONSIVENESS
SUPER



All hell has broken loose in Fantasy Land, where once again the forces of darkness (headed up by the despicable Evil Overlord) have risen up from the depths of Hades to give the living a bit of a bad time.

Only one person is hard enough to launch a counterattack against the rampaging legions of doom, and that someone is the eponymous Alisia Dragoon! She's probably the hardest girl in the known world, known for her thunderous magical bolt-throwing abilities and her strange relationship with dragonkind.

It's her task to travel through the eight-way scrolling

ALISIA DRAGOON
BY
GAME ARTS
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM, TOUGH
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
2
RESPONSIVENESS
GREAT



levels, using her magical abilities to beat up any undead minions who cross her path. Alisia can also call upon the terrifying capabilities of four different dragons, each with their own qualities and powers, whom she has befriended to cause yet more havoc.

When I first started playing Alisia Dragoon I quickly acquired the powerful homing lightning beam and sat back, expecting that it would allow me to crush everything in my

path. But as soon as I reached the end-of-level boss, my preconceptions were proved horribly wrong! Alisia Dragoon

is a tough mother of game, throwing everything but the kitchen sink at you! In fact, conserving enough energy for your confrontation with the first boss is quite a task. Normally, this sort of caper puts me off, but the gameplay isn't all that frustrating — apart from when you use the continue option and

are mercilessly put back to the beginning of the level (argghh!). All in all, though, the original game play and the fast action make this one that you'll come back to time and again.

RICH



PRESENTATION: 85%
A few options to tweak, including alternative control methods. The game itself has a decent feel to it.

GRAPHICS: 92%
Gorgeous backdrops and character graphics. A visual feast!

SOUND: 92%
Some up-tempo tunes back the proceedings and there's some great blasting effects too.

PLAYABILITY: 84%
It's always good to play a game which is a bit different from the norm. Even better, the simple nature of the gameplay makes this easily accessible...

LASTABILITY: 88%
...and the well-balanced difficulty level makes this one that should keep you well occupied for a few weeks.

OVERALL: 87%
A good fusion of platform and shoot 'em up elements makes for an absorbing, challenging game.

This was once the 'Irae' game that came packaged with the Megadrive, until Sonic took over. Sega converted Altered Beast from their own coin-op, a five-level beast 'em up from the mid-Eighties.

Your character has been resurrected by the Gods to fight the forces of evil. Your punches and kicks are used to fend off the likes of zombies and wolves, but to succeed you have to pick up the tokens that turn you into a wolf-beast, a dragon, a were-bear or a were-tiger (all shown in a dramatic animated sequence). In your powered-up form you can run rampant, flying across the screen and punch-



ing the living daylight out of the big bosses.

The game's mythological setting is enhanced by the early scenes in the graveyards and Greek temples. Later levels go through caverns, and volcanic regions, with monstrous bosses erupting from the ground and

creating merry hell. Some of the large creatures are nicely drawn, but animation is a neglected feature for the most part. The conversion from the coin-op is immaculate, but more's the pity. The game was never any great shakes, even in the arcade, and the three year

gap since its release has not been kind to either graphics or sound (the speech sounds like Elmer Fudd). The gameplay comes off worst of all. There are hardly any moves, and your shuffling sprite has trouble in responding with even this limited repertoire. However, now that Sega have whacked the price down to about \$20, any residual fans of this simple and dull beast 'em up may be tempted to add it to their torture chambers.

JAZ



ALTERED BEAST
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
2
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
POOR

PRESENTATION: 72%
The two-player mode is a definite bonus, and all the 'trappings' of the arcade are present.

GRAPHICS: 67%
Boring, bland and blocky spring to mind when the backgrounds and sprites are surveyed.

SOUND: 59%
Speech of yesteryear, and unwolf-like howls sound pretty ragged. Other music is minimal.

PLAYABILITY: 60%
Mildly compulsive for a few goes, but Altered Beast has no depth to its gameplay.

LASTABILITY: 45%
Most players will plough through Altered Beast in a few sittings — and they won't be back.

OVERALL: 48%
Crusty as they come, Altered Beast is from the arcade's Jurassic era. Game evolution selected it for extinction!

Amazing Tennis is designed by veteran programmer David Crane, well known for his gaming innovations. Amazing Tennis continues the tradition by taking a new approach to presenting video game tennis. The viewpoint of the game is from directly behind the player, putting the game into a realistic 3D perspective. The game is played by using the basic shots — valley, drop shot and lob to force an error on the part of your player — either missing the ball or hitting it out of the court (the likeliest event in this version of the game).

As you become more proficient you'll learn tactics for

AMAZING TENNIS
BY
ABSOLUTE PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
HARD
CONTINUOUS
N/A
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

AMAZING TENNIS

influencing shots. Position of the player and timing of the shot make all the difference. Dominating the game from the net is your ultimate object, but the computer players are receptive to your strategy.

The players are shown as massive sprites, which feature some brilliant animation. The ball moves very realistically,

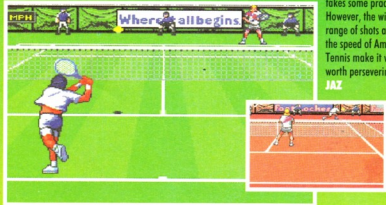
and at immense speed. The feeling of 'being there' is heightened by the comprehensive speech, the digitised voice of established umpire. The racket and net samples are similarly authentic.

While Amazing Tennis has a faultless look, some may be put off by its difficulty. It's probably the hardest tennis sim for

the Megadrive for two reasons. Firstly, the opponents are programmed to play really well, making it hard to get a shot past them. Meanwhile you are struggling to play from the new perspective. In one-player mode you are aided by always playing at the near court, but two players have to swap ends, and judging distance at the far end takes some practice.

However, the wide range of shots and the speed of Amazing Tennis make it well worth persevering.

JAZ



Last year's champion is next year's ad campaign. So went the thinking (probably) behind Tecmagik's tennis sim featuring Agassi as endorser and star player. However famous the name, the game itself is dire.

Players take part in singles or doubles matches against nine other characters, with names like Cassie Nova (ho ho! Geddit?), but not in any recognisable tournament. An additional play option is the Skins game, where players make money by keeping long rallies going.

The presentation is enhanced by a training mode, where a ball machine tests your

ANDRE AGASSI TENNIS
BY
TECMAGIK PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
HARD
CONTINUOUS
N/A
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
VERY POOR

ANDRE AGASSI TENNIS

skills. Despite all this, the range of surfaces, and the shots you'd expect from any decent tennis game, it all goes sour. This lies with the gameplay itself.

There's no scrolling, so everything is shown within a static screen. The court and players

are thus tiny, and the game is very undynamic to play. Worse, the player movement has been completely bodged. The players are not able to walk in a straight line, or by subtle degrees, so much time is spent trying to position the unruly

players.

The game's faults are not sweetened by the appearance. Graphics are awful, with sprites lacking all detail, and backdrops rendered in the most basic fashion imaginable. The umpire's speech is comprehensive, but best described as 'Dalek-like'. Nothing should persuade you to get this.

JAZ



PRESENTATION: 75%
There are lots of options, but the presentation is quite spartan — and there's no trainer.

GRAPHICS: 84%
The realism of the 3D perspective is remarkable, but it causes some play problems.

SOUND: 82%
The FX are excellent and atmospheric, with some really neat umpire speech.

PLAYABILITY: 86%
The initial difficulty makes Amazing Tennis tricky to get into.

LASTABILITY: 90%
Tactics come with time, and the opponents are tough customers.

OVERALL: 89%
A premium tennis title, that's one of the most realistic console renderings of the sport yet. Brilliant graphics and sound make Amazing Tennis one game which truly lives up to its name!

PRESENTATION: 64%
One or two players, singles or doubles, a training mode and skins game. But there's no International tournament.

GRAPHICS: 37%
Atrocious in just about every respect, with poorly drawn and badly animated sprites stumbling around ugly court backgrounds.

SOUND: 61%
The demented Dalek umpire does his job at keeping score, but with no panache.

PLAYABILITY: 41%
It's a fast game, but the players are frustratingly difficult to control.

LASTABILITY: 36%
The problems of gameplay soon makes you question the whole endeavour.

OVERALL: 38%
Andre will want something stronger than coffee when he sees this dire effort.



I was a bad day for particle physicist, Lester Chaykin, when his atom-smashing experiment went wrong and sent him hurtling through into another, nastier dimension. Naturally he wants to get back home, but at the beginning of Another World,

ANOTHER WORLD
BY
VIRGIN
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS
2
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

ANOTHER WORLD

the prospects for that don't look too good.

This world is full of gaping pits, laser-wielding guards, Lester-eating lion-things, grasping tentacles and other platform game-style hazards, but playing isn't just a matter of

learning where to jump or run, because there are plenty of clever puzzles for you to fathom out as well.

The graphics and animation really have to be seen to be believed here. Superb attention to detail gives this game a real

film-like quality. The atmosphere generated by the stunning visuals is enhanced by simple but effective sound and rewarding gameplay. One gripe is that you occasionally get bogged down in some sections where you just have to do the same thing over and over again, before finding the solution. Overall, though, it's very entertaining. **RICH**



James Pond's superiors have decided to give him a long break and a chance to take part in the Aquatic Games. The games comprise eight events, each with a salty flavour of their own. There's the 100 metre splash, the hop, skip and jump,

AQUATIC GAMES
BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
N/A
SKILL LEVELS
2
RESPONSIVENESS
OK

Aquatic Games

the tour de grass (unicycling), the bouncy castle (trampoline), kipper watching, shell shooting (with dams), feeding time, and leap frog.

Oh, how my sides ached

from the intense laughter brought on by playing Aquatic Games. Unfortunately, it's laughter at the empty and bland events. The one player mode is dismal, but Aquatic Games is

actually worse when there are three or four people playing it. Even like kipper watching are very dull to sit through while waiting for your turn, and overall the gameplay is limited. The few funnies, there to liven things up don't extend beyond the usual array of fish puns **JAZZ**



PRESENTATION 94%

The presentation screens are a real jaw-dropper — impressive, and effectively animated.

GRAPHICS: 92%
Very stylish and atmospheric. The animation is believable and the overall cinematic quality is astounding.

SOUND: 90%
The soundtracks are impressive, definitely leading a top-notch, cinematic feel to the game.

PLAYABILITY: 92%
Lester is easy to control and his quest is compelling, but there's no freedom of choice over the route to achieving his goals.

LASTABILITY: 83%
It will take time to master, but once you've finished there's little compulsion to go back and play some more.

OVERALL: 87%
A breath of fresh air in an often all-too-predictable market that should appeal to everyone.

Arch Rivals casts aside the serious sim aspect of other Megadrive Basketball games titles and offers a more cartoon-like, humorous approach to the sport.

Only two players from each team are on the court at any time and the player controls

ARCH RIVALS
BY
FLYING EDGE
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
N/A
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
ERRATIC

ARCH RIVALS

only one of this pair. As any non-bobon knows, the object of the game is to score more points than the other team by simply posting the ball through their hoop. However, such is the des-

peration to win that the teams stoop to whatever unsportsmanlike measures it takes. Thus, on-court violence is an integral part of Arch Rivals. What's more, there's a two-player option so

you can buff your friends any time you like (although it's advisable to only do this in the game!)

The idea behind Arch Rivals is a good one, but like its arcade counterpart, it simply

doesn't provide enough fun to keep you playing. Controlling only one player is frustrating, especially since the other player lacks intelligence and never does what you want, and the ropey collision detection just makes things worse. The controls are fiddly but it's easy to suss out the perfect technique for scoring a basket with every shot. In two-player mode there's a tiny sprout of fun, especially if you manage to pull your opponent's trousers down (very strange and perverted indeed), but really it's all too shallow and superficial to sustain interest for more than a couple of afternoons. **JAZZ**



PRESENTATION: 75%

Up to four players and a practice mode — but you can't select events, which is a big oversight.

GRAPHICS: 83%
James and his piscine chums are all brightly coloured and nicely animated. The whole game looks very jolly.

SOUND: 72%
Fishy tie-in tunes calculated to drive you absolutely mad.

PLAYABILITY: 58%
Some events are boring, some are frustrating, but none are much fun to play.

LASTABILITY: 58%
The game records personal bests, and there is room to improve performances, but there's not much to look forward to.

OVERALL: 61%
If Robocod was the filler, this is the fish heads. Aquatic Games is a dull sports game with a few feeble jokes thrown in.

PRESENTATION: 72%

There are a number of options, but they're not very user-friendly and don't add much to the game.

GRAPHICS: 61%
A couple of well-animated but under-detailed sprites and a single, limp backdrop.

SOUND: 49%
A repetitive tune bleats throughout, ruptured only by a few dismal effects and fuzzy speech.

PLAYABILITY: 43%
Over-responsive and far too simplistic, there's no thought or skill required to win.

LASTABILITY: 27%
No league or playoffs mean single games quickly become boring. Two player mode is unlikely to save it.

OVERALL: 40%
A dull and frustrating release whose "comedy" facade doesn't dredge it from the bowels of tedium.

This was one of Sega's first Megadrive games, but even though it's been superseded by games like PGA Tour Golf 2, it's still an enjoyable simulation of the sport.

Take to the first of the 18 holes and you're presented with a 3D view of the fairway, with trees and sandtraps littered around the place. Choose your club, find the leg position that suits you best, check the wind strength and direction, and make your stroke. This is achieved by pressing the button once to start the backstroke, pressing again at the top of the swing, and a third time to connect with the ball, and deter-

Arnold Palmer's Golf

mine the amount of chip or slice put on the ball.

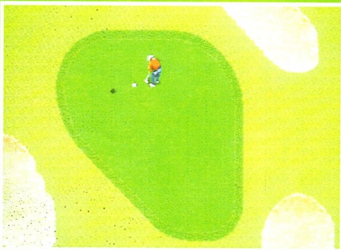
The choice of club is paramount: choose a wood when only 80 yards from the green and the ball goes sailing into the woods—or off a cliff, as some of the courses are in very

strange locations indeed!

Not a game that is easily mastered, Arnold Palmer's Golf requires a lot of practice and perseverance. The music might be diabolical, but the graphics are big, bold, detailed sprites which look great. Unfortunately,

where it loses to the PGA Tours of this world is in the realism stakes. PGA's excellent 3D graphics, control system and range of features gives it a simulation feel, but it's brilliantly programmed so that it's easy for beginners to get into. Arnold

Palmer's Golf is fun, but it's much more limited in it's scope, so after you've been out for a few rounds it tends to get a bit samey. **RICH**



ARNOLD PALMER'S GOLF
BY SEGA
PLAYERS 1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS
PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS N/A
RESPONSIVENESS REASONABLE

PRESENTATION: 78%

Not many options, but there's a good stand of presentation throughout the game.

GRAPHICS: 81%

The animation of the golfers is of a high quality, and the trees are very pretty too! The scenery does take a while to redraw after each shot, though.

SOUND: 62%

The theme is truly awful, and will drive you up the wall in no time. But the sound effects are good.

PLAYABILITY: 82%

Once the basics are mastered, it simply becomes a matter of improving the score. It's much more fun with two players.

LASTABILITY 71%

Although it's not Excitement Incarnate, you will keep coming back to it to improve your par.

OVERALL 72%

A decent golf game, but the PGA games are far superior.

Become the modern day equivalent of Constable, Picasso or Da Vinci with Art Alive—the first art package ever produced for the Megadrive!

You are given the a blank canvas, along with the necessary points and crayons necessary to create a masterpiece. Just select the colours you want to use (known as the palette) for your picture, along with the beginning background colour. The main drawing tools. Lines, boxes, ellipses, erasers and fill options are available. There's even an "airbrush" feature that digitally duplicates the real thing!

art alive

Art Alive enables you to create your own sprites, animate them, and even let them wander across your chosen backdrop. You can create your own sprites, or paste together pre-defined graphics in your own pictures, then use the text tool to add captions. The only limit, supposedly, is your imagination.

While Art Alive is certainly a noble attempt at trying out something different on console, it's actually a completely pointless program. For a start, once

you've drawn your picture you can't store it on cartridge to look at later (a very stupid oversight indeed). Storing them on video is the only option but that's tricky to set up and, in fact, ultimately a waste of time because the art program itself is so hopeless that the chances of you producing anything better than childish scribbles are minimal.

The lack of flexibility is Art Alive's main downfall. Only having 16 colours available at a time is pathetic, the selection

are limited and a chore to use and generally the whole program is very fiddly and difficult to work with. The cursor is so large you can't judge where a line starts and its movement is awkward—there's no inertia at all, meaning that it always moves in straight lines and drawing curves is next to impossible. In fact, the best you can do with the program is little better than scribbles.

To be honest, Art Alive is a waste of money. If you want to make computer pictures, get a computer and use your console to play games on—after all, that's exactly what it's designed

for.
JAZ

drawing tools is poor, the animation features



ART ALIVE
BY SEGA
PLAYERS 1
GAME DIFFICULTY N/A
CONTINUOUS
SKILL LEVELS N/A
RESPONSIVENESS REASONABLE

PRESENTATION: 56%

You have to colour in the title screen yourself! The presentation of the control panel is possible.

GRAPHICS: 51%

It depends on your artistic skill really! The crude drawing tools hardly cater for a limitless imagination.

SOUND: 32%

Brain-warping music plays while you drive your pencil around the screen.

PLAYABILITY: 43%

The crudeness of the drawing tools means that even a junior artist will soon find them annoyingly limiting.

LASTABILITY 31%

With no easy way to store your pictures for later viewing it, it's pretty pointless persisting with Art Alive.

OVERALL 35%

Forget it. You're better off with a pencil and paper.



Atomic Runner puts the player in a nuclear-powered Trackout of Tomorrow, then in an Evil-Deathraion-Aliens-Invading-The-Earth-scenario. The dynamic garment gives Chelnoy (the Atomic Runner of the title) with super-human

ATOMIC RUNNER
BY
DATA EAST
PLAYERS
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
3-15
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
QUICK

powers that enable him to run like the wind, jump like an enlarged flea and fire deadly bolts of energy from his finger-tips.

The graphics are excellent;



though some of the sprites are a bit small, the backgrounds are breath-taking, and some of the guardians are truly amazing. Most impressive are the end-of-level bosses. The first you come across is a fabulous dragon resembling the Chinese festival dragons, then there's a bug-eyed brass idol that tries to stomp all over his head. Stage

three's drop ship is a ferocious firing vehicle of destruction and desolation!

Atomic Runner breathes new life into the runny-jumpy-shooty genre on all fronts. Once you've got the hang of the controls, it's pretty hard to fault the playability. There are loads of things to shoot at in all directions and things often get pretty frenetic as you blast away at several targets at once while simultaneously avoiding hazards and crevasses. Although there are a few new and original features in Atomic Runner, this is really how shoot 'em ups should be.

RICH

PRESENTATION: 90%
Extensive introduction screen that seems to go on forever. Between stage map odds to the game's appeal.

GRAPHICS: 89%
Very pretty, and sprites and backgrounds are well-animated.

SOUND: 77%
Exciting music enhances the gameplay, and the spot effects are good.

PLAYABILITY: 85%
The controls are quite fiddly at first, but once you get the hang of them, they become almost instinctive.

LASTABILITY: 89%
This game packs quite a challenge, but once it's finished you won't return to it.

OVERALL: 91%
A welcome challenge. The only real moan is the miniaturised graphic style, but it doesn't affect the gameplay at all and the result is a superb blast.

That wily old racer, Ayrton Senna, from whom the game is licensed, is having a crack at yet another global title and doesn't want any race virgins standing in his way.

Thus he has singled you out as his rival to publicly

**AYRTON SENNA'S
SUPER MONACO GP II**
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
FABBO



ridicule your failures and generally make you look like an utter dimwit. Can you reverse the compliment by dusting Ayrton's monkey exhaust pipe?

Such is Ayrton's desire to

have you on a slab that he has actually set up a special tournament for the two of you. Ayrton has selected his three favourite courses from around the world and challenged you to a one-on-one series of races upon them. Beat Ayrton across two or more of these and his head should hang in the shame of defeat.



Great though this is, it's far too much like the original Super Monaco GP for its own good. The programmers have obviously used large chunks of the original Super Monaco GP program and simply added a few extra features. When you consider what could have been done to the game — new graphics, a car set-up system, record tables, maybe even a split screen two-player mode — it's painfully obvious that Ayrton Senna's Super Monaco GP II is an opportunity missed in a big way. Still, if you haven't already got the first game, check it out.

JAZ

PRESENTATION: 90%
Nicely presented throughout with loads of pics of Senna and lavish presentation screens.

GRAPHICS: 90%
Fast-moving 3D update and good quality graphics abound. The backgrounds are a bit samey though.

SOUND: 82%
Dull engine noise and few other effects, but the tunes are quite nice.

PLAYABILITY: 92%
Easy to control but still feels realistic. Plenty of high speed thrills.

LASTABILITY: 80%
There are 19 courses to master, as well as three transmissions, but winning the GP doesn't take too long.

OVERALL: 87%
A very good racing game — but if you've already got Super Monaco GP, this simply isn't different enough to be worth buying.

In this game, based around the third and final part of the Back to the Future film trilogy, Marty goes back to the Wild West of the 1880s to rescue his pal Doc Brown who has been trapped there by an accident in the time-waves. Along the way, Marty also has to thwart the evil ways of

BACK TO THE FUTURE 3
BY
MIRRORSOFT
PLAYERS
GAME DIFFICULTY
MED/DIFFICULT
SKILL LEVELS
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



Mad Dog Tannen's gang, headed by an ancestor of Marty's arch enemy, Biff!

Back to the Future III adopts the familiar game-of-the-film format with each level representing a different scene



from the film. There are four levels in all, the ultimate one being a ride atop a speeding train as Doc and Marty attempt to get the DeLorean up to 88 mph so they can make the final time jump home.

I must admit that I really enjoyed playing this. The four different levels are varied and fun, particularly the pie dish-sling-

ing third level, and I found myself constantly going back for another shot. The problem is, though, that it doesn't take more than a day or two to go through the entire game, and once you've done that the appeal starts to wear off. If the game had more levels, this would have been a superb film tie-in. The graphics and sound are both good, and as I've already said, it's great fun to play. However, its lack of challenge means that only Megadrive beginners will really get their money's worth.

RICH

PLAYABILITY: 76%
Amazing intermissions, but no options. In-game presentation is smart.

GRAPHICS: 84%
Some great sprites and backgrounds which adequately recreate the look of the movie. Animation is equally up to snuff.

SOUND: 80%
A selection of good quality tunes and frontier-world style effects accompany the action.

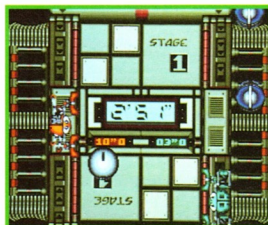
PLAYABILITY: 86%
Very addictive at first, with the four levels offering plenty of varied and highly enjoyable action...

LASTABILITY: 61%
...but once you've completed it (which doesn't take that long), the appeal starts to wear off.

OVERALL: 77%
A varied and thoroughly enjoyable film tie-in which is let down only by its lack of lasting appeal.

Balljacks is a future sport controlled by two players controlling robot crabs, each guarding a conveyor belt loaded with balls. The object of the game is to use your crab's rocket-powered claws to snatch your opponent's balls from his side and

BALLJACKS



put them on yours. If all of your balls are stolen, you have a limited amount of time to recover them, and failure results in losing the round. There's not much more to the game than this, so whether you're playing in single or two-player head-to-head mode, the boring single screen action becomes a turn-off in a short time. The poor graphics and sound make the gameplay limitations all the more apparent, and although the gameplay initially has some novelty value, it definitely runs out of steam before you've got your money's worth.

JAZ

PRESENTATION: 67%
A couple of options screens, but pretty lame presentation in general.

GRAPHICS: 55%
The robotic crabs are the best bit about the game, but the arena graphics are very poor and unvaried.

SOUND: 45%
A paltry selection of musical mediocrities and 8-bit-standard FX.

PLAYABILITY: 55%
You can't resist having a few goes, just to see whether or not it really is as crap as it first appears.

LASTABILITY: 35%
The gameplay is bland and the meagre supply of computer opponents makes it poor value.

OVERALL: 49%
The weird gameplay makes it enjoyable for a short while, but the appeal soon plummets.

BALLJACKS
BY
MAMCO
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

Batman by Sunsoft is licensed from the first film of the caped crusader, and shouldn't be mixed up with Sega's Batman Returns. The games are separated by a good three years of development in the Megadrive, but Batman still holds its own as

BATMAN

a platform beat 'em up. The Caped Crusader has to stop The Joker's plans to massacre the Gotham populace with deadly laughing gas, and this entails chasing him through

twenty levels of platform beat 'em up action, interspersed with scrolling Batmobile-bound blasting stages. Batman's combat skills are pitted against the likes of 'Shakedown' who run him down, 'Enforcers' in jet-packs, and Heatwaves with their flamethrowers. The game is very pretty, with moody and gloomy graphics that go quite some way to capturing the mood of the film. The action is also smart, with extra weapons to contend with and a bat-rope that lets Batman swing from the rafters. But it's way too easy for committed and experienced platform gamers, and only offers good value to novices.

JAZ

PRESENTATION: 80%
Scant options for changing the difficulty resulting in a game which is too easy. The moody intro graphics recreate the look of the film very nicely.

GRAPHICS: 85%
Again, those dark, moody backdrops and sprites make the game look just like the movie.

SOUND: 84%
The sound matches the look perfectly, with stirring arrangements and changing styles.

PLAYABILITY: 74%
Decent punching, swinging, bataringing action.

LASTABILITY: 64%
Twenty different levels, but apart from the odd Batmobile shoot 'em up stage it's all a bit samey — and easy to complete.

OVERALL: 70%
A smart looking platform game which is pretty good fun to play, but which is unfortunately just too easy to keep you occupied for very long.

BATMAN
BY
SUNSOFT
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



The Joker plans to wreak his revenge on those who mocked him and the audiences who didn't laugh loud enough. Daring raids on high-tech weapons facilities have provided him with a range of deadly armaments. So, under the pre-

Batman Revenge of the Joker

tence of being a major promoter, Joker is organising a big charity bash featuring all of the comedy old school, with the punchline being the unleashing of a furious barrage of fiery doom at the end of the show.

Only the Batman can save the world in this horizontally-scrolling platform shooter from Sunsoft, creators of the original Megadrive Batman game.

However, unlike in the original Batman game, the action in Revenge of the Joker is very varied indeed, switching between standard platform stages, jet-pack shoot 'em up stages,

scrolling zeppelin chases and loads of other styles. The graphics are fantastic, very colourful and detailed, capturing the spirit of the comic the same way the first game captured the spirit of the film. The only let-down is the fact that the game can be really easy to finish because it gives the player infinite continues, AND level passwords! Shame, that, because otherwise it's a good game.

RICH

PRESENTATION: 90%
Loads of Bat intermissions and presentation screens, but limited options.

GRAPHICS: 92%
Big, detailed sprites, great use of colour, line backgrounds and smart animation.

SOUND: 87%
Atmospheric tunes accompany the game and the effects are varied and of good quality.

PLAYABILITY: 69%
Fast, responsive, loads of things to see and do, and Batman himself has a wide repertoire of moves.

LASTABILITY: 58%
There are seven long levels to beat, but the flawed continue option makes the game too easy to finish.

OVERALL: 68%
Probably the best adaptation of the Batman comic ever, which is unfortunately marred by the inclusion of passwords and infinite continues.

BATMAN — RETURN OF THE JOKER
BY
SUNSOFT
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
HARD
CONTINUES
INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
GREAT





In the sequel to Sega's first Batman game, the heroic Dark Knight has to take on the evil Penguin's schemes for Gotham domination. As Batman fights his way through the city, he's under constant attack from Penguin's henchmen and his fiendish inventions, as well as the mysterious and savage Catwoman!

Batman Returns follows the plot of its film parent very closely as Batman takes to the streets and battles his way to the memorable roof-top showdown with Catwoman. From here on, the translation to video game features our hero waging war against, curiously, some of

BATMAN RETURNS

the city's architecture. For example, Bats is confronted by a huge mechanical monument which he destroys before going on to face the terrors of the cathedral. Batman is then pursued by the crumbling wreck in the wake of the Penguin's

destruction — an assault course of falling rock and fire hazards, so Batty-Boy best watch his step. So... gasp at the top-quality graphics, revel in the atmospheric effects and cream yourselves over the sparkling originality. Dream on. Sega bagged themselves a very tasty licence in this one so it's disappointing to find that it's translated into a platform beat 'em

up, which is both unoriginal and frustratingly over-difficult.

The look of the game is very dark, obviously in an attempt to recreate the atmosphere of the movie, but it just results in making everything difficult to see. It's not a terrible game, really, but it's not terribly enjoyable either, so you'd be bats (ahem) to buy it.

JAZ

BATMAN RETURNS
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
↓
GAME DIFFICULTY
TOUGH
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
↓
RESPONSIVENESS
CLUMSY



Earth has been at war with the evil Barrax Empire for hundreds of years. After a successful battle mission, Commanders Berry D Mayers and Lori Bergen good guys they have been kidnapped by the Barrax Empire on the return journey to Terrainia — and it just so happens that they're being held hostage on the flag ship of the Barrax Empire's battle fleet.

As a top, crack, elite, crack pilot, you (and a pal, if you fancy a go at the two player mode) have risen to the challenge of busting out Bergen and Mayers. The job entails flying over the vertically scrolling worlds of the Barrax Empire,

BATTLE SQUADRON

destroying the enemy forces in their search for the hostages.

Sporting some stunning graphics, this is one of the most attractive Megadrive blasters around — the backdrops and sprites are excellent. It's not just a pretty face, either — it's tough

too, especially when you play it on the single-player option. In spite of the odds are really stacked against you, with a huge amount of enemy craft all with their sights locked onto your ship — if you don't grab some power-ups quick (and hold on to them) you

don't stand much of a chance. Personally I love this sort of situation, but there are some people in the office who found the high difficulty level really off-putting. Check it out if you're a hardened blasting fan.

JAZ

BATTLE SQUADRON
BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY/MEDIUM
CONTINUES
1-3
SKILL LEVELS
↓
RESPONSIVENESS
SUPER-SMOOTH



PRESENTATION: 87%

The animated introduction screen sets the scene and the intermission screens sustain the atmosphere.

GRAPHICS: 76%

The backdrops are dull, and although the sprites are large, they are poorly animated.

SOUND: 80%

Nice atmospheric tunes, but poor sound effects.

PLAYABILITY: 74%

Above average platform formula stuff, but the unresponsive controls make it very annoying.

LASTABILITY: 80%

The game is hee-uge! The high level of difficulty also makes it durable, if you can stand the frustration.

OVERALL: 77%

Could have been a good film adaptation if it weren't for the frustrating gameplay!

PRESENTATION: 91%

The game is very well presented, with plenty of options. Nice presentation screens as well.

GRAPHICS: 91%

In spite of its age, the graphics in Battle Squadron haven't dated much at all.

SOUND: 72%

Decent enough effects, but the tunes are slightly lacking.

PLAYABILITY: 87%

Plenty of really decent shoot 'em up thrills on offer, and it's still one of the most challenging Megadrive shooters.

LASTABILITY: 81%

The two-player option keeps the thrill-level high, and in the single-player mode there's plenty of long-term challenge.

OVERALL: 85%

A tough and addictive vertical scroller. Recommended to hardened blasting freaks.

We could ramble on all day about this game's absurd storyline — but the game's blurb spells it all out far more succinctly than we could ever put it:

"When the Dark Queen kidnaps both your best buddy and the best looking girl this side of the Mazonian Star Cluster — what are you going to do about it?"

"Are you gonna cry? Hide? Call the Starcops? No way! Because you're a Battletoad and Battletoads don't cry, hide or call for help. Battletoads get real MAD — and then they get EVEN!"

"So, strap on your Blaster, power-up the Toadster, and get

BATTLETOADS

on down to the Dark Queen's planet — but, watch out 'toad — this lady's bad, and she's got a whole mess of really nasty surprises lined up for you — like the Psycho Pigs, the Mutant Ratpork, Robo-Manus and the Saturn Toadtrap, to name but a few.

"Aiiieeee!" "Arghhhhh!" "Mmmmmrrrrghhh!" are a printable selection of some of the exclamations of frustration this game forced me to cry! It's tough with a cap-

ital 'T'! Be it the mega-difficult Jet Turbo section, the slidey ice level (that skids you into massive spikes — arghh!) or the amazingly frustrating snake pit stage, you're guaranteed to

screaming abuse at the console. However, a few days on and I'm beginning to warm to the game — simply because it is so tough. So, for you players moaning about Sega games being so easy, I definitely recommend this. For players who don't like to be frustrated, stay well away from this game — if it'll just make you angry and unsooable — and will turn your face a very embarrassing shade of red.

RICH



PLAYABILITY: 59%

Some fairly decent cut screen intermissions.

GRAPHICS: 77%

The scrolling's smooth and the animation fluid, but it does have the look of an 8-bit game.

SOUND: 77%

A fairly good range of sound effects and hi-energy music, enhances the atmosphere.

PLAYABILITY: 78%

The action is fast and fun, and initially compelling — especially with two players. Some incredibly hard levels make the game extremely frustrating.

LASTABILITY: 82%

Loads of levels to conquer — and some of them are really difficult.

OVERALL: 79%

Although it is just a graphically enhanced version of an 8-bit game, Battletoads is very playable and poses a very tough challenge.

The programming team behind Bio-Hazard Battle set out to create a shoot 'em up with a completely different look to any other on the Megadrive. Considering how many games have trodden this path before, it's a testament to their skill and success that Bio-Hazard looks so distinctive and plays so well.

The scenario has a vague eco-consciousness, with the world in a shocking state due to mutations caused by excessive pollution. Slugs, snails and puppy dog's tails have inherited the Earth it seems. Two players have the job of cleaning up the mess by flying their own mutant-like craft down to the

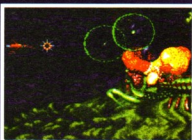
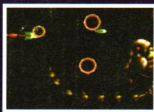
BIOHAZARD BATTLE

surface. Bio-Hazard has all the familiar attributes of the horizontally-scrolling shoot 'em up: power-ups and bosses. There are four power-ups, of varying strengths, and each reads to different craft (there is a choice of four) in different ways. As to the bosses, they're pretty spectacular in terms of appearance and strength. You'll face a massive full-screen garbage monster, a spindly-legged jungle giant

and the ultimate nemesis is a sphere, bursting with maggots. Elsewhere there is plenty of opportunity to view the uniquely grotesque graphics, with massive segmented worms floating

across the screen almost gracefully. The backdrops are forgettable, but some of the experimental sprites in Bio-Hazard are stunning. Later levels take you down tunnels with enemies appearing to 'pour' from the walls, and the underwater level is a gem. What looks like an uneventful shoot 'em up turns into a bizarre and rewarding voyage of exceeding difficulty that carves its place in the Megadrive Hall of Fame.

JAZ



PRESENTATION: 89%

Nice attract sequence, the two-player mode is good and there are a modicum of options.

GRAPHICS: 90%

The backgrounds are fair-to-middling, but many of the horrific sprites are unparalleled. One warped looking game.

SOUND: 78%

The tunes range from the frantic and garbled to later more sinister tunes. Great FX.

PLAYABILITY: 89%

Fabulous feel to the action, with tons to shoot, and a fast pace to the proceedings.

LASTABILITY: 90%

It really does improve as you go, with a very steep difficulty curve. Perseverance is well rewarded.

OVERALL: 89%

A classic shoot 'em up that looks different to its peers, but may prove a little too taxing for junior loser troops.

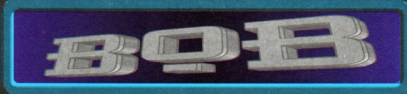
BIOHAZARD BATTLE
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
HARD
CONTINUUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
EXCELLENT



Bob is the eponymous cyborg hero of this massive platform exploration game from EA. He's the robotic equivalent of a teenage delinquent, as he borrows his dad's interstellar Buick for a hot date, and proceeds to crash it on a carelessly placed asteroid. Then follows the task of finding a new set of space-wheels to get him to his important sweetheart.

There's a new car at the end of each level, but to get there Bob has to cross more than ten sub-stages full of robot-hating creatures. Luckily, the boot of the car held some useful items including six different weapons and a variety of

BOB
BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
OKAY



gadgets Bob can attach to himself. Weapons and objects are found dotted around the levels, usually hidden on inaccessible platforms surrounded by lava

lakes and reached by a vine. Bob's gadgets include helicopter headgear, bouncing platforms and floating time-bombs.

As you beat the puzzles and the monsters the game starts to unfold on a small-scaled map, and every few stages a password offers itself, which thankfully spares you from going over the same

territory again. EA have tried to make Bob endearing by having him say 'funny' things and look a bit wacky, but he ends up looking as nerdy and bland as his name suggests. The shooting/platform excitement is also a bit limp and the only thing to keep you interested is the puzzle element, but even that turns out to be minimal. In fact, it's quite a struggle to maintain any interest past the second world, so it's not a game I would recommend.

JAZ



Bobo and Mobo are a pair of Bonanza Brothers, a pair of highly ethical burglars who only ever raid the homes of those who have made their fortunes by evil and unscrupulous means. The only problem is that evil and unscrupulous rich people have large contingents of trigger-happy security guards patrolling their homes, so the brothers have to build carefully, on the hunt for valuable items before making their escape.

Bonanza Bros is meant to be played by two players simultaneously (the screen is split in half so that the players can burgle independently), and this is



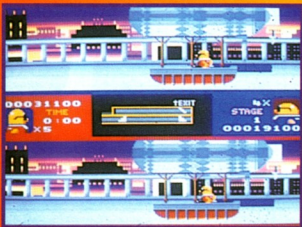
supposed to increase the strategy element. For example, one brother could be shooting the guards from one side of the room whilst the other scoops up all the booty. However, chances are that the brothers will take completely separate routes, scooping up all the treasure and

thus completing the level quicker (and getting tons more bonus points!).

Bonanza Bros was a great game in the arcades, mainly because the player only had to stump up 20p for a game which was packed with great humour, excellent graphics and decent

playability. The Megadrive version is very close to the coin-op, with only some of the later levels and bonus stages missing. However, the gameplay does get very repetitive after a while and even on the hardest level it doesn't represent a serious challenge to a decent game player, simply because you get so many credits to play with. I didn't find much fun with the two-player mode either — there's no real sense of either team work or competition to add to the gameplay. If you're a real Bonanza Bros nut, you'll like this, but if you only find the game marginally intriguing, spend a couple of quid on the coin-op instead.

RICH



BONANZA BROTHERS
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
RAPID

PRESENTATION: 78%

The attract sequence is fair enough, but there are no options apart from a password system.

GRAPHICS: 72%

The Bob sprite is big and well animated. The game's levels look very samey.

SOUND: 63%

Guugh! An array of annoying funk-type soundtracks that prove to be a constant irritation.

PLAYABILITY: 77%

The blend of exploration and shooting is reasonably good fun, but is never compulsive or particularly challenging.

LASTABILITY: 79%

The game is huge, covering a vast amount of levels, but the gameplay doesn't develop any more interest.

OVERALL: 78%

An average platformer which deserves recognition for its exploration element and nothing else.

PRESENTATION: 92%

Excellent in this department, with loads of options and attract screens which are just like the coin-op's.

GRAPHICS: 91%

Great comic sprites and a wide variety of backdrops. Again, very similar to the coin-op.

SOUND: 90%

Spot-on tunes and groovy effects — the Robodog is skill!

PLAYABILITY: 83%

The unusual gameplay and graphics make it quite good fun to start with ...

LASTABILITY: 74%

...but be warned: the game's far too easy to complete if you use all the credits. Play sensibly and use them wisely.

OVERALL: 82%

Fans of the coin-op will love this. Others might find the action too repetitive. If in doubt, check it out.

In this role-playing game, you command a party of new recruits into NEO, an organisation devoted to ridding the galaxy of the last vestiges of the mega-powerful RAM faction. These twisted beings are the previous tyrannical rulers of the solar system who enforced their iron-fisted law with genetic mutant warriors! Your first mission sees you travelling a minor invasion of mutant Terrines at your Earth headquarters, before advancing to the orbital command base where you are assigned to save civilisation in a number of different missions.

Combat in Buck Rogers is a little more involved than in most

BUCK ROGERS
BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS
↓
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
SAVED GAMES
SKILL LEVELS
↓
RESPONSIVENESS
FAIR

BUCK ROGERS

RPGs. The process is carried out in rounds, with each of your characters coming under your control in turn. Once you take charge you may elect for your person to move around, attack, wait, carry out first aid on your fellows or pass completely. Alternatively, you could just leave combat to the computer using the "quick combat" option

where each member of your party acts in the best interest of the others (although it often ends with more casualties than manual combat).

As your characters progress through their escapades, they earn experience points which they can trade in at the NEO training centre for new skills, such as stealth and computer

hacking.

At first play, Buck Rogers doesn't exactly ooze excitement, and the weak graphics and sound do nothing but heighten the despondent atmosphere. Get past these small hurdles however and you'll find an involving and rewarding game. The combat system can be slightly annoying, although it's ten times better than any other RPG system, and you can always stick to quick combat in less-than-desperate

situations. Size is another thing Buck Rogers has going for it. There are loads of assignments and they get very hard after the first couple of missions, making the battery back-up essential.

JAZ



PRESENTATION: **87%**
Lots of presentation screens and they're quite well done, too.

GRAPHICS: **68%**
Small and weedy sprites with little animation. The backgrounds are quite repetitive too.

SOUND: **35%**
The music and effects are pretty weak.

PLAYABILITY: **91%**
The control system makes things easy and there's certainly a lot to do. It'll tax more than your reflexes, so thickies had better watch out.

LASTABILITY: **89%**
There are enough missions to keep you going for a few weeks at most.

OVERALL: **90%**
A challenging and refreshing RPG which makes up for graphical deficiencies with an abundance of playability.

Let's get one thing straight from the start — this isn't your standard beat 'em up. The player takes the role of a young, ambitious martial arts novice attempting to learn four different skills: Kendo, Karate, Bo (using a long staff), and Nunchaku (a weapon consisting of two short sticks connected by a chain).

During a fight, your stamina and Ki levels are very important — the former displays how tired you are, and the latter determines the power of your blows. They both increase the longer you avoid being hit, but decrease when you move, or get hit. An opponent has similar

BUDOKAN

levels, and the object is simply to decrease both his levels before yours diminish to zero.

The action culminates in the Budokan tournament in which you select a discipline and then knocking the stuffing out of him (or her!) or even a friend if you opt for the two-player mode. Do you think you're

ready for the challenge?

Budokan is really a thinking man's fighting game. You have to use both your brain and reflexes as you balance stamina, Ki and pure skill to outwit the opponents. The sheer variety of moves take time to master, but practice reaps its own rewards — you really feel a sense of satis-

faction and achievement when you start to make headway in the Budokan. The graphics and sound are both top-notch, and with tough opponents to beat, Budokan is highly recommended to beat 'em up fans who are looking for a real challenge.

JAZ



BUDOKAN
BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM/HARD
CONTINUES
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
N/A
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

PRESENTATION: **86%**
Nice opening graphics, and a clear and informative manual help you get started. The controls take a bit of mastering, though.

GRAPHICS: **86%**
The sprites are all superbly animated making the fighting look very realistic.

SOUND: **82%**
Good effects, and the music, though not inspirational is at least unobtrusive.

PLAYABILITY: **85%**
Tricky to begin with, but once mastered the moves you'll definitely be hooked!

LASTABILITY: **89%**
Plenty of opponents to beat, and the game's open-ended nature means that you can keep coming back to it.

OVERALL: **87%**
Tough, addictive and difficult to master. A brilliant beat 'em up.

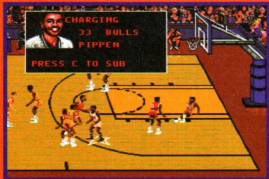


In this basketball simulation every effort has been made to include all the rules of the official game, such as fouls, substitutions and suspensions. As well as the 5-on-5 on-court action, the package

contains a seriously large

BULLS VS LAKERS

wad of options for the tweaking. Take two teams from a list of 18 to play either a single game or enter the NBA tournament. Alter the length of the periods, or practise at small town level



BULLS VS LAKERS
BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
1-2
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS

3
RESPONSIVENESS
OK

before playing showtime basketball. Call up a detailed analysis of each player's performance, and take those difficult decisions when you have to drop a player from the team. You have the choice of one-player, two-players, head-to-head, or two players working as a team against a computer opponent.

It takes quite a while to get the hang of things, but once mastered you can steal, intercept, pass and slam-dunk your way to victory. The graphics and sound aren't exactly brilliant, but the gameplay is more than good enough to make up for their deficiencies. If you're a basketball fan, this is a must! **JAZ**

PRESENTATION: **93%**
Loads of options and stats to look at and tweak. In-game presentation is good too.

GRAPHICS: **74%**
The action sometimes gets cluttered and the sprites look as if they could do with a good feed.

SOUND: **80%**
Decent music on the title screen and the excellent speech create just the right atmosphere.

PLAYABILITY: **83%**
The controls are tricky at first, but the game pace is quite fast...

LASTABILITY: **80%**
...and with oodles of options and challenging gameplay, this isn't a game which will be mastered overnight.

OVERALL: **83%**
An involved simulation which should definitely appeal to serious basketball fans. Arcade players might find it a bit too much though.

This game puts you in control of a team of five hip beach-types competing to be the five hippest beach-types on all the beach! This is done by coming out tops in five unmistakably West Coast events, namely skateboarding, surfing, tootbag-

California games

ging, skating and BMX. What's more, if your pals reckon they're much skiller than you, why not simply challenge you to eight of them at once in a mega-contest? This is a graphical tour-de-



CALIFORNIA GAMES
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

1-9
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS

1
RESPONSIVENESS
EXCELLENT

force, with superbly animated sprites and splendid backdrops, and it plays like a dream.

Each event is a brilliant mini-game in its own right, with beautifully weighted playability that's easy enough to get into but is challenging enough to allow experts to learn and perform tricks that let them attain seemingly impossible scores. Obviously, California Games is best appreciated with multiple players, but even as a single-player game I think it's enjoyable, addictive and challenging enough to make it a priority purchase. **JAZ**

PRESENTATION: **92%**
Loads of options to choose from and flawless in-game presentation.

GRAPHICS: **91%**
Colourful sprites with top-notch animation over expansive, super smooth scrolling animated backgrounds.

SOUND: **86%**
The effects are pretty good and so are the tunes - the problem is that they don't suit the action very well.

PLAYABILITY: **93%**
Fast and furious gameplay which is easy to get into but takes quite some time to fully master.

LASTABILITY: **90%**
In multi-player mode, this is one your mates will be asking you to get out time and time again but even as a single-player game it's still brilliant.

OVERALL: **91%**
California Games is a fun-packed multi-event sports game which should be checked out.

Villain extraordinaire Red Skull has got himself a device which enables him to control the minds of America, and it's up to Captain America and his macho macho crew - Hawkeye, Vision and Iron Man to lay on the superhuman strength and save the world.

CAPTAIN AMERICA AND THE AVENGERS

This weird hybrid of a game is a shoot 'em up and beat 'em up combined. In some sections you can decide which way you want to play it - punching hell out of the enemy, picking up barrels, spanners or rocks to chuck at them or shoot-



CAPTAIN AMERICA
BY
DATA EAST
PLAYERS

1
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
3/5/7
SKILL LEVELS

3
RESPONSIVENESS
REASONABLE

ing your character's particular weaponry at them. In others, you go underwater, or take to the skies where it's strafing time only. Then in training mode, you can practise your skills against each other.

As a conversion, this scores rather highly, playing just like the Data East coin-op, with all the moves in the arcade machine making an appearance. The game looks like a pile of cock, but it plays rather well. It is, however, way too easy, and while it's a good laugh, you'll complete it rather quickly, and after that, it holds no more interest. **RICH**

PRESENTATION: **65%**
A nice range of options, a decent title screen and lots of cartoony excerpts throughout the stages, which help maintain the comic book look of the game.

GRAPHICS: **52%**
Good representations of the Marvel characters, but the sprites flicker horribly at times and the backgrounds are utterly basic.

SOUND: **69%**
Lots of very tinny digitised speech and no effects.

PLAYABILITY: **76%**
Easy to control and really good fun to play, with a goodly number of enemies to waste.

LASTABILITY: **66%**
Amazingly addictive initially and the training mode stretches that interest, but too easy.

OVERALL: **67%**
Initially very good fun, but the thrill soon wears off. Not a game we'd recommend, even to comic fans.

Captain Planet is one of a new breed of super heroes. His idea of public service is not leaping around the Metropolis grabbing people from burning buildings, and foiling small-time armed robbers. No, it's a far bigger fish he fries: the environmental catastrophe facing our entire planet. This Megadrive adventure starring the cartoon character centres on the activities of Zarm, eco-terrorist who has six of the Cap'n's mates, the Planetees, on his island fortress. The planet's fate is inextricably linked with their rescue.

Each of the Planetees has a different world origin, and a

CAPTAIN PLANET



corresponding power. For example, Gi, the Asian girl is happiest in water, and can throw water balls; Me-Ti, born of South American Indians is privy to the healing secrets of the rain forests. Each of them is trapped in their own 'toxic zone' each of which have varied themes. The first level is a massive malevolent computer, with further levels incorporating uranium mines, oil platforms and

sewage outlets. Should a Planeteer lose his energy supply he's ejected from the zone. Lose in every zone and the spirit of the world, Gaia, is defeated. The zones are guarded by Zarm's henchman, labouring under names like Duke Nukem and Vermicious Knump. Sounds cheesy? Well, Capt Planet is the Edom of platform games — cheesy and tough. The game looks atrocious, with rough-

edged, blocky scenery and sprites. The collision detection and control system is appallingly inaccurate, making it unfairly difficult. The puzzle element of the game is so easy as to make it irrelevant, it's wrestling with the controls that takes up your time. Capt Planet is bad, there are many platforms (X-men, Flashback) that surpass this mockery.

JAZ

CAPTAIN PLANET

BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
HARD
CONTINUES
0
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
AWFUL



PRESENTATION: 53%

Scant game options, but the presentation screens detailing the zones are bright and cheerful.

GRAPHICS: 44%

Capt Planet looks far too close for comfort to the average Master System.

SOUND: 48%

Some of the tunes suit the toxic zone settings, but the FX are laughably bad.

PLAYABILITY: 28%

The planeteer supposedly under your control has other ideas, apparently.

LASTABILITY: 22%

The frustration factor is incredibly high with this game, and there's no reward for your perseverance.

OVERALL: 30%

The eco-friendly theme may be laudable, but Capt Planet is software pollution of the grossest kind.

Mickey and Minnie Mouse, the most famous cartoon marriage, hardly spent a day apart since 1928 until the fateful day Minnie was scooped up by the spiteful witch Mizrabel. Mickey's daring rescue bid is the basis for the first Disney game on Megadrive, released back in February 1991. Castle of Illusion bears all the hallmarks of a platform game, albeit a polished and pretty one. Among the five stages are seven jewels Mickey needs to form the rainbow bridge to Mizrabel's lair. Mickey's attack is the classic 'bottom-bounce' whereby landing on top of an enemy is enough to kill it. The sub-levels

CHAKAN

within the game are enchanting and often surprising. In the par-lour level, for example, Mickey dives into a tea-cup and swims amid the sugar-lumps!

What distinguishes Castle of Illusion from other games of

the type (and there are many) are the sumptuous graphics, with lovely depth of colour and parallax perspectives, as well as the beautiful music. Such attention to detail makes this still worth a look, despite its mount-

ing years, though I have to say that if it's best suited to youngsters as the level of challenge is pretty tame.

JAZ

PRESENTATION: 82%

A lovely sequence showing Minnie being whisked away, but not much else in the way of options.

GRAPHICS: 87%

To this day they still impress. Brilliant layers of disney-esque backdrops and fabulous sprites. A console cartoon.

SOUND: 80%

Superb and atmospheric music, arranged to suit the graphical mood of every level.

PLAYABILITY: 86%

The game was obviously playtested to death — Mickey is a dream to control.

LASTABILITY: 77%

As platform games go, this lacks original features, and is too easy for experienced players.

OVERALL: 84%

A great buy for younger players who will be delighted with its jolly and varied appearance. A great Disney license.

CASTLE OF ILLUSION

BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
2
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
SUPERB





This is a Megadrive version of an ancient – but still ace – Nintendo game, featuring radio-controlled cars racing around in high-speed tomfoolery. Just take control of your tiny speedster and battle it out with five computer players on the Pro-Am curcuds of doom!

The objective is simply to beat the other drivers to the finish line, but there are various ways to achieve this, not all of them exactly sporting. There's the normal route to success of course; drive carefully and steer around all the oil slicks and opposing cars. On the other hand you could arm your little minibuggy with forward-firing



rockets or rearward-dropping bombs, and naturally, if these connect with your opponents' vehicles they're out of the race, but only for a while.

The weapons and ammo are lying around the tracks, waiting to be picked up, along with new car parts which boost your acceleration, top speed and the traction of your tyres. As well as all these, there's also a bonus letter tile on each track and when you've collected the first, you're awarded a massive

bonus along with a jazzed-up motor! There are three different vehicles in the game – a speedy 4x4, a souped-up station wagon and a hyper-fast sports model.

At first, Championship Pro-Am is really good fun to play, and in spite of the rather simplistic graphics and sound it's very addictive. I was glued to the Megadrive for hours trying to get my hands on the sports car – and when I did there were still twelve more levels to conquer.

After that, though, the fun level starts to wane, simply because the graphics and the action start to get rather samey and boring. Also, after a certain number of races one of the computer cars develops a turbo speed ability and is almost guaranteed to come in first place every time!

If it had had more to it this could have been better than Micro Machines, but the fun runs out just a bit too quickly.

RICH

**CHAMPIONSHIP
PRO-AM**
BY
**TRADEWEST
PLAYERS**
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
2
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
EXCELLENT



PRESENTATION: 49%
Extremely polished but there are no options to tweak at all.

GRAPHICS: 63%
The scrolling's smooth and the graphics do their job, but the whole thing has a very 8-bit look to it.

SOUND: 63%
Some of the sound effects really capture the atmosphere, but it's a shame that the music is so dull.

PLAYABILITY: 88%
Extremely easy to get into, with the inertia on the vehicles making for a super-playable game.

LASTABILITY: 65%
There are loads of levels to conquer, but they all look the same with only the hazards being any different.

OVERALL: 70%
A brilliant conversion, but there could have been a lot more variety in both the graphics and the gameplay.

Those heroic Chiki Chiki Boys have got a bit of world saving to do! An evil king has stolen the Dragon Blue Eyes, the source of all peace and tranquility, and consequently the kingdom of Alulu is going to run without it. The idea is that you guide one of the boys across Alulu, chopping up everything in his path and collecting money to buy better weapons and power-ups.

You'll notice that, unlike the arcade game on which it's based (Mega Twins) Chiki Chiki boys doesn't have a dual player option, though it is full of delightful presentation features and humorous touches which all



add up to something that not only looks marvellous but plays well too. With the equivalent of only one continue and a high level of challenge on the HARD level this cutesy platformer caters for skilful platformers as well as beginners.

Like the superb Ghouls 'n' Ghosts, Chiki Chiki Boys offers some interesting twists to the accepted platform routine and even now, after completing the game, I still enjoy playing it, just to behold the graphics and enjoy the sounds of another

Capcom classic.
JAZ



CHIKI CHIKI BOYS
BY
**SEGA
PLAYERS**
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
1
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
MEGA

PRESENTATION: 91%
Packed with arcade quality presentation screens and an excellent range of options.

GRAPHICS: 90%
Massive sprites, smooth and varied animation plus some excellent looking backdrops.

SOUND: 91%
The music suits the game perfectly and is a rousing blend of ballad and boister!

PLAYABILITY: 87%
Easy to pick up, hard to put down, and it certainly isn't too easy to beat!

LASTABILITY: 84%
It's so addictive you're bound to keep coming back to it. Besides, the HARD difficulty setting takes some beating!

OVERALL: 85%
A sound platform game which probably would have scored much higher had the two-player feature not have been sorely missing.

Poor old Chuck Rock. There he was, watching stone age television and consuming a few bevvies when along came the evil Gary Gritter, who mercilessly snatched his lady love, the fair Ophelia. Of course, Chuck isn't going to take this sitting down, so decides to rescue his beloved from Gritter's perverse clutches.

The rescue attempt requires Chuck to run around 15 scrolling platform levels, braving the treacherous traps and hazards that Gritter has prepared for him. Luckily, Chuck isn't defenceless in his quest; his enormous beer belly can be used to repel enemy attack with

CHUCK ROCK

just one lethal pelvic action and he can also pick up rocks and boulders to chuck at his assailants.

Most platform games are just a test of your skill, but Chuck Rock is actually something of a brain teaser. Solving all of the mini-puzzles, along with making the best use of your rocks adds a new dimen-

sion to the gameplay. Most Megadrive platform games are completed very quickly, but not so Chuck Rock. Its 15 levels are packed with challenge and I guarantee that this cart will last a long time.

BRCH



CHUCK ROCK
BY
VIRGIN
PLAYERS
↓
GAME DIFFICULTY
ROCK-HARD
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
↓
RESPONSIVENESS
SUPERB

PRESENTATION: 90%

A nice attract sequence and some useful options make up the presentation side of the game.

GRAPHICS: 91%

Truly superb characters, animation and backdrops. A veritable visual feast of large proportions.

SOUND: 93%

Swing your stone age loincloth to some groovy tunes and thrill to the wealth of superb sampled effects.

PLAYABILITY: 92%

Instantly appealing and playable, Chuck Rock is addictive from the word go.

LASTABILITY: 90%

Fifteen long levels to conquer make this a game that should last for a long time.

OVERALL: 91%

An excellent and quite original platform game that's highly recommended to all Megadrive players.

Step into the Time Machine! Columns is old as the hills, coming out as one of the Megadrive's first games. The gameplay is very close to that of Tetris, the smash-hit arcade game, which sadly never got an official Sega release. Jewels fall from the top of the screen, into a narrow channel. They start to pile up at the bottom, and the game ends if they reach the top of the screen.

The way to eradicate the blocks is to assemble them in order according to colour, using the joystick to direct where they fall. When three or more blocks of the same colour are lined up, vertically, horizontally or diagonally, they disappear, and a bonus is awarded, depending how high they were stacked and how many the row consisted of. Occasionally a flashing jewel appears, which destroys all the blocks of that colour if it comes to rest on one.

COLUMNS

This very simple game structure is elaborated by the array of options, including a head-to-head mode, where

players have a channel each. There's also a Flash Columns game which plays in reverse, as the object is to reach a buried flashing block at the bottom of the channel. There's a spread of skill levels, that determine speed and the number of block colours.

The graphics are some of the simplest on the Megadrive, with little variety as you

progress, but they are clear and effective. The three soundtracks play for ages, and sound strangely echoey and mysterious.

Columns is a relaxing and enjoyable pastime but as your skills improve, games last for hours turning that relaxing ambient feeling into one nearer montomy, since the game has a limited level of increasing difficulty. But there's nothing else quite like Columns to recommend as an alternative (except Blockout), and as part of the Mega Games I package it's very good value.

JAZ



PRESENTATION: 88%

There are loads of options, allowing for all player skills and the head-to-head is excellent.

GRAPHICS: 55%

Simple, of necessity, but nice and colourful nonetheless.

SOUND: 82%

The echoey, ambient tunes are most hypnotic and add to the atmosphere no end.

PLAYABILITY: 83%

Columns is simple to play, but is good exercise for the mind, and a quick game always satisfies.

LASTABILITY: 79%

There are limits to the fun factor, but the enjoyment of the two player option endures.

OVERALL: 77%

The gameplay is a bit limited, but it's still good fun. Watch out for the soon-to-be released Dr Robotnik's Mean Green Bean Machine, which is a similar game, but with a bit more to it.

COLUMNS
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
N/A
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

Spots, eh? Nothing but trouble. In fact, you could almost sympathise with Wild Wicked Willy's desire to capture a crop of zits and imprison them. But no, because these spots are the pimplous pals of none other than the fearless Cool Spot who has vowed to rescue his boillish buddies from their prisons on the beach and in the bath and the nursery.

To release each captive, Spot has to run and jump around huge mazes of perilous platform-type screens, packed with Willy's weird cohorts. On the way, Spot has to grab as many spinning cool spot icons as possible because it takes 60 of

COOL SPOT

these to provide the Cool Power required to unlock his pal's cage at the end of the level. Grab enough spots to fill your Coolmeter to 85% and you get to have a go at a bonus round for extra lives!

Just as I was fed up with platform games, Spot comes along to remind how good they

can be. Each level is the right mix of frustration and reward, and the incentive of the bonus game leads you to search out every spot. As you can see yourself, the graphics are brilliant, and the sound is also ace, for both music and FX. But it's not just the facade that makes this the megagame it is: Cool Spot

has that rare feel when it, that gives you such a hit when you pick up the joyaid. It's the control, it's the animation, it's the brilliant character. I can assure you of eleven levels of great fun.

RICH



COOL SPOT
BY
VIRGIN
PLAYERS

1 GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
1-5
SKILL LEVELS
2
RESPONSIVENESS
EXCELLENT

The word on the street is that the sinister UCC Corporation are involved in a top secret project to breed illegal and dangerous mutant creatures which they plan to sell to the highest bidder. The operation must be stopped, but to do that the authorities need proof of its existence, so it's down to you, as one of the top secret agents in the world, to infiltrate the Corporation, find some mutant embryos and escape.

The action is portrayed in first person 3D, using a mixture of polygons (for the corridors) and sprites (for objects and enemies) to create the display. Your objective is to explore the

CORPORATION

Corporation building, collect equipment and solve puzzles in order to reach the higher floors of the UCC building.

The Corporation do not take lightly to unauthorised intruders so you can expect to run into all sorts of security robots and some of their more gruesome genetic experiments

on your mission. Luckily, you can arm yourself with all sorts of weapons and even build your own agent, complete with bionic limbs and psychic powers before the mission begins.

Corporation impressed me immediately with its excellent user interface and decent gameplay. The thing is, not matter

how long I played the game I kept coming away with the feeling that I had hardly scratched the surface of the game - it's that deep and complex. The graphics (particularly the presentation screens) are very impressive, although the corridors look so samey it's easy to get lost. The soundtrack backing

the action is good but I was disappointed with the rather unexciting sound effects. At the end of the day though, Corporation wins through in that it is a very challenging game with many levels to play through and the gameplay should appeal to most Megadrive players.

RICH



CORPORATION
BY
VIRGIN
PLAYERS

1 GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

PRESENTATION: **89%**
A choice of difficulty levels, and an ace sound test.

GRAPHICS: **94%**
Super smooth animation on Spot, for all his many movements. The backgrounds are just brilliant.

SOUND: **90%**
Brilliant surf-rock soundtracks! Tons of chirpy sound FX too.

PLAYABILITY: **92%**
Cool Spot grips you like a vice the first time you pick it up, and it's a 'session game', one where you take a thermos and a week's supply of before you start.

LASTABILITY: **88%**
Eleven levels is sufficient to keep you at it for quite a while. Some are very challenging indeed!

OVERALL: **90%**
Spot has earned the right to label himself cool. Platform gamers will go ape. This has to be one of the best Megadrive games of '93!

PRESENTATION: **90%**
Loads of excellent gameplay options for you to fiddle with and the presentation screens are great.

GRAPHICS: **80%**
The graphics are sometimes indistinct, but the overall 3D effect is quite impressive. It's a shame the corridors all look alike as it makes it very easy to get lost.

SOUND: **80%**
A good tune plays throughout along with functional effects.

PLAYABILITY: **84%**
It takes a while for the action to really get going but after that things become much more enjoyable.

LASTABILITY: **87%**
There are many levels to explore, each with many puzzles, so you should be at this for ages.

OVERALL: **86%**
A high quality, atmospheric role-playing adventure game. Recommended.

The evil Doctor K has created an army of deranged replicants in order to take over the world, and only two men can stop him — Andy Attacker and Ben Breaker, the top soldiers of the CIA's special Crackdown force.

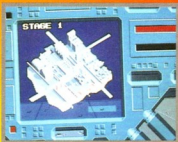
Armed with a machine gun,

CRACKDOWN

some super bombs, a set of explosives and their wits, the two super-soldiers must negotiate a series of multidirectionally scrolling levels of progressively more numerous and nasty enemy

forces, planting explosives at certain points marked with a large red "X". Once all the charges are set, they must exit the level before the bombs go off.

Strategy is the name of the game if you're playing alone — getting to all of the markers in time is a tricky situation which needs a lot of forethought if you're going to get through unscathed. Two-player mode is a different ball game altogether



— this literally halves the amount of work each player has to do, and not only means that the level can be cleared that much quicker, but you get more bonus points at the end!

Crackdown was a fun coin-op to play, and more than reminiscent of the Gauntlet series. The Megadrive version retains almost all of the arcade's playability, but with slightly smaller graphics — hardly surprising, considering the coin-op had a 26" screen! The sound is good, and fits the bill nicely — lots of explosions and the like. If you enjoyed the coin-op, you'll certainly enjoy this, so go forth now and purchase it pronto.

JAZ

PRESENTATION: 76%
A few nice intro screens, with simultaneous two player options and difficulty levels, but not a whole lot else.

GRAPHICS: 73%
The minicase sprites are a bit indistinct but they work okay.

SOUND: 70%
The usual bangs and explosions abound, with other spot effects and some very good soundtracks.

PLAYABILITY: 74%
There's not really much to the game, but it's quite good fun for a while, especially with two players fighting side by side.

LASTABILITY: 69%
Loads of levels, but the game is rather easy to complete in two-player mode

OVERALL: 73%
A decent conversion of an entertaining coin-op, though it does look a bit dated these days.

The best way to make a successful and playable pin-table is to give it a good theme, and make it as atmospheric as possible. Crue Ball is a mix of ghoulish horror elements and hard rock: metallic table, slimy sprites. The table is spread over

CRUEBALL

three vertically scrolling screens, with a set of flippers on each. The object is to move to the next ranking by activating the ramp

and flying to the sub-game section. There the flipper turns to guard the left side of the screen, and the ball destroys approach-



ing skeletons. The soundtrack is the most noticeable and hyped feature of the game. EA have used three 'works' of American Metal band Motley Crue and although the Megadrive isn't capable of metallic miracles, the renditions are fair enough.

What Crue Ball really lacks is fast adrenalin-pumping action. The table is pretty sparse of features, just a few bumpers and bonuses. The higher screens have different features, but these don't change enough on further levels to maintain interest in the game. Crue Ball tries to be rock 'n' roll but it barely musters a quiver.

JAZ

PRESENTATION: 76%
There is a novel introduction to the game, and a sound test for those groovey tunes.

GRAPHICS: 70%
The metallic table looks okay, but the sprites are very bland and game looks quite bare, especially when you compare it to something like Dragon's Fury.

SOUND: 79%
Authentic Motley Crue music, and if that's your bag, you'll be quite happy.

PLAYABILITY: 71%
Crue Ball is easy to get into, though the action would have been more interesting if the programmers had made it more like a real pinball.

LASTABILITY: 61%
There's not much progression in the nine levels. 'Done it, seen it' sets in quickly.

OVERALL: 65%
Crue Ball doesn't really cut it. Not enough action going down on the table, man!

In the future, American Football takes on a new dimension, if the action in Cyberball is to be believed. The game is really close to the rules of American Football, where two teams have to force their way down a pitch by ten yards, within

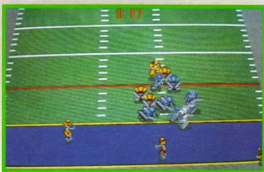
CYBERBALL

four attempts or 'downs', and finally to the goal. In the case of Cyberball, the game is played by 20ft robots, and the ball is a bomb, which explodes if after the fourth down. Play is a mixture of real-time action, when the play begins, and team strategy. You decide the general course of a play by selecting from a range of passes, runs and punts, displayed below the action screen. The real-time action is shown, with the players represented in blue and red. The graphics aren't bad, but the

entire game idea has improved an immensely by the John Madden games. When you think that Cyberball was out even

before the first Madden's — and there have been another two since, you realise that this is an old-timer on the Megadrive sports circuit. It should have given up and opened a pub by now.

JAZ



PRESENTATION: 80%
A fair range of options and two player mode. Nice futuristic atmosphere.

GRAPHICS: 65%
The layout works well enough to get a handle on the action, but looks very dated now.

SOUND: 60%
Crowd and FX do a minimal job in creating the stadium atmosphere. The speech from the female commentator is minimal but excellent.

PLAYABILITY: 76%
The game is more basic than Madden's but choosing plays is easy to accomplish. The action doesn't rely as much on tactics, though.

LASTABILITY: 67%
Cyberball is the shallowest of the football sims you may choose. Even the unusual setting won't hold your attention for long.

OVERALL: 67%
Past its prime, Cyberball is the future sport that's fast moving into history.



There you were, happily indulging in your pastime of space-craft flying, when, all of a sudden, the controls of your craft fused! Amazingly, you manage to find a suitable planet to land on, but sadly, you don't survive the crash — dahl! Luckily, an alien entity finds your shattered body and implants your consciousness into a cyborg frame. What's more, this alien sun decide to erase your memory! Aieee!

However, the memory wipe doesn't go quite to plan, so you decide to use your now-found cybernetic powers to locate the alien entity and give it "some that!" The only problem is, to

CYBORG JUSTICE

destroy the entity you're going to have to punch, kick and shoot your way through legions of enemy cyborgs! Plenty of punches (including uppercuts and body-blows) are available for your cyborg to use along with a variety of kicks. You can also stun your opponent and pull off his arms or even his torso! Armed with these pieces, you can either chuck them at your next opponent or attach

them to yourself! Excellent.

You can even start the game by designing your own custom cyborg. Just enter the Assembly Room and put together one of the many special torsoes, leg units and a ball-on special weapon.

I love Cyborg Justice — it's great! The sprites and animation are excellent and the beat 'em up action is ace! The weapons and moves take ages

to master, but the effort's worth it and it's even better when another player joins in!

If there is a fault with the game, it's down to the lack of backdrops and interaction with the scenery. Still, I'm amazed that all this has been packed into a four megabit cartridge. Goodness knows what it would've been if a whole eight meg were available.

RICH

PRESENTATION: 90%
A vast range of options are available, including different difficulty levels, arcade or duel modes.

GRAPHICS: 89%
Superbly detailed sprites and animation. Shame there are only five different backdrops.

SOUND: 78%
Decent crunching effects when robot fist meets cyborg hide! The music is occasionally a bit poor.

PLAYABILITY: 88%
Getting to grips with your Cyborg takes a while, but it's great fun mastering the moves.

LASTABILITY: 87%
Quite challenging as long as you steer clear of the EASY skill setting. The two player option and the duel will also have you coming back for more.

OVERALL: 89%
An excellent beat 'em up, with tons of extra weaponry, superb moves and addictive gameplay!

CYBORG JUSTICE
BY
USGA
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



As the owner of a fine, Darius-class attack space vehicle, you have decided to take on the might of the hostile alien empire, using all your laser-powered weapons to blast the xenomorphs into oblivion. This involves traversing a number of horizontally scrolling worlds blasting all-and-sundry with your guns and bombs, collecting power-ups on the way (sounds familiar!).

You'll need all you shoot 'em up skills to survive the epic confrontations with each level's end-of-level boss. Their zap guns and missiles have been fully primed for maximum destruction — and only a real

DARIUS II

hero can send them all packing!

The destruction of some aliens results in a rather nifty power-up pod being left behind. Collection of this usually results in one of your craft's weapons systems being substantially upgraded.

There are a massive twenty-six levels in this game — but you only have to complete seven

to finish it! The 'map' of the levels spreads out fanlike, so as each one is completed you get a choice of two to take on next. But be warned — some are a lot more difficult to beat than others!

Although the action isn't as good as Gynoug, Hellfire or Thunderforce IV, this is still a pretty enjoyable shooter. The

trouble is it's lacking the sort of imagination (particularly in bosses and power-ups) that set these games above the mass of Megadrive blasting games and so, after a while, it does get a bit boring. There are a massive 26 levels to beat and it's certainly not easy, but only mad-dog laser maniacs will feel compelled to play the game to all of it's seven endings.

RICH

PRESENTATION 69%
Plenty of options, but the attract sequences are very underwhelming.

GRAPHICS 77%
Small, but detailed sprites with decent scrolling backdrops. The exotic fish bosses are pretty smart.

SOUND 71%
Forgettable tunes are overshadowed by the raucous blasting effects.

PLAYABILITY 79%
Fast blasting action which is easy to get into from the outset, but the lack of original features is disappointing.

LASTABILITY 75%
There's lots to play but the levels are all rather samey and not that interesting to play through.

OVERALL 70%
A good, challenging shoot 'em up which lacks that spark of originality which would have made it something special.

DARIUS 2
BY
TAITO
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
ACE



There's one Megadrive game guaranteed to make a shiver run down your spine every time it's mentioned: *Dark Castle*! Some of the unfortunates at Electronic Arts must turn in their graves when they realise they unleashed this spawn of the

Dark Castle

Devil's trumpet into the world. *Dark Castle* centres around one man's attempt to kill the vampires reposing in a Transylvanian castle. The castle is a flip-screen platform maze,

filled with dangers like Vampire bats, rats, executioners and sinister piles of, well, brown stuff. Rope swings and ladders take you to later 'attractions' such as dragons and torturers' lairs.

Apart from the merest germ of a good idea, *Dark Castle* has absolutely nothing else of merit. The graphics are awful beyond belief, that



includes miniscule sprites, animation and backgrounds. Each of the screens is tedious and frustrating because even a crack in the pavement causes death and the control method is abysmal. The music is an affront to the ears, but the sound FX are hilarious samples of people making funny noises. I can only surmise that the programmers put these in because their game had become something of a joke.

It is a bit of a laugh I suppose, but I guess I'm only saying that because I didn't have to pay good money for *Dark Castle* before playing it. Buy it at your peril. **JAZ**

PRESENTATION 40%

You choose the route through the castle from a whimsical intro screen which looks like it was drawn by some artistically-challenged person.

GRAPHICS 15%

They were awful when *Dark Castle* was new. Now they're just unspookable. Boy, these are really bad. **Yak! Gross!**

SOUND 51%

Dreadful version of Bach's Toccata in D Minor. The high-bit rating is purely for the laughs generated by the absurd samples.

PLAYABILITY 20%

You may find it fun to experiment in that region between pain and pleasure. But probably not.

LASTABILITY 4%

Play it for more than a day and you'll be joining the inmates.

OVERALL 13%

One of the worst Megadrive games in the history of the world. Truly a nightmare experience.

DARK CASTLE BY EA PLAYERS

1 GAME DIFFICULTY
1 TROUBLE-SOME
1 CONTINUES

3 SKILL LEVELS

3 RESPONSIVENESS
1 AWFUL

The Davis Cup is tennis' nice trophy. It's a team-based tournament, where the prize is national prestige, not big wads of cash. By choosing that as the basis of their tennis sim, perhaps *Domark* were trying to give it a different perspective. *Davis Cup*

DAVIS CUP TENNIS

Tennis offers the same features as most of its competitors — one or two player action, singles or doubles, a tournament or friendly mode, and a chance to practice skills. The practice ele-

ment of *Davis Cup* is augmented by the five different practice areas. There are games for sharpening timing, positioning and tactical skills.

But where a tennis game proves itself is on the court, and *Davis Cup* really cuts it here. The viewpoint of the court is from quite a low position, adding a sense



of realism and movement. The ball movement is superb, the player control responsive, and the player sprites look good (apart from their low-cut shorts). *Davis Cup* boasts a unique solution to the problems the second player faces when playing from the back — two-players use a split-screen. The area is quite cramped, but big enough to have an enjoyable game. There are also no less than 50 computer opponents, and they do exhibit different play styles. This is not an easy tennis game to play, but its incredibly stylish in every aspect. Best on the machine. **JAZ**

PRESENTATION 93%

A whole host of options that add to the enjoyment of the game.

GRAPHICS 80%

A workable split-screen, which sets it apart from other Megadrive tennis games.

SOUND 93%

Fabulous sampled speech for all of the line calls and scores, and topper FX.

PLAYABILITY 88%

It's one of those sport games that are well programmed but need a little practice. The high level of control you get gives the game a realistic feel.

LASTABILITY 90%

No less than fifty opponents to beat! The game-play's so good in *Davis Cup* that it will occupy your cartridge slot for a long time.

OVERALL 92%

The premier tennis game on this console. Looks, sounds and plays like a dream.

DAVIS CUP TENNIS BY DOMARK PLAYERS

1-2 GAME DIFFICULTY
1 HARD
1 CONTINUES
1 PASSWORD

3 SKILL LEVELS

1 RESPONSIVENESS
1 GOOD

Decapattack (starring Chuck D Head, eh?) is on of the most environmentally friendly games on the Megadrive — because it's been recycled no less than twice! It started as a platform game on the Master System called *Psycho Fox*, which

DECAPATTACK

was one of the fastest and most playable on the 8-bit machine. So popular was it, that a Megadrive version, named *Magical Hat Flying Turbo Adventure* was an early release, back in 1990. The magical hat of

the title was worn by a plucky young lad who traversed about 20 platform levels of traps and zombie creatures. The game was delayed by over a year while Sega redesigned it into *Decapattack*. The wacky

Frankenstein's Monster-being of the title throws his head at the enemy, and they respond with bits of their body. The level layouts are identical to *Magical Hat*, with



only graphical changes. Either of these games offers a fair amount of gameplay, as the levels are quite long and involved, but *Decapattack* is the one to go for (if you can still find it) because the bizarre graphics give it some individuality. However, many bigger and better games of the genre have appeared since. **JAZ**



PRESENTATION 70%

The standard array of options, but the wacky presentation screens are quite amusing.

GRAPHICS 74%

The look is really zany, with robot limbs flying around, but everything is quite blocky.

SOUND 65%

'Pleasant' describes both music and FX, but nothing is really outstanding.

PLAYABILITY 73%

The platform gameplay is slightly unusual. Throwing your head is one novelty, but the game locks any really startling features.

LASTABILITY 70%

It's an agreeable game to partake of and there are plenty of levels, so you're bound to keep going until you've completed it.

OVERALL 72%

It's a bit of an odd game, but *Decapattack* is still good value, plenty of levels and plenty of enjoyable action.

DECAPATTACK BY SEGA PLAYERS

1 GAME DIFFICULTY
1 MEDIUM
1 CONTINUES

3 SKILL LEVELS

3 RESPONSIVENESS
1 FINE



Using all manner of cunning trickery and political manoeuvring, an evil Middle East dictator named General Killbaba has successfully launched a military attack against a small neighbouring nation. In between whoring, collapsing and suffering various heart attacks, the US President devises a devious plan with which to remove the dictator and send his forces packing.

Operation Desert Strike has been initiated and you, pilot of a rock-hard Apache helicopter gunship have to infiltrate five occupied strongholds and use its advanced weaponry to take out various targets des-

DESERT STRIKE
BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
RESPONSIVENESS
SUPER

DESERT STRIKE

ignated by the mission controllers.

But remember, your gunship only has a limited amount of armour and should the enemy forces get through your shielding, you're history fly boy!

Being able to find extra fuel and weapons isn't much good unless you're able to pick them up safely from the air. Luckily, the Apache is kitted with out with a natty winch that automatically lowers itself when you have over a box of supplies. This winch also comes in handy for picking up double agents and MIAs.

Desert Strike's gameplay is brilliant and I love the way you

can tackle things in any order you like - searching for MIAs first, destroying a power station or taking out the airport! You've also got to think ahead and work out optimum routes so that you leave yourself with



enough fuel and ammunition to be able to complete all the assignments in that mission. Things get very tense when supplies are low and you've still got an assignment to finish AND

return to the frigate to complete the level! The graphics (particularly the helicopter sprite) and the sound are both excellent and the whole game is beautifully presented with cut-screens, mission details and map screens galore! But how long will all this excitement last? Ruddy ages, that's how long! There are five main missions, each with ten sub-missions, and later ones are incredibly difficult.

The sequel to Desert Strike (Jungle Strike) was released this summer, but this still holds its own as one of the best shoot 'em ups on the Megadrive, and it's one game you definitely shouldn't be without.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 90%

A fab opening sequence, cut screens, brilliant in-game presentation and a choice of control modes make Desert Strike very polished.

GRAPHICS 91%

Minutely detailed and well-animated sprites along with decent backdrops.

SOUND 89%

Completely brilliant music and atmospheric effects.

PLAYABILITY 93%

The chopper is easy to control making for some excellent blasting action.

LASTABILITY 91%

Five stages might seem meagre, but there are loads of sub-missions and later levels are extremely tough.

OVERALL 92%

A superb Megadrive shooter, which is still a must even after the release of the sequel!

Based on the semi-popular B film, this game puts you in the yellow overcoat of 'The World's Greatest Detective', Dick Tracy, for it is he, is on the trail of Chicago's nastiest and ugliest gangsters who are apparently planning some vile underworldly deed. And so, armed with his revolver, a tommy gun and his bare fists, Dick has to stomp through town seeing off the gorishly dressed gangster henchmen who are after him.

As Dick plods the street, he comes under attack from oncoming hoods and also bad guys on the other side of the street. It's on these distant dastards that he has to use his

DICK TRACY

tommy gun. It tends to be a little uncontrollable, but with practice spraying the hoods becomes second nature. Just watch the effect it has on the scenery - it demolishes most of the windows and woodwork, and even causes fire hydrants to spring a leak!

Between levels, Dick can earn plentiful extra credits by taking part in a reaction testing bonus game set on a target range. Three target bearing

the faces of goodies and baddies spring up and Dick has to plug all the bad guys without hitting any of the good guys.

The action is also livened up a bit when Dick has to ride between parts of town on the running board of his patrol car, while gunning down the gangsters who drive past, Tommy guns at the ready.

Megadrive Dick Tracy sports excellent graphics (the sprites are beautifully drawn and animated,

and the backdrops are very reminiscent of the film). The control method is slightly unusual but is easy to get to grips with and the game itself is very challenging. It certainly takes a lot of practice before you can go all the way through the game in one go, giving this plenty of lasting appeal. If you're after a shoot 'em up that doesn't feature lasers and alien space ships, Dick Tracy is a good 'un.

RICH

PRESENTATION 81%

The comic-coloured intro scenes provide information and help set the mood of the game

GRAPHICS 84%

The main sprite is wonderful (as are the backgrounds), but the enemies are rather wooden and jerky.

SOUND 68%

Sound effects are a little thin on the ground, and the music's not too hot either!

PLAYABILITY 82%

This is fun to play and easy to get to grips with, and the control method's simple to use.

LASTABILITY 71%

It's not easy to beat, but the gameplay doesn't vary a great deal from level to level.

OVERALL 80%

A good, challenging shoot 'em up which is a pleasant change from the norm.

DICK TRACY
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
ONE
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
FOUR
SKILL LEVELS
THREE
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



DJ Boy is the world's finest exponent of the martial art of Skate-can-do! You play a street kid who's girlfriend has been kidnapped and taken to the 'other side of town'. To get there as quickly as possible you jump into your roller skates and set

DJ BOY

off into gang territory. The game is a simple beat 'em up, with DJ Boy under attack from an army of gang boddies, including strange adversaries like Big Momma. Bonuses, like

food and power-ups are hidden in bins and hydrants are dropped by passers-by, and the kid has a fair repertoire of skate-related moves.

DJ Boy is very light-heart-

ed, so it may not appeal to Streets of Rage fans. It's also far too easy on the lowest difficulty, and the higher skills don't offer any new features.

Strangely, DJ Boy took absolute years to make it on our shelves officially, and three years on, it's still not the cutting edge on the Megadrive.

JAZ

DJ BOY
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
VERY EASY
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
4
RESPONSIVENESS
FINE



A red-faced, alien wolfman is facing the happy hopes of all their happy hopes in seven magic globes and placed them in the custody of seven of his most trusted evil minions. Now it is Doraemon's mission to bring back the smiles by platforming

DORAEMON ADVENTURE

his way through seven strange and magical worlds. With his pistol-a-popping and the occasional game of scissor-paper-stone, Doraemon is aiming to bring all the happiness back in time for tea.

Sega has used the licence well and this earless cat turns the Megadrive into his very own



playground - as soon as the machine is powered up Doraemon appears beneath the Sega logo and cheekily draws the word 'Soay goal'. This stands as a good indication of what is to come, which is a very playable and often amusing cart stocked with variety.

The screen-shots themselves illustrate to anyone who is familiar with Doraemon that the graphics represent him down to a tee and he's animated perfectly too. Though there are seven stages they aren't very long and once you've got a han-



dle on what Doraemon can do things are very obvious. There are a fair number of bonus rooms but they're easy to find so you can stock up with about fifty extra lives and loads of continues, and be absolutely certain of completing the game within a couple of hours! It's a great little game but hardly the cat's whiskers (even with the Doraemon tin pencil box and stationary set which comes in the box).

RICH

PRESENTATION 91%
There are amusing snippets from Doraemon at the front end and between levels; unfortunately it's all in Japanese.

GRAPHICS 88%
Large sprites move smoothly against bold, impressive backdrops. Doraemon is a real star.

SOUND 83%
Joyful - though samey - tunes and lots of cute Doraemon speech!

PLAYABILITY 90%
Excellent fun due to Doraemon's lively personality. There is a hilarious variation on 'musical chairs' at the end of the game.

LASTABILITY 57%
The game takes only a couple of hours to play through as it is very easy indeed.

OVERALL 72%
A very enjoyable, beautifully presented little cart that is too short-lived because of easy gameplay and a plentiful supply of extra lives.

Double Clutch takes a simple approach to stock-car racing, with an overhead view of a three-lap circuit. One or two players participate for prize money which is used to improve the spec of their vehicles. The circuits sprawl over several

DOUBLE CLUTCH

screens, with the screen scrolling in four directions to keep the player's car in the centre. Apart



from right-angled bends, there's plenty of off-track hazards like trees and lamp posts, as well as

a clutch of computer-controlled opponents. Each race is played under different weather conditions, which affects road-handling and your visibility of the track. There is a choice of three drivers, each with varying strengths in the areas of acceleration, speed and braking. Double Clutch offers a dual gameplay mode, but then so does Codemasters' Micro Machines, of which this is an inferior imitator. Double Clutch is slower, less attractive and far easier than Codemasters' classic and even the slightly lower price tag doesn't make it a priority buy.

LEZ

PRESENTATION 69%
Nice digitised pics of the drivers, and the choice of two skill levels make for fair presentation.

