AUGUST 1993 ISSUE 11

MEGA

100% SEGA MEGA DRIVE AND MEGA CD

August 1993 Issue 11 £2.25

THE ULTIMATE EXCLUSIVE!

Ultimate Soccer* – it's, um, "kicking"!

*Sad DJ-stylee chat

HOT NEWS!

- Sega announce "Saturn": the 32-bit Super-Mega Drive
- Mega Drive VR is *here!*
- *Sonic 3* is *late:* the full story
- Sega *beat* Nintendo's "Super" FX chip

SEE AN ANIME*

There's more to Japanese animated movies than Akira: your complete starter's guide!

*Crap sea-urchin pun

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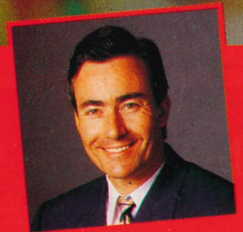
CAN I KICK IT?



WILL THIS MAN *REALLY* KILL SEGA?

Trip Hawkins is the man behind 3DO: a console that *on paper* looks set to knock Nintendo and Sega out the water. How can Sega fight back?

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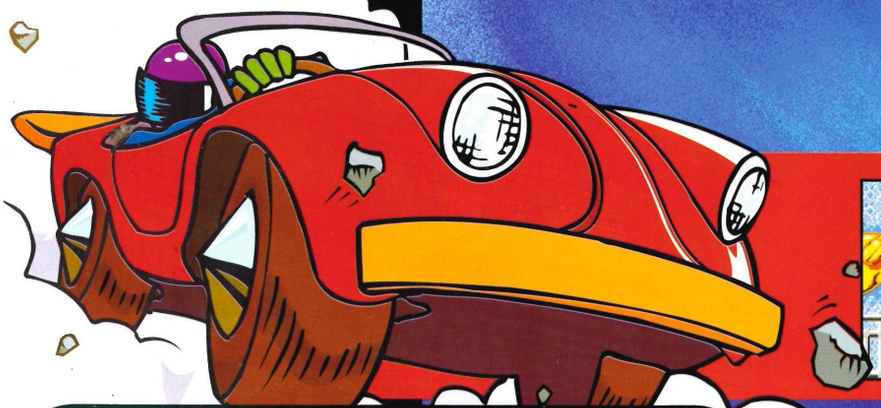
Dodge orange juice stains, jump over playing cards into snooker pockets - simply brilliant" N-FORCE

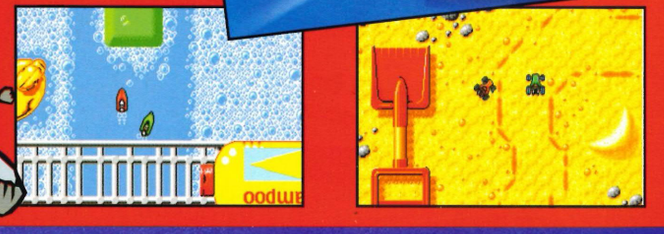
"A fantastically playable racing game"
Sega Force magazine

"Arguably the best race game ever written"
Neil West, Mega magazine **92%**

"So fast and furious, really challenging, it's just perfect"
Tom Glennister, Megatech magazine **92%**

THE ORIGINA
MicroMa
SCALE MINIATU





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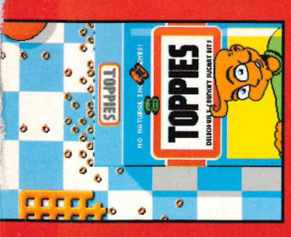
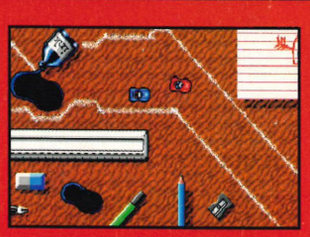
Look-In

93 PERCENT "Probably the most playable game I've ever seen on the Mega Drive"
Gamesmaster magazine

97 PERCENT PLAYABILITY
Mean Machines Sega

IF YOU DON'T GET IT, WHAT ARE YOU PLAYING AT?





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MEGA

Editor: Andy Dyer (I think not - Neil West)
Art Editor: Er, Andy Dyer? (No - Amanda)
Deputy Editor: Andy Dyer goes here then
Staff Writer: And here (Bog off - Paul)
Production Editor: (And this bit's mine - Ash)
Art Assistant: (Sod off Dyer - Sue Huntley)

Advertising Manager: Simon "blah" Moss
Senior Sales Exec: Jane "blah" Geddes
Production Co-ordinator: Charlotte Brock
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Scanning: Simon Windsor, Chris Stocker and Simon Chittenden
Linotronic: Mark Gover, Heath Parsons and Nick Harvey
Scanning and Linotronic Gaffer: Jon Moore
Publisher: Steve Carey
Group Publishing Director: Greg Ingham
Promotions Assistant: Tamara Ward
Circulations Director: Sue Hartley
Managing Director: Chris Anderson

Contributors: Matt Bielby, Stuart Campbell, Frank O'Conner, Andy Hutchinson, Jonathon Davies, Chris Rice, Dave Roberts, Steve Jarratt, Neil West

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Contact address, editorial and advertising:
MEGA, Future Publishing Ltd,
30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW
Tel: 0225 442244 Fax: 0225 446019

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MEGA

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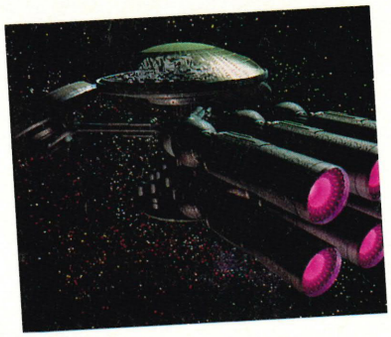
Quick Compo
Which team was first to qualify for World Cup '94?
MEGA,
30 Monmouth St,
Bath, Avon
BA1 2BW

England's footy team may be doing badly, but the Mega Drive scene's never been healthier. Look at this...

6 MEGA CITY NEWS Should video games be censored? Are Full Motion Video games like Sega's *Night Trap* taking the violence theme just a little too far? Neil West investigates...

14 THE CHARTS Well, charts are charts aren't they, er except our charts are always accompanied by our pathetic attempts at humour. Read at your peril.

16 WILL 3DO REALLY KILL THE MEGA DRIVE?



With visuals like this, can Sega and Nintendo possibly hope to compete? Find out now by turning to page 16

The first of the new super consoles is almost here. But will 3DO really be the death of Sega?

Trip Hawkins, the man behind the 3DO super-console, is confident that his system will set the standard for the future. Many of the major players in the industry seem to agree. What is 3DO? And what makes it such a frighteningly real threat? MEGA investigates this powerful new beastie.

19 WIN 20,000 CINEMA TICKETS! MEGA has teamed up with Disney, Virgin Retail and Electronic Arts to bring you the offer of the year: free tickets to a special screening of the US hit movie, Champions, starring Emilio Estevez. Well go on then, there's not much time you know.

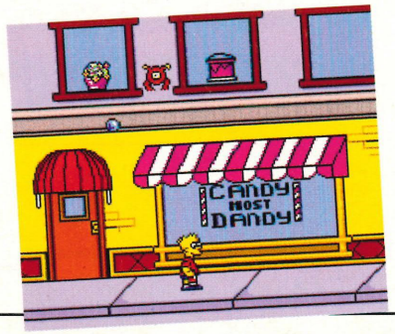
30 A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO JAPANESE ANIMATION

No doubt you've all heard of anime, but many of you may be wondering what the bloody hell it's all about. Look no further...

Anime is everywhere. This distinctive style of Japanese animation is appearing in more and more Mega CD games these days, and few people will have failed to see the mass of videos and comics appearing in shops across the country.

But what is anime? How did it start? And how come it's suddenly become so widespread in its appeal? And most importantly, is it actually any good? MEGA takes a look at this unique form of animation and tries to discover the secret behind its success.

Time Gal in "unusually large buck teeth" scandal



60 MEGA PLAY Paul Mellerick embarks on another tipathon, cursing and swearing as he goes. Still, looks like the reluctant rock bloke has come up trumps yet again. Top games tipped for this issue include *Sherlock Holmes, James Pond 2, Chakan, Fatal Fury, Alien Storm, Shadow of the Beast 2, Starflight, Warpspeed, Hook, Global Gladiators, PGA Tour Golf 2* and *Populous*. Phew! What a lot of tips.

Bart Vs The Space Mutants is tipped on page 62

14 GAMES REVIEWED

We've got an obscene amount of reviews...

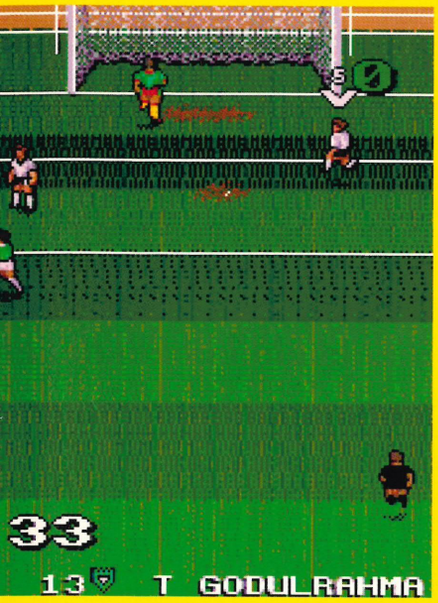
42 BATMAN RETURNS Batters makes a welcome CD return.

48 NINJAWARRIORS Fab arcade game, crap CD game.

52 NIGHT STRIKER Worse than awful. CD sewage.

55 AGASSI TENNIS André's Sega debut is a complete disaster.

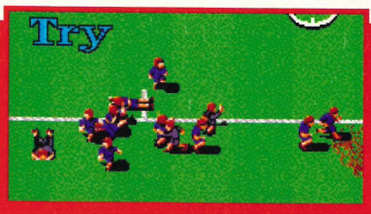
Football • Fab previews • Football



IT'S A GAME OF TWO HALVES...

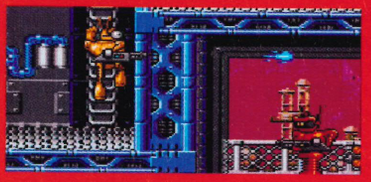
... but it comes in considerably more forms. We're talking footy games, and our ten-page feature brings you the exclusive review of *Ultimate Soccer*, talks to Sensible Software about *Sensible Soccer* and covers all the footy games that have gone before, and all the footy games that will be appearing over the next few months. The action starts on page 20.

38 FORMULA 1 Paul hates it, but he's a git. Excellent race game.

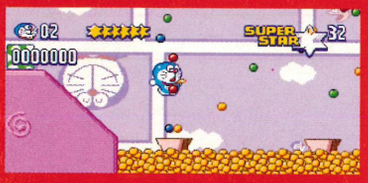


40 INTERNATIONAL RUGBY Rugger, simple as that.

46 DEVASTATOR A platform shoot-'em-up. Not half bad.



47 BOB Bob Monkhouse in his own game? (Don't be dim – Neil)



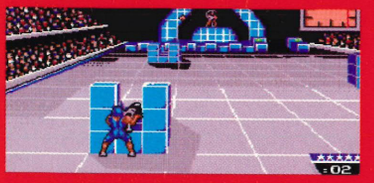
49 DORAEMON Cutesy platform fun, but only for the youngsters.

50 TECHNOCLASH EA go all "fantasy shoot-'em-up" on us

53 SUPERMAN The caped Kryptonian in a laughable game.

54 ANNETTE AGAIN Words fail us. Unbelievably bad.

56 NBA ALL-STARS A decidedly average basketball game.



57 AMERICAN GLADIATORS Nuff said!

64 ARENA Ludicrous challenges, plus loads of other, er, stuff.

67 RIP 'N' TIP Hurrah! It's part two of our fabulous *Another World* solution plus the complete solution to *Flashback* all in one go.

78 SUBSCRIBE Last chance to get 14 issues for the price of 12. Hurry!

80 ALL-TIME TOP 100 MEGA DRIVE GAMES These are definitely the best Mega Drive games of all time, and they're all in exactly the right order. Disagree and you're dead.

88 PREVIEWS *Jurassic Park, Terminator CD, F15, Rocket Knight Adventures* and squillions more.

***Rocket Knight Adventures* – see page 91**

94 MEGA MOUTH Neil's comedy Q&A section panders to your whims.

98 SHUTDOWN And to finish, more fairy tales (That should be facts Dyer – Neil) about the next issue.

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THE MEGA ELEVENTH HOUR

VIDE THEY

Thanks to Sega's new adaptor, up to eight players can play *Ultimate Soccer*

People are concerned about you – lots of people, important people; politicians, psychologists, pressure groups. They want to censor your video games and restrict you from playing them...

Football crazy – that's us. *Ultimate Soccer* is: firstly, pretty much the football game everyone's been waiting for, and secondly, the first of a whole new range of multi-player games from Sega.

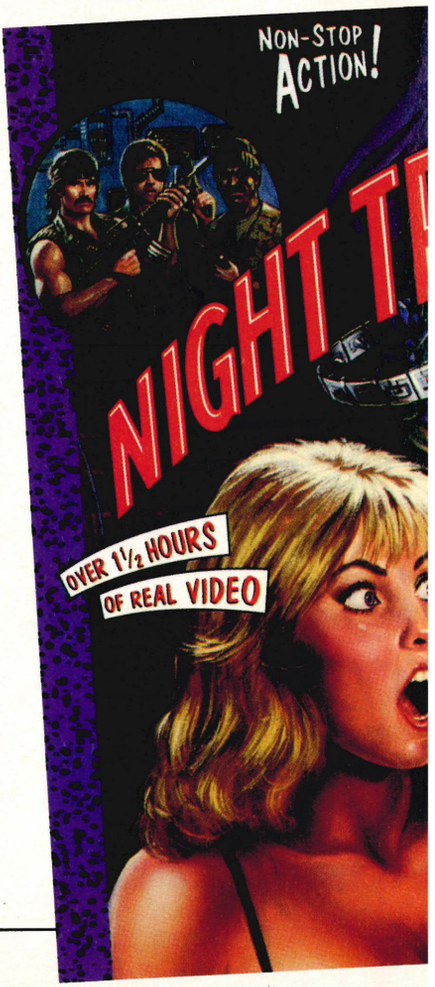
Sega's new joypad adaptor enables you to plug four joypads into each socket – so up to eight players can tap into any one game at one time and play simultaneously.

It's big news because it's the start of a whole new gamesplaying experience. Why do you think Atari's coin-op *Gauntlet* was such an arcade success five years ago? The game was crap – it was the four-players-at-once bit that kept those 20 pence pieces clunking in, and the same principle applies now. A head-to-head simultaneous two-player game always gives a game's lifespan a shot in the arm, and, as Capcom explained last month (in The Making Of *Street Fighter 2* feature), "No other game format can generate the same level of fanatical competitiveness". Just check out the All-Time Top 100 Mega Drive Games (starting on page 80): six of the top nine games are two-player games – and that's no coincidence.

And so eight players mean (not quite literally) eight times the fun. Get some mates (we've found bribery works, for the truly sad) and after the pub, in your lunch break, when your girlfriend's progressively chopping your clothes with a bread knife, or when your boyfriend's had one too many Newcastle Browns to rise to the occasion, get out the Mega Drive. We'll bring you more news of multi-player games as we get it.

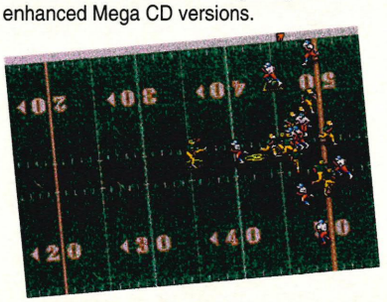
Enjoy the mag – there's loads in it. See you next month!

Ⓜ Neil, Andy, Paul and Amanda



IS IT SPORTING?

Never slow to spot a live market, Sega are to follow in the hallowed footsteps of EASN by launching their own sports label. Titles will include *Joe Montana '94, NBA Action Hosted By Marv Albert(?), World Series Baseball* and *Greatest Heavyweights* on the Mega Drive, with *Joe Montana '94* and *World Series Baseball* also getting enhanced Mega CD versions.



***Montana '93.* Soon to be old hat**

May contain sexual swearwords

Sega of America have recently announced that, "to help consumers make more informed decisions about their video game purchases", they have instituted an age-rating system for all future game releases. Nice, harmless, fun games for all the family will get a "GA" (General Audiences) rating, slightly dodgy ones with bits of blood or glimpses of Chun Li's underwear (say) will be dubbed "MA-13" (Mature Audiences – parental discretion advised), and *Splatterhouse 3* will get an "MA-17" rating, classified as "not appropriate for minors". Presumably, after the ridiculous furore over *Night Trap* (see main feature), it's not beyond the bounds of possibility that this system, or a variation of it, could make it across the water, so stand by to see anything with a "GA" rating plummet down the charts faster than Sharon Stone's (The rest of this joke was rated "MA-17" and has hence been censored from the magazine – A Moral Guardian).

O GAMES: SHOULD BE CENSORED?

Sega's Mega CD for the first time brings CD video game technology to the home. The enormous memory space that CD offers means that for the first time, game characters can be real human actors filmed on video, as opposed to computer-generated, cartoony sprites.

Of course, it was never going to be long before a game utilising this technology came along which would ruffle the feathers of the moral crusaders who're concerned that because there are real people featured in the games and scenes of death, violence (whatever), the games are effectively video nasties. Through your Sega Mega Drive, you are hence being turned into dangerous, evil, sadistic and amoral gore hounds who could rip apart the very fabric of civilised society. Or something.

THE GAME IN QUESTION

Night Trap was the game that ruffled those feathers. The Daily Mail, a regular and formidable defender of decency, got particularly concerned: SEGA SICKENER screamed its headline, with the words "gruesome", "murder" and "torture" all being crammed into the first two lines and setting the outraged (and just a tad outrageous) tone for the rest of the piece.

The paper claimed that *Night Trap* was "more like a video nasty than a game" and then wheeled out the usual brigade of Tory rent-a-quotes to support its argument.

"The manufacturers are evil and ought to be punished for promoting the game," blustered Terry Dicks MP, and then added, rather bizarrely, "People buying the game should be forced to give their name and address".

Dame Jill Knight MP raged: "This is a new generation of videos, nastier than ever before. We should consider legislation against such games because they encourage people to maim, mutilate and murder."

And at the zealous pressure group Family and Youth Concern, Valerie Riches declared: "This is a symptom of a very sick society. Our advice is do not buy this game. It is evil." She then said one final farewell to reality with the intriguing assertion that, "such graphic depictions of violence can, quite literally, blow young people's minds". Now that I gotta see.

The story was written by Luke Harding who himself described the game as "gruesome", "horrific" and "chilling". However, when we spoke to Mr Harding (as Roger Cooke would undoubtedly say at this point) he admitted that he had never actually seen the game and that, at the time of writing, neither had anyone who was quoted in the story.

They'd never actually seen it!

All these desperately sad people, panicking to be seen to do "The Right Thing" hadn't the faintest idea what they were talking about. Still, Toys R Us immediately refused to stock the game and the media (after the epilepsy scare was sorted and after the addiction scare was proved to be nothing) get another go at knocking video games – another chance to find an "evil" scapegoat for the wrong doing of "young people today".

JUST A REFLECTION OF SOCIETY?

So not only had these "outraged" people not actually seen the game, but a leading psychologist, Dr Margaret Shotton, has made a study of the effects of video games and is considerably less concerned about the release of *Night Trap* than Lord Bluster MP and his excitable chums.

"So all IRA terrorists were brought up on a diet of video games and video nasties were they?" she asks. "Since the arrival of television, people have been trying to link these sort of media with violent behaviour, and in all that time there has been no firm proof that the two are linked at all.

"I deplore all violent games, but that is because I see them as a reflection of a violent society. The answer isn't to ban the games, but to work on improving society. It's all a question of cause and effect. Extremely violent people will be attracted to violent games, films, whatever. I think it's highly dubious to suggest that it works the other way around – that violent games, films or whatever create violent people."

Fair comment, problem sorted. Or is it?

While this sort of expert support makes it easy to laugh at the blusterings of a few out-of-touch MPs and out-to-lunch journos, it is actually very dangerous to ignore them – not dangerous for you (you can laugh and ignore all you want) – but for the games industry itself.

The media spotlight is on Sega to respond to the allegation that playing violent games (especially on Mega CD) will lead to violent behaviour. While the allegations stick, then the games should be, at best, subject to certification (like films and videos) or, at worst, banned.

SHOULD VIDEO GAMES BE CERTIFIED?

Sega's European boss Nick Alexander understands the concerns being expressed, and volunteered *Night Trap* for classification by the BBFC.

"We are taking this whole thing very, very seriously and I think people are right to be concerned about the possibilities thrown up by the arrival of real video in games. Sega's policy has always been crystal clear. We will not publish any material which is either pornographic or explicitly violent."

He insists that this code has been adhered to, even with the launch of the first batch of Mega CD games. He claims to find the fuss over *Night Trap* "just extraordinary" and claims that on the horrormeter the game is "somewhere alongside Dr Who" – the 15 certificate rating awarded to *Night Trap* was seen as the "worst case scenario".

Alexander adds, however, that, along with the rest of the games industry, Sega is considering introducing some sort of self-regulating system, perhaps involving stickers similar to the "Parental Advisory Explicit Lyrics" warnings currently adorning any decent rap album.

OK, so that's a voluntary censorship reaction from Sega, but where does the law stand on the issue? The relevant piece of legislation is the Video Recordings bill of 1984. This requires all films and videos to be presented to the British Board of Film Classification, which then decides how old you have to be in order to see it or, indeed, if it can be seen at all.

There are three areas listed in the Bill as exempt from classification; music or sport films/videos, educational or instructional films/videos and computer or video games.

Exemption is waved, however, should games depict "human sexual activity or acts of restraint associated with such activity" or "mutilation or torture or any other acts of gross violence towards humans or animals" or "human genital organs, human urinary or excretory functions".

The Home Office stated that it sees the current law as "perfectly adequate" and believes that no video game has yet tested it. But a spokesman warned: "We are aware of the technological advance being made in video games and these could well present the law with some new challenges. We would be particularly vigilant because children would be involved."

***Night Trap* started all the fuss. A video nasty? We think not**

Violent game gets 15 rating

A CONTROVERSIAL £270 computer game, condemned as violent and evil, has been given a mild 15 rating by British film censors.

SEGA's *Night Trap* is the first computer game to be rated in the same

It was viewed by the BBFC last week in the wake of a storm of controversy over claims that the game depicted torture and mutilation.

SEGA brought *Night Trap* before the Board voluntarily, but had it no

One of the many outrageous reports

GOING TOO FAR?

James Ferman, president of the British Board of Film Classification, is aware of the raging debate, and is monitoring the games market closely. He sees two key areas.

"We were shown some cartridge games earlier in the year for inspection and one of our most important findings was that we did not consider the victims to be recognisably human or animal. They were very obviously just digitised sprites.

"My office have since looked at some CD games, however, and in them it is clear that the victims are human. This very much heightens concern about them and means that the second key factor comes into play; is there a "significant", amount of "gross" violence? If there is, then a game forfeits its rights to exemption and would have to be submitted to us to be given a certificate. It is our view that we will reach this stage within the next twelve months." Already there have been four examples of home computer games (even without CD graphics) being rated.

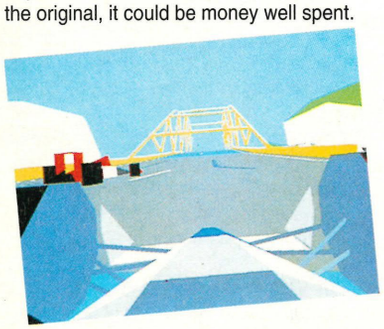
Of course, no game publisher wants its game to be the subject of a court case, so it looks as if Sega will err on the side of caution and eagerly submit any game it feels even might need a certificate – hence showing willing to its critics – and reduce the number of "dodgy" titles to a minimum. This is the way it's going to be from now on. Well-placed sources have told us that Sega itself is rather concerned about the release of such a pugilistic game as *Street Fighter 2* on Mega Drive at such a sensitive time, and it will approach the BBFC for a rating.

The age of video game censorship is upon us, game fans, and we want some feedback from you – the gamers – letting us know how you feel. Write to MEGA MOUTH and let us know your thoughts...

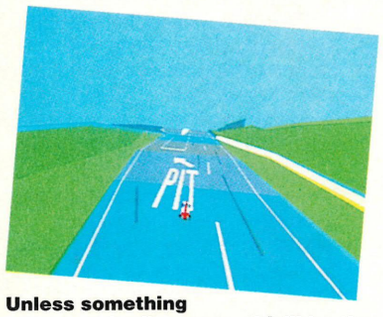
MEGA CITY

Virtua Racing for Mega Drive!

No, we didn't believe it either, but it's here in front of us in black and white on Sega headed notepaper, so it would appear to be true. The best coin-op racing game for so many years is set to defy the cynics and appear, not on Sega VR or even Mega CD, but the humble Mega Drive! As you can see from these early pics, the programmers have made a pretty decent stab at the arcade game's stunning polygon graphics (as well as including the choice-of-viewpoints feature that made the coin-op look so stylish), but as for how it plays, we'll have to wait until the game is released (in America) in December, with a forbidding $70 price tag which will doubtless translate to something extremely scary on import. But if the Mega Drive version comes anywhere near to the thrilling playability of the original, it could be money well spent.



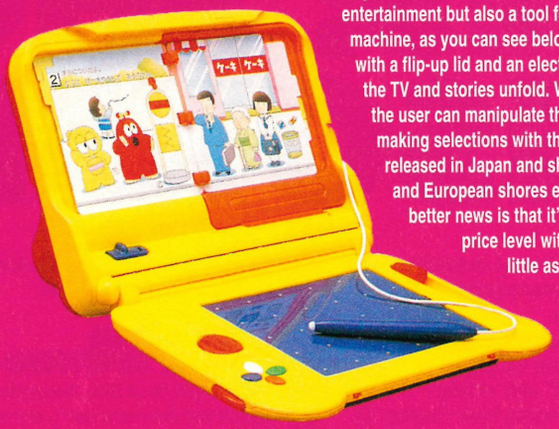
It's not the coin-op, but it doesn't look half bad does it?



Unless something goes very badly wrong, this'll be the best Mega Drive car game ever

PICO-BOO!

What with recent outcries about the effects of video games on children, and parents' own natural aversion to buying one of these horrendous machines for their offspring, it's quite refreshing to hear news of what will be deemed a positive move from Sega. It's a new kiddie console aimed at children of 3-8 years old, which will serve not only as a device for entertainment but also a tool for education. The machine, as you can see below, is a colourful thing with a flip-up lid and an electronic pen. It connects to the TV and stories unfold. When the action pauses, the user can manipulate the on-screen stuff by making selections with the pen. Pico has just been released in Japan and should reach American and European shores early next year. And even better news is that it'll come in at a sub £100 price level with software costing as little as £25.



The Pico. Perhaps this is just what angst-ridden parents have been waiting for

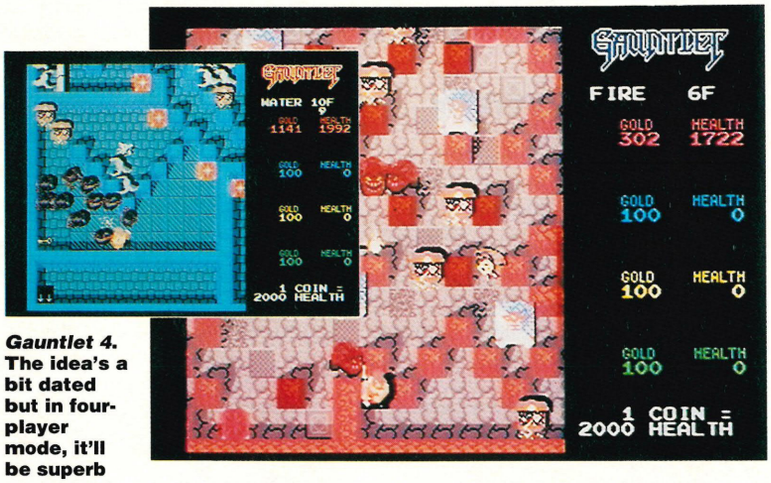
JUST LOOK AT NOBBY STILES!

***Robo Aleste* or *Nobunaga?* Are they the same? We should be told**

Some people are on the pitch! They think *Robo Aleste* (the forthcoming release from Tengen on Mega CD) is just *Nobunaga And His Ninja Force* (reviewed in issue five of MEGA, 52%) with a different name! It is now!

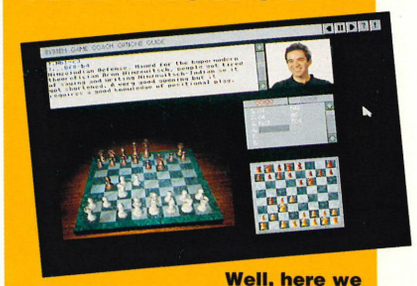
Glove Story

If you're a bit jealous of SNES owners who can now have all kinds of multi-player antics and tomfoolery on games like *Dyna Blaster* and *Super Soccer 2* thanks to the wonders of Hudson Soft's Super Multi-Tap four-player adaptor, then envy no longer. Eight-handed action will soon be yours for the taking with the release of Tengen's *Gauntlet 4*, a four-player continuation of the legendary series of dungeons-and-dragons monster-mashing epics. You will, of course, have to go out and buy Sega's new four-player adaptor too (there are more details about that very device over on page 24), but solo gaming will never seem the same again.



***Gauntlet 4*. The idea's a bit dated but in four-player mode, it'll be superb**

BASHING THE BISHOP



Well, here we are playing chess. With Kasparov. Sort of. Oh dear

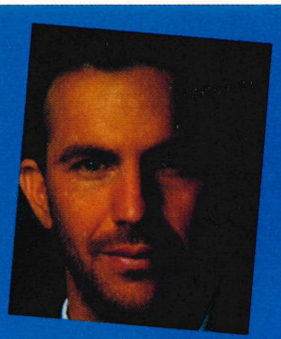
Chess, eh? It's difficult to imagine what kind of person would play chess on a Mega Drive – presumably, even if you've already got one and you really want to play chess and you haven't got anyone to play against, it's still going to be cheaper to go and buy a dedicated chess computer, but, er, if you're allergic to dedicated chess computers or something, you'll be pleased to hear about *Kasparov's Gambit*, the Mega Drive's first chess game, which is coming soon from Electronic Arts.

BULL DURHAM'S INCREDIBLE WORLD OF PR AND ADVERTISING

A JAP MAG SAYS...

MEGA SAYS...

Ha! Well they would say that wouldn't they? But, we think you'll agree, that even a blind man could see that this is nothing more than a flagrantly elaborate tapestry of prevarication, nay, more a raging torrent of dissimulation, falsification and equivocation that serves the single desperate purpose of concealing the undesirable corporate sham beneath. (It's all right chaps, I think we got away with it. The reader's will never tumble the fact that we miserably failed to find a legitimate Bull Durham piece this month – Neil)



Bull "bull" Durham

Next month, old Bullers goes on yet another hunt for industry inaccuracies. (Let's hope he has more luck than he did this month.)

Please read the next page...

When a press release marked P.T.O. arrived on Andy Dyer's desk, he spent an entire morning turning it over and over with a baffled look on his face before someone pointed out that it was actually about *Pacific Theater of Operations*, a new naval wargame from Koei. You can play either the Japanese or US Navy during the tense and violent sea battles of World War 2, and you have complete control over almost every aspect of your fleet, right down to deciding what kind of headbands the kamikaze fighter pilots wear. Probably.

MEGA CD UPDATE

DUNE

VIRGIN

Converted from the PC original, *Dune* (a strategy adventure epic) will be appearing on the Mega CD around the autumn. *Dune 2 – The Battle For Arrakis* (an excellent sort of *Sim City* meets *Mega-Lo-Mania* affair) is due out on the Mega Drive(!) at the far end of the same season.

GREAT! ANOTHER BEAT-'EM-UP!