GRAPHICS 68%
The courses are well defined, but quite bland, and the cars hardly look like speed machines!

SOUND 67%
There's some reasonable speech at the start of the races, but the feedback music is not suited to the game.

PLAYABILITY 69%
Double Clutch appeals initially, and the dual player mode is a welcome feature.

LASTABILITY 55%
The pace is too slow for a driving game, and you'll sail through most courses in a single sitting.

OVERALL 61%
Double Clutch is playable and well-programmed. It just appears dull next to Micro Machines.

DOUBLE CLUTCH
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



Billy and Jimmy Lee, a pair of karate kids have to wander a horizontally scrolling environment on the hunt for their lady friend, Marion, recently kidnapped by the local criminal, Mr Big.

The control method of

DOUBLE DRAGON II
BY
HALFDOZ
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
DODGY

DOUBLE DRAGON II

Double Dragon II is interesting to say the least. No matter which way you are facing pressing A results in an attack to the left whilst C aims a blow to the right. B is used to jump, although

you'd need springs on your feet to say the least. The Lees. This method makes it much easier to fight your way out of corners, although it still pays to learn the special moves, such as the famous jumping cyclone kick.

Sounds like a recipe for fighting excitement, but lordy me, it would seem Double Dragon II has



set Megadrive software back years. The graphics would look poor on a Master System, the sprites are badly drawn and stiffly animated and the backgrounds are oh-so-boring. The sound is feeble in the extreme, with a poor excuse for a soundtrack and crippled effects. Although the control system is quite a novel idea, the responsiveness is so poor that it doesn't help much at all. Luckily your suffering is cut short as Double Dragon II is so easy that only Mr No-Hands could fail to complete it on his first go. Beat 'em up fans would be well advised to run away from this release at high speeds.

RICH

PRESENTATION	43%
A few options but that's it really.	
GRAPHICS	39%
Primary-school sprites in shabby colours animate themselves shoddily over boring backgrounds to the accompaniment of dodgy strolling.	
SOUND	37%
The sound is conspicuous by its poorness. The tune is bland and the effects follow suit.	
PLAYABILITY	40%
The control method takes a bit of getting used to and although it's a good idea it's wasted on the snooze-inducing gameplay.	
LASTABILITY	19%
It's easy, it's boring, it doesn't last very long at all.	
OVERALL	30%
A lacklustre conversion of a coin-op that wasn't so great to begin with. There's nothing to do and it just isn't worth the money.	

Pit your flipper skills against Baelzabub and his demonically possessed pinball table! As you might expect, this is no ordinary pinball game, so challengers should expect a few breaks from convention. To begin with, the table is three

DRAGON'S FURY

screens high, and no end of nasties stalk its surface. There are three sets of flippers, but only falling through the bottom set loses the ball.

As well as being able to set

up high-scoring shots, you can open up the gates to eight different bonus screens in which you have to destroy specific targets like coffins protected by bats, or a five-headed serpent.

The basic pinball table contains hundreds of features. Cloaked monks, exploding larvae and flying mutants all trundle about waiting



to get run over by your ball bearing. The figure head in the centre of the table gradually changes into a mutant lizard if the ball hits the right spot.

Dragon's Fury (or Devil Crash as it's called in Japan) is the finest silverball simulation yet seen! There's loads to discover and I came back to it time and time again to see whether I could find new ways of boosting my score - it's incredibly addictive in that respect! The graphics and sound are both outstanding, but really it's the gameplay that makes this very original game well worth checking out.

JAZ

PRESENTATION	90%
There are eerie title screens, a password system and an all-important two-player option.	
GRAPHICS	94%
Stunning effects, especially on bonus stages. The sprite animation and backdrops are both superb.	
SOUND	91%
Excellent sound effects and a well put together musical score enhance the game atmosphere perfectly.	
PLAYABILITY	91%
Because the ball moves very realistically, this is just like pinball, but with all of those impossible extras!	
LASTABILITY	88%
Mastering the tougher bonus levels should keep you going for some time. Working on a high score also takes practice.	
OVERALL	92%
A remarkable "gothic" pinball sim that succeeds in every aspect. A must for all Megadrive owners!	

It's the year 2089 and one of the World's Presidents has stolen the set of plans to create human "cyber" beings with special skins immune to the deadly ultraviolet waves threatening to destroy life on earth.

The rest of the world retaliates with a plan codenamed

DYNAMITE DUKE
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

DYNAMITE DUKE

Dynamite - a superhuman cyborg called Colonel Duke who's armed with a machine gun and a bionic arm and capable of taking on the army and destroying them single-handed-

ly! The action is displayed in first-person perspective 3D, and is played over six different levels, with Duke shooting and punching his way through

hordes of marauding bad-dies. At the end of the last level is the evil President who con-



troils the enemy army - destroy him and the threat to world peace is neutralised.

As you'd expect, the graphics are as close to the arcade game as you're ever likely to get and the sound is pretty much spot-on. But when it comes to gameplay, the Megadrive version is almost identical to the Master System version in the fact that it's very addictive at first, but lacks lasting appeal. There are extra difficulty levels, but really they don't make the game that much harder. Dynamite Duke will definitely appeal to shoot 'em up fans, but anyone else should try before they buy.

SECA

PRESENTATION	68%
A fair selection of difficulty levels, but not a lot else.	
GRAPHICS	80%
Very nice indeed, and remarkably close to those of its coin-op parent.	
SOUND	70%
Nothing too astonishing - the usual mix of bangs and booms.	
PLAYABILITY	83%
Really rather entertaining, and quite easy to get into.	
LASTABILITY	69%
Lacks long-lasting appeal because it's rather easy to complete. The difficulty levels add a bit of challenge, but they're not that different from one another.	
OVERALL	73%
Again, a pretty decent conversion of the coin-op, but only Operation Wolf fans will want to play this for any length of time.	

Hit the ice in this all-time classic sports sim. The team behind it are Park Place, also responsible for John Madden's Football and the recent Muhammad Ali Boxing. There are tournament modes or exhibition matches for you to try, and of course there's a fine two player head-to-head mode.

By the power of your control pad you have to steer a six-side team to victory, making those skate like mad, pass the puck and trip, body check and even punch out the opposition! It takes a while to get the hang of the control because of all the inertia on their movement (but then they are on ice), and steer-

EA HOCKEY

ing the puck to that tiny goal takes some doing.

Ice Hockey has a reputation for being rather a rough game and EA have even included this into the simulation by adding the option to start a bit of a rinkside rumble and slug it out with a troublesome opposing player. Of course, accidents also happen in the course of play, and players are frequently left off in various states of disrepair. Perpetrators may also be forced to sit out a quarter in the

sin bin. You could forget you're playing a world class field with that sort of conduct, but most nations are represented (though not by the real-life players - that only came with the sequel), with play levels that reflect their world standing. So you can bet that the Canadian sides are pretty tough cookies!

When it was first released in 1991, EA Hockey was one of the best Megadrive sports games going, thanks to its out-

fabulous graphics and smooth play, and also for the brilliant atmosphere captured by crowd, the insane Hammond organist and the commentators contributions. It's still a fast and furious game, which I would have no qualms about recommending to be superseded since its first release by its sequel, NHLPA, and the soon-to-be-released sequel to the sequel, NHLPA '94.

JAZ



PRESENTATION **93%**

Everything you could want with options and stats to check when you're off the pitch, and atmosphere on it.

GRAPHICS **83%**

The rink looks great and the scrolling is super smooth. The sprites perform very realistically.

SOUND **80%**

Great crowd effects, that erupt when a goal is scored. Average title music.

PLAYABILITY **89%**

Super fast gameplay, takes a while to become attuned, but tactics and slick manoeuvres follow.

LASTABILITY **89%**

There are 22 national squads to beat, some of which are rock hard. There's the evergreen two-player mode.

OVERALL **90%**

EA Hockey has a place in the sports locker of every Megadrive owner.

EA HOCKEY
BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES/PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
BRILLIANT

Byond the shallow sounds where the pleasure boats drift, Ecco and his dolphin relatives live in a harmony unknown to humans. Until one strange day, when a mysterious storm descended that, like a giant hand, grabbed the dolphins and whisked them into the air and lo, they were gone. The object of the game, of course, is for Ecco to travel 20+ levels of underwater enigmas, solving puzzles and avoiding a watery grave in his quest to retrieve his cetacean pals.

Ecco might be lucky enough to be up near the top of the food chain, but that doesn't that dolphin danger doesn't

ECCO

lurk amongst the coral reefs. Jellyfish, puffer fish and sharks, among others make Ecco less than welcome unless he can ward them off with his dolphin-style, high-speed nose charge attack.

Much of the challenge, though, is provided by the rocky environment of the reef. As the depth increases the space for Ecco to manoeuvre in becomes very limited. But sometimes the ocean geography, as well as the ocean wildlife plays a part in

solving the puzzles.

A game about a dolphin might sound a bit dull, but Ecco is nothing short of sensational! The graphics are out of this world - Ecco himself himself is superbly animated as he explores the depths and the night on photographic parallax scrolling backdrops look gorgeous. Enhancing the atmosphere are a series of fabulous soundtracks and great effects. Fortunately the game's designers haven't spent all their time

on the cosmetics - the gameplay is thoroughly enjoyable and highly addictive. The difficulty level is beautifully balanced; you're drawn into the game with a large, but fairly safe first level where you can learn the skills and tricks of dolphin aquabatics, but from then on this game is tough - and with over 20 levels to conquer it's not a game that'll be completed overnight by any stretch of the imagination.

RICH

PRESENTATION **90%**

Serves the game perfectly with a good manual, easy password system, and a pleasant demo.

GRAPHICS **95%**

Astounding Dolphin animation, and the background graphics are a work of art.

SOUND **93%**

Wonderful echoing Dolphin song accompanies the music score that is just right.

PLAYABILITY **97%**

An instant hook, due to the unique control method the strong storyline, and attractive early levels.

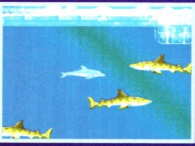
LASTABILITY **96%**

The intensity doesn't diminish, and thankfully the game isn't a pushover with over 20 enormous levels.

OVERALL **97%**

A Megadrive classic without doubt, and a strong contender for best game ever!

ECCO THE DOLPHIN
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
HARD
CONTINUES/PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
SUPERB





The world has been ravaged by the Elemental Master, a dangerous wizard who is completely agin fun. He has endowed his minions in the four elemental zones with them. This is the outline to Elemental Master, a vertically scrolling

ELEMENTAL MASTER

shooter from competent Japanese coders Tecnosoft. You are the young mage who seeks to free the world by walking through the zones, fighting ghoulish creatures: orcs and dragons to reach the large castle

of the Elemental Master. Along the way you assemble an elemental arsenal that matches the master's.

Being of the Tecnosoft stable, Elemental Master still looks really good in spite of its age,

with lots of smart special effects, fantastic weapons that spread across the screen and good solid blasting gameplay. It's similar to Twinkle Tale, and about as good, actually, but because this is older you might find it harder to spot on the shelves.

JAZ

ELEMENTAL MASTER
BY
TECNOSOFT
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
2
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



PRESENTATION 70%
No surprises here, options are limited to a stage select and two skill levels. Looks slightly dated overall.

GRAPHICS 81%
The graphics are excellent on the whole with lots of snazzy special effects, and the big bosses are still impressive.

SOUND 86%
Nice weapon effects, and really good music.

PLAYABILITY 80%
A good blast, especially when you get onto the ghoulish creatures and get to fry some major-league monster ass.

LASTABILITY 78%
Four lengthy levels than a multi-stage, monster-packed fifth level which is enough to keep you going for a while.

OVERALL 79%
It's a blast from the past, but one worth revisiting.

As far as shoot 'em ups go this is a bit of a departure from your usual spoonsbits boloney. In Empire of Steel you find yourself the lone defender of a peaceful nation, under attack by the massed air and ground forces of a neighbouring country.

EMPIRE OF STEEL

You fly into battle either in a slow but well-protected airship or a faster but more flimsy

monoplane, taking out the enemy with machine guns or bombs. The shoot 'em up stuff is

standard fare, though that's not to say it isn't good, but it's the graphics that really make this stand out. The designers have produced some amazing Jules Verne-type vehicles and the scenery graphics are remarkably detailed. The colours, the sprites, everything looks terrific.

However the game isn't too tough to beat. Its own high quality works against it because it's so playable that you won't want to leave the joystick alone, so it's all over within a matter of a couple of days. My advice is to hire Empire of Steel before buying it, because it's definitely a game you'll at least want to try.

JAZ

EMPIRE OF STEEL
BY
FLYING EDGE
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



PRESENTATION 86%
Excellent intro sequences which do a good job of setting the scene. The options are the standard lives, skill levels and so on.

GRAPHICS 90%
There's a really unusual style to the period backgrounds and the mechanical sprites which proves to be the game's most attractive feature.

SOUND 77%
Not as impressive as the graphics, alas, but still decent. Good music and suitable blasting effects.

PLAYABILITY 87%
Great fun to play, but it wouldn't be as compelling if it didn't have those smart graphics. You really want to see what's coming next!

LASTABILITY 75%
You'll definitely be playing right to the end, but alas that won't take too long to reach.

OVERALL 79%
A fine shoot 'em up with ace graphics, let down only by its lack of a long-term challenge.

All is not well in Cyber City. Criminals are running amok - looting, pillaging and raping the city of all its worth, so Cyber City's mayor sets up the ESWAT (Enhanced Special Weapons and Tactics) division of the Cyber Police to deal with the evil, criminal menace.

ESWAT

The player takes on the mantle of a hard-bitten SWAT cop, who seems to be dealing with the criminal epidemic all on his own, with only his trusty service pistol for company. In order to prove to the powers-

that-be that he's eligible to join the ESWAT elite, two levels' worth of eight-way scrolling platform blasting have to be tackled - each with a very nasty end-of-level crime boss to be exterminated.

punks into oblivion! Along with giving the player the benefit of extra armour and powerful gravity-defying afterburners, power-up icons endow the ESWAT suit with a variety of deadly weaponry, rocket launchers, flame throwers, that sort of thing.

This isn't much like the ESWAT arcade game, but don't let that put you off. I think this is actually better than the original game, since there's more challenge and variety, with dassy audio-visuals to match. It's also quite challenging with even the easy level being pretty tough to beat. Highly recommended to all blasting addicts.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 94%
Great in-game presentation screens that give the game a great feel. One of the best presented Megadrive games available.

GRAPHICS 90%
There's a great variety in the sprites and backdrops, and some brilliant parallax scrolling effects.

SOUND 87%
Catchy tunes and hilarious speech (ever heard a SWAT cop with an upper-class accent?)

PLAYABILITY 87%
Good, down-to-earth blasting mayhem that's almost annoyingly addictive!

LASTABILITY 86%
The slightly repetitive action is more than made up for with plenty of extra weapons and varied levels.

OVERALL 87%
Not a very close coin-op conversion - but a damn playable game in its own right. Go for it!

ESWAT
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
0
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GREAT



Euro Club Soccer from Virgin is based on the home computer footy sim Manchester United Europe, but with a whole host of updated options. It adopts a horizontally scrolling grandstand-view style of play, with the ball sticking to the players' feet as opposed to being a free-rolling sphere.

There are 170 teams in the game and you have to take your chosen squad to the finals of the European Cup championship by trouncing 15 other randomly-selected computer teams. Up to nine players can take part in seven tournaments and there's battery back-up to make the lengthy campaign

EURO CLUB SOCCER
BY
VIRGIN
PLAYERS
1-9
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY/MED
CONTINUES
N/A
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
OK

EURO CLUB SOCCER

more palatable.

Euro Club Soccer has two play modes, the first being Arcade, which is more reminiscent of games such as Tecmo World Cup than real soccer. The ref is a little lax in this mode, the ball travels unfeasible distances and players have a tendency to slide huge distances when they tackle another player. Only friendly matches are played in Arcade mode - for

European Cup jiggery-pokery. Simulation mode is the one to choose. In this mode, things are more realistic, with a slower play speed and plenty of rule violation potential, not to mention that all-important European tournament.

Presentation-wise, this is superb. The tournaments, save mode and general options are all excellent. Sadly, though, the gameplay isn't of the same high

standards. There are several sloppy points which mar the action, namely the poor intelligence detection, low player intelligence and very awkward controls which make putting together passing moves very tricky and frustrating. Had the game been more rigorously tested and these irritations removed, Euro Club Soccer could have been an outstanding soccer game - especially with such excellent graphics. As it is, its flaws means that most players will get more frustration than joy out of this.

JAZ



Evander Holyfield's "Real Deal" Boxing casts the player as one of the contenders for the world's number one. Players choose to play as a boxer who has already established a ranking, or kick off a new boxing career by creating their own player. There are 29 opponents to choose and each of them has their strengths and weaknesses. To prove a formidable opponent, a player has to develop impenetrable blocking, a strong left and right hook, and a powerful uppercut. The number of rounds is a matter of choice, but only experienced fighters are able to go the distance. The ultimate challenge is beating

EVANDER HOLYFIELD BOXING

Evander Holyfield himself. Seconds out, round one!

The on-screen stats display the boxer's energy levels. Every time he sustains a hit it is reduced, but spending time effectively blocking causes it to rise again. Also displayed is an indicator showing the extent of injury to head and body. If an opponent's indicator shows

signs of extensive head damage it is worth hitting him there because he is more vulnerable. Watch your own indicators though to make sure you don't end up with the cauliflower ears!

If the gameplay matched the same standards of the graphics, this would be a winner. Sadly, though, the most

impressive thing about this is the still screenshots. The animation of the boxers is poor (they look more like they're fawning over each other than punching), the joystick response is treacle slow and the game logic leaves the computer boxers with glass jaws - a few sessions is all you need to come up with a winning move that's guaranteed to beat

each boxer every time. The presentation may be stunning, but my advice to boxing fans is to try Muhammad Ali's boxing game which is vastly superior.

JAZ



EVANDER HOLYFIELD'S
"REAL DEAL" BOXING
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY/MEDIUM
CONTINUES
N/A
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
POOR

PRESENTATION 94%

More options than the human mind could possibly comprehend, plus some groovy intermissions.

GRAPHICS 86%

Smart sprites and animation all-round. Shame about the backgrounders though.

SOUND 42%

Dull tunes and insipid, sparse effects.

PLAYABILITY 75%

Frustrating collision detection problems and some sloppy gameplay points make getting into this tricky.

LASTABILITY 65%

The tournament certainly takes a long time to win, but will frustration be the only winner on the day?

OVERALL 69%

A superbly presented soccer game which is sadly let down by some awkward gameplay points. Had it been more thoroughly playtested it could have been brilliant.

PRESENTATION 90%

An excellent range of options, including a save option for home-made boxers. There's a two-player mode too.

GRAPHICS 64%

Superbly drawn sprites and backdrops let down by poor animation.

SOUND 72%

Ooph's and uugh's from the boxers but the sound doesn't really catch the atmosphere of the sport.

PLAYABILITY 50%

The boxers are slow and awkward, and the game logic makes winning a matter of routine.

LASTABILITY 49%

There are 29 opponents to tackle, but the tedium is overpowering.

OVERALL 52%

Some good ideas and some impressive graphics ruined by awful gameplay and in-game logic. Certainly not the main event!

It's tough being a cyborg, just ask Professor Kildare. He was programmed by his creators to redevelop an Earth shattered by World War III. This task involves reverting all the now-mutated population of the planet back to their original forms. Still, at

EX MUTANTS

least he has perfected a method by which to do this. Now, his first six combat-trained Ex-Mutants wage war on the evil mutant overlord known as Sluggo and his vile minions.

However, four of the team have been kidnapped by Sluggo and it's up to the remaining pair, Shannon and Ackroyd, to travel across nine desolate wasteland levels, killing

Sluggo's cronies and, rescuing their teammates.

The player can play either Shannon or Ackroyd in their platform adventure. Both have different skills and weapons; Shannon, for exam-



EX-MUTANTS
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

1
GAME DIFFICULTY
HARD
CONTINUES
20
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
EXCELLENT

Fancy flying the deadliest Fighter ever devised, before the real pilots get their hands on it? This game enables you to do just that, and even creates a few war zones for you to fly in!

You could opt for basic F-22 flight training in the USA or

F22 INTERCEPTOR

attempt "the real thing" in the likes of Iraq, or even Russia (even if they're our mates now). For real flying hours, there's even an Aces Challenge, where your F-22 is pitted against the

best the enemy can throw at you.

The flight controls are of necessity simple, but this is really more of a shoot 'em up than a simulation. By using a combination of buttons on the joystick, all the essential options are available, including the obligatory exterior views of the action.

The



F-22 INTERCEPTOR
BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS

1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
SUPER

Once upon a time, there was a young lad called Julian who lived with his two brothers in the land of Holm. Life for them and their countrymen was peaceful until, just when it looked like things couldn't get any better, bad fortune struck the land. Crops failed and Holm was

Fairy Tale Adventure

invaded by hordes of ugly monsters from the Seventh Level of Hell. The town elders decided that only a magical talisman could save the land from the invaders - but the talisman had been stolen! Julian has volun-

teered to set out to recover the item and free his land from menace. And his brothers would that if Julian couldn't find it, they would take up their swords and complete the quest in this graphic adventure.

Julian starts off carrying only a dagger, but later gets the chance to grab a load of goodies. Extra weapons, in the shape of



FAIRY TALE ADVENTURE
BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS

1
GAME DIFFICULTY
TOUGH
CONTINUES
PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
POOR

ple, isn't as weapon-proof as Ackroyd, is faster.

Ex-Mutants will be most loved by those people who believe you don't have to be beautiful to be a benefit to society. The graphics are a little small and fuzzy, but they do their job. The game itself is a lot more fun than the look suggests. The levels are big, and filled with surprises and if you look closely, you can tell some of the bosses and traps are inspired by Konami's Castlevania series. Ultimately, it's not the best of anything, but far from the worst of all.

RICH

ground details are sparse, but what you concentrate on are the targets and enemy planes, and these are smooth and detailed. Wait until you've got five aircraft all hurtling around trying to stick a missile up your exhaust! There are tons of missions to challenge even the most skilled of top guns and even if you conquer them all, you can create some of your own. With its stunning presentation and challenging, thoroughly addictive gameplay, F-22 is not only another prime example of how advanced and complex console games can be, it's also a fantastic game in its own right.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 93%
Loads of options, intras and intermissions, with skiploads of cheesy comic-style dialogue.

GRAPHICS 84%
Smart backgrounds and groovy animation add atmosphere, but don't disguise the fact that the sprites themselves are pretty dull.

SOUND 72%
The effects are good and there's loads of speech which often crops up during the game. The music, however, is too quiet, too dull and too repetitive.

PLAYABILITY 84%
The game is very smooth, easily controllable and the action comes thick and fast.

LASTABILITY 85%
There's a nice long and tough levels to keep you going, and even once it's beaten, Ex-Mutants will still draw you back.

OVERALL 85%
A great game which is, for once, enhanced by its difficulty level.

PRESENTATION 96%
Too many options to list, but suffice to say, every option you could possibly include is here.

GRAPHICS 89%
Great static screens and fast polygon plane graphics. Colours are a bit garish, though.

SOUND 81%
Some brilliant sampled noises for cannons, missiles and explosions. Only the in-game music is slightly lacking, and that can be turned off.

PLAYABILITY 93%
The training missions make getting into this very easy...

LASTABILITY 92%
...and there's loads of tough expert missions to keep you flying, plus the option to make your own. Lastability is guaranteed!

OVERALL 93%
A truly superb flight/combat simulation. A must for your collection!

PRESENTATION 70%
The brief scene-setting sequence is pleasant, but the 36-run save game system is far too long-winded.

GRAPHICS 45%
The game is displayed in a sort of semi-3D view which has weedy monster sprites wandering around it.

SOUND 55%
The tunes are rather nasty and the sound effects are minimal.

PLAYABILITY 60%
At first, the hero seems to die every twenty seconds making this a very difficult game to get into.

LASTABILITY 65%
This adventure is huge, but it's unlikely that you'll want to keep playing.

OVERALL 61%
A dull role-playing game which won't convert non-adventurers to the cause.

Some evil bleeder has gone and pinched the Master Sorcerer's music while his apprentice (aka Mickey Mouse) was asleep. If Mickey doesn't retrieve the notes before the Master returns he's had it, so, using his junior magical powers, Mickey whisks himself off into a dream where he does battle



with possessed magic mushrooms, mobile broomsticks and evil toads.

The object of each level is

FANTASIA
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
SLUGGISH

FANTASIA

to find the hidden notes. But be careful, because if you don't find enough notes by the time you reach the end of the level (and that means battling through three sub-levels) you're sent back to the beginning to start again! This is incredibly annoying.

In fact, the gameplay is badly flawed and there are several highly annoying features. For a start, the collision detection is very tight - Mickey loses energy even when it looks like he's cleared a baddie! The magic controls are very sluggish - you press the fire button and there's a horrible pause

before Mickey shoots ... and if a baddie is close by or moving towards you fast, you just can't avoid being hit. That might be frustrating, but worse still are the completely unavoidable hazards the programmers have put into the game. Platforms drop, baddies pop up out of nowhere or change direction

without warning, things fly on-screen giving you no chance to avoid them ... ooagh! I like a challenge, but when you're given absolutely no chance and are forced to memorize and anticipate hazards and traps before they happen, playing becomes a chore.

JAZ



PRESENTATION 92%
Brilliant Disney-style presentation screens create a great atmosphere.

GRAPHICS 89%
Excellent backdrops and some great sprites.

SOUND 54%
The Megadrive renditions of music from the movie are abysmal and fuel your frustration level immensely.

PLAYABILITY 61%
Arrrrrrghhh! Fantasia's many gameplay flaws result in frustration as soon as you start playing!

LASTABILITY 56%
It's tough - but there are so many annoying features that many will be put off before they complete the game.

OVERALL 61%
Lovely graphics let down by totally dreadful playability. Even the biggest Mickey fans will be disappointed.

Vile gangster, Geese Howard is the man responsible for the death of Terry and Andy Bogard's father, and the brothers are out for vengeance. Mercifully they are not alone in their hatred of the man Geese, for their long-time friend and Thai Boxing champ, Joe Higashi, is out for Geese's blood too.

This game gives one or two players control of this situation, taking Terry, Joe or Andy to their date with fate, ensuring that the putrid Geese gets his just deserts! These three men are expert martial artists, who possess secret mystical moves which you must master to land

FATAL FURY



any chance against Geese and his five bizarre henchmen who all have their own weird fight-

ing styles. Overall this is an accurate conversion of SNK's coin-op/Neo Geo game of the same name. However some features are

absent from the Megadrive version, namely a couple of the boss characters and some bonus

games. To compensate, the programmers, Takara, have twisted the story line a touch and played brother against brother, friend against friend as Terry, Andy and Joe duel for Geese's doom.

The graphics and movement in this game are dead smart; fast, fluid and very effective. The gameplay and range of opponents is similarly good - however, the game does have its limitations. Pulling off the special moves is a lot more difficult than in, say, Street Fighter II - especially as most of the moves end in a diagonal. You really need a decent joystick (rather than pad) to get the most out of it. However, I would say that Fatal Fury is damn good fun, and beat 'em up fans are advised to check this out.

RICH



FATAL FURY
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

PRESENTATION 92%
Striking and comprehensive. The options screen has much to play around with.

GRAPHICS 93%
Bold sprites pitted against each other offer a wide variety of locations, providing atmosphere to the proceedings.

SOUND 88%
The soundtracks and sampled effects reflect the on-screen action well. Most of the sampled speech is a bit rough, though.

PLAYABILITY 84%
Playing on a control pad is difficult, but the promise of hardcore fighting action makes you keep trying.

LASTABILITY 86%
The two player option gives it a long life expectancy.

OVERALL 84%
A good conversion of a decent game that fares well despite the tricky controls.



The Fatal Rewind is a game show of the 21st century. For the contestants, driven by poverty into taking part, the rewards are high - but the stakes are higher. Perform well and you're rewarded with loads of lovely cash. If you die, well...

The general format of the game is remarkably simple. The contestant, encased in a robotic shell, travels around the eight-way strolling platform landscape. His objective is simply to reach the exit far above. He uses the robot's spider-like abilities to scale walls and jump platforms, while the built-in cannon fends off the waves of attacking robots which materi-

FATAL REWIND

alise in the playing area. The other thing is, the route to the top is blocked by locked doors which can only be opened if you find the correct key. What makes things EVEN WORSE, though, is the fact that gallons of deadly acid are being

pumped into the Fatal Rewind arena so it's a race against time to get to the next level before you're dissolved alive.

All these hazards certainly keep you on your toes and make Fatal Rewind very challenging. Mind you, at times it's

a bit TOO challenging. For example I'd like to meet the person who made UP on the jaypad perform the same function as the jump button. In the heat of battle, it's easy to accidentally jump directly into danger! Why not have different con-

figurations of jypad

controls on the options screen? I also found the unforgiving gameplay very frustrating. Completing the level isn't reliant on skill so much as remembering exactly where the keys are. It's not a bad blast, but it's not for novices.

RICH



PRESENTATION 79%

Plenty of options that let you tweak the gameplay, although dodgy the control method is very annoying indeed.

GRAPHICS 79%

Finely detailed, smooth, parallax-scrolling backdrops, but everything looks a bit samey from level to level.

SOUND 81%
Some good tunes on offer here, along with decent effects.

PLAYABILITY 76%
It's a simple enough idea, but it's not particularly easy to get into.

LASTABILITY 79%
Sixteen very long, very hard levels, each with at least two sub-levels to conquer - not a game you'll beat overnight.

OVERALL 78%
A very tough shoot 'em up with only minor faults stopping it from getting a higher mark.

FATAL REWIND

BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

Ferrari Grand Prix Challenge cuts out the cheek-wobbling danger but brings everything else you would expect from the Grand Prix season. As well as the standard sixteen circuits there are four fictional ones designed to help develop racing skills and experience.

Competition is furious so taking advantage of the construction option is vital for success. There is the chance to change tyres, suspension, wings, brakes, engine and transmission. Players face a total of 16 opponents eager to make sure you're the last to see the checkered flag.

To drive Murray Walker to

Ferrari GP Test



bursting point there is an option allowing rotors to challenge a rival or go head-to-head with a

friend.

There are just three things wrong with Ferrari GP Challenge - graphics, sound and gameplay. There's hardly any background to speak of and the other cars are incredibly badly drawn. The 3D update is jerky and completely unrealistic and the still screens between races

are dull. The sonics follow this trend of horror, with a terrible droning engine noise and hardly anything else to keep your ear drums occupied. But worst of all is the gameplay. The car slides all over the road in a style more befitting a hovercraft than a high-performance car, stopping dead whenever it comes

into contact with an object instead of just losing speed or even flipping right over. The challenge level is low because the opponents are complete boobies, and the final straw is that all the construction options have little or no effect on the car's performance bar the gear-box. Absolute dross.

RICH



FERRARI GRAND PRIX

BY
ACCLAIM
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUUES
N/A
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
NOT TOO GOOD

PRESENTATION 90%

Tons of options including a save position system for the GP, two-player mode and car customising.

GRAPHICS 44%
The 3D update is very jerky and unrealistic and does nothing to evoke the exhilaration of racing.

SOUND 42%
Weedy tunes and sound effects. When the car crashes it sounds like someone sneezing!

PLAYABILITY 49%
Steering is unrealistic, leaving you feeling you're not in complete control. Much of the gameplay becomes routine after a while.

LASTABILITY 33%
The 20 circuits and two-player option should keep you going for a while - if you're prepared to put up with the tedious gameplay.

OVERALL 44%
An well presented game ruined by poor in-game graphics, lack of realism and naff gameplay.

The Dark Lord Vasula, leader of the underground world of Dominion is making his presence felt. In the tradition of the Fighting Masters, he challenges each one to single combat and defeats all but the last, that being you. You must now battle your way through the other eleven enslaved Masters to reach Vasula and bring order to civilization once more.

What this boils down to is a series of one-on-one combats in a variety of planetary arenas. Each Master has a number of individual moves available to him, her or it, depending on the individual capabilities of their race, and these advantages

FIGHTING MASTERS
BY
TRECO
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUOUS
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



must be tactically pitted against the weaknesses of your opponent to ensure maximum scrapping success.

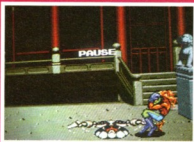
Fighting Masters is a classic example of one of those games you have to "get into". To begin with, the shambling sounds, seeming lack of moves and comparative ease of the one-player mode make the going quite dull. However, there's always the compulsion to see what the other characters can do, and this sustains interest for

long enough for you to get a feel for the controls. Once you get the hang of how to perform all the special attacks and such, Fighting Masters becomes much more fun. Even better is the two-player mode, which pits you against another human in a battle of both reflexes and tactics. If you're going to be playing on your own, forget it.

This was only ever available as an import, and Sega unfortunately ever bring it out as an official release in Europe

now that Megadrive players have Streetfighter II Special Championship Edition (see the special preview at the back of this book) and Actaim's Mortal Kombat conversion to take out their aggressive urges on. Nevertheless, if you spot Fighting Masters in a bargain bucket somewhere, it's well worth checking out.

JAZ



PRESENTATION **84%**
Animated title and intro screens. In-depth character selection screens.

GRAPHICS **75%**
The sprites are original and well-drawn and the animation is reasonable.

SOUND **45%**
Ooh! Ghastly tunes and weedy effects make Fighting Masters an aural graveyard.

PLAYABILITY **75%**
Control of each character is easy, although in the heat of battle some of the direction controls and button combinations can be tricky.

LASTABILITY **70%**
One-player mode lacks challenge, but with two players around, you should be kicking each other in for some time to come.

OVERALL **72%**
Not quite Streetfighter II but this is still an enjoyable two-player game.

What do you do when your end of year science project reveals that an evil race of aliens are infiltrating Earth's society? That's exactly the situation that Conrad Hart, finds himself in. His project, which measures molecular density reveals that hundreds of people aren't human at all - they're aliens, bent on taking over the world! However, before he can present his findings to the authorities, the aliens are made aware of his investigations and (not surprisingly) decide to kill him.

Luckily, he manages to escape on a stolen air-cycle, but the aliens give chase and shoot



him down. Conrad survives the crash, but he's alone, bewildered and wondering what the hell is going on. It's your job to help Conrad foil the aliens' evil plan that could threaten the safety of the entire galaxy!

Conrad Hart is the most well-animated, athletically proficient character in the history of video games! His repertoire of athletic abilities is almost endless. As well as walking and running, Conrad's able to perform a range of different leaps, as well as climbing platforms

with ease. With his gun drawn, Conrad is always ready for action - sneaking along, blasting and rolling his way out of (or into) trouble. Mastering the full range of Conrad's skills is essential in beating some of the game's more fiendish puzzles.

You'll be amazed at the graphics in the game. As you can see from the screenshots, they're completely different from every other Megadrive game available, such is their unique style. But what the screenshots can't show you at all

is the sheer excellence of the animation, it's totally incredible! Conrad himself is a masterpiece of animation - the scope of his abilities is stunning. The game's no pushover either - EASY mode is quite taxing, but NORMAL mode is a lot different, with many more enemies to tackle - making it even more of an arcade packed! Flashback is one of the best Megadrive games I've played in ages - for a non-arcade adventure second to none, get this.

RICH

PRESENTATION **92%**
Loads of amazing cut-scene animations add a great deal to the atmosphere.

GRAPHICS **95%**
The animation on all the sprites is simply stunning. The backdrops score top marks too for their originality and unique style.

SOUND **87%**
Excellent sound effects and dramatic music.

PLAYABILITY **93%**
Simply brilliant. Once you've got the hang of controlling Conrad, you'll have a ball trying to solve the game's fiendish puzzles.

LASTABILITY **93%**
The EASY level will be polished off in around a week by experienced players, but the NORMAL and HARD levels are amazingly tough!

OVERALL **93%**
Quite simply a Megadrive classic which shouldn't be missed.

FLASHBACK
BY
US GUN/DELPHINE
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MODERATE
CONTINUOUS
PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD





Flicky is a small blue bird who gets his kicks by travelling into horizontally-scrolling, cat-infested territory, rescuing defenceless chicks. As the chicks are collected they follow Flicky around the screen until he can drop them off at the Exit to com-

FLICKY

plete that level.

Of course cats and birds don't mix too well, and while Flicky picks up chicks, the prowling pussies are after some light lunch. The cats kill Flicky on

contact, but there are plenty of objects the avian can collect and lob at them to stun them.

Flicky looks and sounds like the worst Megadrive game in existence. But one game was

all it took for me to become horribly hooked. The gameplay is a constant test of reflexes as you teeter on a knife-edge between playing it safe and ending up with a rubbish score, or running the big risks and going for the mega-points! It may not look like one of the most playable Megadrive games, but it's true.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 29%
Completely rubbish. Even the title screen is pathetic, devoid of any options to tweak or even a nice pic to look at.

GRAPHICS 31%
A graphical travesty, with tiny sprites and backdrops so awful, you'll think a six-year-old has drawn them.

SOUND 31%
The music and spot effects are incredibly annoying monotonies.

PLAYABILITY 85%
Flicky offers a game so playable you'll want to keep on going for ages - it's that good!

LASTABILITY 77%
So many levels to complete, Flicky offers months of satisfying play.

OVERALL 85%
An audio/visual abortion but Flicky is still great fun!

FLICKY
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
0
SKILL LEVELS
2
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



After a hard day's mining at the Bedrock quarry, all Fred Flintstone desires is a bit of peace and quiet but one family crisis follows another, starting with Wilma losing her jewellery, and Pebbles making off into the desert. There's usually some

THE FLINTSTONES

prehistoric renegade behind the thefts and disappearances, lurking in the outlands. So Fred sets off to retrieve the missing items, at the bottom of pools, in the midst of deserts, and even some

nestling at the heart of active volcanoes. Apart from the standard jumping and clubbing of platform games you may already have.

fast on the pedal-car. Flinstones adequately captures the wacky style of the cartoons, with dumb dinosaurs. To its favour, it keeps some gameplay twists for later levels, and uses some neat visuals effects. However, it's very like Tazmania, and a clutch of other platform games you may already have.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 80%
Fair selection of options. The difficulty levels are cleverly arranged so that even the easy level is reasonably taxing.

GRAPHICS 87%
The Flintstone characters appear in perfect cartoon detail.

SOUND 70%
A bit too tinkly and tinny to be worth listening too, but the sound FX are all right.

PLAYABILITY 84%
It's only a platform game, but it's a well-constructed one, with varied levels. A lot of platform game clichés (such as a train level and an ice level) are in there.

LASTABILITY 80%
Flinstones shouldn't present too much challenge, and evokes a strong feeling of déjà vu.

OVERALL 82%
A bit of a laugh for Flintstones fans, but not to be taken too seriously.

THE FLINTSTONES
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
2
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



Forgotten Worlds is a multi-directionally scrolling shoot 'em up with power-ups, shops, and trillions of aliens. Each level features different backgrounds as you progress through the ruined cities. The creatures - which come in an astonishing variety of shapes and sizes -

FORGOTTEN WORLDS

attempt to stop you, but your satellite and firepower can stop them in their tracks. Once an alien has been blasted, it conveniently turns into cash that you

can pick up. The money can then be used to buy extra weapons, health, information and various other goods in the shops which pop up on each level.

deadly attack. The first is Paramedic, a circular metallic creature, surrounded by a protective ring of drones. Next is the Fiery Dragon. Then things start to have an Egyptian flavour, as the God of War and the Sphinx rear their ugly heads. You battle these nasties until you reach the top boss, a winged demon on a throne!

Even though this is one of the oldest Megadrive cartridges, it's still a pretty good shoot 'em up. Two player option, loads of meaty weapons, smart graphics, plenty of things to shoot - it's all competent stuff.

RICH

PRESENTATION 75%
Not many options, but lots of nice cut-scenes which look like they're straight out of the arcade game.

GRAPHICS 88%
Smart sprites and backgrounds, which are very similar to the arcade game's.

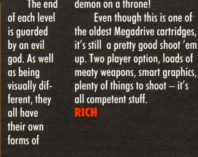
SOUND 79%
Not up to the standard of the rest of the game, but not bad.

PLAYABILITY 83%
Tricky to get the hang of, but once you do the blasting's good fun.

LASTABILITY 80%
Easy to beat on the "normal" level, tough on "hard". However, it's got so many features you'll keep returning, and the two player option is always a good laugh.

OVERALL 85%
A great conversion of an old arcade game which looks good and is pretty good fun to play.

FORGOTTEN WORLDS
BY
SEGA
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
TWO
RESPONSIVENESS
MEDIUM



The Formula One World Championship consists of 16 lethal tracks, which 20 mad racers spin around, risking life and limb for a bottle of champagne and a few million quid in sponsorship—and the Honour!

F1 from Domark sets out to recreate the thrill of racing on these famous circuits. Even if the tracks are not always presented in a strictly accurate fashion, they're all viewed from the driver's point of view. The road is presented in 3D, with overhead stanchions, grandstands, trees and tyre barriers whizzing past at an alarming rate of knots, giving a super-realistic sensation of speed. The

FORMULA ONE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP
BY
DOMARK
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
BATTERY SAVE
SKILL LEVELS
4
RESPONSIVENESS
QUICK

FORMULA ONE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

object graphics are quite simple, and the game looks a bit sparse, but the speed and the realistic feeling of movement more than compensates.

The game has two speed modes, normal and turbo. Turbo is just ridiculously fast, making control of the car a real problem. However, thrill merchants may be disappointed that crashes just bring you to a halt;

there's no smouldering boilersuits and broken vertebrae in this game, matey.

That doesn't stop F1 gripping you totally, as it's a compulsive and perfectly balanced game. There's a fab split-screen mode for two players, that retains much of the speed of the solo game, and the 19 other cars (with drivers named after the real F1 stars) exhibit excel-

lent skill and believable racing tactics.

There's a comprehensive racing season to take part in, and no less than 10 battery game save positions to store your racing progress. In addition, a host of other stats covering tyres, qualifying, team positions and circuit times, make this categorically the best driving game on the Megadrive.

Not even the Super Monaco games can match this for speed and thrills, and if you're a mad keen motor racing fan like me this is the only Megadrive race game you'll ever need to buy.

JAZ



It's war time again and as trainee pilot in the Air Force, you are plunged into the thick of it. Many missions await you, with the object being to wreak as much havoc behind enemy lines as possible.

G-LoC is a 3D shoot 'em up, viewed from the cockpit, in which the player uses missiles and a high-powered cannon to obliterate the enemy forces on land, sea and air. One point is scored for every plane, tank or ship destroyed, and these points are used to buy power-ups at the shop between missions. But their real value is as decorations—get 160 points and you're elevated to top ranking and are

G-LoC

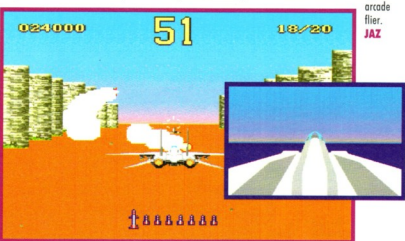
judged to have won the war!

Sego seemed to have missed an opportunity with G-LoC. Previous versions on other systems were quite accomplished, but G-LoC fails to utilise the power of the Megadrive. The action was okay

for the arcade, but it's too linear and limited to hold my attention for long, despite the speed of play. It's simply a matter of shooting a batch of targets (which more or less fly right past your sights) within the time limit. Graphics are nothing

more than mediocre, and some sections, like the bombing raids are very shabby. The Brit programmers, Probe Software, have done a nice job on the presentation screens, and maps, but that's not enough to redeem this outmoded and outgunned

arcade
flier.
JAZ



G-LoC
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

PRESENTATION **90%**
All the racing options you could possibly want and a stunning split-screen dual-player mode.

GRAPHICS **92%**
The circuit graphics do look really sparse, even dull, but at the speed this thing moves you haven't got time to look at the scenery anyway. Fabulous sensation of movement.

SOUND **80%**
The music is barfy, but the engine noises and screeches are great.

PLAYABILITY **94%**
There's no question that this is an instantly addictive game for speed addicts.

LASTABILITY **93%**
The ability to keep records and race consecutive seasons encourages long term playing.

OVERALL **93%**
Forget the rest. FIWC is simply the best Megadrive racer there is.

PRESENTATION **66%**
Not many options, but well presented

throughout, with nice between-flight screens and menus.

GRAPHICS **80%**
The 3D effect is good, but there's not much detail to the backgrounds, and some effects fail miserably.

SOUND **63%**
The sound is really nothing to write home about.

PLAYABILITY **68%**
Initially there's the interest of testing hand-to-eye co-ordination, and the urge to explore.

LASTABILITY **51%**
There's lots of missions, but each is a basic affair of shooting a target quota.

OVERALL **54%**
Distinctly average, and not even an improvement over the older Afterburner II



Based on the dodgy arcade game of the same title, Gain Ground pits one or two players, controlling a team of warriors, against the Master Computer and its minions, which are threatening to take over the world. The said minions take the

GAIN GROUND

form of weird aliens, robot soldiers, and huge metallic monsters.

Each player makes a choice

between playing three characters to start with, but other characters with stronger weapons appear in time. Weak characters

like the cavemen, have spears as weapons, whereas the magician has access to water spells. The characters



make their way through a single-screen battlefield viewed from overhead, with the aim of reaching the exit. The game is spread over 50 increasingly crowded battle areas, making it harder and harder to 'gain ground'. Each of the characters has their own basic attack, together with a special weapon that usually involves a ranged attack.

The graphics, sound and insipid gameplay were lambasted three years ago when the game first dared show its face. The intervening years have been less than kind, and this is the kind of cart that should be given a wide berth.

JAZ

PRESENTATION

60% What presentation? There's hardly anything to lure you into actually pressing the START button, scanty game options and even during the game looks like a dog's dinner.

GRAPHICS

27% Gain Ground is graphically prehistoric. The tiny sprites fail to convey any sense of action and it all looks awful compared to present games.

SOUND

37% Not the best part of the game, which gives you an indication...

PLAYABILITY

38% Monotonous, pointless, joyless and hopeless gameplay.

LASTABILITY

28% After one go you won't ever want to have soiling the cartridge slot in your Megadrive again.

OVERALL

29% Gain Ground is a sad old Megadrive title, best to be forgotten.

Princess Luranna was abducted by the dragon Thanatos on her 18th birthday. Her only hope of rescue is young Galahad, a guard in her service, charged by the King to find and return her to the realm.

Galahad traverses three

GALAHAD

increasingly deadly worlds, starting the quest carrying only a trusty sword. Better gear is on sale at shops, but to buy them

he needs cash from the bodies of the enemies he slays on the way. Each world is made up of seven sealed levels, linked by portals.



To get to the portals Galahad is usually required to find an object guarded by a large monster.

In graphical and game styles, Galahad resembles Shadow of the Beast, but this is much better with more interesting puzzles. However, there are some situations where you seem doomed to lose energy no matter what you do. For example, just touching the back of a snake loses you energy - and I always thought that only a serpent's fangs could poison you! Aside from little idiosyncrasies like that, Galahad is a very appealing arcade adventure.

RICH

PRESENTATION

91% Nice intro sequence. Loads of options, such as pad configurations. In-game presentation is pleasant but not amazing.

GRAPHICS

86% Decent enough, with smooth scrolling, great sprites and good backdrops.

SOUND

79% Of mixed quality, the tunes are sometimes brisk and baroque; or plodding and flat.

PLAYABILITY

84% Good apart from some dodgy collision detection. There is a lot of plodding around between puzzles, which may put some people off.

LASTABILITY

87% Three worlds present a vast game area, and it's a dangerous place!

OVERALL

82% A fine arcade adventure, marred only by a lack of originality and some minor points.

Being a bit of a thickie, you have volunteered to partake of a highly dangerous mission against a far superior enemy, defending a system of inhospitable planets.

Galaxy Force II is one more in a long line of shoot 'em ups on the Megadrive. The action is

GALAXY FORCE

viewed, Afterburner-style, in 3-D from behind the craft. The player zooms around five different planets destroying the alien stronghold on each one. Each planet consists of a surface

stage, and then a flight down a narrow tunnel to the subterranean nerve centre.

The kindly technicians on Earth have supplied you with an unlimited supply of fire-and-forget missiles.

These lock on to the nearest targets and track them automatically. Also, handy power-up carriers



appear once per level to supply you with a power boost for your auto-fire lasers. Galaxy Force II is a lame effort, with all the speed and playability of something slow and boring. The sprites aren't bad, but the animation is jerky. The real culprit is unresponsive control and poor collision detection, which make the game abhorrently frustrating. Like the ageing arcade Dialek from whence this came, it's a load of rubbish.

JAZ

PRESENTATION

68% Comprehensive options and a nice stage select screen which looks just like the arcade game.

GRAPHICS

57% Looks okay when it's still, but everything moves slowly and jerkily, and the 3D update in the tunnel sections is simply a colour-cycling trick which doesn't look at all convincing.

SOUND

54% Crummy sound effects and a few weedy tunes which don't add to the atmosphere one jot.

PLAYABILITY

61% Apart from all the other faults, the extremely bland gameplay results in almost immediate apathy.

LASTABILITY

48% Five short levels take about half an hour to complete. After that you won't want to come back.

OVERALL

51% A poor conversion let down by poor graphics, sluggish gameplay and lack of challenge.



General Chaos is the closest thing on console to imitate those pinball war games people like to play in woodland, pretending they're The Dirty Dozen for the day.

The game is set in the midst of the protracted struggle between two warring countries in a series of skirmishes on their territory. One player has the initiative and selects a region to fight in. A close-up of the battleground appears on a single screen and to capture the region you just have to use your small band of troopers to kill the small band of enemy troopers who are guarding the area. Further rounds are fought until

GENERAL CHAOS
BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS
1-4
GAME DIFFICULTY
HARD
CONTINUES
INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
DREADFUL

GENERAL CHAOS

one captures the capital of the other.

There are a random selection of battlefields, with different landmark features like walls of sandbags, rivers, lakes and trees, all of which provide cover. There is also a choice of troops for each round. There are grenade lobbers, gunners, flamethrowers and bazookas. The range and effectiveness of each weapon is shown, and its vital to position them properly. The final pre-round choice is what size squad to pick: a heav-

ily armed unit, which is slow to move, or a quick pair of commandos, who are usually out-gunned.

Once the action begins, the bizarre control method takes over. One button makes all units fire, and one toggles between players. However, instead of having direct control, the joystick moves a cursor, marking the units destination. It's a confusing and unwieldy system. However, if you've got one of EA's 4-Way Play adaptors up to four players can plug their joysticks

and take direct control of one soldier, which is much more sensible.

There are some admirable qualities to this game, such as the multi-player option. It also looks good, the fighters are comical and have lots of personality, and it's an original concept. But as a single player game it's irritating, not just because of the controls, but also because the action is limited to bouts set on a single screen, and it runs quite slowly. Nice try, EA, but no cigar for you.

JAZ



PRESENTATION 85%
High quality throughout, and an imaginative game setting.

GRAPHICS 79%
The animation on the soldiers is good, but the backdrops are flat, and the display gets cluttered.

SOUND 75%
A selection of battle din and some deeply irritating music.

PLAYABILITY 68%
The unusual concept is promising, but the control method is hellish, and completely wrecks the one player game.

LASTABILITY 69%
If you persevere, and you have friends and 4-Way Play adaptor to plug in, some real enjoyment may finally emerge.

OVERALL 70%
General Chaos has some excellent ideas and looks like it should be good, but it has too many flaws for it to be a widely popular game.

Here's something strange in the neighbourhood, and someone's called the Ghostbusters — the only team who can save the city from an epidemic of spooks and ghoulies.

The object is to clear each level by catching rogue ghosts for cash rewards, then use the money to buy more advanced equipment and weapons than move on to the next house. As the game progresses the boys uncover a sinister supernatural plot to plunge New York into the seventh level of Hell!

The 'busters can crouch, jump, and fire to get through the hordes of spirits. The

GHOSTBUSTERS

'busters are called to four tower blocks in NYC, each complaining of spook activity. After dealing with a variety of minor apparitions on each floor, each level is ended with the obligatory major baddie, whose weak spot must be discovered and exploited. Once the ghost is busted, a green spookette is released and our hero has to quickly trap it in his particle beam and drag it towards the ghost trap on the floor. This is tricky, as the ghost is constantly moving and must

be zapped very near the trap. The four buildings all hold different hazards, such as flaming floors and icy pools containing giant squid. When you've conquered these terrors, the action moves to a sinister out of town castle, and after a couple of levels of busting in there, an earthquake shakes the city and opens up the way to the finale in a huge underground level where an exciting climax awaits.

The three stars of the movie are portrayed quite well

in the game's humorous graphic style, the detailed sprites making up for poor scenery and ghost graphics. Even though it doesn't look like anything particularly stunning to start off with — in fact it looks positively naff — Ghostbusters actually turns out to be a testing and enjoyable mixture of action and exploration. It's well worth its budget price.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 71%
The intro bits and between level sequences don't seem to have much to do with the films, but they do help establish an ongoing plot. Hardly any obligations, though.

GRAPHICS 70%
Cute, and highly detailed cartoon-style graphics. The ghost sprites and the backgrounds are bit iffy on the whole.

SOUND 75%
Spot effects are adequate, and the 'busters theme is accurate.

PLAYABILITY 71%
Nicely balanced difficulty level makes this very easy to get into.

LASTABILITY 78%
Simple, challenging gameplay provides plenty of fun, but it won't keep you occupied for months.

OVERALL 73%
Better than it looks. A fairly enjoyable licence which should appeal most to platform fanatics.

GHOSTBUSTERS
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
2
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
OK





Loki, the evil Prince of Darkness has returned to our fair pleasant lands, leaving a trail of death and destruction wherever he goes. And worse... he's kidnapped Sir Arthur the Knight's girlfriend!

Peusing up to jump into his special hardman's suit of armour and collect his magical lance, Arthur sets off for the final confrontation with this twisted creature. But five lengthy levels of platform scrolling action await before his woman can be safely returned — and the Prince of Darkness has infested the route with all manner of ghostly minions. Not surprisingly, all of these crea-

GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS

tures won't be satisfied until they've got Arthur's head on one of their demonic lances.

Arthur defends himself with throwing lances, but other weapons are hiding in chests along the way: swords, axes and holy water included. Only some are useful! A few

chests hold suits of magical armour. Clothed in this, Arthur's weapons take on a new magical

status, and may be powered up to devastating effect.

Loki's domain is a morbid collection of graveyards, volcanic dungeons, and statues (where you must walk along their slippery tongues). Ghosts 'n' Ghosts avoid being just another platform game by its variety of levels and tons of gameplay features. Once you reach the huge Prince of

Darkness, you find you can't defeat him, and have to retrace the five previous levels with a new magic weapon. This is just one example how challenging Ghosts 'n' Ghosts is. Lesser gamers crumble at some of the tough sections, especially on the higher difficulty levels. The more than adequate reward for all your graft is the brilliant graphics and stirring soundtrack, incredibly close to the original arcade machine. A wonderful conversion.

JAZ



GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS
BY
CAPCOM
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
1
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
UNLIMITED
SKILL LEVELS

RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

There is a certain Burger chain who get ever so touchy when you mention their environmental record. They thought it would be a very good idea to sponsor a console game that linked their name with 'green issues' (and of course was great fun for the kiddiwinks).

So, meet Mick and Mack, Global Gladiators. This pair of pint-sized rainbow warriors travel through four platform-strewn levels (three stages in each), using their goo-guns to stop the activities of the evil polluters. The secondary task is to amass a huge score by collecting the McDonald's Golden Arches as they go.

MICK & MACK GLOBAL GLADIATORS

Between each level is a recycling game, where litter falls from the sky and must be put in the correct one of three bins. The main levels feature a variety of nasty characters: machines pumping out gunge, rabid beavers de-foresting tracts of woodland, and chemical plants working overtime in Toxic City.

You might be concerned about how effective this is as an environmental learning aid. After all, beavers are not the main problem with the rain forest. The truth is it's just good old platform entertainment, sweetened by some very nice graphics, sound and presentation. The animation is excellent, and the backdrops are really

bold. House music and smart speech make up an excellent soundtrack. The game itself is quite good fun, but don't be fooled by the title — it's a single player game only, and you get the option of playing Mick OR Mack.

Anyway, the green warrior may be water-thin, but youngsters will like Mick and Mack.

RICH



GLOBAL GLADIATORS
BY
VIRGIN
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
1
EASY
CONTINUES
3

SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

PRESENTATION 90%
Extremely slick throughout with lots of nice touches. The bonus game is particularly smart.

GRAPHICS 89%
The animation is brilliant and the backdrops are bold and colourful. But there's not that much variety.

SOUND 90%
Great dancey music and spot FX, but the prize goes to the super sound samples.

PLAYABILITY 86%
Incredibly easy to get into, and very playable, but the slick exterior hides a simple game.

LASTABILITY 78%
It's good fun for a couple of hours but Global Gladiators suffers the dual fate of being too easy and too shallow.

OVERALL 79%
This ain't going to change the real world, or even the games world. But it's an entertaining little platform game, all right.

Gods was initially the creation of the Bitmap Brothers, a team of Amigo programmers hailed for their innovative and playable products. Gods was one of their biggest hits, and they undertook the Megadrive conversion themselves in Britain, although Sega Europe strangely decided not to release the game here, so unless they change their mind you'll only find it on the shelves of an importer.

Gods is a four-world, platform shoot 'em up, with a strong mythological theme. You, champion of Olympus, travel through twelve stages, solving puzzles that hinder progress, and killing hordes of grotesque

GODS

demons. Gems play an important part in the game. Different colours offer clues, energy or open doors and traps in distant parts of the playfield, making the puzzle aspect a major part of the game. The action side to

the game is surprisingly well developed, with rabid mutants attacking in hordes. Usefully, the hero has a handy armoury of knives, maces, spears and axes. The more powerful weapons are bought in the shops between levels, using

gems as currency.

It's hard to see why Sega never picked Gods up. The graphics have a classy, moody feel and the action runs at a hell of a pace. Gods is a bit intense for casual

players and there are less

frills than the average platform game, but in terms of pure gameplay, it's top-notch stuff.

JAZ



PRESENTATION 83%

Quite sparse, with a short atmospheric intro, and a few options. The password system is extremely useful.

GRAPHICS 86%

Gloomy temples and Roman back streets. Gods is classically decorated but not cheerful. The animation on the sprites is a bit too mechanical, though.

SOUND 79%

Average music, mixed with some very good sound FX.

PLAYABILITY 80%

Very smooth, but very demanding shooting action, for those who like a challenge. Sometimes the tricky controls add to the challenge!

LASTABILITY 77%

The twelve worlds are not massive, but the game is sometimes impossibly tough.

OVERALL 78%

A very tough platform shooter. Good, but not for novices.

GODS
BY
MINISCAPE
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
VERY HARD
CONTINUES
PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
FINE

That evil being Death Adder, has kidnapped the King and Princess of Yuria! And the dirty swine has also carried off the legendary Golden Axe! And to cap it all, he's killed some of your family. So grab your axe or sword and put on your fighting trousers, 'cos it's time for revenge!

Death Adder has hidden himself in his great big castle, and between you and him is his army of horrid creatures. Goblins, skeletons, black knights, ogres, giant swordsmen and even dinosaur riders are all present to wear down your energy bar and stop you in your tracks! It's effectively a fantasy

GOLDEN AXE

beat 'em up. There are three characters, the exotically named Ax battler (Dwarf), Gillius Thunderhead (Barbarian), and Tyrus Flame (Amazon). Each has a set of moves, that let you crash down on your opponents, roll under their feet, and even

spin your swords in an arcing movement. Advanced players learn team tactics in two-player mode, and how to put combinations of moves together to deal with the likes of the Hammer Giants.

Between each of the five

levels, the players rest, and thiefing dwarf mages come to steal their possessions. By giving them a swift kick they release potions, which may be stored to summon earth, air or fire magic to come to your aid. Another feature is to steal the dragons' some of the enemies are mounted on, and turn their fiery breath to your own advantage.

Golden Axe is strikingly close to the coin-op it was based on, with the duel mode (in which players spar with each other) increasing the fun.

Unfortunately, the slick presentation hides a slightly too-easy game, that most players will whisk through in no time.

JAZ



PRESENTATION 93%

The range of options, including a training mode is simply superb.

GRAPHICS 84%

Still highly impressive, especially when magical fire-breathing dragons descend!

SOUND 80%

Ghastly groans and battle noise. You really feel you've done someone an injury!

PLAYABILITY 83%

Golden Axe is instantly enjoyable, and working as a team is great fun.

LASTABILITY 77%

Sadly, the game difficulty is set too low. The whole game unfolds too quickly, and you don't really need much in the way of tactics, even to deal with the toughest characters..

OVERALL 80%

Not the best beat 'em up now, but still commendable as a faithful arcade conversion.

GOLDEN AXE
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
2
SKILL LEVELS
2
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



A new terror has arisen to threaten the peaceful kingdom once protected by the three warriors Gilius Thunderhead, Ax Butter and Tyrus Flore. The moniacal Dark Guld and his legions of doom are advancing to conquer the land and destroy its inhabitants. All looks grim for the world until the heroes come out of retirement and agree to once more risk their lives, defeat the new evil and make

the world a safer place. Like its predecessor, Golden Axe II is a horizontally scrolling beat 'em up, boasting exciting moves, such as the rear somersault slash, new improved

GOLDEN AXE II
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

GOLDEN AXE II

magic and a host of monstrous new opponents to slay. The action is spread over six levels, with a guardian at the end of each.

Death Adder's minions were positively cheerful when compared with the thralls of Dark Guld. Amongst his terrifi-

ing horde are trolls, warriors with razors for hands, minotaurs, headless knights and lizard men.

Despite these changes, the game isn't that much different from the original Golden Axe, and in terms of gameplay, it's actually inferior. For one thing

it lacks atmosphere, there's no real sense of involvement. The graphics are a mixed bag, with some excellent sprites but some surprisingly poor backgrounds. There's virtually no change to the level layouts, and the enemies seem to be sloped in hap-

hazardly, making the game a monotonous hack. Considering the gap between the two versions, this represents a major last opportunity. If you have the original, Golden Axe II isn't worth the time of day. If you've yet to sample either game's delights, then go for the original.

JAZ



PRESENTATION 85%
Choice of characters, controls and levels. Impressive attract screens and animated storyline.

GRAPHICS 69%
Great sprites and magic, but some pitiful backgrounds.

SOUND 48%
None too good. Weak effects and plain tunes don't help enhance the atmosphere.

PLAYABILITY 67%
It's very easy to get into and fun for a while but anyone expecting an advance on the first game will be disappointed.

LASTABILITY 57%
Even Golden Axe novices should be able to get all the way through it within a few sessions.

OVERALL 61%
A disappointing sequel which lacks new ideas and challenge. If you've got the first one don't even entertain the idea of buying the sequel.

The year is 2016, and the globe is ravaged by global war, carried out by super-powered armoured land vehicles. One man is a mite peeved at all the devastation going on around him, and he is the owner of the legendary Granada X tank, the most powerful artillery piece ever. His plan of action is to attack military sites and forces until everyone sees the error of their ways and signs an armistice. Some plan!

Granada X is another Megadrive shoot 'em up, but this time it's got a few original ideas such as multi-directional scrolling playfields viewed from

GRANADA X
BY
WOLFTEAM
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
MEGA

GRANADA X

overhead, and a novel control system. As usual though, there are lots of nasties to shoot, a few bolt-on weapons to shoot them with and guardians to contend with.

Unlike most Megadrive shoot 'em ups, Granada X scrolls in eight directions. Each level is set in a maze-like location in which several specific targets are marked. The tank must hunt and destroy them all to complete each level. Their approximate location is shown

on a small radar screen, but finding them is still tricky since many of them are mobile, and there usually isn't a direct route to most of the stationary ones either!

Ok, so you've seen the screenshots, but don't judge this book by its cover! On the surface, Granada X is a sad sham of small, feeble-looking sprites and rather naff backgrounds. Get into it, though, and you find a really original and challenging blaster which tests the met-

tle of even the toughest of shoot 'em up addicts. The game gets better the further you go and on later levels there's a frenzied assault on your tank - if your reflexes aren't up to scratch, it's Goodnight Vienna!

Granada X is a real player's game: those interested in pretty graphics will be revolted, but underneath the graphic grittiness there is lots of game to enjoy.

JAZ



PRESENTATION 80%
A fair few options and interesting controls.

GRAPHICS 58%
Titchy sprites and poor backgrounds. But the quality of the graphics belie the quality of the game.

SOUND 67%
The background music isn't too hideous, and the effects are pretty good.

PLAYABILITY 80%
Much more depth than your average shoot 'em up, and great fun to boot. Very addictive stuff indeed.

LASTABILITY 76%
Quite a few not-too-easy levels and only three continues mean that there's plenty here to keep you challenged.

OVERALL 79%
An addictive, original but ugly blaster which is still well worth checking out.



Grandslam Tennis gives you the chance to take part in the world's big tournaments. Games can be played as single exhibition matches, or against a field preselected players. Computer players are seeded according to ability. You can create your own player and allocate points to different skill areas. The training ground let's you practice a few shots before entering an exhibition match. When playing feel they've sussed out both racquet and opposition, it's time to enter the circuit. In Grandslam Tennis there are hard and clay court surfaces as well as grass. The court surfaces affect game speed

GRANDSLAM TENNIS
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS
PASSWORDS
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

GRANDSLAM TENNIS

and tactics and some players have a best surface to play on. Grandslam Tennis really comes into its own in two-player mode. It's possible to play against a friend in the singles, team up with them in the doubles, or choose a computer controlled team mate in the doubles. The options are extensive

and the game also has a well-programmed game logic, with a realistic response to backspin and top spin. It's a bit tricky to get the hang of, and the computer plays a relentless game.

Grandslam's one play weakness is that the characters are a little bit slow to reach the ball on occasions. The game

also comes off unfavourably when compared to Davis Cup Tennis (see review), in terms of graphics and sound. But Grandslam is still a great success in two-player, and is commended as a decent tennis sim. **RICH**



PRESENTATION 87%
The range of options is superb. There is a password system and trainer option.

GRAPHICS 76%
Nicely animated sprites. But they have an irritating habit of constantly swinging their pants!

SOUND 77%
Some pretty good sound effects. The umpire announces the score in a deep booming voice!

PLAYABILITY 80%
Realistic ball movement makes it very easy to play. Players move a bit slowly, though.

LASTABILITY 81%
The Grandslam may be attempted at any seed level, so there's a progressive challenge. The two player options will certainly keep you occupied for quite a while.

OVERALL 80%
A worthy tennis game even if it isn't the best on the Megadrive.

Green Dog is a Californian surfer riding the waves, minding his own business when a particularly huge wave washes him ashore on a foreign beach. He notices a strange medallion around his neck, just as a beautiful beach babe appears out of thin air. She tells him that the only way to get rid of the medallion is to reunite it with the treasures of the Aztecs.

Furthermore, Green Dog has been deprived of his surfboard until his mission is complete. He still gets to party on using other means of transport, such as a skateboard and roller skates in his quest to find the Aztec hoard. The grooviest set

GREEN DOG

of wheels is a single-seat helicopter.

The quest entails much walking along platform levels and throwing Green Dog's death frisbee at dive-bombing parrots and sea urchins. The scenery changes frequently to encompass jungles, caves and

swamp towns, and a wibbling water effect for underwater areas. It might look and sound great, but sadly Green Dog lacks two very important details: playability and challenge. The programmers seem to have gone overboard on neat touches, nice animation, great

backgrounds and funky tunes, forgetting to put any sort of game in there. The skateboarding sections are brief and dull and the underwater bit is fun for a while.

but as sluggish as treacle. The final nail in the coffin is that the game is laughably easy

to complete. Most levels require only the most rudimentary platform skills, and the designs lack the imagination of the graphics. There are a host of Megadrive platform games that surpass this. **RICH**



GREEN DOG
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUOUS
0
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
POOR

PRESENTATION 76%
A neat introduction explains the story, but there's not much in way of options, and only one difficulty level.

GRAPHICS 85%
Colourful backgrounds and sprites, but even they can't make the game look exciting.

SOUND 80%
The music has a Caribbean flavour, but it's also ponderous and distracting.

PLAYABILITY 57%
The bizarre element of Green Dog has some early appeal, but it's far too s-l-o-w and there's hardly anything going on.

LASTABILITY 25%
Even if you do enjoy playing Green Dog (which is unlikely), you'll finish it within a few days.

OVERALL 40%
It might look and sound like a million dollars, but the gameplay ain't worth a dime.



Grey Lancer offers more terror in space, with the well-worn format of the sideways-scrolling blaster. Aliens have kidnapped all of Earth's crack pilots, teleporting them into a section of space filled with heavily-armed gunships, and then blowing them up. But they forgot to kidnap the most dangerous pilot of all — twelve year old Lucia Cabrock. In a rage over her father's kidnap, Lucia leaps into her top secret CSH-01 Grey Lancer and sets off for revenge. Although the Grey Lancer ship starts out with a pretty pathetic rapid-fire cannon, upgrading your defences is simple. Every so often, a

GREY LANCER

BY
MASAYA
PLAYERS

1
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
AVERAGE

GREY LANCER

weapons pod is found floating around in space. Destroy this and a number of armaments are up for grabs. Once you collect your first weapon, it arrives in the form of a spheroid which hovers close by your ship. Another cannon, with a different weapon-type can be added.

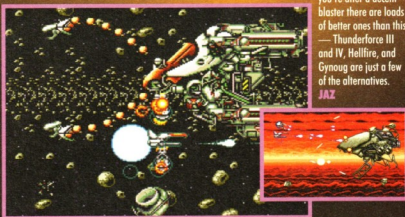
Grey Lancer treads the

well-worn scroll, blast 'n' power-up boards with few new ideas to show off. Its best point is its different firing modes, but these have to be selected before the game starts, and cannot be changed. Another problem is that you spend more time dodging the scenery than blasting, which quickly gets tedious. The

game desperately needs more action. But what really kills it off for is that the game is very easy to complete. Shoot 'em up fans should breeze through this within a day.

The graphics, sound and presentation are all okay, but really Grey Lancer falls flat in the playability department. If you're after a decent blaster there are loads of better ones than this — Thunderforce III and IV, Hellfire, and Gynoug are just a few of the alternatives.

JAZ



This state-of-the-art shoot 'em up comes from Treasure, a new programming team of ex-Kanami coders. The plot starts with colours; three Gunstar agents called Red, Blue and Green. A mysterious agent called Black bribes Green to break from his friends and captain an expedition to find four gems, which will reawake 'The Creator', an occurrence not conducive to World Peace. The remaining two agents set out to stop him.

The Gunstar Heroes fight over seven scrolling stages, fighting the most amazing collection of mechanical creatures ever assembled on the

GUNSTAR HEROES

Megadrive. The heroes have four different weapons, and are able to combine these to form even more specialised armaments. They choose any of the first four stages to start, with the aim of destroying the boss mechanisms. These mechanisms are absolutely awesome, being made of many sprites and featuring a huge range of forms

and tactics. On one stage, a giant mechanical being transmutes itself between seven deadly robo-forms, including a running soldier, a tiger, a spiky urchin and an eagle, and you have to fight them one after another. Gunstar Heroes is not short of climactic moments. There's a breathtaking scene on the wings of a helicopter, even

an entire level played as a board game. The graphics consist of special effects that no-one thought the Megadrive was capable of producing, and all are beautifully rendered. And the gameplay, for one or two players is immaculate: constant action but never frustration. This is a rare occasion where the programmers have had the skill

to put exactly what was in their imaginations on the Megadrive screen. Incredible.

JAZ



GUNSTAR HEROES

BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
TOUGH
CONTINUES
UNLIMITED
SKILL LEVELS
4
RESPONSIVENESS
BLISTERING

PRESENTATION 84%

Lots of options and great presentation throughout.

GRAPHICS 64%

Some impressive looking bosses and backgrounds, but sprites are the usual bunch of little metallic spaceships.

SOUND 40%

Lots of crap tunes and effects to aggravate your ear drums.

PLAYABILITY 63%

Quite nippy and responsive so it's playable, even if it is desperately original.

LASTABILITY 45%

The 11 levels shouldn't take more than a day or two to complete, if you can stand the tedium.

OVERALL 48%

A surprisingly poor release from Masaya, which tries to rehash a load of old shoot 'em up ideas without much success. The Thunderforce games are much better than this.

PRESENTATION 91%

Spectacular presentation, and the game almost unfolds like a drama.

GRAPHICS 95%

Absolutely astounding visuals. Incredible amounts of action at any one time.

SOUND 93%

Turn this up so it pumps along to the action. Groovy stuff.

PLAYABILITY 95%

A superb feel to the action, and Gunstar Heroes has acres of depth. The two player mode is ace!

LASTABILITY 92%

It doesn't take long to beat on the easy level, but even when you've finished the game you'll return to it because it's just that good!

OVERALL 95%

Sets a new standard for Megadrive shoot 'em ups. You must buy this!

Demons have risen against the heavenly powers, so a shining angel named Wor is commissioned to take up his wings and give the devil spawn something to think about.

In this all-action horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up, our



angelic hero travels six stages of blasting action, doling out divine retribution to the damned with a variety of extra weapons. But be warned, bastions of darkness have been placed in

each stage, at the mid-point and end of each level, each is a warped, but powerful agent of evil.

Gynoug has a highly developed demonic theme, with gloomy catacombs and sepulchres as backdrops, and



highly addictive challenge, this takes some beating. **JAZ**

some really horrific sprite designs. The bosses are huge affairs, and often take you by surprise by appearing from behind or below. Gynoug may be one of the Megadrive's older shoot 'em ups but it's packed with playability and sports some stunning graphics. Some of the multi-layer parallax scrolling backgrounds, special effects and end of level baddies are absolutely superb. The extra weapons aren't amazing, but for fast action, excitement, and a

PRESENTATION 86%
A great mythical feel to the game and loads of options to tweak as well.

GRAPHICS 81%
Highly imaginative designs, but while the effects were pretty gobsmacking when the game first came out, they don't look so impressive these days.

SOUND 85%
Thumping music, that deserves to be heard in stereo. The sound effects are a bit bog-standard but they do their job.

PLAYABILITY 86%
Great power-ups, nice responsiveness and literally tons of enemy fiend to wipe out.

LASTABILITY 80%
Doesn't look original next to all the other shooters, but it's a tough game.

OVERALL 83%
Yet another Megadrive shoot 'em up, but it's a great fun to play and still worth the dough.

That most American of sports, baseball, has never really become big on British shores, despite quite a few console incarnations. Hardball is a sophisticated version of rounders, with teams alternating between batting and fielding.



The batting team aim is to make as many rounds of the diamond shaped outfield before three of their batters are caught or stumped out. The pitching team chooses between various curve

and spin throws, to make the batting time miss, or pitch the ball out of bounds. Batting is a matter of choosing a striking position and timing the swing.

Hardball is well presented, and includes a fair amount of sampled speech, which

accompanies 'outs' and warns fielders where the ball is heading. It's not an easy game to pick up (expect to be thrashed the first few times!), but effort is rewarded with the fun of making that first home run.

The fine animation on the pitcher and batter make up for the other poor graphics, and the options cover every aspect of play. As with most sports games, Hardball is best played with another person, but this is still a good one-player game.

RICH



PRESENTATION 73%
The options are comprehensive and the play selection screens are well set out, thankfulty.

GRAPHICS 60%
Great animation on the close-up screens of the pitcher and batter, but the larger view of the diamond is pathetic.

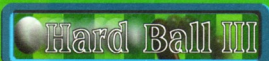
SOUND 59%
Fortunately, the annoying tone can be removed leaving you with the sampled speech is great.

PLAYABILITY 75%
It rather depends on how interesting you find the sport but while most players may find it tricky at first, but against a human opponent it's lots of fun!

LASTABILITY 76%
Any time you feel like pitching, Hardball's there.

OVERALL 72%
A good baseball sim, but there is a better sequel.

Hardball III is a sequel to Accolade's original baseball sim, and was released some two years later, in the summer of 1993. Although it's another simulation of baseball, with identical rules, the game engine has been entirely rewritten, with



some enhancements and many changes. The main change is the viewpoint of the pitcher and batter, which has been changed to the more conventional point-of-

view from behind the batter. The game plays also at a quicker speed than the plodding

Hardball. Otherwise the improvements to Hardball are cosmetic. You have the choice of exhibition league matches, and total freedom to customise your team: from line-ups down to cap colours!

Baseball isn't the most thrilling sport in the world, but this version manages to add enough frills to make it a fun game. There's enough complexity for those with a real interest in the sport, but it's arcadey enough for non-baseball players to enjoy the action without having to read reams of instructions.

Another feature of this is the impressive commentary that runs throughout. It gives the game an excellent atmosphere and contributes to making it the best baseball game yet seen on the Megadrive.

RICH



PRESENTATION 87%
Plenty of options to fiddle with but some of them are just gimmicks.

GRAPHICS 80%
Nicely-defined player sprites, and a variety of stadiums to play in. Good animation all round.

SOUND 79%
The music is iffy, but Al Michael's play-by-play commentary sounds surprisingly realistic and adds a lot to the game.

PLAYABILITY 84%
There's a good feeling of tension between pitcher and batter, but controlling the fielders is a bit too fiddly.

LASTABILITY 85%
The league matches last a long while so you can keep coming back for more.

OVERALL 83%
The best console baseball simulation to date. If you're a fan of the sport, check it out.



'Hard Drivin' on the Megadrive is ported directly from Atari's System 3, coin-op machine, which was one of the first to use solid 3-D graphics for a realistic

display. Originally, Hard Drivin was developed as a

HARD DRIVIN

machine for learner drivers. However, the designers soon realised that it would be much more fun to make it perform like a top sports car, and added all sorts of wild 'n' wacky features to the track, such as stunt jumps and high speed banking!



There's a speed track and a stunt track in the game. The former is fairly straightforward, and you can really put your foot down. The stunt course requires a far more careful approach, with a loop-the-loop, and some high

speed banking to negotiate. As well as concentrating on staying on the road,

there are other road users to worry about. Should you race around the track in record time, you're challenged to a head-to-head race by the Phantom Photon.

The Megadrive cannot offer the realistic steering and pedal controls of the arcade game nor can it recreate the smooth, realistic 3D effect, leaving a rather basic racing game. What's worse, the tracks are easily completed and once you've had your kicks beating your records a few times, there's not much to entice you back on the roads.

OVER

PRESENTATION 83%
An impressive options screen and the in-game presentation is accurate to the coin-op.

GRAPHICS 78%
Fast and effective 3D, although colours are drab and some of the objects are very simplistic.

SOUND 56%
The engine noise is an incessant drone and the music could have been much better.

PLAYABILITY 50%
It's a surprisingly good conversion, but having said that, it's still quite slow and without the realistic cockpit controls of the arcade game it just feels just like any other driving game.

LASTABILITY 37%
The two tracks run out of surprises and excitement pretty quickly. Once you've beaten the Phantom terminal boredom sets in.

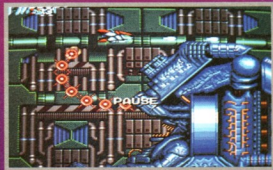
OVERALL 35%
The conversion is faithful, but the lack of challenge makes it worthy only of ardent fans.

Heavy Unit is an aged Megadrive blaster, of the horizontally scrolling persuasion, modelled on an even older version on PC Engine. It subscribes to most of the conventions of the format, which you will be well acquainted if you

HEAVY UNIT

read the reviews if Thunderforce, Bio-Hazard, Hellfire and many more. Plenty of aliens, plenty of metallic backgrounds, lots of

additional weapons. As well as powering up, one precious coin turns you from a sleek craft into a heavy duty robot.



The only distinguishing feature of Heavy Unit is its rock hardness. The game has no real provision for restarting without weapons, so games tend to finish quickly. Fighting with the weedy default weapons is thankless, as malevolent space aliens attack from virtually every angle. It crosses that thin border between fair challenge and leg-pulling.

That said, Heavy Unit still looks quite nice, with large bosses and pleasant backgrounds, and a full twenty stages of action. But it's only going to be of interest to shoot 'em up fans interested in stocking their back catalogue.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 76%
The usual options are there, but that's about it. No nice intro sequences or title screens, so it's not paint-wetingly exciting in this day and age.

GRAPHICS 80%
These have stood the test of time well. Some clever levels load on.

SOUND 74%
Not half bad. The sound effects are standard stuff, and the metallic backing music is just what you expect with games of this type.

PLAYABILITY 79%
Very taxing and fairly unoriginal blasting action. The range of power-ups couldn't honestly be described as 'awe inspiring'.

LASTABILITY 76%
Many players may try, but most will ever see the end of this game.

OVERALL 75%
Heavy Unit is still good fun to play, but shoot 'em up technology has marched on.

The whole of civilisation needs one man to pilot a Hellfire class attack craft into the horizontally scrolling danger-zone and meet the whole of the alien fleet in a battle to the last. They're drafted in the best battle-cruisers their alien money can buy, and terrifying legions

HELLFIRE

of swarming alien craft. Even with the huge amount of mega-weaponry at the Hellfire's disposal, the aliens have still got

one horrific trump card up their sleeves. They've created huge guardians with one aim in life — to kill any plucky types who



think they can stand up to the Empire!

Hellfire looks pretty bland for an arcade shoot 'em up, part of that is due to age — it's over three years old. However, in terms of gameplay it's relatively fresh, and is rightly hailed as a Megadrive classic. The craft has a unique four-way firepower, and the game features unrelenting action that maintains it as the toughest blaster the Megadrive is ever likely to see. Losing all your extra weapons is not recommended, as it's nigh on impossible to recover.

Hellfire is an eighteen stage white-knuckle ride at a budget price.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 85%
Lacking in pretty presentation screens, but the in-game presentation makes Hellfire look just like its arcade counterpart.

GRAPHICS 73%
All the graphics from the arcade game are here (though in a slightly smaller format). Some smart backgrounds and huge swarms of sprites battle for the player's attention.

SOUND 74%
Funky tunes suit the atmosphere an end. Brilliant spot effects thrown in for good measure.

PLAYABILITY 91%
The Hellfire is so good to control, and the blasting action's thick and fast and full of surprises!

LASTABILITY 88%
Six tough levels to conquer, and three difficulty levels to sustain interest.

OVERALL 91%
One of the all-time great Megadrive shoot 'em ups, which still packs a mighty punch.

HARD DRIVIN'
BY
TENGEN
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
0
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

HEAVY UNIT
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
VERY HARD
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

HELLFIRE
BY
TOAPLAN
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
TOUGH
CONTINUES
9
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
BRILLIANT



Kevin awoke one fine Christmas morn to find that his house was empty, his family all gone to Paris without him. What a terrible state of affairs — just as Kevin is enjoying getting away with murder he realises the Wet Bandits, a pair of crooks, are robbing all of the houses in the neighbourhood while the residents are away. Kevin decides to stop them from getting away with the goods by laying a series of traps which should hold them up until the police arrive to take them both away.

Kevin moves between houses on his motorised sled (until it runs out of fuel), look-

HOME ALONE

ing for signs that the burglars are there. Inside the house are located various bits and bobs that Kevin uses to construct an inventory of traps. For example a combination of the hair drier, rubber bands and some snowballs produces a Snowball Bozoako. Once equipped these weapons are a sure way of driving the two thieves away from any house.

The movie had the potential to make a decent console game, but sadly

this one falls well short. The main problem is the lack of action. The motor-sledge section could have been entertaining, but the control method is confusing, and there isn't enough to do. Inside the houses, it's just a case of wandering around waiting for the Wet Bandits to

find you. When you do finally encounter the Bandits, it's nigh on impossible to assemble enough items to make a decent weapon. Slow, dull and repetitive, perhaps this ought to be called *Leave Well Alone*.

RYCR



PRESENTATION 45%

Hopeless presentation, on the title screen, and in-game.

GRAPHICS 66%

The one redeeming feature of the cart is that the graphics are fairly well drawn and animated.

SOUND 48%

The tune for the blueprint screen is quite good. All the others, along with the sound effects, are very poor.

PLAYABILITY 42%

The slopstick element provides some fun at first, but it soon gets boring and even the 'build-your-own-weapons' bit grows stale pretty quickly.

LASTABILITY 34%

Lack of interesting gameplay dooms Home Alone from the start.

OVERALL 38%

A dull and tedious game with little going for it.

HOME ALONE

BY SEGA PLAYERS
1 GAME DIFFICULTY EASY
CONTINUES NONE
SKILL LEVELS 2
RESPONSIVENESS GOOD

Nothing has been heard of Mordamir the Grand Wizard for many months. As his apprentice, you're worried about his disappearance. There's only one thing for it. Enter the caves where he was last seen and rescue your mentor. Who knows? Maybe you might pick up some of the mystical knowledge your master was after. There's only one problem. The word is that a massive dragon jealously

guards the secrets of the dungeon.

Your view of the action is depicted in the sprite-based isometric 3D. The playing area scrolls in eight directions, but is limited

THE IMMORTAL

by the size of the room. When using a door the screen flicks to take you to a new location. Finding a map of each of the eight levels is advisable.

Whenever a dungeon beast attacks you, the screen shifts to a close-up one-on-one battle between your wizard and the evil assailant. A variety of hacks and slashes are available, along with a number of highly amusing death sequences. There's around 16 different gruesome death scenes, including one

hilarious sequence where a hapless goblin is cut in half by our hero's sword!

However, talking to people and using your head to solve puzzles is more important than combat. Being a magician you have magical abilities to add to your combat skill, and once you start acquiring spell scrolls you'll find you can shoot flames from your fingers or flammax your foes by becoming invisible!

The Immortal's greatest strength is the wealth of

fiendish puzzles found in every room. The first level is taxing enough and as the game progresses, things get even more fiendish! There are some sections (such as the worm room and the spider corridor) which might drive you mad but won't stop you playing.

Even two years after its original release, the Immortal is well worth trying for it's clever mix of action, puzzles and role-playing.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 90%

The game is very well-presented. The control method in particular is superbly executed.

GRAPHICS 90%

Finely detailed backdrops and sprites make The Immortal look like something really special.

SOUND 88%

Tunes and effects that do a good job of enhancing the already considerable atmosphere.

PLAYABILITY 89%

The great control method and the balance between action and adventure makes The Immortal very appealing.

LASTABILITY 80%

The dungeon's eight levels should last a few weeks, but once completed there's nothing to play on for.

OVERALL 85%

In its way, the Immortal is a classic, but its delights don't last forever.