Just in case *SF2, Mortal Kombat* and, er, *Pitfighter 2* aren't enough for you, there's another big beat-'em-up on the way. *Eternal Champions* is a 24-meg cart starring "11 of eternity's greatest fighters", each with over 35 moves in their own personal martial arts repertoire with which to rearrange the teeth of the other competitors. Released in the US in November at a bowel-loosening $65.99, *Eternal Champions* is designed to be played with Sega's new six-button joypad or (no sniggering at the back please) the Activator peripheral which (cough) "translates your own kicks, punches and body movements to control the action on screen". Still, there are some new features as well, like a slow motion replay for reliving those particularly spine-juddering moves.

Another World – and another other world

Virgin are to treat Mega CD owners by giving them both the brilliant *Another World* and its sequel *Another World 2* on a single CD, featuring live actors and digitised dialogue. This could be one of the bargains of the year.

Two games on one CD. Wow

SOFTWARE HOUSE PROFILE

Busman's Holiday has gone (we'd covered just about every job in the industry), so instead, in view of previews getting so packed these days, we've moved the monthly software house profile into this space. This month it's EA...

PAST

Electronic Arts have always had a reputation for consistently producing the best sports sims. The biggest of course is the *John Madden* series of games, but also considered by many to be the best game of all time is *NHLPA Hockey*. They also trounced the competition in the golfing scene with *PGA 2*. They also produced a few other minor titles you may remember. *Road Rash 2? Desert Strike?*

***NHLPA '93*. Best hockey game certainly. Best game of all time?**

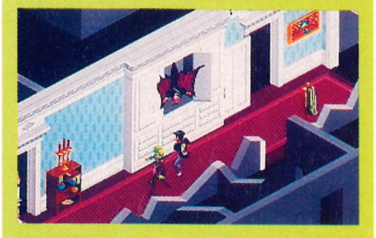
PRESENT

Their current line-up is almost as impressive as their back catalogue, although they are experimenting a bit style-wise. *Technoclash* and *B.O.B.* are both very polished games, while *General Chaos* is a very different experience altogether. If you want to know more about it, it's previewed over on page 93. Oh and one more thing, it'll be compatible with EA's soon-to-be-released Four Way Play four-way adaptor. More news on that next month.

***General Chaos*. Bizarre arcade/strategy thingummy**

FUTURE

Haunting and *Baseball 2020* coming right up. There's a news piece on *2020* over on page 11, but here's a taster of *Haunting*, just to whet your appetites for the preview next issue.



***Haunting*. Previewed next ish**

Sega CD price drop

No, that's not a spelling mistake – the price of the American version of Mega CD has just dropped from $299 to $229, as predicted by MEGA a little while ago. Could UK cuts be around the corner? Not until they get a few more units into the country, at least...

MEGA TOP TEN PEOPLE WHO DON'T DO REVIEWS FOR MEGA

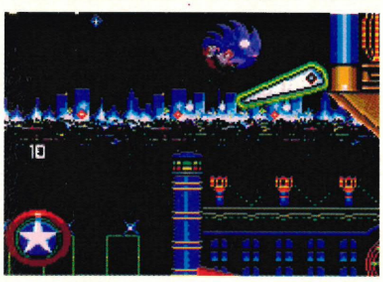
They are:

1. **Sue Huntley**
2. **Ashley Young**
3. **General Norman Schwarzkopf**
4. **Norman Bates**
5. **Simon Bates**
6. **Dominik Diamond**
7. **Anne Diamond**
8. **Judy and Richard from This Morning**
9. **You. Ha!**
10. **Andy Dyer (Oi! – Andy)**

It's Sonic! It's pinball! It's Sonic pinball!

Well, *Sonic Spinball* to be precise. The latest outing for the world's greatest video game superstar is a game inspired by the bumper-and-flipper antics of *Sonic 2's* Casino Night Zone. Nasty old Dr Robotnik (look, Sonic, why don't you just kill the old psychopath and be done with it, eh?) has created a Veg-O Fortress, which, despite having a completely silly name, is in fact a fearsome and oppressive robot factory where he's imprisoned lots of Sonic's furry animal chums using the Pinball Defense System.

However, Sonic has developed some great new powers, and – oh sod it, I'm not going into this ludicrous plot any longer. *Sonic Spinball* will be released on "Segamania Day", a to-be-confirmed date in November, so watch this space for more details, and all that stuff.

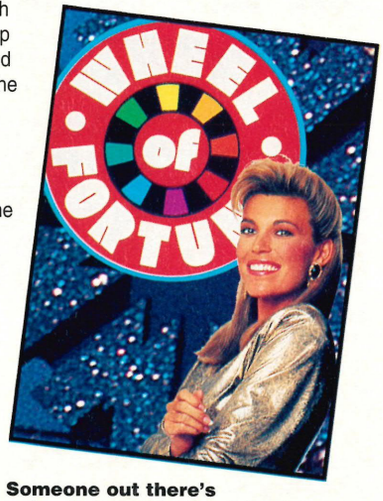


Sonic Spinball* should look a bit like the Casino Zone in *Sonic 2

NO! NO! NO! NO!

Bought a Mega CD have you? Impressed with your £400 state-of-the-art home arcade set-up are you? Want to invite your friends round and leave them gaping open-mouthed in awe at the astonishing quality of the new age of video gaming do you? Then why not buy, er, Mega CD *Wheel Of Fortune?*

Yes, you and up to two of your best buddies will be able to marvel at footage of the *lovely* Vanna White (shot specially for the game), scratch your heads over the enormous new database of *questions* (not used on any other version of the game) and then, hopefully, kill yourselves and donate your machine to someone more deserving and, frankly, not quite so completely bonkers. The game will be released in the US in November for $39.95, and if you buy it on import, we're going to come round to your house and kick your head in. (Probably.)



Someone out there's going to buy this. Don't let it be you

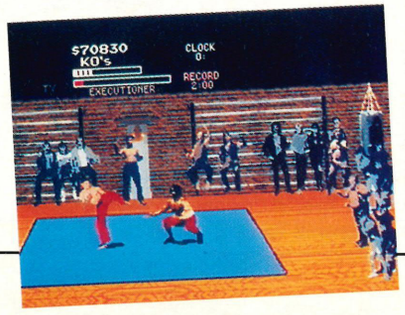
GOT HALF AN HOUR TO KILL?

Then you'll probably be pleased to hear that there's another Disney game on the way, this time featuring the bizarre (what-kind-of-animal-is-he-anyway gormless lump of semi-sentience) Goofy. It's a bit of a very slightly Bionic Commando-ish platformer by the sounds of things and it'll be out in late autumn for around £50 on import.

Goofy. A bit gormless really

Great rhyming slang of our time

Pitfighter 2 is coming soon. Bet you can't wait can you?



VOYAGE TO THE BOWELS OF THE BACK CATALOGUE

Oh yes, it's time again to run one of the worst Mega Drive games ever into the ground. And this month the plopper in question is...

OUTRUN

***Outrun* is an anagram of Our Nut. That's its most interesting feature. Yes it is**

So, you like driving games, eh? You love the high-speed thrills, you love the feel of the virtual wind in your hair and the virtual G-force as you hurtle round hairpin bends at simulated speeds well in excess of eight grillion miles per hour? You love the near-gladiatorial jousting with other cars as you jockey for position just before that lethal chicane? Or are you more into the notion of driving down a motorway for 700 miles with nothing more taxing to worry about that the accumulation of dead flies on your windscreen, eventually rendering vision completely impossible? If so, congratulations – we've got the very game for you. Step this way, sir, and plug yourself into... *Outrun!*

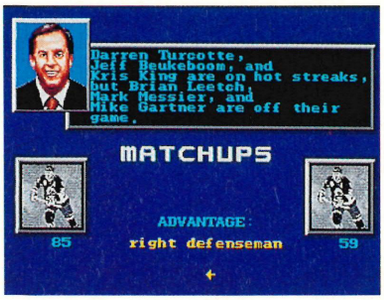
What's the point of this, exactly? You load it up, you spot-weld your finger to the accelerate button, you veer slightly to the right or left once every five minutes, and half an hour later you're admiring the end sequence. OK, lots of games are too easy, but at least with *World Of Illusion* or something, you get a little bit of fun while you're heading for the finish line with one eye closed and your right arm tied behind your back. *Outrun* kicks off with your car static on the start line, and if you think that's boring, you ain't seen nothing yet. This game isn't just "not fun", it's actually a deeply and affectingly unpleasant experience – you want to give up by about half-a-minute in, but a subconscious guilt forces you to see the whole sorry episode through to the end once you've started, and the harrowing schizophrenic struggle between the opposing elements of your psyche is likely to leave you physically and emotionally drained for several days, and mentally scarred for life. I shouldn't be at all surprised if Hannibal Lecter started off as a perfectly normal and pleasant guy, but then accidentally played Mega Drive *Outrun* one time and unhinged himself totally, y'know.

Unless Sega want to risk lawsuits from the parents of serial-killer victims, they should get this one off the shelves just as quickly as they possibly can. Better safe than sorry.

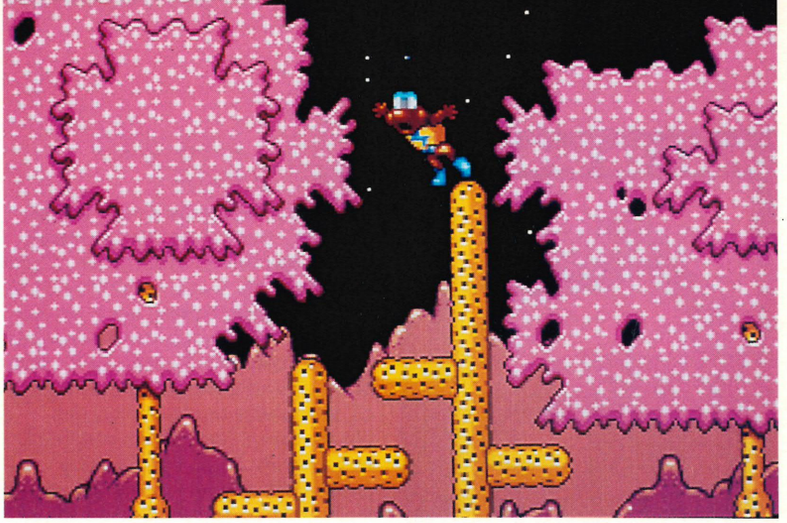
Next month, we'll take another "balanced" look at one of the Mega Drive's biggest plonkers.

NHLPA Hockey '94!

Oh, look, isn't this getting just a little bit out of hand now?



Buy *NHLPA Hockey* again! Complete the set!



JAMES POND 3. It's still on the way! It should be quite soon now! It should be really good! But then again, it might not! Watch this space...

ROCKY, BUT NO BULLWINKLE

Boxing Legends Of The Ring, due out later in the year from Electro Brain, seeks to take boxing games where they've never gone before, ie anywhere any bloody good, with eight real-life heavyweight legends (including Jake "Raging Bull" LaMotta and Roberto "Duran" Duran) and a wide range of special moves, including the revolutionary "punch in the face". Will it succeed? We don't know. This is a news section, not a fortune teller's.

Two words for Electro Brain. Muhammad, and Ali. Think about it

Paint the whole world with an Aero

Could be worse. Could be Aero*bix*

Admit it. When you bought a Mega Drive you didn't really want *Sonic The Hedgehog*. You didn't really want *Dragon's Fury*. You didn't really want *John Madden Football*. You wanted to play a simulation of launching and running a profit-making airline business, didn't you? Well, is it ever your lucky day? The new game from Koei is *Aerobiz*, offering you the once in a lifetime chance to "Establish your hub and then expand outward"! Yes, "realistic business strategy" is now yours for the taking! Form an orderly queue, won't you?

SNES owners suck sonic boom!

Do let us know when you're fed up hearing about *SF2*, won't you?

No, that's not two headlines in one. Yes, Super Nintendo saddoes the world over have been getting all smug and superior again since it became known that they were getting another version of the world's biggest beat-'em-up – the supposedly even-better-than-the-*Champion Edition Turbo Hyper Fighting* version. But (BUT!) a press release lying hot on our desk from CapCom USA reveals that the Mega Drive version of *SF2* will NOT, as previously thought, be the boring old *Champion Edition*, but in fact a *Special Champion Edition*, featuring a *Hyper* option which allows nine different game speeds, and boasts the *Hyper Fighting* version's new special moves. Not only that, but the 24-meg *SF2 SCE* (as it's to be known) will also offer new features and moves unique to the *Special Champion* Edition, including a special Tournament mode!

DINOSAURS IN EXTINCTION SHOCK HORROR PROBE!

"Five levels with vertical and horizontal levels," boasts the press release for *Joe And Mac* from Data East, and it's hard to argue with it. The game will be out soon from Takara.

Mutants, creeps and musclemen

***Madden*, with mutants. And hockey**

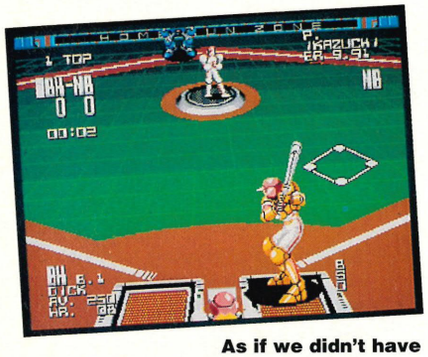
After the partial success of *Mutant League Football* (ie it was quite good, but everyone said, "It's not nearly as good as *John Madden*"), EA are trying again with *Mutant League Hockey*, which aims to give the same treatment to *NHLPA Hockey* as *MLF* did to *JMF*. But isn't *NHPLA Hockey* all about smacking people around and having big punch-ups anyway? Solve this existential crisis for yourself, sometime in early 1994.

SONIC'S CRUSTY BOX

Sad? Really sad? Sad beyond the ordinary boundaries of sad-dom? In training to represent Britain in the 1994 Sadness Olympics? Then why not walk around in public dribbling your Ribena from one of these Sonic flasks, or safely storing your sandwiches in a super-dreamy Sonic lunchbox? Coming next... Sonic – The Lampshade.

HUH?

A sports game from EA, but with a disclaimer announcing that "*Super Baseball 2020* is not an EA Sports title"? I don't understand.



As if we didn't have enough baseball games already. EA's latest is futuristic though, so it might be worth a look

Anyway, *Super Baseball 2020* is "a new action game with a baseball theme" (no!) and a conversion of a coin-op, apparently. Doubtless it'll be just as fabulous as every other Mega Drive baseball game there's ever been, so hurrah, eh?

MEGA CD UPDATE

SUPER BATTLE TANK 2

ABSOLUTE

SB2 is "The fourth entry in the company's best-selling *Super Battletank* series". What? How does that work, then? Is maths different in America? Anyway, it's *Battlezone* with nice graphics and it's bound to be fab. It should be coming your way this winter.

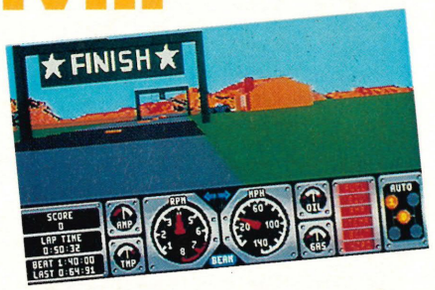
MEGA TOP TEN THINGS MORE FUN THAN PLAYING *G-LOC*

Here are just ten of 'em:

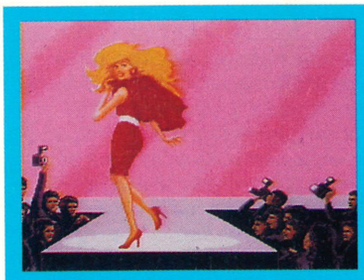
1. Counting the number of letters in its name
2. Counting the number of letters in your own name
3. Counting to three
4. Death by listening to jazz music
5. Death by listening to Neil West and Andy Dyer's rendition of Dude Looks Like A Lady
6. Timmy Mallet
7. Drinking petrol
8. Holding your breath until you faint
9. Having your arms and legs gnawed off by a wolf while someone pours napalm in your ears
10. Not playing *G-LOC*

Race Drivin'

A sickening travesty of a nightmare on the SNES, it can only be hoped that this new Tengen release fares rather better on a machine with a processor twice as fast. *Hard Drivin'* was a little way short of perfect, but they've had a long time to get it right with the second attempt – let's hope they've managed it, eh?



Hope it's more exciting than this

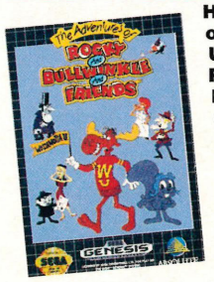


She may only be a six-inch plastic doll – but phwoar, not bad, eh lads?

Girls! Girls! Girls!

It's often been said that gaming is a male-dominated leisure pursuit, and that one of the reasons that more girls don't enjoy the delights of console ownership is that most games are so strongly targeted at boys, with lots of guns and hitting things and all that kind of malarkey. Well, worry no longer. Now, at last, there's a game coming out for the chicks to play, featuring the things they like to do best. Yes, it's Barbie! Play with dollies! Go shopping! Subvert patriarchal society by refusing to conform to submissive stereotyped role models! No, hang on, that's not right...

ROCKY AND BULLWINKLE



Has anyone outside of the USA ever seen a Rocky And Bullwinkle cartoon? Thought not. Don't bother trying, either – they're really, really desperately awful.

VIRTUAL ACTUALITY

US gamers unhappy with their current reality were doubtless ecstatic this month when Sega announced the first four games which will be released later this year for their new Sega VR peripheral. Bundled with the hardware will be Nuclear Rush, a flight simulation set in atomic wastelands with the player as a "nuclear pirate" in charge of a big "weapons-loaded hovercraft", but users will also be able to mess up their hair and look stupid in front of their friends with Iron Hammer (which, frankly, sounds a bit similar with its "heavily-armed skimmer gunship"-type malarkey), Matrix Runner ("a dazzling, hypnotic materialisation of cyberspace, where players collide with strange semi-humans and vulture-like manifestations", ie it's probably a bit like *Sewer Shark* with more black in it), and *Outlaw Racing*, which is, er, a racing game. As for when we're likely to see these games, or indeed the Sega VR itself, in this country, your guess is as good as ours.

Softwear to be won!

It's been a while since we've heard the old "softwear" pun here at MEGA, but it's back like an old friend with the news that top merchandising outfit Outer Limits have produced a new range of video game-related clothing. Games featured on the T-shirts include *Sonic, Sonic 2, Street Fighter 2, Ecco The Dolphin, Lemmings, Taz-Mania, Greendog, Chuck Rock, ToeJam & Earl, James Pond* and *Zool*, and the asking price is a practically-insane £7.99 for kiddie size and £9.99 for fat (Snip! – Neil). But you don't even have to pay that much (although if you really want to, you can ring Outer Limits' mail-order service hotline on 0272 768989), because we've got hold of no less than ten (and no more than ten either – in fact it'd probably be entirely accurate to say the number in question was precisely ten and just leave it at that) of 'em, and because we've got millions of freebie T-shirts of our own already, we're going to give 'em to you.

All you have to do to win one is send us a snapshot of you wearing the most appallingly tasteless/out-of-date/downright revolting T-shirt currently humiliating the rest of your wardrobe, and the ones we judge most desperately in need of replacement get a nice clean shiny new one of their choice. Entries to "Barbara Cartland Competition", MEGA, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW.

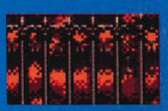
And here's a nice Sonic T-shirt

THE QS IN THE NEWS!

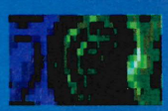
Okey-dokey, let's see if you've studied this issue of MEGA well enough. Answer the questions below, then scoot over to page 98 to find out how you did. But please, don't phone in, it's just for fun (Yes, I'm one of the tedious gits who keeps quoting things from the Big Breakfast).

1. What was special about the arcade version of *The Ninjawarriors*?
2. Why might you get a sense of déjà vu when playing certain sections of *Batman Returns* CD?
3. Which famous tennis star features in Tecmagik's new game?
4. Spot the odd one out:
a) Andy Dyer who loves *F1*
b) Neil West who loves *F1*
c) Everybody else on the planet (who love *F1*)
d) Paul Mellerick
5. Which famous superhero appears in a very un-super game from Virgin?
6. What's Sega's new super-console rumoured to be called?
7. How many events are there in *American Gladiators* (don't look)?
8. Where is Neil?
9. Who is Earnest Evans' girlfriend?
10. What's the name of the artist who does Bernhard The Crab?
11. Which two football teams are featured on our cover?
12. How many players can play *Ultimate Soccer* at once?
13. What does Anime mean?
14. What's the name of the bloke behind 3DO?
15. Who stars in the soon-to-be-released film Champions?

16. Which game is this screenshot snippet from?



17. Which game is this screenshot snip-ette from?



18. Which game is this screenshot snipetty bit from?

19. Which game is this screenshot, er, extract from?

20. And this one?

That wasn't too bad was it now? Or was it. The only way to find out is to scoot on over to page 98 (for that is where the As On The Back Page live) and tot up your score. Are you sure you've got it all right. I should check your answers once more if I were you. More quiz-tastic fun next month.

***Night Trap* (again). Public outcry, Sega set up a rating system, and still people whinge. This time Nintendo have a pop**

NINTENDO BLAST SEGA

Sega's game *Night Trap* caused such an outrage that Sega have decided to impose their own rating scheme on game releases. As soon as they did, Nintendo uncharacteristically (yeah right!) attacked the scheme calling it "a smoke screen for more violent games".

The company says that the Sega game-rating system is a means to justify the marketing of increasingly violent video games. Nintendo went on to say that they rejected the arcade game *Mortal Kombat* "because it includes lots of violence and some death scenes". Acclaim Entertainment are now reprogramming the game to meet Nintendo's guidelines. However, it has been suggested that Sega intend to release an arcade version of *Mortal Kombat* with the death scenes intact. Nintendo continue their criticism of the new rating policy by saying "the future of the video game industry rests on adhering to a policy of internal standards and extensive game evaluation, not unenforcable rating systems".

Ol' rubber face signs up

Guess who Sega's latest hero is? Michael Jackson. Yes, the saviour of America's failing plastics industry has been brought in to promote Sega's coin-ops.

Michael Jackson is to appear in two new Sega coin ops. Can't wait

Michael won't actually be used to sell hardware via TV (in the way he did with Pepsi). No, instead, Sega have actually got the guy filming video footage for inclusion in two future arcade titles. *Scramble Training* is a space rocket simulator and *Megaro Police 2154* is, um, not. Quite how Jacko's going to fit into the plot is beyond us, but you'll be able to find out when both games hit the arcades later in the year.

MARKY MARK

Yep, it's yet another one of those *Make Your Own Video* affairs, this time featuring three videos from the King of Calvin Klein pants, Marky Mark. Slightly better presented than previous efforts, this "game" involves taking a Marky Mark song and loosely constructing a video from stock video footage included on the disc. It's fun for a bit, but ultimately tedious. If anyone out there is interested (that'll just be the Marky Mark fans then), a rating for the game would be somewhere in the region of 50%.

Eeh, what an ornate backdrop. Shame about the Full Motion Video though

What precisely we have to believe will, no doubt, remain a mystery. Git!

DAVE RIOT The new hero for the 90s

Game-starved Menacer owners bored of pretending to be Arnold Schwarzenegger can soon pretend to be someone else entirely – *Body Count*, one of Sega's two new Menacer releases for winter '93, features the inspiringly-named hero Dave Riot, a one-man force intent on saving the Earth from alien rule, which may very well involve shooting lots of things. *Monster Hunter* promises to be broadly similar, but with a jungle/big game hunt setting replacing the urban/space creatures scenario. Yum.

PHONE THING

Sega and American Telephone & Telegraph (AT&T) have just made an agreement to develop The Edge, a device which enables Mega Drives to communicate via a telephone line. This means that soon, gamesplayers will be able to participate in groups, no matter where they are, and the good thing about the system is that you can still send voice messages, so you'll be able to talk to the other competitors at the same time. Electronic Arts and Tengen among others are looking into making their games Edge compatible.

The system should be available next summer in the states for between $100 and $150.

Are you pushing my buttons?

The most interesting-looking Mega CD game for a while could be *Third World War* from Extreme Entertainment Group. Visually akin to *Populous*, it's a government strategy game which makes you leader of one of 16 countries trying to dominate the world by careful manipulation of economic, foreign, domestic and military affairs. The press release seems to suggest thermonuclear apocalypse as one possible economic-difficulty remedy, but it's hard to be sure. Whatever, this one's going to be worth a look when it appears at the tail end of the year.

CH

The

The console market is very buoyant at the moment, and rather than settling down, the battle for first place is more competitive than ever. How, in Sega's eyes, are they actually doing in the Sega vs Nintendo stakes? Is the situation in the US as favourable as that here in Britain?

"It's great," offered Kalinske. "We think we're going to sell about 6.5 million Genesis units this year and that should give us a 58% share of the market. So it looks like we're beating them on both sides of the water."

No doubt Kalinske's Nintendo equivalent would have told us a different story, but certainly Sega's dominance at the show suggested that this may not all be hot air. What were the highlights? Kalinske was massively impressed with *Aladdin* from Virgin and Disney, as indeed was everyone else who saw it. Another product that Kalinske is excited about is *Sonic Spinball*. But why is it not being called *Sonic 3*? Kalinske is very specific about this.

"This is definitely not *Sonic 3*. And I don't honestly think there will be any confusion. I guess the comparison is with something like *Mario Kart*. It's an obvious offshoot, and the game is so distinctive and specifically in one genre that it could not be even considered to be *Sonic 3*.

"I think the important thing is that Sonic brings the strength of his character to a pinball game and makes what was already a great idea into an outstanding game."

So when are we going to see the real *Sonic 3*?

"It won't hit the shops until 1994, probably January '94. This is very much a deliberate policy. January is a huge month in the video game business, there's a lot of Christmas money around and we needed a blockbuster, and they don't come much bigger than *Sonic 3*."

Let's hope not. We asked Kalinske if he could tell us how the game is coming along,

***Aladdin*. This new Mega Drive game was the talk of the show**

ICAGO CES Inside Story

Sega's huge presence at the show certainly spoke for itself, but, as always, MEGA went one step further. Rather than let the product speak, we sent our US correspondent-type bloke to get the low-down from Tom Kalinske, president of Sega USA

but apparently the risk of him getting lynched would be too great. However, he was able to tell us that Sonic will have a new friend, but Tails will still be present.

OK, *Sonic 3* will be the biggest thing since, er, *Sonic 2*, but there are a few other biggies out there which Kalinske was very nearly just as thrilled about. Describing *Jurassic Park* on CD as "staggering" he went on to describe the live video footage and the great attention to detail that has been put into the game. Also, although he made no mention of *Street Fighter 2*, he did seem rather keen to tell us about *Eternal Champions*.

"It's a streetfighting game, but the characters are two or three times bigger on your screen than other games of its type.

"And, of course, there's the Sega Sports category, which we've created a special new label and logo for. We're working really hard to make each new title we do in some way different and better than the last. It's important to us because sports games now account for 38% of all our software sales. Over the next year we're introducing new games on football, baseball, basketball, hockey, motor racing, golf, tennis, boxing and wrestling."

But what about "proper" football, I believe you call it soccer?

"Yeah, we're doing a soccer game. I forgot to mention it because it's being designed over in England because obviously it's more their thing than ours." (Just for the record, irony fans, a few days after this conversation the USA beat England 2:0 at what I guess we now have to call soccer.)

Will it have a World Cup licence attached?

"You know, I'm not sure. My feeling is that it probably will, because we've signed just about every other sports licence going, so I can't imagine we forgot the World Cup."

"We know more about 32-bit technology than virtually anyone else"

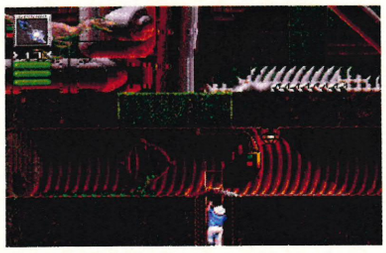
Alright, enough of game releases. The thing that's getting everyone fired up at the moment is Sega VR. Talk to us Tom.

"What we're showing here is only around 25% complete. The final products that you'll see will look at least three times better.

OK, so you can already have VR experiences in arcades, but then you *are* connected to $7,000 machines. This is a $200 machine, and to have replicated the arcade quality so closely is a major technological achievement.

"It is obviously not quite as good as the arcades," said Kalinske, "but it's good, it's very good and we're very pleased with it." Thank goodness for that.

What about the state of the CD software – the first generation received only a lukewarm reception? The verdict on the second batch though is a modest "mind-blowing". Unfortunately, many of the titles were not on show because the video footage was still being shot. However, Kalinske told us of a new boxing title featuring digitised piccies of real boxers wincing with pain, and grinning at you before getting their faces punched in. Kalinske describes the game as "frighteningly realistic". And although not much was said, there's a new "interactive movie" called *Ground Zero Texas*. It's a bit like *Night Trap* but quite a bit better. Hmmm… what about *Sonic CD?*



***Jurassic Park* on Mega Drive. The CD version is "staggering"**

The Chicago CES: bigger than ever. It was a close run thing between Nintendo and Sega, but the general opinion is that Sega had the edge

"We're still planning the timing on that. The product itself is fairly far down the line, but we want to put so much in there, special moves, extra levels."

Will Sonic have a voice?

"It's got to be a possibility hasn't it?" That'll be a yes then. All rivetting stuff. And despite not wanting to pee on Kalinske's parade, a mention had to be made of 3DO. Is it really fair to say that the Mega CD is being left behind by this new machine?

"No, it's not. The important trade off for me is what you provide at what price and I think in those terms we're ahead of the game. Listen, with our arcade experience, we know more about 32-bit technology than just about anyone.

"The problem is getting that sort of technology down to a price which is acceptable to a consumer. At the moment we don't think it can be done.

"So what we're doing instead is improving the 16-bit technology. And the most important thing we've done there, is sign a technical alliance with CinePack, which can provide the same technology as that in the 3D0 machine.

"With their help, the digitised video will look much better and it will fill the whole screen, not just a window. The colours available will go from 64 to 512 and the resolution will be much, much sharper.

"The truth is, when I walk over to the 3DO stand and see what they're running, my verdict is that what we're doing is damn near as good for a whole lot less money. They'll launch at about $700. I'm not interested in machines over $500."

So there we have it, from the horse's mouth. Indeed, this summer's CES was an undeniable success for Sega. While sizewise Sega and Nintendo's physical presence at the show was 50/50, visitors to the event did leave with a feeling that it was ultimately Sega who were the more dynamic competitors. However, the threat of 3DO is looming, so if you want to find out more about that machine, how powerful it is, and what Kalinske and Sega plan to do about it, go to the feature which starts on page 16.

THE CHARTS

Facts have to be faced. Andy and Neil just aren't funny, so we've enlisted the help of Master of Mirth Brian Conley to save the charts page. Go for it...

OFFICIAL TOP 20

This month	Last month	Game Name	MEGA Rating
1	■ (NE)	**Flashback** "This bloke came up to me the other day and hit me in the face with a prawn cocktail..."	M 94%
2	▼ (01)	**Super Kick Off** "No, don't laugh, that was just for starters!"	M 79%
3	■ (NE)	**Fatal Fury** (Haaaaaaaaaaa, ha, ha. Heeee, heeeeeeee. Ooh my aching sides. Just for starters, titter – Neil)	M 65%
4	▼ (02)	**PGA Tour Golf 2** (Snigger, I, hoo hooo, I think, heh, I'm going to faint, Haaaaaaaaaaaaaa – Andy))	M 91%
5	■ (05)	**Ecco** (HAAA

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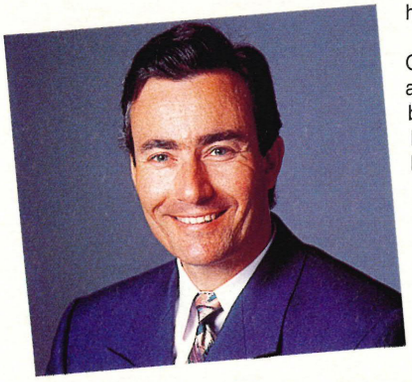
Can 3DO KILL SE

Trip Hawkins is the man who founded Electronic Arts. Now he's the man behind 3DO – a new games machine, due for release in October, which many gamers have already called "the console that will kill Sega and Nintendo". Steve Jarratt takes a look at the facts, and weighs up the chances of Sega actually making it into the year 2000...



Trip, founder of the 3DO company. A shrewd geezer and no mistake

Computer technology is rocketing forward at a fantastic rate. The science-fiction dreams of ten years ago are today's reality – and the same is true of games machines. Both Sega and Nintendo's current line-up is based on 16-bit technology, but a new generation of CD-based super-machines is just around the corner, and 3DO leads the way. A lot of observers reckon that there's just no way Sega can keep up, but first – let's just take a look at what 3DO has to offer.

There's been a lot of talk about 3DO. On paper, the 3DO console is light years ahead of anything Sega or Nintendo have been able to come up with. In California, Hollywood business moguls have been looking for the "next big thing" since home video exploded ten years ago, and they are convinced that in 3DO, they've found it: $57 million shares were snapped up by eager investors despite the fact that so far not one 3DO console has been sold and that the prospectus includes nine pages of risk factors including worrying statements such as, "There's no assurance that 3DO will ever successfully complete development of its technology".

SO WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT 3DO?

Well, a lot of its reputation stems from the man at the helm. Trip Hawkins moves like a man with a purpose – he's the sort of guy that just screams "invest lots of money in me – I know what I'm doing" the moment he walks into a room. He founded Electronic Arts, and now he's founded The 3DO Company and promises to develop the world's ultimate home console.

Having gained a degree in (get this) Strategy and Applied Game Theory from Harvard College, he helped lead Apple Computing into the business market. Then, in 1982, he founded Electronic Arts – you might have heard of them: chances are they've got some of your money. Four years later, EA were the biggest suppliers of video game software in the world.

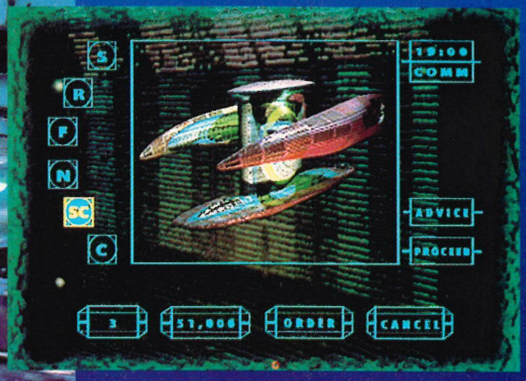
But then Trip – still only 39 years old – set his sights on bigger things. Possibly tired of having to produce games on half-a-dozen different formats and having to beg Nintendo and Sega's permission in the process, Trip left EA to produce a world standard multi-media entertainment system (that's "the ultimate console" to you and me folks).

CHECK IT OUT

These three stills come from *Road Rash 3DO* – impressive, to say the least. Now these aren't the actual game shots, but they do quite effectively illustrate (quite literally) the 3DO's graphical capabilities. You just have to use your imagination to work out what Sega have got up their sleeves...

An intro screen from *Road Rash 3DO*. Hmmm... not bad at all

And here's another one. Yes, still, it's not much for us to worry about, eh?



Well, it's all very pretty but (ahem) probably boring

It was to be a state-of-the-art CD-based console for which anyone could produce games – a move away from Sega and Nintendo's restrictive development policies (you can only produce games for their machines with their full approval) and an "open" licensing system, whereby you pay a fixed (and probably quite substantial) sum to develop to the 3DO standard. In return, you would get a complete development kit, a wodge of manuals several feet thick and 3DO's blessing. After that, you were to be on your own: you would be able to release what you liked, when you liked.

And he's done it too: the first 3DO Interactive Multiplayer™ will hit American stores in October, priced at around $700 (that's roughly £450 – just £50 more than the combined price of Mega Drive and Mega CD) in the shape of a Panasonic-branded machine.

So why Panasonic? Well, this is payback for Panasonic's investment in 3DO – Trip Hawkins may be a very rich man, but he couldn't afford to found a project like this all by himself. He needed business partners, but not just any business partners. He chose Electronic Arts, MCA, Time Warner, AT&T and Matsushita. And guess which huge electronics firm Matsushita owns? Yep, Panasonic.

THE ULTIMATE AIM

But the beauty of it all doesn't stop there. MCA and Time Warner make and distribute films, TV programmes and magazines, AT&T are a giant US tele-communications firm, and Electronic Arts you already know about. So the full equation goes: 3DO standard plus hardware plus movies plus software plus tele-communications equals high-quality interactive movies (games) fed into your machine via the TV cable network. Good stuff eh?

The 3DO tech spec makes anything from Sega look like a Mickey mouse water-filled game

Of course, this is the ultimate (if slightly fanciful) aim of the system; a lot of peripheral technology has yet to be developed that will start pushing 3DO to its limits. When it first appears, all of its software will come on CD, just like a Mega CD. Erm… only better.

Yep. Much as we hate to admit it, the 3DO tech spec makes anything with Sega or Nintendo written on the front look like one of those Mickey Mouse water-filled games you can get from the Disney store. And at just a little over the price of a combined Mega Drive and Mega CD, it can only be described as an absolute bargain.

You know that "video game dream" of taking part in a movie? Yeah? Being able to step into The Terminator or Die Hard or (ahem) Nine And A Half Weeks? Well, 3DO has been designed to make this sort of thing happen. So, let's take a dive into techy-world and look under 3D0's sexy, black casing…

TECHNICALITIES

According to 3DO themselves, they reckon the machine has "a graphics animation processor that delivers 50 times the performance of typical personal computers and video game systems". That's quite a boast, but anyone who's seen early demos isn't debating it very much.

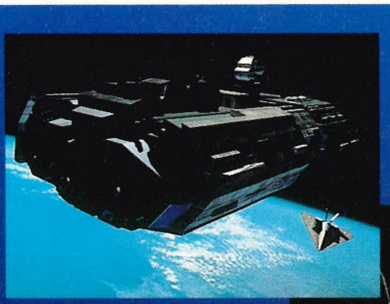
OK, the Mega Drive has its own graphics chips and a pretty nippy 68000 chip Central Processing Unit, but the CPU has to handle everything – and the extra burden of all that lovely CD data is only partially removed by having an extra processor inside the Mega CD's cabinet.

The 3DO still has a CPU – admittedly a bloody fast 32-bit Reduced Instruction Set Computer (RISC) chip – but has dispensed with central processor architecture in favour of a multi-tasking operating system. At the heart of the beast lie two custom-designed graphics animation engines, plus a back-up team of specialised circuits to handle video processing, digital sound and data flow management, 24 Direct Memory Access (DMA) channels and a memory management unit to allow these chips to speak to one another with the minimum of fuss.

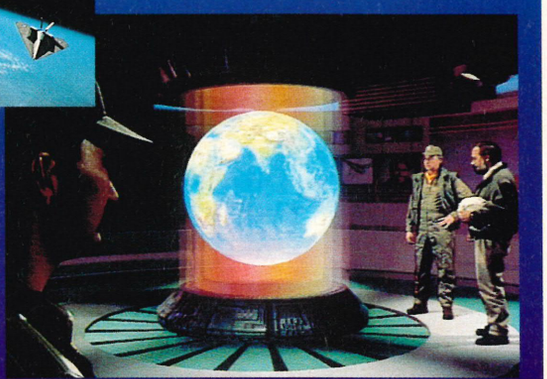
really GA?

The machine itself. Unassuming, but massively powerful... Yikes!

Oh dear me no. There must be some mistake. This is a shot of some movie surely. Yes?



(Gulp!) Things are looking bad...



... um, this 3DO lark's worryingly good isn't it?

3DO

Not convinced? Well, in full flight, the Mega CD can display or move around a million pixels per second, which is pretty meaty. However, that pair of custom animation engines snuggled inside the 3DO can shunt around 64 million pixels per second. In technical parlance, that's "sodding loads".

To do this, the engines organise graphics into "animation cels" – sort of like enormous sprites, only without any limitation of size or shape, or colour, oh, and without having to worry about the number that can be shown on screen. There's no limit, apparently(!).

Just like the cels used by cartoon animators, they can be layered to give depth. They can also be animated, scaled, rotated and distorted – at will, independently of one another, hundreds at a time. For instance, you could happily animate an entire street scene, using separate cels for people, cars, dogs, smoke, clouds – you'll run out of things to animate before you run out of cels.

WARPED ANIMATION

As well as being scaled and rotated, cels can also be warped. With a few commands, you can bend, twist, skew, shrink, stretch and generally torture an image to any fiendish design you can imagine. You can also define the movement of an object and let the 3DO fill in the individual frames for you. For instance, when a squidgy bouncing ball appears on the Mega Drive, an artist has to draw every single frame as the ball deforms on contact with the ground. With 3DO you just tell it where the ball is going, how fast, how soft it is and let it do all the hard work for you.

Oh, and while we're about it, let's make the ball transparent, and made out of water, or fire, or fog. And let's have it lit from the side, casting a partial shadow on the floor below. Oh, and don't worry if the light changes or the ball moves; 3DO still fills in the gaps. And just to finish off the sequence, let's take a big smiling picture of Sonic The Hedgehog and wrap it around the ball. 3DO just doesn't know when to stop.

But these graphic tricks are only secondary to 3DO's main purpose of creating playable movies – all this is just what it does in its spare time, kind of like, when it's bored.

3DO's main raison d'être is to display full-screen, full-colour video footage

3DO's Interactive Multiplayer™ main raison d'être is to display full-screen, full-colour video at 30 frames per second – that's faster than the cinema. And with an additional MPEG data decompression cartridge, your 3DO machine turns into a movie player, for VHS-standard digital video playback – when digital movie CDs become available, of course.

It's even got a high-speed Digital Signal Processor (DSP) for CD-quality sound and a new 3D sound-imaging technique so that when you're wearing earphones, you become completely immersed in holographic sound. The only thing it doesn't do is play the piano for you. (Ah. Apparently, there's a MIDI connector in the pipeline, so it'll even be able to do that before long. There'll also be the addition of 3D glasses, modems, video editing facilities, a keyboard and mouse, proper joypads and trackballs memory-save cards, etc, etc…)

So the question is, of course, if 3DO is really going to appear later in the year – and be able to do all the things Trip Hawkins is claiming – what are Sega going to do in answer?

Well, let's just take a step back and look at the facts.

SEGA'S RESPONSE

Sega and Nintendo are the biggest operators in the video game business right now. They have money, they have power, and they have expertise. Anybody who reckons that 3DO can just steam in and take over immediately is incredibly naïve: do they seriously think Sega will roll over and die without kicking up a fight? Give up their hard-earned position as the world's number one video-game manufacturer? Course not.

3DO can shout about their new super-console – they don't have any existing hardware to promote. Sega have the Mega Drive and Mega CD – they can't start talking about their 32-bit, CD-based console or else no-one will buy Mega Drives or current Mega CDs. But that doesn't mean they don't exist. Sega USA's boss Tom Kalinske has already more than hinted to MEGA (see boxout on the right) that the successor to the Mega Drive is almost complete, but they're keeping quiet.

TWO COURSES OF ACTION

The only sensible conclusion to be reached is that Sega have examined the threat of 3DO and will act upon it. This action will probably take two forms: firstly, Sega will slash the price of the Mega CD – at £400 for a complete set up, it's just not competitive. The Mega CD 2 is cheaper to manufacture – a price drop is now an economic possibility.

Secondly, Sega will hurry up and unveil the 32-bit successor to the Mega Drive; it already exists, it just may have to be bought into play earlier than they had anticipated.

Either way, Sega have got to act – and it has to be good news for Sega games players. Trip Hawkins, instead of killing Sega, may well end up making Sega gaming better than ever before. Ⓜ

TEN THINGS 3DO WILL DO

1) Show full-screen, full-colour video at 30 frames per second, and even play full-length movie video discs
2) Play music CDs and display Kodak Photo CDs
3) Plug into the cable TV network, allowing you to download games, movies, shopping catalogues, and interact with specialised game shows
4) Act as a home video suite for editing, adding special effects and titling
5) Can retrieve data from a CD-Rom at 300k per second
6) Display virtually real 3D images with the help of plug-in 3D goggles
7) Allow you to save out your high score/game progress/pictures/music onto dedicated smart memory cards
8) Act as a music sequencer with an additional MIDI interface
9) Provide a hardware base for coin-op cabinets
10) Play games that will blow your mind...

3DO LICENSEES

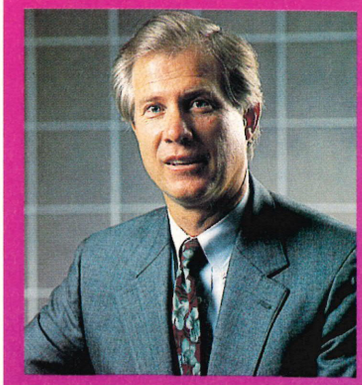
Even though not one single 3DO machine has been sold yet, there are already over 150 third-party licensees gearing up to produce 3DO games. These licensees include the following...

- Electronic Arts (who will have around six titles ready for the launch of 3DO in October, some of which will be souped-up Mega Drive conversions)
- Warner New Media (a branch of Warner Brothers: interactive movies here we come)
- Access Software (the original *World Class Leaderboard* developers)
- Sierra (already well-versed in interactive adventures on the PC)
- Software Toolworks (who'll challenge the 3DO to a game of chess)
- Victor Musical industries (effectively JVC, who have the Star Wars movies' licence)
- Argonaut Software (the leading-edge 3D games developer and the people who developed Nintendo's Super FX chip)
- Psygnosis (Already working on a stunning conversion of their FM Towns game, *Microcosm*)
- Sales Curve (Bound to be *Lawnmower Man 2*, with full motion video clips)
- Virgin Games (Sylvester Stallone's Demolition Man is in production, while 7th Guest must be a cert)
- Ocean (Got to be *Jurassic Park* with real 3D dinosaurs)
- Bullfrog (probably *Populous 3D*)
- Domark (Er... who knows)

Plus a whole host of other US Multimedia companies.

SEGA'S 32-BIT SYSTEM

As we've already stated, only the most naïve of people would think that Sega will see 3D0 as an insurmountable threat and simply pack their bags. When MEGA spoke to Tom Kalinske about future plans, this is what he said.



Tom Kalinske
President of Sega USA

MEGA had already heard that Sega are developing a 32-bit system. However, recently it came to light that the system was almost complete and that it'll be called, Saturn. Did the name sound familiar to Kalinske?

"It sounds like a good name, doesn't it?"

Hmm... cagey bloke huh? It obviously means something to you though doesn't it Mr Kalinske, sir?

"To be honest it does, and you probably know we could more or less bring a machine like that out tomorrow. That's how far advanced we are on a 32-bit console, but it's a question of being able to launch at the right price.

"I don't think that problem is that close to being solved and I don't think you'll see a new Sega console before 1995. I think that instead, the quality made possible by the alliance with CinePak will mean that the Mega CD continues to represent the best CD value on the market."

When Saturn, if that's its name, comes out, will it be compatible with the Mega CD?

"I think so, yes. Backward compatibility has been important to our success in the past."

And will it have a cartridge port?

"That's actually the subject of a big international debate at the moment. In the short term there are still a lot of things worth doing on cartridge, but I think that everybody knows that in the long term they'll be more or less redundant and so that question is very much in the balance."

So what can we gather from all that? The machine exists, it's practically finished, but price is a stumbling block. Sega are just as able, if not more so, to produce hardware at unprohibitive prices as 3DO. They've had years more experience in development, so is the plan to produce a fairly good console at a ludicrously low price, or can we assume from this that they've got a mind-blowing system lined up which at the moment couldn't be competitively priced next to 3DO? Who can say? What is certain though is that Saturn *will* come out, and, we believe, due to 3DO, it will arrive a lot sooner than Sega had planned. And with it being backwardly compatible with the Mega CD, this may provide a substantial incentive for existing Sega owners to choose the Sega machine in preference to 3DO. The battle is by no means won.

20,000 CINEMA TICKETS TO BE GIVEN AWAY!

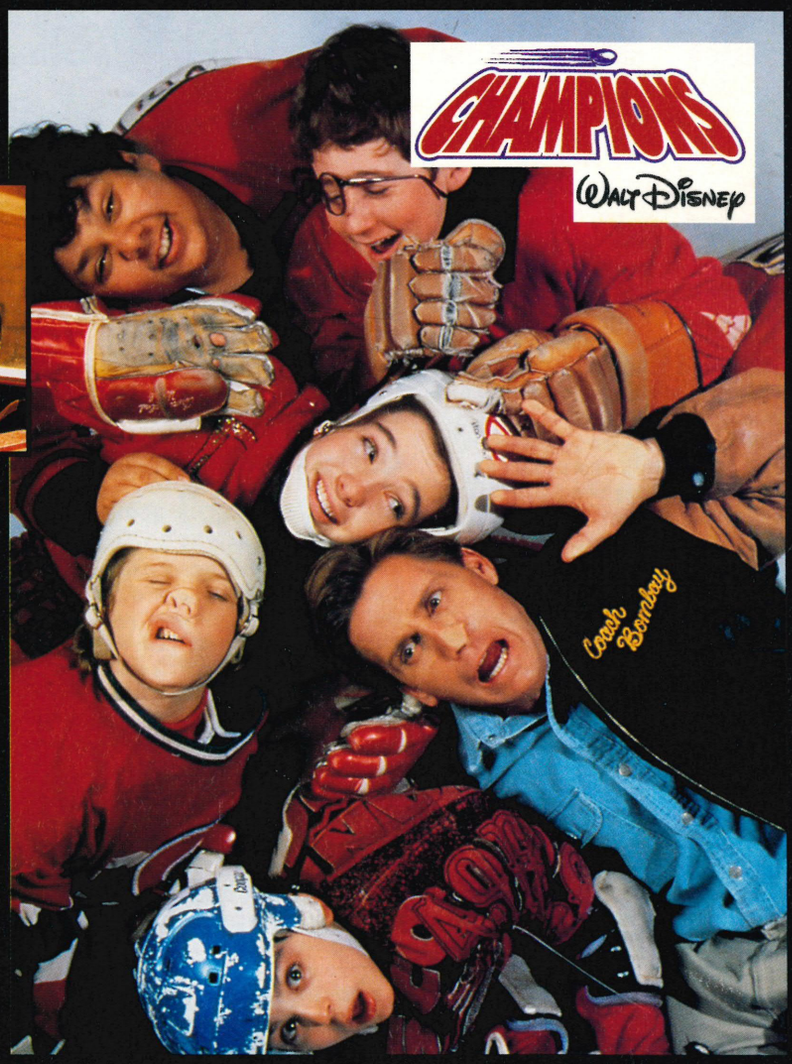
OK so we said "win" on the cover, but it's actually even easier than that. We're *giving* the bloody things away

Something special is happening on the morning of August 8. But if your friends don't buy MEGA, they're not invited. What is it? Well, it's a special preview screening of an action comedy called Champions, starring Emilio Estevez. It follows the fortunes of a lawyer who, much to his disgust, has to look after an ice hockey team made up of young punks who wouldn't know one end of a hockey stick from the other. And guess what? Yep, he makes a decent team out of them. It's supposed to be a fab little film, and it was one of the top-ten money-spinners in the States last year, so it must be pretty good.

MEGA has teamed up with Disney and Virgin retail to offer you the freebie of the century; 20,000 free tickets to the special screening. All you have to do to get a pair of tickets is take the coupon from this page to a local Virgin Megastore or Virgin Games Centre (participating branches are printed on this page) and the bloke or blokess behind the counter will exchange it for the tickets. Easy! What's more, the screening is during school holidays, so no-one will have to bunk off – which brings me neatly onto the next bit. Unfortunately, the offer doesn't apply to people who live in Scotland. Sorry, it's not that we don't like you, it's something to do with holidays or something.

You'll have to be quick though. You'll need to claim your tickets between July 15 and August 7 and it's all on a strictly first come first served basis. Go on then, jump to it! Ⓜ

Above: Emilio gets a small boy to play with one of his balls
Right: Er, defies explanation really



ALL SCOTS, READ THIS!

Sorry to leave you out chaps. Still, EA has kindly given us 15 EA Sports' baseball caps for those of you who feel a bit miffed. If you want one, send us a postcard with your name and address. The first 15 received will get a cap. Send your addresses to: Moose, loose, hoos etc Compo, MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW.

FREE CINEMA TICKETS!

Present this coupon at any Virgin retail store between July 15 and August 7 and you will receive two tickets to see Champions at participating cinemas in your area on Sunday, August 8.

MEGASTORES

Western Road, Brighton
Capitol Arcade, Queens Street, Cardiff
Armada Way, Plymouth
Castle Mall, Norwich
Corporation Street, Birmingham
Market Street, Manchester
Marble Arch, Oxford Street, London
Wheelergate, Nottingham
Oxford Road, Reading
Royal Avenue, Belfast
Aston Quay, Dublin
The Briggate, Leeds
Northumberland Street, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne
Orchard Square, Fargate, Sheffield
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GAMES CENTRE

High Street, Bromley, Kent
Culver Street,Colchester
North End, Croydon, Surrey
Dawson Street, Dublin
North Street, Guildford, Surrey
Whitefriargate, Hull
Exchange Shopping Centre, Ilford
Clarence Street, Kingston-Upon-Thames
Lord Street, Liverpool
100 Oxford Street, London
Westgate Shopping Centre, Oxford
High Street, Sheffield
East Street, Southampton
High Street, Watford
Oxford Street, Bolton
Broadway, Bradford
High Street, Canterbury
Princes Mall, East Kilbride
Metrocentre, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear
Albion Street, Leeds
Cornhill, Lincoln
Crown Walk, Milton Keynes
Long Row, Nottingham
The Cascades, Portsmouth
High Street, Southend
Princes Street, Stockpor
Havelock Square, Swindon

FOOTBALL – It's a funny old game

Soccer games are very popular – but they're notoriously difficult to get right: previous Mega Drive soccer games have been appalling. Starting on page 22 you'll find the exclusive review of *Ultimate Soccer* – the latest footy offering from Sega. Then you'll find interviews with other software houses working on their own footy feasts – all are striving to get it right...

How do you combine realism with playability? How do you handle 22 characters moving independently around a playing area at the same time? How do you translate kicking a ball into pressing a button on a joystick? It's bloody difficult, that's what it is.

Soccer is not a game that suits a console – for a start, half the fun is lost as soon as you're indoors and not with a bunch of team mates in a big bubbly showe...(Snip! – Neil) – but as such a popular sport it seems ludicrous not to give it a try. Why do you think that there are so many platform games available for your Mega Drive? Cynics will say that it's because they're easy to do and can be bodged out by one bloke in his lunch hour, but they're wrong. The real reason (it would take his afternoon fag break as well, actually – Neil) is that platform games are ideally suited to consoles: that's what they were designed for. Just one character to control, who can run left and right, with just two functions: jump and fire some sort of weapon. Easy. Simple. With your trusty joypad firmly in hand you have (or should have) complete control over what your character does.

But football's a different kettle of fish altogether. With just a directional pad and three buttons, how are you meant to give the player control over whether to pass or shoot, where to shoot (left, right, up, down, hard, soft, curler or blaster) or who to pass to, how hard the pass or shot is meant to be kicked, how fast to run, whether to tackle an opponent softly or risk getting a booking and nobble him, deciding which defensive or attacking player to control – while at the same time keeping the speed of the game fast and the time in which you have to make your decisions very, very short?

"Tricky" is the understated answer of the year.

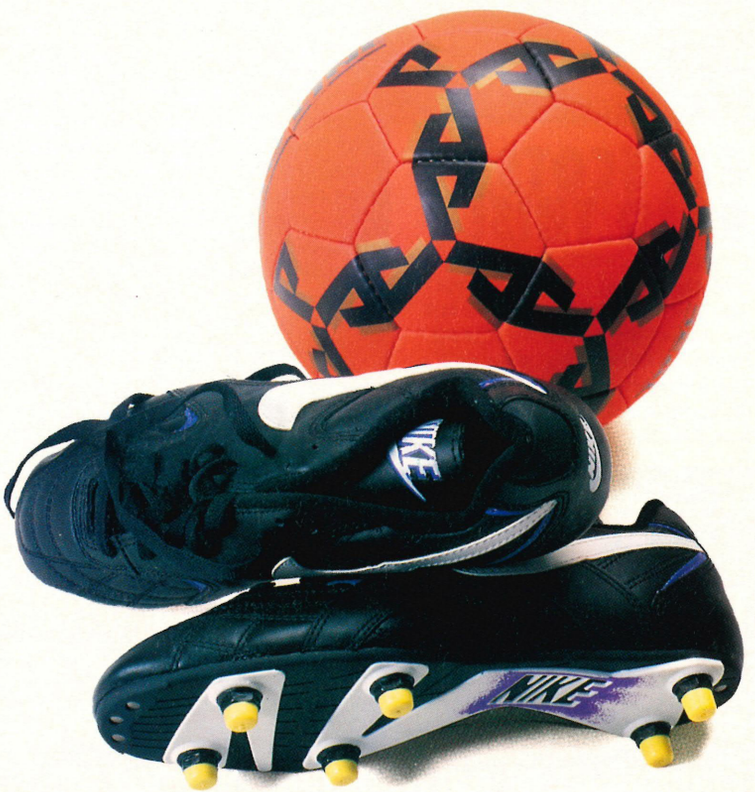
Getting the "feel" of the game right is like trying to grab a mackerel in a bath of custard, and then actually reassuring the player that he is in anyway in control of what's going on on-screen is a nightmare. There's the story of the gamesplayer challenging his non-gamesplaying mate to a game of *World Cup Italia '90*: it was 0-0 at half time, both players were frantically getting stuck into the action and declaring it a fine, evenly matched, er, match, when the gameplayer realised his mate was actually holding his joypad upside down...

Yup. Control is the real problem.

Game options, action replay features, an unlimited number of teams, player customisation, different pitches, comedy referees: all can be piled on and on by the bucketload, but at the end of the day (slipping into Jimmy Hill mode for just the one phrase) it's gameplay that counts.

MEGA doesn't have the winning formula (if we did, you can bet your autographed Peter Shilton jock strap that we'd be somewhere near the Bahamas right now) but over the next ten pages you'll see how the professionals take on the daunting task of creating the ultimate football game.

We will start, on the opposite page, with a rundown of footy games past and present. On page 22 you will enter the main event – the exclusive review of Sega's eight-player *Ultimate Soccer* – and then you will enter the world of *Sensible Soccer*. We conclude our football crazy feature with a look at the other soccer games which are due for release in the not-too-distant future...



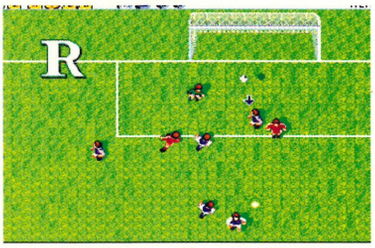
Footoball games are very popular. There's no getting away from the fact that for the last two years computer owners up and down the country have been getting off on games such as *Kick Off 2* (*Super Kick Off* on the Mega Drive) and *Sensible Soccer* (see our interview with those Sensible bods on page 25), and Mega Drive owners have lapped up any football game that's come their way. But, and this is the interesting bit, footy games have got better and better as time has gone on. So let's take a look at the older (and possibly worst?) Mega Drive footy games as well as the later (and increasingly better?) game releases. Then read the review of the latest footy release over the page.

Football games in the past have been, well, dull to say the least. But as the Mega Drive gets older (and wiser) things are looking up. If you don't believe us, take a look at the history of footballing on the Mega Drive...

The OTHERS

SUPER KICK OFF OFFICIAL RELEASE

Release date: May '93



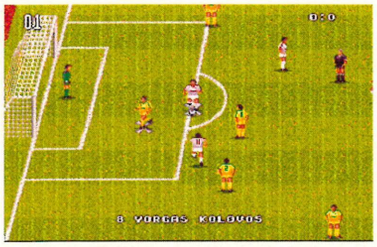
After almost a two-year wait, the famous *Kick Off* finally made it to your Mega Drive. Using an initially unfriendly, very speedy top-down view, this Mega Drive version retains all the instinctiveness and ease of use of the Amiga game and then adds other bits on top. With quite large characters and loads (and loads) of game tweaking options, this is a real statistician's delight, but for us gameplayers there seem to be a few things missing.

The very, very fast speed of the game, although technically excellent, isn't as highly playable as the computer versions, and the control system will take some getting used to. But for overall playability (and that's what really counts isn't it?) this is at the moment, unbeatable.

MEGA SAYS: *Kick Off* took a long while to make it onto the Mega Drive, and while it's an OK footy game, there are, pretty soon, going to be better ones.
MEGA RATING: **79%**

EURO CLUB SOCCER OFFICIAL RELEASE

Release date: July '92



This lovely little game started out as a game called *Manchester United Europe*, but for some reason ended up being called *Euro Club Soccer*. This is a very polished game that is a real graphical treat (as far as footy games go), with big, well-animated sprites, a real stadium feel and grass so real you could roll in it.

Choosing your team from over 170 European teams means you are going to find at least one team you'll want to play as, and with three varying difficulty settings, this is tough too. It has a not overly complex control system (it's just a bit difficult to put some after-touch on the ball) and it is definitely a game that needs to be played for a while before you start getting comfortable with it. There are a couple of gameplay niggles with control of the ball, but at the time of its release this was the best Mega Drive footy game, and it's still up there fighting with the rest of them. Again note the use of the Match of the Day style angle.

MEGA SAYS: A very useful and pretty little footy game, but if they'd sorted out a few little gameplay wibbles, this could be a real contender.
MEGA RATING: **77%**

TECMO WORLD CUP '92 JAP IMPORT

Release date: February '92

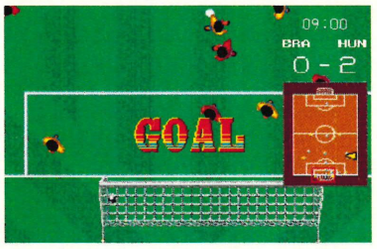
Uh? Unless we're very much mistaken there wasn't a World Cup in 1992 was there? Well no there wasn't, but stick with us and we'll explain all. Going back to the 1990 World Cup, Tecmo, those nice arcade coin-op people, came up with a smooth kick-and-rush footy game that was well worth the odd 20-pence piece of your hard-earned cash, especially when you played it with a mate.

After the game had done so well in the arcades (in fact you can still see some of the old machines in arcades today and jolly good fun they are too) and Tecmo had signed up as a Sega licensee, they thought it would be a good idea to convert it over to the Mega Drive. However, by this time the year was 1992 and so they changed the year in the title of the game. What people forget though is that even a reasonable arcade game won't necessarily make a good console game. For a start, you'll play a console game a lot more than its coin-op counterpart, and it costs more too. And with its kick and rush type gameplay, there's not enough variety in the gameplay to keep you interested. It's also too easy to win through the World Cup, so the lastability isn't there either. Oh, and someone forgot to mention that it is possible to put nice graphics in a Mega Drive game – this really does look like a Master System game. The familiar sideways Match Of The Day viewpoint is cool though, but to show how you should use it, see *Euro Club Soccer*.

MEGA SAYS: I suppose the only really good point about this game is that it's not *World Cup Italia '90*. Playable, but for about ten minutes at the most.
MEGA RATING: **37%**

WORLD CUP ITALIA '90 OFFICIAL RELEASE

Release date: June '90



Ah, it's the old case of a licence selling a game. Everyone was excited about the 1990 World Cup. England had a good chance of getting somewhere in the competition and so Sega officially released this lovely little cartridge. Actually that's a lie. England didn't have a hope in hell and this is one dire little game. With a disgusting overhead view, players that are hideously large, and a control system that can only be described as unfinished, this is a very poor football game.

Good points? Well you do get to play as any of the teams that made it through to the finals... but that's the only good point. This is one of the ten worst ever Mega Drive games, definitely the worst footy game and it sold by the bucketload. My, oh my! Next...

MEGA SAYS: If nothing else, this game wins the award for the worst sport simulation ever to appear on the Mega Drive. Very poor indeed.
MEGA RATING: **35%**

J LEAGUE PRO STRIKER JAP IMPORT

Release date: June '93

Reviewed in our very last issue, this official game of the Japanese football league, including such luminaries as Gary Lineker, is possibly the best-looking footy game you can get. It's not as polished as *Euro Club Soccer*, but with some great character graphics and a nicely sized pitch, this is a real eye-pleaser. It's just a shame the same can't be said for the gameplay. Although there's everything here that should be – an easy-to-use control system, loads of teams, a knockout cup and a league – playing the game requires a lot of effort.