THE IMMORTAL

BY ELECTRONIC ARTS PLAYERS
1 GAME DIFFICULTY MEDIUM
CONTINUES PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS 1
RESPONSIVENESS GOOD





By and large Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade follows the plot of the film, where Prof Reich is racing against the Holy Grail, source of everlasting life. However it's presented as a straightforward platform and ladders game in which the hero can run, jump, punch, and whip his opponents to reach the next level.

The first level concerns the adventurous archaeologist as a young man journeying through caves to retrieve the Cross of Coronado. Avoid the baddies, climb the ropes and track down the Cross to move onto the next level, set on a horizontally

INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE
BY
US GOLD PLAYERS
↓
GAME DIFFICULTY
HARD CONTINUES
2
SKILL LEVELS
↓
RESPONSIVENESS
OKAY

INDIANA JONES and the Last Crusade



scrolling train where more baddies and circus animals must be avoided. Scene three jumps to the adventure in Venice, where a grown-up Indy searches for the shield of the Grail Crusader, an ancient knight who lies in catacombs under the cathedral.

Once found, it's on to Castle Brunwald, the Nazi stronghold, then to an airship and finally to the ancient temple where the Grail is located.

The game is crawling with nasty Nazis, whose guns and knives can do serious damage to

your energy bar. Indy's whip is an effective defence, and also let's him swing across gaps. Despite the obvious film locations, and the familiar gun-bo theme-tune, Indiana Jones captures nothing of the flavour and excitement of Spielberg's

movies. The platform routines are so formulaic as to be thrill-free, and the dull, blocky graphics are no great development over the Master System version, which is also knocking on a bit. Finishing a level is just a matter of working out how to get through, without seriously engaging mind or trigger-finger. The last crusade is one journey too many.

RICH



PRESENTATION 56%

The film reel intro is a vain attempt to inject some period cinema atmosphere.

GRAPHICS 50%

While paying lip service to the film's scenery and characters, the graphics are generally pretty poor.

SOUND 64%

A weedy, and distinctly non-orchestral version of the movie theme is played throughout.

PLAYABILITY 59%

Standard platform stuff, with mildly diverting gameplay for a few sessions. Hardly action packed, though.

LASTABILITY 41%

It's quickly apparent that the game has few surprises and little to offer.

OVERALL 47%

Where gameplay's concerned, this is a real ancient relic.

If you go down to the woods today... You'll probably find they've been cleared to make way for a golf course. The game that started at Old St Andrews on the windy Scottish coast has become a world phenomenon.

Pity most of the best players are American: like the very Jack Nicklaus who has endorsed Accolade's three course golf simulation.

The three courses on this cart are country clubs, which feature enclosed greens and lots of foliage and hazards. As in the real game, the aim is to knock a small ball between two points, the tee and the hole, in the least amount of strokes.

JACK NICKLAUS POWER CHALLENGE
BY
ACCOLADE PLAYERS
1-4
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
BATTERY SAVE
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
AWFUL

Jack Nicklaus GOLF

There's lots more to it than that, though.

Each player has 14 clubs, each suited to different shots from different 'lies'. Only the centre of the course is trimmed grass. This fairway is surrounded by rough, trees and deliberate sand traps, each requiring technique to negotiate. One to

four players can play an 18-hole stroke match, or a 'skins' match for a cash stake. A battery save lets you keep player profiles and performances.

The presentation of Power Challenge is comprehensive and thoughtful, but the actual game does it no justice. The graphics are very poor, and the screen

has to refresh itself every time you alter aim, making play a tiresome experience. There's no sense of the ball interacting with the scenery, especially when putting. All in all, Power Challenge looks pretty dismal when compared to PGA Tour II (see review).

JAZ



PRESENTATION 87%

The game's best feature, is that the cart allows up to four players to be saved. But PGA can save up to 16!

GRAPHICS 39%

Power Challenge fails to create any realistic impression of an outdoor golf course.

SOUND 35%

A few sample noises of the crowd, but otherwise little aural excitement.

PLAYABILITY 50%

It's not too taxing to play a couple of rounds with some friends.

LASTABILITY 41%

Only three courses, and the gameplay really is crud so the chances of you digging this one out again and again are slim.

OVERALL 42%

Power Challenge is a shadow of a golf game. Step into the light of PGA Tour.

James Bond, the dashing Secret Service agent of many books and films makes it to the Megadrive for the first time, in this five stage platform shoot 'em up. As it happens, there has been no Bond movie for a few years, so Domark's game is an amalgam of Bond adventures, featuring his most celebrated adversaries.

At the start of the game Bond lands unannounced on the island base of his unknown target, first making his way across the deck of a supply ship. The chilling Jaws from Moonraker is the first of the famous bosses he comes

across, with later high-

JAMES BOND 007: THE DUEL
BY
DOMARK PLAYERS
↓
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
2
SKILL LEVELS
↓
RESPONSIVENESS
PATCHY

BOND 007 THE DUEL

lights including Mayday from View To a Kill, and Odd Job and his amazing bowler hat of Goldfinger fame.

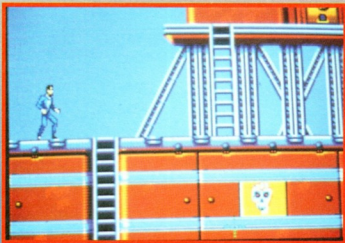
The main objective is to reach the end of each level, while stocking up with ammo clips and rescuing the girls dot-

ted around each level. As well as guards, there are plenty of traps set for Bond, like falling submarines, sharks and poison gas.

The Duel is a fair stab at putting Bond on the small screen, but it fails badly in

some areas. The control is just a bit sluggish at some of the most hectic moments, and the animation on the main sprite slows it down. Although the graphics are well done throughout, they don't really raise the game above the level of an average

platformer. From level three onwards it gets tough, but that may still not be enough to keep you riveted. **JAZ**



He wears a tuxedo, carries a gun, and is a hit with the girls. The fact that he's a fish makes no difference to his espionage activities. James Bond, or Double Bubble Seven to use his code name, is on the trail of the evil Doctor Maybe, whose plans for world domination threaten civilised fish everywhere.

Twelve missions await the brave sub-aqua agent: View To a Spill, for example, pits Pond against a leaking oil rig - he gathers dynamite to blow up the legs of the platform. Starfish, mutated fish, crabs and squids all drain our hero's energy, and other hazards (like radioactive canisters and invisible jellyfish)

JAMES BOND - UNDERWATER AGENT
BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS PLAYERS
↓
GAME DIFFICULTY
AVERAGE
CONTINUES
2
SKILL LEVELS
↓
RESPONSIVENESS

JAMES BOND UNDERWATER AGENT

have the same effect.

Each mission's objectives have to be completed within the time limit, using the warps and secret areas to gain bonus points. And Pond's movements

aren't just limited to water. He leaps out of the sea at any opportunity, usually to grab some juicy bonus item or collect something vital to the mission. In the fourth level, for example,

(The Fish With The Golden Bar) James has to gather gold bars and takes them to a waiting rowboat.

This spoof exploration game was the first homegrown Megadrive cart, but it's worth little more than that historical footnote now. Arcade adventures have advanced beyond simple item collecting, and the funny fish graphics now look pretty flaccid. There's a bit of fun there to start, but the lack of variety leaves James Bond floating belly up. **JAZ**



PRESENTATION **78%**
The attract sequences and options are well presented, though James looks a little peaky on the title screen.

GRAPHICS **77%**
Good mix of colours and excellent animation on the main sprite, but designs are simplistic.

SOUND **76%**
The Bond music is so-so, but some of the in-game tunes add pace to the action.

PLAYABILITY **75%**
Lots of guards to shoot and pleasant meanderings on the earlier levels.

LASTABILITY **68%**
It gets tougher, but also more frustrating, and not so varied that you're kept enthralled.

OVERALL **69%**
Okay as far as it goes, and probably good enough for Bond buffs, but there's still room for improvement.

PRESENTATION **68%**
The game starts with a movie-opening, which is nice, if not exciting.

GRAPHICS **60%**
The sprites are reasonable, but unfortunately the backgrounds are crud.

SOUND **63%**
Again this is nothing to write home about, but is inoffensive and suited to the game's style.

PLAYABILITY **68%**
Inoffensive to pick up and play, James Bond offers some interest to explorers.

LASTABILITY **70%**
Twelve missions confront James, but once they're beaten you won't be coming back for more.

OVERALL **63%**
Quirky and mildly amusing, James Bond suffers most from simple programming and the unkind years.



It's a strange thing to see yet another Soccer game from a nation that doesn't immediately spring to mind as one flocking to the terraces. In fact, Japan seems to be a nation where everyone hates games and forgets their PE kit.

Nevertheless, J-League is a comprehensive simulation of Japan's major soccer league. All its teams, all its players and all its action. The game is viewed from the established three-quarter isometric position, that lets you see lots of pitch and large detail on the players. The game gives you considerable control over the player in possession. Two types of pass, pow-

J-LEAGUE PRO STRIKER

erful shooting and impressive trick shots are all easy to access.

The game's biggest innovation is the use of the Sega four-top. This allows up to four players to compete in a number of combinations; one on one, two against the computer or two against two. J-League is packed with other features, like a useful

scanner that shows the entire pitch area — useful because only a small area of the pitch is seen at one time. There are eight teams, Grampus of Nagoya and Jef United being the strongest sides. J-League is great fun in its four-player mode — the sense of interaction is unlike any previous foot-

ball game. It's also a good game on its own, although it first seems slow, the action is well-paced. Purists may want to buy the original Japanese version, but they'll have to contend with lots of indecipherable text.

JAZ



J-LEAGUE SOCCER
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1-4
GAME DIFFICULTY
HARD
CONTINUES
N/A
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

PRESENTATION 87%

Comprehensive options, but as they're all in Japanese, you have to work them out for yourself

GRAPHICS 87%

The pitch and characters are very well drawn and animated.

SOUND 30%

Aaargh! Some fool is using an airhorn constantly, and the fuzzy lame speech contributes nothing.

PLAYABILITY 92%

The controls, once mastered, make for some superb and realistic soccer play, but it does play a tad slowly.

LASTABILITY 91%

The league is incredibly hard to top, and the four-player mode drags you back again and again.

OVERALL 91%

Off-putting at first, this turns out to be one of the all-time great soccer simulations. Even greater with the Sega-top.

An evil demon is ravaging the lone green and pleasant kingdom you live in. The peasants have nothing with which to defend themselves from this curse, and his assembled hordes as they scorch the earth.

However you are in a position to do something about it, being the Jewel Master.

In this scorching beat 'em up with a strong mystical theme, the demon is found at the end of four long levels. Along the way, as you trudge over mountains and through puddles, there's almost constant attack from the demon's forces; orcs, bats and fiery phoenixes. But the Jewel Master holds the



secrets of gem magic. Gems are set in rings, which the Jewel Master picks up on his travels. Each ring bestows a different magic power like Fire, Ice, Wind and Barrier. However, each ring does not have an infinite amount of magic energy, and

must be replenished. The bonus of the rings is that you can pick up more than one ring and mix the properties of different rings. The 'mixing screen' shows the Jewel Master's hands and the current rings being used. The magic concept is the best part of

Jewel Master. Otherwise the game is let down by a lack of clear ideas or original features. The levels are long, but bland and the waves of the same attacking creatures makes for bland gameplay. The graphics are also a problem. Level 1 has some nice parallax scrolling, but generally the sprites are blocky and ill-defined, and the backgrounds bland. Jewel Master is well past its prime (if indeed it ever had one).

JAZ



PRESENTATION 50%

The ring idea is nicely presented, but Jewel Master offers only the barest options and plot.

GRAPHICS 40%

They were revolting when they first appeared, and the graphics look even more forlorn now.

SOUND 47%

Nothing striking in the sonics department.

PLAYABILITY 53%

Shoot-to-kill fanatics and aspiring sorcerers may find a modicum of pleasure in Jewel Master. It is a bit unusual after all.

LASTABILITY 51%

The more rings you collect the more interesting it gets, but even so, it's not a game that has any kind of allure.

OVERALL 50%

Shoot to kill fanatics and aspiring sorcerers may find a modicum of pleasure in Jewel Master.

JEWEL MASTER
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
OKAY

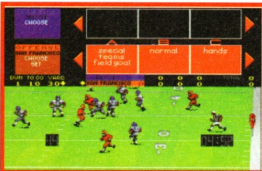
Can you make the big time on the gridiron? John Madden Football gives you the chance to find out. The action is displayed in 3-D, viewed from above the field and the screen follows the ball in realistic multi-level parallax. There are a huge range of

JOHN MADDEN'S FOOTBALL

plays available via a series of easy-to-use menus. When the ball is snapped (hurled into play), the player takes control of the quarterback, who either runs or passes. If the ball is passed, player control is handed over to the receiver.

During the play you control any player you like and although

this seems quite complicated at first, it's surprisingly easy to get the hang of, and the sheer



wealth of play choices gives huge scope to develop your own style.

Rightly hailed as the best Megadrive game when it first appeared, this easily retains its status as a classic sports simulation. The graphics are still brilliant, the range of options just as vast. The only reason not to buy it, is that you intend to get the sequel, which has some presentational enhancements. Otherwise, buy without fear. **JAZ**

- PRESENTATION** 89%
Superb presentation throughout makes a potentially complex game easy to get into with easy-to-use menus. The two-player mode is tremendous.
- GRAPHICS** 90%
Multi-level parallax graphics and superbly detailed and animated sprites.
- SOUND** 89%
An array of excellent soundtracks, and utterly brilliant sound effects.
- PLAYABILITY** 93%
Once you've gleaned the basics of the game from the well-written manual it's easy to get the hang of. It does help if you're into American football already but it's not essential.
- LASTABILITY** 90%
The playoffs will keep you playing for months and the two player mode will last forever.
- OVERALL** 92%
An excellent gridiron game, bettered only by its own offspring.

John Madden Football was the greatest console version of the sport ever; it utilised impressive parallax scrolling to bring the action to life. This sequel uses the same game engine, with enhancements.

John Madden '92 retains

JOHN MADDEN'92

the two-player head-to-head option, but also includes the choice to have both players on

the same team, with the players controlling a man each, and choosing a single player after



agreeing a strategy.

There are four levels of play. Select Precision for easy-going friendlies. Sudden Death is a tie-breaker match where the first score wins the game, and Playoffs is a league set-up leading to the Superbowl!

There are 12 more teams than in the original game, and differences between them are pronounced, menus are improved and new features like weather, injuries and player penalties have been added. The computer is also a far worthier opponent. John Madden's '92 may not be worth buying if you have the original, but it's the best of the three editions to go for. **JAZ**

- PRESENTATION** 97%
More options than ever before, and outstanding in-game presentation, even better than the first game.
- GRAPHICS** 93%
Fabulous detail and animation. Added stunts and crowd screens add a bit of match atmosphere.
- SOUND** 93%
Plenty of Madden speech and bone-crunching impacts.
- PLAYABILITY** 96%
Slicker and faster than the original, and just as easy to get to grips with.
- LASTABILITY** 94%
Mountains of teams to play with and a better computer challenger.
- OVERALL** 95%
Better than the original JM's Football and the best game of computerised American Football there is. What else can be said?

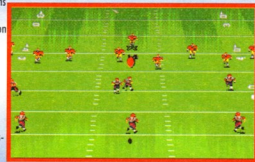
That legendary US footy sim is back again in its familiar form, although this time it has more new plays, more teams and a new picture of the portly commentator himself.

The previous games used realistic team stats. Madden '93

JOHN MADDEN'93

follows the tradition by having up-to-the-minute stats for every one of the 28 teams involved. Changes made to this edition take account of players moving teams, facing injuries and even the effect of drugs bans! In addition, John Madden has selected eight 'classic' teams of glorious past seasons, including a super 'All Stars' side of big names.

Madden '93 replaces the complex password system for



plays with a save game option which holds several

games at a time, though of course this means you can't give passwords to your mates.

In spite of all these, however, I was underwhelmed with the few improvements this game offered, two years after it first appeared. Most of the changes were unnecessary and cosmetic, and seemingly at the cost of game flows like pauses and slowdown during punts, that were not present originally. Save money by rooting out an old copy of John Madden's '92, instead of this. **JAZ**

- PRESENTATION** 95%
Loads of animated pictures of Mr Madden and a load of intermissions. The options, once again, are exemplary.
- GRAPHICS** 91%
Just like in the previous two games, you get well-animated sprites with lots of attention to detail, but occasionally jerky scrolling.
- SOUND** 86%
Lots of musical interludes, and a large amount of sampled speech.
- PLAYABILITY** 96%
Fast and responsive, with loads of depth and plays, but prepare to be frustrated!
- LASTABILITY** 87%
Loads of teams to beat, but the Super Bowl is too easy to attain.
- OVERALL** 89%
A good American Football game, but, amazingly, it's actually inferior to its predecessors.



Jordan Vs Bird is a digital representation of one-on-one, a cut-down version of Basketball where only two players participate, each attempting to score more baskets than the other. In this case, only two different players are available, the anonymous Michael Jordan and Larry Bird. Each specialises in different types of basketball plays, be they slam dunks or three-point baskets (that's where they score from outside of the basket area).

It's up to you to choose your basketball warrior and go into battle, outwitting and outfoxing the opposition by capitalising on your own strengths and

JORDAN VS BIRD

your opponent's weaknesses. Both players fight for possession around one end of the court, both scoring in one basket, which makes for a very static game.

An optional practice round in Jordan Vs Bird is the Slam Dunk stage. This is viewed from the side and shows your player performing acrobatic slam

dunks under your control. You choose the manoeuvre you want to attempt at the start of the round, and then try to accomplish it. Your efforts are then marked by a panel of judges.

Jordan Vs Bird is a beefed-up version of an old and crusty formula, which fails to hide the obvious tedium of the gameplay. There's no freedom of

movement around the court, and hence no tactics or reflex action. The training mode is almost there to hide the embarrassment of the main game's crudeness. Appalling graphics (especially the piddling player animation) and control make it devoid of excitement - even with two players. The slam dunk competition is laughably easy and really there's little else to keep you playing. A real basket case.

RICH



JORDAN VS BIRD
BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
0
SKILL LEVELS
2
RESPONSIVENESS
OK

PRESENTATION 80%
Excellent. Many interesting options to tweak and a great instant replay option.

GRAPHICS 54%
These range from being okay on the three-point screen, to sad on the main one-on-one section.

SOUND 77%
Some good effects and great music courtesy of old Commodore 64 maestro Rob Hubbard.

PLAYABILITY 37%
Unfortunately, all three sections are mind-numbingly dull, and the excitement is practically non-existent right from the start.

STABILITY 28%
Lastability? Pah! Start the game and board the train to Tedium Central.

OVERALL 31%
Even fans of basketball will find this a great deal less exciting than shooting a few hoops in the back garden.

Alarm bells are bound to be ringing in the Pentagon when a small island off South America is suddenly wiped from existence by a massive nuclear blast. The culprit is Iban (yes, Iban) Kilbaba, son of Desert Strike madman, General Kilbaba! He's teamed up with a nameless South American drug lord, escaped from a Florida prison, and they've hatched a plan to destroy the United States of America!

You have been chosen to clamber into a new Comanche Attack Helicopter and halt the attack on Washington. After that, there are eight more campaigns' worth of tactical, eight-

JUNGLE STRIKE

way scrolling shoot 'em up action, a full 16 megabits of cart memory.

The Comanche is armed to the hardpoints with three weapon systems. Hellfires are large anti-tank missiles, Hydras are small but plentiful rockets, and there are 1000 rounds of 30mm chain-gun ammo.

Each mission consists of a set of specific objectives,

revealed one by one on the mission map. To stay alive, Foraging for fuel, armaments and armour is also required.

The settings vary from cities to the North Pole to the South American jungle. On later missions you leave the Comanche behind to carry on your offensive in a Stealth Fighter, a hovercraft and even a motorcycle!

Unlike most of EA's sequels, Jungle Strike really does improve on the original formula - it's twice as big, has better graphics and sound, loads more variety, completely new missions and scenarios, new vehicles and the gameplay is much more challenging. It really is one of the greatest!

Megadrive shoot 'em ups ever seen and is an absolutely essential addition to your cartridge library.

RICH



JUNGLE STRIKE
BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
AWESOME

PRESENTATION 94%
Good options and great in-game presentation, though some of the intro screens look a bit rough around the edges.

GRAPHICS 95%
Amazing sprites and awesome animation, along with a variety of stunning backdrops.

SOUND 94%
The military music sounds just like every other piece of Electronic Arts Megadrive music. The sound effects are great, though.

PLAYABILITY 96%
Jungle Strike's highly addictive from the word go. The control makes it a real pleasure to play.

STABILITY 94%
Nine massive campaigns! And when you've completed the game, there's scores to improve.

OVERALL 96%
Jungle Strike easily ranks as one of the greatest Megadrive shoot 'em ups ever released.

Being the best games player ever, Kid Chameleon is the only human who can resolve the crisis down at the local arcade – a virtual reality game so real that it has been somehow swallowing its players! It's up to him to go into the game and res-



cue them.

Don't expect virtual reality graphics, though, because this is a platform game... but with a

twist. If Kid smacks one of the bonus boxes cluttering the place up he is rewarded with a bizarre helmet or mask, which, when worn, gives him a special power or weapon. The hockey mask, for example, turns him into an axe maniac, and the stormtrooper helmet puts



him in a mini Panzer tank!

Kid Chameleon is very playable, but suffers from being a little easy. The addition of his multiple personalities certainly add to the originality and make things a bit more interesting, especially when you're searching around for the mask you need and are desperately running out of time. The graphics are also good, with distinct and detailed sprites for each persona and some pleasing animated backgrounds. However when it boils down to it, the action doesn't vary much between levels. All that changes is the scenery, the time limit and occasionally the size of the platforms.

JAZ

KID CHAMELEON
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

King Maximus was a lovely chap, treating about on the Royal Pony dispensing righteous justice with his Sceptre of Order. Meanwhile, Arech Dragonbreath, hating the goodie-two-shoes ruler and his kingdom, decided to invade and lay



waste to the four continents with his Dark Legions. To weaken Maximus' forces, Arech has stolen the Sceptre of Order and the armies of good will not be

able to repel the invaders unless it is recovered.

King's Bounty is a cross between an RPG and a strategy game. You can play as one of



four characters, each of whom have their own strengths and weaknesses. Once chosen, the character recruits his own group

of soldiers and treks across the landscape searching for treasure, artifacts and foes to chop up. Killing monsters earns the character a bounty which pays for siege equipment, spells, information and extra troops.

I thought this was going to be an average RPG, but in fact it's not at all bad. I especially like the straightforward combat system, and though the graphics wouldn't win any awards, they do convey all the information. I'm not sure that this will appeal to everyone, but I enjoyed it, and I don't usually go much for this type of game.

RICH

KING'S BOUNTY
BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
AVERAGE
CONTINUES
N/A
SKILL LEVELS
ONE
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

In this conversion of the Neo Geo coin-op, you don't play the hero – you play a giant monster who finds himself in the midst of a vast metropolis, face to face with your arch-enemy, who looks like he wants a fight! You've got to use all your mon-



sterly powers to lay him out before he flattens you. As you might expect, you don't have to be too careful about where you walk, and in fact you actually earn more points for ripping up the scenery and throwing it at

your foe.

There are four monsters to choose in the single or head-to-head games. Each has their own special power and mode of attack. Geon is a Godzilla-like, Rocky is, not surprisingly, a humanoid made of living rock. Beetlemania is an overgrown Stag Beetle and Astro Guy is a giant wrestling bloke from outer space.

King of the Monsters was a pretty lukewarm coin-op, but it's been reduced to a



damned unplayable Megadrive debacle. The monsters are less than responsive. Apart from basic movement, trying to execute any tactics is a hit or miss affair. Once you are in a grapple, the outcome is very unpredictable. But if the control is bad, the game structure is... very bad! Rounds last for ages as monsters constantly struggle up, even when their energy bar is fully gone. Monsters that should be weakened suddenly start winning all the grapples, and in head to head mode, players continue even before a winner is announced. It's ridiculous that a farrago like this should be foisted upon Sega owners at all.

RICH

KING OF THE MONSTERS
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
HARD
CONTINUES
UNLIMITED
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
OK

PRESENTATION 80%
Nice storyline intro and title screen, plus options and intermission screens.

GRAPHICS 86%
The cartoony sprites are small, detailed and nicely animated and the backgrounds are great.

SOUND 78%
Fairly good quality, although the backing music itself is bland and the effects lack volume.

PLAYABILITY 89%
Quite fast, certainly responsive and the multitude of headgear makes it varied and very enjoyable to start with...

LASTABILITY 68%
...but the lack of challenge results in the game being completed fairly easily - which is a real shame.

OVERALL: 78%
A very playable game which has a couple of flaws. Beginners will enjoy the action, but it might be too easy for seasoned platform addicts.

PRESENTATION 78%
Crude but effective screens lead the player through the game, and the manual is laid out informatively.

GRAPHICS 74%
The graphics aren't too attractive, but they never obscure the task in hand.

SOUND 67%
An annoying tune plays throughout, and the sound effects are pretty limited.

PLAYABILITY 82%
Unlike most RPGs this is easy to get into and to play.

LASTABILITY 80%
It will take many days of playing to complete this, and then there are the other characters to play with.

OVERALL: 80%
An RPG which is long on gameplay, but short on decent graphics and sound. Try it out if you're an RPG fan.

PRESENTATION 73%
The only options are to alter the difficulty and time. Weirdly, the choice to fight the same player against each other exists.

GRAPHICS 65%
The game has a graphic flavour of the films it parodies, but the overall effect is spoiled by lack of variety, and poor animation on the monsters.

SOUND 51%
Yuck! The music is atrocious and there's no option to silence it, but the sound effects are no better, with rough unconvincing samples.

PLAYABILITY 56%
King of the Monsters suffers from having few moves that are spectacular to see, and struggles against a hideous control method.

LASTABILITY 52%
Only four characters with a few moves to master, so it doesn't offer lasting appeal.

OVERALL 55%
A good idea but a pretty hopeless game.



Your objective in this arcade puzzle game is simply, well, to klax! Allow me to explain.

Different coloured tiles roll towards you along a conveyor belt, and it's your job to collect these tiles and pile them up in the bin below the conveyor belt. A klax is an arrangement of three (or more) tiles of the same colour placed in a straight line which can either be horizontal, vertical or diagonal. Once a klax has been created, the tiles vanish, enabling you to fill up the bin with even more tiles in pursuit of more Klaxes.

The game itself is divided up into 99 waves, and each wave has a different objective.

**KLAX
BY
TENGEN
PLAYERS**

**1 GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
A BIT DODGY**



For example, on wave one, you just have to complete three klaxes, but later on you have to survive non-stop tides of 100 tiles, or dock up 10,000 points to progress.

The game sets up some really tough challenges, like creating a giant X across the full width of the bin and this requires massive forward-planing powers.

If completing the game is your prime objective, using the Warp Waves is your best bet.

There's no secret as to which waves are warp waves because it tells you just before the action begins.

Thankfully, the arcade game's two player mode is included in the cartridge. This works on a split screen, with two conveyor belts side by side and every time you complete Klaxes you load useless black tiles onto your opponents belt.

Klax is one of my all-time favourite puzzle games, so why aren't I raving like hell over

this? I'm afraid the answer lies in the control method.

Sometimes, when you're in a rush, the joypad just isn't sensitive enough. This lack of sensitivity really is a pain, resulting in many frustrating deaths.

That said, if you're after a good puzzle game you could do a lot worse than buy Klax.

RICH



PRESENTATION 78%

Just like the coin-op, complete with a decent attract sequence.

GRAPHICS 78%

Just the same as the coin-op really, with a variety of well-defined backdrops and functional sprites.

SOUND 84%

A lot of the coin-op's sampled "Ooh's" and "Yeah's" are in there.

PLAYABILITY 84%

The fiddly control method is a tad annoying, but the addictive arcade action's still in there.

LASTABILITY 81%

Klax has the sort of action that brings you back many months later for another fix of top-hole puzzle action.

OVERALL: 84%

Only the slightly annoying controls stop this from being one of the best versions of Klax yet. Klax fans should buy this instead of Japanese version.

Those dirty rats! They've invaded Krusty's Fun House and are going about their rodney business of chewing it to bits. Unless the furry maniacs are quickly caught and summarily put to death, Krusty faces life in a cardboard box! While some might argue it serves him right for being so obnoxious, Bart, Homer, Sideshow Mel and Corporal Punishment are ready to lend a hand by manning the rat traps. Seems like an easy enough task? Well it would be if the traps weren't in such awkward places.

Fortunately for Krusty, there are a number of useful blocks, pipes, blowers, and

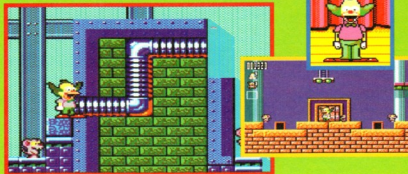


super springs littered about the house, which, if picked up and organised properly, should send the pesky rodents to meet their maker. But rats aren't the only creatures making Krusty's life a misery - Venom Vipers, Pink Flying Pigs, Laser Aliens and Giant Gooly Birds harbour in every floor, waiting to jeopardise Krusty's rat-exterminating antics.

The puzzle action is totally absorbing and the gameplay is beautifully balanced to draw you in slowly and get you prepared for the cleverly designed, but horribly complicated puzzles that lie on later levels. The graphics and sound are both excellent, but they're really secondary to the gameplay. Puzzle games aren't usually very popular, but I urge you to give this a

go. It'll have you scratching your head and yelling with frustration, then running around the room screaming with delight when you work out how to solve a puzzle. It'll also keep you entertained for weeks - which is more than your average "big name" platform game will do. Check it out!

JAZ



**KRUSTY'S SUPER
FUN HOUSE
BY
ACCLAIM
PLAYERS**

**1 GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM/HARD
CONTINUES
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD**

PRESENTATION 85%

Krusty and those pesky rats introduce themselves on the title screen. The password system is invaluable.

GRAPHICS 88%

The animation of the characters, especially Krusty, is just like the cartoon. The backdrops enhance this effect.

SOUND 87%

The funfair style tunes are cheerful and suit the mood perfectly. Excellent sound effects as well.

PLAYABILITY 89%

Getting used to the controls doesn't take very long, and the control response is perfect.

LASTABILITY 92%

While the early levels are pretty straightforward, the game quickly gets taxing and you won't rest until you've figured it out.

OVERALL 90%

A highly original game that's combines two genres perfectly.

The first beat 'em up on the Megadrive, this was originally entitled North Star Ken and was based on a Japanese Manga film, Fist of the North Star. If you've seen the cartoon, you'll know it's an action-packed fighting tale. But this game hardly

LAST BATTLE

lives up to that reputation. As the mystical mutant, Ken, (good name huh?) you have to travel radioactive waste-



lands and seek out an evil mutant warlord, thumping his soldiers out of the way as you go. One of Ken's punches is enough to knock anyone into the middle of the next century (or even take their head clean off), and that's just as well because his repertoire of moves is very limited. In fact, he can only perform a standard punch and kick, which makes the gameplay very limited as well.

This game is really showing its age, and if you want a good example of a scrolling beat 'em up forget this and go for Streets of Rage II.

RICH

PRESENTATION	45%
Hardly any presentation features. Minimal array of options.	
GRAPHICS	51%
Large sprites, but the animation is very stilted. Backgrounds look very old-fashioned too.	
SOUND	60%
Reasonable tunes and thumping effects. Certainly nothing to get excited about.	
PLAYABILITY	50%
Very limited gameplay makes Last Battle pretty much excitement-free.	
LASTABILITY	36%
It's all so bland you'll be bored within a few minutes and the cartridge will be condemned to a life on the shelf.	
OVERALL	40%
A hopeless old beat 'em up with hardly any variety and nothing interesting to the gameplay. It's really worth even its budget price tag.	

LAST BATTLE
BY SEGA PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
OK

The puzzle game starring the suicidal, green-haired critics became a massive hit all over the world and an just about every system. This Megadrive version is a straight conversion, with all the gameplay and levels of the original.

LEMMINGS

The idea behind the game is as follows. You're confronted by a gang of mindless creatures who just walk in one direction, non-stop, until they hit something (in which case they turn

around and walk in the other direction) or until they fall off a cliff or stroll under a crusher (in which case they, um, die). You have to get as many of them as possible from their starting



point, over heaps of dangerous obstacles, to their home base. To get them over these obstacles

you can give individual lemmings a special ability, such as being able to dig holes or climb or build bridges over gaping chasms.

As well as having dozens of varied solo levels, there's also a split-screen double player game in which you have to get your lemmings home, while leading your opponents to their doom (or even leading them into your base, which is a good trick).

The graphics and sound aren't outstanding, but they're more than adequate, and the gameplay is marvelously addictive from start to finish. One of the best puzzle games ever.

RICH

PRESENTATION	92%
Pleasant intro, plenty of levels and useful pass-word system.	
GRAPHICS	80%
Simple lemmings sprites, but the backgrounds are often surprisingly good.	
SOUND	80%
Ridiculous tunes, calculated to drive you mad, and suitably squeaky lemming-speak.	
PLAYABILITY	93%
One of those games that's brilliantly simple yet amazingly addictive! It's almost as much fun to watch the lemmings perish as it is to get them home.	
LASTABILITY	94%
Squillions of different levels which get super-tough. Two-player mode is ace!	
OVERALL	93%
A classic puzzle game, and one that no Megadrive fan should miss!	

LEMMINGS
BY SEGA PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY-HARD(!)
CONTINUES
PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS
4
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

This conversion of the PC hit takes you into modern day combat zones in order to create some serious disorder with your state-of-the-art combat helicopter. You have over 30 missions to fly, covering a wide variety of tasks, including dropping

LHX ATTACK CHOPPER

supplies and taking out command bunkers with the latest in weapons technology.

At your disposal are either the McDonald Douglas AH-64 Apache, or the untested LHX

Stealth Chopper. Between you and your objectives lies a vast range of enemy hardware that demands some precision flying to avoid or destroy.

The missions - there are 30 in all - increase in difficulty as you progress. The campaign zone starts off in the Libyan desert and missions usually involve flying long distances



over barren enemy territory to reach the objective. At the start of each mission you are given an intelligence report that outlines your task, followed by a weather report and a password code. There are a variety of mission types, not all of which, involve blasting the living daylight out of the countryside.

This is a damn fine combat game, made all the better for the varied and well thought out missions it offers. The bottom line is that this is a game which is bound to pay rewards with a little patience and attention spent on it. Great stuff.

RICH

PRESENTATION	86%
Plenty of options to wade through and some pleasant static presentation screens.	
GRAPHICS	83%
The shaded vector graphics move reasonably fast and the cockpit layout is smart.	
SOUND	66%
The effects and speech are atmospheric but sparse.	
PLAYABILITY	85%
The complex control system may prove infuriating for beginners but the compulsion to get into the game is high.	
LASTABILITY	90%
Persevere and you'll discover a game with plenty of depth and excitement.	
OVERALL	89%
A REAL air combat simulation, LHX Attack Chopper is highly recommended to anyone after a good, testable game.	

LHX ATTACK CHOPPER
BY ELECTRONIC ARTS PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
PASSWORDS
SKILL LEVELS
5
RESPONSIVENESS
FAIR



Based around the Lotus Turbo Esprit and the Lotus Elan, this game enables you to drive through eight different levels of obstacles, bad weather, and of course lots of other cars. Perhaps then you'd like to drive on a desert, or in two-way interstate

LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE

traffic or even in the middle of the night! The idea isn't to come first, as you expect from a race game. Instead you just have to keep one step (or second) ahead of the time limit and reach the

final checkpoint.

Lotus Turbo Challenge isn't half as pretty as say, Road Rash, and the sound is very sad indeed. However, it's gameplay that is all-important and in this department, Lotus scores very highly. In one-player mode, it's extremely-challenging and great fun.



LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE
BY ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS 1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY MEDIUM
CONTINUES PASSWORDS SKILL LEVELS
RESPONSIVENESS TOPPER

The two-player mode makes the game all the better. Not only are you racing against an unpredictable opponent, you're also up against some near-impossible time limits too - excitement guaranteed! I think that some of that excitement is lacking in the one-player mode, so if you're a solo player try out Road Rash II or F1 World Championship before checking this out. If you've got a mate who's willing to play, definitely buy Lotus Turbo Challenge. It's the business!

RICH

PRESENTATION 88%
Not many options, but a password feature and some pretty screens help liven up the game.
GRAPHICS 79%
The graphics are animated pretty well and the 3D update is quite convincing, even if the sprites look a tad ragged and the backdrops seem quite blocky for a Megadrive game.
SOUND 50%
Quite poor. The speech is bit sad, the music barely acceptable and the sound effects lacklustre.
PLAYABILITY 88%
Brilliant, challenging fun in one-player mode which is heightened when playing the game with the simultaneous two-player mode.
LASTABILITY 87%
The two-player mode keeps you coming back again and again for a bosh.
OVERALL 87%
An excellent road racer, packed with high-speed fun. Particularly good with two players.

This simulation puts you in, well, all the seats of an M1 tank, out on patrol in Cold War Germany. You can take up any of the tank crews' positions and control the driving, the gunning, look out of the top of turret, everything. No corners have

M1 ABRAMS

been cut in the simulation. The landscape is displayed in glorious 3D-o-vision and there are a plentiful array of controls. To save you from finger-contorting button combinations, though, the controls have been simpli-

fied onto pull-down menus which work well.

Not being a machine well-suited to displaying 3D vector graphics, the Megadrive has a tough job of keeping the 3D play going



M1 ABRAMS TANK
BY SEGA
PLAYERS
GAME DIFFICULTY MEDIUM
CONTINUES NONE
SKILL LEVELS
RESPONSIVENESS SLOWISH

smoothly but it gets by. The trouble is that a tank combat simulation isn't going to be as fast-moving as a jet fighter sim like F-22, so don't expect M1 to provide zoom-and-boom thrills. It is, however, an enjoyable game which, in spite of the rather rudimentary graphics, has a realistic feel.

LEE

PRESENTATION 80%
A reasonable range of options which includes a mission select and mission briefing. The menu controls are well designed to make it use.
GRAPHICS 79%
The 3D graphics are rudimentary but they're fast and smooth, so they do their job more than adequately.
SOUND 70%
Rumbling tanks and booms and a bit of military music it the start.
PLAYABILITY 85%
Not superfast thrills, but the simulation feels realistic so it's compelling once you get the hang of it.
LASTABILITY 78%
There are only ten missions, but they're quite challenging.
OVERALL 81%
A great tank simulation, but it won't appeal to everyone.

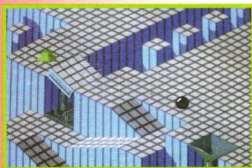
Those enterprising folks at Atari have taken traditional marbles and made them battle it out in an all or nothing race set across varied isometric 3D scrolling landscapes. The object of each race is simply to reach the GOAL! flag positioned at the end of the course, but before you

MARBLE MADNESS

can get there you need to negotiate the Marble Madness authorities' cunning traps - mutant black marbles, moving

acid pools, stuff like that.

Just like the original coin-op, Marble Madness has the simultaneous two-player option



MARBLE MADNESS
BY ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS 1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY EASY/MEDIUM
CONTINUES
SKILL LEVELS
RESPONSIVENESS FAST

available. This doesn't change the gameplay much, but there are plenty of laughs to be had as the two of you bump each other off the road to the finishing line.

Some players might be disappointed by the fact that there are only six levels, but personally it doesn't bother me at all - there are three difficulty settings and I found myself going back to it constantly to see whether I could improve my score, even after I had finished the game many times! If you want to experience a truly classic arcade game, take Marble Madness for a roll.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 87%
Not much in the way of attractive screens, but there's the choice of control modes and difficulty settings.
GRAPHICS 93%
Extremely well-defined, with some truly superb colouring and animation.
SOUND 86%
Catchy tunes that are stunningly close to the coin-op's. Decent effects abound too!
PLAYABILITY 93%
Once you've got used to the controls (which doesn't take long) Marble Madness is extremely playable and very addictive!
LASTABILITY 87%
Only six different levels, but actually completing the game is quite a task. The two-player mode keeps the appeal high too.
OVERALL 88%
A perfect arcade conversion, Marble Madness is in a class of its own on the Megadrive!

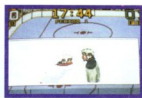
This is a simulation of the fair sport of ice hockey, complete with sportsmanlike features such as fouls and even fist-fights! The action is viewed side-on, and there are close-up screens of certain aspects of the action - such as the liffsticks! Ice hockey actu-



ally does have rules, though, and the standard 6-0-side, get-the-puck-into-the-goal regulations apply.

After each play, I've come to the conclusion that Electronic

Arts' NHLPA still rules supreme, but Mario Lemieux Ice Hockey certainly gives it a good run for its money. Mario is packed full of excellent features, but is unfortunately marred by the annoying player-selection - when you pass,



the computer sometimes chooses a player away from the puck which results in you being intercepted and your attack completely breaking down. Very irritating, especially if the computer team scores! Apart from that, Mario Lemieux Ice Hockey is a very comprehensive simulation of the sport which features impressive stats screens and some neat touches. It should definitely appeal to fans of the sport - but check out NHLPA (or even the new NHLPA '94) before you buy.

JAZ

MARIO LEMIEUX ICE HOCKEY
BY SEGA
PLAYERS 1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY MED/HARD
CONTINUOUS N/A
SKILL LEVELS 3
RESPONSIVENESS A BIT SLOW

Mazinger-Z is the cyborg hero of this scrolling beat 'em up with extra bits. For the most part, he has to cross cityscapes full of enemy fighting robot blokes and, basically, chop them into shrapnel with his big sword. This part of the game looks



something like a cut-down version of Golden Axe, with weeny (but nicely animated) sprites fighting it out on rather bland backdrops.

Get to the boss at the end

of the level, though, and the screen changes to show a gigantic Mazinger sprite doing head-to-head battle with some vile monster! The animation on this bit is super-realistic, and



Mazinger has to use blocking and parrying moves to beat his super-powered foe. Although the other section isn't bad, it's this bit that really makes the game. It's excellent fun, really challenging and looks stunning. What more should I say, except, 'Get it!'

RICH

PRESENTATION 70%
Reasonably intro and set of options. Decent, but nothing really to write home about.

GRAPHICS 90%
Brilliantly animated throughout - even on the small sprites - and the bosses are a knockout!

SOUND 70%
Great title tune and when you're battling the bosses, the music goes wild and there are some great clashing sword effects.

PLAYABILITY 89%
Pretty basic back-and-slay stuff, until you get to the boss sections which are almost a game in themselves!

LASTABILITY 88%
The bosses really are the big lure, and though they're really tough to beat, you keep coming back for more punishment.

OVERALL 89%
An excellent beat 'em up which is much better than it first appears.

MAZIN WARS
BY SEGA
PLAYERS 1
GAME DIFFICULTY VERY HARD
CONTINUOUS 3
SKILL LEVELS 3
RESPONSIVENESS GOOD

Mega-Lo-Mania is set before the dawn of creation and centres around the exploits of four different god-like beings who are vying for ownership of a planet. In order to decide who claims the world, each of them must take control of a tribe of



100 humans and use them to conquer their rivals' tribes on 27 islands, in nine different time periods.

Playing as one of these gods, you have to build up the



technology of your people, allow them to reproduce and move them to new homes on the island. Technology revolves around defending and maintaining your homes along with developing weapons used to take out the opposition. As the tech-level of your people increases, so does the

sophistication of your designs. Indeed, later levels require laboratories, mines and factories to bring your technical innovations to the people!

Although this might sound like Populous, Mega-Lo-Mania is far superior. You have much more freedom to move people, attack enemies, design weapons and defend your buildings. Whoever worked out all the complex relations of mining, designing and producing must be a genius! But the game is still easy to get into in spite of its subtleties.

RICH

PRESENTATION 97%
Brilliant. A vast range of options, a help system and a great look to the game itself.

GRAPHICS 86%
Great definition on the sprites (even the tiny men) and backdrops, depicting the action perfectly.

SOUND 94%
A vast amount of weird and funny digitised speech, plus decent effects and suitably atmospheric music.

PLAYABILITY 94%
The help system makes the game easy to get into and once you're in, you're addicted!

LASTABILITY 90%
Only nine levels to conquer, but the last few are large and exceptionally tough!

OVERALL 94%
An exceptional console debut from Sensible Software, Mega-Lo-Mania is the ultimate god-game!

MEGA-LO-MANIA
BY VIRGIN GAMES
PLAYERS 1
GAME DIFFICULTY MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS 1
RESPONSIVENESS GOOD

Sega's Menacer attachment is a gun peripheral supplied with a six game cartridge, which use the on-screen targeting and sights in a variety of ways. The hardware is packaged in subtle shades of grey quite in line with the Megadrive's glossy black looks. But enough of aesthetics. Enter the Menacer shooting gallery and have a look at the package.

BEST OPTION

This game is played in the dark. Press a button though, and a circle of light appears around your gunsight revealing a pizza being nibbled by ravenous insects. It's up to you to save the pizza by blasting the ever-act-

THE MENACER
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



erating creepy crawlies.

SEXY, RIM, TOMATOES
In this Toe-Jam and Earl shoot 'em up, your Menacer is loaded with rotten tomatoes. As the screen scrolls sideways, old enemies like the Mad Doctor, the Cupids and the Bogey-Man appear, so just splat them all for a big score!

FRONTLINE

Your gun is the only weapon against a massive armoured invasion force, who seem a bit disorganised (they're all going in different directions). As they

travel across the screen, you use your sight to target and destroy them.

SPACE STATION DEFENDER

You're defending a moon base, with alien hordes materialising before your eyes. You have a very limited energy supply, depleted by each shot you make and you must keep moving the sight to the bottom of the screen to recharge.

WHACK BALL

This is best described as a Breakout clone in which you use your Menacer to move a circular paddle around the screen, trying to bounce a ball against destructible blocks. When they've all gone on you go to the next, more complex, layout.

ROCKMAN'S ZONE

This gangster shoot-out resembles old arcade faves like Chicago 1931 and Hogan's Alley. Each level is set in the same seamy street. Suddenly someone appears at a window and you have a split second to decide if it's an armed hoodlum, or an innocent mull.

Unfortunately, all six of these games are very simple, so it can get dull very quickly. After a year on the shelves the only worthwhile Menacer-compatible game to appear is Terminator II: The Arcade Game, so there's not much scope for something else to play. Unless you see Menacer packs heavily discounted you're better off spending your money on a good cart game.

JAL

PRESENTATION 76%

You get lots of Menacer attachments. Skill levels and other such luxuries are non-existent.

GRAPHICS 65%

Six different games means a variety of styles. High points include Tomatoes and bits of Rockman's Zone.

SOUND 58%

The Toe Jam and Earl section retains a lot of effects of the original. Lots of other FX, but nothing outstanding.

PLAYABILITY 65%

The novelty value of the Menacer affords a few hours of action.

LASTABILITY 60%

The six games are pretty basic, so they do grow dull quickly. Playing with a bunch of mates is good fun, though.

OVERALL 60%

With only one decent title to use with it, the Menacer is just an expensive novelty.



Terrorists have kidnapped former president Ronald Reagan, and are threatening to kill him if all America's nuclear missile codes aren't handed over to them. That's your cue to wander up the screen in the style of the old Commando arcade game and shoot everything, including enemy soldiers, tanks, jeeps, helicopters and jets! A fair smattering of weapon upgrades and life-sustaining hamburgers appear whenever you shoot open one of the chests which are lying around.

As well as being an almost-complete conversion of the arcade game (the two play-



er mode is sadly missing) the Merc3 cart also contains a new eight-level game variation. Each level of this game is totally different to the arcade mode, meaning that you really get two games for the price of one.

How's that for value?

In the death 'n' destruction stakes, this takes some beating, featuring some of the meanest mega-weapons ever seen in a game of this kind! Like most Megadrive games, you can fin-

ish it fairly quickly on the easiest level, but select the hardest one and there's a decent challenge to test your shoot 'em up skills. The graphics are excellent, with plenty of small, but nicely detailed sprites running around trying to bring about your demise, and sound consists of thumping soundtracks and even louder explosions.



PRESENTATION 81%

Standard options, animated intros and great shop and mercenary select screens on original mode.

GRAPHICS 89%

Loads of great sprites, backgrounds, animation and effects. Just watch 'n' burn!

SOUND 88%

Explosions, screams and gunfire abound, as well as some brilliant tunes.

PLAYABILITY 91%

The straightforward, high-quality blasting action results in instant addiction.

LASTABILITY 83%

Loads of levels and two different games will keep blasting fans happy well into the New Year.

OVERALL 88%

A stunning conversion made even better with the addition of a second, expanded game on the cartridge. Blasting fans shouldn't miss it.

MERC3
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY/MED
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
SPEEDY CENTRAL

When your sweetheart is abducted you'll go to the end of the Earth to rescue her - even if she's a mouse.

Yes, Minnie Mouse has been captured by the Evil Witch and taken to her Castle of Illusion. The only way for Mickey - that's you - to release his loved one is to go on a quest for the seven magical jewels, and so build a rainbow bridge across the chasm to the castle.

Battle your way through five surreal levels of platform action, gathering the coloured gems as you go. Starting in a forest world, Mickey is attacked by mutant mushrooms, terrifying trees and ferocious flowers.

MICKEY MOUSE: CASTLE OF ILLUSION
 BY SEGA
 PLAYERS ONE
 GAME DIFFICULTY EASY
 CONTINUES TWO
 SKILL LEVELS THREE
 RESPONSIVENESS EXCELLENT



Then it's on to Toytown, where bizarre childhood objects block the spunky rodent's path. Later stages are set in Aztec ruins, a cupboard and eventually the Castle of Illusion itself.

To help him on his way,

our favourite big-eared character performs can destroy the baddies by bouncing on their heads or chucking apples or marbles at them.

When it first appeared this game had the best Megadrive

graphics, but since then the standard of Megadrive games has improved. Having said that, this still looks great and plays very well, but the trouble is most players will find it rather easy to complete, and there are plenty of similar games

around these days which are just a bit better, one of them being the sequel, World of Illusion.

Nevertheless, if you find this at a knock-down price, though, it's perfect for younger players.

RICH



PRESENTATION 88%

The intro sequence describing Minnie's abduction is superb - as is the rest of the presentation.

GRAPHICS 90%

It's a Disney game, so it's bound to be excellent in this department! Large, clear sprites and gorgeous backgrounds!

SOUND 85%

The superb music fits the game perfectly, and the spot effects are great.

PLAYABILITY 89%

Very simple but very enjoyable. The wonderful graphics are a major attraction.

LASTABILITY 79%

The five levels are enjoyable, but they're pretty easy and they don't take too much beating.

OVERALL 88%

Still a very good platform game, though the low difficulty level best suits it to younger players.

Inside every miniature car there is a miniature driver bursting to get out. These shrunken motorists wait until no-one is looking and then take around any available surface at high speed. Eleven of these tiny racers feature in Micro Machines, in a tournament to discover who is the best all-around driver of them all in various vehicles, in this overhead view racing game.

Some of the eleven drivers are better than others. However, to make things easier, the rating of each driver is written above their picture on the driver select screen, so that you can pick out the good drivers at



the beginning, knock them out in the easy early races and then have the weedy ones to contend with when things get harder.

If you achieve first place in three events running you are treated to a bonus event, the Ruffrux. This gives you a strict time limit to negotiate an off-road course littered with boul-

ders and precariously tight paths through rivers. There's no penalty for failure but you get an extra life if you win though.

Micro Machines doesn't look any great shakes from the stills, but the scrolling is super smooth, super fast. The two-player game is particularly addictive, not least due to the

wide range of wacky courses and vehicles to try out. The single player mode is frustrating at times, because of the dirty tactics of the opponents, but perhaps overall the game is a little on the easy side. The best thing it has going for it is the humour, with the snooker tables, desks-top and marmalade spillages to race through.

JAZ



MICRO MACHINES
 BY CODE MASTERS
 PLAYERS 1-2
 GAME DIFFICULTY HARD
 CONTINUES NONE
 SKILL LEVELS 1
 RESPONSIVENESS EXCELLENT

PRESENTATION 93%

Loads of characters to choose from and excellent presentation screens abound.

GRAPHICS 78%

Colourful, though small, sprites and great backdrops with a lot of attention to detail.

SOUND 73%

The effects are a bit dismal and there are no in-game tunes.

PLAYABILITY 95%

Very smooth, responsive and fast. The different races with the different vehicles are brilliantly done.

LASTABILITY 80%

The one player option is too easy to last for very long, but the two player frolics could go on forever and ever.

OVERALL 93%

A cracking game in two-player mode, but single players might not get as much fun out of Micro Machines.



MIDNIGHT RESISTANCE

The evil King Crimson has arrived with a few alien planet-conquering battleships in tow. The population of Earth is basically knackered, and only one pocket of resistance remains: the elite Midnight Resistance team. The only problem is that you're the only Midnight Resistor left and you have to infiltrate Crimson's metallic domain, pinching his power-ups and weaponry, and laying waste to all of Crimson's cronies.

This is a close conversion of Data East's scrolling shoot 'em up arcade game, missing only two features, a two player mode and a swivelling joystick which

MIDNIGHT RESISTANCE
BY
DATA EAST
PLAYERS
↓
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY/ARCADE
CONTINUES
1-5
SKILL LEVELS
4
RESPONSIVENESS
GREAT

let you run one way while firing in another. The Megadrive conversion has four different control methods; the best being the use of the B button to freeze your gun position while you can run and jump in any other.

Once you've got to grips

with the rather awkward control method, there's a really decent blasting experience to be enjoyed here. The game is massive, with very long and varied levels packed full of enemy soldiers and machinery just waiting to make mince meat out of

you! It's challenging too - as long as you don't pick the "easy" level, which lets you finish the game very quickly. The graphics vary in quality from excellent to a bit ropey, but the sound effects and music maintain a very high quality

throughout the game. All in all, though, highly recommended - just remember not to play it on the "easy" setting!
JAZ



PRESENTATION **80%**
Nice intro screens and loads of options to fiddle about with, including a selection of control methods to cope with the rotating gun. No two player mode, unfortunately.

GRAPHICS **76%**
A bit rough in places, but mostly good.

SOUND **80%**
Pulse-racing soundtracks accompany the action perfectly!

PLAYABILITY **82%**
It takes a couple of goes to get used to the control method, but after that, the blasting action is very addictive...

LASTABILITY **77%**
...with four skill levels and nine levels to wade through!

OVERALL **79%**
A decent blaster and an excellent conversion. Shoot 'em up fans should have a look.

Here's one of that rare breed, a Megadrive flight simulation. As you may have guessed, in MiG 29 you're put at the simulated controls of... a Russian MiG-29 fighter! Five missions, and a training flight take you on land and sea based missions, using advanced laser-guided missile technology to pinpoint industrial and military targets then blow them to smithereens. Avoiding civilian or "collateral" damage is a priority, considering the closeness of tower blocks to the target sites.

Unlike some Megadrive flight sims, MiG 29 gives you just about all the controls you would find in a PC flight sim,

MIG 29

though making them all accessible from a three button joystick has necessitated putting things like missile arming controls on in-flight menus. The menus also let you select a wide variety of view angles so that you can watch the action from different locations.

When it comes to gameplay, MiG 29 left me real bored. The most annoying fact is the

poor handling of the plane, and the sudden unpredictable dives it makes. Whether this is the result of poor Russian aeronautics or Megadrive programming, I don't know. The result is a frustrating control method.

Having to work through menus to change missiles or view the map also slows the game down. Also, although the graphics look good, they don't do a very good

job of relating how close the ground actually is, so you have to keep a constant eye on the altimeter. This may sound like an exercise in "skill", but I personally found it a tiresome. To be fair, MiG 29 is quite a sophisticated simulation and it would repay whatever hard effort you put into learning its nuances. For a console game, though, it's all too slow for my liking.

RICH

PRESENTATION: **86%**
Lots of options, a training mission, and touches like the briefing room, but accessing the functions through menus slows play down.

GRAPHICS: **73%**
Reasonably speedy vector graphics, and interesting viewpoint effects. The impression of height is sometimes misleading and often fatal.

SOUND: **73%**
Nice title music, and the effects are realistic, though sparse.

PLAYABILITY: **71%**
There's lots to do, but it's more realistic than fun to play.

LASTABILITY: **79%**
Five missions, each proposing a major challenge means a lot of long term play.

OVERALL **75%**
Simulation fans will love it but most Megadrive owners will shy away from the slow, unexciting gameplay.

MIG 29
BY
DOMARK
PLAYERS
↓
GAME DIFFICULTY
HARD
CONTINUES
PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
POOR



MEGADRIVE REVIEW

Might and Magic is a fantasy role-playing game set (like most of these games) in a mystical land where your task is to lead a party of brave adventurers through the local cities, dungeons and wilderness on a quest to recover a magic Orb.



The locations are viewed through a 3D window in the display and when monsters are around, they're shown here. Killing these creatures gives the party experience and the chance

to gather booty, which allows them to buy goods in shops and taverns. Eventually the quest leads to the Orb itself, but along the way the party have to evade more monsters, as well as diseases, and a host of other repulsive fates.

The current game can be saved to battery-backed RAM so that the adventure can be continued at



MIGHT AND MAGIC II
BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
BATTERY SAVE
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
OK

a later date.

The graphics are basic but this sort of game needs playability rather than cosmetic touches and there's enough in Might and Magic to keep fans of hard-core RPGs going for a while.

Those not steeped in the traditions of role-playing may find it a bit slow going, though. The combat-by-rounds system is very long-winded, especially when you're confronted by a gang of six cats (yes, cats). If you're new to this type of game, you would probably find something like Landstalker a better introduction.

8.5/10

PRESENTATION 73%
The basic but informative intros set the style for the rest of the game.

GRAPHICS 73%
Hardly elaborate, but the monster graphics are good, and the different displays give the player all the information he needs.

SOUND 63%
There's no way anyone could play this game for hours listening to the insipid tune, but thankfully it can be turned off.

PLAYABILITY 77%
M&M is instantly playable and the old-fashioned combat, though long-winded, isn't too difficult to get to grips with.

LASTABILITY: 85%
This will take a LONG time to complete, but considering the £50 price tag it ought to!

OVERALL: 80%
RPG fans should enjoy this, but beginners may not be quite so taken with Might and Magic.

Because of the vast American market for Megadrive games, American Football has always been one of the most popular sports to be translated into console game. Mike Ditka's was one of the first such games to be released on the Megadrive



after the original John Madden game, so there are some Madden influences to be seen in this game.

Mike Ditka Power Football has a two-player mode and the

'three possible plays' selection system. Since your opposing player doesn't know which button you pressed, your strategy remains a secret!

There are a lot of defensive and offensive strategies available in this game, and choosing the right one at the right time may be



instrumental to winning the game.

The obvious question is how does this compare to John Madden '92? Well, it doesn't fare too well - but that doesn't make it a disaster area. The sounds are terrific and the graphics aren't bad at all. Gameplay-wise it's fun, but sadly if just doesn't have the sheer depth and variety of Madden's, and this is what lets it down in the end. Sorry to keep banging on about Madden's, but if you want to experience the best on the Megadrive, that's the one to go for.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 68%
A pretty ropey, unpolished feel to the game, but the mass of possible plays is quite impressive.

GRAPHICS 75%
A bizarre cross between Joe Montana and John Madden's in style. The scrolling's pretty jerky but that isn't too terrible.

SOUND 70%
Plenty of pleasant tunes and decent effects create a reasonable stadium atmosphere.

PLAYABILITY 79%
Easy to get into and good fun to play. But if you've played John Madden '92 you'll be less than impressed.

LASTABILITY 73%
Not quite as enjoyable as John Madden '92, and the scope for extended play is also limited compared to the EA game.

OVERALL: 70%
A decent American Football game unfortunately eclipsed by the classic John Madden games.

Vile drug lord, Mr Big has kidnapped all 'The Kids' and he plans to make dope fiends out of the lot of them, but not if kindly King of Pop, Michael Jackson has anything to do with it! Mike takes to the platforms in Mr Big's many hideouts on the hunt



for the hijacked kids, swiping down Mr Big's henchmen/women/dogs with one mystical kick from his sparkling dancing shoes. He can

even power up his pop-ability and fling his Smooth Criminal hat at bunches of bandits, or even better, charge it up to such an extent that he can conjure

music from the air, causing the bad guys to 'dance till they drop'! All rather



comical really.

There isn't a lot of variety to the gameplay or the graphics in Megadrive Moonwalker, but the Jackson 'Oooh!' sound effects, the music (smart renditions of various tracks from the Bad album) and the dance sequences do set it off. Using your dance magic when surrounded by savage dogs results in them all getting up on their hind legs and grooving along to the beat! It's not a particularly tough game, though, and good players might find themselves completing it all too quickly.

JAZ

MOONWALKER
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
BRILL

PRESENTATION 87%
Brilliant! Comic Jackson cameo screens, plenty of options including a sound test (of course).

GRAPHICS 83%
Whoo! Jazko struts his thang, moonwalks and even enters lifts in a cool fashion.

SOUND 89%
Amazing if you're a Jackson fan - slightly annoying if you aren't. Loads of 'Ooh's and 'Aoww's too!

PLAYABILITY 75%
Addictive, though slightly repetitive find-the-kids gameplay.

LASTABILITY 65%
Hmmm... It's all a bit too simple, really so it can get a bit dull. Also, there's not really that much to keep you coming back to the Megadrive once you've finished the game.

OVERALL: 71%
An essential purchase for Jackson groups, and a decent enough game in its own right.



Coming in the wake of Streetfighter II, Mortal Kombat was a major arcade hit. It's combination of gory fighting and realistic looking fighters attracted punters by the million, and this is a straight conversion of the game, with all the features of the original transferred intact. Seven combatants take part in the Mortal Kombat tournament, all with different special powers and moves. The coin-op even gave them fatality moves which they could use to



finish off their opponents. These don't appear in the basic game, being rather gory, but they are

accessible by inputting a special joy-pad code at the start of the game.

The programmers have done a magnificent job of this translation, which looks amazingly like its arcade counterpart. The only thing that's missing is one of the con-



trol buttons, but you can live with that.

Be warned, though, the 'easy' difficulty setting is very easy to beat, but switch to the higher skills and the opponents learn your tac-

tics very quickly and you can hardly get away with using the same move twice! Definitely, if you like the arcade game you won't be disappointed with this, but some players may prefer to wait for Streetfighter II which promises to be even better!

RICH

MORTAL KOMBAT
BY
ACCLAIM
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
OKAY



Park Place, the programming team responsible for the original John Madden and EA Hockey games turned their hands to another sport, boxing, and this is the result.

Playing as any of ten boxers (including 'The Greatest' - Ali himself) you have to win the World Heavyweight Boxing championship by smashing in the faces of your opponents, just like boxers do.

Instead of the 2D view of the action you get in, say, Evander Holyfield, Ali Boxing gives you a 3D view of the ring with the two fighters inside it. The view pans around to give the best view of the fight, and

this really adds a lot to the feel of the game. The other thing that really works are the boxer sprites. They move perfectly, and when you land a right cross the other guy really looks like he's felt it!

The controls are excellent

too, either in the arcade mode and a simulation mode. Both are easy to get to grips with and provide all the moves, both blocks and punches, that you could ask for, but the simplified arcade mode is a bit too simple to be any good.

There aren't many good video boxing games around, but this is definitely the best one I've ever played on a console. Worth buying even if you're not a fan of the sport!

JAZ

MUHAMMAD ALI BOXING

PRESENTATION 80%
Good option selection, but a rather cruddy vector graphics intro.

GRAPHICS 91%
Ace boxer sprites and the moving 3D ring really add a lot to the feel of the game.

SOUND 78%
Forgettable music, but good thumping sounds.

PLAYABILITY 92%
Excellent controls, graphics and atmosphere, so even if you were never a boxing fan before this is still a really easy game to get into.

LASTABILITY 90%
There isn't that much to beating the other boxers, but the two player mode is tremendous fun.

OVERALL 91%
The best console boxing game ever! Don't miss it!



MUHAMMAD ALI
BOXING
BY
VIRGIN
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
OK

Forget boring old American Football. This is an oddball version of the sport, in which the rules are more or less the same, but the teams are made of gargoyles, skeletons and other assorted uglies. The leagues span galaxies, and the games

MUTANT LEAGUE FOOTBALL

are played on the most bizarre pitches, some of them floating in space!

As in real American Football you have to get the ball from one end of the pitch to the

other, and there's all that stuff about 'downs', but things tend to be a bit more violent and when things are getting boring you can throw the opposition a ball loaded with gelatin that watch their receiver explode.

The presentation and graphics in MLF are smart, it plays really well and the concept of hav-



ing so many different alien races and playing fields gives the game plenty of variety. Mutant League Football does have its faults though. The main problem is that it plays so similarly to John Madden Football - even some of the formations and plays are the same. Also, sacking an opposing player seems to be too easy. In a two-player game, it seems to be an endless cycle of swapping possession, with very little in the way of touchdowns. If you haven't got any of the John Madden series of games, or if you want a sports game that's a departure from the norm check this out.

RICH

MUTANT LEAGUE FOOTBALL

BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
SKILL LEVELS
6 TEAM STRENGTHS
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

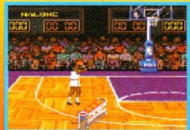
Previous Megadrive games have concentrated on playing games in the prestigious NBA League, but NBA All Star Challenge is a simulation of the more showmanlike one on one matches, where the most famous players take on each other in a

NBA BASKETBALL

fast-scoring three minute round.

The game offers four one-on-one play variations. The first is a simple tournament of basket scoring, with all the rules of normal basketball applying

(travelling, defence violations etc.). The second is the three point shootout, where each player throws four balls from five positions in an arc around the three point line. For some reason striped balls score double the points of plain brown ones. 'Horse' is the third game, another one-on-one variant, where opponents take turns trying to score



from either of its positions. Free throwing is like penalties: an open basket with a moving cursor, where timing is the key to a good score.

These four 'variations' aren't varied enough, though, and because all the action takes place in a small fraction of the court, the whole game turns out to be very unexciting. The programmers have made an attempt at beefing up the weak game ideas by including a tournament option, with playoffs between sets of players, but even so, playing against your dad in the back garden would be more fun than this virtually fun-free effort.

JAZ

NBA BASKETBALL

BY
ACCLAIM
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
N/A
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

Hit it the ice! Hit your opponent! Hit anything! If you were ever under the impression that Hockey was a nice game played by pleasant public school girls, think again. The sub-zero version of the game has little in common with its grassy relative.

NHLPA HOCKEY

The inevitable carnage that results from such a loose code of conduct is ably portrayed in this follow-up to EA Ice Hockey, from the masters of sports simulations, Electronic Arts. The gameplay of NHLPA '93 is a faster

version of the original, though many of the changes are cosmetic. One of the new features is the crowd analysis screen. This highly unnecessary but entertaining feature displays the decibel level achieved by the crowd's cheering. Violence also plays a far greater part in the sequel — you can start fights with your opponents, which are shown in a close-up window. Should you man-



age to trip your opponent the result is quite spectacular. A mere hook of the stick sends the hapless victim flying head over heels, in a hugely degrading show of sad acrobatic ineptitude. The violent nature of ice hockey is hyped up here, with the sampled groans and sprawling of the hapless sprites. The tacky atmosphere is well preserved with the crowd noise and the deliberately awful music. But this is a serious game, with serious options and a challenging computer opponent. Owners of the first, and ace EA Hockey, should hold onto their cash but those new to puck-related antics should take to the ice.

RICH

PRESENTATION 88%

Excellent series of stats and options, passwords, conferences and clear in game presentation.

GRAPHICS 80%

Large bizarre sprites, who indulge in some pretty convincing mauloid violence.

SOUND 77%

That annoying 'Twisted Flipper' soundtrack that gets on to every EA game now. And the coach's voice? Nil points.

PLAYABILITY 80%

Lots of play and good range of control over lead characters. Easy to get into as well

LASTABILITY 84%

A wealth of depth created by all those teams, and the tactics needed for each surface. The five levels of play are a dood challenging.

OVERALL 82%

A solid loofy game with some interesting fruits, that suffers from some annoying play aberrations.

PRESENTATION 81%

Nice graphic presentation of players and menus.

GRAPHICS 61%

Good player animation and clear sprites. Only a tiny portion of the court is ever seen, so NBA looks very boring.

SOUND 52%

A nondescript array of barely acceptable sound effects and forlorn music.

PLAYABILITY 36%

There is a head-to-head option for two players, but the range of action is very limited — no variety and dull from the first play.

LASTABILITY 25%

The routine and flaccid gameplay holds zero-lasting appeal.

OVERALL 29%

A Wafer-thin excuse for a game. Even four play variations cannot relieve the tedium of wandering around a fraction of a basketball court shooting three pointers.

PRESENTATION 97%

The presentation is well suited to the game and as such it's as near perfect as you're going to get.

GRAPHICS 91%

Noticeably better than the graphics in NHL Hockey, this smart, supported by faultless introduction and intermission screens.

SOUND 87%

Nice music, excellent sound effects, though some of the speech is a bit gravely.

PLAYABILITY 95%

Playable in the extreme, especially with two players. The computer opponent is more intelligent than the original.

LASTABILITY 90%

Like EA Hockey, there's plenty to keep you going. Even after the computer fails to impress, there's still the two player option.

OVERALL 90%

A brilliant hockey simulation that contains everything an avid fan could want, but EA Hockey does exactly the same.



US Gold's Olympic Gold contains the whole spectacle, from the lighting of the torch to the medal presentations. The game was released as a licensed tie-in to the Barcelona Olympic Games, which explains the large amount of logos and trademarks plastered everywhere. There's the chance to become the new kid off the blocks in the sprint, be untouchable in the hammer and win Bully's special prize in archery. Other gold medals can be won in the hurdles, the pole-vault, diving and swimming.

There are three levels of competition, with Olympic, national and club competitions.

**OLYMPIC GOLD
BY
US GOLD
PLAYERS**

**1-4
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
SLOW**



Beginners can also learn perfect technique from the teaching facility which takes the player, step by step, through the necessary moves of the various disciplines. US Gold have picked an eclectic series of events, perhaps judging them on terms of playability and looks. A variety of control methods are employed — some simple and others

treacherous. The sprint is a matter of button-bashing, while the diving tests tactics and dexterity. Instead of making for a balanced game this results in some events becoming a waste of time and others an impossible challenge.

When you consider all of the different events that make up the Olympics, US Gold

haven't really chosen particularly exciting ones for this game. The multi-player option here only allows contestants to take turns, which isn't even half as exciting as competing with one another directly. The graphics are nothing to write home about, the stadium being portrayed in the most basic terms. There are plenty of decent

touches throughout the game — but the bottom line is that this simply isn't anywhere near as good as it could have been.

JAZ



Nuclear devastation and pollution has all but destroyed the earth, but one man, Dr Beaumont, has managed to create a water replicator, which might just save the planet from extinction. Of course, he's now been kidnapped by a madman, and only one person (you) can rescue Beaumont. Your trusty vehicle, your machine gun, and your intimate knowledge of the barren terrain may just see you through the wilderness and the 28 different towns en route.

When you reach the next town it's advisable to pull over and scavenge some supplies. However, the locals aren't really very helpful and the only way to



get their stuff is either to beat the senseless or shoot them dead!

Pressing Start brings up the map of the wastelands and lets you see your progress. Although not really that helpful, it does come in handy to see how far it is to the next town.

Will you heed the warning of your fuel gauge and pull over, or will you try to make it to the next settlement?

Initially, Outlander just looks like a poor version of Road Rash, with less variety in the scenery. However, after playing for a couple of hours, it

shows itself to be action-packed and challenging in its own right... There are loads of explosions per minute as you blast bikers off the road, blow up helicopters, and barge cars out of the way. If you suddenly braka, the bikers behind you sprawl all over the hood!

It would have been better if there was more variety between the levels, and in the backdrops, but, this is still really enjoyable.

ROCK

**OUTLANDER
BY
MINDSCAPE
PLAYERS**

**1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
EARNED
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
OKAY**



PRESENTATION 88%
Olympic endorsements litter the title screen. Difficulty levels and the teach facility are useful touches.

GRAPHICS 69%
The animation of the sprites isn't bad, but the backdrops are unimpressive and bland.

SOUND 67%
Irritating, weedy tunes and the sound effects are largely non-existent.

PLAYABILITY 72%
The teach mode and largely simplistic nature of the game makes this a breeze to get into.

LASTABILITY 61%
There's simply not enough depth to sustain interest for a long period.

OVERALL 66%
A largely disappointing game with nothing particularly new or exciting on offer. Only ardent sports fans will be interested.

PRESENTATION 77%
A password feature and some great stills, and that's your lot, really.

GRAPHICS 74%
The 3D is a tad jerky, but works well with lots of big sprites. The sideways scrolling sections are graphically flat.

SOUND 83%
There's some very atmospheric music and decent sound effects.

PLAYABILITY 80%
The action is fast and furious, and though not immediately addictive, it does grow on you.

LASTABILITY 75%
Those 28 different levels might sound a lot, but there isn't much variety between them, so lastability is limited.

OVERALL 78%
Outlander is not without its flaws, but road racer fans with a taste for violence should definitely check this one out.

Take to the roads of America and enter the most arduous racing event for top-of-the-range sports cars! With only your turbo-charged Ferrari Testarossa (top speed: 188 mph) and a whingeing (but well-proportioned) female for company, it's your job to traverse five stages of racing action, dodging other racers and normal traffic in pursuit of the next checkpoint. Outrun is a conversion of an old Sega coin-op, where the emphasis is on a fun day's illegal racing rather than a serious competition.

In order to confuse the police, the Outrun organisers have erected not one, but five

OUTRUN
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

1
GAME DIFFICULTY
VERY EASY
CONTINUES
NONE
2
SKILL LEVELS
4
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



finishing lines, and it's down to you to consider which route provides the least number of pitfalls. Complete the game and glory is yours for ever and ever. Fail, and you can expect a good ticking off from your girlfriend or maybe worse! The route diagram shows you what to expect

when you choose your route through the Outrun courses. The only real hazard is the track itself. Some routes have fewer lanes and more cars than others.

Outrun might be an old arcade classic, but compared with other Megadrive versions

of more up-to-date arcade coin-ops, it's just not exciting enough. Outrun has neither the thrill of uncontrollable speed, or the challenge of other intelligent racers to contend with, and when you discover that it's so easy you can finish it on your first go, it all becomes rather dull and pointless. Without human opposition, or time trials. Even on the highest difficulty setting it's still very simple to complete, and only a complete race game novice with the reactions of a crippled slug could find any real challenge.

JAZ



PRESENTATION 75%
Loads of options and a decent coin-op style attract sequence.

GRAPHICS 71%
Okay sprites and backdrops and vibrant colour schemes but a couple of gruesome sprite effects spoil things slightly.

SOUND 73%
Not half as good as the arcade's sound, but the tunes are passable renditions of the coin-op original. The speech is in there too.

PLAYABILITY 67%
The Ferrari's handling is bizarre. It doesn't feel like playing the coin-op at all.

LASTABILITY 50%
Very easy to complete on all difficulty settings apart from the hardest.

OVERALL 55%
Looks like a good conversion of the coin-op, but play it and you'll be disappointed.

PacMan, one of the most famous arcade characters of all time, is back. Pacmania was a Namco coin-op of 1988, updating the adventures of PacMan from his arcade debut in 1980. This Megadrive conversion features all four of the original levels - Block Town, PacMan's Park, Sandbox Land, and Jungly Steps. On every level the objective remains simple: collect all the dots lying around the maze to complete it.

Of course these are never that easy. Pursuing PacMan are a number of ghosts, all bent on bringing about his demise. Each of the ghosts has a distinct personality, that PacMan should



learn to put to his advantage. Some ghosts track him by his trail, others by working out where he is at present. Luckily, our hero has learned to jump, and pass over the head of approaching danger. There is always the power pill to eat in an emergency - located at the outer four corners of the maze, these temporarily let PacMan

become the pursuer and gobble the ghosts. A new feature in this conversion is the Pac booster, which makes PacMan go faster. You can have it on all the time, or turn it on and off when you need to out run some pursuing ghosts!

Pacmania adds quite a bit to the old PacMan formula - the 3D angle and giant mazes

make the game much less predictable and Pac's jumping ability stops you getting into any instant-death positions.

Visually, there are few differences between Megadrive Pacmania and the arcade version, and the sound is also faithfully reproduced. Even so, the game idea is still simplistic and the gameplay is thirteen years old. The variation of graphics, and the small number of mazes doesn't do enough to keep the game interesting. There's a fair amount of nostalgia value with PacMania, but otherwise you may be disappointed.

RICH



PRESENTATION 70%
Decent options, and most of the PacMan Theatre intermission screens from the arcade game.

GRAPHICS 73%
Simple and crisp. The scrolling is flawless, and sprite movement is smooth.

SOUND 60%
Very similar tunes and sound effects to the arcade game.

PLAYABILITY 75%
Getting into the game couldn't be easier, and within a few goes you're hooked.

LASTABILITY 54%
Apart from a few scenery and layout changes, the levels are very much alike.

OVERALL 67%
One of the simplest games available on the Megadrive, but still fun. Anyone expecting lots of varied gameplay will be most disappointed, though.



A tari's Paperboy first appeared in the arcades nearly seven years ago, and cast you as a paper deliverer whose round takes him to the strangest parts of town. The main feature of the cabinet was the control - a set of bicycle handlebars. In this Megadrive conversion, all of the original coin-op's features have been included (except those handlebars) as you battle against the odds to get your papers delivered.

At the start of the game there are three streets to choose from, effectively giving three difficulty levels. Each level is split into seven days of the week. The object is simply to

PAPERBOY
BY
TENGEN
PLAYERS

1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
9
RESPONSIVENESS
POOR



PAPERBOY

survive until Sunday, by throwing papers into the boxes of your subscribers. Slinging a paper at a customer's front door is enough to count as a delivery, but skilful paperboys throw papers right into their mailbox, which results in a 250 point bonus! If you fail to deliver a paper to a subscriber, he cancels

his subscription. If all subscribers are lost, then the game ends.

Things are complicated by the presence of various obstacles such as lawn mowers, buggies, cassette players, and even ghosts! If you hit any of these, a life is lost. At the end of each day, Paperboy finishes his

round with a spin through the BMX stunt park, throwing his extra papers at targets, and going over ramps.

Paperboy scores top marks in the frustration stakes owing to two incredibly irritating factors. First of all, the collision detection is exceptionally dodgy, resulting in lots of unforeseen trips to the cemetery. Secondly, the control method is very unresponsive. Other than that, Paperboy remains quite faithful to the coin-op with backdrop graphics that mimic the coin-op adequately and loads of great sampled sounds. This game is perhaps a good buy for fans of the original, but ultimately it is just too annoying to be fun.

RICH

PRESENTATION 83%

Arcade-quality intermission screens and comprehensive difficulty settings.

GRAPHICS 73%

Crisp and clear sprites and bright backgrounds make this look just like the original machine.

SOUND 76%

Again, accurately reflects its arcade counterpart.

PLAYABILITY 69%

Annoying controls and bland gameplay make this frustrating and dull to play right from the outset.

LASTABILITY 63%

There are plenty of levels to conquer, but they're all more or less the same and not very entertaining.

OVERALL 63%

A faithful coin-op conversion which is sadly let down by gameplay flaws.



Paperboy has returned. Ten years ago he was hounded out of town for breaking windows and endangering the lives of pedestrians. All his good work catching thieves and the like was sadly overlooked. In this sequel to the original Paperboy, he has been given the chance to redeem himself.

The object is to deliver the daily rag to the subscribers on the street you have chosen to play. The skill is employed in getting the paper right into the mailbox. Miss one day and the customer cancels his order in disgust. The houses not getting papers are most unfriendly — ghosts, reversing cars and



PAPERBOY 2

skateboarders are all life-threatening. There are plenty of sight gags for you to initiate, like drooping a jacked-up car on the unfortunate owner's head. Half way through the level, you have the choice of visiting the Mondo Mart shopper, or the local Fairground, to test your shooting skills. At the end of the day, the familiar BMX course presents itself for bonus points.

Now Paperboy can be Papergirl if you desire. Her

paper-throwing abilities have not been changed, but she sports a natty pony-tail from under her baseball cap. At the end of a successful week behind the handlebars, a front page congratulates you on your sterling work.

The changes to this rather crusty 'classic' are easy to see — this time you can ride down both sides of the street, for example — but they don't really make it any better than the first game. Although there are more

and longer levels, the weakness of ten-year old gameplay shows through. Even the graphics don't look massively different from the original, and that didn't look too different from the Master System version.

Paperboy II's only potential point of interest are the gags, but even they are pretty corny and they come up over and over again.

Well past its sell-by date.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 70%

Simple options, and the pleasantly amusing newspaper intermission screens.

GRAPHICS 63%

Sprites which wouldn't look out of place on an 8-bit machine, and the 3D effect is awful.

SOUND 80%

There is some good quality sampled speech throughout, and the sound effects are good. The music is annoying.

PLAYABILITY 65%

Entertaining to a mild degree, with lots of targets to hit and a plethora of gags.

LASTABILITY 50%

The gags become unfunny very quickly and the game is less than action packed.

OVERALL 53%

This is probably the best that could be done to update paperboy, but the game itself is yesterday's news.

PAPERBOY II
BY
TENGEN
PLAYERS

1
GAME DIFFICULTY
HARD
CONTINUES
UNLIMITED
SKILL LEVELS
9
RESPONSIVENESS
OKAY





PGA TOUR GOLF

This elegant golf contains digitised versions of the four PGA Tournament courses in the USA. PGA Tour Golf was originally a PC game, and all the former options have been crammed into this cart, enabling up to four players to take each other on. Any player can be controlled either by a human or by your Megadrive.

You'd think that whamming your ball towards the green would be pretty simple. Unfortunately, a lot of things contribute to making your shot more difficult. For starters, the variable wind factor has to be taken into account when hitting the ball. A small indicator

enables you to judge how powerful this is. Timing your swing is done with the power bar, which must be stopped exactly to avoid hook or slice.

The courses themselves are also designed to make life a bit more difficult. Trees and lakes abound can spell potential doom to your pitching antics. Before each hole is played, a 'camera' makes an impressive sweep along the length of the

hole, with accompanying comments on how best to tackle it from well-known professionals like Fuzzy Zoeller and Tom Kite. When you near the hole a separate grid view of the greens assists you when you come to putt, by showing you minute variations. PGA Tour is a Rolls Royce of golf sims:

The graphics are simply superb on all counts - the animation on your golfer is incredi-

bly lifelike, and the ball flies realistically. The sound too is great, with plenty of sampled effects. Though there are only four courses they're all quite challenging to complete. Other players add a great competitive spirit to the proceedings. PGA Golf may not seem exciting, but it's actually one of the most involving Megadrive games. However you may want to consider the much enhanced PGA Tour II.

JAZ

PGA TOUR GOLF
BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS 1-4
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
BATTERY SAVE
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
PERFECT



The best got even better! With new features and three additional courses to test the mettle of the most dedicated golf addicts, PGA II steals the trophy as the best golf simulation on any system. The basic gameplay is more or less the same as the original, but additions include revamped graphics and sound, finer shot control and a Skins Game in addition to the usual tournament and practice options.

In the Skins Game, two to four players (and they can be a mix of human and computer players) are allowed to compete for cash over an 18 hole course with each one carrying a certain

amount of moolah for the taking. As the game progresses so does the value of the hole, or shoot, and a player is required to shoot the hole in fewer shots than his pals if he is to claim the prize.

Another new feature that Electronic Arts have included is the Hole Browser. The Browser

is an over-head camera that allows players to effectively fly over the course to anticipate any hazards that could foul things up and give the position any kind of advantage. Players have total control over the camera and are able to zoom in from any angle from a selection of viewpoints. Shots may also be

viewed in slow-motion strobe, and replays accompany stunning shots.

The original PGA Tour Golf scored so well because of the near-perfect playability. The sequel is just as good, but tinkers with the formula ever-so-slightly to good effect. New options, like the hole browser,

are actually very helpful when it comes to setting up difficult shots. Multi-player PGA Tour Golf was one of the greatest pastimes you could partake in using the Megadrive, and in the sequel is even better!

RICH

PGA TOUR GOLF 2

PGA TOUR GOLF II
BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS 1-4
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
BATTERY SAVE
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
PERFECT



PRESENTATION 92%
Well-presented all round, with loads of options, a save game mode and multi-player tournaments.

GRAPHICS 83%
The 3-D graphics work brilliantly, and the golfer's animation is great.

SOUND 81%
Swing your pants to the groovy tune, or mellow out with the soothing effects.

PLAYABILITY 91%
The control method is absolutely perfect making it easy to get into the game very quickly.

LASTABILITY 90%
Four courses for four players keeps the interest alive for many a month.

OVERALL 90%
A superb sports simulation which will appeal massively to all players, not just the golf fans.

PRESENTATION 93%
One of the aspects that has made PGA Tour Golf such a success is its flawless presentation.

GRAPHICS 92%
All the courses are convincingly drawn with the fly-over view and Hole Browsing facility helping to give depth to the playing field.

SOUND 90%
With the smart music and extra sampled effects, the sound in PGA II is virtually faultless.

PLAYABILITY 97%
The playability is without error, partly due to the sensible control method.

LASTABILITY 94%
There are seven different courses and three areas of play to choose from, so there's little chance of boredom!

OVERALL 95%
Electronic Arts have managed to make the best even better: the finest Golf on the Megadrive!



In this conversion of Atari's popular beat 'em up coin-op, one or two psychopathic head-cases battle other horrid loony fighting types in the Pitfighter contest, with big cash prizes awarded to the winner and the losers ending up with broken limbs and worse.

The opponents are a nasty bunch. Most are armed with horrible pointy things, they're nearly all a lot bigger than you and virtually every one is capable of shrugging off even your most devastating blows with ease. The crowd aren't neutral either, and give you a bunch of lives if you get too close. And if that's not enough to put you off,

PIT FIGHTER

there's always the King of the Pitfighters. This masked executioner-type taunts you during all your bouts.

Defeat him and you are proclaimed King (of Pit Fighting presumably), meaning you can quit the circuit and retire to spend all your money.

The three martial artists at your disposal; Ty, Buzz and Kato have their own signature

moves of devastation. Their power may be enhanced by a hidden power pill, secreted within crates on some of the levels, or by picking up the handy daggers and lead pipes strewn on the

floor. Succeed in a bout, and you have the chance to earn a quick bonus by hoisting your player on the fork-lift truck.

The coin-up featured fancy sprite-scaling and amazing animation, but these are both absent from this conversion. However, the sprites are quite detailed and their actions are accompanied by lots of speech (albeit of mediocre quality) and painful-sounding effects, but the movement is unconvincing.