For some reason you really feel the need to put pressure on the pad to get any feeling of power into your shots. Maybe it's got something to do with the pace of the game, which is a little on the slow side. Still, if you like HARD games and you're a ROCK HARD type of a bloke, you may well prefer this over the rest. It's a toss between this and *Super Kick Off* for the trophy of best Mega Drive football game.

MEGA SAYS: A useful attempt at footy and very well programmed too, but you just have to put too much effort in to get anything out.
MEGA RATING: **68%**

So there you have it, the complete up-to-date history of Mega Drive footballing. After a couple of false starts the last three proper football games (we're not including *Tecmo Cup Football* for obvious reasons) have all been a great improvement. The best news though is that with games like *Ultimate Soccer* (see over the page), *Sensible Soccer* (see the interview with them on page 25) and an as yet untitled game from those gods at Electronic Arts, footballing on your Mega Drive is set to get much, much better.

Turn over

It's a game of two halves, 22 legs, two onion bags, one ball, one short-sighted chap in black, four rather fetching flags, and a large expanse of well-kept grass. Andy Dyer dribbles a bit, gets a perm, grows a tash, and signs with MEGA Amalgamated...

HOOF IT!

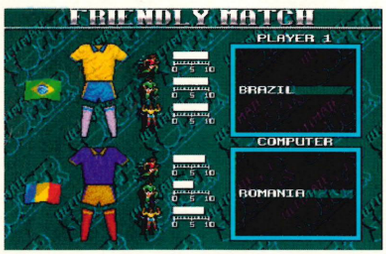
Thanks to the huge array of options in *Ultimate Soccer*, it's possible to play quick passing moves, building up to a goal-scoring situation. As the game's so fast paced you'll often find that there are plenty of onion-bag-bulging incidents.

The secret to scoring goals seems to be shooting from an angle. Rather than legging it up the middle of the pitch and hoofing the ball at the goalie, sprint down the wing and try doing a diagonal shot. Oh, and when you do score spectacularly, watch the replay loads of times to really annoy your opponent!

① Here's a fine goal being shown on the action replay. Brazil have legged it up the field and are on the attack

ULTIMATE SOCCER

Someone stupid once said that it's the taking part (not the winning) which counts. Given how crap we appear to be at all sports except failing, this could only have been said by an Englishman. Yes, like it or love it, the English sporting community (not the Scottish or Irish, who are actually quite good) have all the sporting ability of a particularly asthmatic sloth. While the rest of the globe gets on with winning the odd event, the English look pale and interesting and lose at everything – including football.



You can choose any of the World Cup teams. Here, the strong Brazilians will play crappy Romania

Now I'm no expert, but Graham Taylor and the boys don't appear to be doing a very good job. I mean, we can't even get a result against that feared footballing nation the Americans. We're so lame that we even let the world rename our national sport soccer because it confuses the dear Americans, who might mistake it for a sport involving some skill.

So if you're anything like me, then the one thought zipping around your frontal lobes at this juncture is revenge. I want to get my own back on all those successful sporting nations. I want to be a bitter, twisted ankle, moody, bad-losing brat. I want to sit a couple of mates with slow reactions in front of *Ultimate Soccer*, kit them out with some good teams and beat them – roundly. I want to beat them with style, panache and a cheeky grin on my face. Damn it all, I want to win, because nice guys never win.

Up to eight people can play at once

GIVE WADDLE A BREAK, TAYLOR

Soccer's a tricky sport to simulate correctly. Programming teams tend to plump for one of two approaches. The first school of thought supposes that detail is everything, that it's crucial to get the away kit strips, the feel of the grass and the offside rule exactly right. The other school of thought surmises that what's important is Mega Drive gameplay, that a competitive game's more important than anally-retentive football wibble. Thankfully, Rage (the programmers behind *Ultimate Soccer*)

Should you believe in such voodoo things as tactics, you can wiggle them about a bit

WHAT MAKES THIS FOOTBALL GAME THE ULTIMATE?

Paul Finnegan, the MD of Rage Software, explains how his programming team got it right...

Previous to writing *Striker/Ultimate Soccer* we consistently found ourselves playing *Kick Off 2*, which, at the time, was by far the best soccer simulation. It was during this time that an experimental 3D vector system was written. We then used this system to write *Striker*, a soccer game with perspective TV style display (imagine a football game on television shot totally from above), added realism (more shot variations and player attributes, to allow many types of goal) and increased player intelligence. Since this, *Ultimate Soccer* for the Mega Drive has been

(2) The captain, Aerosol, has hoyed the ball into the penalty box in the hope that one of his talented third-world players will score

(3) The plucky number nine (Artichoke) has made a run into the box in the hope of heading the ball into the net

(4) As the ball comes down, the goalie makes a vain dive for it, but loses out to the cunning header by Artichoke

(5) The ball hits the back of the net and Arti sprints out of the goal box to snog his team-mates and sign a lucrative condom sponsorship deal

Here, the appropriately named Illinger has tackled the comedic Wales' fullback and part-time telephone sanitiser, Godulrahama

TEN TOP PLAYERS WHO WON'T SEE PREMIERE LEAGUE ACTION

1. Percy Bronstein – Rhyl's popular goalie is too busy with his beach-front ice cream parlour
2. Colonel Saunders – finger-licking crap at football
3. Barry Bethall – he may have lost all that weight on the Slimfast™ diet, but his amazingly foul taste in T-shirts means he'll never reach the dizzy heights of footballing stardom
4. Ben Volpiere – the lead singer of Curiosity keeps losing his beret when he runs for the ball
5. That chick off the Pantene Pro-V™ advert – she'd get her lovely hair all messed up
6. That roller-skating chick in the Tampax™ advert – they don't allow husky dogs to play in football league matches
7. Keanu Reeves – a most unexcellent footballer. Nice hair though
8. The Tope off Saturday morning TV show, Parallel 9 – four bits of clear perspex and a bad voice-effects unit have little or no ball control
9. Elvis – he'd be far too worried about getting his blue suede shoes muddy to go for those close tackles and midfield scrimmages
10. Larry Fortensky – Liz Taylor won't let him out to play, even if he is back by six

plumped for the latter approach.

Ultimate Soccer's got more options than the instant diet hot chocolate counter in Waitrose. You can play in a league, a cup tournament or a friendly match. However the most excellent ingredient in the game is the fact that you can have up to eight people playing at once. By using the multi-player adaptor you can do battle with seven of your friends. And who said console gaming was a solitary activity?

Whichever kind of game you plump for, there are 64 teams to choose from. These are seeded into four groups and include Group A teams like Germany, Italy and Holland; Group B teams like Norway, Mexico and Romania; Group C teams like Morocco and Iceland; and Group D teams like Peru, Cyprus and Qatar. Each of these teams has a different set of abilities, with the Group A teams leading the field.

If you plump for the league option, then you can involve up to 32 people. This involves flagging each of the teams. The game then works out who plays when and how their league standing is affected by each win or loss. Similarly, the cup option enables you to utilise up to 24 teams in a knockout contest. The friendly match option enables you to quickly set up to two sides for a knockabout.

Cup, league or friendly matches are all possible against up to seven friends or the console

GET A GRIP!

Moves your chaps round the pitch

A – Hoofs the ball up into the air and hopefully down again. Thanks gravity!

B – Hoofs the ball along the ground to one of your player chaps

C – Dives, chests, or heads the ball depending on your star sign

HE MIGHT ACTUALLY SCORE THE ODD GOAL

But what of the gameplay itself. Well I'm happy to report that the game's jolly playable. This is due mainly to the fact that you can decide exactly how your players move the ball around. For example, you can decide if you want them to push the ball, dribble it, or if you want to use the old ball glued to the foot routine. Obviously the former two lead to a far more competitive game because it's so much easier to lose the ball.

The speed of movement around the pitch is quick and smooth. The angle chosen for the perspective view works well, enabling you to play a rapid passing game of footy. This is helped by the simple controls, where A or B kick the ball and C chests or heads it. By tapping the kick button as soon as you get the ball, you can quickly move up the field to the goal. Thanks to the aftertouch on the ball and the ability to drop the

Turn Over

developed with more intelligence, increased options and there is an indoor six-a-side option with increased game speed.

The speed relates to the gameplayer's reflexes, to create a stimulating game, allowing enough time to plan ahead but keep on the pressure. Graphical detail of *Ultimate Soccer* expands on the original Amiga version, taking advantage of the extended palettes of the Mega Drive and allowing a full range of shots to be implemented, (eg. overhead kicks, headers, diving headers, various kicks etc) there are 600 frames in multiple sizes to provide the perspective for the players. We have felt that it is important to implement a full soccer simulation while at the same time retaining both pace and fluidity in the game.

Ultimate Soccer features over 70 options, varying from ball weight to weather conditions, to both cover the differences in gameplayers and increase longevity of the game. Beginners can select a friendly game, which allows player(s) to quickly leap into a game, involving two of the 64, 16-player international squads, or more confident players can play as one of the league, knockout, or Ultimate cup competitions. The game expands with the player, increasing its intelligence during competitions.

While another option allows up to eight friends to play simultaneously, it has been found that at such a fast pace it is normally preferable to allow the computer to take complete control of the goal keeper – this allows a player to make much better use of the defensive players during a quick attack. The keeper becomes player controlled during goal kicks and penalties.

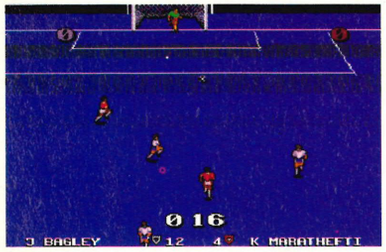
Formats other than the Mega Drive have been more lucky in terms of playable football games in recent times. Soccer games on the Mega Drive can mostly be described as "wooden" in feel, with a limited view point. They lack in options and variation in gameplay, offering short disappointing learning curves. We at Rage hope you agree that *Ultimate Soccer* breaks with this tradition, but we can only leave that for the paying public to decide.

Paul Finnegan

THAT MULTI-TAP THINGY

There it is then – Sega's new four-way adaptor. Sometime soon (release date and price still to be announced) you will be able to plug this little blighter into your Mega Drive and have four people playing at once. It's not quite four times the fun, but it's most certainly massively more enjoyable than playing alone. What's more, buy another one of these, plug it into the second joypad port and you can play with seven other friends – no good for unpopular types like Neil, Paul and me, but perfect for popular punters. Already Sega and other software houses are making titles compatible with the multi-tap. This is one example, and Tengen are currently working on *Gauntlet 4*, which should be brilliant. But also, having established that multi-player games are the way forward, EA has decided to get in on the action with their own Four Way Play adaptor for use with a range of their own games (*General Chaos* being a good example).

Sega's new four-way adaptor. And using two of these means eight people can play at once. This has got to be good news for Sega gamers



The indoor, six-a-side option is fast moving and, ermm, blue...

... and just to prove it really is blue, here's another screenshot

It's very easy to get sent off in this game, so go easy with those tackles

ball down on specific players, it's also possible to play sophisticated set pieces. The game controls all the players except the one nearest the ball, that's your chap, so you're always in the thick of it.

If there's one complaint to be levelled at the game, then it's the dynamics of the ball's movement. The ball seems to die soon after it hits the ground and has little forward momentum, even on the drier pitches. This can lead to the odd mistake, where you think a ball's going out of play, but it actually stops just shy of the line. This is annoying if it's near your goal. The remedy to the problem is to use a lighter ball, but then this can get taken by the wind, so it's a case of swings and roundabouts.

The built-in skill levels of the different teams is a great feature. If you're playing a bit of a knobby side (like England for instance), then the computer-controlled players will tend to miss balls and not read what's occurring. Play a decent side (like Qatar for instance) and they will pick up on balls, enabling you to swiftly move to the goal mouth. Should you score, then you can watch an action replay again and again in slow motion. This is great for winding your opponent(s) up.

It'll get the adrenaline pumping

WE CAN'T HAVE AN ENGLAND SIDE SCORING GOALS

So is it any cop? Well, the Rage programming team have taken all the good elements from other footy games and included them here as options, so there can't be many complaints. This means that whatever style of game you prefer, your needs should be catered for. You can dribble the ball, pass it, push it or stick it to your player's feet. The pitch, the wind, the speed, the difficulty, inertia, the game's duration and even the weight of the ball can all be changed, while in play you can change between eight formations and six styles of play.

Whether you play this game against the console or with seven hand-picked mates you soon find the adrenaline's pumping. Traditionally, football games get slated for not feeling right and for not playing a certain kind of football – because this game plays them all, it should have a wide appeal. Pull out those knackered old boots and chip and volley your way through those slow summer afternoons.

Andy Dyer

Should the game be a draw, you get a penalty shoot-out. Be warned though, the Mega Drive can mystically predict exactly where you're aiming

This screenshot is particularly empty of interesting situations

Looks like a throw in. In which a player "throws" the ball "in" as it were

PUBLISHER: Sega

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: September '93

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: Sega 071 373 3000

As few as one lone footy player or as many as eight – all at once

Three different skill settings for the console-controlled sides

Just a yellow card and a red card

No battery back-up and no password system

Well, there's the cup and the tournament

GRAPHICS 8

SOUND 7

GAMEPLAY 10

GAME SIZE 9

ADDICTION 9

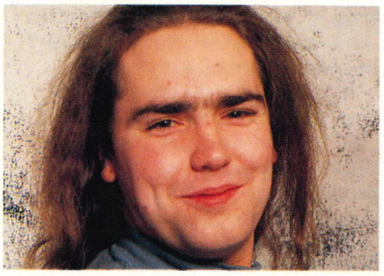
"Wonderfully programmed and enormously addictive footballing frenzy"

93 PERCENT

SENSIBLE SOFTWARE

Sensible Software are the people responsible for such classics as *Mega-Lo-Mania*, *Wizball* and, of course, *Sensible Soccer* on the Amiga. If anyone knows how to code a game, it's this lot. We asked how they went about bringing their brilliant soccer game to the Mega Drive

Here's the Sensible team (though knowing what programmers are like there's probably not a sensible one among them). And to think, this raggle-taggle team is responsible for one of the best footy games ever



John Hare is a big cheese at Sensible Software. We asked him what makes a good footy game

Already acclaimed as the "Greatest Amiga Game Of All Time" by MEGA's sister mag Amiga Power, *Sensible Soccer* is the easy favourite to win the Mega Drive cup. But what's so flippin' great about it? And what magic ingredient is it that Sensible Software feed their programmers? MEGA takes an exclusive look behind the scenes…

If you haven't heard of Sensible Software, they're the team who dreamed up *Mega-Lo-Mania*. They've quickly gained a reputation as the hot-shot home-computer development team and now they're bringing their expertise to the Mega Drive.

BEST SOCCER GAME?

Sensible Soccer is their career highlight so far. If it wasn't for *Street Fighter 2*, it would have been the best-selling home computer game of last year, and reviewers all over the world have heralded it as the best soccer game of all time. It's got options galore: 100 different – individually calibrated – teams, three different cup

SO WHY THE *MEGA-LO-MANIA* SCREENSHOT?

When first designing *Sensible Soccer*, John Hare and co (quite sensibly) took a look at a whole range of other games in order to assess which aspects of other games could be utilised to good effect in their soccer game. A very obvious influence was Dino Dini's *Kick Off* series, which for a very long time was the best footy game around by about a mile. The thing with *Kick Off* was that it was so damn playable, and speed wise it was totally unequalled.

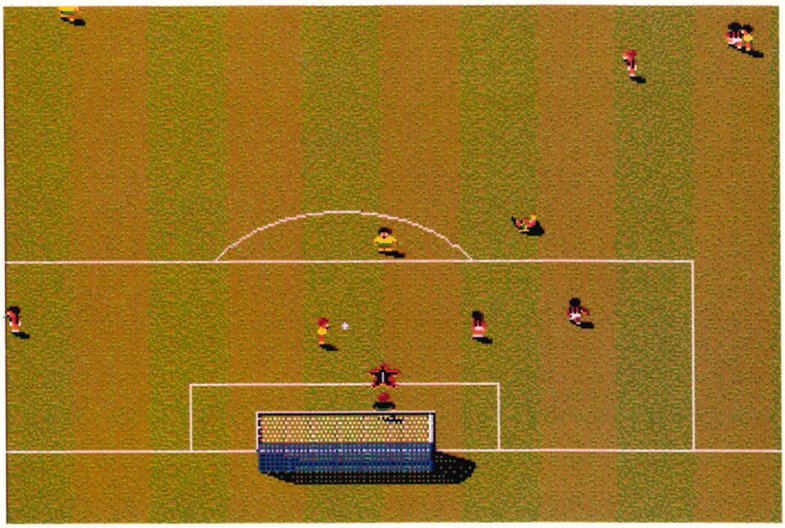
But there were "niggles" in the game that Sensible wanted to improve upon. One of these was that you couldn't see enough of the play area at one time. This meant that during play it was very hard to know where your other players were and make accurate passes accordingly. Because of this, the graphics were scaled down. The guys also looked at the viewpoint and felt that sideways-scrolling soccer games simply didn't work. In the end it was decided that the overhead view was best (it worked for *Kick Off*), scaled down graphics were a good thing (it worked for *Microprose Soccer* which, incidentally was Sensible's first soccer game) and finally, to put the icing on the cake, the programmers also took viewpoint tips from their other game, *Mega-Lo-Mania*. It sounds like an odd reference source, but in their own words "players would always know where the ball was in relation to their player and there's no 3D to decipher".

And so *Sensible Soccer* was born. And what a bloody great success it was too. However, not content with simply porting the game from Amiga to Mega Drive, the boys are confident that *Sensible Soccer* Sega-style will improve upon the formula yet again.

The *Mega-Lo-Mania* viewpoint. Why not use it in a soccer simulation?

Well, there's no doubt about that one, is there? There has, indeed, been a scoring-type incident here

Hmmm... can't say I like the look of those two much. Still, it's only a presentation screen after all



This screen shows quite well how much of the pitch is visible at one time

tournaments (complete with custom teams and tournaments), a full league option, seven different pitch conditions, full match set-up options (extra time? Replays? Penalty shoot-outs? etc), red and yellow cards, a substitute option that actually makes a difference to the team balance and the inclusion of especially talented star players. But these don't add up to a great soccer game – *Sensible Soccer* scores the serious points through the fact that within 15 seconds of picking up a joystick and playing, you feel completely in control of the action while at the same time taking part in an ultra-realistic game of footy. The speed is there, the "feel" is spot on, and a more realistic sports game (with the arguable exceptions of *John Madden Football* or *PGA Tour Golf*) has yet to be created.

It's even better than the Amiga versions

There are no big, sexy sprites, no 3D pitch view, no camera zooming in and out: just a two-dimensional view from a blimp above the stadium, with tiny player characters. The simplicity of the pitch and player graphics enables more computer-processor time to be spent on speed and game control. This minimalist graphical approach pays dividends when the gameplay starts: the players may be small, but they move as smooth as silk and are totally responsive to your joystick movements. Sensible Software's John Hare:

"The reason we started doing *Sensible Soccer* is that during the development of *Mega-Lo-Mania* (that took two years!) the last year took such incredibly long hours that to stop us falling asleep, we were playing *Kick Off* and *Kick Off 2* to keep us awake. But, as everyone knows, both *KO* and *KO2* had lots of annoying niggles and flaws, so by the time we got to the end of *Mega-Lo-Mania* there was a real desire to make our own football game, based on *Kick Off*, but putting right the things that we felt were wrong with it.

"In 1988 we did *Microprose Soccer* on the C64 so we'd had experience in writing a soccer game before and knew some of the pitfalls and were able to avoid them (because we fell into them before!).

"At this time, I went on holiday and made some designs for a soccer game and then came back with loads of pages of A4, but within two months of developing *Sensible Soccer,* 80% of this had to be scrapped because it just would not work. This is why Sensible Software now have the rule of not working to storyboards – because we feel it's important to remain flexible and to scrap things if they don't work properly or as well as they could.

"So, starting from *Kick Off,* the first thing we did was to make the scale smaller: in *Kick Off,* and in *most* football games, you can't see enough of the screen to work out exactly where you're going to kick the ball or where your team-mates are. So we took the same viewpoint as in *Mega-Lo-Mania* (not quite overhead) so the players are viewed as stunted, viewed from the side but the pitch is viewed from above – it's kind of like an optical illusion. We chose this viewpoint so players would always know where the ball was in relation to their player – there's no 3D to decipher – and besides, we generally found that all the best football games were viewed from overhead: *Kick Off* did it and *Microprose Soccer* did it. All the sideways viewed games were rubbish – they're sluggish and don't play like football."

KICK OFF ASPECTS

"We then analysed *Kick Off* and worked out how the players behave on and off the ball and we produced our own version with this as a starting point. Then we worked on the different shots (we were happy to use the same aftertouch system as *Kick Off* but with slightly different timing) but we felt that the tap button to pass would be a nice touch to give the player more versatility. We added the diving headers at the last minute and luckily they worked. The idea for a subs bench (complete with manager) and the ability to change tactics mid-game was conceived very early on and worked well.

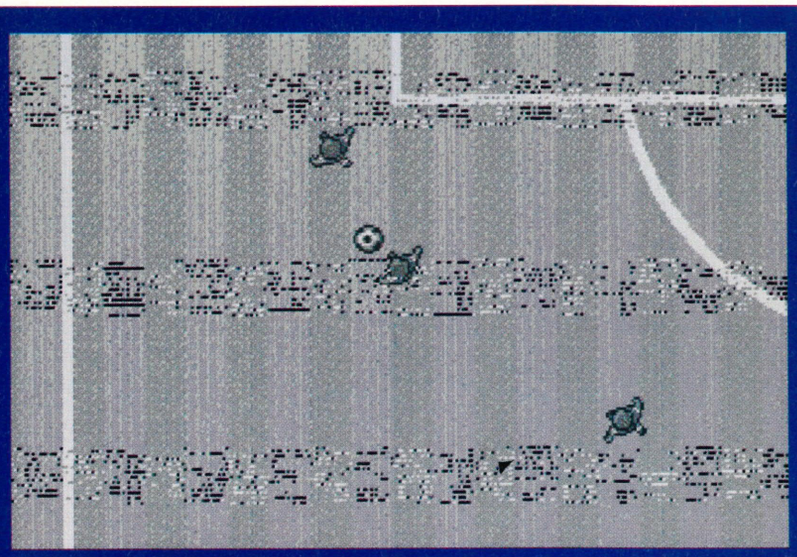
"For the second, 1.1 version of *Sensible Soccer* we worked on the goalkeepers hard – they can now tip the ball away from the goal. We were also keen to make sure that all the teams were based on real stats (this gives the whole game a more realistic and professional feel) and these have been updated. They are as near to accurate and as true to life as we could get.

"Basically, it's our aim to make Sensible Soccer Subuteo on a computer: in terms of making sure it's updated and in tune with the times (so, for example, in *Sensible Soccer 1.1* we added the backpass rule because it had just been introduced by the FA).

So how will Mega Drive *Sensible Soccer* compare to the Amiga versions?

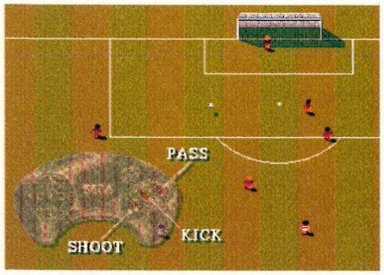
"It's even better than the Amiga versions. Basically this will be *Sensible Soccer Version 1.2*." (*Version 1.1*, an updated version of the original *Sensible Soccer*, has recently been released for the home computers.) "Apart from the obvious improvements in graphics and game music, there are lots of things in the Mega Drive version of *Sensible Soccer* that, in

Dino Dini's *Kick Off*. Hugely playable, but it still had loads of "niggles"



***Microprose Soccer* in odd replay mode. Good, but not good enough**

Options, options everywhere. And rather topically, there's even a World Cup tournament in there



Oh my word, a spectral pad has appeared on screen to give you a reminder of the controls

They think it's all over...

... but they're horribly wrong. Here's where we take a look at the glut of soccer titles coming our way soon

retrospect, we would have liked to have put into the Amiga versions. So you now have three different skill levels (beginner, normal and expert) – on the one hand allowing people to get into the game quicker, but then in the long term making the game a lot tougher. On expert mode, it's harder to beat Mega Drive *Sensible Soccer* than the Amiga version."

Many console developers figure that console players need to be able to get into a game a lot quicker than our computer-owning contemporaries: something to do with attention span, coin-op roots and the success of *Sonic The Hedgehog* (or something).

TACTICAL ADDITIONS

"But these aren't just token skill level differences that no one will bother exploring: each skill level offers a different challenge. So, for example, you can only enter the European Championships playing in expert mode. Also, the significance of star players alters between skill levels.

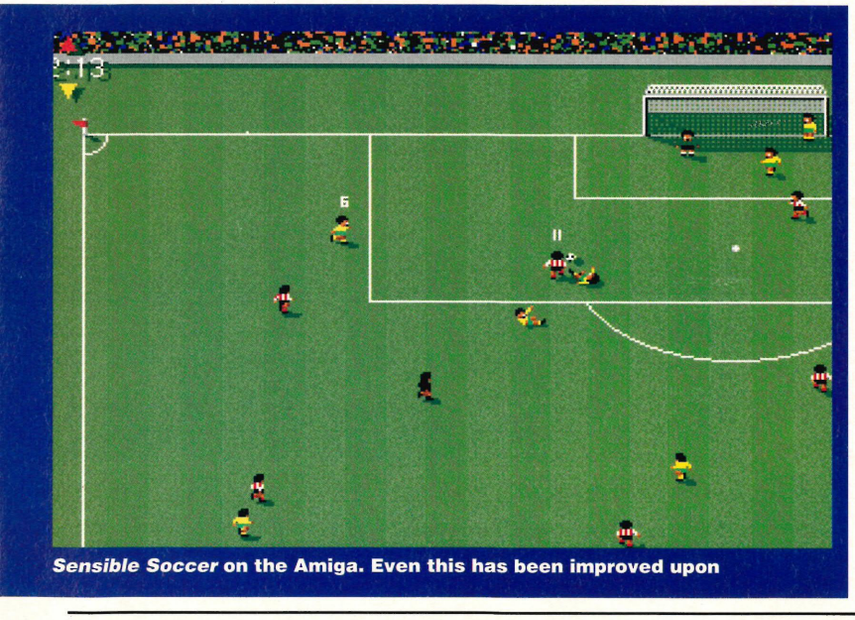
"The Mega Drive's three-button joypad has also enabled us to put in a couple of extra features – on the Amiga the game had to be designed for just a one-button joystick. Now, pressing button A when in control of a star player unleashes a shot on goal, clears the ball further while in defence or passes the ball further up the field. This makes for a more tactical (and more realistic) game as you find your team relying heavily on your star players. Now you'll find that attack patterns are geared towards getting the ball to your star player striker, or that when you set-up your team at the start of each match, you position, say, a star defender on man-to-man marking to counteract an opponent's star striker. It also gives teams more character, firstly as individual players shine through, and, secondly, as some teams may have two star defenders (making them rock solid in defence) whereas others may have their talent in attack making for more high-scoring games.

"We've also upgraded the formations: because of the number of sprites available on screen on the Amiga, some of the defenders couldn't run up field. On the Mega Drive we're not limited by that so you'll find more of your players getting involved in the action."

So are Sensible Software confident that *Sensible Soccer* will be the Mega Drive's best football game?

"It already is the Mega Drive's best footy game! Yes, we're confident. I haven't seen *Ultimate Soccer* yet, but most people thought that *Sensible Soccer* was the better game on home-computer" (*Ultimate Soccer* was released as *Striker* on the Amiga last year.) "We've improved a winning formula further, so we're confident that come Christmas, Sony Imagesoft will be releasing the Mega Drive's best ever soccer game."

MEGA is looking forward to it – we'll bring you the full review as soon as is humanly possible. Ⓜ



***Sensible Soccer* on the Amiga. Even this has been improved upon**

SUPER WORLD CUP SOCCER

Acclaim • August

Acclaim are soon to bring us their very own soccer game. *Bart Vs England* perhaps? (Berk – Neil)

Acclaim are exploiting the fact that in '94, soccer will, for the first time, be big in the US. It is, of course, the year in which the USA hosts the World Cup, and so Acclaim's new soccer game will, we hope, faithfully recreate the entire tournament (short of dunkin' donuts and coffee that is). Acclaim cautiously predict that *Super World Cup Soccer* "should have superb graphics and good animation". It'll take full advantage of the World Cup licence with all the rules, teams, styles of play, uniforms and so on and will even have goal celebrations carried out in different languages. Certainly we've seen enough variety between all of these different soccer games and this one's no exception. The thing that this one has over and above the other games is that it will offer a choice of two different viewpoints. You can view the game either vertically (like *Kick Off* presumably, but in perspective) or horizontally (like *Euro Club Soccer*). That aside, it will also feature varying weather conditions, a pop-up radar for more tactical play, and automatic, semi-automatic or manual goalies. Sounds fab doesn't it? But the competition is stiff, so over the next couple of issues we'll be sorting out the wheat from the chaff.

Turn over

PSSST! WANNA KNOW A SECRET?

Well, much as we'd like to tell you one, we can't. But wha we can say is that as well as the games shown over these pages, US Gold are also releasing a game called, erm, well, it hasn't got a name yet. So what's it all about? Erm, no details about that either. In fact, US Gold are keeping very, very quiet at the moment, but any day now, details will become public, so look out for an update next issue.

EA SPORTS SOCCER

EA Sports • TBA

***EA Soccer* will use the Four Way Play four-player adaptor**

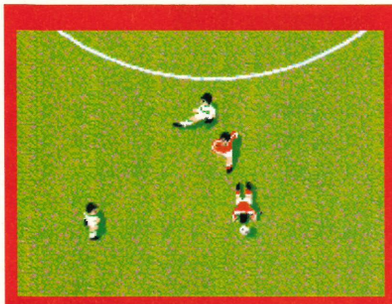
EA are the kings of Mega Drive sports sims: *John Madden Football, NHLPA Hockey, PGA Tour Golf* and *Team USA Basketball* all lead their field. So their debut soccer title better bloody well be up to scratch…

EA themselves are saying how impressive it's looking (funny, all software houses say that about their own products. Just think, at some point, somewhere in the world, someone was wandering around promoting *The Great Waldo Search* saying "It's looking very impressive". Actually perhaps not). Unfortunately for us (and you for that matter) we only have a few technical details about the game. At the time of going to press, screenshots were unavailable and, in fact, even the title EA Sports Soccer was only a working one.

Apparently, the viewpoint will be unique, a sort of three-quarter top-down perspective which will give the player a bigger view of the field. There will be over forty international teams to choose from, each of which will have individual characteristics and styles of play. The game's strategies and tactics have been modelled on real-life ones, and player animations will include bicycle kicks, sliding tackles, diving headers, chest traps and leg traps. There will be different conditions and surfaces to contend with, so the physics of the ball movement will change accordingly. And finally (and least importantly, although it's a nice touch anyway) the crowd will respond to the action with boos, groans, chants and cheers and who knows they may even stick in a sample of some old git saying "Is that ****ing ref blind or what?".

And, according to EA, the game will also feature "an easy-to-understand play interface". This probably translates to the game being largely icon-driven to make strategy, line-up, and tactical selections all the more easy.

That's all we can get from the boys (and girls) at EA at the moment, but *EA Sports Soccer* is actually going to be shown for the first time over the next week or so, so we'll most definitely have it in for preview next month. That should be something to look out for because, as we all know, to date, EA have definitely been the leaders when it comes to creating sport sims.



Yes well, perhaps these chaps are spending a little too much time on the floor to illustrate exactly what made the *Kick Off* series so good

GOAL

Dino Dini revolutionised computer footy games with *Kick Off*. Now he's back with a Mega Drive kickabout

Virgin • Spring '94

Dino Dini is the man who designed the classic computer-footy game *Kick Off*, which was transformed into *Super Kick Off* by US Gold. But now Dino's back he's working for Virgin Games, and they reckon his next project – *GOAL* – is the dog's bo... (Snip! – Ed).

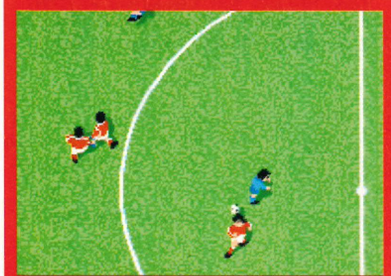
Super Kick Off was adapted for US Gold by programming team Tiertex – they made the character graphics bigger (apparently it was felt that console owners wouldn't feel comfortable with the small players of the original) – but apart from that, the game was essentially Dino's original creation.

GOAL is effectively *Kick Off 3* (but it can't be called *Kick Off 3* because Anco – Dino's previous employers – have the rights to the *Kick Off* name tag) and so we can expect *GOAL* to be in a very similar style to the highly-successful *Kick Off* series: that means ultra-fast play and a tough time dribbling with the ball (*Kick Off* relies more on a series of passes as to solo heroic runs through the opposition).

It'll be in a similar style to *Kick Off*

"People want a result," explains Dino Dini. "You need the elements of football, but you also have to supply what people want from a computer game."

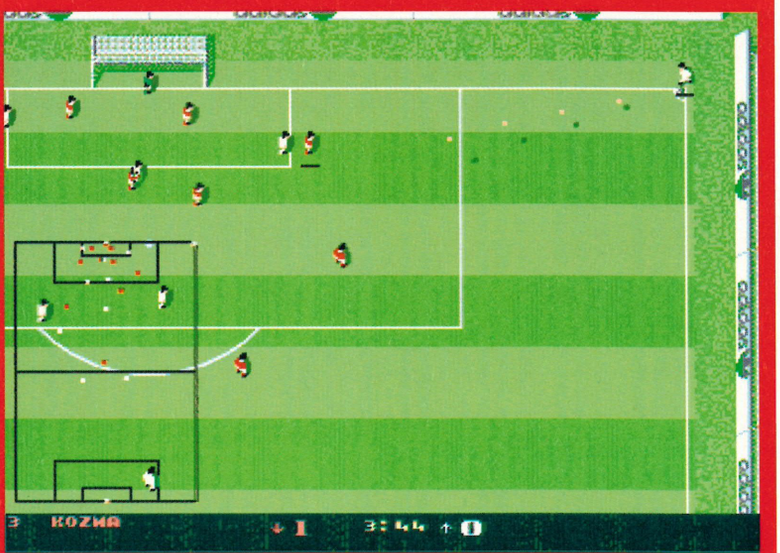
The screenshots dotted around this page are from *Kick Off 3* on the Amiga. Although the final version of *GOAL* will probably be a significant step forward, these images will give you a good idea of what to expect.



Jolly booting weather (groan)

You could play left to right on Amiga *Kick Off 3*. Whether this feature will be present in *GOAL* is still a mystery at the moment

I remember spending many a happy hour in my friend's bedroom playing with... (NOOO Andy – Neil) ... I was going to say with my friends copy of *Kick Off*



***Kick Off* was king of the footy sims, so expect good things from this one**

Footballing legend Pelé collaborates with Accolade to bring us this

PELE

How do you make yet another footy game a bit different? Get it designed by the most famous footy star ever

Accolade • November

Rather than go for a World Cup, FA Cup or Premier League licence, Accolade have decided to badge their footy game with the name of a footballing legend. What's more, they even enlisted Pelé's help to develop the actual game.

This year Accolade got together with Pelé (arguably the most famous player ever, in the world, ever) and persuaded the cheeky chappy to co-design the game of the bloke. Accolade are rather boldy calling the new game "a revolutionary new sports simulation that will appeal to soccer enthusiasts of all levels". Unlike most of the soccer games we've seen, this game features digitised players who, as should be the case, can perform slides, kicks, dives, headers and so on. You can take a team through 30 games to become league champions and you can also play against Pelé's 1962 Brazilian World Cup team (I wonder if they'll have those long comedy shorts on). There are 40 European and Latin American teams in there, again each with individual characteristics.

Pelé himself has even commented on the game, saying: "I helped design the game, so you know it's realistic. I'm even available throughout the game as a coach. We use the attributes and characteristics of real players and feature games played in various kinds of weather. You can even play me in a special skills contest. The game's just the way I like it – physical, exciting and powerful."

The game's producer Robert Daly, offered the following: "Everything about the game offers true-to-life soccer, from the crowd chanting to a tilted 35 degree perspective of the playing field that allows real TV-style coverage. You can even relive your exciting plays with an instant replay feature. *PELE* will set the standard for soccer games, not only in North America, but in Europe and Latin America as well." We shall see.

And here's another bit. Er, quite

There are much cheaper magazines.

Some have posters. Or stickers.

Some review every game good,
bad or average.

Some are easy to get hold of,
any time: they never sell out.

Edge isn't like that.

To be honest, **Edge** isn't for everyone.

Edge: decide for yourself.

EDGE

Giant robots, teenage heroes, cute girls – now *that's* what anime is all about

All decent Japanese video-game characters (the *Street Fighter 2* posse is an excellent example) have a certain style about them right? Well, that style is no accident. There's a whole world of Japanese animation heading for the West, and not just in video games either. Here then, is your guide to "anime", the art of Eastern animation...

Japanese nimation

EGINNER'S GUIDE

(or "See an anime: a pathetic rock-pool related pun")

You'll have heard of Akira, right? Akira was the first Japanese animated feature to strike it big in the West, and at the time it was first released over here it was treated as something of a unique one-off. Now, of course, we know that was far from being the case – Akira was just one very prominent example of a whole genre of films that have, until recently, been massive in Japan and almost unknown outside of it. We are, of course, talking about the world of anime.

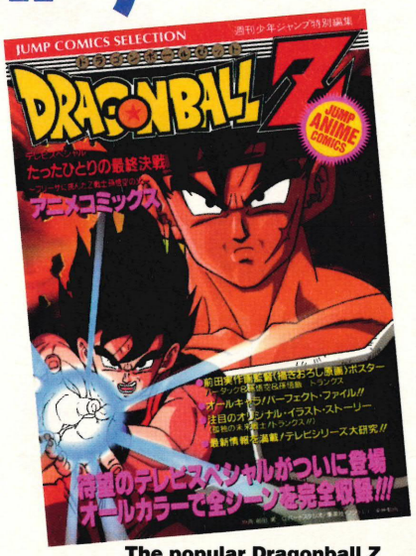
A couple of quick pointers before we go any further. Don't say "aneem", unless you want to be heartily laughed at by those in the know. It's anime, pronounced "annie may". Secondly, don't assume it's all science-fiction action stuff, aimed at 14-25 year old men – though that's almost exclusively what's been brought into this country so far. In Japan you get anime soap operas, business advice programmes, ultra-cute kids stuff and just about every other genre too – different shows tailored to every segment of the population. Like comics and, yes, video games, animation is taken seriously in Japan – nobody thinks of it as "just kids stuff" anymore.

The word "anime" itself is a "loanword" – a name nicked from a foreign language (in this case, of course, ours) and incorporated into Japanese. It's so (relatively) easy to pronounce and read, even in Japanese, because loanwords are written in katakana, the simplest of the three written forms of the language (yes, Japanese has three distinct alphabets, each one used for different things). Of course, what goes around comes around, and the word's now been loaned back to us in turn as a way of distinguishing the very distinctive Japanese product from other forms of animation.

ANIME EXPOSED

To understand how anime has become such a respected, everyday part of life in Japan – over there it's just another popular visual artform, and one that gets prime-time TV exposure, not crammed into ten-minute Saturday morning slots – you first have to look at Japanese comics. These are known as "manga" (yes, yes, I know the biggest importer of Japanese anime into the UK calls itself Manga too, but that just confuses the issue). Manga started as a series of popular narrative prints back in 17th century Japan – the term itself was coined by a famous woodblock artist called Hokusai, and, literally translated, means "irresponsible pictures". It remained popular throughout the years,

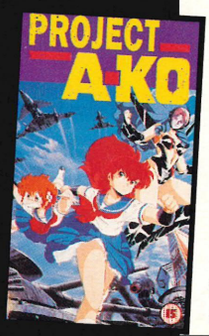
Turn over



The popular Dragonball Z has spawned two games. Sadly, they're on Super NES manga book

PROJECT A-KO

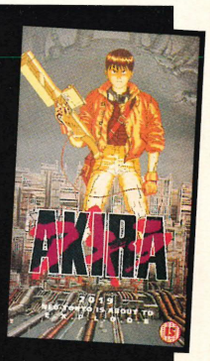
(MANGA VIDEO)



The cutest, most girl-orientated tape released so far, Project A-Ko is a nonsensical action comedy, set in a girls boarding school. It's all about the rivalry of two older girls for the friendship of the exceedingly cute C-Ko Kotobuki – A-Ko is our heroine, B-Ko (her rival) turns out to be more than she first appeared, and there's lots of zooming around with superpowers and so on.

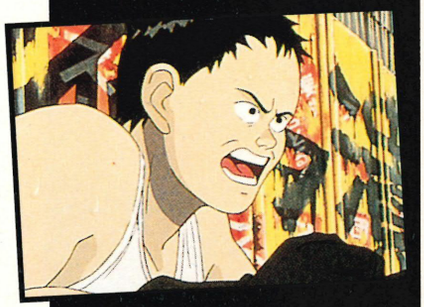
AKIRA

(MANGA VIDEO)



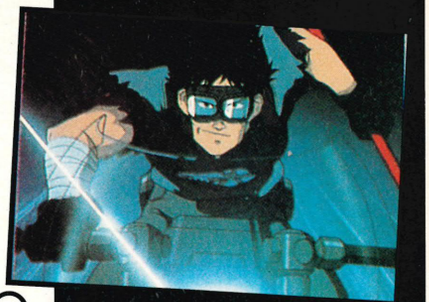
Akira is, of course, *the* big one, and it is an ideal starting place for anyone interested in getting into Japanese animation. Though quite a few years old now, it was developed as a big budget movie rather than a TV show (the same isn't true of many of the films reviewed throughout this feature), and it shows. This still features perhaps the best animation of them all, with some sequences that really will knock you off your seat.

Based on a very popular Manga series, Akira perhaps skips through the plot a bit too fast (it takes most people two or three viewings to tell exactly what's going on), but the rest of it's so glorious it hardly matters. All the classic elements are here – rebel biker gang heroes, a decaying big city setting, a mysterious government conspiracy, characters with increasingly powerful psychic abilities that are driving them slowly mad, plenty of chase sequences, some very nasty violence, bizarre dream sequences, plenty of references to The Bomb and, running through the middle of it all, a love story. It is a glorious, ambitious, multi-layered film, and, on video, a must-buy. (It is, of course, even better at the cinema.)

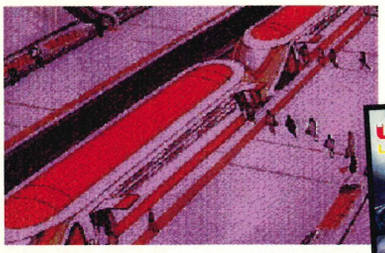


Akira, soon to spawn a game, is a great starting place for new fans

Akira is available in both dubbed and subtitled versions. Many people claim to prefer the subtitles (dubs are often hilariously bad on these things, and tend to make the tensest moments come across as just plain silly) but there's so much going on on-screen at any one time that some people find it hard to see how you can keep reading the subtitles and still appreciate the images.

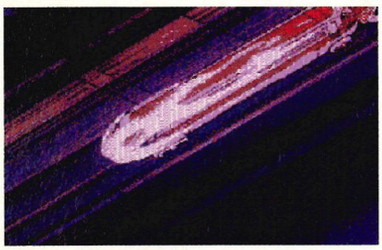


The mass destruction seen in Akira crops up in many other anime films



Anime's influence on games can easily be seen in animated links...

...like this one from the well-known Mega Drive game *Devastator*



This could almost be a scene from an anime film, couldn't it?

UROTSUKIDOJI: LEGEND OF THE OVERFIEND

(MANGA VIDEO)

The most controversial release so far, Legend Of The Overfiend, is fast moving and rather nasty – our heroine gets raped by extra-dimensional monsters about four times, for instance (something she puts up with with almost comical stoicism), while numerous heads and bodies explode all over the place. Yes, it's pretty nasty stuff and has an 18 certificate to prove it.

Once again, the plot makes little sense (this version has been truncated from a much longer Japanese original), but features a number of familiar themes – the nice hero being taken over by an incredibly powerful, and perhaps evil, alien force is straight out of Akira, while the last ten minutes (basically a series of explosions where everything gets wiped out) echo the Hiroshima obsession of many other movies. Still, all that said, this is exciting and quite thought-provoking if you've got the stomach for it. And the subtext certainly says a lot about the position of women in Japanese society...

Legend Of The Overfiend: sex and violence ahoy!

VENUS WARS

(MANGA VIDEO)

Venus Wars is, as its name suggests, a sort of science fiction war movie – again it's the next century, again we have a motorbike gang as heroes, but this time we're in the middle of a civil war between two earth settlements on the planet Venus. Once again, too, the lead character is a feisty young heroine – in this case a reporter from Earth – who gets dragged into it all. The animation is good, the invasion storyline quite complex, and the whole thing makes for entertaining viewing.

Venus Wars is a fast-paced war story, throbbing with action

modifying itself as new printing methods became available into a form much more like today's comics, but really surged in popularity in the years after WWII – at the time it provided a simple, easily understandable way for the country to examine the horrific blow to its collective soul that came from defeat, the experiences of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the need to rebuild. It wasn't long before the leading manga artists, led by one Osamu Tezuka, realised they could apply many of the same techniques to TV and cinema, and anime was then born.

Though it took a while, interest in what almost amounts to a new Japanese artform began to grow in Britain and the United States in the '70s. A fan network was formed, and grew, and it's to some extent through their efforts that Japanese animation has now begun to achieve, if not quite mainstream, then certainly a healthy cult interest in the West. This assimilation of anime hasn't ended here, however – over the next year, a number of major names in the video industry are going to be releasing a lot more in the way of Japanese animation videos. It's a definite growth market, and the small smattering of stuff currently available in HMVs, video stores and games shops is really only the tip of the iceberg.

Plenty of computer games are directly influenced by anime

Minky Momo: cute as they come

ANIME ON THE MEGA DRIVE

But what's all this got to do with Mega Drives, anyway? Well, quite a lot actually. Not only are many Japanese anime series and films converted into games in Japan (in the same way that British and American companies convert popular movies over here), but plenty of other games are directly influenced by anime, in their style of graphics particularly. What is the Mega CD game *Time Gal* if not a short section of anime presented as a game? In more general terms, every time you see a Japanese game character with a little pointy chin and great big eyes, that's the direct influence of anime for you.

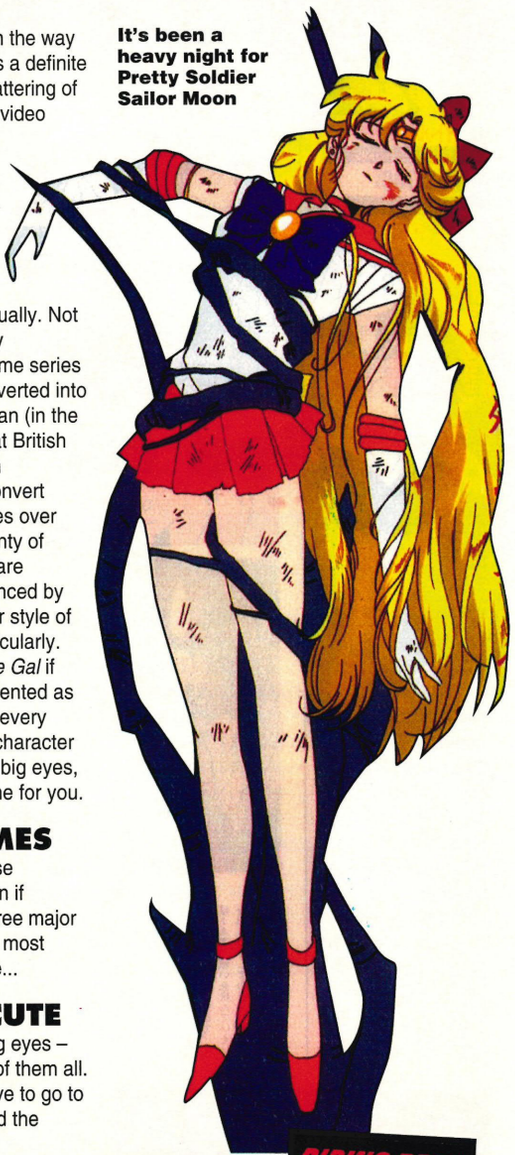
THE MAJOR THEMES

Everyone can recognise Japanese animation, from the way it's drawn if nothing else. There are two or three major themes that recur throughout the most popular anime, and here they are...

THE POWER OF CUTE

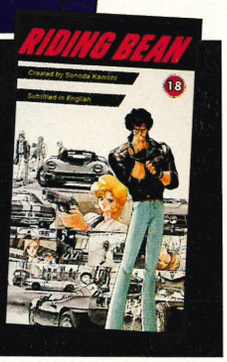
Ah yes. This is all about those big eyes – one of the most distinctive traits of them all. To be honest, you'd probably have to go to Japan yourself to fully understand the

It's been a heavy night for Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon



RIDING BEAN

(ANIME PROJECTS)



Based on characters developed by Ken-Ichi Sonoda, the guy behind Bubblegum Crisis, this American-set film tells of the adventures of a daring bank robbery escape driver, Bean Bandit. A sort of dark comedy road movie, it features lots of animated car stunts and an immoral hero, much in the style of some old Burt Reynolds' films (but with more science fiction elements). Bean has to deliver a 10-year-old girl home for a large reward while evading Inspector Percy's relentless pursuit. This film is certainly great fun for those who like car chases.

Anime comes aimed at both sexes and all age groups in Japan. This one's meant for young boys

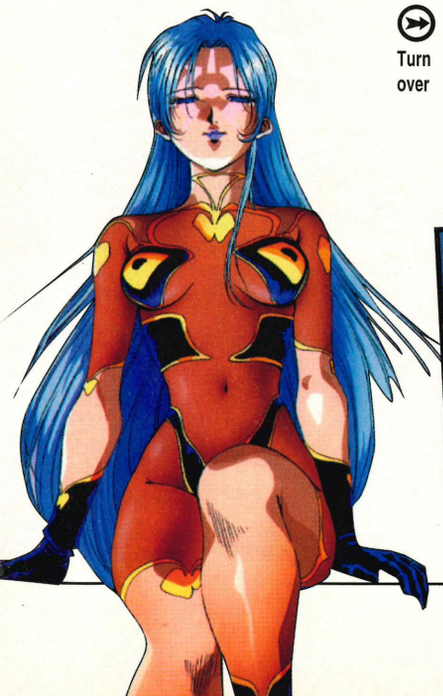
power of cute over there. Kawaii is their term, and it refers particularly to the fluffy animals and underage girls who tend to be the most popular cute characters. Remember, Oriental girls are, traditionally, meant to be sweet, submissive, giggly, bubbly and, above all, girlie. They wear bobby socks. They have their hair in bunches, usually adorned with pink bobbles. They go to school in little sailor suits. It doesn't matter how highly educated, intelligent or, indeed, tough they are – this is how they're meant to look and act, and most of them do.

This being the case, the anime that's aimed at girls – and a good percentage of it is, though little of this stuff has made it over to the UK as yet – tends to focus on these ridiculously sweet characters with big eyes etc. Part of it's Disney's fault – his big-eyed children and fluffy animals were a major influence on Osamu Tezuka when anime was first starting out. Tezuka found the way serious emotions could be put across in an exaggerated way particularly appealing, and so copied it. Subsequent animators tried to outdo him, and so pushed the whole saucer-eyed thing even more, eventually leading to the very stylised look we have today.

STIRRING EMOTIONS

Cute characters are so likeable, of course, because they're so unthreatening – they

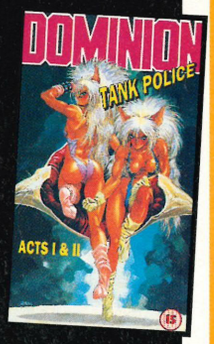
Turn over



DOMINION: TANK VOLS 1 AND 2

(MANGA VIDEO)

There are two Dominion tapes released so far, both containing a couple of episodes of the TV show, and these have to be worth a look. The animation is good, the feisty young heroine is a delight, and the action is of the loads-of-buildings-get-destroyed-but-nobody-is-really-hurt type. Once again we're in a decaying city early next century – one where the police have been issued with (yes!) tanks to keep the peace. Our girl Leona joins up, and soon finds herself, in a cute scratch-built tank she put together from the wreckage of lots of old ones, up against a gang of cyborgs who're terrorising the city. Fast, funny and gently sexy, these videos aren't exactly cutting edge stuff, but they are great fun all the same.



Dominion is funny, fast moving, full of action, and about as good as anime gets

LENSMAN

(MANGA VIDEO)

Not available at the time of writing, but due any day now, Lensman is, of course, based on the famous pulp sci-fi books of EE "Doc" Smith, in particular the novel Galactic Patrol, the third in his Lensman series. The books are said to have influenced Star Wars, and, in turn, director Kawajiri has thrown in a few Star Wars references to his very Japanese-looking interpretation of the books.

It's a fairly old film now, but back in 1984 this was state-of-the-art stuff, and it still looks very good indeed today – computer animation techniques being mixed with hand-drawn cells, much as they have been in recent Disney stuff like Beauty and The Beast.

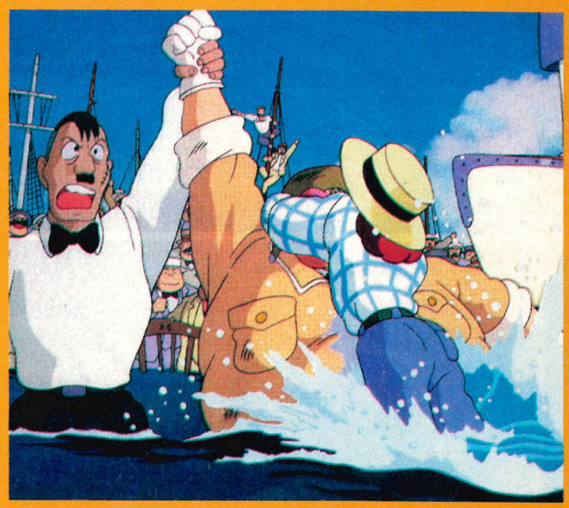
With a fast-moving plot, suitably weird alien baddies and a young farmboy as the hero, this should appeal to most, if not all, sci-fi fans.

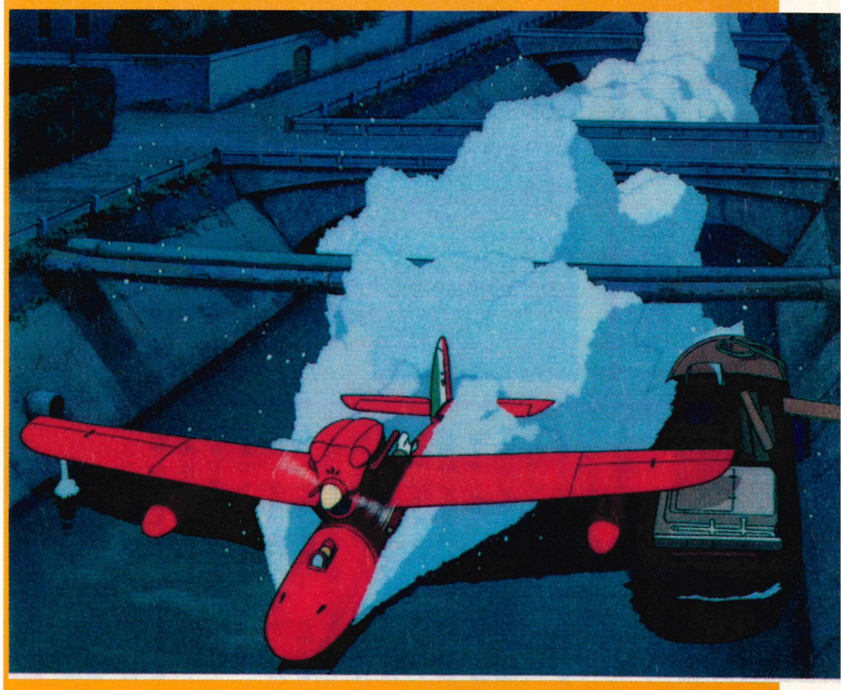
PORCO ROSSO

One of the most popular videos of the last year in Japan – and soon to get a UK release – is Porco Rosso. Set in Italy between the wars, it tells of an ex-fighter pilot who's somehow been turned into a sort of semi-humanoid pig. Luckily his friends can see through his new, ugly exterior, but not everyone can – the villain of the piece is a handsome, moustachioed rival pilot who comes across as a mixture of Errol Flynn and arch British cad Terry Thomas. Our hero bombs around the Mediterranean in a bright red seaplane, racing bad guys and righting wrongs, but – although the tone is generally light and humorous – there's a tragic undercurrent to the whole thing, with Porco often coming over all misty-eyed about his lost humanity.

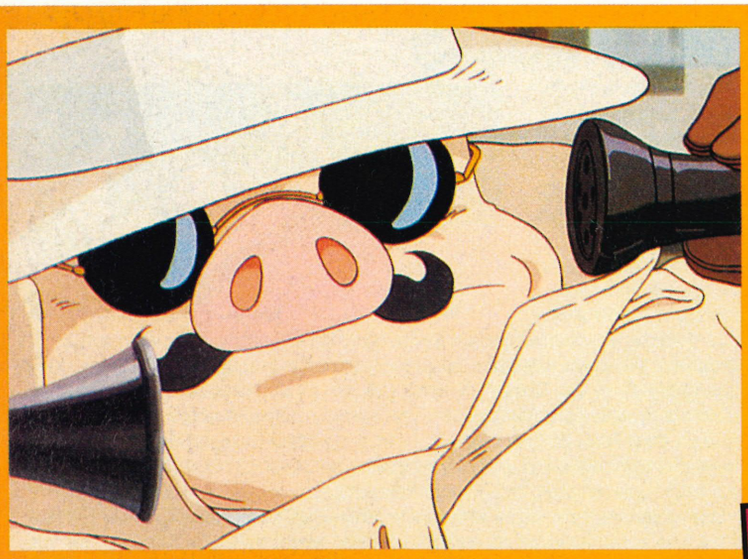
In Japan, Porco Rosso has been a massive hit, though it's taken a bit longer to catch on in the West – some potential British distributors apparently complained about its lack of sex and violence, for instance, which shows how poorly they understood the material. It's the rare Japanese toy shop that doesn't have at least one Porco soft toy on display, for instance, while more specialist anime shops have model seaplanes, Porco badges and other goodies on display. Imagine how big the first Batman film was on release, and you'll have some idea of the impression Porco Rosso has made in the Japanese home islands. The only question now is whether it'll have the longevity of something like Gundam.

Strong characters, plenty of action, lots of slapstick humour, and lashings of 1930s' style – that's Porco Rosso. No game has been announced as yet, but it's got to come...

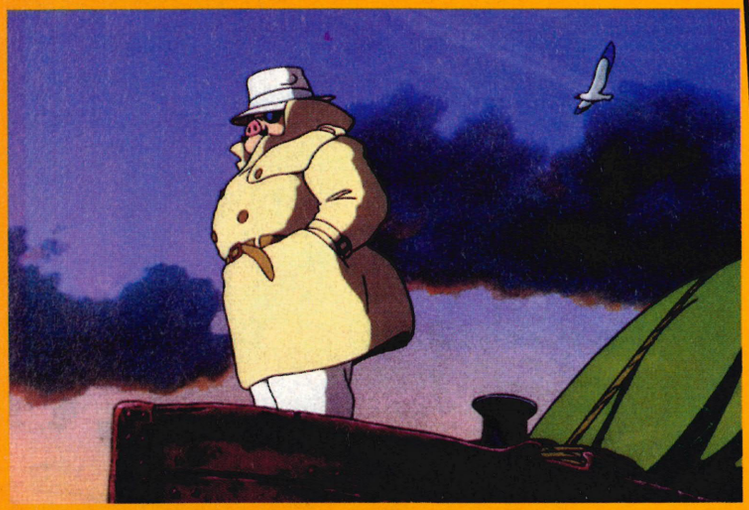




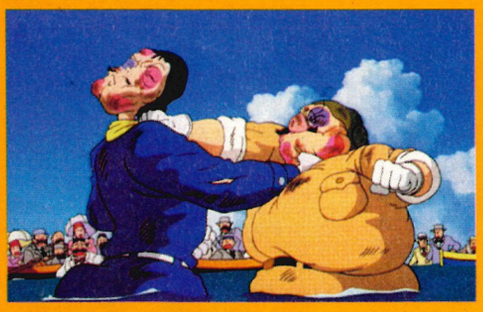
Our hero makes a spectacular getaway in his ancient sea plane, just slipping under a series of low bridges. Porco Rosso is packed full of this sort of fast-moving, thrilling stuff

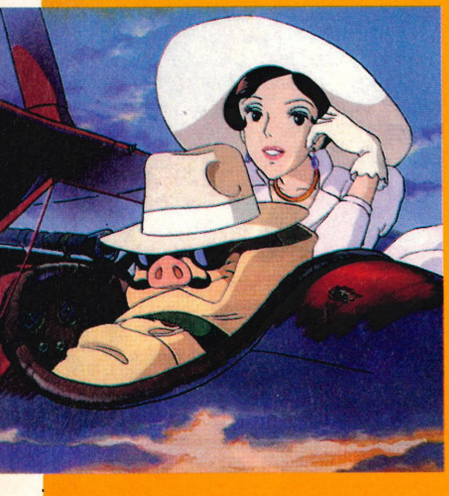


Porco tends to hide his piggy little eyes behind goggles or sun



Porco contemplates what the future might hold for a humanoid pig in a rather poignant moment from Porco Rosso. Touching moments like this add plenty of depth and character to what is basically an action-comedy show





It's not all contemplative stuff, though. Here Porco gets into a bit of a scrap with his roguish arch rival just after an air race. It'll end in tears...

And yes, there's glamour too. The question is, will she be able to see through that ugly exterior to the beautiful soul beneath? To be honest, we rather doubt it somehow...

FIST OF THE NORTH STAR

(MANGA VIDEO)

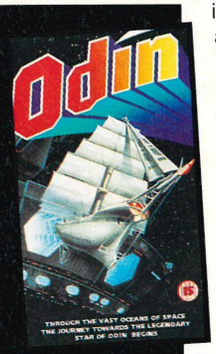
From the sublime to the ridiculous. You may recognise Ken and the other fighters from the import MD game *Last Battle*, and the movie is as much a beat-'em-up as that was. This is basically a running series of fights and ludicrous insults, featuring some gruesomely funny action sequences, plenty of annoying speed lines, but precious little else. Good for a laugh after a few drinks, but not really recommended.

North Star's Ken and co appear in the Mega Drive game *Last Battle*

ODIN

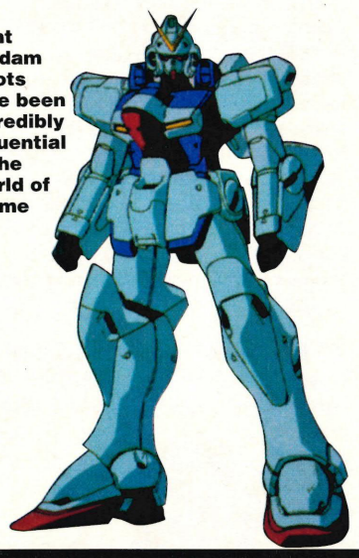
(MANGA VIDEO)

Rather old-fashioned, both in animation style and concept, this is a sort of Japanese Star Trek. Our heroes – a young, trainee space crew – set out in their elegant schooner-style starship on a rescue mission to Jupiter, eventually passing through a wormhole into another dimension, mutinying against their much older captain, and discovering the mythical civilisation of Odin. There are some e very good, though slightly predictable, action sequences, but some of the animation is only so-so.



need protection, and can quickly stir up a whole range of chivalrous instincts in the observer. In the same way, their very cuteness is used as a weapon – one of the few they've got – by real life Japanese teen and pre-teen girls, and this is reflected in the heroines of many anime series. There's a whole genre of programmes aimed at school age girls, about the adventures of this or that cute princess with magical powers masquerading as an ordinary schoolgirl – one of the most popular is called Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon. Similarly, the heroines of many other shows (often the more action-orientated ones aimed at boys) adopt the same look, be they the alien Iczer-1 from the black fantasy Fight Iczer-1 or Noa Izumi, the incredibly popular heroine of Mobile Police Patlabor. Often these heroines – take Priss Asagiri from Bubblegum Crisis, for instance – will have a sideline as singing stars, or "idols", thus allowing oodles and oodles of spin-off CDs to be sold. Oh, they're nothing if not masters of merchandising, the Japanese, are they?