What makes it fun is the horribly brutal action - it really is enjoyable to jump on player two's throat as he lies helplessly on the floor! Pitfighter is okay, but check out the newer beat 'em ups, like *Mortal Kombat* and *Streetfighter II* which are miles better.

RICH



PITFIGHTER

BY
DOMARK
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
HARD
CONTINUES
0
SKILL LEVELS
8
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

People who like to play God with other people's lives can again, with the second instalment in the Populous saga — *Two Tribes*. You are a Greek deity, presiding over a spread of civilisation. The object is to eradicate the followers of the evil God opponent, by constantly improving conditions for your own followers. Raising and lowering the land gives your people a flat surface to live on, and they build houses in which to 'create' more followers. And the more followers you have, the more manna (energy) they produce, and the stronger you become.

The type of dwelling that

POPULOUS 2

your followers build is determined by the amount of flat land nearby that they can farm. They start off in tiny huts which soon become villas, keeps, and eventually full-blown citadels. The more buildings you have, the more manna is created. The type of building also determines the technological level of the inhabitants - and how good they are at fighting off attacking enemies!

As you become more powerful, you are given the power

to create disasters, which are useful in inhibiting the growth of evil. The disasters available depend on the level you are playing, but they range through the elements from pillars of fire to tidal waves. The right disaster in the right location is devastating. But disasters use manna, so protecting your own followers is necessary. When they are strong enough, your followers go into one final battle for supremacy — Armageddon.

The graphics of Populous II

are nicely detailed and neatly laid out, and the disasters look great. Like lots of other Megadrive strategy games (*Mega-lo-Mania* being the only possible exception that I can think of) the action can get a bit samey from level to level, so don't expect major-league thrills and spills.

If you prefer strategy to action, though, this is the game for you.

RICH



POPULOUS II
BY
VIRGIN
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

PRESENTATION **71%**

Tries to recreate the look of the arcade original as far as possible, with loads of animated intermissions. A few useful options, too.

GRAPHICS **68%**

Nice enough sprites, but the animation is poor and the scrolling is jerky.

SOUND **78%**

Groovy sound effects and quite a bit of speech to complement the action.

PLAYABILITY **75%**

There are plenty of moves to master, and the mindless action provides instant fun.

LASTABILITY **67%**

The eight skill levels test the mettle of potential pit fighters. But compared to other fighting games, this doesn't have as much long-term appeal.

OVERALL **70%**

Not a knockout, by any manner of means, but amusingly thuggish nonetheless.

PRESENTATION **92%**

Great opening screens, easy-to-understand icons and generally superb in-game presentation.

GRAPHICS **81%**

Excellent landscapes, and the sprites have to be seen to be believed.

SOUND **56%**

Not much in the way of sound. Grunts, screams and atmospheric windswept sound FX is your lot

PLAYABILITY **89%**

As soon as you've learned what the icons do, you'll be completely hooked.

LASTABILITY **92%**

One thousand levels of strategy might prove a little daunting, but the increasing challenge will keep wargame fans going for ages.

OVERALL **90%**

A considerable improvement on the original Populous idea, this is without doubt, an ace strategy game.

You live in the frozen north, and it has occurred to you that a holiday home on the southern shores would be nice. Being a vicious despot, you decide to drag an unwilling army along, bludgeoning every town and village you come across en route. Only when you've conquered 195 countries will you be able to settle down for good. Along the way you have to feed your military entourage, trade with strangers, recruit new followers, and kill, kill, kill all who stand in your way. To add a dash of intrigue, you must form alliances with some dubious characters, and indulge in some spying as a fifth

POWERMONGER
BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS
↓
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS
↓
RESPONSIVENESS
SLOW

POWERMONGER

columnist. And you'll probably have to invent 195 new names for those countries.

The basic method of progress lies in attacking settlements. Settlements may consist of a single building, or a whole city. If you are weak you may want to trade or form alliances with larger foes, but mostly you

must bend people to your will by force of arms. The amount of resistance you meet depends on the population and their attitude to their former ruler. If they are discontent they are easily brought under your control. If they are zealous they fight bitterly. Once you have won a settlement all the

remaining people turn to your colour, and its resources are at your disposal. Powermonger boasts an astounding level of detail and depth of play. In some ways it is perhaps trying to do too much and this leads to a very slow game. Also, necessary facts and figures aren't in a readily digestible form, which

can be a bit frustrating. If it's the ultimate god game you're after, MegaLo-Mania rules supreme!

RICK



THIS ICON IS: NORMAL
THIS IS USED FOR AN ACTION TO HAVE ONLY HALF EFFECT.

Whilst browsing through Uncle Scrooge's library one afternoon, Donald the infamous Duck chances upon a book about the treasure of King Garuzia and a map giving clues as to its whereabouts. But Donald is being watched by Big Bad Pate, who has his own plan to seize the treasure.

The adventure takes the form of a scrolling platform game with puzzle elements. Donald, in his Indiana Jones garb, travels across the world finding bits of treasure and meeting his Disney buddies who send him on numerous vital sub-missions. If Donald can complete all these and beat the

QUACKSHOT

tan cosmopolitan levels, the treasure is his.

The levels are reached by flying across a world map, to locations in India, Lapland, Egypt and the South Pole. Puzzles and riddles that require objects from elsewhere means there's a lot of globe-trotting.

Donald has a variety of tools at his disposal with which to complete each level. The three plunger guns all freeze enemies, but have other uses, like creating plunger 'rungs' with which you can climb walls. Donald also has access to a bubblegum shooter, which destroys

scenery, and a popcorn shooter, which sprays five deadly kernels of corn. And if Donald eats a chili pepper during his adventure, it sends him into an uncontrollable fit of rage, during which he can charge all baddies out of his way. As in the other Megadrive Disney games, the graphics in Quackshot are brilliant. Unlike most of the Megadrive Disney games, though, the gameplay isn't so hot. The action consists of lots of wandering around locations which are beautifully drawn but have hardly anything happening in them. The infinite continues and the simple puzzles make it a bit easy to complete, so, so it's best suited to younger Megadrive owners.

RICK



PRESENTATION 90%
Massive manual and a helpful tutorial. Good on-screen presentation, and sensible controls.

GRAPHICS 81%
Highly impressive effects on the isometric map. Clear icons, and plenty of innovations.

SOUND 37%
Very basic sound effects, none of which are either important or impressive.

PLAYABILITY 77%
It takes a long time to get into the game, and it's definitely for the strategically minded only.

LASTABILITY 66%
After a while you find you're doing the same things over and over again, and the prospect of having to go through 195 samey levels doesn't inspire enthusiasm.

OVERALL 70%
Powermonger offers excellent value for money, but only for those with a strategic bent.

PRESENTATION 86%
Superb presentation, as you'd expect from a Disney licence. Lots of animated intros, intermission screens and options.

GRAPHICS 90%
Beautifully animated sprites and gorgeous backgrounds make Quackshot a visual treat.

SOUND 69%
The effects are quite good, but they're spoiled by mediocre music.

PLAYABILITY 74%
The slow pace and lack of immediate action make this seem rather dull.

LASTABILITY 72%
Things do get better as you progress. The end levels have more action in them and are more of a test of your platform skills.

OVERALL 73%
A slow-paced game which offers plenty of fun, but not enough in the way of challenge.



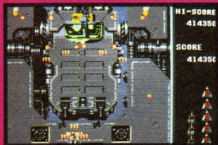
Once again, aliens have invaded Earth, and once again Earth's scientists have managed to knock together a mega-powerful fighter to repel the evil forces. This rather uninspiring story is the excuse for another vertically-scrolling shoot

RAIDEN TRAD

'em up, with a selection of aliens to shoot and a variety of meaty weapons to shoot them with.

You start the game with the basic cannon and a high-power

laser. When certain enemy vehicles are shot down, they release a weapons pod, which changes colour from red to blue. Red pods give your cannon a wider spread; blue replaces it with a laser. This can be powered up to a wide-beam mega-laser of doom.



Also available are nuclear missiles, homing lasers and alien-melting smart bombs.

On the surface, Raiden Trad doesn't look like it's got anything to save it from sinking without trace into the morass of Megadrive shoot 'em ups. The lack of weapons and the unoriginal graphics are an obvious setback but it does have both playability and challenge, especially the final level. If you haven't already had your fill of up-the-screen blasters, this is worth hunting out.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 70%
Standard options, but little else. In-game presentation is reasonable but nothing to write home about.

GRAPHICS 66%
Blurry sprites, and not many different enemies. Good scrolling and movement, though.

SOUND 61%
Groovy theme tunes and plenty of solid blasting noises.

PLAYABILITY 73%
Fast and responsive, and fun to play, though don't expect loads of different weapons or vastly varied gameplay.

LASTABILITY 67%
Eight levels, plus a secret super-hard level at the end. Lack of really unusual gameplay might be a bit of turn-off.

OVERALL 66%
A solid and enjoyable challenge, from an old and unoriginal blaster.

Bob and Bob are heroes! After rescuing their girlfriends from the evil clutches of The Boss of Shadow in Bubble Bobble, the lads returned to their home town in the Rainbow Islands and as the Japanese scenario puts it, got "Super-

RAINBOW ISLANDS

Drunk". The result: the bubble blowing dinosaurs have changed back into human form. But the celebrations are short-lived. The evil Boss of Shadow has returned to enslave the Rainbow Islands and their inhabitants. But there is

one hope. If seven huge crystals are collected the Rainbow Islands and their inhabitants will return to normal. Our heroes have the magic of the Rainbow, which generally means they can sling rainbows anywhere they want. The colourful artifacts make useful bridges, and also kill any bodies they fall on. So it's a case of scaling all 28 platform screens, dealing rainbow death to

any island guardians that stand in the way.

Not only does this Megadrive conversion feature an almost perfect copy of the original Rainbow Islands, it also features Super Rainbow Islands, a much harder version of the game but with different badies. So when you've got good at the first version, the second will challenge you further! The cute graphics are arcade perfect, but the sprites tend to flicker badly when the screen gets busy. Sadly, the dual player mode has also been lost. Otherwise this is a brilliant conversion, but you may well have to hunt around to find it on import.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 87%
All the coin-op presentation screens, along with loads of options and both versions of the coin-op in one cartridge!

GRAPHICS 73%
All the cuteness of the original is there. Shame about the flickery sprites, though.

SOUND 77%
That "re-mix" of Somewhere Over The Rainbow is still there, popping away in the background, and pretty zesty it is too!

PLAYABILITY 85%
All the rainbow-slinging, platform jumping fun of the arcade! Very easy to get into and there's loads of challenge.

LASTABILITY 83%
You get the "extra" version of the coin-op, and a choice of difficulty levels as well.

OVERALL 84%
A fabulous rendition of a classic coin-op!

RAINBOW ISLANDS
BY
TAITO
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
10
SKILL LEVELS
2
RESPONSIVENESS
EXCELLENT



D a war's over fa ma - I ain't gonna fight no more!" When these words come from Rambo, you can bet your bottom dollar that extreme violence is about to be committed. This game casts you as the mumbbling monosyllabic maestro of murder and mayhem, entering

RAMBO III

Afghanistan to rescue his chum Colonel Trautman, and killing the entire Soviet army as an afterthought. Of course, it would be ridiculous to think that an unarmed man could do all this - so Rambo is toiled up with the

latest in military hardware. This amounts to a machine gun, knife, and bow. These are selectable during each multidirectionally scrolling level, as are the time bombs that you send to blow up trucks and other sundry enemy emplacements. The five levels are shown from an overhead viewpoint, but between some levels is a 3D shoot-out, pitting Rambo against a large piece of enemy artillery, such as a

helicopter and tank, similar to Operation Wolf.

Rambo III features loads of dead bodies, tons of explosions and no dialogue - just like the film in fact! The main sprite is suitably Ramboesque, and the backgrounds and other sprites are good. The music and crunchy sound effects are also of a very high standard - especially on level two. The game itself isn't too difficult, and most players should be able to complete it within a week or so. Fortunately there are multiple difficulty levels to make the game more challenging and give a little more lasting appeal. A bargain in the budget range.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 86%
Some excellent intro sequences, and sound test and multiple skill options.

GRAPHICS 79%
Now looking a bit dated, but the sprites do actually look pretty good, and the explosion effects put a bit of pep into the game.

SOUND 89%
Unusual and atmospheric tunes and excellent effects that add a great deal to the game.

PLAYABILITY 88%
Once you've got through the tricky first level, the game is fairly straightforward. Good, ruthless blasting fun though.

LASTABILITY 77%
It's not difficult to finish, especially with unlimited continues. But it's enjoyable stuff.

OVERALL 80%
You may not have liked the film but you'll like the game. A good value piece of total carnage.

RAMBO III
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS
4
RESPONSIVENESS
AVERAGE





MEGADRIVE REVIEW

Itus Fax-Fairbrother, celebrated archaeologist made a remarkable discovery — the Rampart Chronicles. These revealing texts followed the collapse of two rival settlements on an island — their quarrel originating from the most trivial of circumstances. Many chapters, spoke of the endless cannon bombardments, and constant rebuilding work that followed. Eventually, the people of both castles wore themselves out and abandoned the island, evidently deciding that slaughtering each other over an ibino pig and the rights to the island's public convenience just wasn't worth the hassle! Rampart on the



Megadrive is converted from a quirky Atari coin-op of 1991. Two players aim to destroy their opponents castles, while extending their own.

The game plays in two distinct phases. The first is Battle Mode. You control a cursor, and have a shot for each cannon you possess within castle walls. In one-player mode, place your

cursor over enemy ships; in two-player mode place it over your opponent's walls. Made two is Build and Repair. You have a time-limit to repair all the gaps in the wall surrounding your castle. To fill the gaps the computer provides you with a selection of random-shaped wall pieces. If the castle's successfully repaired, its floor becomes che-

quered. You may use any spare time to incorporate surrounding castles into your empire. The more castles you surround, the more bonus cannons you get. The game continues until the all castles have breaks in the wall. The conversion of Rampart is about as close as you could want, though sadly it cannot use the four-player accessory. The

sound and graphics are as basic as the arcade. But this game only shines as a two-player outing. A great head-to-head game.

BACK



RAMPART
BY
TENGEN
PLAYERS

2

GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES

3

SKILL LEVELS

3

RESPONSIVENESS
NEAT

Danger X is a hip shoot 'em up using the trendiest form of future warfare kit — the Attack Suit. An attack suit is a huge armoured vehicle that takes the form of a human body shape, and performs its functions like a huge robot, but under the direct control of a human inside. In Ranger X's case, the attack suits are part of a force trying to liberate the earth from an alien tyrant set over five levels.

The suit is too heavy to be propelled by any means other than rockets, which give it lift and thrust. This means that dealing with tricky problems of inertia is necessary before really



enjoying the game. Despite its size, the Ranger X is very versatile. It carries multiple weapons systems and more can be found hidden amid the levels. It also has a remote unit, resembling a trike. If the Ranger lands on this they combine into a new vehicle with different firing characteristics. Learning the right weapon and configuration adds a strate-

gic element to the blasting action. On later levels the trike is replaced by a massive cruiser, which lends air support to the ground campaign.

Ranger X really is a smashing game. There's more action per kilobyte than most other Megadrive shooters, and the explosions are phenomenal. But it also rewards clever tactics and

thoughtful play, and is incredibly satisfying to play. The graphics are incredible, with some graphic effects never seen before on the Megadrive.

Ranger X is slick, brash and action-packed: a stunning game in every respect.

JAZ



RANGER X
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

1

GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES

3

SKILL LEVELS

3

RESPONSIVENESS
EXCELLENT

PRESENTATION **86%**
Plenty of options, allowing you to handicap yourself in battle, or alter battle parameters.

GRAPHICS **70%**
Almost arcade perfect - castles and cannonballs make a pleasant vista of carnage.

SOUND **69%**
Humorous speech samples and streams, and a fabulous whooshing noise of falling projectiles.

PLAYABILITY **82%**
The simplicity of control and easy rules help to make it instantly compulsive.

LASTABILITY **72%**
As a one-player game it's dull, but it's a two-player classic.

OVERALL **81%**
One of the most original and enjoyable combat games.

PRESENTATION **92%**
Choice of play levels, and atmospheric intro sequences, but two players would have been even better.

GRAPHICS **94%**
Excellent hardware sprites, and the level backgrounds and parallax scrolling make this a visual treat.

SOUND **83%**
Roaring explosion effect and computer noise, but the in-game music is dull

PLAYABILITY **92%**
Ultra brilliant gameplay, with the wonderful control feel and imaginative objectives on each level.

LASTABILITY **91%**
The difficulty curve is perfectly set, easy to get into but a stiff challenge to complete.

OVERALL **92%**
What a groovy game Ranger X is. A totally amazing blaster.



Become the hardest Ninja imaginable - swing your katana, throw your shuriken, use your magic, and generally beat seven types of doo-doo out of the fiendish foes determined to stop your progress. Anyway, it's a good thing you can do all these stunts as the buddies (the Zeed) have kidnapped your girlfriend: to rescue her you must travel around the world, destroying their bases as you go. *Revenge of Shinobi* unleashed Sega's favourite Ninja, Joe Musashi, onto the Megadrive public.

Shinobi carries with him a limited number of shuriken as well as his sword. He can also

REVENGE OF SHINOBI

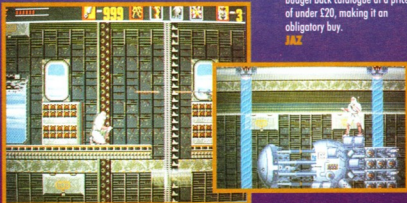
kick his foes, jump, somersault, and do a combination somersault/shuriken-spray attack. The best form of attack however is the devastating Ninjitsu magic; this comes in various forms depending on the game's level, and is crucial in order to defeat the end-of-level bosses. Shinobi has access to four types of Jitsu magic, from the weak 'Fushin',

to the suicidal 'Mijin', which wipes out entire screens of enemies.

The game has eight stages to the game, each subdivided into three parts, and a big bodie die to beat at the end of each one. *Revenge of Shinobi* is a huge game, and each stage is crammed with diverse types of scenery and denizens. The

graphics are exquisite, with flowing waterfalls and intricate Japanese pagodas, each with its own superb music by Yuzo Koshiro (Streets of Rage composer). The gameplay is also out of this world! There still aren't many games that are a match for *Revenge of Shinobi*; it has aged very gracefully. Best of all, it's on Sega's budget back catalogue at a price of under £20, making it an obligatory buy.

JAZ



REVENGE OF SHINOBI
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
4
RESPONSIVENESS
EXCELLENT

PRESENTATION 90%
Stunning opening sequence - and continues to impress throughout the game.

GRAPHICS 91%
Excellent ninja sprites and backgrounds. Just superb overall.

SOUND 94%
Loads of incredible effects and the groovy music by Yuzo Koshiro is absolutely amazing too!

PLAYABILITY 93%
Loads of action right from the word go. The fighting action is fast and furious and demands almost ninja skills!

LASTABILITY 92%
There are eight multi-stage levels to the game which go on for ages. Even the simplest difficulty level gets very tough as the game progresses.

OVERALL 93%
Utterly brilliant in every way. Make this a priority purchase if you missed it.

Void the demon has attempted to steal the Rod of Nexus. During this battle the rod was broken in two, and the two deities decided to turn each of their halves into rings. So what has this got to do with you?

Well, you are Buc, top sorcerer, who must now gather your party of fearsome warriors, recover all the lost rings and return them to Nexus assuring fobness for all eternity.

This task is performed in isometric view, with your characters rooming around the environment. Spells must be learned, characters conversed with and battles won before your quest is out. There are two

RINGS OF POWER

modes of view in *Rings of Power*. The first is a large-scale isometric map. You may move in any of four directions searching for vital cues. If you enter a building, the view zooms in. The action is then viewed on a much smaller scale and greater detail.

Combat in *Rings of Power* comes in two modes. The first is automatic, which selects the

spells for each of your characters and acts as appropriate. The second allows you to do all your own spell choosing. It's generally a good idea to stick to manual though, as the computer tends to get you killed.

The concept behind *Rings of Power* is a good one, but sadly somewhere between the drawing board and the finished

product something went wrong. Sad, jerky scrolling, a hopeless combat system, unfunny jokes, tortuously slow gameplay, feeble graphics and ear-ringingly awful sound ruin the great ideas behind the game and make it a real mess to play. Even the biggest role-playing fan will find this a chore. There are plenty of RPGs available that are miles better than this.

RICH



RINGS OF POWER
BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
HARD
CONTINUES
PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS
RESPONSIVENESS
SLOW

PRESENTATION 67%
Smart title screen, intros and detailed story screens accessible from the options screen.

GRAPHICS 34%
Dull, poorly deformed sprites. Shambling scrolling and hardly any animation.

SOUND 27%
Crummy tunes, and the effects do nothing to lift the aural gloom.

PLAYABILITY 41%
Slow, unresponsive and frustrating. It's hard to make your characters do what you want.

LASTABILITY 30%
Rings of Power is a big game, and it's not easy either. Unfortunately it's horrible to play.

OVERALL 35%
A brave attempt a Dungeons and Dragons-style adventure game which is spoiled by poor programming.

Rohan the warrior, guardian of a monastery, awakes one morning to discover that the brethren have all been kidnapped. Such events have become common since the evil warlord Draxos seized control of the land. Consequently Rohan, not being one to procrastinate, sets out into the Risky Woods in search of his charges.

The player battles the legions of Draxos in his priest-rescuing quest over nine scrolling platform levels. Draxos has turned the kidnapped monks to stone, so our hero is required to free them from their monolithic state by shattering their stone tombs with his

RISKY WOODS

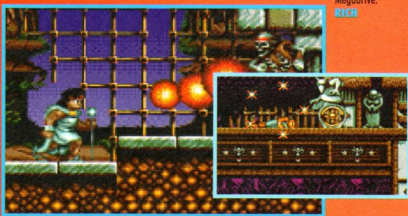
weapon. Once free, the joyous monks cast an almighty spell on their immediate surroundings causing everything evil to crumble and die. However, the dastardly Draxos has anticipated Rohan's ingenuity and has also encased a number of evil monks in stone. Such wily worshippers of the dark also cast spells that

damage Rohan along with the rest.

Although Risky Woods may look good it plays like a wet Sunday afternoon in Rochdale. Take away the glitter of the varied backgrounds and all you're left with is a below average platform game offering nothing new. All that is required of

Rohan is to trundle along and fire at the occasional enemies. The four main bosses look frightening but only take a couple of minutes to suss. Risky Woods stinks of a straight port-over from computer! It simply cannot hold its own against some of the superior arcade quality titles available to the

Megadrive.
RICH



RISKY WOODS
BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS
↓
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
9
↓
SKILL LEVELS
3
↓
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

PRESENTATION **77%**
Nifty looking title-screen and the almost obligatory sound test/control configuration option screen.

GRAPHICS **84%**
Risky Woods abounds with the most attractive looking sprites and scenic backgrounds. But everything looks rigid and uncool.

SOUND **81%**
The music is clean, polished and very computer-like!

PLAYABILITY **75%**
The desire to experience all the graphics of the other levels is high.

LASTABILITY **72%**
There are nine levels to battle through which should take most players a while to explore, but the end result is hardly worth it.

OVERALL **74%**
It's not that Risky Woods altogether bad but the machine is capable of so much more.

This motorbike racing game features five different tracks, and the object on each is very straightforward - beat the other 18 riders to the finishing post. Things are made a little more complex by the fact that there are no rules - riders can crash into or even punch other riders in an attempt to knock them off their bikes.

Add cars which travel the road driving towards you on the left (this is America) and a highly annoying traffic cop who chases after you, and life suddenly becomes more difficult. If

ROAD RASH

you manage to finish all five races, you progress to the next level, where cars are more numerous and riders even more maniacal. If the bike has a bad collision with anything, the rider

gets knocked off and much time is wasted as he springs back to his bike, picks it up and gets back into the race.

Road Rash combines all the thrills of high-speed racing with a fair dose of extreme violence! The 3D graphics are excellent. Whizzing over the varied, graphically superb land-

scapes is made all the more enjoyable by the brilliant sound effects. The scream of the motorbike's engine is superb, and Rob Hubbard has provided some great music as well. It's gameplay that counts though, and Road Rash more than delivers. You'll never believe that you just flew through the air at over 100 mph landing on the hapless corpse of a very unfortunate fellow rider! As road racers go, Road Rash is definitely one of the most action-packed and exciting offerings on the Megadrive.

RICH



ROAD RASH
BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS
↓
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS
3
↓
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

PRESENTATION **88%**
Superb in-game presentation, with brilliant stills and easy-to-use menus.

GRAPHICS **87%**
The 3D update is very fast and totally convincing - make sure you take travel sickness pills before playing!

SOUND **90%**
There's a choice between excellent heavy metal-style tunes and superb sound effects.

PLAYABILITY **91%**
Getting into this is as easy as riding a bike...

LASTABILITY **85%**
...but the riders on the other bikes make this a tough and challenging game for any speed demon.

OVERALL **90%**
A truly thrilling high-speed game which will drive your adrenal gland into a frenzy!



It is one year, almost to the day since the ultimate biker's championship! Road Rash races are set on highways, in amongst the normal traffic, and any form of violence against another biker is encouraged!

There are five major leagues in Road Rash II, each has five races to complete before you are promoted. The landscapes offer many different hazards. Alaska, for example, is noted for its twisty roads, whereas in Tennessee, you can expect to find trees growing in the centre of the highway! As you start to win races you can trade in your original bike, a Shuriken 500 for better, more

ROAD RASH 2

expensive machines which can take you further into the competition. But you'll have to win plenty of races to get the ultimate in bike technology – it costs \$38,000!

At the beginning of the race, you only have your fists and feet to use against the other participants. However, you

can blag a couple of different weapons to increase your damage potential. The club disposes of riders with relative ease, but you have to be quite close to use it. The chain is just as effective as the club, but works at a longer range as well!

Road Rash also has a Mano Mano option, for two

players to race on a split screen. Road Rash II is a definite improvement on the original. Apart from two-player mode, the races are tougher and more varied, but the actual execution of the gameplay is much the same. It really isn't worth buying both.

RICH

PRESENTATION **95%**
Excellent. A selection of 15 bikes, a password feature, 25 different races and some cool character screens for each rider.

GRAPHICS **92%**
Smooth and fast 3D update and there's plenty of variety in the backdrops too.

SOUND **78%**
Some decent effects - exactly the same as Road Rash II!

PLAYABILITY **91%**
Easy to get into and great fun to play. The two-player mode is an excellent laugh as well.

LASTABILITY **93%**
Completed every race in one-player mode is extremely difficult, so that should keep you going for a while.

OVERALL **93%**
Similar to the original perhaps, but Road Rash II still delivers fun and excitement.



ROAD RASH II
BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS
2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
EXCELLENT

The Opossum is commonly thought to be one of the most useless creatures on Earth. But on the planet Elhorn it is different. There, animals have created a civilisation that dwarfs our own. One animal in particular that benefits is an opossum named Sparkster, who is a most unlikely hero! Sparkster has been raised as a Rocket Knight after being orphaned. His amazing powers are to be used to avenge the deaths of his parents and mentor, murdered at the hands of the Dark Lord.

Sparkster is kitted out with a powerful rocket booster backpack. It takes a few seconds to charge up, but once this has

ROCKET KNIGHT ADVENTURES

been done, press the direction button and the furry little fellow rockets off the screen. This cunning device proves particularly useful when it comes to scaling the odd cliff face or reaching things otherwise beyond Sparkster's reach. Sparkster has a magic sword with which to fight the pig guards who are set

against him.

Every level of Rocket Knight holds some sort of boss surprise. There's runaway trains, underwater crabs, giant worms, and an amazing climax when you are chased by a huge robot three screens high, and have to find a machine capable of fighting him. With Rocket

Knight learn to expect the unexpected.

Rocket Knight is pure quality through and through. The graphics are great throughout, with massive character sprites and bold yet detailed backdrops. The game has loads of memorable moments, and is never predictable. If you want a platform game, this is the one to check out first.

JAZZ

PRESENTATION **88%**
There is an entertaining intro sequence, and loads of plot updates throughout the game.

GRAPHICS **94%**
The imagination and clarity of the graphics is superb. The animation is smooth and often comic.

SOUND **86%**
Impressive booms and bangs at climactic moments, and the music tinkles away all cute and cuddly.

PLAYABILITY **90%**
No confusion with the controls; they're cunningly responsive. The gameplay is really fresh.

LASTABILITY **89%**
There are plenty of levels, and you're never quite sure what's going to come next.

OVERALL **91%**
This beautifully crafted piece of software always leaves you wanting more. Don't let the cute characters fool you – this is not just for kids!



ROCKET KNIGHT
ADVENTURES
BY
KONAMI
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY/MEDIUM
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
2
RESPONSIVENESS
GREAT

Poor little Rolo, is a miniature elephant in twisted McSmiley's travelling circus. Being fired from cannons in every show the despairing Rolo realised it was high time for escape. So, slipping through the bars of his cage one night with the keys stolen from McSmiley's belt, Rolo sets out to rescue his captured pals so they can aid him in his quest.

New Rolo is putting his trust in you and your ingenuity to reunite him with his Mother. There are many puzzles to solve and secrets to uncover. What's more, there's over a hundred



different locations to trump through. The adventure unfolds on a huge jigsaw map, with each tile being revealed when you solve the location.

Rolo's mission is to rescue his

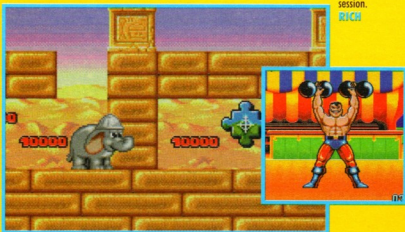
friends: mainly beavers, moles, squirrels and rabbits from their cages. They too have special abilities that make the going easier. Squirrels can climb, beavers can swim, and Rolo can suck! Only three friends are able to follow Rolo at any time. The graphics are charming: cute

and well-defined, but they belie the challenge this game presents. It really is a demanding platform game, but one full of variety and absorbing puzzles. There are months of play in the cart, but unfortunately there's no battery save - so completing the game will take a mammoth

session.

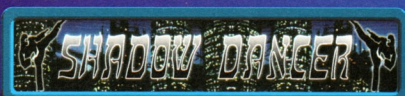
RICCI

ROLO TO THE RESCUE
BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS
|
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS
|
SKILL LEVELS
|
RESPONSIVENESS
SLIPPERY



You are a rock-hard ninja warrior out to crush the power hungry Zeed Empire and their armies of terrifying minions. This means you must first stow away on a heavily-guarded aeroplane bound for the Zeed home country and then fight your way across Zeed-infested landscapes until you reach the final encounter with Emperor Zeed himself!

Shadow Dancer is a horizontally-scrolling platform beat 'em up in the traditional Shinobi mould. The player leaps about killing his enemies and avoiding the many traps and hazards they have placed in his way. At the end of every level, a



giant boss appears, ready to beat the cack out of Mr Mushashi — but you've got special ninja magic with which to repel their aggressive tendencies!

Joe has also brought his Ninja Dog, a beautiful white hound who fights at Joe's command, allowing two opponents to be dealt with at once. The faithful canine rips at the

throats of his victims!

Shadow Dancer plays very closely to the coin-op it came from, but it's a much inferior beat 'em up to Revenge of Shinobi, the previous Mushashi

game. The graphics are nice, but don't have much atmosphere, and the gameplay is fast but unvaried. The addition of the dog was a nice idea, but doesn't really come off in play. Shadow Dancer is rather a disappointment. JAZZ

SHADOW DANCER
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
|
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS
|
SKILL LEVELS
|
RESPONSIVENESS
OKAY



PRESENTATION 71%

The jigsaw map screen looks attractive, but the lack of a save game is a crushing blow.

GRAPHICS 80%

Cute characters that wander about well-presented backdrops.

SOUND 79%

Catchy tunes that suit Rolo's character down to the ground. There are also some amusing sound effects.

PLAYABILITY 84%

The game is instantly enjoyable and the problems are often very rewarding once solved. The player's achievements are mercifully put to waste each time the machine is switched off.

LASTABILITY 89%

Large enough and tricky enough to make compulsive play the case.

OVERALL 83%

A very classy game with plenty of interesting touches, but the absence of a save game/password facility cannot be stressed enough.

PRESENTATION 71%

Few options, although the presentation does mirror the arcade version quite faithfully...

GRAPHICS 61%

The dog sprite is good, but the backdrops are blocky and indistinct.

SOUND 52%

The awful "barking" on the title screen sets the tone for a multitude of lacklustre effects and tunes.

PLAYABILITY 69%

At first this seems to have great potential as Revenge of Shinobi II, but something doesn't ring true.

LASTABILITY 64%

Five levels, with a great deal of repetitive gameplay taking place in between.

OVERALL 59%

A potentially great Shinobi game let down by a poorly graded difficulty level.



You are Beast: once a human, evil magic enslaved you to become the helpless vassal of the Beast lord. Your objective is to track down Maletoth the Beast Lord and make sure he kicks the bucket. However, sensing that he no longer controls your mind, Maletoth has dispatched every beast he still controls in order to bring about your demise.

Shadow of the Beast is converted almost without change from the Amiga game, which caused a storm when it was released some five years ago. It brought new standards of graphics and in-game presentation to Amiga games, but

SHADOW OF THE BEAST BY TECMAGIK PLAYERS

1
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



by the time it appeared on the Megadrive, those standards had long been surpassed.

Underneath the pretty fantasy scenery lurks a very simplistic game in which Beast just has to run around, finding potions, or keys while punching

or kicking ugly mutants out of his way. One rather unsatisfying punch is enough to do away with most of the bad guys, turning them into what appear to be cardboard cut-outs which drift off the screen. With the fighting part of the game being so weak,

it's a shame the puzzle element is so simple it's hardly present in any shape or form.

All in all this is a very unsatisfying arcade adventure, not really worthy of anyone's time or money.

JAZ



PRESENTATION 75%
Little in the way of options, but a few pretty screens.

GRAPHICS 70%
Nicely designed sprites but the animation isn't much cop and after a few minutes the scenery starts to look very samey.

SOUND 76%
An atmospheric tune, although it does grate after a while. The effects are hardly noticeable at all.

PLAYABILITY 65%
Starts off looking nice, but it's soon clear that the gameplay is very bland and neither the arcade nor the puzzle elements provide any satisfaction.

LASTABILITY 49%
It's hard to maintain interest in the game for any length of time.

OVERALL 51%
Beneath the pleasant graphics is an out of date arcade adventure.

Beast-Man didn't have a happy childhood. Through no fault of his own he fell in with bad company, and was soon the messenger slave of the Beast Lord, Maletoth. Then, by happy chance, Beast recognised his father who was being executed, and all his memories came back. He avenged his father's death by Zelek, the Beast Mage, and as a bonus got his human body back.

But Beast Mage has now stolen his sister and whisked her off to Kara-Moon, for training as Beast's replacement. Running to her aid, you find the countryside



teeming with the Mage's men. Without the animal power of his beast form, the going is tougher. Beast's second instalment is another puzzle adventure. Objects and bonus items in the Beastworld are attacking in chests. Destroy a chest with your mace and you may find

coins or an object with a special purpose. There are a series of set-piece puzzles that have particular solutions. Progress is often blocked until the teaser is solved. Meanwhile, 100 different types of enemies are attacking from all directions.

Although the gap between them is two years, no great improvement has been made

from Shadow of the Beast The graphics are quite well-defined, but seem flat and boring, and very Amiga-ish. The sound's just as bland, suiting the pace of the game to a tee. The problem is, not much seems to happen, and what does is pretty tedious. I could gripe about the puzzles - it's all levers and keys, and the fact that mucking up once

means restarting. In the end, who cares? Beast II is just plain mediocre.

RICH



PRESENTATION 50%
Options are sparse and the game actually pauses as if to load data from disk!

GRAPHICS 69%
Nicely defined, but a bit dull on the whole.

SOUND 63%
Slow, ponderous, music floats on in the background Rather poor FX.

PLAYABILITY 59%
The game isn't rewarding to play, and collisions with enemies are often unavoidable.

LASTABILITY 65%
A large playing area, and taxing, obscure puzzles, mean it will take a while to solve, although it lacks variety.

OVERALL 65%
Beast II is not a total disaster, just a charmless arcade adventure that fails to create any interest at all.

SHADOW OF THE BEAST II BY ELECTRONIC ARTS PLAYERS

1
GAME DIFFICULTY
HARD
CONTINUES
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
OKAY



Gwardians, a picturesque outpost in the land of Rune, is home to a race of people known as the 'Ancients'. For the past ten centuries these people have guarded the 'Gate of Ancients', a prison to the mighty Dark Dragon, also known as the 'Lord of Darkness'. Now an evil warlord named Dark Sol has amassed an army and plans to unleash the Dragon upon Rune once more. You are commissioned to form a band, a 'Shining Force' to oppose him.

This plot introduces a massive role-playing game for the Megadrive, that's a mixture of battle strategy and adventuring. You lead the Shining Force from



town to town, in a series of 'chapters', each filled with confrontations and plot developments. There are shops to visit; people to talk to; dungeons to enter and explore; new recruits to locate and enlist.

Battle is an important part of the game. When in a battle

area, you have control over each of your characters in turn. You decide where to move them, whether to fight, throw missiles, cast spells or heal. The events are shown on in dramatic cut screens with large atmospheric graphics.

This is fab stuff: the sort of

game to make you stay up way past bed time, just to get to the next town, or learn a new spell. It works because it's a perfect blend of strategy and adventuring. The game has oodles of atmosphere, and you come to care about the fate of the Shining Force. There's just something about Shining Force that makes it a classic game and there's no competition for it in the Megadrive's RPG range.

RICH



SHINING FORCE

BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

↓
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS
INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS

↓
RESPONSIVENESS
VERY GOOD

Oh lordy! The evil Dark Sol has kidnapped the Princess Jesso, and your dad, Mortred, into the bergain! Unless Dark Sol receives the keys to the kingdom of Thornwood, those hostage-types will never be seen again. This might sound a bit nasty, but it's actually quite a stroke of luck for you, who, being a brave knight, can charge your own price for the Princess' safe return.

What entails from here is a first-person perspective role-playing game, utilising a simple point-and-click menu system to issue commands. Combat is a matter of choosing whether to cast spells (if you can) or attack



with a weapon, and hoping you don't get hit in return!

The alchemist's is one of the more useful places to visit. This is where you can get your healing herbs, teleportation leathers, anti-poison plants and even seeds that, when eaten, reveal a map of your vicinity in the labyrinth! And they don't

even give you a forty bottom! The moment you slap Shining in the Darkness into your Megadrive, you're in for a visual treat. The front-end of the game is more than impressive, with large and detailed sprites conversing with or attacking you. The sound isn't bad either, with a variety of

tunes playing according to the situation (dramatic in combat, classical when in the King's court and so on), although the sound effects are pretty sparse.

However, this quality doesn't quite extend to the gameplay. The exploration part is quite fun, but the combat system, however pretty the monsters, makes the going slow and detracts a lot of excitement from the game. Role-playing fans may enjoy this, but it still pales in comparison to the likes of its sequel — Shining Force.

RICH



PRESENTATION 91%

All presentation screens suit the nature of the game perfectly well.

GRAPHICS 89%

Brilliant battle sequences and great attention to detail throughout.

SOUND 86%

A wide selection of war themes and rural melodies greet the ears.

PLAYABILITY 92%

Though there is much depth to the gameplay the control method is very straight forward. This makes exploration very rewarding!

LASTABILITY 90%

The game is enormous! That in itself ensures a long lasting challenge.

OVERALL 91%

A beautifully crafted piece of Megadrive software with just the right balance of action and adventure to satisfy all needs.

PRESENTATION 92%

Gorgeous intros, multiple save game positions on a battery save, and a host of options, including text display speed!

GRAPHICS 84%

Brilliantly drawn sprites, although the dungeon backgrounds could do with more variety.

SOUND 78%

Decent tunes and average effects, that suit the underground atmosphere.

PLAYABILITY 69%

Fast and smooth controls, and intriguing adventuring, spoilt by a monotonous combat system.

LASTABILITY 61%

Playable for a while, but the dull fighting and lack of variety ruins the lasting appeal.

OVERALL 69%

A reasonable, but pricey RPG with impressive graphics, let down by a combat system which soon becomes a chore.

SHINING IN THE DARKNESS

BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

↓
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS
VARIABLE
SKILL LEVELS

↓
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

Once more the pungent smell of hair tonic is thick in the air as the lengthy-locked master of Neo Zeed has risen from his grave and again seeks ultimate revenge. He has kidnapped the beautiful bride of his arch-enemy Joe Mushashi, and also held the world to ransom. Joe has once more donned his ninjagarb and sworn to destroy the cursed Zeed once and for all, for he is the Shinobi.

This is the third in the Shinobi series (see Shadow Dancer, Revenge of Shinobi), and tries very hard to



be the ultimate Ninja game. Sega even sent the initial finished product back for reprogramming.

Joe slashes and dashes his way throughout eight levels of scrolling beat 'em up action. He faces crack

Ninja commandos, fire-casting wizards and winged-warriors, in some treacherous platform levels. The graphics are fantastic, depicting all sorts of areas, from forests to refineries. Joe has his four types of Ninja magic to bring to bear, and a few new athletic moves, like the jump slash.

New to the game are the

horse and surf riding levels. Obstacles and fighters have to be avoided whilst travelling at high-speed. It's rather tagged onto the game, but is enjoyable nonetheless. Shinobi III has all the right elements for a smashing game, but atmosphere seems to be the missing ingredient. The predictable bosses, and some repetitive sections some-

times make this a matter of going through the motions. Still a superbly playing game, but missing classic status.

REDA



SHINOBI 3: RETURN OF THE NINJA MASTER BY SEGA PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
NINJA SPEED!



The murky world of the Pool ball comes in for some scrutiny in Side Pocket from Data East. Variations on blue baize are offered, with the chance to arrange trick shots and play a skins tournament. There are four game variations, for one or two players, using the scoring system of pocket billiards (otherwise known as American Pool).

In all the variations, points are scored by potting the numbered balls in sequence, and on consecutive shots. The first play variation is called 'one pocket'. This consists of five rounds in various American cities, with a set number of points required to



progress.

The second variation is a head-to-head for two players, each attempting to outscore the other. The third game is called 'Nine Ball' where the object is to pot one ball with that number, but only by striking the low-

est numerated ball first. Lastly there is the trick shot game, which presents a pool puzzle which is solved by correct ball placing and shooting angle.

Side Pocket sounds boring, and in truth it isn't going to appeal to everyone. Graphical

thrills are pretty thin on the ground, although the cart tries to liven things up with 'pretty ladies' and jazz accompaniment. However, the game is surprisingly compulsive, especially in a two player points game. The mechanics of ball

ballistics and collisions are portrayed with admirable realism. The trick shots are also going to take weeks to sort out.

Anyone interested in table sports should be well pleased with Side pocket.

JAT



PRESENTATION 82%
A variety of nice features, including a 'jukebox' play options and trick shot passwords.

GRAPHICS 70%
The graphics are clearly defined, and the ball movement is realistic.

SOUND 69%
The sleazy night club-style tunes which play in the background are really cheesy, but seem somehow appropriate.

PLAYABILITY 81%
Not a game that grabs you from the outset, more of a slow-burner that hooks you in time. Good variety of play options.

LASTABILITY 81%
The sort of game you'll come back to it now and again.

OVERALL 78%
Real Pool fans may not take to this perverted form of their favourite sport, but it's still a most entertaining game.

SIDE POCKET
BY
DATA EAST
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

Invasers are taking over the bodies of Springfielders, and no-one can distinguish them from regular humans except Bart Simpson, whose X-Ray specs reveal their true shape. The trouble is, because Bart is such a well-known trouble-maker, no-one will believe him when he tells them that they are soon to become mindless zombie slaves to an evil alien overlord.

It seems that, to take over the entire world, the aliens need to build a mega-powerful weapon and their blueprint demands it is constructed from everyday Earth objects — nuclear fuel rods, things which

SIMPSONS (BART VS THE SPACE MUTANTS)
BY
FLYING EDGE
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
OKAY

Bart vs the Space Mutants

are purple, hats, that sort of thing — so Bart has to go around town destroying anything on their shopping list.

Bart has a limited amount of time to find and trash 24 purple items, by spraying them red with a can of spray paint or simply breaking them.

Unfortunately, the pavement is ridden with disgusting alien blob creatures which leap

about, trying to pounce on the yellow-headed hero and alien impostors walk the streets.

Although this is little more than a tarted-up conversion of the Nintendo game, but isn't a bad effort. Probably its greatest strength is that it's pretty tough. The solutions to some of the puzzles in level one aren't obvious and all the jumps have to be super-precisely timed and

pixel-perfect.

This causes much hair-tearing because, of course, Bart keeps biting the dust and there's no option to continue from where the last game ended. It's frustrating all right, but it's not a total put-off, so you'll probably keep coming back to this until you've cracked it. If you were expecting the sort of fun you get from Konami's Simpsons coin-op you'll be disappointed, though.

JAZ



Topolan are considered to be a great engineer of console shoot 'em ups, with high-scoring games in this book like Hallfire and Zero Wing. Slap Fight is a conversion of an early arcade shoot 'em up they produced. As a classic vertically scrolling blaster, Tengen have produced a remarkably faithful copy of the original.

The game-play is a simple affair of shooting hordes of aliens, but added interest is created by the power-ups. Tokens from hitting ships are collected and used to customise

SLAP FIGHT

the ship. Wing guns, lasers, bombs and homing missiles are strapped onto the wings. This makes the ship formidable, but unwieldy.

In addition to an arcade-perfect copy of the original game,

Slapfight has a 'remix' version — Slapfight MD, with all-new levels and backgrounds.

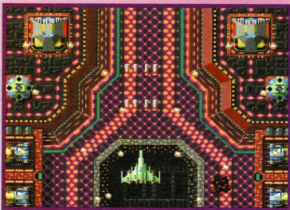
Slap Fight consists of 80 short sections, which are linked in a continuous flow. The game quickly becomes hair-raising, with enemy missiles littering the screen. Things are manageable as long as your ship has a full

complement of weapons, but after losing them it's hard to recover.

The graphics and sound conjure up the past glories of the arcade, but that also means they are not that exciting for a console like the Megadrive. Lots of small sprites, and some imaginative designs, like chaos patterns and glass tunnels, means there's always something of interest to see in the background — if only you had to time to look at it!

With two games on board this package represents great value for money for blaster fans, and though the action is hardly incredible, it's undeniably addictive.

JAZ



PRESENTATION 68%

Nice intro sequence, but lack of game continues makes it painful to play.

GRAPHICS 57%

Minusculc Groening-style sprites, but they do their job.

SOUND 75%

'Eat my shorts' sample and some jolly, Hammond Organ-type tunes (which unfortunately aren't much like the ones in the show)

PLAYABILITY 73%

Oddball puzzles and pixel-perfect jumping makes this frustrating but it's still strangely attractive to play.

LASTABILITY 74%

If you have the stamina you'll spend a long time finishing all five levels.

OVERALL 70%

Simpsons fans hoping for an arcade conversion may be disappointed, but this is still an absorbing and challenging game.

PRESENTATION 84%

A very comprehensive list of options on the title screen, and an entire new game scenario. The original version of faithful.

GRAPHICS 77%

The backgrounds and sprites look slightly dated, but are still imaginative and look very 'arcadey'

SOUND 74%

Music by Yuzo Koshiro: not as good as previous compositions by himself for other games.

PLAYABILITY 84%

Slap Fight has every element in place for a compulsive shoot 'em up. However, the game is so demanding, it's stressful too!

LASTABILITY 65%

The game has a really high difficulty level, but this is undermined by having unlimited continues.

OVERALL 76%

In spite of the ravages of time, Slap Fight survives as a classic shoot 'em up, perfect for nostalgics and fogeys.



Sports of the Future have attracted a lot of past attention... most people think they'll be violent, hi-tech, incredibly fast, and the participants will get massive rewards for risking life and limb. Why shouldn't future TV game shows go exactly the same way? No reason at all, if Smash TV is taken as an indication.

In this game show game, one or two players go through a series of open-plan arenas, shooting masses of robot thugs as they appear from gates in the walls. As level follows level, new enemies appear, but mostly it's the length and ferocity of the attack that increases.

SMASH TV
BY
FLYING EDGE
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
1-4
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
OKAY



As well as thugs, the arena soon becomes littered with prizes: toasters, roasters and bags of money. Although two players are working together, there's a fierce tussle to collect more points. Also appearing periodically in the arena are the

weapon power-ups. Each power-up adds a new type of firepower for a short period of time: grenades, spread-shots, double fire and more.

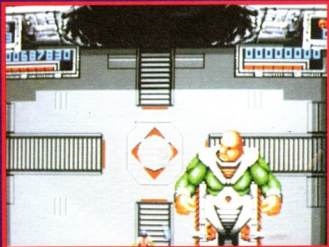
At the end of each set of levels, a massive boss creature, like a pair of cyborg snakes or

the tank-based Mutoid Man, bars the way to the next set of arena. These are rock-hard and frustrating adversaries.

This is an arcade conversion, and graphically and sonically it's competent. However, the control method is a real let

down, inhibiting your ability to give the enemy a fair fight. Too many lives are lost in vain, and the game never seems to get going. Fans of arcade Smash TV will like but not love this game.

JAZ



PRESENTATION 80%

Lengthy introduction screen sets the scene, and there's the option to change the control configuration.

GRAPHICS 76%

A close enough rendition of the arcade. Most of the sprites are nicely rendered and well animated.

SOUND 84%

The various gun samples and explosive effects are cool, but a lot of the arcade's speech is missing.

PLAYABILITY 67%

Lots of shooting to be done, but the control method screws it up.

LASTABILITY 61%

Smash TV puts up quite a challenge — as long as you're prepared for awkward controls.

OVERALL 64%

A flawed conversion of a classic game. A missed opportunity which could have been bettered with a few tweaks.

Abduction of beautiful (and Amagical) princesses is the background to a another platform extravaganza from Toaplan, through Tengen. The Snow Bros are a pair of heroes with warm hearts but frozen exteriors who fight through 80 levels of wacky screen layouts to free their sweet hearts.

This is an arcade platform game, where the levels are played as single-screen 'sheets'. Progress is made by destroying all the baddies on a particular sheet.

The Snow Bros power is very simple. They throw snowballs which stun and then cook their prey. Once a baddy is



encased in a neat snowball, a nudge will send him careening out the screen, killing any baddies he strikes on the way.

Extra bonuses are made by rolling two or more snowballs at the same time. There are extra game features like potions, which grant certain powers when collected.

Every tenth level, a preposterous boss creature appears, crabs, pterodactyls and bubble

beasts being just three. Beating them requires the lads to work out some cunning plan of attack rather than just heavy-duty snow

Snow Bros is a frenetic game. Each level has to be completed sharpish, or an evil pumpkin-head appears to chase you around the screen. Even though the game plays blindly fast, it's still important to work out the right strategies for

right layouts. However, the unlimited continues make the game a breeze to go through. Refrain from using them.

Snow Bros is an odd sort of the game. It looks weird and wonderful, with zany background patterns and creatures, and plays much the same. The dual player mode is also a great bonus. Those in search of exotic should take a close look.

JAZ



SNOW BROS
BY
TENGEN
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
UNLIMITED
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

PRESENTATION 78%

Stunningly close rendition of the coin-op presentation, but the game is spoiled by unlimited continues.

GRAPHICS 82%

Richly sprites and backgrounds — a rash of colour, movement and animation.

SOUND 77%

Plenty of tunes, that anyone with a mental age above five will hate: but they're perfect here!

PLAYABILITY 89%

Fast and furious, Snow Bros is one of the those games you fancy 'just one more go on.

LASTABILITY 68%

The password system makes it too easy to sail through the levels, but this is a game to come back to.

OVERALL 83%

Another brilliant conversion from arcade to Megadrive, and one of the more intriguing platform games.

With his army of armoured animals, vile Dr Robotnik plans to terrorise the people of the world. Sonic is the hedgehog that got away. Now, of course, he's resolved to free his forest buddies by doing over Robotnik and he has to leg it through six hazardous zones. This is Sonic, who needs no introduction to any Sega owner. He's the mascot, the spokesman and the Saint of the company. His games are also some of the best on the machine.

The landscape is packed with platform-type puzzles and terrifying terrain. Not only that — Robotnik has dispatched his robot-like forces to destroy

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

Sonic before he can catch up with him! Luckily, Sonic is a powerhouse of athletic ability, and he can protect himself by curling into a ball and somersaulting into any enemies, skewering them on his spines!

To protect him still further, Sonic has to collect the power rings which are scattered

throughout the landscape. If he bumps into an enemy the rings will protect him, but the collision makes him drop all those he was carrying. If Sonic stays out of trouble, every ring he gets to the end of the level earns him 100 points, and if he has over 50, he is instantly warped to the weirdo bonus

game!

Sonic the Hedgehog is a blinding game. The graphics are great, and the sound boops along infectiously. Every level is well designed and packed with features, and the whole thing is a hell of a good play. However, it must be admitted that Sonic's first outing is a little easy. The

six levels crumble with persistent play, and Robotnik's machines are particularly easy to dispatch. Still one of the all-time Sega greats, but Sonic II improves on it. **RICH**



SONIC THE HEDGEHOG
BY SEGA PLAYERS
↓
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
EARNED IN BONUS
STAGE
SKILL LEVELS
↓
RESPONSIVENESS
SONIC!

PRESENTATION 76%
No options to tweak or anything, and only one decent attract screen.

GRAPHICS 94%
Excellent! Stunning sprites and gorgeous backdrops, travelling at warp speed — some of the best seen on the Megadrive.

SOUND 86%
The tunes are great to listen to, and fit the action perfectly.

PLAYABILITY 91%
Sonic's easy to get into, with plenty of exciting platform action. Amazing sense of speed.

LASTABILITY 80%
It doesn't take ages to complete this super-sonic platform romp, but it's so much fun you just keep on going back!

OVERALL 85%
A superb platform game that every Megadrive owner has to experience. It's the essence of Sega.

In the sequel to his 3.7 million selling game Sonic is joined by a two and a half years old fox named Tails. The heroic 'hog is pursued by this toddling apprentice wherever he goes, even following him into the face of death as Sonic aims to rid the planet of Dr Robotnik once more.

In Sonic's first outing on the Megadrive he could only obtain the six gems by entering special zones, reached by collecting fifty rings. The special zones have been replaced in Sonic II by



high speed races between Sonic and Tails down brightly

coloured 3-D chutes. Here Sonic aims to collect enough rings to pass three checkpoints, avoid bombs and eventually earn the Chaos Emerald

that await at the end of the passage.

When Sonic and Tails can also enjoy a spot of healthy competition in a head-to-head mode, using a horizontally split screen. Player one controls Sonic while player two directs Tails. There is a choice of four different areas to choose from for the challenge, one of which is the special zone.

Sega worked overtime to improve the Sonic concept, and



they clearly succeeded. Sonic II is a blinding stonker! None of the criticisms of the original apply here: Sonic II is faster, slicker, more colourful, louder, bigger and much, much tougher than the original. There's no way even Sonic experts could call this easy! It's packed with features, has loads of secrets, and rounds it all up with a superlative two-player mode that'll have your friends queuing round the block to play. Brilliant! If you miss Sonic II you should be committed to a loony bin!

JAZ



SONIC II
BY SEGA PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
EVERY 50,000 POINTS
SKILL LEVELS
↓
RESPONSIVENESS
EXCELLENT

PRESENTATION 88%
Sonic is joined by Miles on the intro screen and the whole thing looks dassy. Loads of options and the bonus game is cool!

GRAPHICS 96%
Astounding! Breathtaking! Wow! Cor!

SOUND 89%
Loads of high speed crashing sound effects and energetic music to spice the images.

PLAYABILITY 97%
The controls are dead simple and the gameplay is mega addictive.

LASTABILITY 94%
Fairly challenging with one player and utterly brill with two. Even when you finish it you'll still come back to try to beat your speed records.

OVERALL 96%
Sonic has outdone himself. An absolute gem of a game which your Megadrive will be screaming out for.



It's the far future - the year 6236 to be exact - and the beautifully named 214th Sector is under attack from hordes of alien creeps. Being the sort of guy that revels in a little alien-o-side, you grab a jet pack and the latest death-dealing mega laser and transport yourself to the area via your Cosmic Gate to see if you can persuade them to go away.

Space Harrier II is a 3-D shoot 'em up in which you fly into the screen, blasting the baddies that fly towards you. There are twelve levels to clear of baddies, and any one may be selected at the start of the game. Each level contains

SPACE HARRIER II
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
HARD
CONTINUOUS
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

SPACE HARRIER 2

squadrons of weird flying bio-alien, who attack in all sorts of formations. The end of each level is patrolled by an exotic guardian, including such delights as Medusa's head, a giant jellyfish and a three-headed turtle. These are

destroyed to progress to the next level.

The 3-D effect is impressive, with checkerboard patterns moving smoothly and speedily to create the impression of speed. The player sprite moves quickly and responsively around

screen, and the enemy attacks are fast and furious.

Space Harrier II was a sensation in the arcades because of its speed and groovy sit-down cabinet. However its playability never really matched its looks and sound, and I'm afraid that's

true of this game as well. Don't get me wrong, it's fast and furious and great fun, but lacks a variety of gameplay to make it a total winner. The aliens are brilliant, with the difficulty level pitched just right. Still, well worth a ponder if fast shoot 'em ups are your thing.
JAZ



PRESENTATION 82%

Sound test, skill levels and level select - looks like the arcade and pretty good, really.

GRAPHICS 79%

Impressive, with colourful sprites and very smooth and fast 3D update.

SOUND 78%

Booming effects and music that fits the frenetic action well.

PLAYABILITY 78%

Seems tough at first, but once you've got used to the speed, the action is very straightforward.

LASTABILITY 60%

Once you've got over the novelty of the graphics, the simplistic gameplay doesn't take long to master.

OVERALL 65%

A slick and polished game that looks amazing, but the beauty is only skin deep and its rather dull to play.

Speedball 2 is a violent future sport simulation: a sort of cross between American football and Soccer — in Kevlar body armour! In addition to the smash, grab 'n' score antics of the actual game, Speedball 2 also puts you in the role of team manager. This means that you supervise each player's training programme, as well keeping an eye on the transfer market for any new talent.

You start the game with your team, Brutal Deluxe, languishing at the bottom of Speedball Division Two. It's your job as player manager to get to the top of Division One — and stay there! Scoring

SPEEDBALL 2
BY
VIRGIN
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
TOUGH
CONTINUOUS
PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
SPEEDY

SPEEDBALL II

points is the aim of the game. There are goals at either end of

is to light up a set of stars embossed in the side-walls of

the Speedball arena.

Simply by throwing the ball at a star, you're given two points. Hit all five and ten points are doled out as a bonus!

Extremely fast and addictive gameplay with plenty

of violence. It's one of those games that's very easy to pick up and play, but has the potential for expert tactics. Like all sports games, the two-player mode provides the most fun.

The computer opponents pack a hefty punch and the management section adds a whole new angle to the game. With its excellent graphics and superb gameplay, Speedball 2 is a long-lasting and thoroughly enjoyable sports simulation.
JAZ



PRESENTATION 89%

Excellent, with a decent attract sequence, plenty of options and some stunning still screens.

GRAPHICS 88%

The Cyberpunk-style look is used to great effect, with detailed, well-animated visuals.

SOUND 90%

Plenty of crowd noise along with grunts from the players and loads of metal-on-metal spangs.

PLAYABILITY 92%

Great, with the extreme violence and speed making the game very enjoyable to play.

LASTABILITY 91%

The league takes ages to master, and once you've finished that there's still the two-player game to enjoy.

OVERALL 91%

Fast, thrilling and violent, Speedball 2 is the best future sport game available on the Megadrive.

The Kingpin of Crime has planted an atomic bomb somewhere in New York and it's going to explode in 24 hours. What's more, he's managed to convince the good citizens that Spidey's responsible! Spidey's job is simple. Find The Kingpin and disarm the bomb, but Kingpin's recruited some of Spider-Man's worst enemies to put up a bit of a fight.

New York, in this case is a series of eight platform levels, covering locations such as warehouses, Central Park and tower blocks. Spiderman takes his famous web fluid with him. Its multiple powers include creating ropes to swing from and

SPIDER-MAN

stunning opponent.

Since Spidey's alter ego is Peter Parker, journalist, he takes his camera with him. Taking pictures of the end-of-level super villains enables Peter Parker to cash in on his powers. Any money made can then be used to top up on web fluid.

Megadrive Spider-Man is

basically a Shinobi-style game, but has plenty of new touches to keep your interest. I particularly like the way you can take "photos" during the game, and being able to return home and rest when energy is low is a novel twist. The control method is quite tricky to get used to, but once mastered, Spidey can do all manner of moves, from run-

ning across the ceiling to swinging around on his web at high speed.

Graphically, Spider-Man is varied in quality. The large Spider-Man sprite is nicely drawn and animated and all the baddies are excellent, but the backdrops are rather bland and look a bit rough around the edges. Still, Spider-Man is a very challenging game, and provides loads of additive action that'll have you web-slinging for weeks.

JAZ



SPIDER-MAN
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
↓
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS
↓
RESPONSIVENESS
SMOOTH

Splatterhouse II? You might well ask what happened to Splatterhouse II! The fact is, it was never released on the Megadrive — only in the arcades. When Rick stumbled across a hockey mask the last thing he expected was demonic possession. Soon he was hacking his way to Death Central. After miscellaneous dismemberments and more slime than a school canteen, Rick managed to rid himself of the evil spirit contained in the mask.

Now the mask is calling again, and this time Rick feels he must succumb to the madness it inspires if he is to save his girlfriend Jennifer. She has

SPLATTERHOUSE 2

been kidnapped by a demon who is holding her captive on an island. So once again it's crash-bang-wallop, and slash-chop-as Rick tries to make his way into the record books as a master butcher.

Although Rick packs a pretty good punch and a powerful kick, he gets an even better when he's wielding a weapon.

Almost anything lying around is useful in vanquishing the minions of Splatterhouse. Grab bones and metal bars to smash the undead to bits, or pick up a shotgun and shoot them from a distance. There is even the opportunity to throw severed chicken heads at the little devils!

The graphics are nice and

gory, but unfortunately the game is marred by unresponsive controls and slow gameplay. The collision detection also leaves something to be desired. Too many lives are lost in unfair circumstances. If Splatterhouse II was much faster and much more responsive, the poor animation and similarity between the levels could have been forgotten in the slapdash of gory proportions. As it stands, most beat 'em up fans will be disappointed.

RICH



SPLATTERHOUSE II
BY
NAMCO
PLAYERS
↓
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS
↓
RESPONSIVENESS
OK

PRESENTATION 82%
Great comic screens pop up at intervals to give that authentic Marvel atmosphere.

GRAPHICS 70%
Backdrops vary from good to average, but the sprites are good and there's plenty of variety!

SOUND 63%
The tunes get annoying after a while and the effects are lacking too.

PLAYABILITY 84%
Difficult to get into, but mastering Spidey's moves is part of the fun.

LASTABILITY 87%
Seven super-villains are after Spidey, and they won't go down with a BIG fight!

OVERALL 86%
One of the few licensed games which really does carry across the look and feel of the character it's based on. A superb platform game which Spidey fans shouldn't miss.

PRESENTATION 83%
Atmospheric title screens introduce the eerie story. A handy password system is also included.

GRAPHICS 77%
Very impressive artwork, with some really gruesome effects and gaudy, putrid colours.

SOUND 85%
The Gothic strains of the music fit in well with the visual action.

PLAYABILITY 76%
The control response is very slow, leaving you feeling pretty helpless.

LASTABILITY 62%
The slow response and gameplay flaws make this difficult to complete, but its frustration, not challenge.

OVERALL 64%
Behind the graphics is a flawed and rather frustrating beat 'em up. Which needed more playtesting.



This cart tells the tale of Rick and co's third involuntary, holy mission against evil and, as is customary for most evil forces these days, takes place in a huge mansion. Evil forces appreciate a roof over their heads just like anybody else! Somewhere in the expansive house both Jennifer and young David are held captive and so it's up to you, as Rick, to follow the terrible whim of the mask and exorcise the evil that is restraining them!

Splatter House III is a 16-meg, gory beat 'em up venture by Namco aiming to better the previous two parts of this gruesome saga. Rick can now move

SPLATTERHOUSE - 3

into the screen, instead of only left and right, and there are choices of direction to be made, adding an explorative element.

You must lead Rick into battle against a selection of



restorers to aid him in his rescue mission with the possibility of transforming him into a super-

human beast buster.

If you are expecting Splatter House III to be a huge game packed with horror, gore and variety you will be disappointed. It's not that huge, isn't particularly horrible or gory, and variety is distinctly lacking. Much of the game plays down to simply wandering from

room to room encountering the same baddies over and over again. After a while it becomes dull — there's little difference from level to level, and the game simply isn't challenging enough. Bah!

JAZ

SPLATTER HOUSE III
BY
NAMCO
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
VARIES
CONTINUES
INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS
4
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



Star Control is a space combat game played head-to-head against either a human or computer opponent with four selectable intelligence settings.

The basic game is based around a series of dogfights. Each fleet has eight completely different ships, and both players simply choose one ship to take into combat. As the players move closer, the game zooms in and the ships get bigger — close up combat is displayed very large, so you can see just exactly how much damage your weapons are doing!

The object of the exercise is simply to destroy your opponent by killing off his crew. Each hit

STAR CONTROL

bumps off one of his men, and his crew bar diminishes accordingly. A completely depleted bar results in the ship exploding in spectacular fashion. Adding a bit of lasting power to the game is a strategy option where there are a host of



Hierarchy forces.

In the two-player head-to-head stakes, this takes first prize. It's brilliant fun taking on

another human player and using cunning, skill and tactics to take out his fleet. Playing it on you just isn't anywhere near as much fun — even the excellent presentation, brilliant sampled sound effects and a weirdo strategy game don't help. So think long and hard before you buy this game. If you've always

got a second player to kick ass with, it's highly recommended. Solo players just won't get value for money out of the product.

JAZ

STAR CONTROL
BY
ACCOLADE
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
THREE
RESPONSIVENESS
VARIABLE



PRESENTATION 91%

A long intro sequence dupes the player into believing that the game is something exceptional.

GRAPHICS 87%

Anything that moves is large and quite gruesome in a comic book kind of way.

SOUND 91%

The many tunes enhance the doom and gloom nature of the storyline.

PLAYABILITY 81%

Beating up a few monsters is entertaining for a short while. However going through the same motions soon becomes dull.

LASTABILITY 73%

It takes a special kind of person to dedicate time to this rather limited beat 'em up.

OVERALL 74%

Though it may look and sound okay, Splatter House III offers nothing new, and the 16 megs are wasted on excessive presentation.

PRESENTATION 88%

Superb intermission screens and breakdowns of each ship plus a massive variety of options give this plenty of polish.

GRAPHICS 63%

The still screens are great, but the in-game graphics are rather disappointing.

SOUND 74%

Raucous effects which suit the action perfectly - see how many you can identify from sci-fi movies!

PLAYABILITY 90%

It looks rubbish to start with, but simultaneous two-player action comes no finer than this!

LASTABILITY 80%

The two-player option is something you'll come back to years from now - the single player action isn't much fun, though.

OVERALL 83%

Looks crap, but this is a thoroughly brilliant two-player game.

STARFLIGHT

The authorities of the planet Arth look on with slight bewilderment as the stars in the universe begin to disintegrate. And then Arth's sun begins to collapse. Being a scientific genius, shooting ace, mining authority and best pilot in the cosmos, you're drafted in to find a solution to the problem, or failing that, find some new planets to colonise.

Unfortunately, the Arth authorities aren't making things easy for you. You have to earn a living in order to upgrade your ship, and the only way to do that is to mine some of the planets and sell the materials. Understandably, some civilisa-

tions don't particularly fancy the idea of someone robbing them of all the valuable minerals.

Mining is the central part of the game. The Arth authorities pay big bucks for any - just about any mineral. Your ship has a TV (Terrain Vehicle) which

scours the landscape digging up valuables. Mineral scans are needed in order to find the buried treasure. The TV can be upgraded to search deeper for minerals, and can even be turned into a hovercraft for some off-shore action!

Starflight looks dull at first, but it's just like having your own Starship Enterprise. You can open all the haunting frequencies you want, fire off God knows how many photon torpedoes and even train up your crew! There are many different

alien cultures to interact with in order to get to the bottom of what's happening. The graphics are pretty dull, but it doesn't really matter when you have a game as good as this. The vast nature of the game means you'll be at it for months.

RICH



STARFLIGHT
BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
BATTERY SAVE
SKILL LEVELS

RESPONSIVENESS
SMOOTH

The Steel Talons Corps, is a crack fighting unit made up of the greatest helicopter pilots in the world. You play the part of one such lucky pilot, chosen to train and fight with the best.

Firstly, you must complete your education in helicoptering, participating in a series of gruelling tests before graduating to the ranks of the elite.

Once a member you are sent on the most dangerous missions in the world.

Steel Talons is a conversion of the coin-op which takes the player through a number of war zones where

STEEL TALONS

you fly around a free-form landscape strafing ground targets and dog-

fighting with enemy helicopters. There are twelve set missions, with multiple objectives.

If you fancy yourself as a bit of a Red Baron of the helicopter world, there's a single player only head-to-head option which pits your skills against those of an elite com-

puter pilot, both armed to the teeth. The landscapes are a craggy arrangement of hills, mountains, cliffs and valleys so avoiding the scenery is a major part of the game.

Steel Talons was a great coin-op. It was the sheer speed that made it so exhilarating. Apart from the sprites, Tengen

have failed failed to get any of it right. The main problem lies in the jerky controls. Should you press right, there's a slight delay before you actually turn, and when you do the heli just lurches massively to one side. This, and the ever-so-slow running speed, ruin things utterly. If Steel Talons were faster and the helicopter could make tighter turns it might be okay, but as it stands it's a load of old pants.

RICH



STEEL TALONS
BY
TENGEN
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
HOME
SKILL LEVELS

RESPONSIVENESS
JERKY

PRESENTATION 85%
Good use of menus, and the in-game presentation is great.

GRAPHICS 67%
Loads of well-drawn aliens, some nice planetary effects, but a pretty dull space sequence.

SOUND 84%
A few bits of computer speech reminiscent of HAL in 2001 and excellent Star Trek effects.

PLAYABILITY 90%
The mission will keep you playing for weeks (unless you use the hints in the back of the manual).

LASTABILITY 94%

The mission will keep you playing for weeks (unless you use the hints in the back of the manual).

OVERALL 91%

A completely and utterly brilliant space quest that's unbeatable in the playability and depth stakes!

PRESENTATION 60%
Options and intermissions galore. In-game presentation is dull and cramped.

GRAPHICS 61%
Sprites are all right, and the still shots look pretty good, but the animation is slow and jerky.

SOUND 68%
The effects aren't too offensive, and there's loads of (rather dull) tunes.

PLAYABILITY 26%
Slow and action-free with a control system which makes it almost impossible to play properly.

LASTABILITY 32%
There's twelve whole missions, plus that head-to-head option, but it's all pretty tragic, so it's not very interesting for long.

OVERALL 29%
A seriously bodged attempt at an arcade conversion the Megadrive would never have been able to handle competently.

The streets are no longer safe for ordinary people any more. Mr Big and his violence-crazed minions have moved into the city, and their main occupations include the scaring people with their grotesque features, beating them up with a variety of weapons and generally causing a bit of aggro.

Sick of the way the people are being treated, three heroes decide to leave the police force and become street vigilantes, kicking the excrement of anyone who looks vaguely threatening. Their one objective is to put an end to Mr Big's reign of terror, by taking out the man himself who waits at the end of eight

STREETS OF RAGE
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
FAST

STREETS OF RAGE

levels' worth of beat 'em up action. It's a hard task, but our heroes aren't just hard — they're living rock!

There are plenty of weapons available in Streets of Rage. Some of them can be pinched from the enemy sprites while others are found hidden inside the likes of rubbish bins

and telephone kiosks. The weapons included in the game include the likes of bottles, aluminium baseball bats, knives and lead pipes!

The action is great, especially with two players on-screen at once! For one, the players act as a team, using each other to produce moves not available

in one-player mode. The graphics are superb: at times the screen is chock-a-block with thugs ready to send you to your doom! The backdrops are similarly detailed, although the scenery on each level could've done with being a bit more varied. The music, by Japanese composer Yuzo Koshiro,

deserves special mention. Streets of Rage is still a classic game, and it's worth buying this and the sequel. **RICH**



- PRESENTATION** 86%
Plenty of decent attract screens make the game look special.
- GRAPHICS** 85%
Loads of sprites on-screen at once, with some decent animation and good enough backdrops.
- SOUND** 96%
Techno-dance tracks for each level, and they're some of the best Megadrive tunes ever heard!
- PLAYABILITY** 91%
Supreme beat 'em up fun, with lots of fast and furious action on every level.
- LASTABILITY** 87%
Pretty easy on easy level, but the going gets tougher when you know that difficulty level up a few notches.
- OVERALL** 90%
A classic beat 'em up for the Megadrive, positively chock-full of action. The sequel is much better, but this is still worth a shot if you can hire it or buy it cheaply.

The evil crime syndicate of Mr Big was overthrown by the heroes of Streets of Rage. But the crims have their revenge by snatching Adam Hunter, one of the original Rogers. Now it's up to the other two fighters, Blaze and Axel, and their two new pals, Max and Skate to free the unfortunate abductee.

The action is much the same as Streets of Rage, but with a cart holding down a bit that memory capacity, a lot more detail has gone into graphics, levels, animation and



music. The extra two characters have some great combat moves. Max is able to do a devastating shoulder charge, and Skate uses his roller mobility to perform combat stunts. Axel has also learned the phenomenal power of the Streetfighter Dragon Punch. Players can augment their char-

acters' abilities by picking up weapons and using them.

The levels take the characters through a range of atmospheric settings. A murky alley (with superb rain effect), a fairground, a bar and a suspension bridge (with bikers and hoodlums. Each has its own collection of thugs and ne'er do wells.

An added game feature is the duel mode. This pits player against player in a single screen of action — with the winner decided out of a three bout contest. Players can even use weapons for an unfair



advantage! Streets of Rage II is the ultimate cartridge beat 'em up on the Megadrive. The graphics are superb, with huge sprites and great animation. There's also loads of enemies attacking at once. Sound and presentation are of an equally high standard, and the gameplay is just superb, especially in two-player team mode. You couldn't want more from a beat 'em up. **JAZ**



STREETS OF RAGE 2

- PRESENTATION** 91%
There's an incredibly polished feel to Streets of Rage II, and an extensive list of options.
- GRAPHICS** 93%
Massive sprites and lush backdrops. You'll think you're watching a real arcade game.
- SOUND** 92%
Yuzo Koshiro pulls off the best rave and house music that your Megadrive can handle.
- PLAYABILITY** 93%
Immediately gripping gameplay. You are not going to leave the console until it's beaten.
- LASTABILITY** 89%
The duel option is great for long-term play, and the hardest setting is a tough game.
- OVERALL** 92%
The Megadrive really shows off with Streets of Rage II. Cool beat 'em up action, about double the size of the average Megadrive game.

STREETS OF RAGE II
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
5
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GREAT



It's the year 2048 and a mad Emperor has taken control of Russia. Glasnost has been thrown out of the window and world peace is threatened as he assembles his giant army of robots with the intent of taking over Earth. Only one person can save the day, and that's super commando Strider, an athletic choppie who's perfectly capable of destroying the entire army alone — as long as the player has the skill to guide him through this hazardous mission.

The action is set over five scrolling levels, each packed with androids, giant robots and huge gun emplacements. All are out to get the hero, and contact

STRIDER
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
EXCELLENT



with either them or their bullets and weapons depletes Strider's energy. Fortunately Strider is armed with a big sword. There's also help in the form of drone ships which occasionally fly by. Destroy them and a pod is exposed which, when collected, gives you one of a variety of

weapons ranging from extra shot power and energy to bonus points and lives.

Strider was Capcom's first Megadrive game, and has all the hallmarks of their competency and attention to detail. The conversion from the arcade is incredibly close. The main

sprite is huge and well detailed, and the backgrounds are simply exquisite. The best level is the fourth, with Amazon warriors, piranhas, and massive dinosaurs to defeat. The difficulty is pitched just right, although your attention keeps wandering to look at the graphics - they're

that good! Strider hasn't aged much at all in the three years it's been around, but the one failing it has is the comparative lack of levels. Five just isn't enough.

However, if the arcade game blew you away, expect the same treatment from your Megadrive.

JAZ



PRESENTATION **85%**

Skill level select, sound test and arcade-style presentation.

GRAPHICS **90%**

Identical to the coin-op, with absolutely superb sprites and gorgeous parallax scrolling backdrops.

SOUND **88%**

Again, identical to the coin-op. Great tunes and effects.

PLAYABILITY **93%**

The manic slashing 'n' jumping action is amazingly addictive from the word go.

LASTABILITY **85%**

A stack of levels which are as tough as the coin-op's and there are three skill levels to test your mettle!

OVERALL **90%**

A lavish beat 'em up, and an absolutely cracking conversion that's identical to the coin-op in almost every way. A real Megadrive Golden Oldie.

The Master is back! And he has many ways. Anyone who hasn't partaken of the original Strider may be alarmed to hear there was a threat to take over the Earth, perpetrated by the mad leader of the Soviet Union. Since being defeated by Strider (and the nation embracing free-market economics), the Master has been wandering around looking for funding for further World Domination schemes.

It seems he's been successful, and his evil efforts now result in another six-level platform assault course for Strider. Along the way a variety of mechanical and organic minions of the Master attempt to thwart



him. Strider still has his trusty sword, and some other items of weaponry he may find in the labyrinthine levels.

Strider is a little fellow, which is useful considering he has Redwood trees to scale, ceilings to scramble across and outer space satellites to take on. It's hardly surprising that coming a cropper happens all too often, making Strider II a tough and uncompromising game.

This sequel to Strider was programmed for US Gold by

British programmers at Tiertex. However, the original Strider was the product of arcade giants Capcom, who, whichever way you look at it, are more adept than their British colleagues. Strider II isn't bad as an effort, but has none of the glamour or amazing gameplay features of the original. The graphics particularly are patchy. Good in places, shockingly dull in others.

Although this is three years on from the original, it seems to be marking time in gameplay

terms. The game is closest to is James Bond: The Duel, and it is slightly superior. The most impressive feature is the sinister and abundant speech, but this seems to have swallowed too much of the cart memory.

Unfortunately, this is a pale shadow of the original game and doesn't deserve the same attention. Give it a miss. **JAZ**



PRESENTATION **71%**

Not really much in the way of options, and looks quite rough compared to the polished Strider.

GRAPHICS **79%**

A nice variety of graphic elements between levels, but the sprites are rough, dull and badly animated.

SOUND **89%**

Amazing speech, with echoing laughter and malevolent women's voices. Good music.

PLAYABILITY **79%**

Intriguing to begin within, and strikingly difficult at first. The game's a bit nit-picky with control.

LASTABILITY **67%**

There are only six levels, and the spots don't really fly at any point.

OVERALL **72%**

Inferior to the much older Strider. Maybe an unnecessary revisit, but an okay platform beat 'em up in its own right.



Summer Challenge is an Olympic-type sports compilation, featuring eight separate competitive events. They may be played individually or as part of an ongoing tournament, between several entrants. Competitors must score in the top three for a medal. In tournament play, points are awarded for medals, and an overall league table is cast.

The eight events cover various disciplines: Equestrian,



SUMMER CHALLENGE
BY
ACCOLADE
PLAYERS
1-3
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS
BATTERY SAVE
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
AVERAGE

SUMMER CHALLENGE



Cycling, Archery, Hurdling, Kayaking, High Jump, Javelin and Pole Vault. Different disciplines use a variety of control methods, and have quite different objectives. The Kayaking is a long drawn out event, where the player negotiates water gates on an artificial stream. The horse-jumping is similarly epic, requiring concentration and almost perfect judgement.

On the other hand, Cycling and Hurdling are simple events that rely on speed, and the two jumping events and Javelin are

over in the blink of an eye. All the events are portrayed in a pseudo 3-D perspective, using simple polygons.

When you compete in the hurdles, the stadium rotates to follow you around the track.

In some instances these graphics work, but in other events it fails miserably to create the sense of realism the programmers were trying to achieve. In play terms this is also a mixed bag.

The most enjoyable events are also the most taxing and take longest to learn. Even though eight players can compete, they have to take turns separately, which is a pity.

The presentation of Summer Challenge is generally high, although the ceremonies are extremely poorly done. It is the most inventive sports compilation on the machine, though there isn't much in the way of competition.

JAZ



PRESENTATION 81%

The multi-player options and the training function are well done.

GRAPHICS 74%

The polygons used are interesting and offer an original perspective for sports games. Some of the animation is quite impressive.

SOUND 48%

This is one area where Summer Challenge is very weak.

PLAYABILITY 69%

A game which you might well drag out at group occasions, because of the multi-player option.

LASTABILITY 63%

A game which you might well drag out at group occasions, because of the multi-player option.

OVERALL 67%

A brave attempt at a new kind of sports game, but the Megadrive isn't powerful enough for some of its ideas.

Billy and Cormano were an okay team. It was true that Billy objected to Cormano's over indulgence in the barbecue beans - especially when they had to share a bivouac - and his under-indulgence in washing. For his part, Cormano thought that Billy was on all right gringo.

And as they rode into Brushville County, they realised they might have to cash in that friendship for some rough times. Some seriously wanted men had rode in and were demanding high 'tributes' from the townsfolk. Billy and Cormano thought they might just put them in their place,



knowing there was some English toff behind the whole set-up. Time to pay Sir Richard Rose a courtesy call. So lock up your southern ladies, it's the Sunset Riders!

Konami have converted this from their own coin-op, and made quite a nice little western



Indian reservations perfectly, and Billy and Cormano are easy to control, playable characters. The game's four levels are packed with incident, but uns poking out from windows rocks,

and just about anywhere.

There are loads of little touches, like walking into saloons and getting a kiss from one of the bar-maids. But a good game by any one else's standards, Sunset Riders isn't quite up to the mark Konami usually set themselves. The four levels are cute, but not that hard, and playing on easy is not advised. Not an essential buy except for fans of the arcade.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 89%

Excellent two-player option. Nice title and attract screens, and suitable options.

GRAPHICS 82%

Neat sprites, and a good range of animation. Good backdrop ideas.

SOUND 76%

Jaunty soundtrack and arcade shooty effects, keep the action bouncing along. The composer couldn't quite decide between Morriconne or Kylie.

PLAYABILITY 83%

Additive from the first shot, with loads of enemies appearing from all sides. Different things to do on each level.

LASTABILITY 79%

The duel option is really ace, and the harder difficulties should draw you back from time to time.

OVERALL 81%

A surprisingly good blast out of a lacklustre coin-op, which should merit an inspection at least.

SUNSET RIDERS
BY
KONAMI
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUOUS
5
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
PATCHY



This game allows you to experience all your biking dreams, as you take part in a variety of races around the world. As well as racing against other riders, you also race against the clock. Each track has a series of checkpoints, which you must pass within the time limit. At the end of a race all the time remaining is converted into bonus points.

There are two game modes to choose from — arcade and original. Arcade mode is a straight conversion of the coin-op, and gives you four tracks to race on; beginner, junior, senior and expert. Each track is progressively longer, and is also



more twisting — the real challenge is trying to win the expert race.

The original mode is an ongoing challenge where you race against a series of opponents over a variety of tracks. If you win you're awarded money to

better and better, and the courses get more challenging.

Super Hang-On certainly is a great racing game, with plen-

ty of fast action and high quality scrolling which conveys a superb sense of speed. The original mode gives you a feeling of planning for a season rather than a single race. Even though Super Hang-On is years old, it's still the only real motorbike racer on the Megadrive. Yet the game is lacking that certain something to make it an all-out

winner. Still, it's a great game to play and is full of excitement and thrills — if racing's your thing, don't miss it!
JAZ



SUPER HANG-ON

BY PLAYERS

1 GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM CONTINUOUS
NONE SKILL LEVELS
4 RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

As far removed from our beloved game of soccer as Mahatma Gandhi was from Hitler, American football is the biggest noise in the spectrum of world sport — anybody who has watched coverage of this spectacle on Channel 4 would testify to that.

Arena have converted this wild and crazy Midway coin-op to the Megadrive. Be prepared to literally fight for recognition in this latest, skull-crushing American Football outing on the Megadrive. You have been warned.

Super High Impact has an option where friends can team up to play against the computer.



Player one controls the offensive moves while player two is in charge of the defence. What this amounts to is that player one controls the quarter back and player two the receivers on offence, but player two gets to call the shots when choosing the best defence formations.

It only costs 50p to find out that the arcade game is a very

limited, highly simplified and not particularly enjoyable version of American Football. It takes £40 to find out the same thing about this! On the surface the game looks great. The visuals are very good, the sound is neat and there are some brilliant presentation touches that are very similar to the arcade game.

The problem is, though, that the gameplay is very poor indeed. There are only three main play actions, there's very little difference between the teams, the game difficulty is moronically low (even on the hardest setting) and the action itself is simplistic beyond belief. Even with two players, the lack of excitement and depth means that it only takes a couple of hours to get completely bored with this.
RICH



SUPER HIGH IMPACT

BY ARENA PLAYERS
1-2 GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM CONTINUOUS
NONE SKILL LEVELS
3 RESPONSIVENESS
SNAPPY

PRESENTATION 87%
Two game modes and a hidden options screen (see if you can find it!)

GRAPHICS 84%
Lovely animation on the rider, excellent roads, and the landscape zooms by at a fair lick.

SOUND 79%
Fun tunes keep you movin' on down the road, and there are plenty of screeches and roars.

PLAYABILITY 88%
Responsiveness is good, and you instantly get into the racing spirit thanks to the speed of the graphics and the jaunty music.

LASTABILITY 87%
Four challenging tracks to beat in arcade mode, and the original mode will keep you racing for weeks.

OVERALL 85%
A very high quality racing game which is a must for speed freaks.

PRESENTATION 90%
Arcade quality attract sequences and intermission screens. Reasonable choice of options.

GRAPHICS 87%
Strikingly animated sprites that perform some amusing tricks and classy digitised images.

SOUND 86%
Stacks of sampled speech and rousing music to hype the game.

PLAYABILITY 61%
Very easy to play, but the amount of command over the team is severely restricted. Success is achieved using no skill at all.