A step even further in the direction of cute is the concept of the -chan. "-chan" is a Japanese suffix meaning "little darling" or "dear", and is usually added to the names of younger brothers or sisters, pets, or boy/girlfriends. Chibi Maruko-Chan, for instance, is an anime about the life of a little girl. However, in anime terms it's been taken much further than this – as an extra marketing initiative, whole new



Giant Gundam robots have been incredibly influential in the world of anime

BUBBLEGUM CRISIS

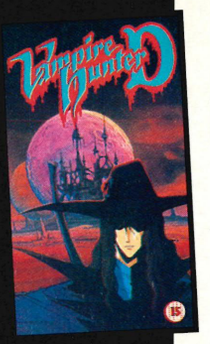
(ANIME PROJECTS)

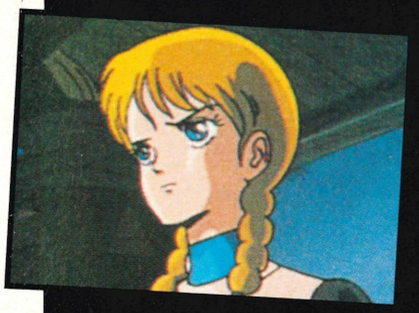
Though we're expecting a number of major video labels to start releasing anime stuff soon, currently only a small outfit called Anime Projects rivals Manga's domination of the market. Anime Projects stuff only comes subtitled, which will cut down on the appeal a bit, but otherwise it is top-quality stuff – particularly Bubblegum Crisis. The title refers to (get this) that moment when you're blowing a giant bubblegum bubble, and you know it's going to burst any second but it hasn't quite yet – think of it as a metaphor for the near-collapsing 21st century society in which the series is set. Our heroines are the Knight Sabers, a group of teenage girls in powerful robot suits, who keep their identities secret, superhero style, but fight rogue Boomers (escaped biogenetically-engineered cyborgs of great strength) which terrorise Mega-Tokyo. The reckless Priss, in particular, has become a real cult star in Japan, though her popularity waned somewhat recently when the singer who had performed her songs in the series (her day job is as a teen "idol") was replaced by somebody else.

VAMPIRE HUNTER D

(MANGA VIDEO)

More horror-orientated than most of the other Manga videos, Vampire Hunter D is a bit like an anime version of one of those old Hammer horror movies. Our hero, "D", comes to rescue a village from the local vamp, the twist being that old D himself is actually half vampire – the son of Dracula, no less. The director of Vampire Hunter D was the same guy who did Fist Of The North Star, and, in the basic style of it, it shows. The character designs, by Yoshitaku Amano, have been much admired since its original release back in 1985, but for most of this it's a less-than-essential release. The dubbing is particularly poor too.





Vampire Hunter is a sort of Hammer horror/spaghetti western crossbreed

Giant Robo features a massive robot in distinctive ancient-Egyptian style

THE LOVE OF THE NEW

Alongside cute, and as significant a part of life to Japanese boys as cuddly animals, are to Japanese girls, the most popular concept in Japanese animation (and, indeed, Japanese culture beyond that) are the giant robots. These, of course, come from the Japanese love of technology that has dominated their culture this century – following WWII, imported high tech was seen as the only way to drag what was still in large part a rural, near-feudal society into the 20th century, something they, of course, did with a vengeance.

POWER FANTASY

It's not, however, just that the use of technology is so important to the Japanese economy that has made giant robots are so popular. No, the operator-driven mobile suits of series like Mobile Police Patlabor or the incredibly popular Gundam are, instead, seen as one way to give the little guy a chance in a big threatening world. Controlling a giant robot doesn't depend on the size of your muscles, or your rank in society, and their appeal is an empowering one – a power fantasy, if you like.

Perhaps the weirdest development of recent times is the unholy marriage of the -chan concept with the giant robot. Again, it started life as a marketing thing – in general, -chans didn't appeal to boys (too cute), but the concept was such a good one it was a pity to waste. Thus the SD ("Super Deformed") robot was born, "cuteyfied" versions of (initially) the Gundam mecha (robots) and other characters, but with a more mischievous, impish personality to make them less sickly sweet. The TV series SD Gundam, for instance, is now tremendously popular – it takes the heroic nobility of Char Aznable and the other heroes of Gundam proper, and turns it on its head. The characters are now crazed little mannikins, playing out their mad rivalries at sports days, eating contests and other ridiculous events. In the wake of the success of SD Gundam, Ultraman now has his own SD anime series too, as do Devilman and the other characters of top animator Nagai Go.

Part of the reason for the incredible success of the Super Deformed concept is that it appeals to both boys and girls – boys like the comedy and the naughtiness, and girls like the cuteness. Whoever first thought up the idea must be rubbing his hands with glee.

Boys like the comedy and naughtiness, and girls like the cuteness

shows have been created around cute -chan versions of already popular characters (the whole idea of the Muppet Babies over here, for instance, was directly influenced by this). To make a character a -chan you shrink the body, enlarge the head to about one third body size, and round everything out, making the character look more child-like. The eyes, of course, get rounder than ever. As a marketing ploy this turned out to be a work of genius – some -chan shows are now more popular than the full-sized characters that spawned them!

Even more radical than the -chan-ising of already cute characters, however, is the creation of cute versions of the giant robots that has followed. We'll look at these in a moment, but if they don't emphasise the power of cute to you, nothing will.

The heroines of Bubblegum Crisis are girls, dressed in robot-suits

Super Deformed robots are *incredibly* popular in Japan

JAPANESE ANIMATION IN THE UK

Until very recently, the only way you could get to see Japanese animation was through the fan network, or at occasional screenings of Akira at art cinemas. In other words, you were very unlikely to. This all changed last year, though, with a company called Island World launching its Manga label, devoted exclusively to bringing dubbed versions of Japanese anime into the UK. Manga has been such a success that the parent company has since changed its name from Island World to Manga Entertainment, and other even bigger players in the video market are planning on getting into the area too, giving Manga a run for its money. Currently then, your local Virgin record shop or HMV will have ten or so anime films on its shelves, but expect this number to double or even triple over the next year.

Check out the black boxouts over these pages to find out exactly what is currently available on video, and what we at MEGA think of it all.

3X3 EYES

(MANGA VIDEO)

This is based on a Manga original. It tells the story of Pai, the last member of a race of immortal folk. Most of the time she's a normal, sweet teenager who just wants to be human, but, when riled, a third eye (in the middle of her forehead) opens, and she becomes a 300-year-old goddess with awesome powers. The story, which is set in modern day Tokyo and Hong Kong, is all about her quest to be normal, which involves going up against a bunch of demonic thieves – thieves who can call up monsters to do their bidding when the going gets tough. The animation is good, and there's some funny black humour, but some of the story's logic lapses a bit too much. Still, it's quite a charming release that will appeal to many.

In the UK, 3x3 Eyes earned an 18 certificate for some reason

ANIME CONTACTS

For more information on the world of Japanese animation, try these:

MANGA VIDEO releases are available at video stockists up and down the country. However, if you're having trouble getting hold of them or simply want more information, write to: The Manga Club, Island World Communications, 40 St Peter's Road, London W6 9BD.

Anime Projects videos aren't available in most high-street stores, but can be found in comic shops or from some mail order specialists.

For more information on the world of anime, try **Anime UK** magazine, available from all good comic shops at £3.50 an issue, or from the publishers at 70 Mortimer Street, London W1 for £3.50 plus 70p postage and packing.

Finally, for a good overview on the subject, a picture-heavy book, Anime: A Beginner's Guide To Japanese Animation, published by Titan Books and written by Anime UK editor Helen McCarthy, will be available at booksellers up and down the country in September, at £6.99.

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Lots of exciting new game releases this month. But, sadly, the same tired old set of reviewers as ever...

FOUR GITS

ANDY
Editor. Responsible for the mag and all its weighty administrative needs. "It's a thankless task," he says

NEIL
Annoyed. "I go on hols for a week and Dyer thinks he's in charge for good," says a miffed Mr West

PAUL
Rock bloke. Hangs out in dark pubs with an assortment of rock chicks. Likes Nirvana (probably)

AMANDA
Still married art editor. So the team is still completely unable to do rudies with her. (Damn!)

RATINGS

It's the easy-to-read rating system. Take a look at how we individually rate every single aspect of a game to make things easy for you.

How many players can play the game at any one time?

SKILL! Skill levels? Yes please. Here we tell you how many there are

How many lives are you given? And how many continues?

A game with this icon has a password system!

Even better, a game with this icon comes with battery back-up!

Sonic 2's got 20, but *EA Hockey* hasn't got any. Stages that is

Import carts are shown with one of these logos, from America or Japan

GRAPHICS 9

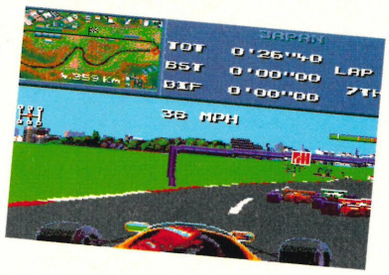
Five game components are rated individually out of ten. Here's what we look for in each:
GRAPHICS: Clear presentation, animation, scrolling, collision-detection, design, speed
SOUND: Music, FX, samples and speech
GAMEPLAY: Movement, control mechanism, difficulty, challenge design and fun element
GAME SIZE: How much does the game offer? Are the levels big? Is there a league option?
ADDICTION: Er, is it addictive?

"What we think of the game, be it praise or a slagging"

AND FOURTEEN GAMES

38 F1

A fab game, but even better was the go-karting trip Domark treated us to as a promotion. Ain't journalism tough? Er, no!



40 INTERNATIONAL RUGBY

Domark are really getting their act together. This is just what rugby fans have been waiting for.

42 BATMAN RETURNS (CD)

The CD version of the game. The driving section's fab. The platform bit is still nob.

46 DEVASTATOR

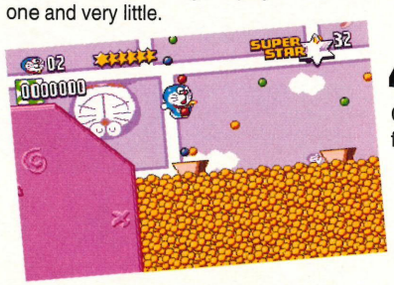
A platform shoot-'em-up interlaced with shoot-'em-up sections.

47 B.O.B.

Off-beat platform shenanigans from the peeps at Electronic Arts. Er, that's it.

48 NINJAWARRIORS

The arcade game had three screens and loads of gameplay. This has one and very little.



49 DORAEMON ADVENTURE

Cutesy platform game which borrows heavily from Mario, but it's dead easy. Good for kids.

50 TECHNOCLASH

Gauntlet-style battle game. Very pretty to look at, but have EA remembered to put the gameplay in?

52 NIGHT STRIKER

This is utter crap. Read the review though, if only to see exactly what the Mega CD *isn't* capable of.

53 SUPERMAN

Superman is dead. How sad then that he is destined to live a while longer in this atrocious little title.

54 ANNETTE AGAIN

Over-priced cack. You'll be left hoping beyond hope that you never see Annette ever again.

55 ANDRE AGASSI TENNIS

Sorry, but despite all our hopes, last year's Wimbledon star draws a blank.

56 NBA ALL-STAR CHALLENGE

A basketball game. And, er, it's crap!

57 AMERICAN GLADIATORS

Don't ask. Just don't ask...

GAME REVIEW

F1

Andy Dyer needs a change of pants after just a couple of laps of this fab racing game

If you've ever driven a Ford Escort XR3i (which I haven't, I hasten to add) you'll know that, despite their obvious failings, they go pretty fast – quite terrifyingly fast, in fact. But next to a Ferrari 348 TB, a Ford Escort XR3i looks positively docile. Now, a 348 TB really *is* fast – neck-jerkingly, eye-poppingly fast. Even one of those, however, would be left eating dust by a modern, high-tech Formula One racer, which is as fast as fast can be. But, having said that, a Formula One car wouldn't have a chance against a Hawker Siddley Harrier GR5. Blimey, those are fast. Not as fast, though, as...

The speed of *F1* would make Senna shrink back into his seat

Er, hang on. (Ford Escort... Ferrari... Formula One car. Got it?) Even a Ferrari isn't as fast as a Formula One car. (Forget that other stuff, would you?) They really are very, very fast. And Domark's new officially-licensed Formula One game captures that feeling of speed just perfectly.

Actually, it goes even further than that. I can't help feeling that even Ayrton Senna would find himself shrinking into his seat were he to play *F1*. The speedo says 215 mph, but it seems more like 2015 mph. Imagine the speeder-bike chase through the forest in Return of the Jedi, throw in the most frightening rollercoaster ride you've ever been on, and that's about half the speed at which *F1* goes.

GLORIOUS GRAPHICS

Most of it can be put down to the graphics. They're of the rarely-seen-in-driving-games polygon variety, which gives the tracks a far more solid, believable feel than you get from the sprites used in *Super Monaco GP*. So as well as road-side signs, you get spectator stands, bridges and tunnels flashing past in perfect 3D. It helps, too, that they're completely smooth and jerk-free, thanks to some top-quality coding by French developers Lankhor (who, fact fans, were responsible for renowned Amiga racing game *Vroom*, of which this is a beefed-up conversion). And there are numerous subtle touches which help towards that overall sense of incalculable

You know you're onto a winner when a game's got a two-player mode. *F1's* isn't perfect, though, being a bit of a squash (as you can probably see)

THE COURSE WITH THE MOST

All the courses in *F1* have their own distinct personalities and national flavours. Some are really wiggly, making overtaking particularly difficult. Some have lots of straight bits, and generally fall to whoever's got the fastest car. Others specialise in interesting tunnels and bridges. Perhaps most fascinating of all, though, is Japan, with its pleasing blend of everything that's good...

...though you might not believe it from this profoundly dull picture. Nevertheless, we're in pole position and the race is about to begin. In fact, it actually *has* begun, and within picoseconds we're up to 16 mph and accelerating hard. Vroooooooooom!

Vrrroooom! Vroooom! 140 mph, but – oh no! – we've been overtaken by some git in a red car. Go away. Shoo. Right, that's it. Foot to the floor, eyes closed, and we'll try to ram him (which you can actually do in *F1*, and it's well worth trying, no honestly)

But we weren't going fast enough, and rather than flying over his head and regaining the lead as planned, we've ended up grinding to a halt and nearly skidding off the road. Meanwhile, another five cars pass us and we're down into seventh place. Hrmph

Yoinks! A little further on, we squint a bit too hard at one of the unintelligible Japanese roadside signs and end up embedded in it. Four more drivers pass us (including a few really crap ones no-one's ever heard of, probably) and we're in a pathetic eleventh

Maybe some new tyres would help. Having managed to call into the pits (which is surprisingly tricky till you've got the hang of it), we're asked to choose some tyres. "Hard" would suit our demeanour best, don't you think? Certainly not "soft", anyway

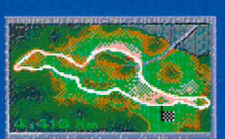
A RACER'S DOZEN (OR RACING ALL OVER THE WORLD)

Australia. Watch out for marsupials

Belgium. Home of some top choccies

Brazil. Mmm – lovely coffee. (And nuts)

Britain. Desperately cold and wet



Canada. Look out for lumberjacks

Germany. What an interesting track

Italy. Land of pizzas, Fiats and the Pope

GET A GRIP!

Steer left and – yes, believe it or not – right

Change up and down gears

This is your accelerator – wahay, away you go

This is the brake. You might even need to use this in this racing game

C, er, allows you to make a pit-stop. This takes some getting used to

Switch the game to "turbo" mode and it goes even faster still, except your car gets shrunk down a bit, for some reason. Oh well.

velocity, like the way the screen tilts almost imperceptibly when you take a particularly tight bend. You can almost feel the G-force.

It sounds perfect, and, to all intents and purposes, it *is* perfect. *F1* is as essential a purchase as you'll ever come across. But, while the speed's as authentic as can be, the action is very much geared towards arcade fans. The steering is heavily simplified, so that as long as you nudge the D-pad in the right direction your car will follow a perfect line through a corner. On "Novice" level, where your speed's limited to around 150 mph, it really is too simple, and you've got to deliberately try to screw up before you'll run off the road. Bump the game up to "Expert"', however, and you'll need the reflexes of a fully-wound tomcat. (Or something.)

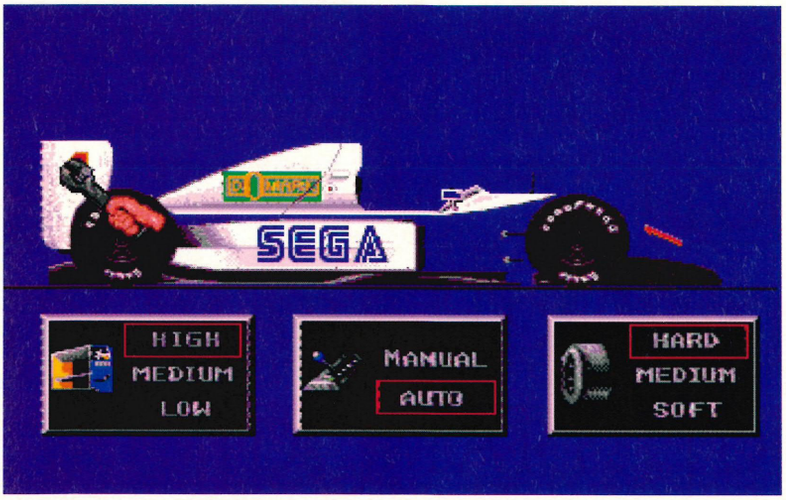
Also notably absent are crashes. You can throw your car about all over the place and it'll never actually spin off and burst into flames. But *F1* more or less makes up for that with a devastating "thunk" whenever you hit anything, as well as making your car lurch up into the air and plonk itself back down again entirely convincingly. Best of all, though, is the way that, if you hit the back of another car fast enough and at the right angle, you actually get launched into the air, sail over the top and land in front of it.

REALISTIC RIDE

And on top of all that it works perfectly as a proper racing game – you weave between other cars just like in a real race, waiting for the chance to make your break and seize the lead, and pit-stops and everything are also in there. The two-player spilt-screen mode is a bonus, too, although space is so tight that it can be hard to see what's going on. And all the essential options are there – automatic or manual gearbox, different sorts of tyres, and championships, that can be set up to include as many or as few courses as you wish, as well as a special arcade mode that dispenses with realism altogether and just has you trying to overtake as many cars as you can.

It's hard to imagine a better car-racing game than this. Even *Super Monaco GP2*, wonderful though it is, slips into *F1's* wake, making this one of the finest Mega Drive games yet. It's the closest you'll get to flying without actually leaving the ground (very much).

Ⓜ *Andy Dyer*



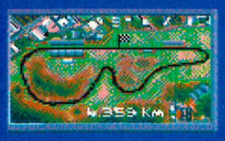
There isn't a huge number of things to fiddle with, but the essentials are there – aerofoil, gearbox (auto is recommended) and tyre softness

THEN AGAIN...

It's fast, and it's got pictures of Ayrton Senna all over it, but it still isn't as good as *F1*

King of the racing games to date has been *Super Monaco GP2* – the tenth best Mega Drive game ever, we reckon. But *F1* is faster, slicker, more exciting, more convincing, more involving and more, erm, betterer, basically.

There are 12 circuits in *F1*. And look! Here's the proof! The bends, hills, dips and narrow bits are realistic representations of the real thing, though the awkwardly-placed trees surely wouldn't be allowed under Formula One regulations. Oh well, it all adds to the racing fun...



Japan! Whence all good things come

Monaco. The bit on France's bottom

Portugal. Down the left side of Spain

San Marino. Er, where? Erm...

Spain. Just to the right of Portugal

PUBLISHER: Domark

PRICE: £49.99

RELEASE: August '93

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: Domark 081 780 2222

Happily, there's a split-screen two-player mode

Four skill levels affect your car's top speed

Lives? Don't be ridiculous, it's a driving game

There's a comprehensive battery back-up facility

There are twelve tracks to race around

GRAPHICS 9

SOUND 7

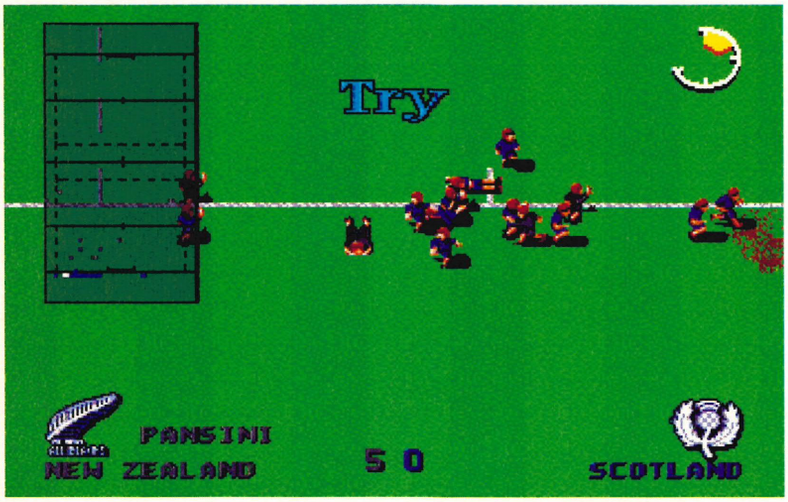
GAMEPLAY 9

GAME SIZE 7

ADDICTION 8

"If you feel the need, the need for speed, there's no better place to find it than this"

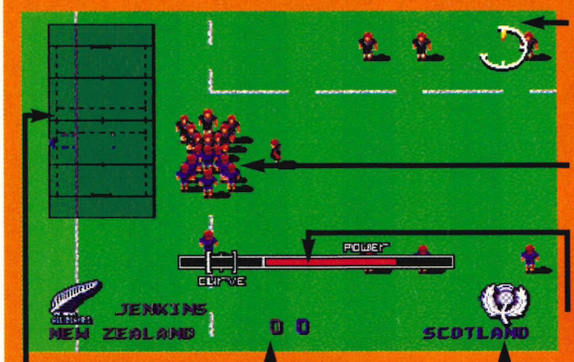
90 PERCENT



You've scored a try. And as a result, a big "Try" appears on screen

BOTTOMS UP!

This a screenshot of the scrum. Not only is it one of the more interesting screenshots, but it'll also help us illustrate what all those other weird bits on the screen are all about.



TIMER As you can see, there ain't much time left

SCRUM Sweat, bottoms and lots of shoving, ooh er...

POWER METER Shows how much power you've got

SCANNER Shows the players who are off screen

THE SCORE Pitiful isn't it?

THE TEAMS You're playing as New Zealand. Your opponents are Scotland

At last, you no longer have to be the burly, beer-swilling type to play rugger. No, thanks to Domark's latest release, you can now be the *skinny, cigarette-smoking*, beer-swilling type. Andy Dyer is truly delighted...

It's always difficult to know how to approach a sports sim review. Do I take the serious "I know all about the subject" line to appeal to real fans of the game? Do I make light of the more jovial aspects of the game such as rowdy songs about breasts and beer? Or do I cater for those ignorant of the game in order to point out that perhaps it will appeal to them anyway? One thing's for sure, unlike that git Neil West, I won't be making the "Rugger's a game for men with odd-shaped balls" quip... Oh bugger, too late.

This game is damn fine fun whether you like the real sport or not

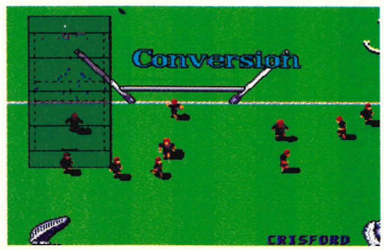
The good news is that despite being a rugby game, it's also damn fine fun regardless of whether you like the real sport or not, in much the same way as *John Madden Football* can be enjoyed by anyone, even if they haven't the faintest interest in, or faintest idea about how to play, American football.

THE AIM OF THE GAME

The aim of rugby (and those people who already know might as well skip this paragraph) is to score points against the other team. You can do this in a variety of ways. You can carry the ball over the try line and touch the floor with it for five points. This entitles you to take a conversion. Get the ball between the posts and you get an additional two points. Then, you can simply boot the ball between the posts while you're on the run. This is a drop goal and is rewarded with three points. Finally, a penalty kick at the goal gives you two points. A couple of other rules are worthy of note and those are that when running with the ball, you can only pass it backwards to another player. You can kick the ball forwards, but it has to bounce within the thin sections at the side of the pitch before going out of play. If it does go out of play, you get to take a line-out (a sort of throw in) from where the ball went out. If not, you have to take it from where you kicked it. There are loads of other fiddly little rules to get your head around but this is, after all, a review of a Mega Drive game, not a rugby masterclass.

REALISTIC REPRESENTATION

The game plays in much the same way as *Super Kick Off*, and, indeed, the two games look very similar too. This is no bad thing because, after all, the *Kick Off* games were for some time completely untouchable in



Score a try and you get the chance to attempt a tricky conversion

INTERNATION

ONE BIG ICON, BOUNCING UP AND DOWN

The good thing about *International Rugby* is that you can either get straight into a single match just for the sheer hell of playing, or you can opt to fiddle about with all the available tournament, team and line-up options. And don't worry if you're a rugger ignoramus, it's all icon-driven so there's absolutely no thought required at all. This is just as well, because when I first started, you could have written all my rugby knowledge on the back of a postage stamp that already had the Old Testament fully printed on it.

Choose your team. The similar icon which appears on the other side of the screen is to choose your opponent's team

Once you've chosen the team you want, click on this icon so you can, if you so wish, change your squad

Why not play a single match before taking on any of the tournaments. Click on this icon if that's what you want to do

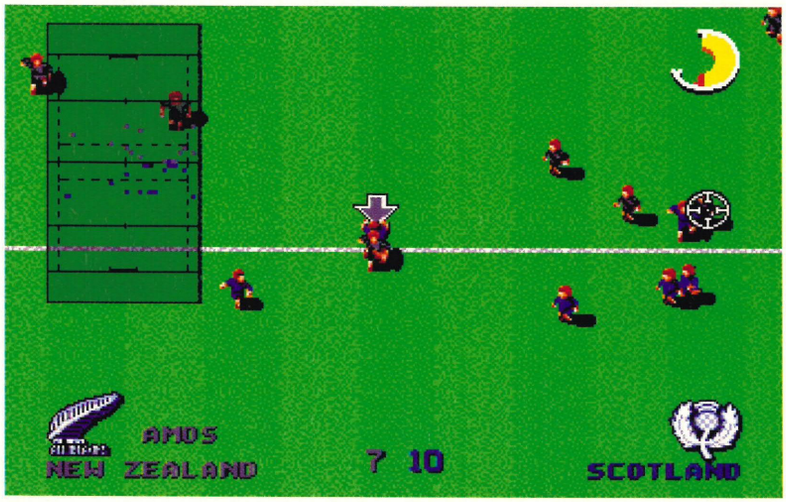
GET A GRIP!

Moves your players around. And that's about all it does really

A The A button allows you to pass the ball to the left

B Using the B button you can kick the ball and tackle an opponent

C The C button allows you to pass the ball to the right



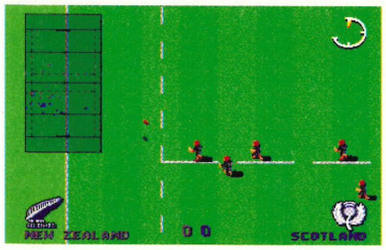
Passing is simple. Press and hold the button to select a player, then release

terms of gameplay, so well done to Domark for using a tried-and-tested formula to very good effect.

The controls are very sensibly handled. When you're in possession of the ball, button A passes left and button C passes right. All you do is hold the button of your choice, and if a nearby player is in a position to catch the ball, a circular cursor will appear over him. Then all you have to do is simply release the button and the pass is made. If the opposition has the ball, your buttons will select the player you control and they will also enable you to perform tackles.

Scrums are just as simple. When the scrum starts, you frantically press button A. If you're faster than the opponent, your men will force them back. As soon as this happens, press button B to get the ball out and you're on your way again. I could go into depth about conversions, tries and line-outs but they're all very well handled too – there are just a couple of button presses and power meters to get your head around and that's it.

Because the game is so easy to play, even novice rugby players can get straight into it. Indeed, I wasn't entirely aware of the rules and techniques needed when I started reviewing the game, but within a couple of hours I was sorted.



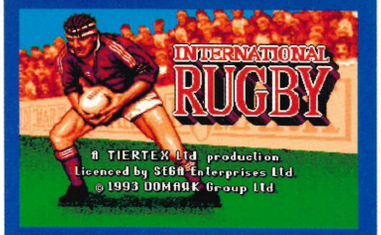
If the ball bounces between those lines and goes out, it's a line-out

CURIOUSLY UNCONTROLLABLE

So this is a big hit right? Erm... sort of. True I enjoyed playing the game an awful lot, and, in the early stages, figuring out the best way to score points was fun. But then you get to a point where during some games you'll do incredibly well, then other times you'll get hammered, and there aren't many times it sort of goes evenly. And the curious thing is that this has nothing to do with playing teams of differing skill. Even when fairly matched teams play, there is this niggling feeling of not being entirely in control. I know this all sounds terribly vague and you're probably thinking "What the hell is he on about?" but the trouble is, the problem isn't a tangible one. The best I can do is to simply suggest that the intelligence of the computer-controlled opponents isn't quite what it might be. While the player you control desperately runs around trying to pull off some spectacular moves, the rest of the team are thinking about other things.

But enough criticism. There are several things to say about the game. It's the only rugger game for the Mega Drive and it's a good one. It plays well, it looks good, it's fast, and the programming is generally very slick. Rugby players will love it and the majority of other gameplayers will certainly either love it or, at worst, like it. It's a fine sport sim but it just slightly lacks the depth of play that makes games like *John Madden* so great.

Ⓜ *Andy Dyer*



PUBLISHER: Domark

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: August '93

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: Domark 081 780 2222

Up to four people can play four players, using the new multi-tap joystick adaptor

The skill needed depends on which team you play as, or against

Lives in rugger? I think not

No battery back-up and no password system

Well, you have the various play-offs in the competitions I suppose

GRAPHICS 7

SOUND 7

GAMEPLAY 8

GAME SIZE 8

ADDICTION 7

"The first rugger game for the Mega Drive and it is a fab one. Slightly lacking in computer intelligence, but, heck, it's still very slick and playable"

AL RUGBY

Clicking on the trophy icon brings up the fixtures of the tournament in which you're playing

Click on the question mark to change the game options, such as length of match and so on

And finally, to actually play the next game in the tournament, click on the mini pitch screen in the middle

80 PERCENT

MEGA CD

BATMAN

The Bat is back. However, this time he's on Mega CD with an impressive new driving level. Paul Mellerick gets behind the wheel and finds he hasn't had so much fun in ages

SCALING?

Just to show that having a Mega CD is not all memory and no special effects, *Batman Returns* has some really nice scaling effects on the various demo and intro screens. Neat huh?

Let's step back in time, way back, to issue three of MEGA to be precise. You remember, it was the one with the fabulous (even if we do say so ourselves) American football cover. As I look back I can remember all the hoo-har about Christmas. Neil was ordering his holiday supply of hair gel, Andy was collecting "grunge" to distribute around his flat, and Amanda was, well, Amanda was just taking things easy. It was quite a stonking issue, issue three; there were plenty of good games to review – *John Madden '93, Bio-Hazard Battle* and *Lotus Turbo Challenge* to name three – but the issue also had its downers, and one of these came in the shape of *Batman Returns.*

Hyped as one of the releases of the year, we all awaited *Batman Returns* with bated breath. As it turned out, we needn't have bothered. It was (and still is) a complete pile of old tosh. So when we heard that a CD version of the game was being programmed, we didn't exactly jump for joy. And now, having seen the game, we appreciate just how wrong we can sometimes be.

A NICE DRIVE IN THE COUNTRY

So what's the CD version got that the cartridge game hasn't? Actually, that's quite an easy question to answer. It's got a driving bit. Yep, it's as simple as that. Instead of completely re-thinking the whole gaming idea and starting from scratch, Sega have come up with a no-holds-barred driving/shooting game, bolted it in between each level of the cartridge (platform only) game and turned a completely crap platform game into rather good CD driving game with crap platform bits.

Choose the full game, the platform game or the driving game

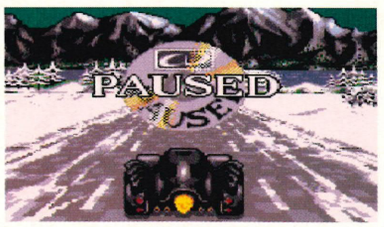
Now, while having to put up with the platform bits until you get to the next driving bit could be annoying, Sega have overcome this by splitting the game up. Through the options menu you can choose between the full game (both driving and platform), the platform game (ha) and the driving game. But what's so good about the driving game?

SPEED, CONTROL AND SCALING

Well for a start, take a look of some of those screenshots... Impressive aren't they? Well

Don't worry about silly things like road blocks. If you see something in your way, and it's made of wood, drive through it. You are *Batman* after all

You'll use this screen a lot. It's the very useful options screen

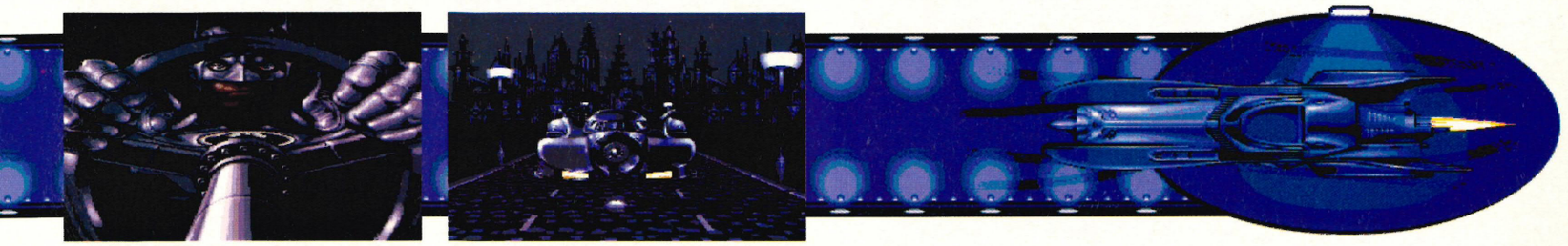


Ooh, look, if you pause the game, a little CD appears and revolves

This packed little piccy is taken from level three (the industrial bit, as you can see). Don't butt into the metal girders though, it's bad for your car

Sometimes I think these programmers lose their grip on reality. I mean, that statue by the side of the road, what the hell is it supposed to be?

RETURNS



These red cars, with their petrol bombing occupants, are really damaging to your lovely car

But if you thought that was hard...

Whhhhhhheeeeeeeee!!!!!!!!!!!!

OK, who said "ugly git"?

GET A GRIP!

Steer left or right and down to brake

A Your turbo, or acceleration, button. Keep this held down to move

B Fires little bullets, which are very useful indeed...

C ... but nowhere near as good as your homing missiles. Hee, hee

imagine them moving at the same speed as, say, *Road Rash 2*, but with a lovely scaling on all the buildings (and cars) as they shoot by you. Pleased? You should be. This is the first real driving game that has combined speed, control, scaling *and* playability at the same time. This being Batman though, there is more to this driving lark than just speed. You see, the road is polluted with all sorts of the Penguin's nasties, who would like nothing better than to blow up the Batmobile. Each driving level is split into six sections and each section has both a time limit and a "baddie counter". To move onto the next level you must wipe out all the nasties on that level before the timer runs out. This would be hard enough, but don't forget that your Batmobile is a delicate piece of equipment, and a few well-aimed missiles up your cam shaft will have a devastating effect on your mode of transport.

Missiles up your cam shaft are a bit of a bummer

If you do die though, there's none of that annoying right back to the start of the level stuff. If you're on level one, section four and you die, you get fully powered up again, but you start from the beginning of section four. Lose all your lives and continue (using one of the three available) though, and you'll start at the beginning of the level, not the section on which you died. This little bit of ingenuity makes the game just that little bit harder, and when you play again you'll remember where you died last time and then try to prevent the same thing happening again.

Controlling the car is very simple, and the controls can be changed through the options menu to suit your own special finger problems. One button accelerates, one fires your Bat-bullets, and the other fires one of your short supply of missiles. The joypad is used to steer left and right and if you're after the brakes, press down.

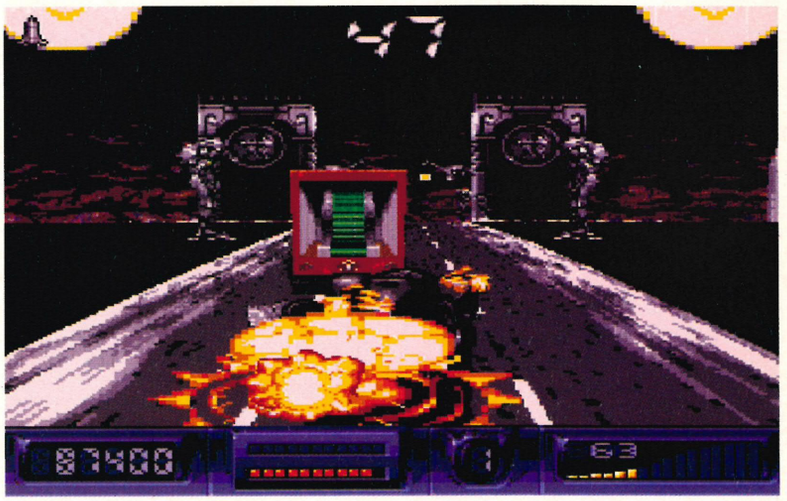
All good news this isn't it? And don't worry, there isn't even a but coming as far as the driving game is concerned, but (sorry) for those among you who haven't sampled the true mockery of a sham that is the cartridge game *Batman Returns,* then I feel it is my duty to warn you about it.

SHAME ABOUT THE PLATFORM PART

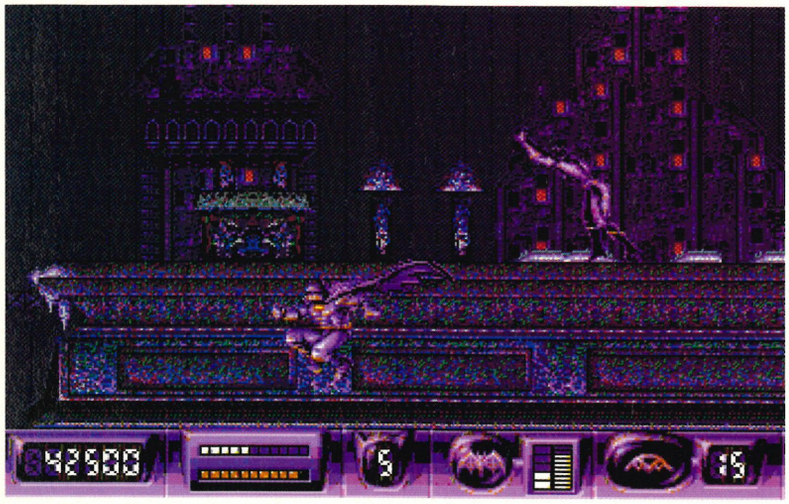
We all expected great things of a film licence as lovely as *Batman Returns* – loads of opportunities for dark, moody graphics, loads of sexy scenes with

Turn Over

You should see the speed as you move through this tunnel bit, which, by the way, lasts for one whole level. Oh, and mind your head on the top as well



Here's the mid boss on level three and he's dropped one of his exploding things right on top of you. A very lovely explosion don't you think?



See that rather unattractive purple blob (no not Batman)? Well, that's supposed to be the sprite version of Michelle Pfeiffer. Cack or what?

Michael Keaton and Michelle Pfeiffer and, possibly, a really good game in there as well. None of these assumptions came true. This isn't the worst platform game you'll ever see (it comes close but it's not the worst), it's just a far cry from being the best, and, for a title that is supposed to be the biggest licence of the year, that really is very poor. This is meant to be the cutting edge of video gaming for goodness sake.

Still, that's enough about the crap platform game, let's get back to the driving bit. Did I tell you that it's got the best music I've ever heard in a CD game? Not only is it none of that formulated Japanese rubbish that pollutes the airwaves, but I kept having to put the joypad down as an overwhelming desire to play air guitar swept over me. Did I also tell you that this is one hard mother of a game? No? Well it is. Even in driving only mode you're going to have a really tough time with this one. There are 30 driving sections for you to get through and it's not just a case of driving through the sections without any challenge, just to face up to a really tough end-of-level boss. This game is tough all the way through.

A strong desire to play air guitar swept over me

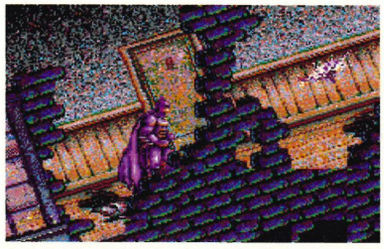
THREE GAMES FOR THE PRICE OF ONE

All this toing and froing between platform and driving bits leaves me in a bit of a dilemma, to say the least. You see, we gave the original cart version of this game 40%. Now, the CD game is that same game (with the fabulous music added of course) with a really rather fab driving game bolted onto it. You can play both games together or you can play both games separately. This means that we could almost give the game three different ratings to get the whole picture. So what shall I do? Well, I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll rate the game as a whole, taking both the crap platform bit and the fab driving game into account, but I'll also strongly recommend that you give this game a go in driving mode only. You may have played many a platform game like this one, but you will never have played a driving game like it, and for that reason alone *Batman Returns* on the CD is well worth checking out.

Ⓜ *Paul Mellerick*

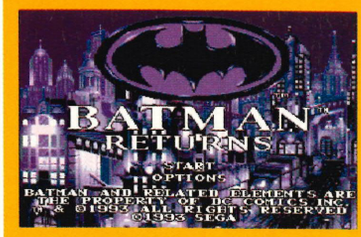
Now give those arms a good flap. Go on, don't be embarrassed, we're all here for a good workout

You'd think that with the building leaning at this angle, the local council would condemn it, but no



And of course with those lovely brick walls in the way, you can never see what's coming until it's too late

Oooh, and it's a bit of a low blow there from the bat guy. Let's see if the thug can recover and come back



PUBLISHER: Sega (IMPORT)

PRICE: £40 (CHECK WITH CONTACT)

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: Mega CD

CONTACT: Video Game Centre 0202 527314

There's only one top Bat guy

SKILL! Training (a limited two-level affair) or Normal levels of skill

Three, five or seven lives – it's up to you really

No battery back-up or password system. You're really up against it

Five driving sections (30 stages) and five platform sections

GRAPHICS 9

SOUND 10

GAMEPLAY 8

GAME SIZE 7

ADDICTION 8

"A strange breed of game. The platform bits are rubbish, but the driving game is the best I've ever played"

81 PERCENT

GET A GRIP!

Walk left and right, and then press Up for the grapple to reach higher up

A Jump and use the grapple to hang while you're in mid flight

B Your hand attack. In other words, it's your punch or kick button

C Press Start to select a weapon from your batbelt and this to use it

The end of level one. Beat the Penguin and you can see the next driving bit

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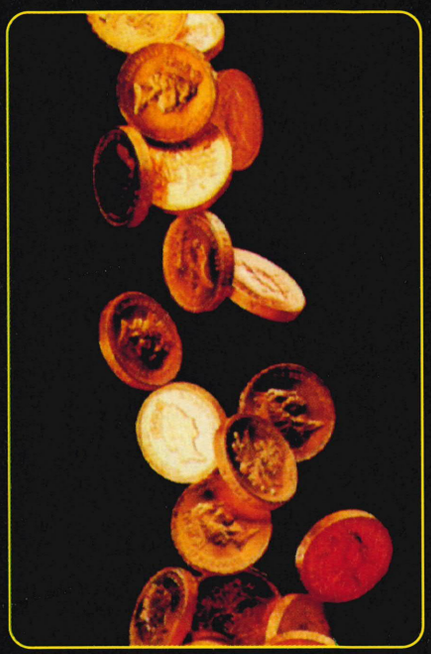

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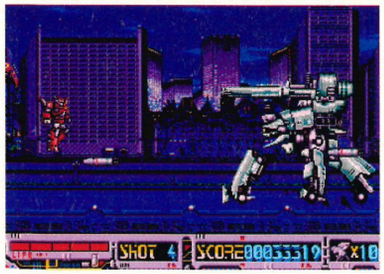
MEGA CD

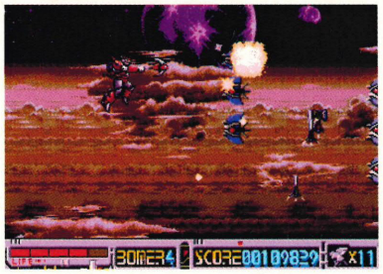
It's a real shame that this isn't a completely devastating game, because then Paul Mellerick could stick an awful pun into this intro

DEVASTATOR

What the hell this is I don't know, but I'm going to kill it anyway



The first big piece of hardware really puts the willies up you



The shoot-'em-up levels can get just a little bit on the hectic side

Some games are simple, some are complex. Some are big, some are small. Some are full of new ideas, some aren't. Some of them even revolve around very elaborate plots and some of them involve you playing as some sort of creature. It's only when you receive a game from Japan (regardless of whether it's on CD or not) that you realise how stupid all that complicated stuff can be, especially if you've got an RPG with an accompanying Japanese instruction book. Occasionally, however, you get a nice straightforward shoot-'em-up and you can forget the instruction booklet, ignore the intro sequence and just sit back and enjoy the game. So, it was with open arms that I welcomed the arrival of *Devastator* in the office this week.

Straight-forward Jap shoot-'em-up action

DEVASTATINGLY SIMPLE (SORRY)

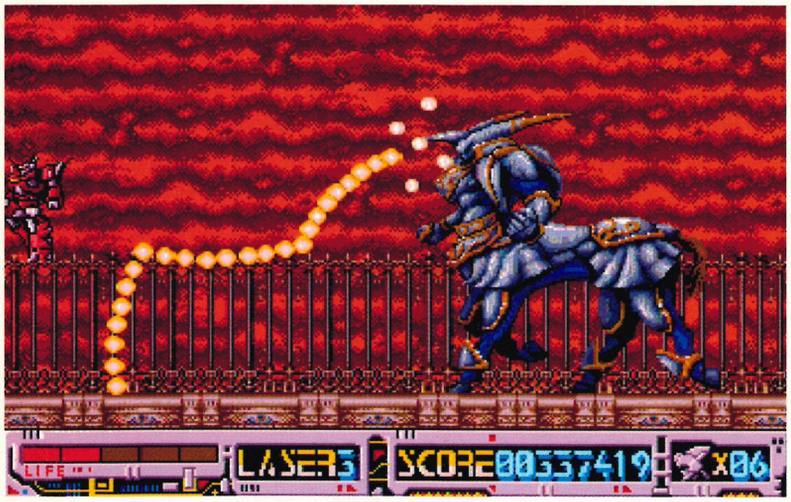
What we have here is a very simple platform shoot-'em-up, interlaced with shoot-'em-up levels. You play the part of the Devastator robot, which in real terms is about 100 feet tall. You're controlling this robot from inside (it's a sort of exo-skeleton) and it's a pretty hard piece of kit too. However, if you think *you're* hard, you should see some of the things you're gonna come up against. There's some serious hardware in this game.

You're far from completely powerless, however, and thanks to the little "gifts" left behind when you blow up certain enemies, you can power up to some real ball-blasters. There are three different types of weapons available (lasers, shots and bombs) and all can be powered up to a maximum factor of four. All of these weapons are also backed up by your standard grappling-hook type thing, which you carry with you all the time no matter what power-up you've got. Robots are destructible though, and if you take six hits, you'll lose one of your ten lives.

COULD HAVE BEEN ON CART

It's not the most original game you'll find, but everything is very nicely done, so you can't really find fault with it. However, there is the question of whether of not this game should actually have appeared on a CD. Apart from the excellent soundtrack and brilliant Battle of the Planets animated bits between each level, this doesn't really do anything that a normal cart game couldn't. And with (don't hold me to this because it's all in Japanese remember) about eight levels I don't think this is going to last that long either – it's not that the game is easy, it's just once you've cracked the basic jump and shoot gameplay, there's not a lot of challenge left. CD owners who are desperate for playable games will like this, but it isn't really a great leap forward in CD technology or console gameplay.

Ⓜ *Paul Mellerick*



Here we are at the very end of level six, and it's not going to be easy to get past the three-pronged attack of this guy. Good luck

PUBLISHER: Wolfteam (IMPORT)

PRICE: £39.99 (CHECK WITH CONTACT)

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: Mega CD

CONTACT: Gamesville 0293 541953

Only one player at a time please

The usual levels of skill: Easy, Normal and Hard

You've got a very generous ten lives

A password or battery back-up facility would make it too easy

Eight stages? I think so, but don't hold me to it

GRAPHICS 8

SOUND 9

GAMEPLAY 7

GAME SIZE 6

ADDICTION 7

"A nice, playable CD game that could also be a nice, playable cart game"

71 PERCENT

GET A GRIP!

Use these to move our hero around

A Your attack button, which basically fires your weapon

B Your jump button, which basically makes you jump

C Your attack button, which basically fires your weapon

Here we see "Bob" in revolutionary platforms-with-a-bit-of-shooting scenario

B.O.B.

It's just another platform game really. Neil West elaborates (like he does)...

Right, it's platform game time again. The Mega Drive's seen so many great platformers (well, five or six anyway) that you'd imagine nobody would bother trying to follow something like *Sonic 2* unless they'd got a game that was really a bit special. And yet it's not the case – every second game we seem to see here at MEGA is yet another tedious leap-around-aimlessly-and-bash-some-token-baddies effort, and we're sad to report that Bob's another one.

NOT HALF BAD...

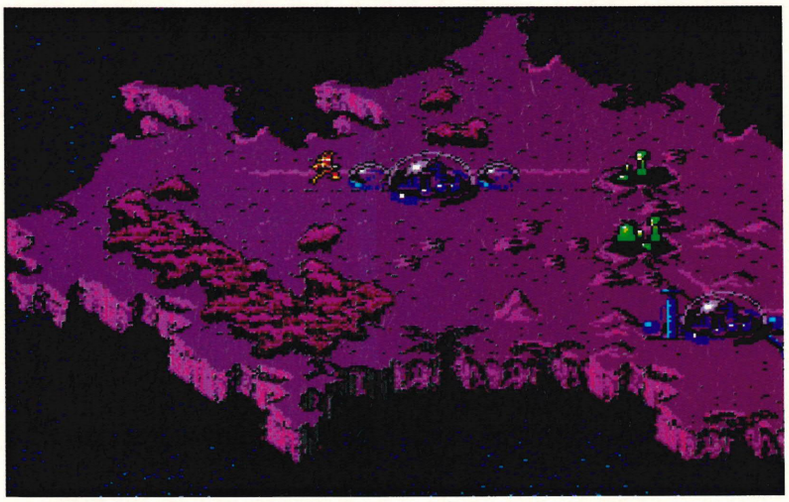
It's not that this is a particularly bad game, heck no. It's easy to get into, it's actually got a halfway interesting character for once (well, I'm using the word "interesting" in a context of relevance, obviously – you wouldn't want to take Bob here down the pub and have a good old chinwag about Gorgozneyev's classic drawing-room comedies of the early 1820s or listen particularly closely to his theories on how to solve the world's economic crisis, but you could probably put up with his company without too much trouble if you somehow got yourself zapped, Tron-style, into a strange parallel video game universe after an especially rough night in front of the TV. As long as he didn't do his amusing comedy death sequences all night long, that is. But I digress.), and it all moves along at a moderately zippy pace.

... BUT NOTHING SPECIAL

It's just that it's all so lifeless – I played this game for hours and I can't remember seeing a single innovative feature, or even a remotely clever combination of old ones. *Bob* is, if you switch your brain off when you switch your Mega Drive on, perfectly entertaining in its own insignificant and undemanding little way. It's just that ten minutes after you start playing it, you begin to wonder why you're bothering. Ten minutes after that, you realise that you can't think of a single reason to continue – nothing's changed except the colours of the backdrops, and you couldn't really care whether Bob saves the world/rescues the princess/burns the cakes/whatever else it is he does or not. Another ten minutes in, and you've actually stopped playing, and ten more minutes on you've forgotten that you even started playing it. Life's just too short.

Neil West

And here "Bob" discusses Proustian situationism with Roland Barthes...



Sadly, despite appearances, this isn't even slightly like ToeJam & Earl

GET A GRIP!

Climb, dive and move left and right

A – This is your weapon-selection button

B – And this'll be your fire button

C – And that leaves this one, which is your special weapon button

PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: September '93

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: EA 0753 549442

One player. It's not really worth "two bob". Ho ho

There are no skill levels

You have three lives

There's a password system

There are three worlds, with 15 levels per world

GRAPHICS 7

SOUND 6

GAMEPLAY 6

GAME SIZE 8

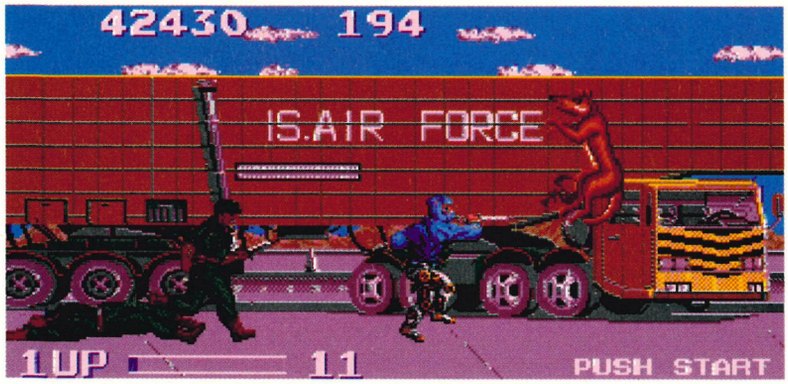
ADDICTION 4

"You've already played a hundred platformers better than this. What's the point?"

50 PERCENT

GET A GRIP!

- ↑ ↓ ← → Move left and right along the screen
- A Jump. And if you want a big jump, press diagonally left or right
- B Dunno what they're called, but they're like knifes and you press B to use them
- C The ever-present Ninja weapon – the Shuriken. Sharp and very deadly



Dogs! Don't you just lov... I mean, *hate* them? They smell, they moult, they leave their mess everywhere, and they lick their... Yes, exactly

Oh, this business really does get my back up sometimes. In my job I get to see quite a few games every month, and not just Mega Drive ones either. After years and years of seeing software houses bring out the same old coin-op conversion drivel – hiding a cack Mega Drive game behind an arcade name – it *still* amazes me when they release a game like this.

THREE INTO ONE...

Right, let's start by enlightening you on the original coin-op game. To make you part with your money in an arcade, some machines tend to go slightly over the top, and *Ninjawarriors* definitely fits into that category. With a BIG cabinet, three TV screens laced into one and some really big speakers blasting out some serious sounds, this one quickly drew the crowd.

Thing is though, if you put the odd pound coin into a coin-op, you appreciate the game, the sound and all the extras. But when it comes to putting all that into a CD game that costs £40, the equation doesn't quite work. The reason is quite simple. *Ninjawarriors* is just a very simplistic, lateral game that doesn't test your intellect, your reflexes, or any part of your brain at all. It works in the arcades (because you're blown away by the graphics, size and sound), but it doesn't work on your TV.

Let's hope rubbish like this stays in Japan

DULL IN THE EXTREME

Simply slagging the game off isn't helping you much really is it? Right then, I'll tell you exactly what's wrong with it. Well, for a start, imagine bland backgrounds, dull graphics (no sign of any extra CD stuff here) and even duller gameplay. With level after level of walk right, take out the baddie and walk right again, the incentive to see the next level is very small indeed.

There's also a severe lack of ideas, and all the bad guys follow the same mode of attack level after level – there's just more of them, to make things slightly harder. The real shame about all of this, however, is the use of the CD (or should that be "lack of use"?). The Mega CD has been blatantly used to sell the idea of a Taito Sound Team (who even get their own sort of FMV pop video), and this really isn't on. There's some nice sound in the game, I'll grant that, but the game is just so poor that not even impressive sound really helps.

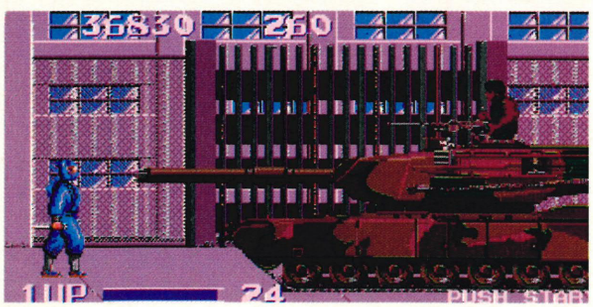
There's no use of any CD technology, no extra memory used to beef up the levels, and nothing that can save this game at all. Let's hope rubbish like this stays in Japan and that English software companies working on CD software steer well clear of drivel like this. (Ooh, I feel better for that.)

Ⓜ *Paul Mellerick*

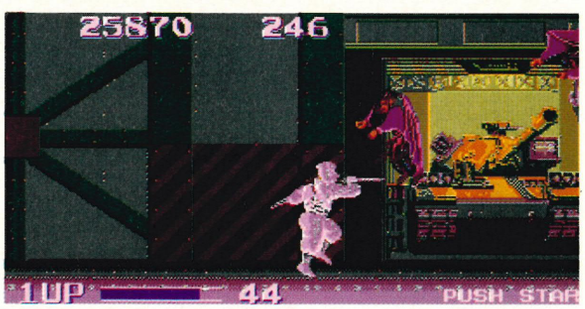
The equally dull and tedious two-player game. Twice the tedium in the same amount of time

"Oh dear," sighs Paul Mellerick as he ponders that age-old question: Why do people always think that coin-ops will make good console games?

THE NINJAWARRIORS



Er, no, you don't have to blow up the tank. Just shoot at the driver using your deadly-sharp shurikens



You don't have to worry about the bat-type people, because they're really quite easy to kill

PUBLISHER: Taito (IMPORT)

PRICE: £40 (CHECK WITH CONTACT)

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: Mega CD

CONTACT: Video Game Centre 0202 527314

There is a two-player mode

Easy, Normal, Hard and Super Boredom levels of skill

One life, with four continues

Er, no. No battery back-up and no password system

No idea how many stages, but there are definitely too many

GRAPHICS 6

SOUND 8

GAMEPLAY 2

GAME SIZE 5

ADDICTION 1

"A very poor game by any standards, and a real waste of (CD) space"

15 PERCENT

GET A GRIP!

Moves "no ears" around the screen

Action button – picks up enemies

Your fire button – hold it down for a more powerful shot

Your jumpety, jump button

Shame I just died, 'cos that key would have made me invincible

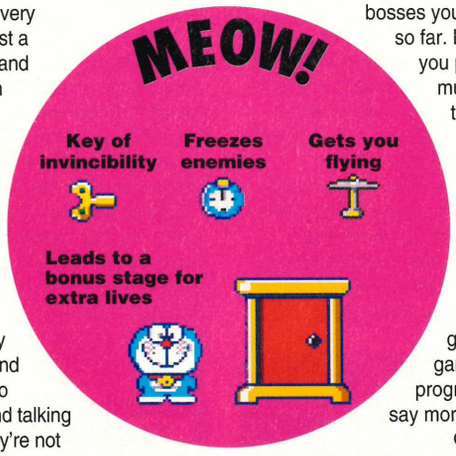
What do you call a cat with no ears? Anything you like, he can't hear you

Right, well, I could try to be clever (or funny) by attempting to either fathom the plot of this game, or alternatively making up a fake comedy one, but it would be a waste of time. I mean, a game which features a cat with no ears who freezes chickens and plays party games with his enemies defies description really doesn't it? And besides, this is a Japanese import so the task is made all the more impossible (if you can have varying degrees of impossibility).

FREE PENCIL CASE

Instead I will say that *Doraemon Adventure* is a platform game. It borrows heavily from the *Mario* series of games on the Nintendo systems (hmmm...), and it's most definitely for younger gamers. How do I know this latter fact? Well, it wouldn't take Sherlock-bloody-Holmes to work it out that's for sure. For a start, the game comes bundled with a pencil case, eraser and several pencils. Ah ha... already the pieces of evidence are falling into place. Secondly, the graphics are cute beyond belief, and the bosses, instead of trying to tear your head off, play curious little party games with you. More and more rapidly the mysteries of this case are unfolding. And finally, despite a rather relaxed attitude towards the game, I managed to complete it after two tries. "Bingo!" (Although I rather doubt Sherlock Holmes ever said bingo.) This is most definitely a kiddies game, so I will, therefore, rate it as such. If you're a competent gamesplayer or an older gamesplayer, ignore the rating. In fact, ignore the review – this game ain't for you. If you're dead young, however, or you're searching for the perfect game for your beloved child whose at the post-toddler stage, stick with us.

The levels are very straightforward – just a series of platforms and opponents who can quite easily be stunned with your weapon. A nice touch is that you don't actually kill anything, but instead freeze them so that they can then be used as platforms or they can be picked up and used as weapons to obtain bonuses. And talking of bonus items, they're not overly complex or numerous. There's a key which makes you invincible, a... oh hang on a minute, this is all described in that circular box down there so have a read of that.



KIDDIES GAMES

And finally as I said, the bosses don't fight, they just play twee party games with you. All the bosses play a fun little version of Scissors, Paper, Stone with you (you know the one, scissors cut paper, stone crushes scissors, paper wraps stone). Win three times, and the boss disappears. Then, just before you meet the final boss, you have to play musical chairs with all the bosses you've encountered so far. Beat them all and you play a game of musical chairs with the final boss. Beat him three times and victory is yours.

That's it. No real challenge for old farts but perfect for the youngsters – nice graphics, fun gameplay, well-programmed. Need I say more?

Ⓜ *Amanda Dyson*

PUBLISHER: Sega (IMPORT)

PRICE: £40 (CHECK WITH CONTACT)

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 8Mbit

CONTACT: Gamesville 0293 541953

One player... and it's a cat... with no ears. Weird!

You can play the easy game, the easy game or, er, well it's easy

Start with three lives but you can collect loads

No passwords, no battery back-up

Eight big stages, plus bonus levels. Yes, it's a biggy!

GRAPHICS 7

SOUND 7

GAMEPLAY 7

GAME SIZE 7

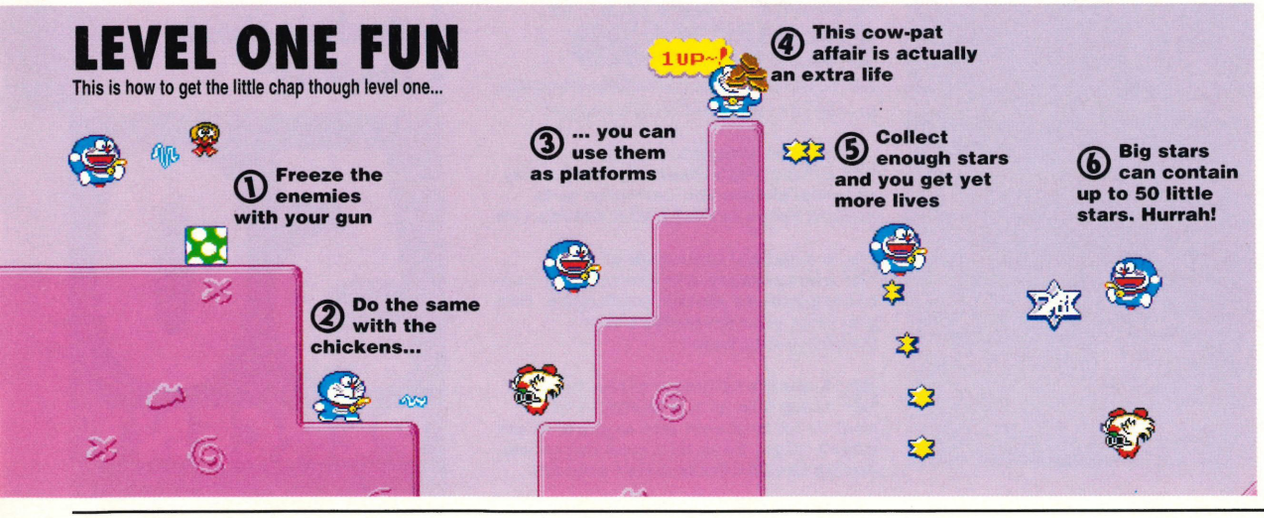
ADDICTION 7

DORAEMON ADVENTURE

A cat with no ears? Amanda Dyson just has to investigate this...