LASTABILITY 32%
The extremely limited gameplay and lack of real control means this loses its appeal swiftly.

OVERALL 39%
A superbly presented American football game which is totally let down by its limited, dull and shallow action.



Megadrive Super Kick Off is a vertically scrolling, overhead view soccer game, which mixes fast-paced arcade action simulation elements. There's more to football than tanking a pig's bladder up and down some grass. Tactical, strategic football

SUPER KICK OFF

is just as important as nifty foot-work.

The thing which made Kick Off popular in the first place was the aftertouch feature which enabled players to perform fair-

ly realistic curling shots. This feature has been reproduced in the Megadrive game. Kick the ball and quickly turn the joystick in the direction of curve required.

The controls take a bit of getting used to, due to the fact that the ball doesn't stick to your feet. But once mastered, the level of control



you can develop are incredible. Steal the ball from an opponent with a slide tackle, sweep the ball swiftly up-pitch with a mega pass, and beat the keeper with a rocket-shot! Super Kick Off is a truly rewarding game: the more you play it, the better you get, and the greater the game becomes!

JAZ



SUPER KICK OFF
BY
US GOLD
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
HARD
CONTINUOUS
N/A
SKILL LEVELS
4
RESPONSIVENESS
GREAT

PRESENTATION 90%
Horde of options and more options scream for attention, as well as numerous presentation screens.

GRAPHICS 82%
Small but perfectly formed. Colourful sprites and smooth-scrolling pitches in a variety of designs.

SOUND 76%
A few good quality tunes and effects - and some speed.

PLAYABILITY 96%
Fast-moving and exciting, but hard to master. There's definitely years' worth of play locked up in this cart.

LASTABILITY 94%
The four tournaments should last quite a while, and with another player it should last forever.

OVERALL 95%
The best football game going, and one which every Megadrive owner should leap out and purchase.

The city of Metropolis is a dangerous place, as reporter Clark Kent knows better than most. First a gang of schoolchildren are kidnapped, then before you could say 'Michael Jackson' Lois Lane disappears too. Clark decides to don 'saateen' under-



wear and investigate.

What Virgin have come up with to represent the thrilling adventures of Superman is a platform game. Yes! All the

spills and flying chills in glorious 2-D side-on-a-vision. Superman does have a modest range of super powers, the super run or the super leap. Picking up icons

allows you access to other effects like the heat-vision and floor drilling but only



at points marked by the 'spin here' message.

The four bosses that stand against you are pretty weak, and even the climax with Brainiac is a distinct anti-climax. Superman isn't much cop at all, combining mundane looks with the most boring game style imaginable. Every time you play, the same boring baddies are waiting in the same places to be pulverised. Irredeemable.

JAZ



SUPERMAN
BY
VIRGIN
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUOUS
UNLIMITED
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
FAIR

PRESENTATION 48%
Substandard in every department. The intro screens are particularly dire.

GRAPHICS 60%
Tiny sprites set against bland background with hardly any detail. The superpowers fail to impress.

SOUND 47%
All Superman's stirring themes have been dumped for a series of aural trautes.

PLAYABILITY 58%
There is the small matter of five levels of action. The game is so limited that the thought is a turn off.

LASTABILITY 52%
Completing Superman only requires superhuman powers of Tedium Resistance, and it's as appealing as green Kryptonite.

OVERALL 52%
A very poor platform game that stuns with its lack of imagination or action. Even comic and film fans will feel very shortchanged.

Not only does Super Monaco GP include a completely faithful conversion of the arcade game, there's an option that lets you challenge other top drivers in a complete Grand Prix season.

The World Circuit mode gives you the chance to race



against other drivers over an entire Grand Prix season. All the world's most famous courses are included, and you've got to race

around them all and out-perform other drivers to win the Grand Prix at the end of the season. There are seventeen



other drivers, all fast off the grid. On screen instrumentation lets you know your position, as well as speed, tyres and lap times.

The action is amazingly fast, and the 3D is both smooth and completely convincing. The World Circuit option adds massive lasting appeal, with a full season to race and other drivers to challenge - and even if you win the Grand Prix, you can return to the game to see if you can break all your lap records. Super Monaco GP is an all-time great in the Megadrive racing circuit, if not now the best on the shelves. For sheer challenge, it is still unbeaten.

JAZ

SUPER MONACO GP
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
SKILL LEVELS
3
CONTINUOUS
PASSWORD
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

PRESENTATION 91%
Superb presentation screens, and a wealth of options including an arcade mode and an excellent World Championship mode.

GRAPHICS 88%
The scenery is very sparse, but the fast and thoughtfully convincing 3D conveys an adequate impression of racing.

SOUND 81%
Good tunes and atmospheric stereo spot effects - wear your headphones when you play!

PLAYABILITY 92%
Easy to get into, and once you start racing it's very difficult to stop.

LASTABILITY 90%
Multiple cars and skill levels maintain the challenge - and the World Circuit will keep you coming back for more.

OVERALL 90%
A fast and utterly thrilling race game one of the best you'll play on any home machine.

Jump into your 4x4 off-road truck and burn around hazardous dirt tracks along with the greatest off-road racers in the world — including the legendary Ivan “Ironman” Stewart himself! Super Off-Road is best described as a Super Sprint vari-

SUPER OFF-ROAD

SUPER OFF-ROAD
BY
BALLISTIC PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
2
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

ant, where the object of each race is to complete four laps of the off-road circuit before your opponents. Super Off-Road enables one or two players to face up to two or three comput-

er-controlled trucks. The courses are quite rough, with hills, puddles and ramps. Beat your opponents and the prize money you gain is taken to the “Ironman” speed shop where you customise

your truck’s abilities by allocating your funds appropriately.

Super Off-Road is a decent conversion of the pop-culture character of Leland



three-player coin-op with spot-on Megadrive representations of the miniature sprites and detailed backdrops. The game is all the better when there are two players participating. The graphics are spot-on replicas of the arcade original, with extra tracks not included in the original coin-op. The sound effects and music are very dull though and they don’t make any use of the Megadrive’s sampling abilities. Single players will tire of this after a while as there isn’t much in the way of variety, but if you’ve got a pal who fancies some two-player racing, get it.

RICH

PRESENTATION 55%
Not much in the way of options or presentation screens.
GRAPHICS 76%
Tiny, but detailed and nicely animated car sprites zip around lots of bumpy backdrops.
SOUND 59%
Average tunes and dull effects are the order of the day.
PLAYABILITY 80%
It’s a fast game and you get a good feeling of having to bump your way to the front of the field, so it’s instantly playable and addictive, especially with two players.
LASTABILITY 76%
Plenty of tracks, but it’s easy to get through them all and only the two-player mode will keep you coming back to the game after that.
OVERALL 79%
An excellent coin-op conversion! If Super Sprint-type cooping appeals to you, get this!

Super Real Basketball is that most American of sports, portrayed in a purely athletic port. One or two players compete in either an Exhibition match or a tournament season. There are eight teams to choose from, with the selection spanning the States

SUPER REAL BASKETBALL

SUPER REAL BASKETBALL
BY
SEGA PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
SIMPLE
CONTINUES
N/A
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
QUITE GOOD

from Seattle to Boston. When the team screen appears it’s time to choose who plays where. Zone or Man-to-Man defence are selectable, depending on whether the team

concentrates on attack or not. Shots from outside the area score three points, those inside get only two.

Super Real features a series of animated sequences.

Shooting from out of range, slam dunks, and the throw-up are shown as close-range animated scenes. Success depends on the player’s skill at



timing the shot. The graphics of the main game sequence are not so impressive, with a bare court and large, blocky players.

Super Real lives up to its name in the ball and player movements. They behave as you’d expect. On the other hand, the games last too long, and the computer opponent is soon predictable, so I would only recommend this to someone who play against.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 82%
Colourful and clear option screens and the player substitution displays make this quite an easy game to get along with.
GRAPHICS 72%
The players are great, and the cut-scenes portraying all the special slam-dunks look pretty cool.
SOUND 71%
The ball whooshes, the cheerleaders chant, and the players dribble!
PLAYABILITY 80%
Brilliant in two-player mode, but the game lacks the same thrills when attempting it solo.
LASTABILITY 71%
It’s a good fun to get out once in a while, but it lacks the detail and depth of Supreme Court or Bulls vs Lakers.
OVERALL 77%
Solid entertainment to two players, but on your own it’s a little wearing.

Super Thunder Blade is a conversion of another one of Sega’s massive custom coin-ops. This time the action is centred round an Apache helicopter as it makes daring combat raids through built-up areas.

The gameplay is exception-

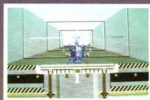
SUPER THUNDERBLADE

SUPER THUNDER BLADE
BY
SEGA PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
POOR

ally simple, just shoot whatever crosses your sights. Two viewpoints of the action are shown. A 3-D approach is used as you fly through the city, between buildings and in the face of enemy

tanks. When you have reached your goal, an overhead bombing view is shown. In this mode you can alter your height before dropping your payload.

There are plenty of levels, with a plethora of targets, but Super Thunder



Blade is let down by its age. Being one of the first Megadrive carts, it was technically impressive at the time, and copied the coin-op quite closely, but now looks jerky and plays unresponsively compared to later releases. If you fancy rotor-blade fun try LHX Attack Chopper or Jungle Strike. You’d be best advised to avoid this.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 65%
The attract sequence of the coin-op with a digitised pic, apparently from the Blue Thunder movie. A few basic option features.
GRAPHICS 68%
The 3-D section doesn’t look much cop. Bloated, oversized sprites move jerkily on dull backgrounds. The overhead view is even less impressive.
SOUND 54%
The drone of chopper engines and a lot of explosion effects. What you’d expect really.
PLAYABILITY 59%
It’s still a good game idea. There’s lots of action but it’s not very well presented, that’s all.
LASTABILITY 48%
The poor control response and lack of variety make you want to desert this after a few games.
OVERALL 49%
A poor helicopter game which can’t help being old and crap, but sadly, is.



Supreme Court Basketball enters the fast, skillful and often frantic world of... basketball. There are four teams to choose. One team might be strong in defence, another might be sharp on the break, but generally they're all evenly

SUPREME COURT

matched.

Supreme Court Basketball certainly scores highly for innovation, departing from the usual diagonally scrolling view of other Megadrive basketball

games. Only half the screen is viewed at a time and when the players cross the court the screen flips to show the other half. This switch is irritating at first, but once you get used to this the

viewpoint works well, and this is complemented by some stunning animation on the miniature players. As well as having great graphics



SUPREME COURT BASKETBALL
BY SEGA
PLAYERS 1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY MEDIUM
CONTINUUES NONE
SKILL LEVELS 3
RESPONSIVENESS GOOD

PRESENTATION 86%
There are plenty of options and some nice touches like the half-time chat-chat with US basketball star David Robinson.

GRAPHICS 81%
Very detailed player sprites which are very realistically animated. The basketball court is, well, it looks like a basketball court all right.

SOUND 85%
Very impressive sound effects which create the perfect aural atmosphere.

PLAYABILITY 85%
It plays a fast game of basketball which is quite realistic. The switching viewing angles is a little off-putting at first.

LASTABILITY 83%
About the right mix of strategy and fast action makes this a basketball game that you'll come back to.

OVERALL 84%
Probably has the widest appeal of all the Megadrive basketball games.

Zoras the evil magician has been consorting with foul, depraved demons. Unfortunately, Zoras and his new-found buddies have returned to our green and pleasant land and have murdered good King Pallas.

Sword of Sordan

Two people are ready at hand to dish out vengeance. Enter Brodan and Shardan, a brother and sister who have decided to rid the land of Zoras.

The general gameplay involves walking across the horizontally scrolling screens using the Sword of Sordan to chop up any of Zoras' minions. They may

leave potions behind that have many and varied effects on your barbarian hero.



SWORD OF SODAN
BY ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS 1
GAME DIFFICULTY EASY
CONTINUUES 0
SKILL LEVELS 1
RESPONSIVENESS SLUGGISH

Some may give our hero extra powers. Others do nothing unless you mix them with another potion. But beware! Some potent combinations produce a highly toxic poison which drains a lot of energy.

At first it looks pretty tasty, with impressive opening screens, large sprites and great sounds. However, good as though they might be, they simply don't paper over the gaping cracks in Sword of Sordan's gameplay. It's just plain boring. There's simply not enough variety, excitement and challenge to keep you coming back after you've played it a couple of times.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 69%
Nice in-game screens and a good feel within the game itself.

GRAPHICS 53%
Enormous, detailed sprites and nice backdrops, but the animation on the characters is completely abysmal.

SOUND 61%
Digitised effects abound, but they aren't of an astounding quality.

PLAYABILITY 39%
Those big graphics make the game look like its going to be really good, but it doesn't take long for the awful truth to become apparent.

LASTABILITY 33%
You won't be able to stand more than half an hour at the controls of this tragic game.

OVERALL 38%
Brilliant graphics are let down by a completely crap attempt at a mystical beat 'em up. Save your cash.

As dispossessed Prince Thomas, your goal in this role-playing game is to overthrow that vile usurper, Torkan and take your place as rightful king of Exaladria. Preferably before teatime.

You start with 200 Kims, (the local currency) with which

SWORD OF VERMILION

to outfit yourself and guard against the slimy denizens of the wilds. Killing monsters gives Thomas more money, which he spends on armour, weapons, herbs and spells. Each town or village has some sub-quest to

complete which usually rewards him with an item or some information.

While moving between locations the screen shifts to a 3D perspective; but when the hero's journey is interrupted by

some monsters, the view is of the battle area.



SWORD OF VERMILION
BY SEGA
PLAYERS 1
GAME DIFFICULTY TRICKY
CONTINUUES BATTERY SAVE
SKILL LEVELS 1
RESPONSIVENESS GOOD

Tom's often surrounded by creatures, and they increase in speed, number and strength as the game progresses.

Though it's getting on in years, this is still one of the best RPGs on the Megadrive; graphics are excellent, and the playability is of a high standard. Maybe it's a bit pricey for its age, but if you're an RPG fan you won't want to miss it.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 90%
Incredible intro screens combine with the wonderful music to great effect.

GRAPHICS 70%
The main baddies are brilliant, and the standard of graphics is high throughout. The arcade combat bit is pretty smart.

SOUND 91%
The music is some of the best heard on the Megadrive. Prepare to be amazed!

PLAYABILITY 89%
Lots of varied sub-quests to keep your interest, and the gameplay is much more accessible than most role-playing games.

LASTABILITY 91%
This is actually quite an expensive RPG, but it's a big enough game to make it worth the cash. There's months of gaming here.

OVERALL 89%
Still one of the best Megadrive role playing games which should appeal to everyone.

Baloo the Bear is managing his air freight firm 'Higher for Hire' with his 'young friend', Kit. Times are hard everywhere and when the chance to win an unbelievably huge business contract that would secure their air-lining firm's future is announced Baloo and Kit find the temptation just too much. All they are required to do is to retrieve ten boxes of cargo from nine exotic locations.

However, they are in competition with Baloo's old jungle nemesis, Shere Khan (who is

TALESPIN TALESPIN TALESPIN



also managing an air freight business!). Also, they have to complete their task within seven days if

they are to secure this lucrative contract and hold on to their business.

The task in hand is not as straightforward as it seems though. The nine boxes scattered across the globe have been secreted deep in hostile environments. To make matters worse the skies are patrolled by Don Karnage and his Sky Pirates. This new two-player game puts you in the boots of these cuddly Disney Bears as

they wade through swamps and flee Don Karnage in a race across the skies to locate the cargo.

The basic concept behind TaleSpin is quite good, splitting the action between platform and shoot 'em up levels. Sadly, the implementation is dire and spoils everything. The controls are unresponsive and "loaty", the collision detection is very bad indeed - there are certain enemies who you can't hit them for taffee. The last straw must be the stupid two-player mode. Having Kit dragged along after Baloo is very frustrating. There's loads of cartoon platform games out there, and the all right shoot 'em up bits don't do nearly enough to warrant the purchase of TaleSpin.

JAZ

TALESPIN
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
CLUMSY



Talmi's four pixie girlfriends have been kidnapped, (surprise! surprise!) and they are being held by a particularly nasty wold who, for some suspicious reason, enjoys wearing Viking outfits. Anyway, he's got them locked away somewhere in Marvel Land, a vast amusement park.

To rescue them from the park, Talmi must overcome a whole collection of bizarre obstacles. There are moles wielding spears, pink mushrooms with split personalities, blubbering sharks, leucating pangolins, and a whole host of other undesirables who Talmi has to jump on to obliterate. Special

ITALMI'S ADVENTURE

icons allow the hero to fly and even leave a trail of Talmi clones.

This Megadrive platform adventure is a vast game. Marvel Land has four worlds, and each world incorporates seven levels. There are frantic rides on roller coasters, desperate treks across waterfalls, mayhem aboard steamboats, and castle-bound intrigue. Each of the themed worlds has mechanical attractions of its own. There's also a special falling

star round.

At the end of each world, Talmi meets a guardian who challenges him to a game of luck and skill. Variations of this are a hammer-paper-scissors game, and one where blowing up a balloon is accomplished by finding the right plunger.

In the presentation department, Talmi's is a mixed bag. The graphics are mostly small and unimpressive, but every so often there's a really smart effect (like the star round). The

tunes also sound a bit naff, but likeable. The pin-point accuracy required to succeed in the game is also something that takes some getting used to, but this heightens the challenge. However, despite the onset of age, this is one of Namco's best games, and is rightly a minor classic of platform games. Fans of the genre won't be disappointed with the goods on offer here.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 77%

An attractive cartoon-like introductory story. A selection of options available to tweak.

GRAPHICS 79%

The images from the cartoon are easily recognisable in their video-game forms. However the animation is poor.

SOUND 80%

Happy tunes and amusing effects suit the attempt at a joyful game.

PLAYABILITY 44%

TaleSpin rivals Fantasia in its dreadful playability caused by poor collision detection and design.

LASTABILITY 57%

TaleSpin's appeal is severely marred by lacklustre playability so its long term interest is limited.

OVERALL 59%

A great licence with a couple of brave attempts at new ideas, brought down by careless play testing.

PRESENTATION 90%

The intro sequence is great, with a cartoon plot. A useful password option is also included.

GRAPHICS 87%

Sprites are well defined and there are plenty of cheerful colours knocking about.

SOUND 85%

Pleasant fairground tunes that catch the atmosphere of the game.

PLAYABILITY 80%

Controls are responsive, but the precision needed in attacks can frustrate. The game slows down occasionally.

LASTABILITY 84%

The amount of levels, and the difficulty of the game means you'll keep bashing away for some time.

OVERALL 83%

A platform game that includes all the regular features and a few new ones. Fans of the style should be satisfied.

ITALMI'S ADVENTURE

BY
NAMCO
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



Poor Taz and his family have run out of food and their only chance of avoiding starvation is to find one of the mythical giant eggs laid by the mythical giant TazMania sea bird.

So he has to cross the deserts, jungles and mysterious



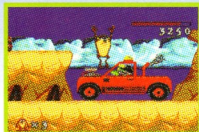
ancient ruins of Tazmania in this platform game full of weird and hostile character, such as Taz-eating plants and ferocious rock creatures. Plus there are the bad guys who plague Taz in

the popular Saturday morning show.

Taz Mania is visually one of the most stunning-looking Megadrive games – it's virtually identical to a Taz cartoon. The

animation is very impressive, and the sprites and backgrounds are well defined, detailed and full of colour. Alas, the game is terribly easy to complete. The bosses can all be beaten with the same move and the final boss is as easy to beat as the first!

JAZ



TAZ MANIA
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
REALLY GOOD

Electronic Arts turns its popular basketball engine into a tournament cart featuring the world's finest teams. The gameplay and appearance of this version is similar to that of Bulls and Lakers but the 16teams are replicas of their real-life coun-



terparts. The American team is an assembly of the greats of USA basketball such as Larry Bird, Michael Jordan and 'Magic' Johnson. Each of their sprite has been drawn to resem-

ble the players' physiques and they can perform their signature moves, such as 360 degree spins and jump shots.

The game itself is great: a fast-playing, arcade style of bas-

ketball, but with loads of room for tactical and strategic play, and a great control method, this is good a basketball game you could wish for. However, the changes are minor and I'd strongly advise that owners of Bulls vs Lakers do not to buy this game because it's just far too similar.

JAZ



TEAM USA BASKETBALL
BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
1-2
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

Tecmo World Cup soccer takes an arcade-style approach to the game. Technical aspects of the sport are lost in place of fast action. The ball is passed with superb accuracy at the touch of a button, and shooting is done with another. When you're off the ball, the shoot button does a



slide tackle which usually wins the ball from the opponent. Should you fancy tournament play, the World Cup awaits! Take charge of one of 24 teams in your attempt to win that statuette. The first heats are decided

on a points basis and subsequent rounds run as a knockout competition.

The Tecmo World Cup coin-op wasn't exactly inspiring, and this conversion fails to improve on its faults. The graphics are

exceedingly bland in their two-dimensional jerkiness. The sound is very limited. What really puts the boot in is poor gameplay. The loose collision detection makes it impossible to run around opposing players and tackles are ridiculously easy to perform. Even in two-player mode Tecmo loses all of its appeal.

JAZ



TECMO WORLD CUP '92
BY
TECMO
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
VERY EASY
CONTINUES
N/A
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
LAME

PRESENTATION 86%

Some options and gorgeous intros as well as superb in-game presentation.

GRAPHICS 92%

Easily some of the best Megadrive graphics – superlative sprites, animation and backgrounds in glorious Technicolour.

SOUND 80%

Effects as true to the cartoons as you could expect, as well as some suitable tunes.

PLAYABILITY 85%

The graphics are the game's main attraction, though the action is also good fun, if not particularly challenging.

LASTABILITY 65%

Sadly, although Taz Mania is entertaining, it's way too easy. The bosses especially, are a piece of cake to beat, as all of them yield to the same tactics.

OVERALL 75%

An enjoyable and visually exciting platform game which is just not tough enough.

PRESENTATION 92%

The international aspect of the gameplay is very well covered. All the teams, loads of team statistics and even international trivia!

GRAPHICS 85%

The sprites really do bear a strong resemblance to the real players. The only slight flaw is that the animation is a little jerky.

SOUND 81%

Every country has its national anthem and there are some great in-game effects.

PLAYABILITY 75%

There's lots of action, but it's more of a technical simulation of basketball than a fast arcade game.

LASTABILITY 84%

The control method allows plenty of sophisticated techniques, and the two player game is fun.

OVERALL 80%

An enjoyable and sophisticated basketball game which is as least as good as EA's Bulls vs Lakers. Probably best-suited to real basketball fans, though.

PRESENTATION 66%

Quite a few options and static screens to engage your enthusiasts.

GRAPHICS 47%

The sprites are wooden and the backgrounds are dull – even for a football game.

SOUND 51%

Poor tunes and effects fail to generate any sort of soccer atmosphere.

PLAYABILITY 46%

Being the simplistic soccer action and the low, low difficulty setting makes playing this a dull ride.

LASTABILITY 34%

Limited controls and lack of challenge detracts the single-player game, and even the two-player mode gets dull quickly because the game is so limited.

OVERALL 41%

A naïf conversion of a poor arcade game which fails miserably as a football game. Get Super Kick Off or J-League Pro Striker instead.

The Hyperstone Heist is the first venture into the world of Sega gaming for the teenage turtles. Donatello, Raphael, Michelangelo and Leonardo are called on to halt the plans of The Shredder, a dreadful being who has just arrived from Dimension

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES
 BY
KOMAMI
PLAYERS
 1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
 5
SKILL LEVELS
 3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



X, with his Hyperstone machine. This device has already shrunk the Statue of Liberty! In order to protect New York, the Turtles have six levels of beat 'em up action ahead.

Each scrolling level features loads of enemy martial artists. These may be used unarmed combat, shurikens, swords or fire magic. The Shredder also has a force of electrifying robots. At

the end of the level, they face some of Shredder's lunatic lieutenants. A maximum of two turtles can play



together. Turtles look great. The sprites really capture the look of their cartoon counterparts. The fighting animation is also nice. There is also an endless onslaught of action, but the game isn't always challenging. There are too many continues and too much life-restoring pizza scattered about. A shame, as Turtles could have been a classic.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 90%
 Very polished throughout, even allowing you to change the Turtles' colours to either those of the TV Turtles or the comicbook stars.

GRAPHICS 91%
 Excellent! Turtles look a lot like the arcade game. Both the turtle sprites and backdrops are boldly done, and the variety is vast.

SOUND 87%
 Thumping soundtrack and great fighting FX.

PLAYABILITY 90%
 An instant kick in the playability stakes. Taking the turtles is great fun.

LASTABILITY 79%
 Beating the game on the easy level is a complete breeze, but the hard setting is more challenging. However, the gameplay stays much the same all the way through.

OVERALL 83%
 A good beat 'em up that's too shallow and too easy to be great.

As Kyle Reese it is your job to destroy that nasty Terminator and thereby save Sarah Connor from a sticky end. There are four levels of platform-based shoot 'em up thrills, each one loosely based on a scene from the movie — includ-

TERMINATOR
 BY
VIRGIN
PLAYERS
 1
GAME DIFFICULTY
VERY EASY
CONTINUES
 NONE
SKILL LEVELS
 4
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



ing the climactic showdown in an empty machine shop.

Kyle first infiltrates a SkyNet base to destroy a big bubbling tank of goop before logging it to the time displac-

ment unit and zipping back to the future. In this level, the boy Reese is armed with a supply of hand grenades, a few time bombs and an Uzi sub machine gun.

While it looks and sounds absolutely bril-



liant, it sadly lacks substance. The problem is that there are only four levels to conquer, and it takes very little time to get through them all — half an hour on the easiest level is enough to see you through to the disappointing end screen, and even on the top difficulty setting, a few hours practice is all it takes to defeat the game! The great graphics and passable sound are wasted in such a thin package.

RICH

PRESENTATION 90%
 Fab intros, loads of smart intermissions and nice in-game presentation.

GRAPHICS 89%
 Great sprites and animation, but the quality of the backgrounds really tails off towards the end of the game, though.

SOUND 73%
 Some great tunes and effects, but there are a few crappy ones there too.

PLAYABILITY 68%
 Pretty standard blasting fare. Some sections are a bit sparse and the gameplay doesn't change much.

LASTABILITY 74%
 Four short levels which take no time to complete. The programmers seemed to run out of ideas towards the end.

OVERALL 41%
 A potentially superb license ruined by complete lack of long-term appeal.

After the American defence computer, SkyNet, launched a nuclear strike the survivors of the holocaust then faced a bitter war against SkyNet and its robotic minions. The human race was saved by the leadership of John Connor. However, in a last-

TERMINATOR 2
 BY
ACCLAIM
PLAYERS
 1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
 5
SKILL LEVELS
 1
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



ditch attempt to save its own scheme, SkyNet is sending a horrible metamorphic killer robot, the T-1000, back in time to bump off Connor whilst he is still a little boy, thus preventing

him from doing anything to further the human cause in the future.

Luckily, the human resistance got wind of the proceedings and are themselves sending an old captured and reprogrammed Cyberdyne Systems Terminator back to protect the kid. You play that Terminator,



and it is your job to destroy everything SkyNet throws at you. This operation is performed in a first-person view Operation Wolf-esque shoot 'em up, con-



trolled by either joystick or Menacer light gun. With a Menacer it's fairly tough and certainly proves to be addictive and

thoroughly enjoyable — easily the best Menacer game available. But with a joystick it's really boring. The on-screen sight makes it far too easy to blast the targets, and I finished the entire game on my first go!

JAZ

PRESENTATION 87%
 Loads of digitised scenes from the film and great in-game presentation. Controlling the game with the Menacer really adds a lot to it.

GRAPHICS 85%
 Smart sprites and backgrounds. It's all very atmospheric and reminiscent of the film (and indeed the coin-op).

SOUND 71%
 Loads of decent effects, samples and tunes.

PLAYABILITY 83%
 Fast and furious with the Menacer, with loads of things to blow up. Joypad players are not so lucky.

LASTABILITY 80%
 There are some really tough levels to crack and two player mode adds excitement and playing with the joystick makes it a bit too easy, though.

OVERALL 72%
 The first real light gun game which has anything to offer. Menacer owners should definitely buy it.



Test Drive 2 is a driving simulator viewed from the driver's seat with you flogging your expensive sports car to its limits. It's thrash central as you and the other driver race full tilt along public roads attempting to be the first past pre-designated checkpoints.

Test Drive 2 gives you a choice of three top cars: the Ferrari F40, a four-wheel-drive Porsche 959 or a Lamborghini Diablo. Each car has its own information screen which details all its vital statistics such as acceleration, braking times and so on.

Highway Police often feel

TEST DRIVE 2 - THE DUEL

BY BALLISTIC PLAYERS
1 GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES NONE
SKILL LEVELS 3
RESPONSIVENESS HYPER



they must stop and arrest so-called 'reckless drivers' such as yourself. So, if you see flashing blue and red lights in your mirror, or even heading straight for you, it's best to drive with much haste. Luckily, the police cars are comparatively slow and it's easy to outrun them.

Test Drive 2 incorporates some smart presentation which should have made it a winner. Sadly, this is as far as the good points go. For starters, the collision detection is ridiculous. Even

if you think you've only just scraped your wing mirror you can expect to see the windshield shatter signalling the loss of a life. The controls are also wildly over-responsive, resulting in much crashing and general needless doom. The in-game

sprites are poorly drawn, the



backgrounds are bland and the 3D update is some of the worst I've ever seen on the Megadrive. The sound is of a similarly low quality with an ever present grating engine drone and a couple of tunes obviously bled from Outrun to assault your eardrums.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 71%

Lots of nice intro screens, plenty of options and stacks of stats, but the in-game presentation is poor.

GRAPHICS 30%

The car interiors are great. However, the in-game sprites are poor and the 3D update is jerky and unrealistic.

SOUND 41%

The tunes are weedy and the effects don't inspire atmosphere.

PLAYABILITY 47%

The game objective is straightforward, but the dodgy collision detection and lack of challenge make this stall.

STABILITY 46%

It's not very hard or addictive and it doesn't take long before its appeal wears off.

OVERALL 43%

A potentially superb product ruined by poor collision detection, naff graphics and a severe lack of long-term challenge.

Well, guess what? Aliens are invading again, and it's up to you to stop them in your turbocharged laser death-spitting starfighter of doom. On the first level the action is viewed from above, and you have to fly around the multidirectionally scrolling screen and blast four ground installations. Naturally they're well defended, and swarms of aerial craft try and stop you in your tracks.

Neutralise the quartet of targets and you move onto the next level, a horizontally scrolling affair that's once again packed with very hostile aliens and a big guardian at the end. Once that's out of the way it's



back to an overhead view, and the game continues to switch viewpoints in that order all the way through its nine levels.

Throughout the game there are a wide variety of power-ups to collect. Drones, three-way, wide-shot, and many

more give you the ability to cut great swathes through the enemy. Each weapon has its strengths and weaknesses, so careful choice is required.

Thunderforce II is great fun — for a while. Having two different types of scrolling sections is

a good idea, but neither format stretches the Megadrive to its limits. This is true for the graphics and sound as well — the sprites aren't particularly good, the backdrops are all right and the sound effects are meaty, but the machine is capable of much better.

Thunderforce II was possible for an early 16-bit blast (which it was), but in these days, intergalactic warfare has come on leaps and bounds, leaving Thunderforce II looking stodgy and dated. Try Thunderforce IV if you want hardcore blasting action.

RICH



PRESENTATION 78%

An options screen with sound test and three skill levels.

GRAPHICS 74%

The sprites are all right, and the backdrops are detailed. Both have been much improved in later Megadrive shooters.

SOUND 75%

Thumping music and plenty of corking sound effects and speech!

PLAYABILITY 79%

Straightforward blasting from the outset. But the extra weapons don't provide enough variety to the gameplay.

STABILITY 74%

Nine tough levels to get through — and plenty of hidden bonuses. Thunderforce isn't that striking to play.

OVERALL 76%

Thunderforce II has definitely had its day. The sequels in the series are much better bets for a good shoot 'em up.

THUNDERFORCE II BY TECHNOFT PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY MEDIUM
CONTINUES 9
SKILL LEVELS 3
RESPONSIVENESS VERY GOOD

Those Thunderforce lads are back, and this time they're taking no crap — especially from the massive Orm Empire task force that's taken over a whole sector of Earth Space. Since their last dangerous adventure on the Megadrive, they've upgraded their ships to carry even more weapons and thus give those Orm scum even more opportunity to have their bottoms soundly thrashed out of this dimension.

Unlike Thunderforce II, which was, for the most part, viewed from above and scrolled in eight directions, Thunderforce



THUNDERFORCE III



III is a more traditional R-Type style horizontal scrolling shoot 'em up. As usual for this type of game, it features plenty of bolt-on weapons and massive end-of-level bosses!

Included in the Thunderforce armoury are the likes of bog-standard pea-shooter

weapons, powerful beam weapons, ground-hugging missiles and alien-busting ripple lasers. Once collected the weapon remains with your craft and can be selected at will. The Thunderforce ship can carry five weapons at once.

Three more levels of Orm-related excitement await the player after the first selectable five have been completed.

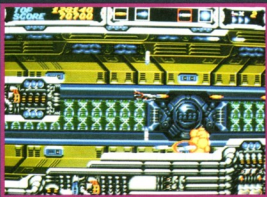
From the shimmering fiery backdrops of the volcano planet to the super-smooth parallax scrolling on the ice world, it's a graphical treat. It's not just a pretty face, either. Thunderforce III is tough and challenging. Obviously not on the easy level — any half decent blasting fan should be able to shoot their way through to the end of the game in a few sessions — but on the more difficult levels, where the action is bonkers and you have to fight through a constant barrage of bullets and baddies.

Thunderforce III is a premium blaster on the Megadrive, only surpassed, in fact, by its direct sequel, Thunderforce IV. In gameplay terms there isn't much to choose between the two.

JAZ

THUNDERFORCE III
BY
TECHOSOFT
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS
3
SKILL LEVELS
2
RESPONSIVENESS
FAST



It's two years since the devastating battle of Thunderforce III and the Orm empire are on the move again, plotting the extinction of all human life. So once more it's down the ever-faithful Thunderforce pilots to save the world, the universe and everything.

There are quite a few differences between this edition and its predecessors. Where II and III were four megabit carts, this is eight megabit. This means there are more levels and more weapons. The parallax scrolling has also entered new realms, with the shoot 'em up fun going higher and lower than the screen itself. In

THUNDERFORCE IV



Thunderforce IV, there's loads of scrolling fun to enjoy, because the space in which the Rynex moves isn't restricted to the top and bottom of the screen, the game scrolls up and down to reveal a massive playfield, packed full of enemies, remember where the power-ups are, though, because they won't always be visible on the screen.

The Rynex has a full range of extra weapons, including missiles and beam lasers, but most of the enemies have equally spectacular armament. In one level a huge rail-gun appears behind you, unleashing a massive energy beam in your directions. Huge decart worms appear through sand blizzards to attack you. The game is a

constant struggle.

Apart from the wider playfield, this is very much a traditional horizontally scrolling blaster where you simply shoot the baddies, pick up the power-ups and take out the end-of-level bosses. Even the weapons offer nothing new. Admittedly the graphics and sound are excellent, but the game basically boils down to the same old shoot 'em up formula taken to the extreme.

JAZ

THUNDERFORCE IV
BY
TECHOSOFT
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS
5
SKILL LEVELS
2
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



PRESENTATION 81%
Pretty decent levels of presentation throughout the game, including a limited level select.

GRAPHICS 84%
Stunning graphic effects for each level and brilliant end-of-level bosses. The intense background patterns are sometimes confusing.

SOUND 82%
Good explosive effects and catchy music, provide a thunderous backdrop to the action.

PLAYABILITY 92%
Fast 'n' furious shoot 'em up action that's well addictive. Satisfying control.

LASTABILITY 90%
Eight levels to conquer, and three difficulty levels to sustain interest. On the hardest this is a real mother.

OVERALL 91%
An addictive blast which features stunning visual effects. Have a glance through the back catalogue and check it out.

PRESENTATION 87%
Nice title screen intro, and most of the regular options, though no password system.

GRAPHICS 92%
Superb state-of-the-art graphics, brilliantly drawn and coloured. No complaints about the animation, either.

SOUND 86%
The blast effects are cool, but the jazzy tunes, while good, aren't wholly appropriate.

PLAYABILITY 94%
Really easy to get into. The game is responsively fast, as it needs to be. Some of the enemy attacks are incredible.

LASTABILITY 92%
The level of challenge and the number of levels means it's certainly no pushover. Very compulsive too.

OVERALL 93%
Great game, but suffers from a complete lack of originality.



Buster Bunny discovers a treasure map at the Looniversity — and it's promptly swiped from Buster's paws by the wicked, the dastardly Montana Max!

Inspired, Montana transforms Buster's friends into automatons and employs them as slaves, ordering them all to hunt that treasure down! The mad Doc and his brainwashed lackeys follow the map's directions to a group of secret islands.

Taking place in the treasure islands, Buster's quest for his partners' freedom leads him through perilous pastures, ghost ships and lava pits,

TINY TOONS ADVENTURES

not forgetting on ice level! When the crazy, cartoon action gets too hectic for Buster he whistles for the help of a friend. Everything



stops while one of his mates flies or dashes across the scenery. By far the cutest of

them all is the tiny blue mouse that floats in beneath a bunch of balloons and sneezes itself off the play area! This game is stunning. Konami have managed to make the Megadrive's sound chip truly sing with the superb, swinging tunes in the game. The effects and melodies in Tiny Toon Adventures are very



smooth and crystal clear. The graphics are also varied and colourful. Experienced platform addicts shouldn't expect the most incredible level of challenge from this cart, however this factor is balanced by the many secrets and bonus levels hidden throughout the game. Just like the cartoons on which it is based, Tiny Toon Adventures is fast paced, hilarious and impeccably presented. A real showcase piece of Megadrive software beyond a doubt.

RICH

PRESENTATION 93%
Konami couldn't fit another scrap of presentation into here, there's just no more room.

GRAPHICS 95%
Again, superb — but more so! The Megadrive's graphics glow under Konami's expertise.

SOUND 95%
Some of the best sounds ever heard from the Megadrive. The music is absolutely outstanding.

PLAYABILITY 91%
Instantly addictive, the control over Buster is a joy. This is grinning material of the highest order.

LASTABILITY 84%
As the game is so large and so exciting it offers much long lasting appeal and is enjoyable long after completion.

OVERALL 92%
Excellent stuff! Definitely one of the best platform games on the Megadrive.

TINY TOON ADVENTURES
BY
KONAMI
PLAYERS
↓
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS
↓
RESPONSIVENESS
EXCELLENT



It would appear that Toe Jam and Earl are having a couple of problems. On the way home to the planet Funkatron, Earl went and crashed their rocket. By a twist of fate, they crashed on Earth, and now they're being hunted by man-eating mailboxes and gangs of chickens carrying tomato mortars.

To escape the planet, the two alien funksters must find the ten lost pieces of their ship, including their twin four-hundred megawatt speakers, and achieve the dizzy heights of Supreme Funk Lords. If they don't they'll be doomed to spend an eternity evading bogey-men, giant hamsters and

TOE JAM & EARL

a jet-packed Father Christmas.

The game is played on a series of open plan levels viewed from above. Twenty-two of these are linked by lifts. The pieces are scattered randomly amongst them. Toe Jam and Earl is much more fun when two players are participating. When

the pair split up, the screen splits in two to show a view of each character as he rambles around. When the pair meet up, the screens combine and you have a larger view of the pair.

Toe Jam and Earl is a hilarious adventure. From the cartoon-style opening sequence

to the in-game banter between the two characters, the emphasis is definitely on comedy. This would mean nothing if the gameplay wasn't up to scratch, but it is. The going is a little slow for the first couple of levels, but once you get into the swing of it, it's great. If you're after fun in a Megadrive cartridge, Toe Jam is the one.

RICH

PRESENTATION 90%
A Fantastic intro sets the scene, and loads of options let you customise the game.

GRAPHICS 81%
Weirdo central, with loads of small, but very detailed sprites. Some of the characters are hilarious.

SOUND 93%
Fabulous samples of the hallelujah chorus and others, and really funky beatbox tracks.

PLAYABILITY 89%
The laid-back gameplay and whacked-out features provide insta-addiction.

LASTABILITY 76%
It's not particularly difficult to finish, but there are tons of things to discover, and you'll want to find them all.

OVERALL 80%
A wild 'n' wacky game for a two-some, with a weird sense of humour so. Check it out!

TOE JAM AND EARL
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
↓
RESPONSIVENESS
REASONABLE



One day, when Toki was just about to get to grips with his beloved, a sorcerer materialised and warped her to a squalid dungeon far away. Then he cast an evil spell on Toki that turned him into a monkey! However, a side effect of the spell enabled



Toki to spit powerful fireballs at will.

Toki infiltrates the scrolling platform levels of the sorcerer's dungeons, using his monkey powers to penetrate the

evil domain. But the sorcerer isn't the only denizen of darkness to be found in these treacherous lands. At the end of each level, Toki faces up to a massive, deadly boss bent on robbing the monkey-like hero of his very life!

The Megadrive version isn't a close conversion of the Toki coin-op. Unfortunately



the screen layouts have been completely changed – for the worse. Instead of being fast and fun it's dull and irritating and there are unavoidable traps dotted around the landscape. It's easy to see why the programmers have put those in though, because there's nothing else in this game to stop you completing it on your first go.

JAZ

TOKI
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
1-7
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



Toxie is toy turned video game hero, in this scrolling beat 'em up based on the odd cartoon character. The Toxic Crusader is a hideously deformed, but kind-hearted eco-warrior, who sets out to protect the earth from hordes of other mutants.



The threat comes from the planet Smogula and its radiation rangers. Toxie and his two friends must first ride skateboards through their home town of Tramoville, dealing death to foes with their various combat

moves. Then follows a level on the planet Smogula space ship, and finally a series of levels on the planet itself.

The game sections are a mixture of hair-raising rides on the skate and surf boards, and more sedate exploration levels on Smogula.

However, neither are particularly fun. The game looks atrocious, even accounting for



the fact that everything is supposed to look mutated. The sprites are extremely fuzzy, and the backdrops so basic, you'd think they were done by a cack-handed six year old. The game is just as dire, being unrewarding, repetitive, either too slow or too fast, and there are tons of bugs. Not much playtesting here. Get just about any other beat 'em up than this.

JAZ

TOKIC CRUSADER
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
5
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
POOR



Aliens are steering five asteroids towards Earth, guarding them with a host of nasties armed to the teeth! This shoot 'em up casts you as a space fighter pilot inflicting as much damage as possible on the swarms of flying aliens and



ground installations that are trying to shoot you down.

There are a host of power-ups to be collected, as well as extra weapons, extra lives and

more smart bombs. The end-of-level baddies come in a variety of shapes and sizes and usually in numbers of two to four. It takes a lot of firepower to elimi-

nate them and even when you do, it's no rest for the wicked – the alien scum still keep coming!

There are three power-up weapons: lightning rays, green lasers and extra red firepower. Lightning rays are good for mass destruction, but aren't so effective on end-of-level baddies. Green rays are powerful, but are shot in a thin, straight line. The best weapon is extra red firepower – you get a shield with it!

Truxton is a fine example of a pure, no-frills arcade blast. The graphics are pretty straightforward, and the sound is all right, but when it comes down to blasting, Truxton has plenty of glowing thrills and spills on offer.

RICH

TRUXTON
BY
SEGA
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
PLAYERS
CONTINUES
UNLIMITED
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
QUICK



PRESENTATION 47%

A fair range of gameplay options available. Certainly nothing particularly eye-catching and the intro sequence looks very neat.

GRAPHICS 65%

Some of the sprites look good, some of them look rather retro, though. But the animation is a bit lacking.

SOUND 69%

A pretty good tune plays throughout the game and the effects are okay.

PLAYABILITY 54%

Toki's easy to pick up and play, but the game is boring and has many frustrations.

LASTABILITY 41%

It's a game you'll complete very quickly – if you can stand the boring gameplay for long enough.

OVERALL 43%

The Megadrive has many other quality platforms that make Toki look like the dull, unoriginal game it is.

PRESENTATION 67%

It's a nice touch having the choice of the three characters to play, but the rest is pretty tardig stuff.

GRAPHICS 47%

Awful graphics for the most part, clearly designed by people who simply cannot draw for a living.

SOUND 45%

Not much in the way of music, intro or in-game effects.

PLAYABILITY 49%

The fact that it seems to feature much of the rather wacky humour of the cartoon show. Spend a couple of minutes playing, though, and you certainly won't be laughing.

LASTABILITY 39%

The gruesome gameplay is a quick turn off and you'll be running back to the shop for a refund.

OVERALL 43%

This is certainly Toxic as a Megadrive release. Avoid at all costs!

PRESENTATION 60%

Three skill levels, but very little else. Nothing seriously ugly, though.

GRAPHICS 82%

Bright, with well defined sprites and colourful backdrops. Some of the weapon effects are quite spectacular.

SOUND 74%

A decent, if rather finny tune and basic effects.

PLAYABILITY 85%

Easy enough to begin with, getting rapidly harder. Even though there's not that much variety it's still highly addictive stuff!

LASTABILITY 76%

Even experienced blasters will find Truxton a challenging game. The lack of varied action doesn't seem to hamper the enjoyment too much.

OVERALL 82%

A highly enjoyable blasting romp which looks good and plays nicely. Recommended to hardcore shoot 'em up fans.



This wheel-spinning, engine-revving contest involves driving your Ferrari along 16 sprite-based 3D stages and literally outrunning the competition! This comes in the form of normal traffic like Minis and Juggernauts along with vehicles taking part in the contest, like Porsche 959s and other high-powered sports cars.

There are only two problems. First of all, you must complete each stage in an allotted time period or you are instantly disqualified from the Outrun-related proceedings. The second

TURBO OUTFRUN



problem comes in the form of the US law enforcement officers, who see your high-speed shenanigans as being in some way harmful to the other law-abiding road

users. A quick stab of the C button on your trusty joystick

siphons pure nitrous fuel straight through to the Ferrari's engine, making for some explosively fast acceleration. Understandably, such tamfoolery has a tendency to heat your engine up to critical levels, even though there's a fire-spewing rocket exhaust at the back of the car. But beware because should your engine reach overheat levels, you have to wait until it

cools down before you can use the turbo again.

Every aspect of Turbo Outrun is worse than its predecessor. Hopeless, mega-jerky 3D graphics, juddery scrolling, dreadful tunes, noff sound effects and badly drawn sprites make for a sad first impression, and hopeless car handling, poor playability and the fact that all five levels of play seem to be exactly the same make those first impressions last.

If you've played the arcade game you'll be amazed to find that the different stages which were set in different states of the USA all look pretty much the same and they last about 20 seconds each! With even a the tiniest iota of skill will be able to complete this tragic game in next to no time.

RICH

TURBO OUTFRUN
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
POOR



PRESENTATION 44%

Pretty poor overall, although the high score screen is quite nice.

GRAPHICS 43%

The sprites are reasonable, but the backdrops range from awful to barely average. The 3D effect is also very poor.

SOUND 42%

The Megadrive "interpretations" of the coin-op's tunes are shallow and twee, and all the effects are rubbish.

PLAYABILITY 47%

A bungling, unresponsive control method makes Turbo Outrun a shambles to play.

LASTABILITY 43%

The uneven, unrewarding gameplay and stupid difficulty settings head it for the scrapyard.

OVERALL 42%

A big disappointment. Turbo Outrun looks similar to the coin-op, but plays nothing like it.

A foul demonic creature from Hell used to get his kicks by terrorising people in his nightmares. However, this proved frustrating, since people tend to wake up just as they're about to die. Therefore it made sense for this creature to follow them back into the land of the living and terrorise them there.

Since every human is vulnerable to this creature's mental powers, a robot warrior is created in order to kick the demon's ass back to the smelly land from whence it came.

This robot is Turrican, the perfect killing machine. However, before he can do away with the evil creature, he

TURRICAN

has to travel massive eight-way scrolling levels, scaling the platform scenery and blasting away at the evil beings and end-of-level bosses that the creature has created during his brief stay in our world. The only problem is, Turrican hasn't got a brain, and it's down to you to control him in a fight to the death with the ultimate menace!

Later in the game, Turrican leaves the usual platform-based levels for an action-packed section set in a vertically

scrolling tunnel. Here, Turrican's equipped with a jet-pack and the objective is just to reach the top of the tunnel. This is made quite difficult however, because there's the ubiquitous load of nasty enemy sprites out to get our robotic hero!

Turrican's main problem lies in its origins. This is identical to the yanks old Amiga version, truly out of the Dark Ages of 16-bit gaming. The gameplay is not an evenly balanced. The first stage is absolutely rock

hard — the slightest touch from a nasty alien results in all of Turrican's life force draining from his body in an instant. But after that, it becomes very easy. If they have the stamina to get through the stage one most players should be able to continue all the way to the end of the game within a few sessions. The graphics and sound aren't particularly hot, either, so I'd advise you not to bother with this.

RICH

TURRICAN
BY
BALLISTIC
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
QUICK



PRESENTATION 55%

Boring attract sequence and difficult control method.

GRAPHICS 59%

Very dull backdrops and mediocre sprites. Only Turrican himself is well animated.

SOUND 51%

Decent blasting effects, but the music is a bit too jolly for this sort of game.

PLAYABILITY 63%

The difficult control method makes getting into the game tricky, especially considering the first level.

LASTABILITY 45%

Turrican is a big game, but it's pretty easy to finish the game with 20 spare lives!

OVERALL 48%

With gameplay tweaks and enhancements, this could have been good. However, there are neither tweaks nor enhancements, so it's bad.

Thousands of years ago, there were three primal forces embodied in their rawest form as globes of magic energy. One day the three forces clashed and from the resulting explosion a fourth force, that of pure magic, was formed. All four energies were forged into jewels each one guarded by a powerful mage. Now the mages and jewels have fallen into the wrong hands. It is now up to Twinkle to travel the lengths of the Mystic Kingdom and free the gems before they are used to wreak destruction throughout the planet.

Twinkle is the cute little girl who stars in this scrolling

TWINKLE TALE
BY
WAS
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
HARD
CONTINUOUS
3-5
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
SWIFT

Twinkle Tale

shoot 'em up. Each level is a separate four way scrolling territory. Although Twinkle's main use of magic lies in her primary attacks, her offensive capabilities don't stop there. Twinkle is also able to make use of talismans found concealed in chests and statues found along her way. These artifacts unleash a magic force of great destruction. There are two different powers

for your delectation. The first one, Fire Blast, launches three huge shafts of flame up the screen destroying whatever it hits. The second one, Super Bombs, launch three whirling globes of doom in front of Twinkle, which then swirl around the screen killing things.



With a name like Twinkle Tale, you immediately think this is going to be a real wet sipping pansy of a game. But nothing could be further from the truth. Twinkle Tale is a challenging blaster which also features great graphics, good tunes, thumping sound effects and plenty of fast and furious action. Don't let the rather inane plot and the fact that the game doesn't feature laser-equipped space ships put you off.

JAZ



Pencil-neck bureaucrats insisted on burying their toxic plutonium waste underneath the Statue of Liberty. Unfortunately, during the last deposition of waste, the bungling bin men accidentally blew up the highly radioactive materials. New York was annihilated, and it took around 20 years to rebuild the city.

During that time, a scientist conducted a twisted experiment. He captured some of the city's mutants and transformed them into terrifying fighting machines. The Government has hired two mercenaries to kick their mutated butts into oblivion. This takes place over a

TWO CRUDE DUDES

series of horizontally scrolling backdrops.

Energy is reclaimed in Two Crude Dudes by kicking the seven shades out of cola dispensers. After every four blows, a can of cola is produced. Slurp this down and repeat the process to increase your energy. The Two Crude Dudes have all manner of amazing combat

moves at their disposal. The usual staple diet of ordinary punches and kicks are available, but the best move of all is the flying kick.

Two Crude Dudes has some nice features — trotting along carrying a massive car



over your head ready to chuck it at a group of aggressors is great, and ripping up lamp-posts to bat the rampant punks off the screen is a hoot. The graphics are big and chunky and amusingly violent. The only trouble with it is that with a pair of players in control Two Crude Dudes becomes super-easy to complete. In fact, it offers maybe an hour of excitement on the easy setting before you find yourself taking on the mad professor at the end of the game.

JAZ



TWO CRUDE DUDES
BY
DATA EAST
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS
3-4
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

PRESENTATION 90%
Gorgeous intro and lots of neat intermissions set the scene.

GRAPHICS 89%
Lots of large, clear sprites, loads of colour and great backgrounds. Impressive magical effects.

SOUND 77%
Although the effects are good, the tunes can get a bit dull, and hardly fit the fantasy setting.

PLAYABILITY 90%
Fast and responsive with loads going on at all times, and a stiff challenge from stage one.

LASTABILITY 87%
Plenty tough, with three difficulty levels to challenge even the most accomplished of blasting fans.

OVERALL 87%
A tough and enjoyable game which, although it sounds a bit wet, is one of the most enjoyable Megadrive blasters around. Shame it's only on import at the moment.

PRESENTATION 68%
A nice array of options, but the attract sequence doesn't amount to much.

GRAPHICS 66%
The player sprites are excellent and get up to all sorts of crazy fighting stuff. But the other sprites and the backdrops are clumsy.

SOUND 74%
Some good thumping tunes, but the effects could have been better.

PLAYABILITY 83%
Two Crude Dudes is instantly playable and enjoyable, especially with two players participating.

LASTABILITY 70%
Avoid using the EASY difficulty setting or you'll complete the game in no time. Having two players makes it even easier.

OVERALL 76%
A few flaws and a bit rough around the edges, but Two Crude Dudes should go down well with most beat 'em up fans.

Ultimate tiger is based on rather old coin-op called Tiger Heli, that made its mark sometime in the late eighties. After several conversions to most formats, it appeared as Ultimate Tiger on the Megadrive in mid 1991, resembling other games like Twin Hawk, and Vapour Trail. The vehicle makes little difference to the game type, as Ultimate Tiger is one of that most familiar of genres, the vertically scrolling blaster.

You pilot an apache attack helicopter through multiple terrains, against a formidable array of enemy weapons. There are the familiar tanks, planes,

ULTIMATE TIGER
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVE
GOOD

ULTIMATE TIGER

ships and fellow helicopters spewing bullets all over the shop. Over land and sea, later levels vary the terrain, but not really the action. Expect only more of the same, but wilder, and maybe with a side-salad of large boss machines.

Your tiger heli is a bit lonesome on the preposterous mission, but things can be evened up slightly with the spe-

cial weaponry, collected from pods found in the smouldering remnants of ex-foes. Strap these on to achieve a variety of useful, if not startling effects: lasers, twin-fire, four-way and rockets. Also, the helicopter carries a limited supply of mega bombs, that look very tough when they destroy vast chunks of opposition.

Tiger Heli isn't original by

any stretch of the imagination. The game idea and execution mirrors that of many others in this book. The graphic style is reminiscent of a lot of Megadrive games: competent but not over-exciting. It's in the playability stakes that Ultimate Tiger fares best. The levels are busy, challenging and bullets fly everywhere. Good stuff, and worth buying if you can track down an import copy.

JAZ



You're Luc Desreux, a Vietnam soldier brought back from the dead by the Government to be the ultimate, mindless, killing machine. Unfortunately, a technical cock-up brings back your memory and that's where the trouble starts. You must escape the clutches of the psychotic Sergeant Scott who you killed in the war while he was wiping out an entire village.

Just your luck, the Sarge gets resurrected as well AND remembers who was responsible for his untimely demise — he's out to get you

UNIVERSAL SOLDIER

and this platform ramp around a selection of , hazard-laden landscapes is you doing just

that. Before it's too late.

This is roughly the plot of

the movie, but in reality Universal Soldier is nothing but a poor platform shooter with absolutely no originality. Each of the dozen or so levels is nothing more than a romp through a maze of brick-buildings and forests, with the inevitable con-

frontations: with ludicrous bosses, like a giant Lundgren!

The characters carry pulse rifles, which may be powered-up to fire spread bullets and lasers. Another neat trick is the soldiers ability to turn into a spinning, pointy cog, that rumpages through dangerous areas. A power that was strangely absent from the movie.

inert in the extreme. Even judging the graphics and gameplay on their own, they're awful: indistinct, ill-conceived and laughably incongruous — check out the giant bouncing

Dolph Lundgren, and Sol's 'buzz saw' party trick. The levels are bland as can be, and crappy collision detection makes even the meagre gameplay annoying. Fortunately, it's all over very quickly and I finished Universal Soldier in an afternoon. This isn't even Turrican 2, it's basically large chunks of code from Turrican 1 with a tart's makeover.

RICK



UNIVERSAL SOLDIER
BY
ACCOLADE
PLAYERS
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS
2
RESPONSIVE
POOR

PRESENTATION 70%
About standard for a game of this type. The usual options.

GRAPHICS 70%
The graphics are close to those of the Tiger Heli arcade game — exceptionally sharp if not too detailed.

SOUND 77%
Big booms and bangs and other competent sounds of battle, all backed by tinny arcade tunes.

PLAYABILITY 85%
As a blast, the simplicity and demanding action is an instant turn on. Has aged well in the play stakes.

LASTABILITY 74%
Although Ultimate Tiger is quite hard, the basic nature of the game reduces any long term appeal.

OVERALL 78%
Those nostalgic for the golden age of vertical blasters will shed a tear for this good little blaster.

PRESENTATION 57%
A completely useless options screen, and the game presentation is nothing like the film.

GRAPHICS 58%
The character representing Luc is like Turrican and everything else is poor beyond belief!

SOUND 78%
The music exceeds the standard of the game and the sound effects aren't bad either.

PLAYABILITY 56%
Easy to get into and a good enough blast until you realise that you've literally seen it all before.

LASTABILITY 44%
Anyone who finds themselves compelled to finish the game will be disgusted as the end sequence is so disappointing.

OVERALL 45%
A particularly good example of an awful game. There are dozens of games that are far superior.

After the kidnapping of a beautiful princess, someone has to get her back, and slay the evil wizard responsible for the deed—Wardner. This is a cute platform game, with our lead jumping and shooting his way across each level.

**WARDNER
BY
VISCO
PLAYERS**

**GAME DIFFICULTY
QUITE TOUGH
CONTINUES**

9

SKILL LEVELS
RESPONSIVENESS
AVERAGE



The obligatory end-of-level guardians take their bows, ranging from the dragon on level one to the necromancer on the final stage. Wardner needs

special tactics to defeat each monster and cannot rely on firepower alone.

Between levels there's a shop which gives Wardner the opportunity to buy improved weapons, extra fairies or added time. Careful shopping is a must—all goods are non-return-



able.

Although it features graphics that are a little fuzzy in places, this conversion of the Wardner coin-op is superb. It's got more levels and new challenges that weren't even in the original coin-op, and very challenging and enjoyable game-play, as long as you don't use its pile of continues. As with a lot of Megadrive games, there are far too many continues, and they allow you to finish the game very quickly. Wardner may now look dated to platform fanatics raised on more recent fare, but the gameplay is pretty ever-green.

JAZ

PRESENTATION **47%**
The story is told in great detail, but unfortunately unless you read Japanese it means nothing.

GRAPHICS **68%**
The sprites and backgrounds are slightly fuzzy in places, similar to their arcade counterparts.

SOUND **76%**
Nice tunes and electrifying effects make this an aural delight!

PLAYABILITY **78%**
Wardner's a tricky game, and there are plenty of nasty surprises to catch out unwary players.

LASTABILITY **76%**
Don't use all the continues and you've got a challenge that'll keep you going for quite some time. The later bosses are extremely tough to top.

OVERALL **74%**
A thoroughly enjoyable coin-op conversion which features great sound and oodles of playability. Well worth buying if you come across an import copy.

This is the sequel to 'Where in Time is Carmen Sandiego' and follows the same detection game format. Carmen is a notorious crook, who likes to visit the world's premier cities and steal their most valuable items. You are in employee of a



worldwide detective agency, and are assigned to locate thieves in forty separate cases. Like the first game, the screen is split

into two sections. The left portion shows pretty views of the locations, the right side displays information leading to the

arrest of suspects.

In each location, people offer clues to where the thief is heading. Using an encyclopedia, you decide your flight destination and find the thief. Then you must use details of their appearance to decide which of Carmen's cohorts to charge. All of this is done against a time limit.

Carmen Sandiego is a good education idea, but marred by being too simplistic, repetitive and easy to complete. The geographical clues aren't taxing, there are a limited number of locations, and catching criminals is a very basic process. Better as idea than an end result.

JAZ

PRESENTATION **80%**
Rather tacky intro sequences, but it's a nicely packaged game.

GRAPHICS **62%**
Some of the scenery graphics are great, but the rest of the graphics are static and rather crude.

SOUND **32%**
Horrible signature tunes, and hardly any FX.

PLAYABILITY **64%**
Appears to be an intriguing way of combining gameplay and learning, but any knowledge the player might acquire would be useful only in trivia quizzes.

LASTABILITY **45%**
Forty cases is a lot, but every one puts you through the same rather dull routine. It's doubtful whether even children would find it entertaining for any length of time.

OVERALL **56%**
A small step in education, but not offering much fun or serious learning.

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS CARMEN SANDIEGO?

**ELECTRONIC ARTS
PLAYERS**

**GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS**

1
RESPONSIVENESS
LOW



Poor old Carmen Sandiego. She's a victim of a society, cast out as a pariah. So she assembled a cartel of time-travelling criminals to wreak terrible vengeance throughout the space-time continuum. You are a time cadet of the Acme Detective



Agency and it's your job to put a stop to her and her gang.

The presentation of Carmen Sandiego is simple. The main display is taken up by the chronoskimmer's control panel, with a smaller sensor of your surroundings on the side. Menus are selected

which allow you to question suspects, compile evidence and set course for your next destination. Finding each villain is

tricky as they have the whole of space and time to hide in. Luckily in each place locals tell you things such as "He was

planning to protest against Ivan the Great". When you know where they're going, select the TRAVEL menu to launch into the ether.

It's easy to become engrossed in the investigative gameplay. There are a couple of problems though. Carmen Sandiego is huge, for sure, but each case is much the same. Still, if brain exercising is your thing, you won't be too disappointed.

JAZ

PRESENTATION **34%**
No options, and the game is only played on one screen!

GRAPHICS **52%**
Not much variety, but there are set graphical pieces for each country and time zone which look quite pleasant.

SOUND **35%**
Hardly any at all, and what there is isn't too hot.

PLAYABILITY **63%**
The investigative gameplay is absorbing... for a while. But as with the other Carmen Sandiego game, it's not really educational or entertaining.

LASTABILITY **46%**
Again, just like Where in Time... this is a very big game but you find yourself doing the same sort of things over and over again and it quickly becomes tiresome.

OVERALL **52%**
An unusual and highly commendable game concept which is spoiled by a lack of variety.



Poor old Wonderboy. First, his girlfriend gets kidnapped by an evil demon, then a dragon king threatens to destroy his people. Now he's got back to his village to find it's been overrun by evil monsters from the north!

Still, he's still got all his sword-swinging platform-jumping abilities intact, and you can be sure he'll be using them to their full extent in this, the fifth instalment of the Wonderboy saga.

Wonderboy now has the ability to converse. Talking to people around the village is as essential to his progress. For starters, there are many shops along his travels which allow

WONDERBOY IN MONSTERLAND

BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS
BATTERY SAVE
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

WONDERBOY IN MONSTERLAND

him to equip himself with far better gear than the stuff he starts with. Then there are important clues to the whereabouts of items, spells or people of importance. The simple rule is to talk to everyone.

Wonderboy's other new skill is his mastery of magic. Wonderboy has learned to cast a number of spells. The first three are offensive spells used to damage opponents, Shield guards Wonderboy for a short time, Power restores damage

done to the youngster and Return is a special spell whose use only becomes apparent at a later stage in the game.

Although the graphics aren't brilliant and the sound falls woefully short of the standards you'd normally expect from the Megadrive, Wonderboy in Monster Land is both absorbing and addictive – all thanks to the marvellous playability. The challenging platform action and the tricky but logical puzzles combine together with the

game's enormous size to give massive depth of gameplay. There's tons to discover, and the game's many original features and novel concepts keep you playing just to see what's around the next corner.

If you've ever played Nintendo's Zelda games you'll be pleased to hear that this has the same sort of unputdownable appeal. I was engrossed until the very end of the game and I enjoyed every minute.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 80%

No options, but the in-game presentation is excellent.

GRAPHICS 73%

Chunky, colourful sprites and backgrounds. The scrolling is smooth, but the animation is poor.

SOUND 53%

Oh dear. The tune is feeble and pathetic to say the least, and the effects follow suit.

PLAYABILITY 87%

Absorbing and involving puzzle elements make this instantly interesting.

LASTABILITY 90%

Some of the puzzles take a bit of work to solve, and there's enough of them.

OVERALL 88%

An interesting and intriguing meld of puzzle, role-playing and platform action which should keep Wonderboy fans happy for weeks.



Recoding into the distant past is the Soccer tournament in Italy that was World Cup 1990. It harbours fond memories of Scalacci, crying Gazza, Valedaromma, Roger Milla and the Colombian goalie who liked playing mid-field. Does this game capture that atmosphere?

World Cup Italia '90 can be played by one or two competitors, and is divided into three sections. The World Cup is the main event, with all six groups represented. Each team has individual strengths and weaknesses, but some are stronger than others. However the teams are represented on the pitch by only eight players each; this

WORLD CUP ITALIA '90

probably a good thing, as the pitch is very small indeed. An arrow shows which player is "on" the ball.

While choosing a team, it's possible to check out their stats. The four statistics that are shown are: Offence, Defence, Speed, and Kick. These are rated out of five, and Brazil, Argentina, Italy, and the Soviet

Union are among the best teams to choose.

There's a penalty shoot-out option which gives you the chance to take on the keeper in a one-on-one showdown.

The graphics are all right, but why only eight players per team, and why such a minuscule pitch? The control is appalling and awkward, with no easy way

of making the nearest player chase the ball. When possession is gained, however, your opponent stands next to no chance of halting your progress. The heart of a good football game is the control, and the way that controls can be finely tuned with your growing skill. A football game that does not reward skill easily is no football game at all – and sadly, that's the case here.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 67%

The starting screen is fair, and the team selection screen is rather jolly.

GRAPHICS 52%

Nice presentation screens, but the in-game graphics are gaudy and confusing.

SOUND 47%

Whistles, cheers, and other spot effects – but they're very tinny indeed.

PLAYABILITY 53%

Don't expect to play this long into the night – it's irritatingly difficult to control, and not much fun.

LASTABILITY 46%

The frustrating controls and naff playability result in this getting the red card and an early bath.

OVERALL 51%

A very poor effort that's disappointing in the extreme. Get Super Kick Off or J-League both of which are superior football games.

WORLD CUP ITALIA '90

BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS
N/A
SKILL LEVELS
N/A
RESPONSIVENESS
POOR



Following the success of *Castle of Illusion* and *Quackshot*, it seemed sensible for Sega to place Mickey and Donald together in a game. The result is a highly memorable platform outing set in the World of Illusion.

The adventure begins when the two chums are practising their magic routine. A stray cubby taps them to a topsy-turvy world. Only by reaching the castle, where an evil magician awaits, can they regain their way back to the real world.

Each of the levels features a subtle variety of platform action. Both characters can run,

WORLD OF ILLUSION
STARRING MICKY AND DONALD
BY SEGA
PLAYERS 1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY EASY
CONTINUES PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS 1
RESPONSIVENESS GOOD

MICKY MOUSE IN WORLD OF ILLUSION

jump and swing their capes at enemies. Other powers are revealed. Both carry ropes to pull each other up, and Mickey can pull his fat chum Donald through narrow areas. Further co-operation allows them to see-saw and railroad rides, making the game great fun in two-player mode. There are

also two single player games, one for each character, both featuring a different selection of levels.

The emphasis throughout is on variety and visual effect. In the space of five minutes the player moves through jewel mines, flies on a magic carpet, swims in rippling underwater

cavern and rides on a champagne cork as it soars through a starry sky. There is no other Megadrive game which is such a feast to the eye.

The sound is also brilliant, suited to the mood of each level. Gameplay-wise, everyone will love Mickey and Donald, but it is a bit too easy for older players. This is squarely aimed at the kids' market, but it's a game that no younger player should be allowed to miss.

RICH



PRESENTATION 95%

Everything is immaculate, from the cartoon intro to the multiple game options.

GRAPHICS 96%

Backgrounds of astounding detail, and animation that matches the fluidity of the actual cartoons.

SOUND 91%

The Megadrive sound chip is pushed to provide an array of chirpy, dreamy and cheesy tunes.

PLAYABILITY 94%

Totally absorbing, because it feels like you're playing a cartoon. Clever dual player interaction.

LASTABILITY 88%

Players with experience may get annoyed when they plough through most of World of Illusion quite early.

OVERALL 92%

A phenomenal platform game that sets high standards, but not in the difficulty stakes. An ideal children's game.

WRESTLE WAR

Become King of the Ring in this techno-tussling tournament which pits you, as the heroic Bruce Blade, against eight wrestling rednecks. Play solo and Bruce is entered into an All-American tournament, but if another player wants to join in, he can choose to fight as one of the eight opponents in a one-off battle of biceps.

Bruce begins the tournament as a relative unknown, and to get onto the circuit he first has to beat Mohawk Kid. With The Kid out, you can then choose Bruce's next opponent from one of five who came from all across the USA. Beat this guy and you've made it to the

semi-final, where Bruce faces Bucksin Rogers. In the unlikely event that Rogers is beaten, Bruce finds himself in the final with only Grand Kong, America's hardest wrestler.

Grabs and throws are achieved by getting a hold on your opponent and pressing the button quickly to gain control. After that, the joystick opens up

more options to you, like slams, rope throws or headlocks. If you find yourself thrown out of the ring you can pick up a chair or even something that looks like a moneybox and brain your opposite number with it. On the other hand, if your opponent is on the floor, the three buttons provide three options — help him up (by the throat), stomp

on his body or pin him to the floor. Keep him down for a count of three and you've won the match.

The fighter graphics are really great and the animation is quite dynamic — the wrestler's eyes look like they're popping out when you knock them in the guts! There isn't a vast amount of skill involved in the gameplay, success being more down to button-bashing speed than anything else but although the control system will more than likely break either your wrist or your joystick, it all adds to the frantic fun. The presentation does look a little ropey now, compared with Acclaim's WWF, but any tussler should get off on this.

RICH



WRESTLE WAR
BY SEGA
PLAYERS 1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY MEDIUM
CONTINUES 3
SKILL LEVELS 3
RESPONSIVENESS GOOD

PRESENTATION 76%

An easily accessible options screen and good single or double player options.

GRAPHICS 74%

The playing area isn't given much screen space, but the graphics for the fighters and all their moves are spectacular!

SOUND 73%

Lots of sampled grunts, cheers and announcements.

PLAYABILITY 79%

The control system is quite easy to get to grips with, the game is great fun for two players.

LASTABILITY 75%

Long-lasting fun in two player mode, and the tournament should take some winning!

OVERALL 76%

An old but reasonably enjoyable wrestling game. Not as good as WWF Wrestlemania but worth a shot if you're a fan of the sport.

Wrestling has gone Hollywood in a big way, and suddenly the wrestlers are teen heroes again. You can see the similarities — the costumes, the complete nutters involved, and hear all the grunts. But now we are gripped by *Wrestlemania*, and it seems there's a new pizzazz to the canvas ring.

Now's your chance to get a slice of knee-rending action with Acclaim's 8-man circus on the Megadrive. Play any of the bona fide trademarked wrestlers in individual, tag or tournament format. But watch that dirty elbow, oooh!

One of the best wrestling

WWF WRESTLEMANIA

BY ACCLAIM
PLAYERS 1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY EASY
CONTINUUES NONE
SKILL LEVELS 1
RESPONSIVENESS ADEQUATE



laughs is a tag event, when each player selects two characters each. It only takes one pin to end the match, but weakened players may escape by 'tagging' their ally who waits ringside. Although it's illegal for both members of the team to be in

the ring at once, the rules occasionally are bent, when someone's about to get counted out!

The range of moves is fine, with more complex ones rightly taking a bit of time to master, but I would have liked some more spectacular throws and

presses in addition to those offered here. Playing tag and survivor games is fun, so why didn't Acclaim didn't boost the game's lasting interest with some more options, because they are pretty limited. Some skill levels, and a proper 'circuit'

should have been added.

That's the overall impression, of a fun wrestling game (the best on the Megadrive so far) which could have been supported with a bit more front end.

RICH



PRESENTATION 76%

Nice selection screen, and the MC palover is okay. A serious lack of option support, though.

GRAPHICS 77%

Animation and sprite definition is above average — just. The same, unchanging ring and backdrop makes the game appear dull.

SOUND 80%

A wee tune for each character, and nice in-game speech and effects.

PLAYABILITY 83%

A not too massive range of moves has the benefit of making play quite simple to begin with.

LASTABILITY 78%

Two players is a good laugh. But the lack of moves makes the game quite 'sagey'

OVERALL 82%

Not as good as it could have been, but if you ever wanted to be The Ultimate Warrior this is the game for you!

Who would have thought that evolution would give human beings superhuman powers? That's exactly what's happened in the X-Men, the best-selling comic of all time. Most people would happily use these powers to stop crime and save the world, but not Magneto and his bunch of crazed mutants. Luckily, the X-Men have always been at hand to heroically save the day from the forces of evil.

However, Magneto has taken control of a sophisticated satellite. With this device Magneto's sent a powerful virus into the X-Men's Danger Room computers. This room is a holo-



graphic environment that allows the X-Men to hone their skills. However, now the threats have

become real — and the X-Men are in mortal danger!

The X-Men comics are all about teamwork, something which this game attempts to emulate. A two-player mode has been included which allows mutants to fight the menace of

Magneto together. Should an X-Man be separated from his colleague, he can call upon Jean Grey (the X-Men's telepath) to teleport the otherwise doomed lad back to safety. Funnily enough, using two players actually makes the game even harder than it is already!

But comic fans are going to be disappointed — each hero's special power has either been completely watered-down. I get the feeling this was based more on the forthcoming cartoon series than the comics. The game itself, however, is great. The backdrops and sprites are all superb and the gameplay is compelling because it's so damn tough! I've spent ages trying to crack the Excalibur level and I still can't do it! Sega have got a real winner with X-Men.

RICH



X-MEN BY SEGA PLAYERS 1-2

GAME DIFFICULTY ROCK
CONTINUUES NONE
SKILL LEVELS 3
RESPONSIVENESS SKILL

PRESENTATION 78%

There are character stats of each X-Man, taken directly from the official Marvel guide book.

GRAPHICS 88%

The sprites and backgrounds are well-defined and faithful to the comic strip.

SOUND 84%

There's a good deal of atmospheric music which helps enhance the game no end.

PLAYABILITY 89%

X-Men is very easy to get into and extremely addictive. The two-player mode adds a new dimension to the game.

LASTABILITY 87%

There are only six levels in total, but things get EXTREMELY tough on level three.

OVERALL 88%

Another fine Marvel comic makes it to the Megadrive and it's pretty good! Well worth adding to your collection.

Those evil Xenites have come up with a dastardly plan for universal domination! Their new blueprint for cosmic supremacy involves striking at the heart of the Earth Empire by blowing up massive bombs throughout the planet's past history, thus making it an easy target in the future. To give their dangerous scheme an even bigger chance of success, they've also deposited massive laser-spewing forces to guard the bombs.

During the game, cash is instantly added to your bank account by blasting entire attack waves or blowing up multiple hit meemies. After a boss has

XENON 2

been annihilated, the Xenon ship is instantly warped to Crispin's Laser Death Shoppe, where weapons are both bought and sold. Watch out though, Crispin's prices are extortionately high and he doesn't pay much for second-hand gear.

This was originally an Amiga shoot 'em up released in 1989 and although it was ahead of its time then, it's certainly showing it's age now. As you can see from the pics, Xenon II certainly looks okay, and some

of the bosses are well smart, although to tell the truth there are plenty of better looking shoot 'em ups on the Megadrive these days.

However, the worst thing about Xenon 2 is that, compared to just about every other Megadrive blaster, it's reeeeally slow. The controls are sluggish, the scrolling is jerky and the bullets move so slowly up the screen that it's very difficult to actually hit a moving target with them. This is all pretty dis-

graceful considering what the Megadrive's hardware is capable of, and even worse is the fact that there are only five levels to the game, so if you can be bothered you can finish it in next to no time. The weedy rendition of Bomb The Boss' Megablast which squeaks away in the background just adds insult to injury. Give it a wide berth is my advice.

JAZ

XENON 2
BY
IMAGEWORKS
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY/MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
OKAY



PRESENTATION 65%
A few options on the title screen to tweak, but the actual presentation is quite dull.

GRAPHICS 71%
Stylish graphics spoiled by judicious scrolling.

SOUND 54%
The Bomb The Boss Megablast theme tune is rather poor and the sound effects are dull.

PLAYABILITY 66%
There are loads of weapons to play with, but the gameplay is extremely slow and unimpressive if you're used to something like Thunderforce IV.

LASTABILITY 57%
There are only five levels, so steer clear of the EASY level which is way too easy.

OVERALL 59%
It might have been good four years ago, but Megadrive players can get a lot more shoot 'em up for their money these days.

Betrayed! After signing a peace treaty with the CATS star pirates, the Alliance of Pleasant Worlds set about building eight space stations with the help of their new-found confederates. But as the eighth station reached its orbit, a bomb secretly placed aboard by CATS exploded destroying it utterly!

Moments before the station exploded, its captain managed to reach his Zero Wing starfighter and launch it. His mission is now to avenge his betrayed comrades, and bring CATS to justice — dead or alive!

Mounted below the Zero Wing's cockpit is a tractor beam projector which, when activated,

ZERO WING

grabs any small enemy nearby and neutralises it. It is then locked on to the front of the Zero Wing in a stasis field, where it acts as a make-shift forward shield. By reversing the power of the beam, the "shield" can be propelled forwards to destroy another enemy!

Other pods can be picked up by the computer to add extra firepower. The colour of the pods denotes the fire type, and

picking up the same pod continually increases the intensity of the attack.

Considering the (very) tired genre, Toaplan have come up trumps with a game that has a very original graphic style, along with some pretty enjoyable gameplay. The weapons are pretty ordinary, but the strange tractor beam addition is novel, if not amazingly useful. The sound (as usual for a

Toaplan game) is great, with some pretty decent effects and brilliant tunes. But it's usually the difficulty level of a game that either makes or breaks it, and just like Hellfire, Zero Wing is something of a tough nut — even on the lowest difficulty setting. So if it's thrills, spills and a high death count you're after, look no further than Zero Wing!
RICH

PRESENTATION 85%
Plenty of options and some great introduction screens, which are unfortunately plastered with Japanese text.

GRAPHICS 87%
As well as the terrific intro screens, Zero Wing sports some great-looking sprites and backgrounds!

SOUND 85%
The sound effects are fine, and the background tunes vary from "good" to "real good"!

PLAYABILITY 85%
Plays much like a lot of other shoot 'em ups, it has sufficient innovative touches.

LASTABILITY 83%
Not as easy to complete as other Megadrive blasts, but even when you do there are still secrets.

OVERALL 87%
One of the best Megadrive blasts. Well worth saving up for!

ZERO WING
BY
TOAPLAN
PLAYERS
ONE
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS
VARIES
SKILL LEVELS
THREE
RESPONSIVENESS
FAST



Take to the skies in your F-15 jet fighter in this Mega-CD shoot 'em up which looks not unlike G-LoC (which as you may remember if you've read the Megadrive reviews, is available on cartridge). Once airborne you get a limited amount of time to take out a particular number of targets with your auto-firing Vulcan cannon and heat-seeking missiles. Tanks and planes zip past your nose-cone in speedy sprite-scaled 3D, shooting real bullets which threaten to put holes in your nice aeroplane unless you employ a bit of evasive manoeuvring.

Mind you, there's not that as much evasive manoeuvring

AFTERBURNER III
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
PIECE OF CAKE
CONTINUOUS
3
SKILL LEVELS
4
RESPONSIVENESS
OK

AFTER BURNER III

required as there should be because playing this game would be easy for a dazed amoeba. There is hardly any pulse-racing action, mainly because, with your automatic gun firing you can just, well, wobble your plane around a bit

and you end up shooting just about everything that comes at you. Even the graphics are pretty poor. The Mega-CD's sprite rotation and expansion hardware is used for the 3D effect, but the sprites themselves are really badly defined. I would say

that the final nail in the coffin is the hopeless music and sound effects, but I wouldn't want to neglect telling you about the pitifully bad intro sequence, which depicts an aircraft resembling one of the failed Airfix kits I constructed when I was six.

This is the worst official Mega-CD title on the shelves, and if you want to play an Afterburner game you're miles better off buying the original Afterburner II cartridge which is miles better.

RICH



PRESENTATION 44%

Fair set of options but the worst Mega-CD intro you'll ever see in your life.

GRAPHICS 39%

A bit of sprite rotation and expansion but the sprites and backgrounds themselves are terrible.

SOUND 40%

Appalling music and mediocre sound effects.

PLAYABILITY 39%

Sort of semi-playable... for a couple of minutes. Because the guns fire all the time, the gameplay consists solely of wobbling your plane around to nail all the oncoming hostiles.

LASTABILITY 24%

So easy and so crap that you'll be close to Death By Boredom after no time at all.

OVERALL 28%

Grooh! One of the most dismal Mega-CD games in the world. Buy it and you'll regret it forever.

Batman Returns - returns! Here we have Sega's iffy platform game which appears on cartridge (Phoo! Smelly!) accompanied by an absolutely amazing 3D driving game! (Hurray! I'm so happy!).

The way it all comes together is like this. In the normal game mode you play a couple of levels of the swinging, jumping Bat platform game, smacking the Penguin's hench-clowns and Miss Catwoman, then you climb aboard the Batmobile and drive the Gotham highways to your next destination, machine gunning down skeletal bikers and other motorised hazards. At the end

BATMAN RETURNS

of these levels there's some kind of giant bossmobile which takes heaps of hits before it runs off the road.

The platform bit is untouched, and it's still frustrating with really grainy graphics. But forget that, because with a

lick of the options you can opt to play only the Batmobile levels, which is more than enough of a game to keep you going. The Mega-CD sprite hardware is used to produce high speed graphics of almost arcade quality and there are five levels of

this, each with six really challenging stages, and in the later ones you trade in the Batmobile for the Bat Ski-Boat which you have to pilot through the Gotham sewers avoiding crazed penguins. It's all astounding, and it makes this one of the best

Mega-CD games available! Don't miss it!

RICH



BATMAN RETURNS
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
ROCK HARD
CONTINUOUS
3
SKILL LEVELS
4
RESPONSIVENESS
EXCELLENT

PRESENTATION 85%

Don't expect full-motion video extracts from the film, but the options are excellent and there's some impressive sprite rotation and expansion in the cut-screens.

GRAPHICS 95%

The platform game graphics aren't so good, but the driving section is astonishing!

SOUND 92%

Ace music and effects. Even a few snatches of speech.

PLAYABILITY 94%

Ignore the platform bit because the driving section is brilliant.

LASTABILITY 93%

Loads of really tough levels. And if you get bored with the driving you could always try the platform game.

OVERALL 93%

Uses the Mega-CD hardware to produce a really stunning game. Just ignore the crappy platform bits, that's all.



Intelligence reports from Terran outposts warn that armies of massive robots are invading the solar system, their goal being the subjugation of the entire human race! These monsters are too powerful to take on with the most heavily-armed attack ships, so you have to take the controls of a giant combat droid and take them on at claw-to-claw combat!

The idea of beat 'em up starring robots is a pretty good one and, *Black Hole Assault* does look like it's going to be pretty smart. The game starts with a cartoon intro which might not look amazing compared to more recent efforts, but gets

BLACK HOLE ASSAULT
BY SEGA
1-2 PLAYERS
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
BATTERY SAVE
SKILL LEVELS
RESPONSIVENESS
OK

BLACK HOLE ASSAULT

the story off to a good start. The other in-game presentation is really good too; the combat computer displays really do look like combat computer displays, and there are a range of options which let you practice against different opponents on different planets with different

gravity conditions and so on. The graphics are quite good and the danging, smashing sound effects of battling robots are excellent.

The trouble is, the gameplay is not very interesting at all. You can play one of two very similar robots, both of which

have about five moves at their disposal. To make things even more dull, the opponents are equally limited in their combat repertoires, and you can beat nearly all of them using only one move repeatedly. With so little in the way of interesting gameplay, even the two player

mode seems dull, so *Black Hole Assault* turns out to be a right old robo-duffer. **RICH**



The celebrated dolphin simulation comes to your Mega-CD, in all its former undersea glory but with the addition of seven new levels and some eerie CD music. As in the original, you find yourself in cetacean guise, pondering the problem of where the subaquatic heck that mysterious waterspout has spirited your dolphin mates to. Finding out means swimming around 30 levels of seascape, using his high-speed nose charge attack to fight off unfriendly fish-types, and your high-quality brain to get through many a puzzlesome scenario.

Ecco does all sorts of dolphin things, swimming, leap-

ECCO

ing, and even using his built-in sonar abilities to map his surroundings. The control method and the animation on the Ecco sprite are amazingly good and they contribute to the game's superb feeling of realism. Not only that, the background graphics are superb, as are the splashy sound effects and the music – all sorts of Vangelis-ish ambient tracks which, if you've got a hi-fi connected, seem to loom out of the speakers at you,

thanks to the wonder of Sega's Q-Surround sound technique. Backing all this up is a superb game, combining challenging exploration and puzzle solving in a most unusual and compelling setting.

The only shame is that more wasn't made of the CD aspect of the game. Seeing as just about every Megadrive

levels instead of just seven. Having played the original game all the way through, I found myself going through the motions all over again for much of the time I was playing this.

Having said that, Ecco is definitely one of the best Mega-CD games around, and if you're one of the few who didn't complete the original, it's an absolute must. **RICH**



owner has played the cartridge version it would have been nice to see a game mad up of completely new

PRESENTATION 85%
Excellent battle computer screens, loads of options and a decent animated intro.

GRAPHICS 83%
Good interplanetary backdrops and smart robot sprites. It's a shame there's not a bit more variety in the robot designs, though.

SOUND 75%
Great clanging robot punch-up sound effects but the music is forgettable.

PLAYABILITY 64%
The robots' fighting skills seem very limited which results in the action being very limited too.

LASTABILITY 51%
It only takes a short while to discover that it's all a bit boring and easy.

OVERALL 59%
Sega have missed a potentially good opportunity for an unusual and action-packed beat 'em up.

PRESENTATION 84%
Pleasant, but short, cartoon intro. Not many options, but overall, the game has a polished look to it.

GRAPHICS 93%
Amazingly detailed sprites and backgrounds. The animation on Ecco is superb.

SOUND 96%
Excellent CD soundtracks, with the benefit of a simulated surround sound effect. Plug in the hi-fi and you could almost be there.

PLAYABILITY 94%
Tremendous blend of puzzles, exploration and action which will get you hooked immediately.

LASTABILITY 93%
Thirty intriguing levels which keep you burning the midnight oil for months.

OVERALL 93%
A tremendous CD game. It's a shame it's so similar to the original though.

ECCO
BY SEGA
1 PLAYERS
GAME DIFFICULTY
QUITE TOUGH
CONTINUES
PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS
RESPONSIVENESS
EXCELLENT



Mike Haggard, the ex-wrestler who became the mayor of Metro City, is having trouble with the nasty Mad Gear gang, who are trying to bribe him into overlooking their nefarious trading in human souls. Being an honest bloke, he has turned down their offers and has been rewarded by having his lovely daughter kidnapped!

Haggard decides that enough's enough and chooses to take to the streets, using his wrestling skills to subdue any Mad Gear hoods who cross his horizontally scrolling path. Helping him rescue Jessica is her boyfriend, the street fighter hunk, Cody. Also joining the

FINAL FIGHT

crusade is Guy, a streetwise ninja-type, hard enough to get away with wearing orange pyjamas in public.

Along the way, there are plenty of barrels, crates and telephone boxes to smash open. Inside are all manner of goodies, including money, food and

weapons, such as pipes and swords.

Final Fight on the Mega-CD is incredible. This definitive beat 'em up has all the features of Capcom's classic coin-op which means that all three characters are here in the best simultaneous two-player fight-

ing action on any machine - apart from Street Fighter II, of course! Even on EASY difficulty setting this conversion is mightily challenging, the screen resembling the London Underground at rush hour, it's so packed with sprites for the killing! As you'd expect from a CD, the sound tracks are slick and groovy renditions of the arcade originals - in fact they're better! Likewise the sound effects come blasting from the speakers with fantastically sickening, over-the-top duplications of fist against bone and knife into arm! If you're after some hard-core beat 'em up action you can hardly put better than this!

RICH



PRESENTATION 92%

A smart intro, and plenty of options to tweak as well. The bonus timed level is a welcome addition to the game.

GRAPHICS 94%

Amazing backdrops and sprites that are high-on-perfect replicas of the arcade originals and the animation is fab.

SOUND 94%

A brilliant range of smacks and thuds back the proceedings, along with awesome CD soundtracks.

PLAYABILITY 96%

Highly addictive beat 'em up action. It really is like having the arcade originals in your bedroom!

LASTABILITY 94%

Seven tough levels on four difficulty levels and a duel-like timed game to add to the interest.

OVERALL 95%

Final Fight CD rules supreme as the ultimate combat game on any Sega console.

FINAL FIGHT
BY
SEGA/CAPCOM
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
TOUGH
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
4
RESPONSIVENESS
EXCELLENT

Hey! Over here! Fancy driving the second fastest road car in the world? Of course you do, except you need £350,000 to pay for a real Jaguar XJ-220, so this cheaper Mega-CD simulation option is much preferable.

You can take your 220 mph racing machine around two sets of tracks in this game, 16 of which are based on real grand prix circuits with another 16 set in different countries with local scenery to fool you into thinking you're actually abroad. Driving is simply a matter of keeping your finger glued to the accelerator button while deftly steering around bends, but make sure you beat the 30 other competi-

JAGUAR XJ-220

tors to the line or you'll never make it to Super Driving Champion Hero Of The World.

Better than the thrill of beating 30 simple-minded computer drivers is that of beating a real, live human, and to that end, the programmers have included a split-screen two-player option. This is definitely the best way to play this rather jolly game. It's not amazingly good

(actually it's not a million miles per hour better than Lotus Turbo Challenge on cartridge), but it's fast and pretty playable and there are a few little bonus features which spruce it up, things like the in-car stereo which lets you select the in-game music before each race. There's also an easy-to-use track editor which lets you create your own courses and save

them to Mega-CD memory for later enjoyment. On the whole, though, the Mega-CD hardware isn't used to any massive extent, and even the rooieside sprite expansion isn't particularly good, certainly not as impressive as the effect in Batman Returns. But hey, as long as it's good fun to play (and Lotus Turbo Challenge IS good fun to play) who cares? Not me that's for sure.

RICH



JAGUAR XJ-220
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
OK
CONTINUES
BATTERY SAVE
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

PRESENTATION 89%

Lots of nice presentation touches, such as the in-car CD player and the track builder.

GRAPHICS 81%

The cars are a bit square, but that's more to do with the shape of an XJ-220 than anything else. The 3D effect is fast and smooth.

SOUND 80%

The CD contains some funkyish rock soundtracks and the sound effects aren't bad.

PLAYABILITY 88%

Good and fast, which is just how a race game should be, and the two player option is quite a laugh.

LASTABILITY 85%

Not much variety between races, but the two player mode leads to long late-night sessions.

OVERALL 85%

A smart racing game, though one can't help thinking that the Mega-CD is capable of something a bit more spectacular.



This conversion of a smash hit arcade shoot 'em up goes one stage further than most. As well as putting the coin-op's gameplay, soundtracks and graphics on a CD, Konami have actually included a light gun in the *Lethal Enforcers* package.

The idea of the game is that you play a member of an elite police force trained to deal with hi-jackings and other super-dangerous situations, not with negotiation but with sharp shooting! So, as soon as you arrive at the scene of the crime you find yourself under attack from dozens of gun-toting hoodies who jump out of hiding with their guns trained on you.

LETHAL ENFORCERS
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
4
RESPONSIVENESS
OK

LETHAL ENFORCERS

The sensible option is to punt your gun at them and pull the trigger before they open fire. Unfortunately, there are innocent bystanders knocking about and when they run across the screen you mustn't shoot them or there'll be trouble (and points penalties when the scores are totted up at the end of the stage!). The other thing you have to worry about is keeping

your gun loaded because it can only fire six shots before you have to reload by pointing your plastic gun off-screen and pulling the trigger.

There are five levels of this, each comprising between three and five sub-sections. At the end of each level there's a supertough 'boss'; in one level it's a guy with a rocket launcher in a helicopter, in another it's a

madman throwing knives at you from a train.

It's not a very complicated game, being something like *Operation Wolf*, but the addition of being able to point a pistol at the bad guys really adds a lot to the enjoyment.

Even better, if you can afford to shell out an extra £12.99 for a spare gun, two players can take part, side by side, and that really IS good fun. You can play in double player mode with only one gun, but this lumps one of you with a joystick-driven gunsight which is much trickier to use. So, if you want something close to an arcade experience you really need the whole package and while that's not cheap it is worth it.

RICH



Aliens have infested an American country house, where a gang of high-spirited teenagers are holding a slumber party. But as the evening progresses, the kids start... disappearing!

The Sega Covert Action Team are onto the aliens and have installed traps and cameras (which give you a full-motion video view of what's happening in each room) then put you in control. So, you have to keep an eye on the partying kids, and also watch our wandering aliens. If you do spot

NIGHT TRAP

an alien (you'll recognise them instantly — they look like men

keep this up until all the aliens have been captured, and naturally, suffering too many casualties results in the end of the game.

In spite of the usual graininess problems, the full-motion video is very impressive, and the way it runs is cleverly constructed. For example, when the kids come into the lounge and two of them head for the kitchen, you

can quickly switch to the kitchen camera to see them coming through the door then eavesdrop on their conversation in there. The strict schedule to all of the events is a bit limiting though, because the secret to success is simply to learn when there's going to be an alien wandering through Bedroom 2, keep an eye on the clock and be ready to catch it. But to work out all of their appearances you have to watch what is effectively a bad movie dozens of times,

and that can get tedious. It's novel and it'll impress your mates, but *Night Trap* isn't a tremendous game. **RICH**



dressed in black overalls with black balalavos) you've got to activate a trap to get rid of them. But to complicate matters, the aliens are also onto SCAT and they occasionally change the access codes so that your controls don't work properly. You've got to



PRESENTATION 90%
The full-motion video system is well done, even if the acting is a bit ropey, and the security panel controls are easy to use.

GRAPHICS 93%
The film action is very impressive in spite of the grainy pictures.

SOUND 90%
The voices of real actors (well, realistic actors), combine with spooky CD music.

PLAYABILITY 89%
It's an unusual game presented very well, so at first it's intriguing.

LASTABILITY 76%
There's a lot to watch, but the gameplay is very simple, and you have to sit through the video over and over again to get the timing of the events.

OVERALL 78%
An unusual and impressive-looking game which lacks substance. It'll impress your mates, though.

Vile Grand Vizier Jaffar has beautiful Princess Jasmine locked in her bedroom until she sees sense and decides to marry him. Only a travelling prince has the guts to save the princess, but he's also locked up - in the palace dungeon with twelve levels of platforms, puzzles and potential pain separating him from the princess.

Prince of Persia's animation is renowned as some of the most realistic you'll find on any game system. Here the Mega CD conversion doesn't fail to impress, with the Prince's movements when climbing and running looking totally convincing. Even so, this conversion is dis-

PRINCE OF PERSIA

appointing. In spite of the vast memory space available, the programmers have only included the original twelve levels and even on those the scenery graphics are hardly spectacular.

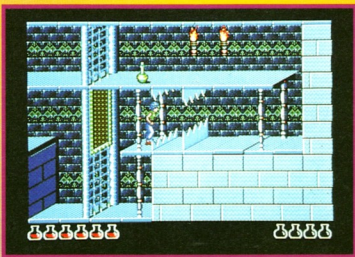
The game's control method

has always taken a bit of getting used to, but for some reason, it's particularly awkward here. Even after a few hours of play it remained

frustrating, with moves failing to come off now and then

causing unavoidable death or injury. What these criticisms mean is that while this is a pretty good conversion of the game it could have been substantially better on the Mega CD. The most impressive aspects of this

conversion are the excellent Eastern tunes on the sound-track and the smart title sequence too. **RICH**



PRINCE OF PERSIA
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME
DIFFICULTY
CONTINUOUS
BATTERY SAVE
SKILL LEVELS
NONE
RESPONSIVENESS
TERRIBLE

If you've played Cobra Command which came free with your Mega-CD you'll recognise this style of game. Road Avenger is meant to be something like one of those laser disc arcade machines, in which you control the actions of a character in a cartoon playing direct from the disc. As the cartoon plays you get to a point where you have to make your character do something by pushing in the right direction at the right instant. If you're timing is right he pulls off his move and the game continues. If it isn't, something nasty happens.

In Road Avenger, you're at the wheel of a sports car in

ROAD AVENGER

high-speed pursuit of a gang of highway bandits who were responsible for the death of your girlfriend (hence the Avenger bit in the title). As explained above, through the windscreens you get a cartoon view of the world, and if you want to keep seeing it you have to steer left and right and hit your car's turbo button at just the right time to get out of the way of oncoming juggernauts and other obstacles.

The James Bond driving stuff you and your poor car get up to is pretty amazing. There's a bit where you chase a guy up a building, then drive straight out of a 15th storey window! Even better is the bridge jump in which the car does a mid-air barrel roll just like the stunt in The Man With



The Golden Gun! Really cool stuff, this.

The cartoon graphics in Road Avenger look like most Mega-

CD full-motion video stuff, is a bit grainy. But the cartoon action is generally of a much better quality than that in similar games like Time Gal. As a game, it also lasts much longer than Time Gal, but even though it takes a while to beat, once you've seen the full adventure the game doesn't have much to lure you back to play through it all again.

RICH

PRESENTATION 89%
Scene-setting cartoon bits are impressive, but the range of options isn't amazingly good

GRAPHICS 91%
Some of the best full-motion video cartoons yet seen on the Mega-CD. And the stuff going on in the cartoon is great to watch too!

SOUND 89%
Suitable CD music and effects match up to the action very well.

PLAYABILITY 85%
More interesting than most games like this, mainly because it seems so much more action-packed.

LASTABILITY 84%
There's a fair bit to play through, but it won't last forever. When you've finished the game there's not much to come back for.

OVERALL 84%
An impressive example of this type of game, but this type of game is a bit limited anyway.

ROAD AVENGER
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
PIECE OF CAKE
CONTINUOUS
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
EXCELLENT





Anyone who's played the little-known import game, *MUSHA Aleste*, will find this game very familiar. The plot is a strange combination of Samurais and giant robots, but all you really need to know is that it's a real whom-bam laser-powered blastfest!

Your robot ninja rockets his way through level after level of up-the-screen scrolling obstacles, blasting away at ground targets and bizarre flying battleships before finally confronting a gigantic android boss and, with any luck, blowing his transductional modulators off.

Agreed, it's standard Megadrive stuff, and if it wasn't

ROBO ALESTE

for the superb CD soundtracks pumping out of the speakers you could be forgiven for thinking you were playing a Megadrive rather than a Mega-CD game. There's hardly any sprite rotation or expansion here. However, Robo Aleste is still a damn good shoot 'em up,

with loads of extra weapons to mess around with, loads of COMBINATIONS of extra weapons to mess around with and plenty of pretty smart-looking enemies to gun down. It's a lot tougher than a lot of Megadrive shoot 'em ups, too. The best players in the office

could just reach the last boss robot, but none could beat him.

Robo Aleste probably isn't the sort of game you bought your Mega-CD to play, but if you're a real laserhead, you will probably find this keeps you glued to your joystick a lot longer than something like

Sherlock Holmes or Night Trap. Definitely worth considering. **RICH**



PRESENTATION 75%

Fair selection of options and there are plenty of between level cartoon sequences. Nothing really outstanding, though.

GRAPHICS 88%

Superb in game graphics. The sprites and the backdrops are imaginative and detailed. There's not much here that a Megadrive couldn't do on its own, though.

SOUND 89%

Excellent CD music backs the action from start to finish.

PLAYABILITY 91%

Okay, so it's just a shoot 'em up, but it's a very good shoot 'em up.

LASTABILITY 90%

The gameplay doesn't vary vastly from level to level. If you want a hard-to-beat blaster, though, this is certainly up to the challenge.

OVERALL 90%

While it doesn't really show off what the Mega-CD can do, Robo Aleste is still an excellent blast.

ROBO ALESTE BY SEGA PLAYERS

1
GAME DIFFICULTY
TOUGH
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
QUICK

his game takes place in a future where humble sewer rats have mutated into 'ratigators' and are joined by the likes of 'zorks' and 'electric scorpions'. Why, it's enough to put you off sitting on the toilet for ever!

You are the latest recruit to the 'Sewer Sharks', a crack team of Sewer Hog pilots - a Sewer Hog being an underground fighter-craft. Dedicated to monster pest control under the watchful eye of Solar City's Commissioner Stanchler, the whole stinking outfit's other requirement is the delivery of supplies to the metropolis' lucky citizens. That means navigating

SEWER SHARK

the labyrinthine network of sewers at high speed, making sure you nail your quota of attacking ratigators while looking for the one safe route through to Solar City. At certain points in your mission you're given three numbers which refer to the next three junctions where you should turn off. Miss the junction and you'll find yourself hurtling towards a wall at the end of a blind alley!

Every part of this game is impeccably presented, with full-motion video sequences which make it look more like a decent quality sci-fi series than a console game! The game itself is very limited; you don't have much control over your ship, so most of the time you're blasting tidily little rat-



gator sprites. However, once I got into it, I found that the atmosphere generated by the fast 3D graphics was almost mesmerising, and the constant video communications from the other pilots made it even more interesting. It's not a game for everybody but if you're into SF you should enjoy it. **RICH**



PRESENTATION 87%

The acting and special effects give Sewer Shark lots of atmosphere.

GRAPHICS 88%

The sewers are convincingly dull and forbidding and there is a good illusion of movement.

SOUND 51%

Overall, the sound effects are poor to average and the music is similarly sub-standard.

PLAYABILITY 80%

The gameplay is a basic reaction test, but somehow the feeling of racing down a tunnel makes it all quite mesmerising.

LASTABILITY 75%

If you get into it there should be enough to keep you going for a while, as the game is tough and reasonably large.

OVERALL 78%

It might lack solid gameplay, but the speed and atmosphere are enough to keep you playing Sewer Shark.

SEWER SHARK BY SONY IMAGESOFT PLAYERS

1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
QUICK

This game lets you team up with the great detective and his faithful lackey Dr Watson to solve three fog-bound murder cases set around Victorian London.

The stories always start with some full-motion video of Holmes reading about some foul deed in the crime pages of *The Times*, and the whole game continues in this cinematic style. From the initial clues in the news story, you have to track down those involved in the crime and pump them for useful info in a full-motion video interview. Holmes has various sources of information at his disposal, among them the

SHERLOCK HOLMES

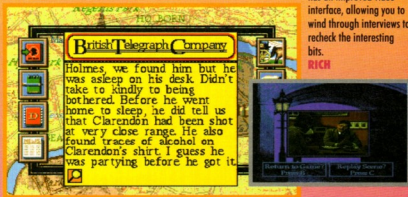
famous Inspector Lestrade, and his own youthful accomplices, the Baker Street Irregulars, a band of scalliwags who will do a lot of his running around for him. All this should end up with you being able to finger the miscreant and run him in.

It's quite a cleverly-constructed game and, as ever, the full-motion video bits are quite

impressive. However, as with *Night Trap*, the acting here is pretty ghastly — the cast are all American though their 'Cock-enee' accents are dreadful. The other problem is that you sometimes wish Holmes could do more than just go through a pre-recorded script when he talks to some of the suspects. Some of the clues are very

obscure indeed and you can spend ages hopping backwards and forwards between locations conducting the same interview over and over again, without picking up anything useful. If you like the idea, you might prefer the sequel, *Sherlock Holmes: Consulting Detective Volume II*, which has three more detailed cases on two discs, and has an improved video interface, allowing you to wind through interviews to reread the interesting bits.

RICH



SHERLOCK HOLMES
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
1
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
BATTERY SAVE
SKILL LEVELS

RESPONSIVENESS
1
NOT BAD

Agents of evil are causing trouble in the Earth's solar system, and they've started by placing a virus in the central computer which normally runs everything smoothly, but is now causing pandemonium. In the cockpit of your SA-77 Silpheed fighter, you have to laser a path through 12 levels of shoot 'em up action, destroying as much of the enemy space fleet as possible, before it destroys you!

Silpheed is really a simple blaster good and fast, but simple. However, it has one major thing going for it its graphics. The whole game is presented in a 3D perspective, viewed from above and behind your fighter,

SILPHEED



of a film. This has made it possible to produce some startling graphic effects. The cinematic

prepared for *Death Star* Tranche-style effects and more! Added to all this is a superb soundtrack, complete with speech and excellent stereo effects.

As I've said, the game itself is a fairly basic shoot 'em up, but it's very challenging and the thing that keeps you coming back for more is those graphics. *Cynics* might say that good graphics and sound don't guarantee a good game, in fact, I used to say that myself, but it looks like things are changing.

RICH

and all the graphics are drawn using filled-in vector graphics. This makes most of the spaceships look small and crude, but check out the ones which fly past in the background. Gigantic starships, huge asteroids, vast fleets of spacegoing juggernauts, they all consist of thousands of polygons and move supersmoothly, as before. In their frames of animation are predefined and stored in their entirety on the disc so the Mega-CD just has to play back the frames as if it were playing back frames

into had jaws on the floor in the Moon Machines office, and then there were the bits where gigantic laser beams rip straight through huge spacetenkers which then explode into hundreds of tiny spinning fragments. It just gets better the further you go. Be



PRESENTATION **87%**
Good use of full-motion video to introduce the cases, and the icon-driven controls are easy to use.

GRAPHICS **88%**
The film stuff is really pretty good, combining actors with suitable period drawings

SOUND **70%**
All the speech is good quality, but the accents are sometimes impenetrable

PLAYABILITY **75%**
Looks impressive but it takes ages before you feel like you're getting anywhere in some of the cases.

LASTABILITY **70%**
Some people might find it boring just watching interviews, but it does become quite intriguing once you get into it.

OVERALL **75%**
Interesting. Not for everyone but it should entertain those of a detectively disposition.

PRESENTATION **94%**
Options are adequate, but the intro and between-level sequences will blow your mind!

GRAPHICS **94%**
The quality of the game sprites is best described as 'functional' but the absolutely astounding 3D visuals make up for that!

SOUND **90%**
Great music, and the stereo effects are excellent. Plug your hi-fi in and you'll feel like you're really there.

PLAYABILITY **87%**
The shooting action is fairly simple, but the thrill comes from the speed and realism of the visuals.

LASTABILITY **87%**
Twelve challenging levels which just get better and better, and a surprise extra bit!

OVERALL **90%**
A really amazing game which no Mega-CD owner should miss out on!

SILPHEED
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
1
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS

RESPONSIVENESS
1
FAST AND SMOOTH



There are no two ways about it — this is one odd game. Things aren't helped by the fact that it's a Japanese game and it's very hard to make heads or tails of any of it, but the idea (as far as I can tell) is that all the electrical systems in the world

SWITCH

have screwed up and it's up to you, a humble workman to put things right.

At the start of the game you find yourself in a room, confronted by a bank of buttons

and you just have to keep pushing them until you're transported elsewhere else. And so it progresses. It would be extremely dull if it wasn't for the fact that all the other buttons result in incredibly weird, and often hilarious, things happen-

ing to our danged hero, and that's where the fun originates.

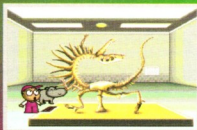
There are hundreds of screens and different buttons which call forth thousands of visual gags, accompanied by strange vocal effects. If your sense of humour tends towards the unusual you'll have a ball and if you've got a bunch of like-minded mates around this game could form the basis for an all-night party! There's no comprehensible gameplay as such, but Switch really does

entertain like no other video game.

RICH

SWITCH
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS
BATTERY SAVE
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



PRESENTATION **89%**
Excellent. Even though it's all in Japanese the game is easy to get to grips with.

GRAPHICS **97%**
Amazing range of amusing gags, all brilliantly drawn and with a few smart sprite tricks thrown in as well.

SOUND **94%**
Great CD soundtracks, with sound effects created by a bloke doing impressions of cars and stuff. Very odd.

PLAYABILITY **90%**
Kind of depends on your sense of humour. If you like weird humour you'll love it.

LASTABILITY **89%**
Again it depends on your sense of humour, but if you're into it you'll be hooked until you've seen all of the hundreds of screens and jokes.

OVERALL **90%**
A very odd, but very entertaining game. It wouldn't suit everyone though.

This is another game like Road Avenger in which you watch a 'cartoon' until a certain point when you have to press the joy pad in a certain direction or choose the right option from a menu to escape certain death.

On this occasion you find

TIME GAL

yourself in the 25th Century boots of Time Gal herself who is on a trans-time mission to capture a renegade scientist hidden somewhere in the chronostreams. To this end she is trans-

ported first to primordial times for a quick bit of dinosaur dodging, before passing through the ice age, then the middle ages, then the present day and on into the future. Each section is very short, lasting between about 30 seconds and a minute, so you get maybe four prob-



lems per section.

As with most of these game, the trouble is it doesn't take long to work out what you're supposed to do at each 'junction' so all it requires is a bit of concentration and you've finished the game. The graphics and sound are pretty good, but that's not quite enough on this occasion.

JAZZ

TIME GAL
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

1
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUOUS
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



PRESENTATION **70%**
The usual options, but the intro cartoon is quite good.

GRAPHICS **77%**
The in-game cartoon graphics are good on the whole, but occasionally they do look a little rough.

SOUND **79%**
Decent speech effects and bouncy music.

PLAYABILITY **65%**
Not bad fun, but it's just a case of learning all the right moves in the right places.

LASTABILITY **45%**
Probably the easiest example of this type of Mega-CD game. The scenes are very short and quite simple to crack so it doesn't take long to beat it.

OVERALL **50%**
Entertaining for a while and actually quite funny, but it won't be enough to occupy for as long as Road Avenger.

Young Willy Beamish is in big trouble after his pet frog dissolved the headmaster's wig at the end-of-term address. Now Willy's lumbered with a terrible school report and a spell of detention. If that school report reaches his house, he's likely to

WILLY BEAMISH

be sent away to a military cadet school so you've got to make sure that report never reaches home.

It's an unusual plot for an adventure, and you might have thought an enjoyable one, espe-

cially bearing in mind the easy-to-use point and click command system. But after every action the game freezes for up to ten seconds while the disc whirrs and the correct response is found and loaded in. Needless

to say, this makes the whole game extremely tedious to play.

The graphics

and sound are ace (there's loads of sampled Willy-speech), but as well as being dogged by the disc-access problem, there just isn't enough player control over what happens to Mister Beamish. When you're confronted by a problem the options open to you are minimal and some sections of the game — like the opening classroom scene, and the kitchen-with-Mom scene — are intensely dull. I'm happy to see new console game concepts, but there's still a lot of work to be done before we see true interactive cartoons on the Mega-CD.

RICH

WILLY BEAMISH
BY
DYNAMIX
PLAYERS

1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS
BATTERY SAVE
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
SLOTH-LIKE



PRESENTATION **65%**
Nice ideas in the game, but the constant disc accessing ruins the fun.

GRAPHICS **93%**
The sprites, backdrops and animation are all excellent.

SOUND **77%**
The game is packed with hundreds of sampled conversations and great effects. Unfortunately, the in-game music is a shambles.

PLAYABILITY **61%**
There's plenty to see in the game but the sluggish pace is enough to put you off.

LASTABILITY **69%**
It's a massive quest which should keep you coming back if the unwieldy control method and slow nature of the game don't put you off for good.

OVERALL **60%**
Willy Beamish is let down by being far too slow to play (due to the excessive disc access) and to control, and by the lack of real interaction.



Cool that you are, you "volunteered" to take part in several missions instrumental to Allied victory in the Second World War — just you and your Hobson FB-61 "Grim Reaper" fighter bomber. The four missions are pretty simple. Just destroy some munitions trains travelling through Munich, a bunch of nabby pambly V-1 "Buzz Bombs" darkening the skies of southern Paris, JU-88 bombers to the east or the U-Boats hanging out in the North Atlantic. Just remember that the Luftwaffe don't take kindly to our Tommy heroes infiltrating their airspace.

Each of the missions has a briefing, given from HQ. From

ACE OF ACES



take-off you are on your own, and are expected to control all the functions of the plane yourself. To aid you is a succession of viewpoints within the plane, allowing you to see forward, rear and over wings; instrumentation and bomb doors. Button B combined with down on the joystick takes the player to the bomb bay screen. Here the bay doors can be opened and the target can be bombed. This is also the place to change the main weapon between the main guns and rockets.

Ace of Aces wasn't a particularly awe-inspiring game when it first appeared on the C64 five years before, and this Sega version is nowhere near as good as the original. Poor-quality, fuzzy graphics and amazingly naff sounds are the nails in the coffin, and the

tediously slow gameplay hammers them well and truly home. There's no feeling of excitement - the missions are all pretty dull and unchallenging - and the sluggish and fiddly control method serves to make play irritating and annoying. Ace of Aces could have been a great Sega flight sim. It's a shame it fails dismally to live up to its potential.

JAZ



ACE OF ACES
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

1 GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
NONE
2 SKILL LEVELS
2 RESPONSIVENESS
SLUGGISH

PRESENTATION 67%

Very good, with plenty of front-end screens and a precise option as well.

GRAPHICS 43%

Nice presentation screens, but the in-game graphics are dull and the movement is extremely jerky.

SOUND 24%

Incredibly unconvincing sound effects.

PLAYABILITY 34%

Four missions in-game "action" bores from the outset. Even the dogfights chug along at a snail's pace.

LASTABILITY 23%

Four missions, but the game's so dull there's no compulsion to come back after after a couple of missions.

OVERALL 25%

A dire flight sim that shouldn't be allowed to infest your Sega collection under any circumstances.

Crushers loaded with said contemptuous slimy extraterrestrials have landed and the ghostly inhabitants have taken over, terrorising the populace and generally disporting themselves in a yobbo fashion.

Fortunately there are two brave survivors still willing to fight for the human cause. They are Gordon the Hamburger Stand Man and Scooter his robot assistant who have decided to take on the entire alien fleet and give their alien allies the kicking they deserve.

Alien Storm is a conversion of Sega's popular arcade game. The action is seen in a three-quarters side view, giving the

ALIEN STORM

screen "depth" that the players can move in and out. Blasting aliens is the order of the day here, as they attempt to gear themselves on innocent passers by out doing Saturday shopping.

A change in the action is heralded twice during the game. This time, we see our heroes legging it along the screen as usual, but at enormous speeds more befitting

Sonic the Hedgehog! During this level, our heroes' long-range weapons become activated and the game becomes more of a horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up. The other section involves a 3-D shooting section, with the 'bots looking for aliens hiding in supermarkets and car showrooms.

Alien Storm is lacking in



three areas: graphics, sound and playability. The sprites are small, blocky, poorly animated and few of the aliens resemble their arcade counterparts in any way. The sound is dreadful, with one or two barely audible "effects" and what must be the worst Master System tune ever. The final nails in the coffin are the unresponsive controls and poor collision detection. Quite simply, Alien Storm is a very unsuccessful conversion.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 42%

Choice of two characters and two difficulty settings. Not much in the Pretty Screen Department.

GRAPHICS 44%

Small, blocky and poorly animated sprites, jerky scrolling and little variety.

SOUND 22%

An absolutely dreadful tune causes aural pain throughout, accompanied by the occasional sad spot effect.

PLAYABILITY 39%

The action is so ridiculously unchallenging, even the dodgy collision detection doesn't make life difficult.

LASTABILITY 31%

A few sessions is all it takes to get through the game, and after that there's nothing to entice you back.

OVERALL 38%

A very poor conversion which contains none of the original coin-op's thrills and spills.

ALIEN STORM
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

1 GAME DIFFICULTY
VERY EASY
CONTINUES
3
3 SKILL LEVELS
2 RESPONSIVENESS
SLUG-LIKE



In days of yore, the Atari Corp bagged three arcade games. And lo, their names were Centipede, Breakout and Missile Command. Then, one day, Virgin Games decided to convert these three classic games unto the Master System, and so Arcade Classics was born.

In Centipede you get to protect a mushroom patch from evil insects by shooting them as they enter from the top of the screen. The hordes include spiders and flies, but the biggest threat are centipedes. These many-legged marauders head in from the top of the screen, snaking downwards, changing direction every time they hit a

ARCADE CLASSICS

mushroom. If you shoot a centipede in the body, it splits in two, and the two halves follow separate routes down the screen.

Breakout is the second game. You control a bat and must use your deflecting skills to bounce an energy ball against a brick wall. Once all the bricks have been completely destroyed, you move on to the next, more challenging screen. Lastly comes Missile Command. This puts you in charge of three

anti-missile sites. You target your guns to shoot down incoming missiles aimed at six cities. The missiles are constantly

in motion and your guns are quite slow, so the skill lies in estimating the missile's course.



land! Considering the simplicity of the original arcade machines, these Master System copies should be perfect but instead they're awful hatchet job versions. Ok, they're fun for a while in their own simple way, but they don't offer half the entertainment and nostalgia that they would if they'd been properly playtested.

JAZ

ARCADE CLASSICS
BY
VIRGIN
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
SLOW



What should have been a fun-packed stroll down memory lane has been turned into a miserable charabanc trip through half conversion

It's the year 55 BC and the Roman empire is in complete control of all Europe, save for one tiny Gaulish village. The reason for this is the magic strength-giving potion brewed up by the venerable druid Getafix. When the Gauls swig this elixir, it allows them to dust anyone who gets in their way!

Emperor Julius Caesar has decreed that the druid be captured and transported to the Italian capital to make the potion for the Roman forces, and sure enough Getafix has vanished. As Asterix and Obelix, the

ASTERIX



village's hardest men, you must undertake a quest of many platform levels, dodging hazards, negotiating underwater sections and beating Romans senseless.

Getafix was fresh out of magic potion when he was captured. However, the druid was able to whip up a much simpler potion in his prison wagon and he has scattered cauldrons of this throughout the game. Asterix can use bottles of this concoction in a similar way to grenades. After being thrown,

the mixture bubbles for a few seconds before exploding, destroying any enemies or destructible sections of scenery in the vicinity. Obelix prefers a much more direct method of attack. The fat one throws huge menhirs which demolish their targets.

First impressions of Asterix are most favourable. The graphics are top-notch and the

sprites closely resemble their comic counterparts. The game is also very playable to start with. The action is fast and there's a lot of secret rooms and bonuses to discover. The only flaw with Asterix is that there are too many places where one single mistake results in the loss of a life. Asterix is a great game, but it can be frustrating.

RICH



ASTERIX
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
QUITE GOOD

PRESENTATION **73%**
Options for every game and "hilarious" cartoon intros. Well, more 'crap' than hilarious' actually.

GRAPHICS **56%**
Pretty basic and gaudy stuff. The backgrounds are distinctly sad.

SOUND **31%**
There's one tune per game which repeats its bleepy cacophony every ten seconds. Distinctly yucky.

PLAYABILITY **52%**
The controls are a little sluggish and the games don't play half as well as the originals.

LASTABILITY **45%**
The games have some novelty value, so they are fun for a short while, but not for any great period of time.

OVERALL **49%**
A reasonable idea but its potential has been wasted. A fully updated version is needed.

PRESENTATION **79%**
Comic-style intros and intermissions and a few options including a language select for all those foreign players.

GRAPHICS **86%**
Detailed sprites which look just like their cartoon counterparts and nice backdrops.

SOUND **68%**
A simple and weak tune goes along with the action, as well as some effects of mixed quality.

PLAYABILITY **85%**
The action is easy enough to get into, but there are some awkward places to keep you scratching your head.

LASTABILITY **71%**
It's lengthy and hard and should keep platform fans at it for ages. Lots of value for money.

OVERALL **80%**
An excellent platform game let down by one or two gameplay flaws and unlimited continues.



The sequel to Super Monaco GP, *deverly* comes with some dazzling new features. There's a construction option which gives the driver the chance to build the kind of car that suits him.

Any self-respecting racing driver can tell you that in wet weather hard grip tyres are essential. The gears, wings and transmission can also be changed. Once the car is set, qualifying for pole position is the next priority. Getting a good lap time improves your grid position, giving the driver a greater chance of being first past the chequered flag.

If there is one man who is more likely to get his hands on

AYRTON SENNA'S SUPER MONACO GP II

BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS
PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS
2
RESPONSIVENESS
OKAY



the cup, it's Ayrton Senna, who endorses the game and offers advice on how to tackle the exhausting circuits. Total concentration is necessary to successfully negotiate the bends and take full advantage of the straights.

When you feel you're ready to challenge the nifty Brazilian, it's time to enter the World Championship. There are 16 circuits which span the globe, and getting used to each one is important. If the qualify option

is chosen the lap times of the driver are recorded. The better they are the better the grid position.

The speedometer might claim the car is doing 300 kph, but I found myself expecting the vicar to come wheeling past on his bicycle. Basically, the whole concept of speed is unrealistic. Some of the blame for this can be directed at the graphics



which, while not disastrous, do little to enhance the Formula One atmosphere. The music and sound effects contribute nothing to the Grand Prix experience either - the engine sounds like psychotic hair-dryer! Super Monaco GP II is a big disappointment.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 87%

Quality title screens, excellent options including car construction and a handy password system.

GRAPHICS 44%

The colours are bright and varied, but the car, track and backdrops are poor.

SOUND 32%

Ghastly sound effects and revvelling tunes provide the aural torture.

PLAYABILITY 46%

The slow pace and basic control method means this is easy to pick up and play.

LASTABILITY 32%

The lack of depth, challenge and atmosphere means that even the most ardent racing fan will soon become bored.

OVERALL 41%

A highly disappointing racing simulation which fails to capture any of the excitement of Formula One.

Marty McFly's back from the past to save the future! With girlfriend Jennifer in tow, Marty jumps into Doc Emmet Brown's De Lorean time machine and speeds off to 2015 to save his son from prison. He does this by incriminating the real felon, Biff's grandson Griff. Thinking his work is done, Marty returns to 1985 but it is a completely different scene that greets the lad as he emerges from the DeLorean. Biff's minions have taken over Marty's home town of Hill Valley, so Marty's left to beat a path through Biff's cronies to Biff himself (this crops up in the game as a horizontally scrolling



beat 'em up).

Once Biff reveals his dastardly plan, Marty travels back to 1955 to correct Biff's damage to the space/time continuum (as depicted in the game by the sliding block puzzle). However, Biff's still left loose, and in the last hoverboard screen, Marty uses his magical board to catch up with the bully and give his monkey ass a good dusting!

What we have

here is one of the worst game-of-the-films I've ever seen. The first and last levels are dull and frustrating. The collision detection is dreadful, the control method is very poor and sprites seem to come out of nowhere, giving you no chance to avoid



them unless you memorise exactly where they pop up. The beat 'em up section is also pathetic; again naff controls and collision detection help to make it an unenjoyable and irritating experience. The puzzle sections are the most interesting aspect of the game, but even they're not particularly good, the slide puzzle is limited and the house section is ridiculously easy to complete.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 64%

Nice presentation screens, but no options to tweak.

GRAPHICS 41%

Great static screens. Sad, laughable in-game visuals. The sprites look nothing like any of the film characters.

SOUND 33%

The BTTF tune grates forth from the Master System's tortured sound chip.

PLAYABILITY 29%

Awful controls and bad collision detection are just two of the problems in the playability department.

LASTABILITY 21%

The levels are either just too difficult or too easy. Either way, they're all pretty bad and you won't want to play them for long.

OVERALL 24%

An awful game of the film with very little going for it.

BACK TO THE FUTURE 2

BY
IMAGEWORKS
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUOUS
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
SLUGGISH



n this game, based around the third and final part of the Back to the Future film trilogy, Marty goes back to the 1880s to rescue his pal Doc Brown who was accidentally sent back to that era when his time-travelling Delorean was struck by lightning. Along the way, Marty also has to thwart the evil ways of Mad Dog Tannen's gang, headed by an ancestor of Marty's arch enemy, Biff!

Back to the Future III adopts the familiar game-of-the-film format with each level representing a different scene from the film. There are three levels in all, the ultimate one being a ride atop a speeding

BACK TO THE FUTURE III



train as Doc and Marty attempt to get the Delorean up to 88 mph so they can make the final time jump home.

The action is split into three levels. The first is a manic horse ride across a hazardous desert in which the Doc must rescue Clara Clayton from her runaway buckboard cart.

Second is a shootout where pie dish-slinging Marty must defeat Mad Dog Tannen's gun-toting

gang. The final level is set atop a speeding train where Marty attempts to dodge a variety of hazards and collect the four charges required to make the time trip home.

After the disappointment of the forlorn Back to the

Future II, it's good to see that Back to the Future III is of a much better quality. But even so I must admit to being disappointed. What's there is very good - the three levels all feature marvellous graphics and excellent soundtracks, but the problem is that at the end of the day there's simply not enough. Even a mediocre Master System player should be able to finish it within a day or so.

REVIEW



BACK TO THE FUTURE III
BY
MIRRORSOFT
PLAYERS
↓
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
↓
CONTINUES
INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS
↓
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

PRESENTATION **78%**
Great cut screens introducing the scenes from the film, but no options.

GRAPHICS **87%**
Very high quality throughout, from the excellent stills to the nicely animated sprites and colourful backdrops.

SOUND **72%**
Surprisingly good tunes play throughout, and the sound effects aren't half bad either.

PLAYABILITY **77%**
Very easy to get into, with the high-quality gameplay providing much enjoyment.

LASTABILITY **52%**
Sadly there are only three levels and that's simply not enough to hold anyone's interest for very long.

OVERALL **67%**
A potentially great game-of-the-film sadly let down by its lack of content.

ou take control of one of the Bonanza Brothers and it's your job to strut the four-way scrolling corridors of Mr Big's hideouts, half-inching anything valuable that crosses your path. But your evil adversary isn't completely thick. He has hired several security companies to look after his goods, and their orders are to shoot to kill.

Luckily, the Bonanza Brothers have guns of their own and can even use the scenery to their advantage, splatting their foes behind doors and the like.

There are ten hideouts for the Bonanza Brothers to raid before the Chief has enough hard evidence against the syndi-

BONANZA BROTHERS

cate to close down their operations for good!

Don't be misled by the title, or indeed the fact that the game is converted from a split-screen two-player coin-op. The Master System version of Bonanza Brothers is **ONE-PLAYER ONLY!**

However, on the option screen you can choose to be either Robo or Mobo Bonanza. This is pretty pointless though as neither character plays any differ-

ently whatsoever.

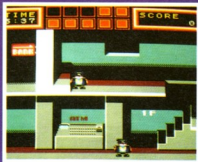
The levels are a series of rooms on floors connected by stairs. A scaled map shows the player where objects to be stolen are located, but the task is hampered by the likes of security guards and robotic watch dogs.

Master System Bonanza Brothers bears an uncanny graphical resemblance to its Megadrive counterpart, with well animated sprites and loads

of colour. The gameplay also comes close to the Megadrive — which is a bit of a shame really, because it wasn't all that good. The runny-jumpy-shooty action is good fun up to a point, but it eventually becomes repetitive and dull. It's also a horrifically easy game to complete. Watch as you scoot through the levels in a day. For dihard Bonanza maniacs only.

REVIEW

BONANZA BROTHERS
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
↓
GAME DIFFICULTY
VERY EASY
↓
CONTINUES
4
SKILL LEVELS
↓
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



PRESENTATION **70%**
Plenty of options to tweak, including the choice of Bonanza Brother.

GRAPHICS **79%**
Very close to the coin-op, with cute sprites and bizarre, but still decent backdrops.

SOUND **78%**
The music is quite annoying, but the sampled sound effects are good.

PLAYABILITY **80%**
Getting into the game is very easy and the action is quite addictive. The novel game concept helps too.

LASTABILITY **45%**
But the levels are so easy you should finish the game in your first sitting.

OVERALL **57%**
Bonanza Brothers is a nice idea and it looks very smart, but it just doesn't offer enough game to warrant the price tag.



Bub and Bob have been turned into bubble-blowing dinosaurs! Who could have performed this dastardly deed? Only the not-very-nice Baron von Blubba, that's who. To regain their human forms, the two dingo dinos have to travel through 100 levels of madcap platform action and confront and destroy the Baron himself!

This is by no means an easy task, though, as the Baron has his hordes of minions waiting to dispose of any bronto that might get too big for its bubbles, and each has its own way of dishing out the devastation. The bad guys don't have it all their own way — they can

BUBBLE BOBBLE

be blotted by blowing a bubble at 'em. As the dinos progress through the game, the screens get tougher and tougher, and the enemies increase in speed and intelligence.

Baron von Blubba has foolishly left a variety of items scattered around each of the levels, which bestow the two brontos with special abilities.

Bubblegum gives extra range or power to the dino bubbles; umbrellas transport both players to later levels; water, lightning and fire bubbles burst with effects on the baddies.

Featuring weirdo action,

supercute sprites and manically addictive gameplay, Bubble Bobble is one of those classic arcade games which never seems to lose its appeal. This conversion is great to play, and features a beautifully graded difficulty level which starts out easy and just gets tougher and

tougher — some of the later levels are incredibly hard, especially when you lose your power-ups! And if that's not enough, the simultaneous two-player action of the original has also been included, which adds even more to the lasting appeal!

JAZ



BUBBLE BOBBLE
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
UNLIMITED
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
GREAT

PRESENTATION 88%
Excellent, with one or simultaneous two-player options and a neat password system.

GRAPHICS 80%
Nice, chunky and colourful, if a bit flickery at times.

SOUND 57%
The same tunes and effects as the original coin-op performed by the Master System's sad sound chip.

PLAYABILITY 85%
The highly cute gameplay instantly grabs you, and the nicely balanced difficulty level keeps you playing.

LASTABILITY 85%
Literally a ton of levels, and it gets VERY hard later on! Excellent fun from start to finish, and in two player mode it's hard to beat for long-term enjoyment.

OVERALL 85%
A brilliant conversion of a classic coin-op that's just horribly addictive. Go get it!

Columns is one of those classically simple puzzle games, like Tetris and Klax. The jewels descend in assorted blocks of three, the order of which can be changed as they fall down. When a minimum of three jewels of the same colour are placed together, horizontally, vertically, or diagonally, they disappear — and the jewels above fall down to fill the gaps.

The two-player option means that the players take it in turns to lay jewels in the box, meaning that they inadvertently help each other half of the time. Of course, teamwork is important when the screen is nearly full. Other options let you

COLUMNS

change the jewels into alternative shapes such as dice or even fruit. All this is set to a tune similar to the Halloween film theme, far added atmosphere. The game is played in a variety of patterns, some levels letting you start with rows of blocks inserted.

Although Columns sounds

rather dull, it's the sort of game that you keep on coming back to time and time again because it's simple, playable and very addictive indeed. It starts off easy, but when you get to high levels the jewels fall at very high speed, and your hand-to-eye coordination is given a really good work-out. A special men-

tion must go to the sound, which is one of the best tunes I've heard on the Sega. Columns might not be the most exciting game in the world, but it's a great way to unwind after you've just dispatched some big baddie with your lasers, or have kicked the heads of endless street gangs in the latest beat 'em up!

JAZ



COLUMNS
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
MEDIUM

PRESENTATION 84%
The intro screen is suitably classical, and the backgrounds add a neat graphic touch.

GRAPHICS 78%
Fairly basic, but with this sort of game it's to be expected. What's important is that the definition is clear.

SOUND 89%
Subtle, restrained effects and tunes that fit the game to a tee!

PLAYABILITY 93%
Addictive, therapeutic, absorbing, and very enjoyable. The two-player is a bonus.

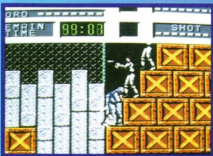
LASTABILITY 88%
Although it won't grab your attention in the same way as an arcade game, you'll keep coming back to it.

OVERALL 89%
A brilliant Tetris variant with a variety of options, and playability coming out of its ears.

Only one man can save us, and he's not even a proper man - he's a cyborg, a mixture of man and machine. Oddly enough, this strange being is also an expert in the martial arts. He can jump, kick, and slash foes with his sword. He also has access to throwing stars and other special weapons. Best of all is the Ninja magical attack - not quite what you'd expect from a robot, but devastating in its effort on the enemy.

Early levels are set in factories and warehouses, with wooden crates and rising platforms to negotiate as well as baddies to zap. Then

CYBER SHINOBI



the action moves to the Bay Area, the Plain, the jungle and the waterfall. The final two levels are set in a secret base, complete with force fields and tough opponents. Then it's on to meet the final boss, a huge ED209-like robot with an extendible pinbar.

Tokens are liberally scattered throughout the game, giving the metallic black belt extra life, shuriken, bullets and

blend of magic and technology, but yet again I've been disappointed. The hero's movement is wooden, unresponsive and jerky, destroying any sense of

magic, as well as powering his sword up to greater heights of deadliness.

Ninja beat 'em ups can be great - Revenge of Shinobi proved that. I had high hopes for this game, with its

suspended disbelief. As for the music, well let's just say that Mozart's got nothing to worry about. The only backgrounds of note are those of the final level, when Cybor is wandering through the enemy base. The foes are poorly animated and easily defeated, even though the hero's lack of adequate response causes immense irritation. Do yourself a favour and spend your money elsewhere.

RICH



CYBER SHINOBI
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
↓
GAME DIFFICULTY
AVERAGE
CONTINUES
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
↓
RESPONSIVENESS
OKAY

Dick Tracy is set over 18 horizontal levels of action, starting outside the police station and progressing to the underground HQ at the end of the game. Dick walks along, and is able to punch or shoot the vil-

DICK TRACY



lains in his path, as well as spray bullets from his Tommy gun at those in the distance. Other levels have our hero standing on the running board of a car, trying to survive a hail of lead.

Bonus stages appear from time to time, where Dick shoots pop-up targets for extra points, providing he doesn't hit too many good guys! Although he has unlimited bullets in his revolver, Dick only has up to three magazines for the Tommy gun. So accurate shooting is needed if the man in the yellow mac is going to triumph over the forces of evil.

The bonus level consists of cardboard pictures, portraying

civilians, gangsters and policemen, that spring up every couple of seconds in a random order. The player must quickly shoot the bad guys, taking care not to kill any of the civilians or cops.

Dick Tracy takes a bit of getting used to, since it has rather slow jayped response and a slightly strange control method, but once you get over that first hurdle, you find an

addictive and challenging game hiding beneath. Although there's not a lot of variety, I found the reaction-testing gameplay thoroughly enjoyable since you've got to watch several things at once. There's plenty here to please shoot 'em up fans, and the graphics are very similar to the stylish movie. If you're after a good blast, check this out.

JAZZ



DICK TRACY
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
↓
GAME DIFFICULTY
HARD
CONTINUES
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
↓
RESPONSIVENESS
SLUGGISH

PRESENTATION **73%**
A fairly straightforward title screen and little in the way of options.

GRAPHICS **61%**
The dire animation and mediocre backgrounds fail to impress in any way.

SOUND **57%**
As with the rest of the game, the sound is diabolical and weedy in the extreme.

PLAYABILITY **62%**
The gameplay is repetitive, dull and predictable and lacks the thrills expected of a beat 'em up.

LASTABILITY **49%**
Despite the number of levels, Cyber Shinobi won't be occupying your cartridge slot for long, for obvious reasons.

OVERALL **58%**
A very poor effort indeed which is bound to disappoint even the biggest Sega fans.

PRESENTATION **74%**
A comic-like intro shot establishes the mood of the game, and panels appear between levels.

GRAPHICS **78%**
The sprites are small, but nicely detailed and animated. The backgrounds are simply coloured.

SOUND **67%**
The sound is nothing to write home about, but performs its task in a workmanlike fashion.

PLAYABILITY **70%**
The tricksy control method severely affects the play, and the levels do become repetitive after a while.

LASTABILITY **72%**
Eighteen levels provides a tough challenge, although they're all basically very similar in gameplay style.

OVERALL **71%**
An enjoyable and pretty addictive film tie-in which is bound to appeal to shoot 'em up fans.



The evil witch, Magica de Spell, has kidnapped Donald Duck's nephews, Huey, Dewie and Louie, complete with their lucky birthday dimes, a present from Donald's uncle Scrooge McDuck. But that was not the end of her evil deeds for she also pinched Scrooge's original Lucky Dime into the bargain.

This is where you come in, guiding Donald in the inevitable rescue attempt, in this night-way scrolling platform environment, smashing the seven shades out of every enemy sprite that dares molest him on his travels. At the end of each stage, Donald is accosted by an evil end-of-level boss.

DONALD DUCK: THE LUCKY DIME CAPER
BY SEGA PLAYERS
1 GAME DIFFICULTY MEDIUM CONTINUOUS
3 SKILL LEVELS
1 RESPONSIVENESS SMOOTH

DONALD DUCK AND THE LUCKY DIME CAPER

Only multiple bottom bounces from our hero sees these evil demons off and enables Donald to attempt the next stage.

There are seven levels of platform action. The first three are selectable and in those Don rescues his imprisoned nephews. Only when they are free can our Donald have access to the next three levels, where the duck-like creature locates the missing dimes.

Every so often, Donald runs out of platforms to jump

around on and is forced to leap into the water to continue his adventures. Funny enough, considering that he's supposed to be a duck, Donald's underwater agility is rather sad and dodging the meanies is quite difficult.



are great! The Donald sprite looks and acts just like the "real" thing, and the action is accompanied by reasonable sound. As always, it's the game-play that makes or breaks a game and fortunately Donald Duck is very playable. It's also very difficult to beat with a number of long and tough levels. **RICH**

The graphics



It's the year 2089 and one of the World's Presidents has stolen the set of plans to create human "cyber" beings with special skins immune to the deadly ultraviolet waves threatening to destroy life on earth. The rest of the world retaliates with a plan codenamed Dynamite — a superhuman cyborg called Colonel Duke who's armed with a machine gun and a bionic arm and capable of taking on the army and destroying them single-handedly.

The action is displayed in first-person perspective 3-D, and is played over six different levels, with Duke shooting and punching his way through

DYNAMITE DUKE



hordes of marauding boddies. At the end of the last level is the evil President who controls the enemy army - destroy him and the threat to world peace is neutralised.

Duke relies mostly on his machine gun weapon. Targets appear from behind scenery and in armoured vehicles for him to shoot. Take too long to disable them and they find Duke's range. Duke is capable of doing a super dynamite

punch. Just keep the fire button depressed until the power meter reaches its maximum and then let go to unleash a

mega punch which destroys virtually anything!

The coin-op on which

Dynamite Duke is based was itself a rip-off of Operation Wolf, a scrolling 3-D shooter. The Sega version is actually quite entertaining,

with some pretty decent graphics, but falls down on two major problems - firstly, the game itself does become remarkably repetitive, and secondly, it's far too easy! Gaming novices or fans of the coin-op may find a few hours entertainment with Dynamite Duke, but hardened gamers will find themselves completing this within a few goes. **RICH**



PRESENTATION 87%

A great Disney-esque attract sequence kicks off the game, but there are no options toinker with.

GRAPHICS 93%

Superb! The sprites and backgrounds do great credit to the Disney licence.

SOUND 80%

Jolly tunes add that cartoony atmosphere to the proceedings.

PLAYABILITY 92%

Some of the greatest platform action to adorn a Master System game. Great fun right from the word go.

LASTABILITY 92%

Six huge levels and the final confrontation with Magica de Spell make this one long game!

OVERALL 92%

Topper graphics combined with superb playability make Donald Duck an all-time great! Don't miss it!

PRESENTATION 63%

An okay title screen, but no difficulty levels.

GRAPHICS 82%

Nice and colourful, with little or no flicker, but only average animation.

SOUND 80%

A good rendition of the coin-op music, with the odd boom and bang in between.

PLAYABILITY 89%

Very addictive at first, because it's so easy to get into the blasting and bashing gameplay.

LASTABILITY 60%

Easy to get into, but unfortunately very easy to beat too. Even a novice player will be able to reach the end after a relatively short playing stint.

OVERALL 71%

Shoot 'em up fans will certainly enjoy this, even though it's pretty easy to complete. If you're a good player, try it out first.

DYNAMITE DUKE
BY SEGA PLAYERS
1 GAME DIFFICULTY EASY CONTINUOUS
3 SKILL LEVELS
NONE RESPONSIVENESS GOOD

The city is under siege and only a heroic cop can save the day! Enter the SWAT (Enhanced) Special Weapons and Tactics team, a bunch of hardened cops with the greatest weaponry and armour that the city can provide.

You start the game as a lowly police officer aspiring to be a part of the elite ESWAT team. You need to prove your policing worth in order to qualify, and must first kill one of the crime bosses and his associated cronies to prove you're worth your stripes (and presumably, your armour).

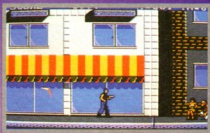
Once you're in possession of the necessary armament, it's

ESWAT

time to clean up the rest of the streets. There's five levels' worth of ESWAT excitement, and each level has four smaller scenes packed with felons to dispatch to their graves. It's a one-on-one shoot-out at the end of each level, and success means one less member of the crime boss cartel. Failure isn't even worth contemplating.

The number of felons to be 'brought to justice' is many and

varied. The common knife-wielding punk should present no problem to the standard police-issue pistol, but later on things get a bit more tough. Compared to its arcade



parent, this is duff stuff. The original coin-op features a variety of mean 'n' meaty weapons, but the ones in this version are wimpy by comparison. Even the graphics are feeble: a selection of gaudy backdrops and small, poorly animated sprites. When you get down to playing it, once again the game is a let-down. It's great fun at first, but there are only five levels and they're very easy to get through. ESWAT is a mediocrity.

JAZ

ESWAT BY SEGA PLAYERS
1 GAME DIFFICULTY EASY
CONTINUES 5
SKILL LEVELS 2
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD



A conference of all world leaders is being held in the city of Megapolis, and the outcome of this historic event could be world peace. Hurrab! However, a ruthless gang of terrorists is driving towards the city with a large nuclear bomb and they intend to blow up the whole place and then take over the world during the following confusion.

There's only one person who can save the day - and that's you! So grab the keys to your 850 horse power deathmobile, the Thundermaster II, arm its guns and missiles and take to the highway and destroy the villains before they complete

FIRE AND FORGET II

their foul mission!

The 3-D action is viewed from behind your car, and the object is to race down the road (or fly for a limited period of time if you manage to run over the special fuel canisters), catch up with the convoy leader and destroy it. The ultimate aim is to destroy the bomb-carrying convoy leader on the fifth level.

Dashing along the road blowing everything up is my idea of fun (I've got an Uzi

attached to my Escort). This game gives a real feeling of speed, and the excellent scrolling helps to add atmosphere to the challenge. With

so many factors to consider - collecting fuel pods, steering around the corners, and destroying anything silly enough to get in your way - the action remains fast and furious throughout.



The end-of-level baddies present a tough fight, and not an insurmountable one, and I find myself constantly distracted by the rather pretty parallax-scrolling clouds! This game isn't the greatest ever, but it's lots of fun and one of the best driving shoot 'em ups on the Sega.

RICH

FIRE AND FORGET II BY TITUS PLAYERS
1 GAME DIFFICULTY MEDIUM
CONTINUES 2
SKILL LEVELS 1
RESPONSIVENESS VERY FAST



PRESENTATION 63%
 Overall, a tad lacking - the presentation screens look boring and the game lacks a polished feel.

GRAPHICS 61%
 Urrghhh! Clashing colours a-go-go! Not very atmospheric or well-drawn for that matter.

SOUND 59%
 White noise sound effects and monotonous, tinkly tunes which don't suit the mega-tough, dangerous atmosphere of the game at all.

PLAYABILITY 73%
 Plenty of things to do at first, but tends to get a bit repetitive after a while.

LASTABILITY 62%
 Five quite large levels, but the easy pace of the game means that you'll crack them quickly.

OVERALL 68%
 A reasonably decent shoot 'em up, crying out for better graphics and sound.

PRESENTATION 81%
 A few in-game presentation screens, but no options. It does look inviting as soon as you switch on the Master System, though.

GRAPHICS 90%
 Very colourful, with excellent parallax scrolling and fast, smooth and convincing 3D update.

SOUND 88%
 Solid blasting effects and some racy tunes suit the action very well.

PLAYABILITY 87%
 The fast speed of the action is almost off-putting at first - but perseverance reaps rewards.

LASTABILITY 79%
 Five levels doesn't sound like much, but they're long and completing them requires much practice.

OVERALL 82%
 A graphically superb road racing shoot 'em up which offers plenty of speedy thrills and spills.



The God of Destruction, Emperor Bios, has created eight unpleasant gods to help him rule the universe. However, Bios' idea of "ruling" involves killing, torturing and raping the natural world!

This conversion of the arcade classic features the hero flying over horizontally-scrolling landscapes shooting anything that moves and even things that stay still. His weapons of destruction fire continuously, and the two buttons rotate his disher of doom left and right. Most creatures transform into cash bubbles once zapped, which can be collected and spent in the shops located

FORGOTTEN WORLDS

on each level to buy weapon upgrades, extra lives and health.

The realm of the Emperor Bios is a stunning set of futuristic levels, with backdrops of ravaged cityscapes, or underground bunkers. Slotted into this are some of the most eye-catching boss creatures seen on the Master System. The look of

the game makes it a rare treat for those who like sci-fi games. The bosses also represent the toughest part of the game.

Sporting graphics that bear a remarkable resemblance to the original arcade machine, *Forgotten Worlds* is an enjoyable blasting game with plenty of action. It's a pity the two-player option had to be omitted.

However, it has one bad flaw, it's too easy. Within a couple of sittings you're right into the game, and it doesn't take much practice to get to Bios and kick his head in. Had the gameplay been tougher, this would be highly recommended. As it stands, only those who are completely new to the shoot 'em up scene will get any challenge and long-term play out of it.

JAZ



FORGOTTEN WORLDS

BY SEGA
PLAYERS 1
GAME DIFFICULTY EASY
SKILL LEVELS 3
RESPONSIVENESS FAB

It's time for war again. Being a trainee air force pilot, you are right in the thick of it. You are scheduled for a full roster of missions, set behind enemy lines. Disruption of enemy strategy and communications is your prime objective.

Like the Sega coin-op of the same name, *G-LoC* is a 3-D shoot 'em up in which the action is viewed from the cockpit. Reel in amazement as tanks and planes zoom towards you, then grin in distasteful glee as you blow them apart with a flick of your machine gun trigger or missile release button. One point is scored for each plane or base destroyed. The points can

G-LoC

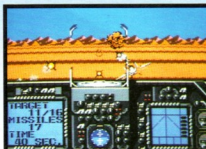
be translated into custom weapons, like homing missiles — bought between stages.

Each mission has a finite number of targets, and gameplay is simply a matter of targeting and letting rip. The scenery changes by a modest amount throughout. Sometimes you are over sea, with an enemy fleet crossing below. Other levels are set in narrow canyons with multiple ground targets, and often in the dark of night. Mostly it's

squadron after squadron of fighter who fly in formation from a head-on position.

However, sometimes an enemy fighter will position itself on your tail. At that point the view changes, and you have a few vital seconds to get out of its missile path.

Between stages you are given a breather while your status and performance are recorded. *G-LoC* is



based on an eye-catching Sega coin-op, that used a fully-rotational cabinet to attract players. The actual game wasn't that playable. It's a pleasant surprise to find the Master System is more fun to grapple with, even if it lacks all the fancy attendant hardware. This is not an essential flying game by any means, but it still beats Afterburner.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 76%

The detailed 'debriefings' and the weapons shop are two nice presentational features.

GRAPHICS 79%

The 3-D effect is just about convincing enough to persuade you you're flying. The planes are good.

SOUND 58%

The music here won't 'take your breath away' but Top Gunners are usually tone deaf anyway.

PLAYABILITY 83%

G-LoC benefits from no frills in the presentation, and being a solid and relentless arcade flyer.

LASTABILITY 82%

The missions are very much like each other, but the game is fun enough.

OVERALL 83%

On the margins of good and great, *G-LoC* flies as high as the Master System can.

G-LoC

BY SEGA
PLAYERS 1
GAME DIFFICULTY MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS 3
SKILL LEVELS 3
RESPONSIVENESS FAB

Take control of the elite Galaxy Force fleet, a body of space flying aces dedicated to the downfall of the Fourth Empire (presumably they were also responsible for getting rid of the first three!). In order to carry out this almost impossible task, four of the Empire's command bases have to be destroyed.

But each base has its own contingent of space fighters, each armed with deadly phasers and even more lethal photon torpedoes! Other hazards come in the form of terrifying natural hazards: pillars of flame, meteors, storms, tall trees and the like. Your Galaxy Force craft has

GALAXY FORCE



a shield that can absorb up to 16 hits, and after that it's curtains to your heroic efforts.

Galaxy Force had one of the most spectacular arcade cabinets yet seen. The cockpit of the craft spins around in up to 330 degrees, with extra up-and-down motion provided by the chair. But, the hydraulics were juddery and unrealistic. That's a problem that firmly grounded Master System owners won't

have to face!

Although the original coin-op was no great shakes (all graphics and no game), Galaxy Force has translated to the Sega well, with tweaked gameplay adding a new dimension of challenge and

addition to the original 3-D blast'em up concept. The end result is one of the most visually spectacular games available on the Sega. The 3-D graphics are quite superb, with great backgrounds and spectacular effects, which vary over the four different planets. Although the lack of levels might put some people off, they're all tough to crack, and the sheer visual splendour keeps you coming back time and time again.

RICH



GALAXY FORCE

BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS
4
RESPONSIVENESS
COSMIC

This arcade game was a sensation when it appeared in 1986, and this version has nearly all the features of the original machine. Each player (and there can be two at once) selects a character, either Valkyrie, Elf, Wizard, or Warrior. Then you're thrown in at the deep end — placed in a huge scrolling dungeon full of creepy creatures and malevolent monsters! All you have to do is make your way to the exit, not easy because there's a vast army of creatures out to knock down your health points.

The levels are littered with treasure chests, which give bonus points when collected.



Food can also be found which adds 100 points to your health, and there are also potions which give temporary benefits such as invulnerability and spells which damage or kill everything on-screen when unleashed.

There are a variety of monsters: Sorcerers with powers of invisibility; Demons who breathe fire; Lobbers who throw rocks; and Death, who cannot be harmed and has a deadly touch. All of these are spawned

continually until their generators are destroyed.

The graphics are brilliant and the sound fits the game well, but it's the playability that made me love the game so much (I was a big fan of the arcade machine). Atmosphere is an important element in any game, and



Gauntlet positively oozes the stuff. Turning a corner only to be confronted with a

GAUNTLET

BY
US GOLD
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
4
SKILL LEVELS
4
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



PRESENTATION 79%

A boring attract screen, but there's decent animated intros for each of the four level.

GRAPHICS 92%

Excellent, super-speedy 3D sprites and backgrounds. One of the visually outstanding Master System games.

SOUND 51%

Boring crash-bang effect and laughable music. Par for the course with the Sega sound chip.

PLAYABILITY 93%

Loads of immediate thrills and fourths on offer as you trash the Spirit Empire.

LASTABILITY 72%

Only four worlds to conquer, but they're quite challenging, and the game's absorbing.

OVERALL 85%

Put simply, Galaxy Force is a fine 3D shoot'em up for the Sega and should be checked out immediately.

PRESENTATION 83%

Nothing too flashy, but you'd rather be getting on with the game anyway.

GRAPHICS 86%

The screens are large and clear, and the sprites are well-defined. What more could you ask?

SOUND 81%

Acceptable and varied throughout the game.

PLAYABILITY 94%

The two-player mode adds a whole dimension of teamwork. There's no beating this for fun and frolics!

LASTABILITY 89%

With a hundred levels and a pass-word system you've got a very long-lasting game. Hours of gameplay guaranteed!

OVERALL 92%

A classic! It might be an ancient coin-op but it makes a superb Master System game, especially in two player mode.



Night descends on the happy kingdom. Whilst people sleep, and the guests in the Palace roister, evil plans are afoot. The Goblin King has his eye on the Princess. He swoops through her bedroom window, and carries her off to his fire-dungeon, six leagues across a desolate landscape. You are the brave knight, Sir Arthur, who is also the Princess' main squeeze. Don't surprisingly, Arthur is really mad at his girl being kidnapped and now he wants the Goblin King's head on a skewer, but to get to him he needs to tackle each of his Goblin domains as a platform level.

Ghouls 'n' Ghosts is a rea-

GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS

sonably faithful conversion of Capcom's arcade gem onto the Master System. The main selling points are the ghoulish graphics and Arthur's special weapons. Starting with a lance, chests reveal further arms, some of which are more effective than others at killing denizens. Axes, Holy Water and daggers all feature. As well as hand weapons, Arthur's suit of armour enables him to perform a variety of amazing magical effects. Some

of these are additions missing from the Megadrive version.

The levels are short, pacey arcade affairs, with a guardian at the end. The final boss is Loki, but reaching him is only half the



story — you need an amulet to defeat him that is found back on level one! The game is quite picturesque, with towns, fire caverns and crystal caves to negotiate.

The graphics just about capture the atmosphere of the coin-op, though they do look quite nice nowadays, and the music is rather poor. The highest scoring area of the game is the gameplay itself. A couple of tweaks, and some extra twists in the levels makes the game a refreshing and tense experience. Arcade fans should feel satisfied.

JAZ

GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
UNLIMITED
SKILL LEVELS
RESPONSIVENESS
OKAY



PRESENTATION 64%
Very basic presentation, just the title screen and a single skill level.

GRAPHICS 75%
Plain in many cases, and rough around the edges, but still recreating the essential arcade look.

SOUND 66%
The Master System does not make an accomplished effort of making Ghouls 'n' Ghosts sound gothic and gloomy.

PLAYABILITY 80%
Strong in the play stakes G 'n' G adds twists the original game's format.

LASTABILITY 76%
The challenge is medium, and should take a couple of weeks, but you may not rush back.

OVERALL 80%
For an ageing conversion of an ancient game you cannot really complain. It does the ghoulish business.

Golden Axe Warrior is a flick screen role-playing game, boosting over 200 screens of non-stop RPGing. As a brave hero and champion of the righteous, you decide to take on the hideous might of Death Adder's empire. But unlike this game's predecessor you don't carry out your task by beating up evil minions on a horizontally scrolling playfield.

Instead, Golden Axe Warrior is a fantasy exploration game, in which the deformed main sprite trundles round forests, dungeons and towns. Some of the buildings in Golden Axe Warrior turn out to be shops. Here our muscle-bound hero can

GOLDEN AXE WARRIOR

stock up on food (which replenishes his ever-decreasing energy). Also for sale are better weapons and armour. Some buildings are inns where our hero can spend the night here to

dank dungeons. Golden apples help restore your energy and there are even balloons to give you a better view of the world. Ships and canoes are also evident and are just the ticket for messing about on the river.

Don't be misled by the "Golden Axe" in the title of this game, because this has got

absolutely nothing in common with Golden Axe, the brilliant beat 'em up. Golden Axe Warrior is a tedious role playing game with very little action. It starts out with promise, but there are long periods where you have little to do, coupled with awkward combat sequences. Some role playing fans should try other titles, arcade fans should steer well clear.

JAZ



fully replenish his energy bar. The problem is, everything costs money.

On your quest to collect the jewels and do in Death Adder, you find plenty of items to stick in your backpack. Swords and axes are your weapons, whilst torches light up this dark and



GOLDEN AXE WARRIOR
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS
RESPONSIVENESS
FAIR

PRESENTATION 59%
Pretty good. There are plenty of character portraits and a fairly good intro.

GRAPHICS 39%
Apart from the close-ups, the graphics are awful, with blocky sprites and monotonous backgrounds.

SOUND 40%
Dreadful, warbling tunes massacre any smidgen of atmosphere.

PLAYABILITY 35%
The adventuring aspect is uninspiring, the gameplay tedious in the extreme.

LASTABILITY 43%
It's a huge game, but even the most die-hard role playing fans could get bored long before the end.

OVERALL 36%
Don't be fooled. This is no sequel to Golden Axe, just an uninspiring and uninteresting role playing game.

MASTER SYSTEM REVIEW

Driving is a particular kind of sport, for a particular type of person. Haring around bendy tracks at 100+ mph isn't the sort of pastime enjoyed by your average Master System owner, you might think. Indeed, that may explain the scarcity of motorbike games on the machine apart from this one and that very ancient arcade conversion, Hang-On.

GP Rider is based on a world champion circuit, where sixteen riders race for an overall prize based on results from a multitude of international tracks. Apart from the course action, there is an element of bike customising. First, players



must choose between automatic and gear-based transmission. The former is the best for a beginner to pick, basically as they can concentrate on steering rather than shifting up and down. However, it's worth switching to the manual gearbox once you've got the hang of things, simply because you can accelerate faster.

Tyres and engines may also be changed to reflect the course

characteristics and the weather at the time of each race. The game is viewed from a 3-D position behind the rider. If two people want to race together, the screen splits horizontally, with two separate racing windows.



Despite all this, GP Rider is a real loser. The game bears little resemblance to real racing. The tracks are ridiculously twisty, and the bikes handle like their on ice. Even so, the game is so easy, due to poor computer racers, that victory is hollow. The look of the game is also depressing: fuzzy sprites, awful animation and empty tracks. Even the split screen fails to impress. Tedious and tragic.

JAZ

GP RIDER
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
VERY EASY
CONTINUES

N/A
SKILL LEVELS
N/A
RESPONSIVENESS
AWFUL



Starring James "Buster" Douglas, the former World Champion, this is a one or two-player game with the aim being to knock seven bells out of the opponent.

In one-player mode, Buster fights five boxers, each successively tougher. The pugilists have four statistics: Power, which determines the strength of punch; Recovery, which shows the speed of damage reduction between rounds; Footwork, the quickness of the boxer's movement; and Super Punch, the number of mega-blows available. Victory comes through a knockout, a technical knockout, or a Judge's Decision,



in other words on points. Playing through to the end is an arduous task, as fifteen rounds can be a long time.

Each round is scored at the end, with the boxers getting up to 10 points each. This is judged by the number and severity of blows landed, and a running total is displayed. This is often crucial, because if there's no deciding knockout the match is won by Judge's Decision. So

make sure you land as many blows as possible, and keep your guard up!

This is almost a very good game. The graphics are excellent, with brilliantly drawn and animated boxers, and the action is fast and furious. But unfortunately there are only five different boxers to challenge you, and it doesn't take very



long to beat them all. With two players it's a similar story, this time the fun is marred because you always fight with the same boxers, and one has an advantage over the other. As a consequence, Heavyweight Championship Boxing is great fun for an hour or two, but it doesn't take long before the game becomes predictable and dull.

JAZ

HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES

NONE
SKILL LEVELS
2
RESPONSIVENESS
QUICK



PRESENTATION 87%
Loads of cut screens, plus a decent array of options to play with.

GRAPHICS 32%
All the intermission screens are great, but the game graphics are very dull and unimpressive.

SOUND 24%
Something purporting to be an engine is being strangled in the background. It's hideous.

PLAYABILITY 39%
Slow, uncontrollable, jerky, dull, samey and insipid all spring to mind.

LASTABILITY 33%
It's incredibly easy to win GP Rider, and the game is good enough for two players to ever enjoy.

OVERALL 34%
Absolute twaddle. Even the most ardent Master System Hell's Angel should resist the temptation to buy this.

PRESENTATION 74%
Digitised pictures of "Buster" Douglas help to provide the sorely-needed atmosphere.

GRAPHICS 85%
Excellent animation, with the pugilists reacting and fighting in a realistic fashion.

SOUND 59%
The sounds are pretty basic, with no music and a few spot effects.

PLAYABILITY 73%
Easy to get into and fun two-player mode. It's not especially thrilling, though, as it's hitting a really feel like you're hitting anyone.

LASTABILITY 25%
But with next to no options and only five boxers, this doesn't hold your interest for any length of time.

OVERALL 49%
A potentially brilliant boxing game ruined by the lack of long-term appeal and challenge.



Dr Elvin Atomber is the ultimate computer hacker gone wrong. He's elevated from changing the bill on his credit card to seizing control of all the world's super-computers. Now he is ransoming the world against nuclear oblivion, a threat he aims to carry out in twelve hours.

The only hope for salvation is agent 4125, who has discovered a way to infiltrate Atomber's 32 room bunker. He must assemble the code that allows him into the control room. But the bunker is patrolled by the mad scientist's robot guards. They don't have the power to kill agent 4125,



but being stunned by them knocks ten minutes off the precious remaining time.

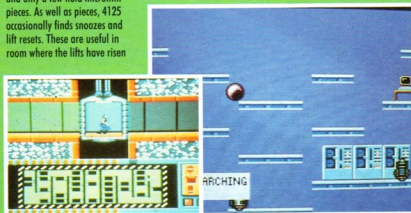
The microfilm code has been shredded into 32 parts and hidden in furniture in each of the rooms. So you've got to visit each of the platform rooms, and search all the furniture. Searching takes a few seconds, and only a few hold microfilm pieces. As well as pieces, 4125 occasionally finds snoozes and lift rests. These are useful in room where the lifts have risen

out of a reach, and a snooze disables all robots for a short time.

A couple of rooms feature memory games, where a board of squares flash in sequence. Remembering sequences has its own reward. Impossible Mission is a classic piece of platforming adventuring. The graphics are

crisp as Weetabix, with 4125's fabulous somersaulting animation. The tactics of the robots are varied, and some of the rooms require a lot of working out and a fair bit of dexterity. Another such wonderful amalgam of style and playability you will not find on your Master System.

JAZ



IMPOSSIBLE MISSION
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
GREAT

PRESENTATION **83%**
No options, but the atmosphere of the game is incredible. The time-limit is the perfect way of building tension.

GRAPHICS **91%**
Lovely architecture, darling furniture and the main sprite is more supple than James Bond.

SOUND **89%**
Real thriller type music, an incredible in-game effects. You may not believe your ears.

PLAYABILITY **97%**
Almost perfect in the play states. Despite saying the same, Impossible Mission is full of surprises and twists.

LASTABILITY **92%**
The task of finding Atomber is moderately hard, and every step of the way is fun.

OVERALL **93%**
Stands head and shoulders above every other Master System platform game. Class in a cart.

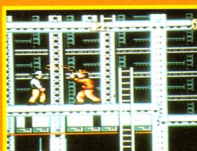
Indy's back! And this time he's brought his dad. Well, actually his dad is implicated by being trapped in the sinister castle of Grunwald. That's just one of the destinations Indy is bound to stop off at in this Master System game of his final celluloid outing - Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade.

It's a straightforward platform game affair. Indy can run left and right, climb ladders, fall a reasonable distance without harm and use his famous brown leather whip (after he finds it). The quest is to find the Holy Grail, a mythical object that allegedly grants immortality to those who drink from it.



The locations of the game match up to those of the film, even if it seems Indy is frequently doing things that bear no relation to the film. The first level, The Cross of Coronado is a good example. This relates to the episode when young Indy searches a deserted mine for the jewelled treasure. In reality, this level plays just like every other,

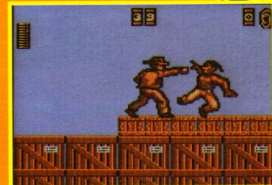
with hazards like deadly acid pools, falling stalactites and gun-toting hoodlums. Later on Indy runs along a circus train, takes on the Nazi's in castle Grunwald



and attempts the Grail Quest. Indy looks very much like the Megarive game, but that's a credit to the Master System. The difficulty level is set high, and each of the levels is packed with tricky sections that are a lot of fun to work out. It's fast, attractive and one of the best platform games on the Master System.

JAZ

INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE
BY
US GOLD
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
TOUGH
CONTINUES
2
SKILL LEVELS
2
RESPONSIVENESS
EXCELLENT



PRESENTATION **76%**
Just a single skill level, but an attempt has been made to catch the atmosphere of the movie.

GRAPHICS **94%**
Very crisp sprites, and a surprising variety of backdrops throughout the game.

SOUND **81%**
The theme is there, it's recognisable, and it's not that severe on the eardrums.

PLAYABILITY **85%**
Platform action very much in the standard mode, but still fun and well structured.

LASTABILITY **82%**
Indy's really tough, so a lot of game hours lie between you and the Holy Grail.

OVERALL **85%**
All in all, a well rounded platformer. Looks good, plays well and offers a decent lasting challenge.

Those men built like brick 'out'-houses return in an American Football simulation licensed after the legendary Quarterback Joe Montana. No surprises as far as the rules of American Football are concerned — this game sticks to them quite closely.

Two teams are lined up on a 100 yard field. The object is to 'touchdown' at the extreme end of the field, but the ball can only be moved by recognised passing, running or kicking moves. Each team has four attempts to move the ball 10 yards or more, called a 'down'. If they fail possession goes to the other team. Teams take turn



at offensive and defensive plays. Apart from failing to shift the ball, the defensive team can intercept a pass, and they gain possession if the ball doesn't hit the ground.

Joe Montana plays in two phases. The play choosing is the strategic part of the game.

When a play begins the player takes control of the Quarterback, and can also play one other position.

This Master System version of Joe Montana has a wealth of other presentational features. There are 28 teams to choose, a two-player option, and each

game interval allows players to see a detailed list of stats.

It's a shame that the game's real weakness is in the graphics and gameplay. The computer opponent is predictable and easy to beat, the lack of plays limits choice, and the game doesn't have any on-screen excitement. This is not a sport that the Master System handles well.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 77%
There's loads of stats, tons of teams, but not much of the excitement of the real sport.

GRAPHICS 64%
The area where Joe M's most lets itself down. The puny sprites don't convey the beefiness of the players.

SOUND 69%
Warbling Master System music at the intermission, but no real game effects.

PLAYABILITY 66%
Not many plays, and an uninspiring computer opponent drag Joe Montana down.

LASTABILITY 68%
The two-player option guarantees some real entertainment, but the game still looks poor.

OVERALL 65%
Poor Joe. This footy game is lacklustre, just the sort of thing you don't expect from this glitzy sport.

JOE MONTANA FOOTBALL
BY SEGA
PLAYERS 1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY EASY
CONTINUOUS N/A
SKILL LEVELS 3
RESPONSIVENESS FLUID



You make think Danan is an Irish songstress, who slipped into decline after winning the Eurovision song contest, but he is actually a space traveller who's craft unfortunately had a disagreement with a large planet.

Danan survived and was raised by an elderly, but kindly native called Jimbo. Years later, Danan returns to his home one day to find Jimbo badly duffed up. It seems some baddies have taken offence to him. Danan sets off to find the holy man, who advises him he will need to locate three objects to find Gilbas, the demon.

The planet is a bit of a



jungle place, and much time is spent tramping rain forests and caves in the arcade adventure. Most of the time, Danan is surrounded by Gilbas' forces, which he destroys with his sword.

these comes in animal form, and give Danan superb powers — like smart bomb, extra lives, energy regain and the power to fly. Danan sometimes has to travel underwater, and finding oxygen prolongs his time in the water.

Danan looks very much like a game

called Rastan, where the action was four-way scrolling back and slash. The gameplay is devoted to physical violence than puzzle-solving, and it's unfortunate that Danan finds it all to easy to kill most of his foes. You'll be romping through most of these jungle levels early on. Average is the word that best describes Jungle Fighter.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 81%
No skill settings or continues, but this is compensated for by nice arcade-style presentation.

GRAPHICS 72%
Nicely detailed jungle scapes, but the adversaries are the epitome of Sprite Mediocrity.

SOUND 59%
Poor, even by the low standards of the Master System sound chip. The music doesn't match the mood.

PLAYABILITY 78%
Rastan-type action, which is initially absorbing. Exploring the early levels is fun.

LASTABILITY 62%
Progress into the game is made so rapidly that it takes no time to get to the end. Very short-term appeal.

OVERALL 72%
A mediocre game that is principally let down by its lack of original features or climactic moments.



Occasionally, people are found who are happy to converse, and may shed some light on the mystery of the three required objects.

In the deeper dungeons are tokens which make the quest a lighter burden. Most of



JUNGLE FIGHTER
BY SEGA
PLAYERS
GAME DIFFICULTY MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS NONE
SKILL LEVELS
RESPONSIVENESS FINE



It's the arcade puzzle game second only to Tetris in the best-puzzle-game-ever stakes. The aim of Klax is simply to klax. As you'll see from the screenshots the game is set on a 3D ramp. Different coloured tiles roll along the ramp, and it's your job to collect these tiles and arrange them in the bin below the ramp.

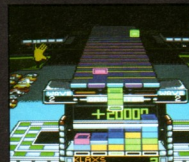
A klax is a just three (or more) tiles of the same colour placed in a straight line. This straight line can be either horizontal, vertical or diagonal. Once a klax has been created, the tiles vanish, enabling you to fill up the bin with even more tiles in pursuit of even more Klaxes.

The game itself is divided

KLAX

up into 99 waves, and each wave has a different objective. For example, on wave one, you just have to complete three klaxes before moving onto wave

two. Later on things get more difficult. For example, you may have to survive a tide of 100 tiles, or wind up 10,000 points to progress.



two. Later on things get more difficult. For example, you may have to survive a tide of 100 tiles, or wind up 10,000 points to progress.

When tiles disappear after completing a klax, the tiles on top fall down. If these should



triple the score for the klax, and so on. I like a good puzzle game, and the original version of Klax is one of the best. This Master System translation is almost arcade perfect. The graphics are excellent, with the backdrops of

the coin-op perfectly reproduced. But it's the playability that's all important and Master System Klax scores very highly. The controls are super-responsive and every arcade Klax tactic can be used in this version too!

JAZ

KLAX
BY
TENGEN PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

Randy rats have chosen Krusty's fun house to transform into a rat-ridden maternity clinic with baby rats dropping out faster than you can say Rat-O-Kill! The place is crawling with the little verminants and it's up to you, as Krusty, to work your way through the 50 plus rooms, rounding up all the rats and guiding them to their doom.

By strategically placing blocks, repairing broken pipes and wasting the ill-assorted bunch of boddies, the object is to pave the way for a smooth passage to the great rat-house in the sky. The cantankerous clown is constantly bombarded

Krusty's super fun house

by the bullets fired by a variety of weird and wonderful enemies. He doesn't die for the first few hits but he gradually gets worn down.

To combat the onslaught of the vindictive scum, Krusty is able to accumulate an arsenal comprising rock-hard cannonballs or custard pies, found in purple boxes that litter his house. As well as putting the meenies out of action, nothing

up points in the process, he also uses the balls to bash down the walls that block hidden passages.

Looking at this wickedly fun puzzle-platform romp you could



swear it was the Megadrive version. This is an absolutely stonking conversion with excellent animation on the main Krusty sprite. The way the rats are wasted in a variety of sick but hilarious ways is also wonderful. It's really good fun and completely addictive, if very frustrating at times. There's often an ultra-tough time limit or route that seems impossible to bridge. But if you possess a Master System and a keen brain, Krusty's Fun House is an essential purchase.

RECH

KRUSTY'S FUN HOUSE
BY
ACCLAIM PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



PRESENTATION 91%

A nice introduction from the great man himself and attractive title screen.

GRAPHICS 93%

Absolutely superb! Some of the best graphics the ever seen on the Master System.

SOUND 84%

The same rousing tunes as the Megadrive version and good sound effects.

PLAYABILITY 92%

Puzzles galore of all shapes and sizes all with a good level of challenge. Fast, fun and utterly addictive.

LASTABILITY 91%

Dozens of tasking levels which get tougher as the game goes on. The password system's a great bonus.

OVERALL 91%

An absolutely topper puzzle game ties your brain up in knots but still drags you back for more.

Every thirteen years, a place known as Ghost City appears. This ghostly town is inhabited by all manner of evil and grotesque creatures who take great pleasure in committing any number of vile and horrifying acts on the populace of nearby towns. Worst of all however, is the tendency of these monsters to kidnap a child, steal its soul and then sacrifice it.

This is where you come in. You are a good ghost, committed to being nice, and you have decided to save the kidnapped child with the aid of your laser rifle. As the child's soul has already been stolen she cannot act of her own accord and needs

LASER GHOST



you to direct her out of Ghost Manor to Ghost Headquarters, whilst blasting all the evil ghosts that bar your way.

There are two modes of play open to would-be Laser Ghosts: one-player where the joystick is used to control the gun sights, trigger and special weapon, and simultaneous two-player in which the light phaser controls the gun sights and trigger, and the joystick controls the special weapon.

A stunning-looking, super-sounding ground-breaking game this isn't. But it's a good laugh, and that's what's important.

The roving cursor seems a bit of a pain at first, but once you get

used to it the game soon becomes addictive and you start to enjoy yourself. There are loads of baddies to shoot, and I like the idea that you've got to keep one eye on the girl, which adds a new dimension to the game and really keeps you on your toes. If you're looking for a fun light phaser game, or are just after a shoot 'em up that's a bit different, check this out.

JAZ



LASER GHOST
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVEL
1
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

PRESENTATION 68%
No options, but plenty of intermission screens to keep you interested.

GRAPHICS 64%
Okay sprites with average animation. Nothing to get all excited about.

SOUND 48%
Screechy tunes and few effects. Turn the sound off before plunging in the game.

PLAYABILITY 77%
The control system takes a bit of getting used to, but after that it's great fun.

LASTABILITY 72%
Not all that difficult, but there's plenty of levels and lots of secret rooms and bonuses.

OVERALL 76%
A neat arcade conversion which offers plenty of blasting fun and frolics. It's one of the best Light Phaser titles so if you own such a gadget it's well worth buying.

The Lemmings have invaded just about every games system, the Master System included. Sega have lovingly recreated all the 100 levels of their original wacky world with all its attendant dangers. On each level a set number of Lemmings fall from an entrance. There is an exit at some other place within the level.

Each level of Lemmings has a solution based on the Lemmings' skills. Some are obvious, some are fiendishly complex. Most of the time the Lemmings are safe but unable to reach their goal. However, as often occurs, some hazard presents itself that threatens to

massacre every last Lemming unless you take immediate action. To reach this goal you have to assign jobs to the Lemmings enabling them to overcome the hazards that thwart them. Cliffs, acid baths, fire, and walls stand between the green ones and their goal.

Lemmings may become diggers, climbers, floaters or even walking bombs! With these skills, a way round the apparently insurmountable obstacles reveals itself. Master

System Lemmings is one-player only, omitting the simultaneous two-player action of the 16-bit versions.

Master System Lemmings is mightily impressive. What was originally seen as, only for the power of 16-bit machines, has exploded onto this 8-bit system, lock, stock and barrel! The graphics, sound and gameplay are as near to the original as dammit, leaving you

gasping at the achievement. Someone has found a way to get tons of sprites onto the Master System at one time, and all of them fully animated. Despite the brilliant graphics and funky tunes, it's the gameplay I'm most satisfied with. The amazing playability of Lemmings is intact here.

RICH

LEMMINGS



PRESENTATION 90%
The password system, and the presentational humour of Lemmings remains intact.

GRAPHICS 95%
Remarkable animated sprite achievements. Crisp, colourful and clear backdrops.

SOUND 94%
Brilliant tunes — and wads of them. All of them very close to the original. Add speech to that.

PLAYABILITY 94%
Fiendishly addictive, and highly ingenious, nothing can save you from the spell of Lemmings.

LASTABILITY 91%
100 contrasting levels, tons of strategies, and steadily increasing difficulty. A game to last.

OVERALL 96%
A fantastic and laudable conversion. With all those levels and a two player mode it offers incredible value for money, and demands instant purchase.

LEMMINGS
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS
4
RESPONSIVENESS
EXCELLENT





Life's tough when you're a prisoner of war, unless of course you find a secret mega-powerful machine gun stashed in your cell! Once in possession of this powerful weapon, it's simplicity itself to shoot your way out of prison and commandeer a jeep to get you home.

This rather improbable set of circumstances are thrust upon you in Sega's conversion of their arcade blaster, *Line of Fire*. The Master System conversion of *Line of Fire* differs somewhat from the coin-op. Whereas the arcade machine was a 3-D Operation Wolf-style first-person perspective machine gun game, this version is an up the

LINE OF FIRE

screen blaster! Sega obviously felt that their 8-bit system wasn't up to the high-speed sprite scrolling. However, the levels, enemies and guardians themselves follow the coin-op quite closely.

Your opponents arrive in many and varied forms. There are standard troops who shoot at you with their rifles, other jeeps armed in a similar fashion to yourself, twin tanks, heli-

copter gunships, dive-bombers, frogmen and even fully-armed battleships! The more powerful vehicles require multiple hits, and return fire constantly. Your hero is surprisingly robust, and can take many hits. Finding first-aid kits prolongs the game even further.

Dynamite Duke shows that the Master System can handle 3-D games, so why waste the licence on turning the game into a poor

example of a vertically scrolling shoot 'em up? On the plus side, the maps of the levels do follow the coin-op quite closely, although the sprites are so small and badly drawn that it's difficult to tell. The game is also very slow and far too easy. The action gets tricky at one point in level two but otherwise any semblance of challenge is missing. Not even fans of the coin-op will enjoy this.

JAZ

LINE OF FIRE
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
OKAY



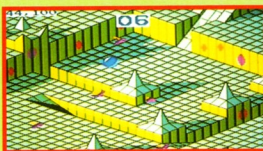
This isometric 3-D game puts you in control of what must be the toughest marble of all time, and it's your job to guide the orb-like item around the many hazards that make up the *Marble Madness* course. Your objective is simply to reach the end of the stage before your time limit expires. There are six levels of arcade action in *Marble Madness*, packed with strange meenies, cunning traps and hazardous landscapes.

Marble Madness must have one of the strangest assortment of baddies to be found in a video game. Look out for evil black marbles, pools of living acid, hammers and suction-cap

MARBLE MADNESS

creatures that eat you whole. Most of these creatures should be avoided at all costs or you die. Some creatures, like the black marbles can ricochet off the edge of the landscape and into oblivion.

Graphically this is as close to the arcade original as you could hope. Sadly the gameplay doesn't quite live up to the same standards. The control method is rather fiddly and lacks the 'feel'

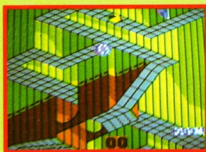


that made the coin-op original and other console conversions such a joy to play. The game also lacks challenge — it's just too easy to go all the way through the game. I still went back

to it to try and notch up near perfect scores, but didn't enjoy it as much as I had done with other versions. *Marble Madness* fiends are bound to enjoy what's on offer, but at the end of the day you're left feeling that just a little bit more polishing in the gameplay department would have resulted in this being a perfect conversion, rather than just a good one.

JAZ

MARBLE MADNESS
BY
VIRGIN
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
POOR



PRESENTATION 74%

Lots of options to tweak, including a choice of control method.

GRAPHICS 87%

The graphics are simple, but they're very close to the coin-op indeed. The movement is really smooth, too.

SOUND 64%

A range of tunes play throughout varying from quite good to downright awful.

PLAYABILITY 71%

It has all the elements of the arcade machine, but the control method is not accurate enough.

LASTABILITY 61%

There are only six levels and because the game's so easy, they don't take long to conquer.

OVERALL 70%

A graphically superb game, *Marble Madness* is let down a lack of challenge and a poor control method.

The setting is nineteenth century London, a time of Hackney carriages and pea-souper fogs. It is also a time when Jack The Ripper walks the Earth. Every morning a new corpse is discovered, mutilated in increasingly bizarre and sickening ways, with particularly bloody examples emerging after every full moon. All this is particularly hard on renowned psychic investigator, Ferdinand Social, who has so far come no closer to solving the crimes than to the police.

Now Ferdinand's task is to seek out Jack the Ripper before he strikes again, but what Jack hints at reveals something far

MASTER OF DARKNESS
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
↓
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS
↓
RESPONSIVENESS
GROOVY

MASTER OF DARKNESS



more sinister – the existence of a deadly cabal which could mean the end of civilisation as we know it!

Ferdinand moves through a series of platform scrolling levels, uncovering secrets on the Ouija board as he goes. Although the game idea is familiar and well-worn, the execution is brilliant and the atmosphere tremendous.

Like every good evil mastermind, the self-styled and mys-

terious Master Of Darkness has concealed bonuses along the way. The power-ups range from weapons and ammo, through to points spheres. Extra energy is also available to heal your injured detective, plus extra lives to improve your chances against the vile horrors. The presentation is superb with fantastic graphics. There are loads of little touches

all over the place such as torn posters fluttering in the breeze, and some recognisable landmarks in the parallax backgrounds! The sound is excellent too, with the tunes being particularly impressive. The controls are responsive and the action comes thick and fast. When you're not busy fending off ghouls and zombies there's a tricky platform arrangement to negotiate. Chillingly good!
RICH



PRESENTATION 92%
Smart intros and intermissions - but no options.

GRAPHICS 90%
Detailed sprites and backgrounds, good animation and great use of colour.

SOUND 90%
Amazing! Fabbola spooky tunes and high quality sinister sound effects.

PLAYABILITY 93%
Smooth, fast and responsive. Great fun to play.

LASTABILITY 91%
It gets very tough after a couple of levels. Infinite continues take some challenge out of it, but even once you've beaten it, it's likely you'll go back to it.

OVERALL 92%
Although not exactly tops in originality, Master of Darkness is a superb title you'd be a fool to miss. So don't!

Terrorists have kidnapped former president Ronald Reagan, and are threatening to kill him if all America's nuclear missile codes aren't handed over to them. Obviously, the government aren't going to waste any of their proper soldiers on the inevitable rescue bid, and so they hire you, a top mercenary, to do the deed.

This means you wander up the screen in the style of the old game Commando and shoot everything. This includes enemy soldiers, enemy tanks, enemy jeeps and even enemy trees! Mercs is an arcade extravaganza, with no place for the subtler forms of warfare. Just push

MERCS

onward and blitz the enemy with what you've got.

A fair smattering of collectables are yours for the taking, should you find them, and these should doubtless aid you in your battle against a huge piece of war machinery at the end of each level, such as fighter planes, battleships, helicopter gunships and a giant bomber.

Most of the levels are pretty straightforward, but sometimes there is a choice of which direction to take. Some paths

may conceal a cache of useful supplies, whilst others hide unusually stiff opposition.

This conversion of Mercs is well decent, with some of the smoothest scrolling I've seen on the Master System. The action is tough and addictive, with plenty of things to blow up and enough enemies to make life difficult and death rather easier! The

extra weapons are quite satisfying in their destructive power, and the game has a good overall buzz. The graphics and sound aren't outstanding, but if it's the gameplay where this is strongest, and there's certainly plenty here to keep a Master System blastoholic happy for quite some time.
RICH

PRESENTATION 59%
Two or three still screens within the game, and a single option to tweak.

GRAPHICS 74%
Pretty blocky, but there's plenty of variation and colour in the game.

SOUND 51%
A rather sad attempt at two of the coin-op's tunes, along with mundane effects.

PLAYABILITY 84%
Plenty of blasting action that's very addictive to begin with. Shame the arcade game's two player option isn't present, though.

LASTABILITY 80%
Mercs is a toughie, meaning that there's quite a lot of play to be had from this one.

OVERALL 81%
A good conversion of an outstanding coin-op that should appeal to anyone after a decent shoot 'em up.

MERCS
BY
CAPCOM
PLAYERS
↓
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
↓
RESPONSIVENESS
OKAY





On their way to McDonalds, Mick and his best pal Mack happen across a comic which tells the tale of 'The Global Gladiators', an ozone-friendly, superhero duo. Much impressed by the Gladiators' green activities Mick and Mack long to be like their heroes. Suddenly, Ronald McDonald appears behind them promising them just such an opportunity!

As Mick or Mack it is now your job to put an end to world pollution. The lads do battle through four different locations of our polluted world, using their slime guns to wash away the result of one crisp packet too many in this platform bonanza.

MICK AND MACK: GLOBAL GLADIATORS
BY
VIRGIN PLAYERS
ONE
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
↓
RESPONSIVENESS
UNSURE

MICK AND MACK GLOBAL GLADIATORS



While you're running and jumping and shooting around, watch out for bonus items such as extra lives and golden arch symbols which provide big points and, should you collect enough, earn you entry to the next level.

There is a strong element of humour to the game, with the large gloopy sprites, and comical expressions when either of the players comes a cropper. Most of the polluting characters

are zany ideas for enemies. Though the look of the game changes after each three zones, the gameplay

stays much the same. Basically, this is exactly the same as the Megadrive version, except that it's a lot tougher. This is fine by me, as the 16-bit game was about as difficult to complete as putting on a hat. However, Global Gladiators is still

lacking. First of all, the gameplay remains identical though with only the graphics and meenies changing, and this does promote boredom very quickly. The controls are also a pain too. Whereas the Megadrive version's controls had absolute precision, the Master System version is perhaps over-responsive which does lead to many an annoying death.

RICH



PRESENTATION **86%**

A mildly entertaining attract sequence followed by a series of in-game demos.

GRAPHICS **94%**

Large, skillfully drawn and smoothly animated sprites act out their roles against the bold scenery.

SOUND **91%**

The game's funky music lives up to the standard set by the graphics.

PLAYABILITY **74%**

It's challenging and quite fast paced, although the movement of Mick and Mack is terribly floaty and frustrating.

LASTABILITY **78%**

The levels are quite large and the challenge level is consistently quite high.

OVERALL **77%**

Mick and Mack looks impressive but comes a cropper on the rotting banana skin that is the gameplay.

Mizrabel the evil witch was having a particularly bad day, and so decided to kidnap Minnie Mouse, using her evil magic to spirit her away to the Castle of Illusion. That's where she is now, and Mickey wants you to help him rescue her!

That's where the problems really start. When Mickey arrives at the Castle of Illusion, he finds out that to stand any chance of doing away with the evil Mizrabel, he has to infiltrate seven huge platform-infested scrolling levels. At the end of each is a Master of Illusion. Each guards a rainbow jewel, and when Mickey has them all he can use the power to overthrow

MICKEY MOUSE: CASTLE OF ILLUSION
BY
SEGA PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS
3
SKILL LEVELS
↓
RESPONSIVENESS
SUPER

MICKY MOUSE IN Castle of Illusion



Mizrabel in a final, epic confrontation!

On the way to rescuing Minnie, there's plenty of devious platform traps and nasty monsters waiting for the plucky animated hero, but he can see off most bad guys by jumping then landing on them, but-first! As with a lot of games of this type, there are also plenty of hidden bonuses to be discovered. When a level is worked through, the tempo changes with the arrival

of some spectacular bosses. A tornado tree, a devious bar of chocolate and a malevolent clock all have very distinctive attack patterns.

The action is set in spooky forests and sinister toyworlds, a sweet factory and an incredible animated clock tower, and to go along with all these strange scenes are some absolutely stunning graphics! The Mickey Mouse



sprite is beautifully animated and looks just like he's been lifted straight out of a cartoon! To match the sensational graphics, an excellent sugary soundtrack matches the mood of each of the levels. And of course, every minute playing it is a joy. This is an incredibly polished and creditable Disney license for the Master System.

RICH

PRESENTATION **90%**

Disney-esque intro screens and a nice cartoon-like feel in the game itself.

GRAPHICS **94%**

Mickey is a treat to watch, and he's accompanied by brilliant enemy sprites and backdrops.

SOUND **87%**

Loads of those cutesy tinkling tunes that the Master System does so well!

PLAYABILITY **90%**

Mega-addictive platform gameplay makes Mickey Mouse a real winner!

LASTABILITY **88%**

Loads of levels to conquer — and plenty of secret rooms and bonuses to keep you coming back for more.

OVERALL **89%**

In spite of its age, this is still one of the best Master System platform games around.



The power of the written word should never be underestimated, one glaring example of this axiom is the fate Mickey Mouse finds himself in. While reading an enchanted book, he gradually begins to fall asleep. After a drowsy slumber he awakes with a start to find himself far from home — in the Land of Illusion! Escape from the land involves facing the evil phantom who has it in his grip. He has seized a crystal which holds the key to controlling this alternate world.

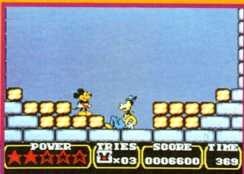
This second adventure for Mickey on Master System follows much the same course as

MICKY MOUSE IN LAND OF ILLUSION
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
SKILL

MICKY MOUSE IN LAND OF ILLUSION



the first, Castle of Illusion. A series of scrolling levels, Mickey picking up objects and bottom-bouncing cute enemies. But this adventure is even more involved and atmospheric than the World of Illusion. Loads of different levels depict forests, fire dungeons, haunted houses, rose gardens and palaces.



Mickey opens up the paths on a large map by completing the levels, and can return to areas. Moving back and forward to

solve puzzles is an essential part of the game.

Along the way, Mickey

bumps into loads of his cartoon pals, all depicted in wonderful graphic style. In fact, the whole game is graphic sweetness and

light. The colours are wonderful, and the animation is superb. The game is also considerably tougher and better planned than Castle of Illusion. There's a whole new level of interaction by collecting objects on conversing with character you meet. This has to be the premier platform/exploration game for the system.

JAZ

PRESENTATION 87%
Brilliant cut screen sequences before and during the game compensates for lack of options.

GRAPHICS 94%
As near to perfect as you could want. The spirit of Disney is captured by the sprites and backgrounds.

SOUND 77%
The tunes are very tinkly and cutesy, and not particularly attractive, but well done just the same.

PLAYABILITY 92%
Extremely easy to get into, the initial levels tutor you in the skills Mickey is capable of.

LASTABILITY 91%
The later levels are real toughies, and the interest level remains high due to variety.

OVERALL 92%
Another fabulous platform game for the Master System. Mickey fans cannot get it any better than this.

Mr Big has kidnapped all of the kids and is ready to subject them to the horrors of drugs! Our hero Michael Jackson is a bit miffed at this to say the least, and pausing only to jump into his Smooth Criminal designer gear, decides to risk five levels of Mr Big's domain in an effort to rescue the kids and bring Mr Big to justice. Hoary!

There's four rounds to each level and in each, Michael has to run around the platform environment dishing out magical death to any crony that decides to cross his path. Our hero must search the level, opening doors and moving



scenery to find and rescue the kids. When all the kids have been safely rescued, Mr Big appears and sends some of his most terrifying henchmen to try and dispatch Michael.

When they're safely out of the way, it's on to the next round with yet more kids to rescue. Each level has its own Michael soundtrack, including the funky Smooth Criminal, Beat It and Bad.

It's not just his patrifery voice that's lethal. In this game,

Jackson has a particularly nasty lise in magic that can be used to dispose of any henchmen that seek to put an end to Michael's rescue attempts. There's also a moonwalking move, but you're going to have to work out how to do that for yourself!

We all know that Michael has a soft spot for the kids, but

Moonwalker the movie was a bit much. No one knew what the hell was going on for the most part. However, the game is a much more straightforward platform affair, and the better for it. The action isn't original, but it is fairly relentless. Old, but still worth a look.

JAZ

MOONWALKER
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
FAST
CONTINUES
5
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
FLUID



PRESENTATION 84%
Nice intro screens between levels, but little else.

GRAPHICS 76%
Life-like Jackson sprite who even does lots of Jackson-like moves, but there's not much variety in the enemy gangster sprites.

SOUND 82%
Surprisingly accurate Sega renditions of famous Michael Jackson hits, but accompanied by smashing effects.

PLAYABILITY 75%
The gameplay is very repetitive, but the novelty of playing Michael Jackson takes a while to wear off.

LASTABILITY 67%
The game doesn't really stand up to concerted playing and you'll probably finish it within a couple of weeks.

OVERALL 71%
An accomplished Jackson licence begging for a more varied game design.



As a dragon ninja, Ryu Hayabusa is naturally a man of honour. Imagine his horror and disgust then, when he receives a message telling of a massacre at the dragon village where he lives. Rushing home, he finds his family and fiends reduced to kit form! To rub salt into the wounds, the sacred Bushido scroll has been stolen, and the gang who have stolen now have a chance to turn its immense power to evil ends.

Realising there is no time to lose, Ryu heads straight for the forest to begin the first leg of his journey. Armed with his dragonsword, he must make his way through eight stages, tack-



to miss it. The graphics are excellent, sometimes rivalling Megadrive visuals for quality, and the scrolling is super-smooth. The speed of the game is also quite remarkable, moving at a hectic pace, making for some great play. Perhaps it's a little too easy at times, but it's just so good to play that you'll be coming back for more even after you've completed it.

RICH

- PRESENTATION** 78%
The heart-rending story starts the game, but there are no options to speak of.
- GRAPHICS** 87%
Some excellent graphics, with well-drawn and animated sprites and detailed backdrops.
- SOUND** 60%
Sound effects are a bit weedy. The oriental sing-along starts to grate after a while.
- PLAYABILITY** 80%
The controls are responsive and the in-game logic is good. Poor collision detection on occasions.
- LASTABILITY** 86%
The size of the game and the variety of weapons and moves means there is plenty of challenge.
- OVERALL** 83%
Not particularly original, but Ninja Gaiden is still a wholly enjoyable game which succeeds in all departments.

NINJA GAIDEN
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
↓
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS
↓
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

ling gunmen, evil Ninjas, birds, bats and end-of-level guardians. Fortunately for Ryu, there are weapons to collect along the way, such as the shuriken and super shuriken, enabling him to kill enemies from a distance. There are even fireballs which home in on the nasties leaving Ryu's hands clean. The more powerful a weapon the more combat points it uses up. To gain access to

combat points and weapons, Ryu has to cut open scrolls which litter the eight stages. Ninja Gaiden has loads of appeal. Ninja fanatics owning Master System cannot afford



As a secret agent usually involved in dangerous assignments and fast cars. However, in the deadly assignment dramatically dubbed 'Outrun Europa', things have gone drastically wrong. Your Ferrari's been nicked by the crime Overlord in Dover.

Now it's your job to grab the nearest form of transport possible and begin a trans-European road chase to catch up with the thieves behind the wheel. Once the car and the plans are safely reappropriated, it's time to head towards HQ complete the mission. To help you in your escapades, you're able to make good use of the



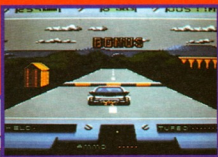
built-in weaponry featured in each mode of transport. Starting out on a high-power motorbike speeding along to Dover, it's not long before you hit the English Channel, where a nice jet ski is just waiting for some fun and frolics. Once over on the continent, plenty more high speed

level of the game, you got to drive your fabbo Ferrari F40. Outrun Europa certainly had plenty of potential — the idea of different modes of transport,

are completely unnecessary. They should have been dumped and replaced by more energy

- PRESENTATION** 70%
A couple of interesting presentation screens, but not a whole lot more.
- GRAPHICS** 64%
The sprites are okay, but the design of some of the roadside obstacles is a bit childish. The 3D effect is very jerky and looks hopeless.
- SOUND** 54%
Good, though repetitive tunes and quite annoying effects (like the police siren).
- PLAYABILITY** 51%
Initially addictive, but the lack of variety soon makes itself apparent.
- LASTABILITY** 48%
It's a tough game, but the action isn't varied or rewarding enough to sustain long-term play.
- OVERALL** 49%
Lack of variety and poor 3D effect puts this at the back of the starting grid.

OUTRUN EUROPA
BY
US GOLD
PLAYERS
↓
GAME DIFFICULTY
HARD
CONTINUES
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
↓
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



fun awaits. In Germany, a super turbo-charged Porsche awaits you and if you reach the last

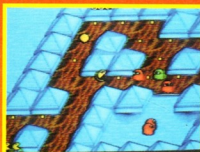
let down by jerky 3D and lack of variety. The roadside objects, although large and impressive,

each sporting deadly weapons is great — but unfortunately the game is cars and faster, smoother 3D. The main problem, however, is that there are basically only two different levels: water and road. If it's racing thrills and spills you're after, check out Fire and Forget II, Chase HQ or Battle Outrun, they're all much more exciting than this.

PacMan returns to PacWorld to find everything's gone 3-D on him! Unperturbed by this, our yellow spherical hero with the voracious appetite goes on yet another munching spree, out to clear the four levels (Block Town, PacMan Park, Sandbox Land and the Jungly Steps) of video pills, and also see whether he can find Coin World, an all-new secret world.

As you'd expect, PacMan's arch enemies, those pesky ghosts, are back, but Inky, Pinky, Blinky and Clyde have been joined by two new recruits - Sue and Funky, and all six are out to make PacMan's life just as much of a misery as before.

PACMANIA
BY
TECMANIA
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
19
RESPONSIVENESS
GREAT



The tables can be turned by munching on a power pill, giving PacMan the ability to bite back! Since making the transition to 3D, PacMan has learned how to jump. If he's in a tight corner, a press of the fire button makes him leap over an oncoming ghost. But watch out - at later levels, the ghosts can also jump, and bumping into them in mid-air is fatal.

This has got to rate alongside Gauntlet as one of the most

outstanding Master System conversions. Full-screen graphics and an addictive quality result in a game which grabs you from the outset and only lets go

when you've played the thing to

death! There's lots of different maze layouts, and the jumping ability rids the game of the frustrations of getting trapped in a corner. Okay, the somewhat repetitive nature of the game could lead to some players relegating this to the back of the software cupboard before long, but fans of the coin-op and nostalgia freaks will absolutely love it.



A tari's Paperboy first appeared in the arcades around four and a half years ago, and cast you as a paper deliverer whose round takes him to the very strangest parts of town. In this Sega conversion, virtually all of the original coin-op's features have been included.

At the start of the game there are three streets to choose from, effectively giving three difficulty levels. Each level is split into seven sub-levels, which represent a day of the week. The object is simply to survive until Sunday.

At the beginning of each round you're shown a map of



your delivery route. You must deliver papers to every subscriber, by throwing them either into mailboxes or on doormats.

Non-subscribers should be treated with the contempt they deserve, so throw spare papers through their windows and ride all over their nice flower beds for bonus points.

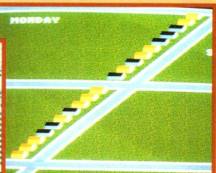
There are numerous perils. First off, all stationary objects such as mailboxes and traffic cones must be avoided. Other dangers are trickier, for exam-

ple poodles that come scurrying towards you and out-of-control motorised toy cars, tyres and even breakdancers. They're all deadly, so keep your hands on the handlebars.

This conversion captures all the humour, originality and playability of the arcade machine. It seems very straightforward at first, but once mad dogs, nutty street dancers, runaway tyres and even rogue dri-

vers enter the fray, things start getting very tough indeed. The game is a bit limited in the gameplay styles, and starts to lose its appeal once all the gags of the average paper round have been seen. However, with the large following this had as a coin-op Paperboy should find a place in any arcade fan's cartridge collection.

RICH



PAPERBOY
BY
TENGEN
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

PRESENTATION **80%**
A very nice title screen, with one or two-player options.

GRAPHICS **86%**
Excellent full-screen graphics that bear a remarkable resemblance to the coin-op. Very smooth scrolling too.

SOUND **83%**
A nice rendition of the arcade music, with the familiar 'wacka wacka'.

PLAYABILITY **85%**
So easy your granny's cat could play it, and extremely addictive from the word go.

LASTABILITY **70%**
Very repetitive but it's a game you'll come back to from time to time for a quick burn around Blockland.

OVERALL **80%**
A brill conversion of a great coin-op, and a game that you'll play again and again.

PRESENTATION **80%**
Excellent intro screens and three skill levels, cleverly represented as different 'streets'.

GRAPHICS **82%**
So close to the coin-op there's no real difference. Bright solid-looking houses and detailed little sprites.

SOUND **79%**
Boppy tunes keep you humming. Captures the coin-op's sound.

PLAYABILITY **81%**
As playable and addictive as the arcade machine. That means a lot of short term fun.

LASTABILITY **72%**
The three streets provide a fair challenge, but the gameplay is limited.

OVERALL **81%**
It's great to see a classic game like this translated so well. A headline game for the Master System.



You get to play God in Tecmagik's conversion of Populous for the Master System. Controlling an increasing number of followers, the aim is to utterly destroy the worshippers of the opposing evil god, and gain points for the number of houses, castles and knights under control at the end of each conflict.

As God, you have access to a number of disasters you can visit upon your enemies, but their God has the



equivalent power to make misery for your own people. The key to success is to encourage or force your people to spread across fertile areas of flatland, gathering mana for you and evicting the enemy from their settlements.

Set over a number of different landscapes, which all have an effect on the game, Populous is not for wimps. Skill, tactics, and downright skull-duggery are the only things that guarantee victory, as the com-

puter opponent increases in speed, ability and aggression every time it is beaten.

As well as the desert, grassy plains, ice, and rocky hell worlds of the original Populous, the Sega version adds new landscapes for your delectation and delight. Among others, a futuristic world has been added that is set on a grid system. Also included is a Bitmap world, replete with computer print-outs

and the like. Weird or what?

Populous is an incredible conversion for the Master System. All the features of the 16-bit version are included, and there are even more levels than the Megadrive game. It may be the ideal game for action freaks, but it's an essential buy for Master System owners into strategy.

JAZ



POPULOUS BY TECMAGIK PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

On one particular planet, the main sport is killing things. Anything'll do, small furry creatures, big scaly ones, sapient, sentient or vegetable: see it, shoot it.

Sadly, this sport has been so popular for so long that the inhabitants of the planet, the



PREDATOR 2

Predators, have run out of things to kill.

So, to preserve the long tradition of slaying, a few hand-picked scouts have been sent out to find new killing grounds, and luckily for us, one of them has found Earth.

However, crack narc Harrigan has stumbled on to their fiendish plot and is determined to put a stop to it. But are his horizontally-scrolling blasting skills a match for the Predators?

The action for Predator is presented in a side-scrolling shoot 'em up format. The hero has the twin tasks of rescuing hostages and avoiding the targets of the Predators. The ulti-

mate aim is to confront them in their disguised space craft, on the fifth level.

Predator 2 on the Megadrive was pretty good, if a bit easy, and most of the same criticisms apply to this Master System conversion. There are a few differences between the two, however. The graphics are understandably poorer, although they're still not that bad by Master System standards, and there's no sprite flicker whatsoever.

The game moves quickly enough and the controls are easy to get the hang of and pretty responsive. However, although

Predator seems pretty tricky when you first play it, after a couple of games you'll just whizz right through to the end. The password system doesn't improve the challenge, as it effectively provides you with infinite continues. Novice games players or general hooligans should give this a bit of a go, because it's a pretty good game, but seasoned shoot 'em ups should pass Predator 2 by.

RICH



PREDATOR 2 BY ACCLAIM PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

PRESENTATION 91%

A stunning array of features, and a password option for each of the levels (of which there are even more than in the Megadrive version!).

GRAPHICS 77%

Basic, but the Master System copies very well with the definition of the characters.

SOUND 45%

Not an important part of the game, and thus not well catered for.

PLAYABILITY 92%

Populous has a charm of its own for strategists. Engrossing, original gameplay.

LASTABILITY 90%

There are 500 levels, and although the game stays much the same, the challenge rises steeply.

OVERALL 94%

The best strategy game on the Master System by a long chalk. You'd be bankers to miss it.

PRESENTATION 74%

Friendly good title and end sequences. No options or anything like that to speak of though.

GRAPHICS 76%

Good use of colour and there's none of the usual Master System sprite flicker troubles.

SOUND 70%

A selection of not very inspiring tunes and effects.

PLAYABILITY 81%

Fairly quick-paced with fluid controls and plenty of action most of the time...

LASTABILITY 82%

But it's all very easy indeed once you know what you're doing, and the password option is just plain daft.

OVERALL 74%

An enjoyable game, but ruined by the lack of any challenge. Mr Predator certainly wouldn't approve.

While the Sultan is away, the evil Grand Vizier Jaffar has taken over the throne. And to cap it all, he's even trying to get his grubby mitts on the Sultana who he's abducted! Our hero must explore the 12 dungeons of the palace and search both for the hero's sword and the Sultan's daughter.

He runs, jumps, edges forward and lowers himself off precipices. Potions along the way either help or hinder the hero, and the fat guards blocking the way get tougher and tougher as the levels progress. He's also capable of some heart-stopping athletics, by clinging to the edge of plunging



chasms with his fingers. You'll be catching your breath frequently whilst playing.

The palace catacombs are full of terrors and traps. The eunuchs who guard certain passages have nothing to lose, so they fight with ferocity, especially on later levels. An added feature are the skeletons who also battle fiercely against any trespassers. Slamming gates, yawning chasms and collapsing floors

conspire to kill our hero. Only the best can survive!

The thought of death at the end of a spiky sword is only half the trouble. The other is the time limit the game is played against.

You only have an hour to traverse the twelve dungeons, with



a password system to record your position at a certain time.

Prince of Persia is an all-time classic platform game. It oozes atmosphere, playability and challenge. Your character is superbly animated, as are the guards, for all combat moves. Some of the layouts are really demanding, so the password doesn't detract from the lasting interest.

PRESENTATION 86%

The password option is essential, and the spicy Arabian flavour is great.

GRAPHICS 94%

Excellent sprite animation on all the characters, and some dark and gloomy dungeon scenery.

SOUND 85%

The Sega sound chip does as good an impression of Arabian music as you could hope for.

PLAYABILITY 92%

Extremely playable as a platform game, but requires some patience at first.

LASTABILITY 90%

Those twelve levels include some impossibly wide gaps and some rabid guards, so expect some long nights.

OVERALL 92%

A fabulous platform adventure that makes you feel part of the action. Movie-like thrills on the Master System.

PRINCE OF PERSIA
BY
DOMARK
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
NONE

SKILL LEVELS
RESPONSIVENESS
SUPER



In Japan, the Inari Daimyojin (a fox deity) is worshipped to promote a good harvest.

Unfortunately, one fox, named Madfox Daimyojin used these special powers in honour of all things evil and twisted. He took over a country and populated with foul creatures that willingly do his bidding. Enter Psycho Fox, a young fox spoiling for a fight. Psycho Fox's mission is simple. Travel through the seven zones (each with three sub-zones) kicking out Madfox's minions and generally causing a bit of oggro for the twisted fox-like one.

Psycho Fox was once the fastest Sega platform hero (before Sonic of course). After



Psycho Fox is one weird game. But it's challenging, playable and very addictive too. The way

well as other secret features to discover, giving the game plenty of lasting appeal. Psycho Fox is easily one of the best platform games available on the Master System, and is a vital addition to any self-respecting player's collection. The game has been con-

each round has been beaten, Psycho Fox is transported to a bonus sub-game. Put a stake up and choose a route for the fox to take. He'll follow it to one of the endings. Most of the endings supply small bonuses, whilst one kills him off. The best bet is to try to reach the palace. Many extra lives and points are awarded here, depending on your bet.

Sporting a weird storyline and even weirder graphics,

the screens are laid out is excellent, with loads of areas to explore and discover - I

found myself going back to it time and time again to see whether I missed anything. There are also warp areas, as



verted to the Megadrive as Magical Hat/Decapattak, if you're interested. JAX

PRESENTATION 69%

Simple presentation screens and that's about it.

GRAPHICS 75%

Simple, but well-animated sprites and decent backdrops. Psycho Fox is certainly a colourful affair.

SOUND 56%

Fairly weedy tunes and repetitive effects, which easily get on your nerves.

PLAYABILITY 93%

Excellent platform-based action that has you glued to the Sega. Cute and cuddly and supremely playable too!

LASTABILITY 91%

Twenty one levels to conquer, but there's still plenty of hidden warps to find once you've completed the game. You'll be playing for months.

OVERALL 90%

One of THE classic Sega platform games and well worth the money!

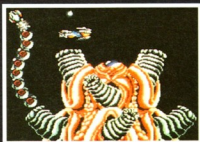
PSYCHO FOX
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
INFINITE

SKILL LEVELS
RESPONSIVENESS
SMOOTH

The evil Bydo Empire is attacking the Federation and the only thing standing between them and victory is your R-9 fighter. It is the apex in modern space fighter technology, and is well equipped to take on anything anybody throws at it. And the Bydo Empire are certainly throwing plenty!

The mission of mercy takes place over eight horizontally scrolling levels, each packed with vicious and highly



aggressive alien beings, and each with a horrible guardian waiting at the end. The R-9 accepts ball-on weaponry, available by shooting one of the many supply drones.

Normally the R-9 shoots short bursts of plasma fire, but keeping the fire button depressed for a second or two powers-up the plasma gun. When you take your finger off the button a massive power-bolt is unleashed which destroys virtually anything in its path!

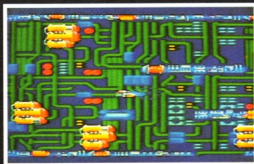
R-TYPE
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



Despite some minor flaws, R-Type is one of the finest horizontally scrolling shoot 'em ups available on the Sega. Virtually all the features of the coin-op have been crammed into this excellent conversion, with all eight levels (AND a secret one) and identical game-mechanics! The graphics are stunning, and are about as close to the coin-op you could possibly get on the Master System. The sound's a bit wobbly, but nevertheless

manages to add atmosphere to the action. The price you pay for this amazing accuracy is that the game plays a little slower than it does in the arcade, and there's also a bit of flicker when things get very busy. However, the challenging and highly addictive gameplay coupled with the superb visuals more than makes up for those deficiencies.

RICH



PRESENTATION 79%

Fairly straightforward, with no frills.

GRAPHICS 93%

Superb sprites and backdrops which faithfully recreate the look of the coin-op. However, they sometimes flicker.

SOUND 78%

Tunes and effects of the coin-op reproduced in the usual, wobbly Master System fashion.

PLAYABILITY 94%

It's certainly tough, but the quality of the gameplay keeps you coming back time and time again.

LASTABILITY 86%

Eight big and tough levels to tackle, and a secret level to find — this one won't be cracked overnight.

OVERALL 92%

Despite a few minor niggles, R-Type is a slick and challenging blaster for every shoot 'em up fan's cartridge collection.

Blessed with the power of casting magical rainbows, Bobby the chubby bloke is fighting for his life in an archipelago of islands which have been overrun by an evil force and are sinking into the sea! Help Bobby struggle past the hordes of disapproving locals, take their booty and run! Taito's own conversion of their successful coin-op (the sequel to Bubble Bobble) is slightly different from the original but the classic features are all still here: the platforms, the cute 'n' cuddly but dangerous baddies, the magical killer rainbows.

On the odd occasion a defeated enemy leaves behind a

RAINBOW ISLANDS
BY
TAITO
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
UNLIMITED
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



brightly coloured gem for Bobby's colours. They reflect the colours of the rainbow and, when you've collected seven of the correct colour, in the correct order (which is of course, red, orange, yellow, green, blue,

items that improve Bobby's chances of survival. We suggest that you go for these because the conversations are pretty boring! However, in both situations Bobby is rewarded with one of seven huge gems. He needs to

Islands was generally hailed as one of the best games on most home computers. Unfortunately, although this Master System conversion is excellent fun and extremely addictive, it doesn't quite hit the mark. At first, I thought the difficulty setting was a little too easy but as you progress through the game it does get harder and harder and should present a challenge to the toughest gamers.

RICH



chests from which Bobby may choose a prize or he has the option of a chat with his mate instead. The prizes are along the lines of permanent special

collect ten to successfully complete the game.

Rainbow

PRESENTATION 47%

The title screen consists of the Rainbow Islands logo and that's it! Even the intermission screens are basic.

GRAPHICS 86%

Bobby and his co-stars are animated well. Everything is so irresistibly and stylishly cute.

SOUND 42%

The same three tunes repeated over and over again is unbearable after a short while.

PLAYABILITY 89%

Rainbow Islands gives as good as it gets. Beginners also enjoy the game because of its immediate, easy-going appeal.

LASTABILITY 79%

Seven levels consisting of five stages, each one is progressively harder than the last.

OVERALL 84%

An alternative reincarnation of the classic coin-op that retains most of its original features.

Asurry me hearties! It's the 16th century and war is being waged - which is bad news for you. The problem is that you're in charge of fortifications and cannon operation on an island which is being invaded by an



RAMPARTS
BY
TREGEN
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
2
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

armada of pirate fiends. This means it's up to you to repel their fearsome water-borne attacks with accurate cannon fire, whilst keeping the fortifications around your castles in good enough order to keep the invading soldiers out.

Ramparts is a conversion of an Atari coin-op which enjoyed moderate arcade success. Play alternates between a two-part strategy section, where randomly

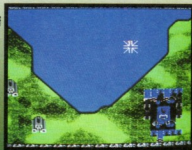
shaped wall sections must be linked together to completely surround your forts and then cannons placed for maximum firepower. Then it's shoot 'em up time with the cannons being aimed at incoming vessels using crosshair sights. Destroy the entire invading fleet and the island is safe.

Four boys must be successfully defended in Ramparts. Each boy has three forts, one of which you pick. The fort is fully fortified, and there is room for four cannons. At the end of each attack wave, extra cannons are awarded for the amount of territory you have managed to successfully defend. Fail to fortify your castle, and it's your head

on the block!

Whatever else you say about Ramparts, it certainly is original. The blend of arcade shoot 'em up and puzzle action seems bizarre at first, but it's really a lot of fun. The controls are responsive and the action comes thick and fast. If you really want something truly different that will tax both your brain and your reflexes, Ramparts is the cart for you.

RICH



PRESENTATION 48%
Few options and a single title screen. It doesn't exactly leap out at you.

GRAPHICS 68%
The colourful sprites look cheery, although they're a little blocky.

SOUND 63%
An average tune and mediocre effects that won't set your ears alight.

PLAYABILITY 90%
No problem to get into, and instantly addictive and a lot of fun to play. The two different games (shoot 'em up and puzzle) in one make it even more enjoyable.

LASTABILITY 83%
Challenging later levels and the two-player option means there's plenty to keep blasting fans happy.

OVERALL 87%
One of the most addictive and fun blasters seen on the Master System in a long while.

The pavements are crawling with all the wrong kinds of people, therefore requiring a fine upstanding person like yourself for a spot of urban pacification — vigilante style!

Most of the action takes place on the city streets but there are those who prefer to take the battle indoors, crashing through the corridors and letting loose in the living rooms of N E Ville's notorious drug barons, pimps, mass-murderers, gang leaders — you know the type of thing. Though it's a rather old-fashioned coin-op, Renegade is notorious for its violent scenes of skull-splitting action and, shall we say, expressive portrayal of



unarmed combat. Master System Renegade's is a similarly no holds barred, Dirty-Move Central, fist-fist without a doubt.

The game plays in the same format to Streets of Rage, but without the two-player option. Fighters have to walk the city streets alone. The levels

owns for a face off. Your player has a surprisingly large repertoire of moves with which to defend himself, including flying kicks and throws. Renegade is the sort of game

that's about it. All the baddies on



which when first switched on makes you think you're in for a

the individual levels are identical and can all be dispatched with in the same simple way. Not surprisingly this adds up to a short trip to Dullsville. The motorcycle scene is a refreshing change but not enough to rescue this game from mediocrity. Try something like Ninja Gaiden instead (but not the Streets of Rage games, which are surprisingly weak).

RICH

scroll horizontally, and depict the speedier side of town. Thugs frequently emerge from the shad-

good ride. But after a few minutes you realise that although it looks quite pretty graphically

PRESENTATION 73%
An arcade style attract sequence raises the eyebrows.

GRAPHICS 78%
The main sprite features a lot of animation to accommodate the wide range of moves available to him.

SOUND 76%
The sort of thing you might expect from a beat 'em-up game. Not all that bad.

PLAYABILITY 62%
Once the flying kick is mastered, after about two seconds, Renegade plummets into dull city.

LASTABILITY 44%
The game itself is quite small and the tedious nature of the repetitive moves really plays havoc with any enjoyment the game might have provided.

OVERALL 51%
Renegade is a yawn-inducing disappointment due to the undemanding nature of the gameplay.

RENEGADE
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



A special patrolman of the Special Criminal Investigations Department, you must investigate the antics of the city mayor, who is covorting round the city's highways in the company of known criminals, kidnapping pretty young girls and strapping them to bombs.

Of course, rather than investigate the drugs deal and abductions you are far more concerned with the flagrant disregard for the suburban speed limit that these crooks are showing. With advice from HQ, you set out onto the freeway, with the sole intention of stopping the marked car, but it has a good start on you.



The object of SCI is two-fold. First and foremost you have to survive the twisting roadway and reach the target car before the timer reaches zero. At that point the object changes to overpowering the target car by ramming until its damage meter is filled. After a cut-screen showing your success, it's off to the next level.

The wicked band of drug purveyors drive a variety of sinister vehicles. These speed ahead, but can be caught with

some judicious driving skills. When reached, the best way to apprehend them is to ram them from the rear, or better still draw level and bump them to the side.

Just about everything here is unsatisfactory. The graphics are dismal, flickery

affairs. You slip and you slide in a fashion more becoming a toboggan than a high-speed sports car, and find yourself in ludicrously unavoidable crash situations. Not to worry! You can continue at top speed most of the time after crashing. The lack of challenge is normally a down point, but here at least it means the whole debacle is over with as quickly as possible.

JAZ



SCI BY TAITO PLAYERS

1
GAME DIFFICULTY
VERY EASY
CONTINUES
2
SKILL LEVELS
RESPONSIVENESS
POOR

That ancient board game, Chess, is available on that miracle of modern technology, the Master System. The game plays in either overhead or 3D mode, the former being clearer and the latter being more attractive. Of course, all the rules of chess are applied including En Passant and Castling. Options include one or two players, sampled speech, the number of jaypads used and the depth of the computer player's thinking if playing solo.

If you have trouble thinking up a good move to make, the computer provides a hint and if you really get stuck any number of moves can be taken back.



Also it's possible to force the computer's move to stop it from having too long to think, and if none of that works, and defeat seems inevitable, you can even resort to swapping sides!

Unlike the speech, the various special modes add a great deal to the game. The Problem mode sets up a specific chess problem for the player to solve, while Adaptive mode means that the computer will decide its

move in the time the player took for his or hers. However, for a real challenge, choose Infinite mode — then the computer will take as long as it wants to make its mind up!

This certainly plays a good game of chess and the computer opponent is pretty tough to beat. The two player mode is a mystery: why not use a real board? Otherwise this Sega product simply plays the role of a glorified chess computer. If you have a Master System and you fancy yourself as Nigel Short, this simulation won't let you down.

JAZ



SEGA CHESS BY SEGA PLAYERS

1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
N/A
SKILL LEVELS
5
RESPONSIVENESS
SLOW

PRESENTATION 61%

The inter level screens of the arcade game are retained, but there are no options of any description.

GRAPHICS 41%
Poor scrolling, feeble sprites and bland, uninteresting and boring backdrops.

SOUND 71%
Each course has its own, fairly decent, tune, but the sound effects are poor.

PLAYABILITY 45%
The chase objective adds a bit of tension, then the crop controls and gameplay faults take it away.

LASTABILITY 13%
Even experienced players should finish this in a few goes, and there's nothing to bring you back once it's completed.

OVERALL 26%
A dreadful game which lacks all the features of a half decent game.

PRESENTATION 72%
Simple, basic screens show all you need to know.

GRAPHICS 78%
The playing pieces are large and clear even in 3D mode.

SOUND 77%
The sampled sound is very clever although you'll probably want to turn it off after a while.

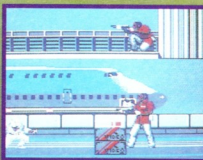
PLAYABILITY 81%
It's chess, and that's as playable now as ever. Two players won't gain much from playing on-screen though.

LASTABILITY 85%
The number of difficulty levels and special modes will keep you going for ages. Obviously it's not a game you play for ages, non-stop, though.

OVERALL 73%
A decent, if expensive, game which is best recommended to chess fans who have no-one to play against.

You are a rock-hard ninja warrior out to crush the power hungry Zeed empire and their armies of terrifying minions. This means you must first stow away on a heavily-guarded aeroplane bound for the Zeed home country and then fight your way across Zeed-infested landscapes until you reach the final encounter with Emperor Zeed himself!

Shadow Dancer is a horizontally-scrolling platform beat 'em up in the traditional Shinobi mould. The player leaps about killing his enemies and avoiding the many traps and hazards they have placed in his way. At the end of every level, a



nasty-words and finally spirit, which summons a religious figure, thus Buddha-ing Joe's opponents into submission.

Master System

required to do them away, you get stuck. Once you finally succeed, you go straight through to the next boss where you get stuck again, making progress rather sporadic and frustrating. A shame because otherwise this is a fine game with good graphics and plenty of variety. Ardent Shinobi fans might enjoy it, but with gameplay tweaks, this could have been so much better.

JAZ

giant boss appears, ready to beat the cock out of Mr Mushashi - but you've got special ninja magic with which to repel their aggressive tendencies!

Ninjas don't spend their entire lives being taught how to chop people up - they are also instructed in the ways of three brands of deadly ninja magic. There's fire, which bathes the warriors enemies in flames, air, which launches fatal whirlwinds

Shadow Dancer fares better than its Megadrive counterpart,

but even so I'm still left with a nagging doubt. Getting to each end-of-level boss is easy, but until you work out the method and magic



SHADOW DANCER
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
↓
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
↓
RESPONSIVENESS
FANTASTIC

PRESENTATION 54%

No options, but the title screens aren't too shambolic.

GRAPHICS 81%

The sprites are nicely animated and the backdrops are fine.

SOUND 58%

The awful 'barking' on the title screen sets the tone for a multitude of lacklustre effects and tunes.

PLAYABILITY 72%

The bosses should give you trouble for a while, if you don't hurl your joystick through the screen first!

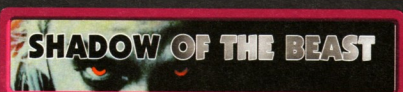
LASTABILITY 67%

The bosses should give you trouble for a while, if you don't hurl your joystick through the screen first!

OVERALL 71%

A potentially great Shinobi game let down by a poorly graded difficulty level.

When you were a child, the mages of Maletoth and the Beast Lord kidnapped you and used their dark arts to warp your mind and body. You are now the Beast, a grotesque creature whose aim in life



involves carrying out the Beast Lord's evil bidding.

However, although your conscious mind may be drugged and altered, your dreams are still

your own. One fateful day, you dream of your father's horrific death at the hands of the Beast Lord. Waking up, you realise someone has to pay. Someone has to suffer. That someone is the Beast Lord.

The arcade action takes place over six stages of scrolling action. Unfortunately, the Beast Lord's got wind of your revenge-related antics and has dispatched all 132 varieties of beasts under his power to

search you out and have your monkey ass well and truly dusted.

But the path to the Beast Lord isn't just a case of cutting a swathe through the assembled masses. Each domain has its fair share of bizarre puzzles to solve in order to progress ever onwards to the final confrontation with the twisted Maletoth!

Shadow of the Beast is not the last-action game it first appears as: instead it's more of an exploration game

with the anus more on puzzle-solving than beat 'em up arcade skills. The graphics are excellent, the sound is

good and the gameplay is addictive, but there are a couple of annoying things. First, the nature of some of the traps is highly irritating, as there's no warning of them. Secondly, the control method makes life unnecessarily difficult. It's a shame these points are present, because they take the edge off an otherwise highly enjoyable and entertaining game.

JAZ



SHADOW OF THE BEAST
BY
TECHMAGIK
PLAYERS
↓
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
↓
RESPONSIVENESS
OKAY

PRESENTATION 85%

Brilliantly presented, with an excellent intro sequence and a decent end-game sequence.

GRAPHICS 81%

Very good indeed, with super-smooth scrolling, well defined backdrops and sprites.

SOUND 80%

The Amiga version's tunes are faithfully translated, although they may start to grate after a while.

PLAYABILITY 80%

The action is quite addictive, although the control method can be very annoying.

LASTABILITY 76%

Six big levels to explore and conquer, with many taxing puzzles to sort out.

OVERALL 80%

A few minor quibbles, but otherwise a respectable arcade adventure.



Smash TV is an all-shooting, all-exploding game show of tomorrow, where the contestant battles against hordes of armed clones with only his trusty machine gun to help him. This conversion follows the massive success of the Williams coin-op, which features great speech, twin joystick control and breathless action.

The object of the game is to fight your way to the end of each level and destroy the giant guardian who waits there, whereupon you are rewarded with many prizes. Each level is composed of a series of single-screen rooms into which enemies pour. Once all the enemies



in the room are dead, the player progresses on to the next and so it goes on. It's survival of the fittest on prime time TV and a new slant on the phrase your money or your life.

Your player comes across several weapons of mass destruction. They appear randomly as icons within the arena, and must be collected quickly. The benefits of doing so are immense: rockets, grenades,

spread shots and satellite shots are all on offer.

It would be so nice if looks were deceiving. On the face of it, the screen-shots look pretty bad and the game seems worse when you see the badly animated characters limping and flickering

around the screen. Unfortunately, they're not deceiving. Smash TV looks, bad, sounds bad and plays very badly



indeed. The controls are unresponsive and when they do respond, often send you in the wrong direction. It also features staggeringly few enemies on-screen at a time and seeing that the piles of bodies to blast was the major attraction of the coin-op this makes a mockery of the title.

PRESENTATION 74%

There's a two player option, but players can't join in any time, and there's no dual controller feature.

GRAPHICS 31%

Groty sprites, groty animation, groty colours. At least it's consistent.

SOUND 68%

A listenable version of the arcade game's tunes, but the speech is omitted.

PLAYABILITY 22%

There's more fun to be had playing with flat mammals on the roadside.

LASTABILITY 13%

The difficulty level sets a challenge as tough as old boots. If you care.

OVERALL 17%

A ghastly conversion that fails on every level to capture even the merest hint of the brilliance of the coin-op.

SMASH TV
BY
FLYING EDGE
PLAYERS

1-2

GAME DIFFICULTY

HARD

CONTINUES

3

SKILL LEVELS

3

RESPONSIVENESS

POOR



With his army of armoured animals, vile Dr Robotnik plans to terrorise the people of the world (until they relent and promise to pay him lots of money).

Sonic, being a speedy blighter, is the hedgehog that got away. Now, of course, he's resolved to free his forest buddies by doing over Robotnik in six hazardous zones, each made up of three scrolling areas.

The landscape is packed with platform-type puzzles and terrifying terrain! Luckily, Sonic is a powerhouse of athletic ability, and he can protect himself by curling into a ball and somersaulting into any enemies, skew-



ering them on his spines!

To protect him still further, Sonic has to collect the power rings which are scattered throughout the landscape. If he bumps into an enemy the rings will protect him, but the collision makes him drop all those he was carrying. Collect enough and Sonic is warped to the weirdo bonus game!

Sonic certainly gives your

brain an optical treat — the backdrops and sprites are truly exceptional. The speed of the game is another blinding aspect as Sonic zooms along at a lick that almost puts the Megadrive version to shame!



The Megadrive version of Sonic suffered for two reasons. It was rather easy to complete and the gameplay was simplistic. Unfortunately, the Master System programmers haven't changed either of these aspects. The easiness could be put down to the fact that there's little in the way of enemy sprites to accost the cute hedgehog on his travels. But still, it's very difficult not to notice Sonic's addictive qualities and polished action.

PRESENTATION 63%

No options to tweak or anything, and only one decent attract screen.

GRAPHICS 92%

Excellent! Stunning sprites and gorgeous backdrops — some of the best seen on the Master System.

SOUND 64%

The Sonic theme tunes grate after a while...

PLAYABILITY 91%

Sonic's easy to get into, with plenty of exciting platform action.

LASTABILITY 83%

It doesn't take ages to complete this super-sonic platform romp, but it's so much fun you just keep on going back!

OVERALL 89%

A superb platform game for the Master System, that's just as much fun as its Megadrive counterpart.

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

1

GAME DIFFICULTY

EASY

CONTINUES

VARIABLE

SKILL LEVELS

3

RESPONSIVENESS

SUPER-SONIC!



After destroying Robotnik in his first outing, Sonic is back in an all-new, and bigger adventure. The phenomenon of the Nineties is joined by a young fox called Tails. The young brush loves the blue, spiky hero like an older brother, so much so that he follows him everywhere. While both were playing innocently one day, Robotnik descended and stole Sonic's rusetal pal away. A new adventure, based around Sonic's mercy mission of rescue awaits.

A major feature of this second Sonic game for the Master System is modes of transport. In the first level Sonic takes to a mine-cart, which whisks him

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 2



through some underground lava pools. Later on a hanglider appears, which Sonic uses to soar to platforms which would be otherwise out of reach. Sonic also creates his own form of underwater transport, in a huge floating bubble.

Most of the stalwart features that made Sonic 1 such a bug hit are included here. Wall breaking, spring jumps, secret passages and loops are packed into each level, along with new objects like spinning wheels and fountains. The object is still to

collect the rings in order to retrieve the chaos emeralds. Robotnik's end of level guardians are the most imaginative and devious possible.

Sonic II looks so slick it could almost be a Megadrive

game. The graphics are brilliant, with amazing attention to detail, and a standard of animation you wouldn't expect from the Master System. The use and range of colour is particularly commendable. The gameplay itself lets rip from the very first level, and these seven levels are the toughest Sonic has ever had to face. Sonic II players are going to have masses of fun cracking them.

JAZ



SONIC 2
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
VARIABLE
SKILL LEVELS
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

When man began colonising space, he came across some pretty unsavoury life-forms. In turn, they had discovered a new delicacy and went all out to stock up on human flesh. An uneasy co-existence had erupted into war, with some gloopy aliens swarming into an Earth owned Space station and munching on the staff. It's not on. So they are looking for val-unteer cadets to go and kick some alien ass. And you, fool boy, signed up. Just a pistol - that's all you have to defend yourself. But don't be too trigger-happy, there may be some survivors waiting to be rescued.

Space Gun is compatible

SPACE GUN

with the Master System Light Phaser. If you haven't got one of those doobies, you can play the game with a normal Master System joystick. This shows an on-screen target to help aiming.

In screenshot form, Space Gun doesn't look too dreadful. But wait until you see it move. Two-frame animation on the baddie sprites has them goose-stepping across the screen as if they were doing some grim mockery of a hokey-cokey. More comedy is in evidence on the



men you're supposed to be rescuing - they're all 12 inch high

midgets who float to the bottom of the screen. The bland backgrounds scroll smoothly, but during the '3-D' sections the screen updates are jerky and hopelessly unrealistic. Still, I can't complain too much because the graphics are the best part of the game. Yes indeed, the game itself is worse. It stinks, in fact.

JAZ



PRESENTATION 87%
An amusing animated introduction, and intermissions, but not options.

GRAPHICS 95%
Cor blimey! Incredibly fast and detailed graphics throughout all seven levels.

SOUND 79%
The frantic music captures the mad antics of Sonic, and the FX are also energetic.

PLAYABILITY 96%
The gameplay is just incredible. Flawless and relentless action: the paragon of platforming.

LASTABILITY 89%
It all looks so good, you'll be delving into it again and again, and the difficulty level is set perfectly.

OVERALL 95%
This is even better than the original. Sonic II stands for all that's best on the Master System.

PRESENTATION 51%
The game supports the highly useful Master System light gun. There are no other options whatsoever.

GRAPHICS 13%
The 3D effect is highly unconvincing and equally unimpressive. Most sprites are frankly crap. Most backdrops are frankly croppier.

SOUND 9%
Gah! Horrible! A drawn out tune plays out, with several piercing notes that threaten a player's sanity.

PLAYABILITY 7%
About as playable as using a wet lettuce as a football. With the joystick it's a walkover.

LASTABILITY 8%
Absolutely none. You may try it for a couple of hours then never again.

OVERALL 9%
An awful, awful conversion with nothing in it reminiscent of the arcade game whatsoever.

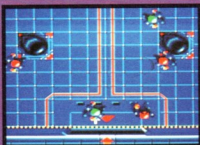


Set in a jaded future, the sport of Speedball pits two teams of five armoured men against each other, with the object of hurling the ball past the opponent's goal keeper to score points. It's a battle of wits, muscles, and power gloves but skill is the deciding factor.

To liven things up (as if they needed further livening up), power-up tokens appear on the pitch, and these speed up your players, reverse the controls, give one team immediate possession, or do something even more exotic.

As well as effect tokens, coins turn up on the pitch from time to time. These are well

SPEEDBALL II



to play, and it has a sense of humour. After ploughing through a plethora of staid shoot 'em ups and cretinous cute platform games, this comes as a breath of fresh air to me. My main criticism is that the

worth collecting, as at the end of each half they can be used to bribe the officials for extra time, or to increase the skills and stamina of the team. Obviously coins aren't worth grabbing if it means missing an opportunity to shoot at goal, but at other times picking them up can mean the difference between winning and losing!

Speedball is one of those games that adds another dimension to console software; it's relatively original, exciting

JAZ

PRESENTATION 85%

An impressive intro sequence, inspired by Rollerball, creates the atmosphere of the game.

GRAPHICS 84%

The players are reasonably detailed, as is the pitch. It has a great feeling of brutality!

SOUND 79%

Quite adequate, the sound is unobtrusive and suits the game to a tee.

PLAYABILITY 81%

Fast, frantic and fun with two players. Quickly gets very boring with one player, though.

LASTABILITY 76%

Two-player mode offers plenty of long-term laughs. If you play on your own, though, you'll only get a few hours of entertainment out of this.

OVERALL 79%

A brilliant two-player game, but completely pathetic in single player mode.

SPEEDBALL BY IMAGEWORKS PLAYERS

1-2 GAME DIFFICULTY VERY EASY CONTINUES N/A SKILL LEVELS

RESPONSIVENESS SPEEDY



The Kingpin, freshly released from prison, is out for revenge against our wall-crawling, web-slinging hero. So determined is he to get Spidey out of the way, he's massed the meanest bunch of terrorists and super-villains ever, and they're all out to get Spidey!

As an emergency back-up, the Kingpin has also planted a massive bomb somewhere in the city and it can only be made safe by collecting five keys that disarm it.

The Kingpin has given these keys to some of his best friends (and Spidey's enemies) namely Dr Octopus, Electro and the fearsome Hobgoblin! Spidey

SPIDER-MAN

can only save himself from the slammer (and the city from a devastating explosion) by finding the bomb, disarming it, and then going after the Kingpin himself!

Five keys are needed by Spider-Man to disarm the Kingpin's bomb and each end-of-level guardian hides his own key. However, once captured, these guys aren't about to blab about the location of their key.

Often, Spidey's forced to search the landscape again looking for the keys before he proceeds to the next level.

Like the Megadrive version of Spider-Man, this is one of the few licensed games which actually makes good use of the licensed character. The



Spider-man theme has been exploited fully, and there are plenty of wall crawling laffs and web-spinning jokes. The graphics are very good indeed, with swift, smooth scrolling backdrops, excellent cartoon-style still screens and a very nicely animated main sprite, and the action is fast and furious, with enough original features to keep you on your toes. Spidey fans will top it up.

RICH

PRESENTATION 88%

Various cameo screens of all the old favourite Marvel characters really add to the feel of the game.

GRAPHICS 84%

Small, but perfectly formed sprites and pretty decent backdrops. The movement is good too.

SOUND 71%

Tunes that vary in quality from good to awful, and competent effects.

PLAYABILITY 90%

An easy-to-use control system means you'll be wall-crawling and web-slinging from the word go!

LASTABILITY 86%

Plenty of super-villains up against of Spidey, so there's plenty of lasting challenge in there.

OVERALL 87%

You too can be the webhead! A brilliant comic licence and a terrific game in its own right - go for it!

SPIDER-MAN BY SEGA PLAYERS

1 GAME DIFFICULTY MEDIUM CONTINUES 0 SKILL LEVELS 3

RESPONSIVENESS SUPER



The Grand Master is a pretty evil chap. Well, what could be more evil than coming to Earth with a massive contingent of space fighters and proceeding to take over the world? Strider Hiryu and his merry band of roaming martial artists watched the carnage in their island hide-away on an island is the South Sea.

Strider decides to use the deadly martial artist skills endowed on him to bring about an end to the evil tide of death and destruction devastating the world. This generally involves negotiating five levels of four-way scrolling action, dealing with an evil gordon, the end



of each. Strider is not defenceless in his quest for freedom. He's packed his massive titanium chopper in his trousers and he can whip it out at will, using it to cut in half anyone who gets in his way! Strider can also slide, and the special razor blades mounted on his striding Reoboks fatally maim anyone who gets in the way! Icons carried by enemy drones can be

collected in order to give Strider an extra satellite which blasts away at the enemy.

This certainly looks good, with great sprites and smooth-scrolling backgrounds. However, when you start playing, the poor controls and frustratingly unforgiving gameplay



brings you down with a bump. The controls are sluggish, and there are some very annoying points like the fact that Strider moves very slowly and can't duck under bullets. The programmers, Tiertex, whose other Master System titles are pretty good, have really slipped up here and it looks like the game should have undergone some more playtesting before it was released. As it stands, even the biggest fans of the coin-op will be very disappointed.

RICH

PRESENTATION 70%

A pretty title screen, but that's about it. No gameplay options or anything.

GRAPHICS 77%

The backdrops are good and the sprites are great.

SOUND 33%

The Master System attempts to sound like the coin-op and fails abysmally.

PLAYABILITY 72%

Dodging the enemy flak is rather difficult, and the task soon annoys beyond belief.

LASTABILITY 61%

Five large levels, but the frustrating gameplay and poor control method is so off-putting that you'll be chucking the game out of the window before long.

OVERALL 67%

A great looking conversion, but Strider's high frustration level and poor playability makes it a big disappointment to play.

STRIDER BY US GOLD PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
HARD
CONTINUUES
0
SKILL LEVELS
RESPONSIVENESS
SLOW



Get ready to win some gold medals! Summer Games features five events: the 100m dash, the pole vault, gymnastics, 100m freestyle swimming and the high dive. Each can be completed in turn, or can be played separately. Points are awarded for performance, with the medals being dished out for first, second or third place.

THE 100M DASH

This pits you directly against a computer or human opponent, and requires plenty of fast, rhythmic fire button bashing to ensure maximum speed.

THE POLE VAULT

Tricky one, this. Once you have started running, you have to

SUMMER GAMES

gauge correctly where you have to drop the end of the pole in order to flip yourself over the bar.

100M FREESTYLE SWIMMING

Just a case of pressing the pod to throw yourself into the pool, then bashing the fire buttons for all you're worth. At the 50m mark, your swimmer flips over, ready for the return to the start.

GYMNASTICS

Simply press the button to start your running, then press the button to vault from the spring-board onto the horse. Then flip yourself over to land upright on the mat.

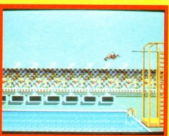
THE HIGH DIVE

This is split into four separate parts; the forward dive, the back dive, the inverse dive, and the back inverse dive. You've simply got to do as many som-

ersaults as possible and enter the water straight to ensure maximum points.

The graphics are small and have little detail, and the backdrops are bland beyond belief! Surely there was scope for some amazing animation here. The gameplay is very dull, most events requiring simple button-bashing to succeed, and those that don't are easily mastered. Even if you're a big fan of sports simulations, you'll more than likely find this very disappointing.

JAZ



PRESENTATION 79%

Decent enough selection screens and a pleasant attempt at some opening ceremonies.

GRAPHICS 49%

Blocky, plain, ill-proportioned and badly animated sprites, and dull lifeless scenery.

SOUND 54%

Ugh! Bland tunes that are completely inappropriate to the sports theme.

PLAYABILITY 43%

Easy enough to play, but gets very boring extremely quickly even playing with more than one player.

LASTABILITY 40%

All the events are so easy, the game becomes boring very quickly indeed.

OVERALL 41%

Poor graphics and dull gameplay makes Summer Games more of a bummer game.

SUMMER GAMES BY SEGA PLAYERS

1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
VERY EASY
CONTINUUES
N/A
SKILL LEVELS
RESPONSIVENESS
SLOW



SUPER KICK OFF

As the name and the screenshots suggest, Kick Off is a football game, but it's not just any football game. Owing to a completely brilliant method of ball control it's the most realistic soccer sim ever devised. In normal soccer games, the ball "sticks" to the foot of the player in possession, but with Super Kick Off, the ball has to be successfully manipulated by dribbling, trapping and shooting just like real life.

Just about every single rule of soccer has been programmed into Super Kick Off with the exception of off-sides (according to the original programmers, it slowed up the



game). Everything else is included — even fouls, penalties and sendings-off!

This Master System version has exactly the same graphics, gameplay and game logic that made the Amiga version one of the greatest games ever written. The controls are superb, although those new to Kick Off might find them a bit strange at first, but believe me, once you master it you won't believe the moves you can get your players to pull off! And if you do become completely brilliant at

the game, there are an amazing amount of game-play options, two different two-player modes (two players on the same team or two players head-to-head), two different

leagues and a cup competition to keep your interest alive and kicking. The only thing that's disappointing about this

game is the sound — the title screen has one of the crappiest, most repetitive and irritating pieces of "music" ever heard in the history of video gaming. Other than that, Super Kick Off is a truly outstanding game, offering gameplay, challenge and lasting appeal unmatched by any other Master System game. Under no circumstances should you miss it.

JAZ



PRESENTATION 97%

Every option you could hope for on the most dynamic options screen yet devised!

GRAPHICS 83%

Finely detailed sprites and a smooth-scrolling pitch convey the action perfectly.

SOUND 10%

Ten percent for the whistle noise, ten percent for the ball effect and minus ten percent for the very sad "music".

PLAYABILITY 96%

The unusual controls take a bit of getting used to, but once mastered you're addicted for good!

STABILITY 95%

The game's just so good to play and has so many options to tweak, you'll be at this for years literally!

OVERALL 96%

A totally amazing soccer game and one of the best games ever for the Master System!

SUPER KICK OFF
BY
US GOLD
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
0
SKILL LEVELS
4
RESPONSIVENESS
GREAT

This is a beefed-up version of the classic 1978 Taito coin-op, Space Invaders. This time it features scrolling playfields, extra weapons, boss aliens, secret levels and all manner of other new, improved formula-related shenanigans. The object of the game for anyone who's been asleep for the past thirteen years is simply to stop the aliens landing at the bottom of the screen. If you can manage this for thirty-six screens, the invaders are repelled forever and you are the hero of the galaxy. If not, this could be the end of civilisation as we know it.

At the end of every third level, a bonus sub-game

SUPER SPACE INVADERS



Well, if you like Space Invaders, yes. The graphics are really good, including some especially nice backdrops, the sound is none too horrendous either and there are plenty of options, including the great two-player mode. Still, however you disguise it, it's Space Invaders. The game is good fun for a while, but I'm a little doubtful as to its stability, as it all gets a bit repetitive, despite all the new formations and weapons.

RICH

appears. It goes by the name of Cattle Mutilation, and it concerns your efforts to prevent the kidnapping of all the Earth's cattle by UFOs. The bottom of the screen is littered with cows, and as each one is caught in an alien tractor beam, it struggles to escape, alerting you to its plight. The more cows saved, the higher your bonus at the end of the game. Little do the

aliens know it takes more than a tractor beam to stop Burger King!

The Master System isn't exactly famous for having a surplus of shoot 'em ups, so does this one fill the gap?



SUPER SPACE INVADERS
BY
DOMARK
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

PRESENTATION 83%

Well presented, with quite a few options and impressive opening screens.

GRAPHICS 80%

Good throughout. Well-drawn sprites, impressive weapon effects and brilliant backgrounds.

SOUND 79%

Inoffensive tunes and a few good effects. Nothing astonishing, mind you.

PLAYABILITY 85%

Dead easy to get into and fun to play. It helps if you can summon up a bit of a feeling of nostalgia.

STABILITY 79%

It gets tricky later on, but never hard enough to really tax the skills of a true blasting fanatic.

OVERALL 82%

An excellent shoot 'em up which is slightly marred by the fact that it doesn't get tough enough on later screens.

Tazmania follows the misadventures of, Taz, the whirling, ravenous TazManian Devil of cartoon infamy. Here we find him, hungry as ever, on the hunt for some legendary giant eggs as laid by some legendary giant sea birds, but the territory is hostile, so be prepared to witness some ecological bad attitude.

Taz's first outing takes in the wide plains of Tazmania which are populated by ferocious tribal mice and mobile Taz-eating plants. Luckily, Taz is more than devil enough to get past these hazards, thanks to his well-documented spinning attack, which sends his foes



too much chicken lying around. If there was less extra energy and lives thrown about we might have a bit of a challenge. One annoying feature of the Megadrive, inserted here, is the resetting of bonuses for each new life, enabling the accumulation of masses of lives. This is not good game design. As things stand, I would recommend this great, but very easy game to young children and novices.

RICH

whirling off the screen. There's even more danger in the form of the gaping chasms waiting to claim Taz, so judicious jumping is required if he's going to be safe from high speed impacts with the ground.

The time I spent playing Taz Mania was really enjoyable, I think the game itself plays in a superior fashion to the Megadrive version. But the major flaw of that game has

been carried over and Master System Taz Mania is also far too easy. I can't fault the graphics or sound; they're fab, with great variety for each level. The layouts for each level are clever, and some of the areas are quite taxing. But there is just for



PRESENTATION **75%**
A few nice touches, like the redefined font. No options and a complete lack of skill levels.

GRAPHICS **88%**
Brilliant, bright and bold throughout, with a good cartoonesque feel to scenery and animation.

SOUND **81%**
Nice ditties and sound effects that are just fine.

PLAYABILITY **86%**
Instantly addictive, with a better response than the Megadrive. Markedly easy from the beginning onwards.

LASTABILITY **60%**
It may be a big game, but it's so easy you just waltz through it in hours.

OVERALL **71%**
Brilliant looking, highly playable and very enjoyable — but the ridiculous amount of lives and lack of enemies means the game

TAZ MANIA
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
UNLIMITED
SKILL LEVELS
1
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

After the USA's defence super-computer, SkyNet, started World War Three, it took over the entire planet and set about eradicating the human population with its army of cybernetic Terminators. When one man, John Connor, turned the tide of battle and saved everyone. In the final hour, SkyNet sent a Terminator back in time to kill his mother, thus preventing him from ever being born. Having intercepted this information, the human forces have also sent back their top man, Kyle Reese, to stop the Terminator.

You control Reese in a to save the future by saving Sarah Connor from the jaws of death.



Armed initially with a bag of hand grenades, then with an assault rifle, then an Uzi, Reese has to jump and run around five levels of platform mazes. These start off in the futuristic wastelands, where Reese has to break into the SkyNet complex while watching out for roaming Terminators, then climb aboard the Time Displacement machine to return to the past. The 1980s city streets are full of villainous punks and cops after Reese's blood, and of course the

Terminator is knocking around somewhere as well.

The Master System Terminator is a hundred times better than the Megadrive effort. Okay, so the graphics can't match up to the stunning 16-bit ones (although they are pretty good) but what really counts is the beefed up difficulty level. The levels have been

redesigned and are much longer. The enemies are also more intelligent and there's always enough of them on screen to provide a constant challenge. With only five levels Terminator may be a little short, but it is easily one of the best licensed games on the Master System.

RICH

PRESENTATION **80%**
Options and intermissions a-gogo.

GRAPHICS **81%**
Well animated and colourful sprites and quality backgrounds. Very impressive overall.

SOUND **70%**
The tunes are a bit too beepsy to successfully conjure up the somber ambience conveyed by the film soundtracks, but the effects are okay.

PLAYABILITY **86%**
Tough and addictive gameplay makes this a veritable blast-fest.

LASTABILITY **72%**
It's fairly tough, but there are only a few levels. Still, you'll probably find yourself playing it even when completed.

OVERALL **82%**
A top-notch platform shoot 'em up which is slightly spoiled by being just a mite too short.

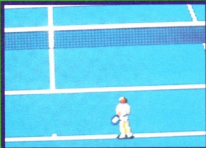
TERMINATOR
BY
VIRGIN
PLAYERS
1
GAME DIFFICULTY
HARD
CONTINUES
0
SKILL LEVELS
0
RESPONSIVENESS
CYBORG-QUICK





Wimbledon costs you as a young British tennis hopeful, out to prove to the world just how good you are at hitting balls over the net. To this end, you can use the Wimbledon tennis courts to practice in a series of exhibition matches or you can enter the world circuit proper and participate in the major tennis grand-slam events. There's even the option to face up to another human player in a one-on-one tennis

WIMBLEDON TENNIS



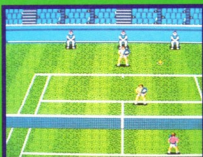
match, or play with them (or against them) in some doubles-

story can be altered by using the D-Pad. Button two produces a massive lob, essential when it comes to foiling any of your opponent's near-the-net tomfoolery. Should you attempt to hit the ball before it has bounced, you produce a high-velocity volley or a devastating smash!

As a tennis fan, I really enjoyed playing this. Okay, so the players are a bit on the small side, but they're detailed and very nicely animated. The presentation is outstanding, with a massive variety of play options and excellent stills and cameo shots of the players.

But it's the gameplay that kept me playing. The action is tough and fast, and although it takes a lot of practice to get used to the sheer speed, once mastered you can pull off some pretty spectacular shots. With its sheer variety of options and excellent two-player mode, Wimbledon Tennis is a game that's highly recommended to tennis fans.

RICH



WIMBLEDON TENNIS
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
EASY
CONTINUES
N/A
SKILL LEVELS
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD

related clowning.

But as Britain's number one (seeded 2,093 in the world), you've got a lot to prove.

Plenty of different types of shots are available in Wimbledon Tennis. Button one is a simple forehand/backhand (depending on the position of the ball when you attempt the shot). The return and its trajec-

PRESENTATION **95%**
Outstanding! A massive variety of game options, different tennis players and court surfaces to choose from.

GRAPHICS **79%**
The sprites are a bit small and out of scale, but they're nicely drawn and animated.

SOUND **30%**

Rubbish tunes and poor effects make this an aural disappointment.

PLAYABILITY **79%**
Initially very difficult to get to grips with, owing to the high speed of the action ...

LASTABILITY **81%**
...but if you're prepared to stick with it you'll discover a tough, but highly addictive tennis game.

OVERALL **80%**

Takes a lot of getting used to, but Wimbledon Tennis is a tough and enjoyable game that should appeal to fans of the sport.

We join Wonderboy at the end of an arduous journey. Our hero is just about to approach the lair of the evil dragon terrorising the realms of Monster Land, and Wonderboy is one step away from dealing the Dragon a blow if he never forgets...

However, Wonderboy has no idea of the extent of this particular dragon's powers, and just as Wonderboy deals him a lethal blow the Dragon unleashes a curse with transforms him from Wonderboy into Dragonboy!

Cursed, wretched and deformed, Wonderboy must begin a new quest to find some

WONDERBOY III



degrees of skill in certain areas. Piranha Man has fine swimming abilities; Hawk Man can fly and Dragon Man can breathe fire and walk through

This has to rank as one of the greatest Master System games ever! It has a depth of gameplay that's second to none. What constantly amazes me about this game is that there's always something new to discover, be it a key to a previously locked door or even a secret room! The sheer vastness of the

way of reversing the Dragon's spell, a quest that will take him through many levels of platform-infested multi-directional scrolling chaos...

Vanquished foes leave golden coins behind which can be used to buy better weaponry, armour and other useful items at the weapons shops dotted around the map. So when you're bashing the baddies, keep collecting the cash!

At various points throughout the game, Wonderboy can transmute into different creatures all of whom have varying



lava. Mastering each character's strengths and weaknesses is the key to success.



quest also helps this to achieve classic status. All in all, a very slick Sega product with universal appeal.

RICH



WONDERBOY III
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
SKILL LEVELS
ONE
RESPONSIVENESS
EXCELLENT

PRESENTATION **93%**
Very well presented on all levels, with password and continue options.

GRAPHICS **90%**
Great sprites complement the many-and-varied backdrops. Throw in some super-smooth scrolling and you have one fine-looking game.

SOUND **77%**
The usual Master System fare on this score. Could have been much better.

PLAYABILITY **91%**
Incredibly accessible from the word go, with addition setting in almost immediately.

LASTABILITY **93%**
So much to see and do that you'll come back to this one for months and months.

OVERALL **92%**
An outstanding golden oldie which deserves to be snapped up from the shelves of your software shop immediately!

Fresh from freeing himself from the curse that turned him into a writhed, deformed Dragon-Man, Shion the Wonderboy was feeling rather happy with himself... and why not?

But that was before the monsters arrived from another dimension, spreading fear, evil and destruction throughout the fair land that is Wonderboy's home. Shion grabs his trusty sword, Gradus, and sets off on an all-new adventure. His aim: to rid the kingdom of every monster that dares set foot in it!

Wonderboy in Monster World takes the basic game style of Wonderboy III, incorpo-

WONDERBOY IN MONSTER LAND
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS

GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUUES
NONE
SKILL LEVELS
RESPONSIVENESS
OK

WONDERBOY IN MONSTERLAND

rating the scrolling platform action with meenie-bashing and puzzle-solving.

In every one of the towns in the game, Shion finds inns



and shops guaranteed to help him out on his quest. For a nominal fee, inns enable Wonderboy to regain any lost energy (and indeed save his current position). Shops are also essential in upgrading Shion's weaponry and armour, as long as he collects enough coins to

pay for the goodies.

The graphics are really, really neat with some excellent sprites and colourful backdrops, definitely superior to the average Master System game. The actual game itself is the same brilliant mix of clever time-consuming

identical. Wonderboy is a healthy looking sprite, and very responsive to the controls. The depth of the game is massive, with hours and hours of brilliant gameplay before the end is reached. Again, this is one of these reasons to get a Power Base converter — or even a Master System! Monsterland is one of the best arcade adventures ever!

RICH



This Sega conversion of the ageing C64 classic offers up to four golfing heroes the chance to challenge each other on four of the World's most demanding courses! Just watch out for the bunkers, trees and lakes — they have a tendency to get in the way of your potentially awesome shots. Oh yes, and let's hope it's not a windy day!

There are four courses (each with 18 holes) for aspiring golfing aces to conquer.

ST ANDREWS

One of the World's most famous golf courses. A fairly straightforward course with only water and the occasional bunker to cause trouble.

WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD



DORAL

A pretty tough course, with loads of bunkers, trees and large lakes. However, most of the par limits are pretty easy to meet.

CYPRESS CREEK

Trees and bushes are your worst enemies at Cypress Creek. Cunning play is required to reach the end of this hole on par.

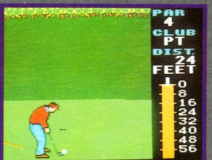
THE GAUNTLET

18 holes of pure hell! Everything possible has been

included to make these some of the most demanding holes of Golf you'll ever play! Your caddy carries around all of your clubs and for each shot, you have to choose which one is suited to your needs, but if you select the novice levels, the computer automatically chooses the best club for you.

Although the 3D views are quite slow to redraw, all of the skill, timing and atmosphere of real golf has been successfully captured. Invite a few more players around for a game and the competitive atmosphere really heats up. The graphics and sound are both superlative (especially the great sampled effects and speech) and are merely the icing on the cake.

RICH



WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD
BY
US GOLD
PLAYERS
1-4
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM/
CONTINUUES
N/A
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GREAT

PRESENTATION 51%

A bit of a presentation debacle, apart from the password option.

GRAPHICS 79%

Nice, colourful backdrops abound. The sprites are a tad pathetic.

SOUND 40%

Sadness incarnate in the form of tedious, tinkly tunes and inappropriate effects.

PLAYABILITY 90%

A decent combination of combat, exploration and puzzle-solving. Very easy to get into as well, with a large quest to get your teeth into.

LASTABILITY 92%

A massive quest contained in the cart that should have you coming back for months in order to complete it.

OVERALL 90%

Not as good as Wonderboy III, but still an excellent arcade adventure offering a great challenge.

PRESENTATION 79%

Rather banal opening screens, but the game itself has loads of options to tinker with.

GRAPHICS 92%

The 3D screen is a bit slow to build up, but the results are well worth it.

SOUND 94%

Generous lashings of sampled speech and brilliant effects. An above average tune is thrown in for good measure.

PLAYABILITY 93%

The fine control method makes accurate driving and putting easy to get to grips with and the game is addictive from the outset.

LASTABILITY 92%

Four sprawling courses and a four-player option give this loads of lasting appeal.

OVERALL 92%

The best Sega golfing game by far, and one to snap up as soon as possible!



Ahh! Italy! Ahh! Football! World Cup Italia '90 lets you take your team of eight (yes, eight) fleet-footed soccer stars to the cup final, fighting off teams from the other groups to collect the trophy. If you can't be bothered with all that, though, you can just use the Test Match option to challenge Morocco to a bit of a kick-about.

Each team has individual strengths and weaknesses, but some are stronger than others, Brazil and Argentina being among the toughest. The reverse holds true as well – don't choose to play as the United Arab Emirates unless you're a glutton for punish-

WORLD CUP ITALIA '90

ment! However the teams are represented on the pitch by only eight players each; this is probably because the pitch is very small indeed. An arrow shows which player is "on" the ball, and running, passing and shooting are achieved through judicious use of the buttons and control pad.

If you fancy a bit of a change from the workaday slog of high-intensity international cup competitions, there's always the penalty shoot-out option

which gives you the chance to take on the keeper in a one-on-one showdown. It's the best of five kicks – so make sure that each shot counts.

Unfortunately, despite the comprehensive game options, World Cup Italia '90 is a rather crappy football game. The graphics are all right, but why only eight players per team? And why such a minuscule pitch? The control is appalling and awkward, with no easy way of making the nearest player chase

the ball; at least not until the swift-footed computer opposition has got there first. When possession is gained, however, it's simply a question of running towards the computer team's goal. Your opponent stands next to no chance of halting your progress.

A football game that does not reward skill easily is no football game at all – and sadly, that's the case here.

JAZ

WORLD CUP ITALIA '90
BY
SEGA
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
N/A
SKILL LEVELS
N/A
RESPONSIVENESS
POOR



PRESENTATION **83%**
The starting screen is fair, and the team selection screen is rather jolly. Throughout the game the standard remains high.

GRAPHICS **62%**
Nice presentation screens, but the in-game graphics are gaudy and confusing.

SOUND **56%**
Whistles, cheers, and other spot effects but they're very tinny indeed.

PLAYABILITY **53%**
Don't expect to play this long into the night – it's irritatingly difficult to control.

LASTABILITY **39%**
The frustrating controls and naff playability result in this quickly being relegated to the software shelf.

OVERALL **51%**
A very poor effort that's disappointing in the extreme – get World Cup Soccer instead.

Yenite Alert! The alien Xenites *Arra* after our lovely Mother Earth, but their military space-forces have just been beaten off by Earth's defences, so they're trying a new tack. They've decided to use their time-travelling technology to delve into Earth's past where they have planted devastating bombs, hoping to disrupt the future of the planet and neutralise the human defenders.

This means you too, as the pilot of a shiny new Terran starfighter, have to travel back in time, to seek out the Xenite forces and eradicate them from history before they do some serious damage. Braving every-

XENON 2

thing from prehistoric aquatic worms to giant chameleons to spacecraft, you set to, zooming up the screen and blasting away at the oncoming hordes of enemy stuff. Blasted baddies drop little bubbly currency which is worth collecting because at certain points in the level you get to dive into a time-travelling



weapons shop where you can trade in the tokens for some big guns which fire bigger beams left, right, up and down the screen. If you get tired of the same old weapons you can even put

them in for part exchange, but you'll find the owner of the shop is a bit tight.

The graphics in Xenon 2 are pretty impressive for a Master System shoot 'em up. The shiny metallic sprites of the Amiga original are recreated very nicely, even if they do look a bit chunkier after the port-across. The action isn't super-fast but with all the sprites on the screen and the laser blasts and so forth, that's all you'd expect. It's all rather good actually, and even though it's a couple of years old, it's still one of the best Master System shoot 'em ups around.

JAZ

PRESENTATION **70%**
Nothing startling actually, but the in-game presentation is smart.

GRAPHICS **90%**
Very smart for a Master System Game. The sprites and backgrounds are very colourful. Definitely the best-looking shoot 'em up.

SOUND **56%**
The warbly, blippy music doesn't really capture the thrills of hardcore blasting.

PLAYABILITY **87%**
Not particularly speedy, but plenty of blasting action. All the humongous weapons keep the thrill-level high.

LASTABILITY **81%**
Not a vast array of levels, but it's a game you'll come back to, to better your score.

OVERALL **88%**
One of the top Master System shoot 'em ups. Worth a go if blasting is your bag.

XENON 2
BY
IMAGEWORKS
PLAYERS
1-2
GAME DIFFICULTY
MEDIUM
CONTINUES
3
SKILL LEVELS
3
RESPONSIVENESS
GOOD



AERIAL ASSAULT

SEGA

Aerial Assault pits you, heroic Earth pilot, against a gang of Earth-threatening terrorists in a horizontally scrolling blaster. Your sole purpose is to destroy EL. A massive laser aimed at the ozone layer.

The action is set over four levels, with different scenery graphics, and much the same sort of gameplay. Enemy aircraft hover over cities, ships fire ground-to-air missiles and parachute bombs fall from

above and you have to blow up or dodge the lot of 'em. At the end of each stage is a massive enemy boss, like the huge stealth fighter on level one.

Aerial Assault was converted verbatim from an ancient Master System game, and it certainly shows its age. It looks terrible, sounds awful and is extremely easy. Not



worth considering at all. **JAZ**

PRESENTATION	67%
GRAPHICS	60%
SOUND	60%
PLAYABILITY	66%
LASTABILITY	71%
OVERALL	35%

ALIEN III

ACCLAIM

The third instalment of the cult movie series takes place on Fiorina 161, a prison planet. Ripley finds herself crashlanded, with her co-survivors dead. Somehow there are hordes of aliens roaming the

scrolling corridors and air ducts of the prison, so it's lucky Ripley comes armed with grenades, a pulse rifle and a flame thrower!

Ripley has to patrol 15 levels, looking for alien-impregnated pris-

oners who must be rescued before their chests explode. The play area is packed with aliens, face-buggers and eggs, and trouble is waiting to pounce from every corner!

This is a fabulous game, probably the most atmospheric on the Game Gear. It's huge and presents a massive challenge. The weapons are great and easily controlled and the



blasting action is utterly satisfying. **RICH**

PRESENTATION	92%
GRAPHICS	91%
SOUND	80%
PLAYABILITY	83%
LASTABILITY	80%
OVERALL	91%

ALIEN SYNDROME

SEGA

Six spaceships in deep space have been left stranded after a gang of horrible squelchy aliens teleported aboard and ate the crews as a light snack. It's a phenomenon classified as the 'Alien Syndrome'. You take

the role of one of two super-troopers, out to clear the maze-like decks of each ship.

This conversion of an old Sega coin-op is a good mix of exploration and shoot 'em up. The decks are

viewed from overhead, and are split into areas. There is also the problem of the ship's self-destruct mechanism, and a large gloopy boss waiting in the vaults of each ship.

Alien Syndrome is good fun, especially in game-linked mode, but it's looking a bit ropey now, and has some weird play flows, like the dodgy scrolling. Have a look if you



want some tough entertainment. **JAZ**

PRESENTATION	73%
GRAPHICS	68%
SOUND	67%
PLAYABILITY	74%
LASTABILITY	80%
OVERALL	72%

ARIEL THE LITTLE MERMAID

SEGA

It's Hans Christian Andersen's classic fairytale of the mermaid who wanted to live on land was brought to life in the stunning Disney movie of 1990. This game uses the character of Ariel and her father, King

Triton in a collect 'em up maze game.

The game is a curious affair, based around locating friends of the aqua-people, who have been shrunk to plankton by the evil sea-witch

while seeing off her servants with Mer-magic. Each of the four levels is a twisty maze of coral reefs or timbers of wrecked ships, and occasional enemies.

Occasional is all too true. This game is so easy that even young children will finish it in a day on easy setting. The graphics look good but are offset by poor scrolling, and



the sound isn't worth mentioning. Ariel is as damp as seaweed. **RICH**

PRESENTATION	58%
GRAPHICS	75%
SOUND	53%
PLAYABILITY	63%
LASTABILITY	16%
OVERALL	24%

AX BATTLER

SEGA

Death Adder's troops are running rampant across the land. Ax battler must speak to the natives, learn clues about magic objects and places to explore; buy equipment and supplies, then visit the caves, forests and

dungeons. The game is normally viewed overhead, but when a combat situation ensues, Ax Battler gets a better picture of who he's fighting.

This RPG debacle purports to be a continuation of the Golden Axe

legend, as recounted in the two coin-op beat 'em ups. Ax, contraires, it is a mish-mash of game styles that satisfies no player sufficiently. Ax Battler falls miserably because it's ugly and uneventful, even by RPG standards.

The graphics are unimaginative blocks of colour, each town looks much like every other. Great chunks of the game are spent doing nothing



much. When something does happen, it's not very exciting. Avoid it. **JAZ**

PRESENTATION	48%
GRAPHICS	30%
SOUND	30%
PLAYABILITY	41%
LASTABILITY	34%
OVERALL	37%

A.SENNA'S SUPER MONACO GP II

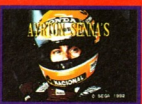
SEGA

Ayrton Senna, the fastest Brazilian on land lends his name to the second Super Monaco game on the Game Gear. Maybe Sega hoped some of his flair might rub off on the game.

Sixteen World Champion tracks are featured, with two racing stages for each. First players have to battle for a place on the grid with 11 other drivers. Also involved in your success is the car design and spec. Tyre

changing and gear choice can shave vital seconds off lap times. Loads of other options are available.

But let's be honest, all this is by the by if the on-screen racing isn't up to the mark. And that's the case here. The sensation of speed created doesn't match the heady figures of 300kph shown on the speedometer. It feels more like you're in control of



a Lada than a sports car. Not recommended, even to racing fans. **JAZ**

PRESENTATION	48%
GRAPHICS	45%
SOUND	31%
PLAYABILITY	43%
LASTABILITY	47%
OVERALL	45%



BART VS THE SPACE MUTANTS

FLYING EDGE

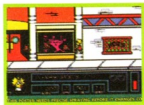
Bart is known as Springfield's most precocious brat, so it's no surprise that that no-one believes him when he claims Earth is being invaded by aliens disguised as humans. Having overheard their

plans, Bart knows that they're building a weapon out of everyday objects (starting with purple objects and moving on to hats) and, realising that he's not going to get any adult help, he resolves to foil their

plans himself.

Bart's crusade takes the form of a multi-level platform game. Each of the levels presents Bart with a different wacky task, like painting objects a different colour. Sometimes the challenge comes from tests of dexterity, sometimes it's puzzle-solving.

RICH



PRESENTATION	83%
GRAPHICS	85%
SOUND	76%
PLAYABILITY	91%
LASTABILITY	89%
OVERALL	90%

BATMAN RETURNS

SEGA

Batman Returns is a scrolling platform beat 'em up, in which the Dark Knight himself has to swing and leap around Gotham's dingy buildings punching out the Penguin's clown pals, and Miss

Catwoman herself should he find her. As well as his fists, Batman is armed with a stock of batarangs as well as grenades and even a swarm of bats who swoop to his aid when he calls.

Though it's similar, this conversion is actually better than the Master System game, featuring some smart effects like a snow blizzard on level one. The visuals are sharp and convey the atmosphere well on the small screen. This is quite a movin' beat 'em up for the Game Gear, that deserves attention.

RICH



PRESENTATION	87%
GRAPHICS	92%
SOUND	78%
PLAYABILITY	91%
LASTABILITY	74%
OVERALL	79%

CHAKAN

SEGA

Nothing is as chilling as looking into the face of the man who cannot die. Chakan achieved this miraculous state by duelling with Death and winning. However, he soon discovered the state to be one

of misery, as sharing life with eternal evil is Hell itself.

Your quest in this occultish platform adventure is to rid the universe of evil and then let Chakan rest in peace. Spirits roam the rocky

levels, and Chakan defends himself with twin swords and other sharp weapons he finds along the way. He can also use the mystic magic contained in pairs of potions which are lying around the platforms.

Chakan has loads of ideas, but is let down by excessive difficulty. It's not as aggravating as the Megadrive version, but it is still too demanding



to be outstanding fun.

RICH

PRESENTATION	88%
GRAPHICS	99%
SOUND	91%
PLAYABILITY	83%
LASTABILITY	78%
OVERALL	79%

CHESSMASTER

SEGA

This Chessmaster simulation produces a one or two player Game Gear platform for Chess.

The game itself is as you'd expect, though it's not played to competition rules (no strict time lim-

its here, unless you specify them for the computer opponent). However, all the subtle techniques of Chess, like casting and en passant, are recognised and the Game Gear can play at a variety of levels, the hard-

est of which is very challenging and it can even teach you how to play in its Teach mode. The only thing you could really fault it for are the board graphics which are very unambitious. The sound isn't up to much either, but then you don't want Game Gear music playing while you mull over your next move do you?

Chess fans who can never find



anyone to play with should enjoy it.

RICH

PRESENTATION	91%
GRAPHICS	48%
SOUND	26%
PLAYABILITY	81%
LASTABILITY	84%
OVERALL	80%

CHUCK ROCK

CORE

Chuck is an amorous caveman turned furious caveman, since Gary Gritter, his arch-enemy has stolen his girlfriend to have his wicked way with her. What ensues is

a mad dash across perilous prehistoric landscapes that make Jurassic Park look like Whipsnade Zoo.

The five levels are packed with rocky platforms and hungry

dinosaurs who see roost caveman on the menu and have to be beaten off with Chuck's belly-butt technique or a large rock to the nut.

This is a great conversion of Chuck Rock with all the humour and zany graphic style of the originals. The dinosaurs look great, and the levels are really well constructed.

JAZZ



PRESENTATION	85%
GRAPHICS	93%
SOUND	84%
PLAYABILITY	92%
LASTABILITY	86%
OVERALL	89%

COLUMNS

BY SEGA

Sega's favourite jewel-dropping game appears on the Game Gear too, and it's practically the same as the Master System version. Direct the plummeting columns of three coloured jewels/fruit/dice so that

they match up with previously stocked jewels/fruit/dice and hence disappear. The more you match, the faster it gets, and the higher the stack grows the more likely is the imminent end of the game.

All the game options are here, including a two player competition and a Flash Columns option, which for some reason is backed by a constantly-scrolling 3D road. The tunes are tinkly but are none the worse for it. The gameplay is as fascinating as ever. It's not a game that you'll be playing in heavy doses, but rather one that you'll come back to



from time to time when you want a break from blasting or Ninjas.

RICH

PRESENTATION	80%
GRAPHICS	71%
SOUND	79%
PLAYABILITY	87%
LASTABILITY	82%
OVERALL	85%

CRASH DUMMIES

BY ACCLAIM

Slack and Spin are a pair of crash dummies who earn their keep by being thrown off buildings and such-like. You have to get them through a week of freelance stunting, doing things like falling off buildings,

working in a bomb factory, driving through walls, downhill skiing, and riding a rocket. They prefer to stay in one piece so you'd best steer them around any dangerous obstacles or handle those bombs with care.

Besides, the better they do, the more cash they earn, and if they screw up they tend to get the sack.

This is a rather jolly little game, though when I say 'little' I mean 'little'. It doesn't take long to master the five sub-gamings and though they're quite good fun it's a game I tired of all too quickly.

RICH



PRESENTATION	92%
GRAPHICS	84%
SOUND	91%
PLAYABILITY	90%
DURABILITY	78%
OVERALL	83%

DEFENDER OF THE OASIS

BY SEGA

Fans of role-playing games had a pretty raw deal if they owned a Game Gear... until Defender of the Oasis came along. A wicked snake lord has arrived in a peaceful land and caused a bit of an uproar by

enslaving all the people. The former prince has to find the source of this mystical fiend's and free his country.

This big 4 megabit cartridge contains massive amounts of action, with acres of all-action dungeon

exploration and combat. It's one of this new breed of RPGs which aren't bogged down by menus and long-winded round-by-round combat.

The graphics aren't amazing, but they do the job and the fact that everything's very easy to use makes it a good game for novice and experienced role-players alike.

JAZ



PRESENTATION	91%
GRAPHICS	75%
SOUND	88%
PLAYABILITY	93%
DURABILITY	91%
OVERALL	90%

DONALD DUCK

BY SEGA

After each being given a lucky dime by Uncle Scrooge McDuck, Huey, Dewey and Louie have all been kidnapped by Magica De Spell who wants their lucky coinage to start her fortune. It's up to Uncle Donald to save the boys from their

prisons around the world in this platform adventure, full of the sort of troublesome creatures Donald always seems to be coming up against in the cartoons.

Like just about every other of Sega's Disney licensed games,

Donald Duck is a corker. After the smart intro sequence you get to feast your eyes on the excellent graphics they're very colourful and wonderfully animated. The music is extremely jolly and the gameplay is equally ace. In spite of the kiddo looks it's very tough as well as being very playable. Well worth buying.

RICH



PRESENTATION	91%
GRAPHICS	96%
SOUND	88%
PLAYABILITY	95%
DURABILITY	87%
OVERALL	89%

FANTASY ZONE

BY SEGA

This odd little shoot 'em up puts you at the controls of a living space ship named Opa Opa, who finds himself in the highly bizarre Fantasy Zone. The place is full of flying, er, things which hardly seem

to realise that they could do Opa Opa a serious mischief should they collide with him. Opa Opa comes fully armed, though, and if you can shoot some creatures, collect the cash they drop then take it to the

floating shop which appears from time to time, you can upgrade his engines and his armament into something that does a lot more damage.

All the weirdness of the original arcade game is present in this conversion. It's a simple game really, and the floaty controls take a bit of getting used to, but it's good fun



PRESENTATION	88%
GRAPHICS	80%
SOUND	77%
PLAYABILITY	91%
DURABILITY	79%
OVERALL	80%

and still one of the better GG shots.

JAZ

G-LOC

BY SEGA

In G-LoC you find yourself in the cockpit of a strike jet on a mission of no-mercy into enemy territory. The action alternates between high-level strikes against squadrons of hostile jets and low-level ground

strikes in which rocketing tanks and ships is the order of the day. Not surprisingly, destruction equals points, and at the end of each stage these points can be traded in, rather like Esso Tiger Tokens, for newer

weapons.

As we've mentioned before, the G-LoC coin-op was one of those 'All Graphics, Not Much Gameplay' machines, so it comes as something of a surprise to find that the Game Gear version, which doesn't have the benefit of 32-bit graphics co-processors, is actually a reasonable 3D shoot 'em up. It gets a bit boring



after a while, though, because there's hardly any gameplay variety.

RICH

PRESENTATION	71%
GRAPHICS	78%
SOUND	83%
PLAYABILITY	88%
DURABILITY	86%
OVERALL	60%

GLOBAL GLADIATORS

BY SEGA

Mick and Mack are back! These two environmentally-conscious lads have resolved to clear up the planet single-handedly by venturing to the places where slime, sludge and pollution congregates (usually

scrolling platform-packed places it would seem) and wipe it out with their disinfectant goo-guns.

Egging them on is no less a personality than Ronald McDonald, who will also reward them for every

McDonald's golden arch they happen to find when they've completed each level.

Though the environmental message is a bit feeble, and it's all a bit of a McDonald's advert, this is still a very jolly platform game, with smart graphics, bouncy music and fast action.

RICH



PRESENTATION	81%
GRAPHICS	88%
SOUND	88%
PLAYABILITY	88%
DURABILITY	88%
OVERALL	85%



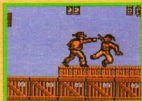
INDIANA JONES

BY US GOLD

The great Dr Jones is off on another of his treasure hunts, this time for the Holy Grail! As usual the Nazis are after it too, and unless Indy gets their first Hitler will probably use the Grail to gain eternal life!

Various scenes from the film are recreated in this platform maze game, starting with young Indy retrieving the Cross of Coronado before moving on to the current adventure. The action is good, but

somehow the Indy character isn't quite as tough as you would expect. He punches, shoots and whips the bad guys out of his way, but his whip disappears after only a couple of hits! That never happened in the film! It struck me as one of those licensed games where any character could have been in the place of the Indy sprite and it wouldn't have



made any difference to the action.
RICH

PRESENTATION	75%
GRAPHICS	87%
SOUND	88%
PLAYABILITY	90%
LASTABILITY	90%
OVERALL	86%

JOE MONTANA FOOTBALL

BY SEGA

Here's the infamous quarterback to host a bit of Game Gear Gridiron. Pick your team from the 28 on offer, then take to the field for the kick-off. All the standard rules of the game are observed - get the ball

into your opponent's end-zone in four downs or the other team get possession.

You get to choose an offensive or defensive play from menus at each down. Then when the teams

line up the play begins and you get control of the Quarterback or flip to another position.

The game's weakness is the limited selection of plays and the too-predictable computer opponent. If you want to play American Football you're best off buying a Megadrive and a copy of JM '92.

JAZZ



PRESENTATION	75%
GRAPHICS	88%
SOUND	88%
PLAYABILITY	78%
LASTABILITY	88%
OVERALL	87%

KLAX

BY TENGEN

Here come those tiles, rolling down the conveyor belt at you! Quick, catch them on your paddle and tip them into the bin below to form those patterns of like-coloured tiles they call Klaxes. String together

three tiles, vertically, horizontally or diagonally and they disappear to let any that are above fall into their place. And this earns you points.

This classic puzzle game which calls for reflexes and strategic think-

ing has made the translation to Game Gear pretty much intact. All the levels are there, as well as all the warps and it's still one of the best games of its genre. Klax is one of those games that you just can't put down once you've picked it up so make sure it's added to your collection as soon as possible!

RICH



PRESENTATION	90%
GRAPHICS	95%
SOUND	95%
PLAYABILITY	91%
LASTABILITY	96%
OVERALL	90%

KRUSTY'S FUN HOUSE

BY ACCLAIM

Curse those ravenous rodents! They've invaded the home of the famed degenerate clown so favoured in the Simpson household, and now poor old Krusty has to jump around his pad, finding ways to lead the

army of rats to their doom at the hands of one of his pals.

You live to exterminate the ever-marching rats by building bridges for them to cross or networks of pipes which will lead them

to the Great Rathole In The Sky. All this takes a bit of working out as you need to be able to predict the path of the rats and construct accordingly. The puzzle-type gameplay is fiendishly addictive, the levels are multitudinous, the graphics amazingly good for a Game Gear and the game overall, unmissable.

JAZZ



PRESENTATION	88%
GRAPHICS	91%
SOUND	85%
PLAYABILITY	93%
LASTABILITY	91%
OVERALL	92%

LEMINGS

BY SEGA

This is the game that proved so popular it spawned many imitators (including Krusty's Fun House, above). The idea is simply to rescue a gang of brainless Lemmings who just march around non-stop, chang-

ing direction if they hit something, or just walking over cliffs and dying. To do that you need to get them past some horrific obstacles by blessing certain of their number with special Lemming powers, such as the ability

to climb, or dig, or build bridges or explode. Each level presents a new and more fiendish challenge, some of which will have you screaming in frustration but all of which are possible - somehow!

This is a quite staggeringly good conversion of this classic puzzle game, which plays near enough exactly the same as all the other



versions. It's funny and fun and if puzzles are your bag you shouldn't miss out on it.
RICH

PRESENTATION	90%
GRAPHICS	89%
SOUND	83%
PLAYABILITY	94%
LASTABILITY	91%
OVERALL	92%

MARBLE MADNESS

BY VIRGIN

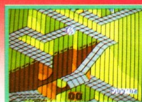
In this conversion of the classic Atari coin-op you have to steer a marble through six levels of surreal obstacles displayed in isometric perspective. The idea is simply to get your marble to the finish line at the

end of each course, but there are such marble-hating fiends as vacuum cleaners and the despicable black marble waiting to bump you off the track.

This is a decent conversion, but

it's seriously lacking in levels. The six tracks take maybe an hour to beat, and although the appeal of the arcade game was that you could keep coming back to beat your previous times and high scores, this doesn't seem to have translated to the Game Gear version and I was soon bored by Marble Madness.

RICH



PRESENTATION	75%
GRAPHICS	71%
SOUND	73%
PLAYABILITY	77%
LASTABILITY	51%
OVERALL	70%

MIKEY MOUSE, CASTLE OF ILLUSION

BY SEGA

The evil witch Mizrabel has captured Mickey's main squeeze Minnie. It's probably the attention-seeking of a lonely old woman, but Mickey is nevertheless honour-bound to traverse seven deadly

landscapes and rescue Minnie from Mizrabel's dungeon in the Castle of Illusion. Mickey's only defence is his ability to trash his enemies by landing on them butt-first and his prodigious apple-throwing abilities.

The intervening drama provides the Game Gear with one of its best games ever, a sumptuous platform feast with haunting sound, beautiful graphics and loads of gameplay to keep you occupied. There's a real flavour of Disney in this game, but the playability recommends it in its own right.

JAZ



PRESENTATION	81%
GRAPHICS	92%
SOUND	87%
PLAYABILITY	90%
LASTABILITY	88%
OVERALL	91%

MIKEY MOUSE, LAND OF ILLUSION

BY SEGA

One day, Mickey dozed off while reading a fairy story in a book and found himself in a dream in which he's on a quest to recover a stolen magic gem from a foul phantom. The gem usually provides pro-

tection for a peaceful village, but the phantom is using its power to bring gloom and doom on the population.

Mickey can't take the chance of running into the phantom's fiendish servants. Luckily, they all yield to his

old tactic of the bottom bounce, and Mickey can still lob objects at his foes. He also needs to collect objects to solve puzzles which allow him further into the game.

World of Illusion has tremendous graphics, the animation is superb and the gameplay has more depth to it than Castle of Illusion.

RICH



PRESENTATION	88%
GRAPHICS	92%
SOUND	92%
PLAYABILITY	90%
LASTABILITY	88%
OVERALL	92%

OUTRUN

BY SEGA

This conversion of the famous coin-op driving game puts you at the wheel of a smart open-topped Ferrari Testarossa on the start line of a cross-California race for glory, along palm-lined boulevards and through dimly-lit tunnels.

Though the poor little Game Gear can't hope to pump out the kind of visuals and sonics produced by the arcade game, it does a fair impression of the original, with fairly good sprites and a fastish 3D effect, spoiled only by a bit of sprite

flicker which makes some of the scenery disappear from time to time.

It's all reasonably good fun but seeing as it was the nice graphics and sound that really made playing the arcade game such an enjoyable experience, this does tend to look a bit feeble after a while. I'd rather spend the asking price playing the good-sprite and a fastish 3D effect at my local arcade.

JAZ



PRESENTATION	81%
GRAPHICS	78%
SOUND	77%
PLAYABILITY	78%
LASTABILITY	67%
OVERALL	78%

OUTRUN EUROPA

BY US GOLD

Great US Gold's attempt to inject new life into the Outrun formula didn't quite come up trumps on this occasion. The idea is that you're a sort of super-spy who has had his car pinched by enemy agents who know about the secret documents in the

glove compartment and are now on their way to the continent. Grabbing the nearest motorbike you have to drive from your start point in London to Dover, dodging police cars and other traffic, then cross The Channel on a jetski before switching

transport again. And so it goes, all the way across Europe.

While the idea is sort of good (though I'm a bit dubious about transplanting Outrun to Europe and thus removing the appealing California atmosphere) the game-play is pretty poor. The graphics are mediocre and the action is highly frustrating. I couldn't get past the jet-ski section, but if I had persisted



with it I'm sure my Game Gear would now be in a million pieces.

RICH

PRESENTATION	73%
GRAPHICS	65%
SOUND	64%
PLAYABILITY	55%
LASTABILITY	49%
OVERALL	58%

PAPERBOY

BY US GOLD

Experiencing all the thrills of being a paperboy may not sound like much of a game concept, but Atari made a popular coin-op out of it a few years back, and this is pretty much a straight conversion.

Get on your BMX saddle and look after a street-full of newspaper subscribers for a week, making sure they get their morning papers on their doorsteps. Failure results in them cancelling their subscriptions

and you eventually losing your job. To make things tricky there are all sorts of crazy obstacles waiting to knock you off your saddle, but you can whack most of them out of the way with a well-thrown newspaper.

All the features of the coin-op are here, and it's all pretty good stuff actually - unusual and very playable. Give it a try if you want



something out of the ordinary.

JAZ

PRESENTATION	81%
GRAPHICS	84%
SOUND	72%
PLAYABILITY	82%
LASTABILITY	77%
OVERALL	79%

PRINCE OF PERSIA

BY DOMARK

While the Sultan of Persia is off on his hols, Grand Vizier, Jaffar, seizes the chance to kidnap his daughter and take over the entire kingdom! Obviously he must be stopped, but the only man to do

it has just been imprisoned by Jaffar in the palace's deepest dungeon. This hero has to escape his prison and race through twelve levels of fiendish platform mazes, full of fiendish traps to reach the princess

before Jaffar does something nasty to her. As well as the traps there are guards everywhere, so the first thing you have to do is find a sword and master some fencing skill. Only the best can survive!

This is simply a superb game, with all the atmosphere of a Sinbad movie, great puzzles which test your reflexes as well as your brain, and



astoundingly good animation on the athletic main sprite. Get it!

JAZ

PRESENTATION	88%
GRAPHICS	93%
SOUND	97%
PLAYABILITY	92%
LASTABILITY	89%
OVERALL	91%

PUTT & PUTTER GOLF

BY SEGA

After *Putt and Putter's* rather crap title sequence you enter the rather crap game by first placing your ball on the tee mat. You can then proceed to hit the ball in any direction you like and the chances

are all the pinball-style bumpers and the bouncing boundaries around the green will eventually send the ball into the cup after your first shot or at least well under par. Sometimes, though, the powerful

rebounds result in the ball landing anywhere so you can end up taking about ten shots to get the ball up a hill only for it to bounce off a wall and run straight back down at you every time. And all the while there's some brainlessly jolly music playing in the background.

This isn't worth the effort.

JAZ



PRESENTATION	87%
GRAPHICS	87%
SOUND	81%
PLAYABILITY	98%
LASTABILITY	90%
OVERALL	92%

SHINOBI

BY SEGA

One of the finest of Sega's Shinobi games - and it's only on the Game Gear! Joe's four Ninja mates have all been kidnapped and it's up to him to rescue them from locations all over town. All sorts of heavily-

armed bad guys stand in his way, but nothing stops the blade of Musashi and his ninja magic. Once rescued, you can switch characters, using the special powers of the other Ninjas (such as being able to cling to

walls or perform cyclone spins) as well as their special magic power to get past tricky obstacles.

This is simply an excellent game. The graphics are ace, the gameplay is unbelievably addictive and even the music is superb. A must for your collection, even if you already own the sequel.

JAZ



PRESENTATION	93%
GRAPHICS	91%
SOUND	92%
PLAYABILITY	98%
LASTABILITY	90%
OVERALL	92%

SLIDER

BY SEGA

This was actually based on an old Amiga game called *Skweek* which was a surprisingly addictive variation on the old PacMan theme. The fluffy hero (who is actually called *Skweek*) has to rescue his

entire planet which has been turned blue by invading aliens. What this involves is walking around levels made up of blue tiles which turn pink when *Skweek* steps on them. There are all sorts of nasty aliens

wandering around, whom *Skweek* should of course avoid or indeed shoot with one of the extra weapons that are lying around. There are also nasty traps such as cracked tiles which disappear as he crosses over them. There are even different coloured tiles which he has to walk on several times before they turn into the correct colour.

It's very simple and actually has a bit of an air of naifness about it, but having said that it is actually quite good fun, even if it's only in a mindless sort of way.

Well worth trying if you like this sort of game.

RICH

PRESENTATION	73%
GRAPHICS	79%
SOUND	69%
PLAYABILITY	88%
LASTABILITY	75%
OVERALL	76%

SMASH TV

BY ACCLAIM

The game show of tomorrow requires no naming of tunes or guessing of prices or even naming the capital city of Venezuela, it just requires a bloke with a big gun and arenas full of robots to blow away.

That's what *Smash TV's* all about. The plucky contestant has to walk through a maze of robot-infested arenas, grabbing cash and other prizes while wiping out his cybernetic foes. Extra weapons become avail-

able from time to time, and at the end of each maze there's a particularly large and nasty boss robot blocking your route to the next part of the show.

If you liked Williams *Smash TV* coin-op this is... pretty grim actually. The graphics are minuscule and poorly defined and the action is a very pale shadow of the arcade orig-



inal, made no better by a very tricky control method. Give it a miss.

RICH

PRESENTATION	71%
GRAPHICS	51%
SOUND	67%
PLAYABILITY	58%
LASTABILITY	45%
OVERALL	50%

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

BY SEGA

The once-benevolent Dr Robotnik has turned to evil, encasing fluffy creatures in nasty robot suits so that they will help him take over the world. The one creature he couldn't

catch was Sonic, a turbo-powered hedgehog who now has to race over all kinds of dangerous platform levels in his quest to free his bunny pals and give Robotnik a good seeing-to.

Though this is a cut-down version of the Megadrive version of *Sonic* it still contains all the speedy frolics of the original. The graphics are very colourful and stylish and the gameplay is good fun, if a little easy. Mind you, *Sonic 2* is better.

RICH



PRESENTATION	85%
GRAPHICS	89%
SOUND	85%
PLAYABILITY	88%
LASTABILITY	88%
OVERALL	88%

SONIC 2

BY SEGA

Sonic's new fox-cub pal, Tails has been kidnapped by vile Dr Robotnik and it's up to Sonic to race over the traditional hills and dales to get Tails back by collecting the Chaos rings and recovering the Chaos

Emeralds which give him the power to defeat Robotnik.

Sonic 2 has all the features of the original and more. As well as all the leaping, racing around, smashing down walls and looping-the-

loop, *Sonic* also gets to take to the air on a hang-glider, ride a minecart and ride underwater in a bubble.

Like the Master System version, *Sonic 2* looks very smart indeed, with excellent sprites, gorgeous backgrounds and super-speedy scuffling as well as seven levels of challenging and enjoyable game-



play. In fact it's another of those cartridges which no Game Gear owner should be without.

JAZ

PRESENTATION	87%
GRAPHICS	95%
SOUND	79%
PLAYABILITY	98%
LASTABILITY	89%
OVERALL	95%



GAME GEAR REVIEW

SPACE HARRIER

BY SEGA

This was the first of Sega's big hydraulic chair/3D graphics coins which proved very popular in its day and isn't bad on the Game Gear. You play a jet-pack powered hero who has to fly through the

twelve levels of The Fantasy Zone which have been infested with weird alien creatures. You're armed with a large gun, and when you see something nasty zooming out of the screen at you, just blast it!

Without the hydraulic chair and super-duper graphics of the coin-op Space Harrier is a no-frills shoot 'em up, though having said that, it's not a bad game. The graphics on this GG version are surprisingly decent though the sprites seem to have a chunky square borders around them. The action is fast and the only thing that really lets it down is a



lack of variety.
JAZ

PRESENTATION	71%
GRAPHICS	70%
SOUND	70%
PLAYABILITY	77%
LASTABILITY	68%
OVERALL	69%

SPIDERMAN

BY SEGA

That well-upholstered madman, The Kingpin, has planted a huge bomb somewhere in New York and gone on television to warn the populace and blame Spiderman (for it is he) for trying to hold the city to ran-

som. To clear his name and save NY, Spideray has to leap, crawl and swing his way through numerous levels of platforms, doing out fist-flavoured justice to any of The Kingpin's henchmen who happen across his

path. Take care, though, because The Kingpin has also enlisted the help of Spidey's old enemies, Dr Octopus and The Hobgoblin, who are guarding the keys which will deactivate the bomb.

The action is non-stop and there are loads of levels to beat and it's all really challenging stuff. Highly recommended, especially to



fans of the Marvel superheroes.
RICH

PRESENTATION	85%
GRAPHICS	83%
SOUND	71%
PLAYABILITY	89%
LASTABILITY	81%
OVERALL	80%

STREETS OF RAGE

BY SEGA

Community policing just hasn't worked in this particular neighbourhood, and so the police are sending in their best officers who are experts in unarmed combat! Playing as either tough cop-blokes, Axel or

Adam or rock-hard girl-cop, Blaze, you have to fight your way through loads of levels full of street punks and hardened criminals on the hunt for their boss, the infamous Mr Big. While this is a good effort at

reproducing the classic Megadrive beat 'em up, with decent graphics and sound, it turns out to be really frustrating because as soon as you get knocked down one, you're immediately surrounded by bad guys who won't let you off the ground! You'll probably end up kicking the cack out of the Game Gear - and that sort of thing isn't



covered by the warranty!
RICH

PRESENTATION	81%
GRAPHICS	84%
SOUND	83%
PLAYABILITY	73%
LASTABILITY	76%
OVERALL	77%

STREETS OF RAGE II

BY SEGA

After sorting out Mr Big in Streets of Rage part one, the Espacially Tough Division of the local police force have got to track down a new crime boss, Mr X, who has kidnapped one of their number. On the

hunt to retrieve their lost buddy, you get to play one of the other two members of the squad Blaze or Axel, or perhaps a new bloke called Max. There are an absolute ton of bad guys guarding the route to Mr

X's base of operations, and they all need to punch or otherwise whacked out of the way. All the original fighting manoeuvres are present, and a couple of spectacular new ones have been added.

The extra moves are just one of the features that make this a much better game than the original. The graphics are ace and the fighting



action is much easier to get to grips with as well as being loads more satisfying. Top stuff.
RICH

PRESENTATION	87%
GRAPHICS	89%
SOUND	85%
PLAYABILITY	91%
LASTABILITY	88%
OVERALL	90%

SUPER KICK OFF

BY US GOLD

The famous football game gets everywhere doesn't it? Tiertex, who programmed the Megadrive and Master System version of this soccer classic also produced the Game Gear version and it's just as

good. Take your team to the top of the league or play against a pal in friendly matches, if you've got two cartridges and a link cable.

All the gameplay of the original is here, though remember that

the controls take a bit of mastering, especially on the Game Gear's dinky pad. The Game Gear's dinky screen can occasionally make things difficult to see too. After a few hours of play you'll be irrevocably hooked, though, and you'll have picked up the skills required to out-dribble your opponent and knock the ball into the back of the old onion bag. If



you're a football nut, don't miss out on this.
RICH

PRESENTATION	90%
GRAPHICS	83%
SOUND	54%
PLAYABILITY	99%
LASTABILITY	92%
OVERALL	91%

SUPER OFF ROAD RACER

BY VIRGIN

This racing game puts you in one of those giant 4x4 trucks driven by big Americans in lumberjack shirts. Each race is set on tracks laden with deep ditches, pools of water and steep hills. Your objective

is simply to complete four laps before the other three competitors (one of whom can be another linked-up player), usually by barging the other trucks into the track-side hoardings.

You might want to make the occasional detour to pick up the bags of cash and nitro-injectors which appear on the course. The cash comes in handy when you want to upgrade your truck after the race, and the nitros give a speed boost.

This is an enjoyable racing game, but it does get a bit samey, especially when you run out of



tracks and have to race around the old ones in the opposite direction.
RICH

PRESENTATION	81%
GRAPHICS	83%
SOUND	79%
PLAYABILITY	85%
LASTABILITY	90%
OVERALL	81%



SUPER SPACE INVADERS

BY DOMARK

Space Invaders? Who wants to play Space Invaders these days? Well, this one is a beefed up version of the antique coin-op with 33 levels of spruced-up graphics, extra weapons and all sorts of other enhancements.

As ever, the invaders are marching left and right on their relentless descent to the Earth's surface, dropping bombs as they go. The same old stuff really.

After every third level you're

placed in a bonus game in which aliens are stealing Earth's cows! You have to blast the cowpopping bad-dies before all the cows are sucked up into oblivion.

Unlike the arcade oldie, the graphics in this game are quite good, but no matter how much you tart it up it's still Space Invaders, so it's not surprising that it gets more



than a bit repetitive after an hour's play.

PRESENTATION	80%
GRAPHICS	89%
SOUND	80%
PLAYABILITY	79%
DURABILITY	70%
OVERALL	73%

TAZMANIA

BY SEGA

Taz and his TazManian Devil family are starving. They haven't had anything to eat for weeks, and they're so desperate that they've told Taz to go out into the platform-filled island that is TazMania and

bring back one of the giant eggs that legend has it were laid by pre-historic sea birds on the far side of the island.

Of course, there's loads of nasty TazManian wildlife standing in

Taz's way, but luckily Taz is as tough as old boots, thanks to his high-powered spin attack which can send his foes spinning off the screen.

TazMania certainly looks amazing, with colourful backgrounds and cartoonlike sprites, but just as with all the other versions of this game the Game Gear translation is just too easy to complete.



You'll have a good time doing it, but when I reached the end I almost couldn't believe it was over.

RICH

PRESENTATION	79%
GRAPHICS	89%
SOUND	80%
PLAYABILITY	84%
DURABILITY	69%
OVERALL	74%

TERMINATOR

BY VIRGIN

A cyborg killing machine from the future, a Terminator, is stalking the streets hounding the woman who will one day give birth to the man who leads the final assault in a war between humans and the

Terminator's control computer. You play Kyle Reese, a soldier of tomorrow, who has also come back in time to protect the woman.

In this platform shoot 'em up, you start your mission with only a

bag of grenades to get you past armies of Terminators so that you can get to the time machine. Once you've made the time-jump you have to fight off armed punks and misunderstanding police officers before he runs into the Terminator itself.

Unlike the Megadrive version, this is really challenging as well as



looking good.

RICH

PRESENTATION	80%
GRAPHICS	85%
SOUND	80%
PLAYABILITY	81%
DURABILITY	79%
OVERALL	80%

WIMBLEDON TENNIS

BY SEGA

You too could become the next Jim Courier or Steffi Graf (sort of) with this tennis simulation, set on the infamous Wimbledon centre courts. You can play friendly matches against another player or a comput-

er player, or take on a field of computerised professionals in the tournament mode. The action is viewed from above and behind one end of the court and all the rules of tennis are adhered to.

Wimbledon Tennis' graphics aren't superb, but they do the job adequately. The gameplay is reasonably good, though if you've played some of the latest computer tennis games you may be disappointed by the fact that there isn't much of a range of shots for you to use. It's quite good fun, but unless you're a real tennis fan you're not



missing anything if you don't buy it.

RICH

PRESENTATION	86%
GRAPHICS	77%
SOUND	71%
PLAYABILITY	80%
DURABILITY	76%
OVERALL	75%

WONDERBOY

BY SEGA

This is a conversion of a very old coin-op which Sega brought out to rival Nintendo's popular Super Mario Brothers. Like SMB, it stars a very cute little guy who has to rescue his kidnapped girlfriend by running

along horizontally-scrolling levels, jumping over obstacles and jumping ON any nasty creatures in his path. He has to keep his strength up by collecting fruit and keep an eye out for eggs on the ground which con-

tain weapons, such as throwing axes, or power-ups, such as skateboards.

While the graphics are cute and colourful I just couldn't stifle a yawn while I was playing Wonderboy. Like I said, it's a very old arcade game and I've played loads of similar games which are actually much better since then. In fact, I'm sure everyone has. If you want this sort of



thing, try one of the Sonic games which are more up to date.

JAZ

PRESENTATION	67%
GRAPHICS	71%
SOUND	78%
PLAYABILITY	67%
DURABILITY	68%
OVERALL	64%

WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD

BY US GOLD

How about a round of golf on four different 18-hole courses? You don't even need to leave your seat, because US Gold's golf simulation gives you a realistic game of golf in the comfort of your chair.

After selecting your course you're presented with a 3D view of the hole, with your little bloke at one end and the hole in the distance. You have to use your skill and judgement to get the ball in the

hole in the lowest number of shots.

Just aim your shot, taking wind or slope into account, then hit the button to start a moving meter. Press again to stop the meter and set the strength of the shot, then again to set any slice you want to put on the ball. It all works very well indeed, and overall this is a most comprehensive simulation which

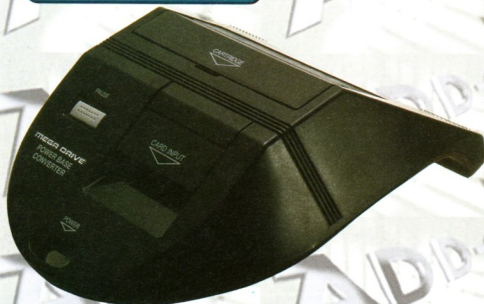


even golfing novices should enjoy.

JAZ

PRESENTATION	89%
GRAPHICS	86%
SOUND	89%
PLAYABILITY	90%
DURABILITY	89%
OVERALL	89%

MEGA DRIVE



▲ POWER BASE CONVERTER

The Megadrive is the only 16-bit console in existence completely compatible with a vast range of 8-bit games. Simply plug in the Power Base and the Megadrive can play the entire range of Sega Master System games! Check out the Master System reviews section, and you'll see there are some really smart titles out there and most of them are much cheaper than Megadrive games too!

SEGA TAP

Open up a whole new range of awesome Megadrive gaming with the four-player Sega Tap. Plug it in for multi-player action second-to-none! The Sega Tap is currently compatible with J-League Pro Striker (an imported football game which is completely excellent in four-player mode), Gauntlet (Tengen's smart conversion of the old coin-op which is coming soon) and Wimbledon Tennis (which is unfortunately a bit naff).

4-WAY PLAY

This is Electronic Arts' version of the Sega Tap, allowing four players to hook up their joypads for multi-player games. It isn't compatible with the Sega four player connector, though, so it won't work with games like J-League, but EA are releasing their own range of titles which work with it. Most of them are sports games (and don't forget, EA's sports games are some of the best on any console) such as Bill Walsh College Football, NHL '94 and the amazing FIFA World Soccer. The 4-Way Play also works with General Chaos, transforming a rather unplayable combat game into something much more enjoyable.

ARCADE POWER STICK II

For people used to conventional joysticks rather than the Sega joypads, the Arcade Power Stick is the perfect solution. The Power Stick is a high quality precision controller with adjustable auto-fire. It's very heavy too so it makes an excellent tabletop stick.

▼ GAME GENIE

This is a cheat cartridge, something like the Action Replay Pro, but instead of inputting number codes you use mysterious combinations of letters and numbers. Creating your own codes is a matter of changing letters in the supplied codes until you find one that works, which isn't as efficient as the Action Replay's game trainer feature. The Game Genie does offer a wider range of very weird effects, though, so it's still really good fun to mess around with.



MEGASTICK

This joystick is replacing the Arcade Power Stick. Like the Power Stick it has adjustable auto-fire, but has the neat addition of a slow-motion switch. It's also much smaller and neater than the Power Stick, yet it's still heavy enough to make a good tabletop controller. It's even cheaper!

VIDEO CABLE

When the dog chews through the cable that connects the Megadrive to the telly, this is the widget you'll need to restore those wonderful graphics to your screen.

ACTION REPLAY PRO

Plug this gadget between your Megadrive and your favourite cartridge and you can enter special codes to provide your on-screen counterpart with infinite lives, extra weapons – just about anything! If you can't find the code you want in the supplied handbook you can 'train' the game yourself using a very simple process. The Action Replay is an excellent piece of equipment, very easy to use, and it can put new life into tired old games that were just gathering dust on the shelf.

▼ SIX BUTTON CONTROLLER

This new Sega controller has the same top precision D-Pad as the conventional Megadrive model, but has six independent fire buttons **MODE** and **START** buttons! It's compatible with all Megadrive games currently available, but the extra three buttons mean you can get access extra functions out of newer games, such as Ranger X. Oh, and if you want to play the Megadrive version of Streetfighter II (and who doesn't!) this is absolutely essential as it provides easy access to the full range of punches and kicks.



▶ THE MENACER

Fancy a bit of real shooting action with a real gun? Well, not a REAL gun, obviously, because that would be dangerous. Plug the infra-red control box into your joystick socket, point The Menacer at your screen and it can detect exactly where you're aiming. Comes complete with lots of slot-in bits like a stock and (rather crummy) binocular sights, as well as a six-game cartridge containing a range of shooting gallery games including a tomato-firing Toe Jam and Earl splat 'em up! Also, it currently only works with one other game, Terminator 2, and though it's quite a jolly piece of equipment it doesn't look like The Menacer has much of a future. Some retailers have been selling them off cheaply recently, so if you can get one at around £30 or less it's worth a go. Oh, and don't forget you need six batteries to put in the gun!

▼ UNIVERSAL ADAPTOR

Nine beautiful volts of direct current could be surging into your Megadrive power socket with this sexy replacement power supply. Just the thing for those of you who dropped your last mains adaptor in that bucket of pig-swill.



SCART LEAD

Improve your Megadrive's display quality with this essential lead. It plugs your Megadrive into any TV or monitor with the SCART/Euro connector and produces a display of excellent definition and colour. We at MEAN MACHINES don't know where we'd be without ours!

CARTRIDGE SOFTPACK

If you're a Megadrive owner who wants to transport his cartridges around to your mate's for an afternoon session, this is the carry case for you! The softpack, done in quality nylon trimmed in blue and with a fabulously noisy Velcro strip to keep the top on, holds up to eight cartridges in their cases. Gorgeous, although a Sainsbury's carrier bag is cheaper (though perhaps not as attractive).

▶ CARTRIDGE CADDY

Mum always on at you about the untidy pile of cartridges under the bed? Well, no more! Keep eight of your favourite games in tidy array with this handy caddy. Alternatively, just exercise a bit of self-discipline and keep your bedroom tidy.



MEGA-CD

CD-X PRO CARTRIDGE

This is the only Mega-CD add-on you can get, but it's extremely useful! It bypasses the protection which prevents you playing foreign CDs on a European Mega-CD and vice versa. It's not completely fool-proof though as some games tend to run out of sync with their CD soundtracks. And that can play havoc with Night Trap!

MASTER SYSTEM

INFRA-RED CONTROL PAD

Say goodbye to all those troublesome control pad wires with this handy infra-red unit. The base connects to the Master System's controller port and when you've got some batteries in your controller, an infra-red beam communicates your button presses and D-pad movements to the console. A bit of a luxury, really, considering the fact that joystick cables don't usually get THAT messy and the price of batteries these days.

UNIVERSAL ADAPTOR

If your power supply gets lost or stolen or hijacked by terrorists replace it immediately with the official Sega Universal Adaptor. Guaranteed not to blow up your Master System and burn the house down.

▶ CARTRIDGE CADDY

Yes indeed, stack those cartridges in style with this eight-position rack, moulded from tasteful black plastic. Also useful for transporting your games safely, if you've got very steady hands.

▶ CARTRIDGE SOFTPACK

Fancy transporting up to eight of your Master System titles around in comfort and safety? The cartridge softpack more than fits the bill, but it makes you look a bit odd in the street if you start carrying it by its little blue handle.

LIGHT PHASER

Rather like The Menacer, but a bit more laser pistol-esque. When you're playing those shooting games where the standard Master System controller just isn't realistic enough, just plug this in and shoot at the screen to destroy your in-game adversaries! Jolly fun, but just like the Menacer, there aren't many good games available which make use of the gun.



LIGHT PHASER WITH OPERATION WOLF

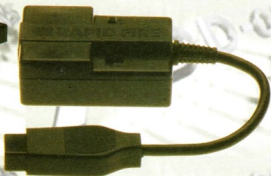
The enhanced Light Phaser bundle pack. This contains the Light Phaser along with the best game compatible with it: the great conversion of Taito's Operation Wolf coin-op! Excellent fun, for all the family!

CONTROL STICK

If you're more at home with conventional joysticks rather than the Master System's rather crummy joypads, take a look at the precision Control Stick. The stick itself is a bit of a strange shape but it's still eminently usable.

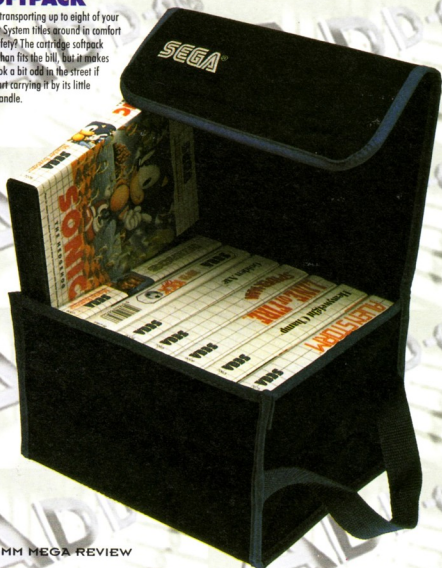
▶ RAPID FIRE UNIT

Designed for all those Master System titles where a super-speedy fire rate is handy. Reduce the wear and tear on your control pads (and your thumbs) with this useful peripheral which belts out the bullets at high speed!



▶ MASTER GEAR CONVERTER II

Oh cripes! If you want to play your Master System games on your new Megadrive II the standard converter won't fit around those new streamlined curves. So what you want is the new Master Gear Converter II which slots into the top of the new miniaturised Megadrive and lets you plug in your favourite MS games. One of the best console add-ons you can get!



GAME GEAR

▶ TV TUNER

Clip this attachment into your Game Gear's cartridge slot and your hand-held console is instantly transformed into a portable full colour television, able to pick up terrestrial transmissions! Don't go buying any foreign TV Tuners though, because they won't pick up signals from good old Tommy TV stations. Also, the price is a bit off-putting, being almost as high as the price of a standalone mini-TV!



UNIVERSAL ADAPTOR

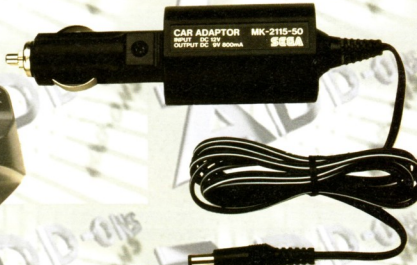
One of those Game Gear facts of life is that if you want to have non-stop fun with your hand-held wonder you're going to need some kind of controlling interest in Duracell. So, when you're playing at home it's absolutely vital to conserve battery power by running your Game Gear off the mains, and this is the gizmo that lets you do just that. Essential.

▶ CAR ADAPTOR

For the true gollivranting game player, this little device lets you plug your Game Gear into the cigarette lighter socket of the nearest car (driver permitting of course), thus saving even more of that valuable battery power!

RECHARGEABLE BATTERY PACK

If your gaming is burning a massive hole in your pocket in terms of battery bills, the rechargeable battery pack is an essential addition to the Game Gear. Recharge the same batteries again and again - save money and help the environment.



▶ GEAR TO GEAR CABLE

Open up a whole new dimension of portable colour gaming with the Gear to Gear cable. With this invaluable addition, a whole range of carts allow you to access brilliant two-player games by hooking your Game Gear up to a mate's. Don't forget that you need two copies of the game too!



AV CABLE

A very useful cable that enables you to use your Game Gear (with TV Tuner) as a remote monitor! For example, connect it up to a Comcard for instant full-colour portable playback. Quite remarkable!

SUPER WIDE GEAR

Magically increase the size of the Game Gear's high-resolution display with the aid of this magnifier. Just bolt it to the back of the Game Gear and the magnifying lens swings into position over the screen making everything that much clearer to see and possibly improving your chances in some games, especially if you're a bit short-sighted in the first place.

STREET FIGHTER II

Not since the days of Space Invaders has a coin-op caused such a stir as Street Fighter II and its six-button beat 'em up action. Such was its popularity that its developers, Capcom, have since released two 'remix' versions in the form of SFII: Championship Edition and SFII-Turbo Hyper-Fighting - the latter of which forms

the basis of the Megadrive game. Street Fighter II offers the player the chance to battle their way across the globe as any one of twelve beefy characters. Ranging from an American squaddie to a Chinese schoolgirl and a Brazilian beast to a Spanish Matador, each contestant is pitted against a succession of opponents in a



'best out of three' match. Using a combination of kicks and punches, the basic idea of the game is to whittle away your opponent's energy bar before a sixty-second time-limit expires - but it's not as easy as it sounds. What's more each of the characters has been given individual skills and weaknesses and mastering these is the key to the game's longevity - for instance, the Indian entrant, Dhalsim, features rubber limbs

which give him a massive advantage across long distance, but leaves him rather vulnerable at close range.

There's no doubting SFII's popularity within the fighting game arena. Unlike most of its competitors, SFII features instinctive controls which allow the players to combine a number of moves to devastating effect. Also, by way of a break, there's even the chance to smash cars or barrels so





you move towards the final confrontation with the current title holder and generally evil so-and-so, M. Bison!

Just before this book went to press we had the opportunity to play a pre-release copy of this game and we have to say that it may well be the best Megadrive game ever!

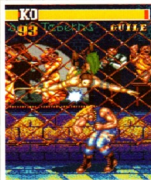
All the features of the arcade game are in there — and more! As well as having a perfect copy of the Championship Edition encoded in the cart (which lets you play as any of the twelve characters), there's a full version of the turbo version with ten speed settings,



six of which are actually faster than the coin-op!

For arcade realism, the game makes use of the new six-button joystick. If you don't have one, you can still use the old three button pad, but you need to keep hitting the START button to switch the A, B and C keys between punch mode and kick mode, which is very fiddly.

As well as being probably the best Megadrive cartridge ever, Streetfighter is also the biggest, with 24 Mbits of information packed into the chips. This has allowed the programmers to include special options such as special tournament modes in which each player picks a set of six fighters and plays them off against each other. Also, you can set handcaps on different fighters, and even prevent



them from using their special moves. Awesome!

This beats all other versions of Streetfighter II hands down, and if you're one of the many fans of the arcade game you definitely won't be disappointed!

**BY
SEGA
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE**



THE ADDAMS FAMILY

They're ookey and they're kooky and they're all completely missing in this platform game based on the popular TV comedy series of yesteryear.

That's right, the whole of the Addams Family has vanished, kidnapped by baddies, and only bread-winner and head of the house, Gomez, is around to rescue them. Racing around the Addams Mansion, he must collect the family fortune, which takes the form of dollar signs, as these are the only way he can pay the ransom. To make things harder, the mansion is littered with creepy, kooky nasties which Gomez can dispose of using the legendary Addams bottom bounce.

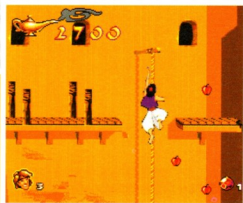


BY
ACCLAIM
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE
MASTER SYSTEM
GAME GEAR

ALADDIN

Prepare for a taste of eastern promise as Disney's smash-hit animated movie comes to the Megadrive in the form of this 16-Meg platform game.

Taking on the role of Arabian Knight, Aladdin, the aim is to rescue your sweetheart Jasmine from the clutches of the evil wizard Jaffar. Simple enough, except that Jaffar has also got the legendary magic lamp and has used it to create ten levels packed with swash-buckling sword-fights and flying carpet fun. From the dingy caves and dungeons to the magnificent cities and palaces, the game looks stunning with graphics drawn by the actual Disney artists who were behind the film.



BY
SEGA
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE

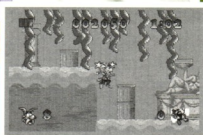
ASTERIX AND THE GREAT RESCUE



One of France's most popular comic book characters, the little Gaul with the yellow moustache now stars in his own platform game.

For years, the small Gaulish village where Asterix lives has managed to resist invasion by the Roman Empire thanks to one thing—their druid Getfix's magic potion, which endows them super-human strength. Now the Romans have kidnapped Getfix and the Gauls are helpless unless Asterix can bring him back. Playing either Asterix or his best pal,

Obelix, the platform action leads from the village, right through Europe, and on to Rome as our heroes have to collect coins, beat up Romans and eat wild boar. Unlike the Master System Asterix game, this is not particularly good fun.



BY
SEGA
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE

BLADES OF VENGEANCE

Coming from Electronic Arts, you'd expect this to be a hockey game of some sort, but it isn't. *Blades of Vengeance* is EA's unlikely step into the world of Megadrive platform games.

Set in a realm of sword and sorcery, one or two players can choose to be either a wizard, barbarian, or huntress and face the Evil Shadow Lord and his hordes of zombies, dragons, vampires and fiery dwarfs. There are



various fantastical steeds that our heroes can ride, such as turtles, spiders and centaurs, and extra weapons and magical amulets can be collected.

BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE

CASTLEVANIA: A NEW GENERATION

After years of unholy existence on the Nintendo consoles, Konami's popular vampire saga sinks its teeth into the Megadrive market with a whole new episode of platform action.

It has been centuries since Dracula was vanquished from existence, but a female vampire, Elizabeth Bartley, intends to resurrect him. Only two people can stop her—vampire hunting Messrs. Eric Lecarde and Quincy Morris. Racing across Europe, our heroes have to face all manner of supernatural terrors such as the ghost of Marie Antoinette, the Phantom

Ship of Dover, the spookily non-Leaning Tower of Pisa and of course the Prince of Darkness himself, at his country cottage.



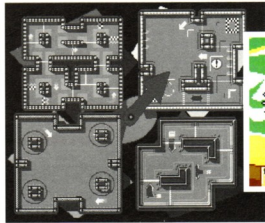
BY
KONAMI
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE

COSMIC SPACEHEAD

He's an intergalactic tourist from planet Linoleum and he's just had a holiday on a crazy planet called Earth. Only when Cosmic returns home, nobody on Linoleum believes

Earth-people could possibly be as nutty as he claims, so he decides to get proof!

Using a similar point 'n' click style of gameplay to *Monkey Island*, *Cosmic Spacehead* is an adventure game in which our hero has to overcome various situations by experimenting with items and information he finds during the game. The adventure is broken up by a number of platform sections and there's even a hidden sub-game which is a bit like *Micro Machines*. We found the Megadrive version a bit too easy and not exceptionally good fun, though.



BY
CODEMASTERS
FORMATS
MEGADRIVE
MASTER SYSTEM
GAME GEAR

▲ Megadrive wonderment in *Cosmic Spacehead*.

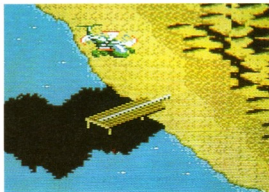
DESERT STRIKE

This was an incredibly successful game for Electronic Arts when they released it on the

Megadrive, mainly because it was incredibly good, and it looks like *Desert Strike* is going to be just as popular with Master System and Game Gear owners.

As a top helicopter pilot you have to take on the ground-based military might of General Kilbaba, who has just invaded one of his peaceful neighbouring countries (sound familiar?). Anyway, the game requires you to complete four campaigns, each made up of several missions, using your chain gun and rockets to

blow up radar installations, truck convoys, SCUD missile launching sites, airfields that sort of thing. The action is displayed in isometric perspective and the graphics in these two new versions are most impressive, as is the game itself. Probably one of the best shoot 'em ups for the 8-bit Segas.



▲ Witness the Master System version!

BY
TENGEN
FORMAT
MASTER SYSTEM
GAME GEAR

DRACULA



Bram Stoker's legendary vampire glides on to the Megadrive in this conversion of Francis Ford Coppola's hit movie.

Taking on the role of Jonathan Harker, you have to escape from Dracula Castle. Rats, bats, she-devils and of course the Prince of Darkness all stand in your way, but all you have to do is beat them out of the way. Yes, Dracula is a simplistic Final Fight-style beat 'em

up! Featuring fully-digitalised sprites, 3D rotoscoped backgrounds and short intermissions from the film, this game will have poor Vlad turning in his grave.

BY
SONY
FORMAT
MEGA-CD

DR ROBOTNIK'S MEAN BEAN MACHINE

Having spent years playing the bad-guy in the Sonic the Hedgehog games, Dr Ivo Robotnik finally gets his own back with his very own game.

Similar to Columns, Mean Bean Machine is a puzzle game in which you have to guide pairs of coloured beans down the screen, joining up beans of the same colour to

make them vanish and earn points. However, the real aim of the game is to defeat an opponent by creating massive chains of coloured beans, thus sending them onto your opponent's screen. Fiendishly addictive in one-player mode, Mean Bean Machine is even better as a two-player game.



BY
SEGA
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE

DUNE CD



You've read the cult science fiction novels by Frank Herbert, you've seen the cult science fiction movie starring Sting. Now play the Megadrive based on the movie.

Centring around a precious substance called the Spice Melange, Dune is a blend of arcade adventure and strategy as you play Paul Atreides and journey around the planet making new allies and increasing your mining production.

Then it's onto the strategy element, where you use your growing power to amass large armies against your rivals. Dune also uses clips from the movie and some excellent 3D landscapes, plus loads of CD-quality interactive speech.



BY
VIRGIN
FORMAT
MEGA-CD

DUNE: BATTLE FOR ARRAKIS

Frank Herbert's cult science fiction stories form the basis for the spiciest strategy game to hit the Megadrive.

The Spice Melange is the most powerful substance in the Universe, but it only grows on one planet, Arrakis, better known as

BY
VIRGIN
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE

Dune. By controlling one of three of Dune's ruling families, the player has to accumulate the Spice and use it to build up their forces and steal territories from the other families in a fashion similar to Mega-lo-mania or Powermonger. From harvesting the spice, to building up your factories and making weapons, Dune looks like a game for anyone who wants more than just simple blasting fun



FANTASTIC DIZZY



When Code Masters were still producing their £1.99 Spectrum games the heroic egg on legs that they call Dizzy proved to be a perennial favourite with the punters. His games were always a blend of platforming with puzzle solving, and that's just what's going on in this slightly suped-up cartridge instalment in the Dizzy life story.

Egg creatures like Dizzy are naturally quite fragile so he has to take care when he's out and about on his treasure hunts, jumping

over some of the wild creatures he comes across and bargaining with others. This usually means finding the right object for the right person, taking it to a particular location and handing it over. The puzzles are pretty simple like that, but there are a variety of little subgames to give you a break from treasure hunting. It's quite a big game, but its simple nature means it's best suited to younger Game Gear fans.

BY
CODE MASTERS
FORMAT
GAME GEAR

FIFA SOCCER

With the recent surge of football games to hit the Megadrive, it was only a matter of time before EA, a company renowned for their excellent sports games, brought out their own one and it's officially sponsored by FIFA too.

Unlike most footie games which normally take a side or plan view of the action, FIFA Soccer is viewed from a more realistic 3D isometric angle. What's more, over 2,000 frames of animation have gone

into the player sprites. But the realism doesn't stop there. Full FIFA rules, including the back-pass rule (missing from a number of footie games) are there, as are 40 international teams complete with stats and playing styles. Four-player action is also the order of the day with EA's new four-player adaptor.



BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE

THE FLASH



One of DC's lesser-known comic heroes, The Flash is blessed with (not surprisingly) amazing speed and agility which he has to put to good use in this 8 bit platform adventure. Running, leaping and using his powerful spinning whirlwind attack, he has to beat off the attentions of loads of sinister bad guys on his way to making his city a safe one for honest citizens.

The action in The Flash is suitably speedy, and the game plays very nicely

indeed with lots to do and plenty of variety. The graphics are also good for a Master System; the sprites are small but very detailed, the colour schemes are very comic-like and the animation is excellent. Definitely a game which is well worth considering.

BY
SEGA
FORMAT
MASTER SYSTEM

GAUNTLET

The smash-hit four-player coin-op of its glory days makes a stunning comeback in this spot-on Megadrive conversion.

Taking on the role of either a warrior, wizard, elf or valkyrie, the aim of this plan-view, fantasy shoot 'em up has always been a simple one—to get through all the levels by killing baddies and eating food. However, with over a hundred levels that's no easy

task. Not only is Gauntlet 4 a perfect conversion of the brand-new Quest Mode and head-to-head battle mode. But best of all, using the Sega-Tap it can be played by four players.



BY
TENGEN
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE

HAUNTING: STARRING POLTERGUY

Being trapped on Earth as an undead spirit is bad enough for poor Polterguy, but having to share his house with the repulsive Sardini family is even worse. So he decides to scare them out. Beetlejuice-style!

Taking him through four mansions, Polterguy's mission is quite simple. By possessing various household objects he can scare the unwitting occupants of the house. If they get scared enough they



leave for good. All manner of horrible possessions can be performed, beds eat their occupants, sharks leap out of fish tanks, bodies hang from cupboards. However, while fairly good fun, there are moments of frustration in this game.



BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE

HOOK

Based on the rather unsuccessful Steven Spielberg movie, Hook follows the adventures of Peter Pan as a now aging lawyer, Peter Banning.

The boy who never grew up, did just that and now his children have been kidnapped by the sadistic Captain Hook. Only Peter can save them with his close friend Tinkerbell the Fairy in tow. Excellent orchestral music and fancy inlays (with some awful budget actors voices) give way to a rather poor platform game as Pan swash-buckles his way across Never Never Land battling Lost Boys, Pirates and Red Indians in an attempt to reach Hook's ship and his kids.



BY
SONY
FORMAT
MEGA-CD

JUNGLE BOOK

Currently enjoying a resurgence of interest at the box-office, Jungle Book is also about to make it big-time on the Megadrive courtesy of Virgin's new platform game.

Following the antics of the man-cub, Mowgli, the aim of the game is to guide our young hero back to the human village, all the while avoiding the vile schemes of the dreaded Shere Khan. All the famous characters are there, Baloo the Bear, Bagheera the Panther and King Louis, King of the Apes, and the game looks just brilliant. What's more, the

tunes (even on the 8-bit machines) are fantastic renditions of their movie counterparts.



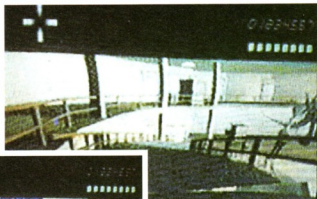
BY
VIRGIN
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE
MASTER SYSTEM
GAME GEAR

JURASSIC PARK

It's the biggest movie and the year and it's caused a Worldwide dinosaur craze. Now it's coming to the Mega-CD. Welcome to Jurassic Park.

Taking on the role of Alan Grant, the aim of the game is to retrieve all the dinosaur eggs littered around Jurassic Park. Easier said than done because the dinosaurs are free. T-Rex, Velociraptors, Spitters, all of them have been animated at Sega's Multimedia studios using the same tech-

niques the film-makers used. Taking on a first-person perspective, the game has fully digitised graphics, 0 Surround Sound and even a Dinosaur Field Guide hosted by a noted paleontologist.



BY
SEGA
FORMAT
MEGA-CD

LANDSTALKER

Following on Shining Force is the latest instalment in the Shining in the Darkness saga, a 16-Meg RPG called Landstalker.

Following the antics of a wandering treasure-hunter, Nigel, the game centres around his quest for the hidden treasure of King Nole. This is a massive game with a huge country-

side to explore and Nigel can talk to anyone he meets, enter any building and search all kinds of pots and pans! However, what puts this game above most RPG's is the complete lack of boring statistics and number-crunching-style fights. It's all just good old-fashioned arcade-style sword swinging fun.



Friday: What are you doing!
Stop that!
I hate you! I hate you!

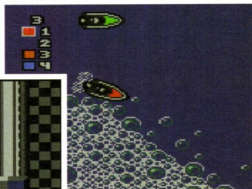
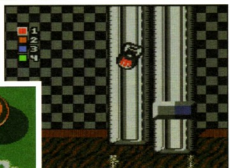
BY
SEGA
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE

MICRO MACHINES

Here in the Mean Machines Sega offices, we're of the opinion that Micro Machines is possibly one of the best console games of all time, so you Game Gear owners should rejoice that it's been converted almost exactly for your handheld.

One or two players can take part in racing their microscopic vehicles (all sorts of cars, boats, and even helicopters) around all sorts of dinky tracks, such as the bath, the garden, the garage floor and the breakfast table. There are three other Micro Machines on the circuit and you just have to make sure you don't pass the finish line in last place, either by pure driving skill or by continually ramming your

rivals off the track. It's a simple game, but the cute graphics make it instantly appealing, and the two player mode is incredibly good fun. Unmissable.



BY
CODE MASTERS
FORMAT
GAME GEAR

NHLPA HOCKEY '94

As the New Year trundles ever closer, so EA warm up the third instalment of their popular Ice Hockey series, NHLPA '94.

The EA Hockey games have always been the best ice hockey games around and this latest edition adds even more features to the game. Among the many new tactics such as the power-packed 'timer' shot, the game now allows up to four players to join in a match using EA's new four-play adaptor. However, the popular fist-fights and blood-drenched injured players are now absent from the game and that dulls the fun of the game somewhat.



BY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE

PGA TOUR GOLF

Electronic Arts' classic golfing simulation makes it to the 8-bit courtesy of Tengen's programmers, who have tried to keep as much of the original gameplay in as possible. With your trolley full of clubs trailing behind you have to get your little white ball from one end of the green to the other, where the little hole is waiting.

The programmers have included such things as the 3D view of your little golfer and the trimmed lawns stretching off into the dis-

▲ **Master System
PGA Tour Golf in
all its greenery.**



tance, but of necessity this has been trimmed down a little so it takes up less of the display. However, the excellent control system, which helped make the Megadrive version so good, is in there, so this still plays very well. A fine competitor for US Gold's World Class Leaderboard which previously ruled the 8-bit fairways.

BY
TENGEN
FORMATS
MASTER SYSTEM
GAME GEAR

POWER STRIKE 2

If you Master System owners have ever looked at your mate's Megadrives and envied them those smart-looking shoot 'em ups with all the giant weapons and stuff, you can just be a bit more satisfied with your lot now that Power Strike 2 has come along. This vertically-scrolling spaceship blast 'em up has been programmed by Compile, the develop-

ment house who produced such great shooters as Super Aleste on the Super NES, Musha and Robo Aleste on the Megadrive and Mega-CD and GunTet on the PC Engine. These were all ace games with a vast variety of meaty lasers and missiles to bolt onto your craft, and Master System Power Strike 2 is no different.



Obviously the graphics aren't going to be as good as those other games, but they certainly are impressive for a Master System.

It's the action, though, that really grabs your attention. Really fast and powering up your ship to blast even more alien creeps is incredibly satisfying. One to watch out for.

BY
SEGA
FORMAT
MASTER SYSTEM

PUGGSY

Having crashed-landed on a strange planet, friendly orange alien, Puggsy, has to rescue the bits of his spaceship from the inhabitants—a race of raccoons. That's the plot of one of Psygnosis' latest Megadrive games.

However, this is easier said than done as the Raccoons have hidden away the spaceship parts in their city at the other-end of a hazard-packed island. Featuring a blend of platform and problem-solving action, Puggsy



has to battle against baddy raccoons, squirrels and other animals whilst overcoming puzzling situations, Crystal Maze-style. There are even some Space Invaders and Gravitar sub-games hidden in there to keep you happy. Very enjoyable.

BY
PSYGNOSIS
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE

ROBOCOD

Minister Dr Maybe has installed himself in Santa's toy factory at the North Pole and tied Santa up somewhere! With Christmas just around the corner this could spell disaster, unless F.I.S.H.'s best secret agent can step in and save the day. James Pond is the name of this piscine power-house, though since he had his cybernetic expanding torso installed he also answers to his code name of Robocod. Pond has to bounce and climb his way



Christmas of 1990, and like the original it has loads of levels of extremely cute and colourful dangers for Pond to overcome, along with plenty of secret bonuses and hidden rooms. If you like platform games you won't want to miss it!

through the toy factory's many laboratories and workshops where Maybe's peons have installed themselves, to defeat the evil doctor and free Santa - before Boxing Day presumably.

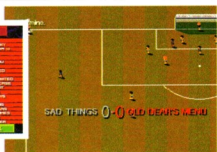
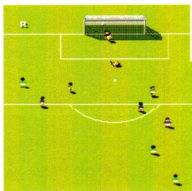
In case you hadn't already realised, this is a straight conversion of the Megadrive platform game which was so popular around

BY
US GOLD
FORMAT
MASTER SYSTEM

SENSIBLE SOCCER

There's a whole plethora of football games dribbling their way on to the Megadrive and among them is the most successful footie game of all time, Sensible Soccer.

Programmed by Sensible Software (hence the name), Sensi Soccer was a big hit on the Amiga. Graphically quite simple with its Super Kick-style plan view of the pitch, the real appeal comes from the playability with fast moving sprites and realistic ball-handling giving the game a real addictive edge. All the features of the original are there, as is Sensible's crazy humour with crazy customised team names on the menus.



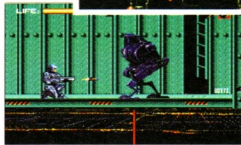
BY
SONY
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE

ROBOCOP VS TERMINATOR

Don't move, creep. It's show time as two of the biggest box-office cyborgs in movie history battle it out in their very own Megadrive game. Let the Clash of the Titans begin!

Somewhat, the Terminators from Earth's apocalyptic future found a way into Robocop's

parallel universe and are now proceeding to take over Delta City. Taking control of Robocop, it's up to you to clean up the streets with your Beretta Auto-9. There are twelve levels of platform-based, shoot 'em up action, packed with street punks, terminators, hunter-killers and ED-209s. Even Robocop 2 makes an appearance.



BY
VIRGIN
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE

SNAKE, RATTLE AND ROLL

Having proved popular on the NES, Rare's snakery platform game comes to the Megadrive.

Meet Rattle and Roll, two snakes who are stuck on the planet Mellotron. Their only means of escape is through the exit doors on each level. However, these can only be opened by putting a heavy weight on a set of scales. So, our snakesky twosome have to eat enough Nibbly Pibblys to trigger the scales and that's the aim of the game. Things are made harder by a strict time limit, sharks, hopping mushrooms and snapping clams. Fun, but a bit fiddly.



BY
SEGA
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE

SONIC CD

Having worked wonders for the Megadrive, Sega's superstar hedgehog brings his platforming talents to the Mega-CD.

Sonic CD follows the tried and trusted platform formula of Sonic's previous outings. Now racing through such levels as the Palm Tree Panic Zone, the Tidal Tempest Zone and the Wacky Workbench Zone, Sonic once more

has to face Robotnik and his band of Badniks. There's a new deadly robot-Sonic to confront, a pink girl-hedgehog to rescue and Sonic can even travel backwards and forwards through time to past and future zones. To top it all, there are some stunning 3D bonus special zones, brilliant techno dance music and an animated cartoon intro complete with soundtrack.



SCORE 200
TIME 0'27''73
RINGS 7



BY
SEGA
FORMAT
MEGA-CD

SONIC SPINBALL

As a brief interlude before Sonic 3 arrives, Sega give us the latest Megadrive instalment of the blue hedgehog's adventures - Sonic Spinball.

Based around the Casino Night Zone from Sonic 2, the aim of the game is to bounce around the inside of Dr Robotnik's volcano hideout in an attempt to reach the evil villain's penthouse at the top. However, this is easier said than done as you can't control Sonic. Nope, in true pinball-style, you have to direct the spiky blue one using flippers, bumpers and spring plungers. Of course, being Sonic this is far more than just an average pinball game, with steam jets, badniks and other hazards out to get our speedy hero.



BY
SEGA
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE

SON OF CHUCK

Following in the successful footsteps of his father, Chuck Rock Jr ungo bungs his way on to all three Sega machines in his very own platform game.

Chuck Rock has been kidnapped. The evil Gary Gritter, jealous of Chuck's successful stone-age car company has kidnapped the Neanderthal hero and held him to ransom. So it's up to his baby son to rescue him. Armed only with his father's club, he has to face dinosaurs, prehistoric birds and even



▲ Above we have the Master System *Son of Chuck* and ◀ here's the Megadrive version.

giant squids on his rescue mission. Although the game doesn't add anything new to the tried and trusted platform formula of its predecessor, it's fun nonetheless.

BY
CORE
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE
MASTER SYSTEM
GAME GEAR

SPIDERMAN VS THE KINGPIN

Your friendly neighbourhood Spiderman swings his way on to the Mega-CD in this game based on his popular comic adventures.

Things are looking grim for Peter Parker. His wife, Mary-Jane Parker has been kidnapped by the Kingpin and his alter-ego, Spiderman, has been framed for a terrorist bomb threat. There's only one course of action, rescue his wife and bring the real cul-



prit to justice. It's platform action once again as Spidey has to face such old rivals as Venom, the Lizard, Hobgoblin and Sandman. An update of the Megadrive game, the CD version features over fifty levels and cartoon intermissions.

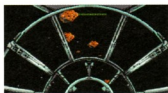
BY
SEGA
FORMAT
MEGA-CD

STAR WARS

The programmers at Beam Software turned one of the greatest science fiction films of all time into one of the best Nintendo games of all time. Knowing a successful game when they see one, US Gold snapped up the licence to put the game onto the Sega machines. The Megadrive version was shelved but here's the Master System conversion of this multi-level platform game in all its glory.

The different levels of the game (and there are many) follow the adventures of

plucky farm boy, Luke Skywalker as he roams the deserts of Tatooine in his landspeeder, takes on Jawas, meets Obi Wan Kenobi, then flies into space aboard the Millennium Falcon, rescues Princess Leia from the nefarious attentions of Darth Vader on the Death Star, then leads a final assault in his X-Wing fighter. Like the movie, it all looks excellent and, unlike the movie, it's a great game.



BY
US GOLD
FORMAT
MASTER SYSTEM

SUPER OFF-ROAD

This Super Sprint-style coin-op wasn't a major success when Leland first released it a few years ago, but they must certainly have made some money out of selling all the console and home computer conversion rights — Super Off Road has appeared on just about every format imaginable! Quite why it's taken so long to get to the Master System is a mystery, but it's here now so what the hey.

The game pits you and four other drivers of giant 4x4 trucks (one of whom can be another player) against loads of very bumpy race courses in which the normal racing eti-

quette is rarely observed. The best way to win is to barge your rivals out of the way, grab any cash bags you might find on the track, then when the race is over, use the money to buy engine upgrades, nitro injectors and so on to make your vehicle even more formidable next time around.

As with all the other conversions of Super Off Road, the single player mode can get a bit tedious after a while, but with two players this is ace fun.



BY
VIRGIN
FORMAT
MASTER SYSTEM

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES: TOURNAMENT FIGHTERS

Cowabunga, ladies and gentlemen! Those pizza-loving, sewer-dwelling, heroes in a half-shell are back in their second Megadrive game. Only this time they're in a one-on-one Street Fighter-type beat 'em up.

There are eight characters to choose from. The Turtles—Leonardo, Michelangelo, Donatello, and Raphael. Lovely TV news-reporter April O'Neil has donned her fighting gear too, as has BR burger hero Casey Jones and two aliens, Ray, a giant winged demon and Sisypheus, an insect. As with any other beat 'em up, each character has their own special moves, plus there are boss characters waiting at the end. What's more, each character has a special verbal taunt you can use.

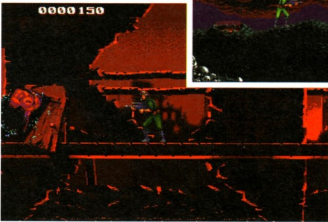


BY
KONAMI
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE

TERMINATOR CD

Not to be mistaken for Virgin's all-too-easy Megadrive Terminator game, this Mega-CD version is a completely new episode of cyborg-blasting mayhem.

Based around the original James Cameron movie, Terminator CD puts you in the role of Kyle Reese, a soldier from an



apocalyptic future who has been sent back in time to rescue the saviour of Mankind from assassination by a Terminator, before he's even born! The journey takes you from the war-torn rubble of the future, where you have to penetrate SkyNet, to 1980's Los Angeles where you have to rescue Sarah Connor, the mother of Mankind's hero.

Great graphics, film intermissions and thumping soundtracks abound.

BY
VIRGIN
FORMAT
MEGA-CD

ULTIMATE SOCCER

Joining the massed ranks of newly released Megadrive football games comes Sega's official rendition of our national sport, Ultimate Soccer.

If there's one thing that Ultimate Soccer isn't short of, it's features. There are over 24



teams to choose from, four different pitch conditions, five wind strengths, eleven 0-side or six a-side team options, three game speeds, six different game duration times, an extra time on or off option, a

choice of penalty shoot outs, rematch or a draw and even the option of using a light, medium or heavy ball. Plus, four player matches can be played using the Sega Tap. Unfortunately, the gameplay isn't so thorough, with juddery scrolling, cruddy sprites and dodgy perspective.



BY
SEGA
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE



VIRTUA RACING

It's the greatest racing coin-op ever and it's about to make its debut on the Megadrive in the form of this 16-Meg conversion.

Although the polygon graphics have been simplified for Megadrive consumption, all the speed of the arcade machine is here thanks to Sega's answer to Super FX—the DSP chip. All three coin-op tracks have been included and the four different 'virtual' viewing modes are also present! Fast and slick, it even features all the little touches from the coin-op like grass cuttings spraying off your

back-wheels when you hit the embankment. Definitely one to watch out for.



BY
SEGA
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE

WINTER OLYMPICS

US Gold put their acquisition of the Winter Olympics licence down to the success of their previous Sega sports sim, Olympic Gold. This time around, they've put together a ten-event simulation of chilly games which can be played at three skill levels or against other players. The events are the Men's Downhill, Ski Jump, Super G, Bob Sleigh, Giant Slalom, Luge, Slalom, Bob, Freestyle Moguls (ski-ing round little snowy hillocks) and Short Track

Speed Skating. No Snowball Fighting, unfortunately, but then that's not currently an Olympic sport.

All the world records are built into the game for you to beat, and all in all it looks rather nice. Remember to wrap up warm before playing, though.



BY
US GOLD
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE

WIZ 'N' LIZ

Wiz and Liz are a wizard and witch respectively. They are also the main characters in the latest Megadrive platform game from Psygnosis, cunningly entitled Wiz 'N' Liz.

Racing around the many platform levels, the aim of the game is to catch all the rabbits and then leave, all before your time runs out. Also, by collecting the fruit that some rabbits leave behind, you can concoct new spells and potions. There are over 105 different spells available and some even



BY
PSYGNOSIS
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE

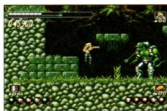
access sub-games of Space Invaders and Asteroids. Extremely fast and very playable, it has an even better two-player mode.

WOLF CHILD

This started life as an Amiga game programmed by Core Design (of Chuck Rock and Thunderhawk fame) who went on to translate it to Mega-CD. Now here it is on the 8-bit Segas, where it perhaps works best of all. The game idea is a fairly simple platform/shoot 'em up concept; as the son of a kidnapped geneticist, you have to track your father down to the heart of an island base which is hidden amongst jungles full of platforms and wandering guardian robots. The twist is that Dad seems to have done a bit of

experimenting on you, and if you can collect enough energy capsules you turn into a werewolf who can shoot blue fire from his claws!

While this looked a little derivative on the Megadrive, the smart graphics and action-packed gameplay make it much more impressive on the Master System and Game Gear. Well worth investigating.



BY
VIRGIN
FORMAT
MASTER SYSTEM
GAME GEAR

WONDERDOG

Originally created as the mascot for JVC's Wondermega console, which was never officially released, Wonderdog has finally arrived on British release.

Harking from the Planet Kninus, Wonderdog crash-lands his bone-ship on Earth and has to find a way back home. Journeying through all manner of mad-cap levels with names like Bunny Hop Meadow and Loony Moon he travels onward to Planet Weird and finally Planet Kninus. On his journey our canine hero can collect diamonds, wing power-ups, hoppy faces and bonus bones. There are the usual bonus rooms hidden in various levels, plus whole levels hidden away throughout the game. Fun, playable, but a bit too easy.

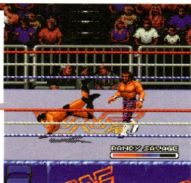


BY
CORE
FORMAT
MEGA-CD

WWF: ROYAL RUMBLE

Wrestling fans take heed! After the success of Acclaim's first WWF wrestling simulation, they've released this newer, better version which features twelve of the famous WWF stars, including Papa Shango, Hulk Hogan, IRS and Hackshaw Jim Duggan. All of the competitors are displayed in big, realistic sprites and they can even perform their real-life signature moves! As well as all the usual one-on-one matches and the tag-team tussles, this game also lets you take part in the Royal Game, with all twelve wrestlers in the ring at once and the winner being the last man standing.

Royal Rumble is 16 megabits of top-quality wrestling fun, and fans of the so-called 'sport' should really enjoy it.



BY
ACCLAIM
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE

ZOMBIES

B-Movie horror grabs the Megadrive by its face with this blood-curdling shoot 'em up from Konami.

Stealing from the plots of just about every horror film ever, Zombies puts one or two-players in the role of a couple of American teenagers as they attempt to rescue their neighbourhood from a Twilight Zone invasion. There are over fifty plan-view levels packed with zombies, mummies, wolf-men, body-snatchers, blobs, vampires, Martians, lagoon monsters and axe-wielding dollies and our heroes have to arm themselves with everyday objects like knives and forks, plates, tomatoes, water-pistols and rocket launchers. Excellent graphics, great sounds and highly addictive gameplay. Great fun.



BY
KONAMI
FORMAT
MEGADRIVE

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MEAN MACHINES

THE ESSENTIAL SEGA GUIDE

Mean Machines Sega brings you the Essential Sega Guide. The best Sega magazine lends its unparalleled expertise to this unique reference work, the first available to Sega game players. Every game available for your Megadrive, Mega-CD, Master System and Game Gear is comprehensively reviewed and rated, with full-colour screenshots for every review. Over 350 carts tested over 190 pages. There's also a guide to machine accessories and hardware, making it the ultimate source of Sega knowledge.

ABOUT THE EDITORS



JULIAN RIGNALL

Jaz Rignall was UK Defender Champion of 1984 when he started on Zzap! 64 magazine. Julian recognized the potential of Sega's console machines early and, as Editor, launched the first, and most successful UK console mag — Mean Machines — in 1990. He is currently Managing Editor of Mean Machines Sega.



RICHARD LEADBETTER

Rich joined CVG magazine at the age of eighteen. Writing under Julian he quickly rose to Deputy Editor, and then Editor of Mean Machines in 1992. Richard has played just about every Sega release, and his expertise extends to Macintosh systems and PC programming. He is presently Editor of Mean Machines Sega.

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