LEVEL ONE FUN

This is how to get the little chap though level one...



"Adult fun for five minutes only, but this is perfect bairn-fodder. Buy it for your sprogs. Aw go on"

71 PERCENT

TECHNOCLASH

PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts
PRICE: £39.99
RELEASE: September '93
CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit
CONTACT: EA 0753 549442

Just the one player

No skill levels

Just the one life with three continues

There's a password system

There are seven large worlds, varying in size

GRAPHICS 8
SOUND 6
GAMEPLAY 4
GAME SIZE 7
ADDICTION 2

Andy Dyer isn't a short-tempered chap. Playing this game, however, cost the MEGA office a joypad *and* a window

Oh *Technoclash*, how do you annoy me? Well, just let me count the ways.

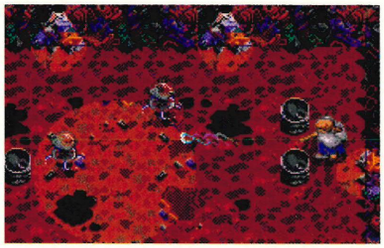
Firstly, there's your fantastically stupid plot about a world where machines are considered evil and there's a one-way time portal to the modern world which leads straight to a present-day Las Vegas casino. The casino is full, not of one-armed bandits, roulette wheels and people playing poker as you might expect, but of loads of ridiculous bad guys chucking fireballs and stuff at you every time you try to go up a set of stairs. Now I have to admit to a bit of a lack of research here – I've never actually been to Las Vegas, but if I ever do, I'll bet you anything you like that absolutely nobody throws any fireballs at me. But then, who ever expected game plots to be even vaguely sensible? Since I'm in a generous mood, we'll just forget about the plot, OK?

HANGING ON FOR DEAR LIFE

What's harder to forget, however, is the incredibly annoying way in which this game plays. It's an overhead-view scroller with superficial *Gauntlet* similarities, but when you wander up to a bad guy and give him a swipe with your magical sword (which is a product of sorcery, not a machine, yeah?), he doesn't vanish in a puff of smoke, oh no. What he does is take a bit of damage and recoil away from you, simultaneously leaping about three feet to one side so that to hit him a second time, you have to traipse around and line yourself up with him all over again.

This is so annoying I can hardly find the words to describe it – when I whack a baddie, I expect him to die. And that's that. It wouldn't be quite so bad if the collision detection wasn't so picky, (which is annoying in itself when so much of the time you have to hit things diagonally – never the easiest of things to do reliably with a Mega Drive joypad at the best of times), but it is, and it makes a simple task like chopping up a couple of level-one sword-fodder goons something more like battling the final boss on *Rolo To The Rescue*.

And then there's the fact that there's some almost-good stuff in here that's been wasted by the laziest game engine imaginable. The way you choose between your wide range of weapons is quick and clever, and the graphical settings are some of the nicest I've seen in a while – scrapyards full of crushed cars, the insides of what looks like a Viking feasting hall viewed from above the ceiling rafters, or the Las Vegas setting itself which has exactly the kind of lush carpeting and neo-classical architecture you'd expect to find in such an establishment. Oh yeah, and there's a lovely fade-to-sepia effect which serves only to make the actual in-game colour scheme look garish and tacky. When's someone going to do something clever with graphics as an atmospheric tool, that's what I want to know?



See? It's quite pretty when it tries. Shame it doesn't try more often

Las Vegas, with vicious baddies, but without any gambling

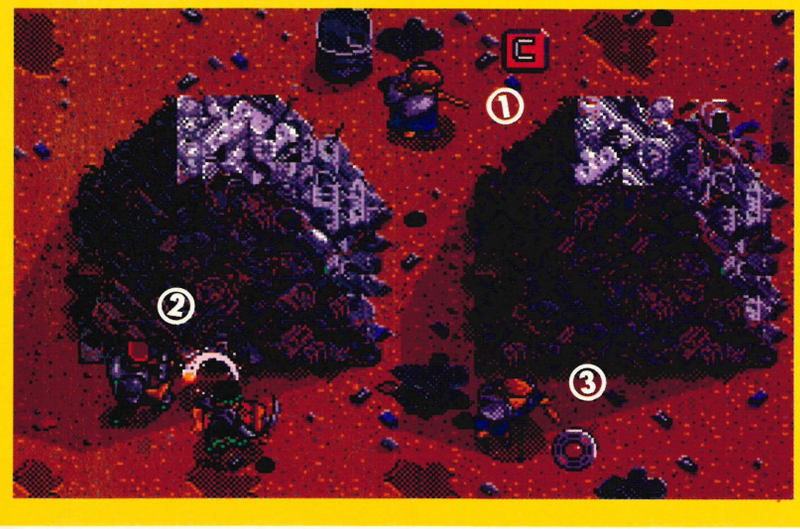
COULD HAVE BEEN A WINNER

So anyway. *Technoclash* – it's not the worst game I've ever seen, but with another month's work at the design stage, it could have turned into something really nifty, and to see that potential thrown away by laziness, well... it annoys me greatly to say the least.

Ⓜ *Andy Dyer*

GET A GRIP!

Moves you around the screen
A Allows you to swipe with your club
B This is your fire button
C This brings up the very-useful weapon-select screen



CRAP CART'S GRAVEYARD

Ever wondered where rubbish old Mega Drive games go to die? It's here – the crap cart's graveyard.

① A large magnet, used for extracting potentially useful bits of metal before the cartridge gets melted down to make Phil Collins LPs

② A colossal mountain of unnecessary and completely non-biodegradable plastic packaging. Can you spot your favourite cover illustration in here?

③ A quality surveyor picks through some bits of wreckage in the search for any new and original ideas which might have escaped detection during the deconstruction process

"There's a framework of something decent here. However, *Technoclash* isn't it"

50 PERCENT

THE COMPLETE MEGA DRIVE GAMES GUIDE 1993

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MEGA

100% PURE SEGA MEGA DRIVE...

MEGA CD

NIGHT STRIKER

655 Megabytes of memory, £300 worth of kit and what do you get? 3D adventures in Legoland. Neil West investigates

This end-of-level boss is apparently some kind of truck (OK, so you'll have to use your imagination). Shoot it for ten seconds and, well, that's it really

Picture the scene: You have just been down to Dixons, looking for the future of home entertainment. You managed to avoid buying a Philips CDi, but the salesman convinced you that a Mega CD was the answer to your prayers. "Ooh, that sounds good," you said as you handed over nearly £300.

Now you have the darned thing in the house and you eventually get it hooked up to the telly (after farting around with bits of metal and plastic clips). Which game will you play first? Try *Night Striker* and check out what a phenomenal investment you have just made.

A GOOD BUY?

This is Taito's answer to Sega's very own *Thunderblade*. Sadly though, there isn't a friendly helicopter in sight. For some weird reason, you take control of a flying car. It doesn't even have the charm of Chitty Chitty Bang Bang. This thing looks like a Lotus Esprit that's been hit with the ugly stick.

So, you get into the driving seat and then proceed to zoom through a claustrophobic tunnel before emerging into a world filled with danger, violence and big yellow square things. All the enemy aircraft are portrayed using the Mega CD's notorious scaling chip. They start off chunky and, as they approach, it all goes horribly, horribly wrong.

Check out the Night Striker patrol vehicle. It's just a shame it doesn't look this good during the game

You can choose the route you want to follow as you finish each level – all the way from A to, er, U

OPPRESSIVE SPRITES

The enemy sprites (as well as your own) completely obscure the surrounding scenery. Even your own bullets cause you trouble. As you fire, you immediately lose sight of the track and crash headlong into the first obstacle that happens upon your path. Add to this the big, blocky explosions and the occasionally terminal flicker and what you have is a nightmarish mess of colour.

Sound effects, on the other hand, are fantastic – obviously. They're all sampled and stuck on a CD. The music too is superb, and not quite as cheesy as most of the Japanese anthems we've become used to. There's a fair bit of speech too, and most of it is in English, albeit with a terrible Japanese accent.

The backgrounds slide past with enormous ease and there are loads of levels, which branch out as you progress. The gameplay, however, is a shambolic travesty of modern entertainment. There's not a sign of originality or challenge anywhere in sight. Don't bother with it.

Neil West

Soar through the tunnel and remember, just for a moment won't you, how good *Space Harrier* looked in comparison to this load of crap

GET A GRIP!

Like in an aircraft, up is down, down is up, while left and right do just what you'd expect

A Fires gun

B Shoots gun

C Alright then, all the buttons do the same thing really

PUBLISHER: Taito (IMPORT)

PRICE: £50 (CHECK WITH CONTACT)

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: Mega CD

CONTACT: Gamesville 0293 541 953

One sad, lonely player

There's no skill required in this game actually

You've got three lives and three continues

No battery back-up and no password system

There are oodles of levels

GRAPHICS 4

SOUND 7

GAMEPLAY 3

GAME SIZE 7

ADDICTION 1

"Avoid this at all costs and don't say we didn't warn you – because we did, so there"

23 PERCENT

SUPERMAN

PUBLISHER: Virgin

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: Virgin 081 960 2255

Your friends are safe – it's one player only

There are three skill levels, which make the baddies harder to kill

One measly life, with an energy bar, and two continues

There's a severe deficiency in the password division

Five levels, encompassing platform and flying bits

GRAPHICS 4

SOUND 3

GAMEPLAY 5

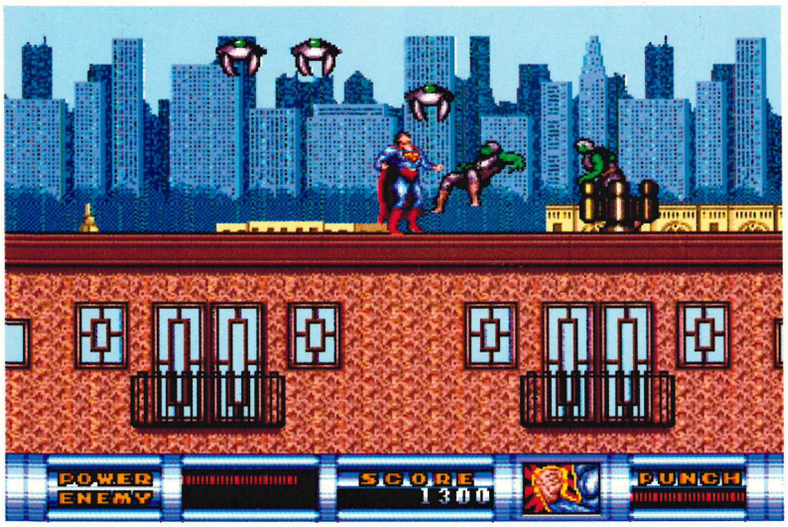
GAME SIZE 4

ADDICTION 3

"Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it's a steaming pile of old nob"

39 PERCENT

Neil West may look a sorry sight wearing his underpants over his tights, but so does Superman in the latest comic licence release



Hit the baddies, Superman, that's all we ask of you. (No, really – that's all)

It's hard to think of a more limp way to kick off a *Superman* game than with a gutless rendition of something vaguely resembling the Superman theme tune with all the notes swapped round. It would seem that the licence to the movie soundtrack didn't come as part of the deal, so this is what we get instead.

SORRY-LOOKING SPRITE

And throughout the game, evidence that we're in the company of the legendary Krypton ex-pat is in scant supply. Sure, if you squint really hard at the little sprite on the screen, it looks a bit like him – blue shirt and tights, red cloak and famously misplaced underpants. But, while he'll cheerfully dispatch baddies with one sweep of his mighty fist, he's only got to brush against one of them and he loses a huge chunk of energy. What a nonce. What's more, he can only fly when the game dictates that he's in a "flying section". The rest of the time he's got to walk, like everyone else. And to think he's supposed to be rescuing Lois Lane from the clutches of the evil Brainiac. Tsk.

SUPER POWERS

Being a superhero, Superman's got super powers – three of them.

A super punch

A super spin

And super laser eyes

So then, there's nothing much doing on the superhero front. But in a way it doesn't matter too much, as the task ahead could be as easily accomplished by a Man of Play Doh as the Man of Steel. The first level is probably the worst in the whole game – it's just a lot of running along rows of buildings hitting crummy robots – but it's far from atypical. All the way through the game you get the feeling you're being fobbed off with the absolute bare minimum. Scrappy, unvarying, anonymous baddies float around empty, two-dimensional landscapes attacking you in exactly the same way over and over again. It's all very, very dull indeed.

As if having the place crawling with baddies wasn't trouble enough...

While playing *Superman*, you're sure never to find yourself saying things like, "Cor! That was neat!" or "Cripes! I wasn't expecting that!" or "I wonder what would happen if I...". It's much more likely that you'll whimper, "Why the Dickens, despite reading MEGA's unusually sober and joke-free yet accurate-as-ever review, did I actually go out and buy this load of old rot?".

Scabby baddies float around dull scenery

END OF A SUPERHERO

But that shouldn't happen, of course, no, not if you've heeded this warning. Reports of Superman's death have by no means been exaggerated either, and here, sadly, is all the proof you could require.

Ⓜ *Neil West*

GET A GRIP!

Superman moves about the place

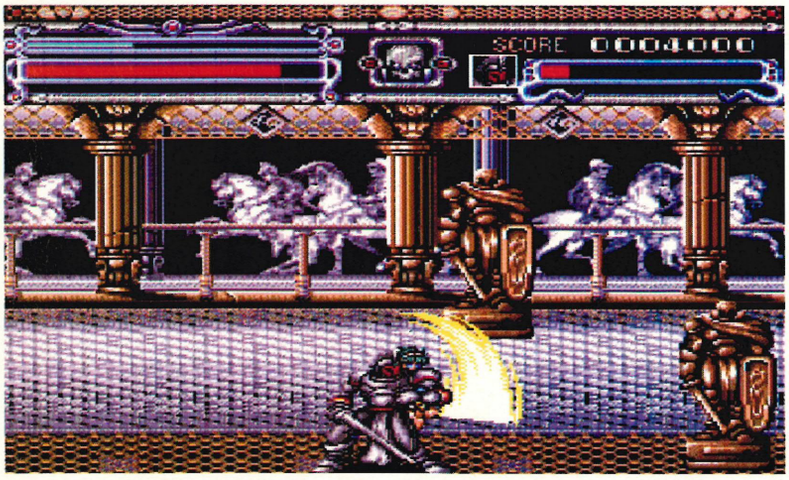
A – This button executes a special extra-hard punch

B – Normal punch, and a "spin" in combination with A

C – Makes Superman jump

Superman's flying in this bit – sort of, well, not really at all, actually

Superman attempts to lure the baddies towards the terrified kids



Swish! Swoosh! Ka-Blooey! An impressive swashbuckler is our Annette

GET A GRIP!

- Moves you around the screen
- A — Your everyday attack button takes out the enemies
- B — Try this little button if you fancy doing a few jumps to get you out of trouble
- C — Your magic button gets you out of trouble very easily

PUBLISHER: Wolfteam

PRICE: £59.99 (Yes, really)

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: Mega CD

CONTACT: Video Game Centre 0202 527314

Just the one player

There are Easy, Normal and Hard levels of skill

Just the one life. When your power bar runs out, you're dead

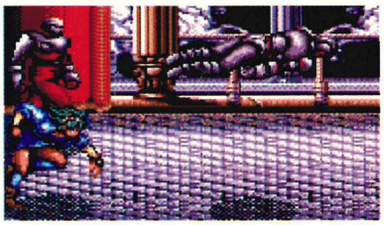
No battery back-up or password system

Now how can I tell you this when I don't know? Yes, exactly

GRAPHICS	5
SOUND	8
GAMEPLAY	3
GAME SIZE	5
ADDICTION	2

Although this is Annette's first CD game, she's been around before. Yeah, she's Earnest Evans' bird you see. Confused? Paul Mellerick is...

ANNETTE AGAIN



She shoots, she stumbles, and all in only two frames of animation

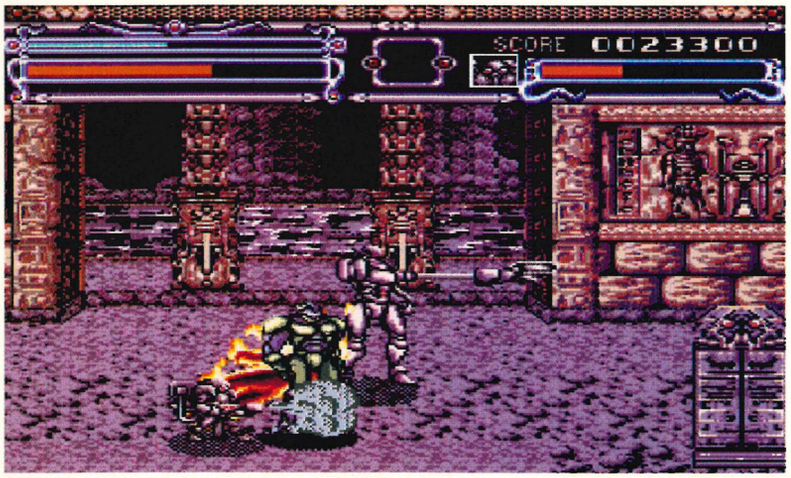
The Japanese really love their game characters. But if there's one thing they love more, it's a sequel. So if you can produce a series of games starring the same characters and things, you've got a big seller on your hands.

Take this Annette person. She stars in her own game, *El Viento*, and then appears as a guest in *Earnest Evans* (these guys are what you'd call an item). And now she's appearing in her own CD game with a guest appearance by, yep you've guessed it, Earnest Evans. Still, this sort of character play makes those lovely Manga-type intros at the start of all Jap Mega CD games a little bit more interesting.

PILE OF OLD TOSH

But what about the game? Well, actually, can we go back to talking about Annette getting off with Ernie because it's a helluva lot more interesting than this pile of old tosh? We can't really tell what's going on plot wise, because the intro is in Japanese. You will, however, grasp enough to figure out that you're the good girl, that there are loads of people out to get you, and that you're in big trouble. And believe me, you don't really want to know anymore.

So what marvellous steps in gaming has this latest CD brought us? Amazingly fast scaling and rotation? Huge bosses? Loads of frames of animation? Huge levels? Nope, none of these. The latest offering from CD "experts" Wolfteam is a beat-'em-up, and a bad one at that.



Well, there's a lot going on here. Annette's bum is on fire, and as soon as she gets up she's got a few blokes to deal with

GOLDEN AXE MINUS THE GOOD BITS

Imagine a game like *Golden Axe*. Now take out all the graphics, all the gameplay and anything else remotely good and then call it *Annette Again*. That may sound a bit harsh, but for a 1993 CD game, this really is very poor indeed. The graphics are very bland, in both the character and the background departments, and the animation is just, er, missing. The whole thing also looks very immature. In fact, it looks as if the Japanese government has just started a YTS scheme and that Wolfteam were one of the companies which had to take somebody on and then publish that person's game. There's no thrill in the gameplay; it's just another simple hack and slash-type game with a magic feature thrown in to add some special effects.

In fact, there are no redeeming features about this game at all and this review is getting very tedious, so I'll stop.

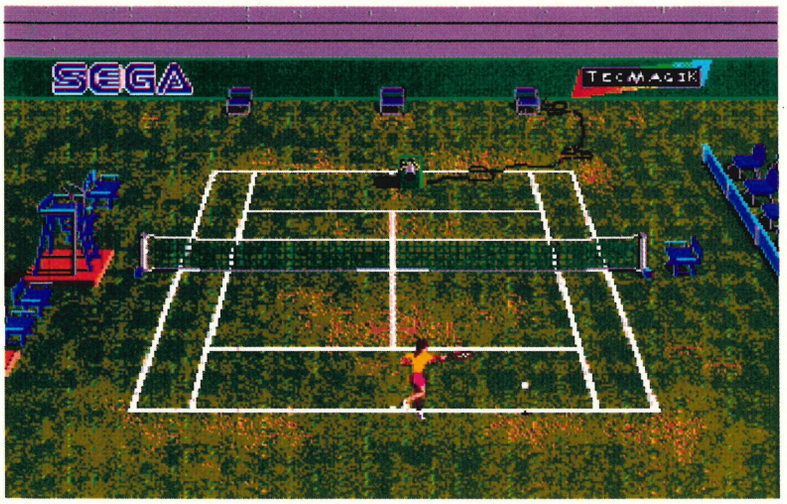
Paul Mellerick

"Play this for a few minutes and you'll think 'this is going to get better, surely'. Sadly, it doesn't"

33 PERCENT

ANDRE AGASSI TENNIS

Jumping Jack Flash, it's Agas(si). We apologise on behalf of Paul Mellerick for that pathetic attempt at a pun, and hope that you will still cast your eyes over this review



See this, this is the training mode. And it's no help at all really

God I'm fed up with tennis games. All of a sudden it seems as if every software company in the universe is either planning, programming, or promoting one. Now this wouldn't be a bad thing if any of the games were any good, but because they all fit into a very large "er, good but not that good" category, it is. This brings us rather nicely round to *André Agassi Tennis*.

BREAKING THE MOULD

In the strange world that is console journalism, we're all getting very excited about Wimbledon (Andy has already ordered 3,000 tonnes of strawberries and 100 gallons of fresh cream), but by the time you read this review, the whole event will be over and long forgotten. The 1992 champion may have retained his title, or he may not. One thing is certain, however, André Agassi will still have his name etched in Mega Drive history.

And just like the man in question, this game offers just that little bit extra. Most tennis games are very similar in their gameplay: you hit the ball, wait for it to come back, run to the right spot, stop, select your shot and then hit the ball (hopefully). Now while this can be quite good fun, it just isn't crick... sorry, tennis. However, this is where *André Agassi* breaks the mould. By using a very intelligent shot selection system, the game automatically selects which shot makes the best sense and plays it. You still have to run to the ball and press a button corresponding to a soft, hard or lob shot (buttons A, B and C respectively) but this gives you a greater range of delicate or killer shots.

DON'T BELIEVE THE HYPE

Sounds good on paper doesn't it? Well, *I* was impressed anyway. At least I was until I put down the press release and decided to actually *play* the game. *André Agassi Tennis* is a very nicely put together, OK-looking and reasonably-sounding game. But tennis games really rely on their playability more than anything else, and *André Agassi* really does fail to deliver in this area. Playing and controlling the game is initially very tough; knowing where to place your player and when to hit the ball is quite awkward. This does lessen with practice, but instead of getting more out of the game, you just discover more problems.

Although getting the ball back over the net isn't hard (after a while), placing the ball with any great degree of accuracy is. Adding direction to your shots using the D-pad is very severe, and nine times out of ten you'll find your shot shooting past the "in" line. The automatic shot selection though is possibly the most awkward aspect of the game. Timing, running, the speed of the ball, the speed of you (and maybe even the time in New York, when it's 12 o'clock in London?) are all taken into account, but it never seems to come up with the killer shot you were hoping for.

This is quite a valiant attempt at something different in the tennis genre, but it offers nothing much of interest and shows that you can't make a game just on the strength of a character (who said *Sonic*?).

Ⓜ ***Paul Mellerick***

You don't have to play as Agassi all the time, but have a look at those stats – he's a bit good isn't he?

Talk about action: the muddy (clay) court, the frantic doubles action and it's a skins game too

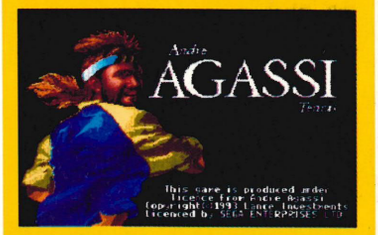
GET A GRIP!

Er, moves you around the court

A If you fancy a softer type of shot, then press this when you're near the ball

B But if power is your game, then this is the button for you

C Or draw your opponent into the net and then lob him. Hee, hee



PUBLISHER: Tecmagik

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 4 Mbit

CONTACT: Tecmagik 071 243 2878

You can play on your own, or with (and against) a matey

No, there are no skill levels

No lives, this is a tennis game after all

No, no, no. There is no battery back-up or password system

Four different types of court *and* there's a tournament to enter

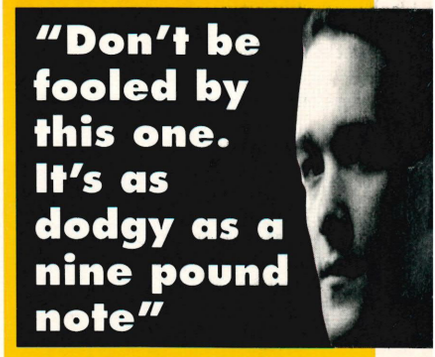
GRAPHICS 7

SOUND 6

GAMEPLAY 4

GAME SIZE 5

ADDICTION 4



51 PERCENT

NBA ALL-STAR CHALLENGE

PUBLISHER: Flying Edge (IMPORT)

PRICE: £39.99 (CHECK WITH CONTACT)

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 4 Mbit

CONTACT: Gamesville 0293 541 953

"One-on-one" gives it away a bit, doesn't it?

There are loads of different opponents to take on

Basketball players don't die

No battery back-up and no password system

No stages as such, just keep getting those baskets

GRAPHICS 7

SOUND 6

GAMEPLAY 3

GAME SIZE 1

ADDICTION 1

"Does what it does well enough, but there's practically nothing there. A waste of money, even for two players"

19 PERCENT

Bulls Vs Blazers* proved that basketball makes a good sports sim. However, Neil West is horrified by the smelly poo that is *NBA

You'd better get used to looking at this screen pretty quickly, because it's practically all you get to see for the whole game

Do you really need me to give this a kicking for you? Isn't it immediately obvious from the basic premise that this couldn't be worth 40 quid in a million years? What do you mean, you don't know the basic premise? Sorry, I'm getting ahead of myself again.

What we've got in *NBA All-Star Challenge* is, obviously, a basketball game. But not the kind where you actually play basketball. What? No, what you actually get here is what I'd personally expect to be a sort of training mode sub-section of a proper basketball game, a little throwaway extra bit to provide extra variety and value (like, for example, the two-player game in *Sunset Riders*. It's good fun for a quick blast, but you wouldn't want to make an entire game out of it).

FIVE'S ALIVE?

You actually get five different variations of basketball in *NBA All-Star Challenge* (or "five blistering ways to play", as the box rather worryingly suggests) – there's one-on-one, which is you against a solitary opponent. The two of you simply try to score at the same basket until a time limit runs out or a certain score is reached, and you run out of things to do after around ninety seconds. Terrifyingly, this is the most involved sub-section in the game.

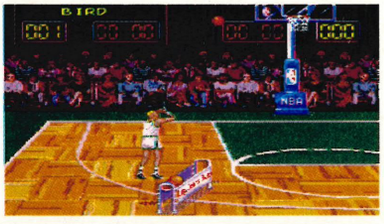
Your alternative entertainments are: "Free Throw Contest", which is, amazingly, a free-throw competition which plays not unlike most computer darts games (wibbly cursor which you have to force into position); "Three-Point Shootout", which is much the same except that you throw from further away and in varying positions against the clock; and "H.O.R.S.E.", which is a bizarre game involving you making a shot from anywhere you like, which your opponent then has to duplicate exactly or they're awarded a letter of the word HORSE. The first player to be completely dubbed as a hoofer loses. Making up the five different games is the All-Star Tournament, which is one-on-one but, er, in a tournament.

IS THAT IT?

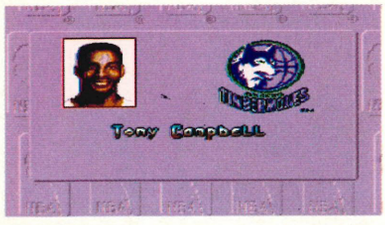
Right, so there's the plot. Sorry to spend so much time wibbling on about it, but I couldn't think of any more effective way of warning you exactly how little you're getting if you fork out hard-earned cash on this game. It's feeble, it really is – *NBA All-Star Challenge* might just about be worthwhile as a practice section in a proper basketball game, but as it stands, you play around with it for a few minutes and think "OK, I'm ready for the real thing now", and then find you've got nowhere left to go. It's all executed reasonably well, but that's also what should happen to the person who decided that this would make a full-price cart.

Ⓜ Neil West

This is the one-on-one option featuring Sekaly – what a loser eh?



Exciting slightly-further-away-from-the-basket action



What a dreamboat – everyone will want this beaut on their team

The Free Throw Contest. And what a stunningly exciting contest it is...

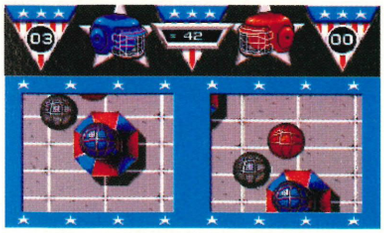
GET A GRIP!

Moves your player around the court

(A) This makes you jump and block an opponent's shot

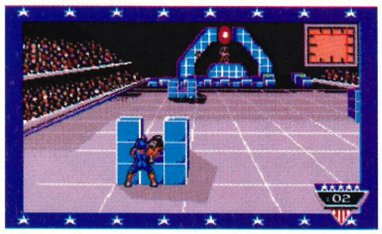
(B) This allows you to grab and steal the ball from your opponent

(C) Your shoot button. Used with button A you can slam dunk



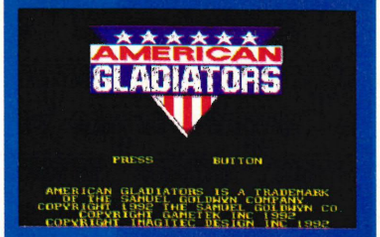
Tedious "roll, roll, roll, your ball, gently down the screen" action

My red-clad opponent wins while a pervert tries to remove my pants



Potentially fun, but in actual fact, it turns out to be rather dull

AMERICAN GLADIATORS



PUBLISHER: Gametek

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE: Out now

CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit

CONTACT: Gamesville 0293 541953

Up to eight different people can play in turn

It gets harder as you get further through the tournament

One life. If you lose a tournament round, you lose the game

No need for battery back-up, the game's far too small

Six different events (and all of them are cack)

GRAPHICS 7

SOUND 6

GAMEPLAY 3

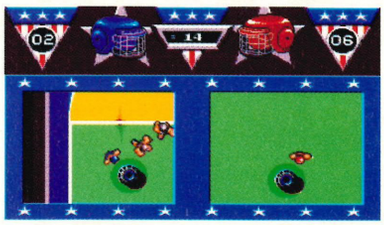
GAME SIZE 2

ADDICTION 3

Andy Dyer sprints into the changing room, slips on his lycra shorts, and then wishes he hadn't left them lying on the floor in the first place

It's remarkable isn't it, that one of America's most, well, *American* TV shows The Gladiators could ever find its way onto our screen? Well it did, via Sky TV. But more remarkable still is that soon after, a British-made version appeared. Instead of rock-hard American beefcakes convincingly snarling such classics phrases as, "You better believe it buddy, that son of a gun is going down", we'd have some tedious accountant from Rochdale squeaking, "Eeh, I'm reet tough me, 'appen he don't stand a chance". Anyway, British or American, the game is the same, so sad fans of either show may be interested in the Mega Drive version that's just come in on American import.

There are six events to take part in, and, of course, anyone who watched the TV shows will already know what they are. There's the Assault (hide behind obstacles and fire tennis balls at people), the Powerball (crap, get a ball and deposit it in a bucket without getting beaten up), the Atlasphere (highly annoying gerbil and ball simulator), the Joust (hit each other with padded sticks), the Wall (climb fast) and finally the Eliminator (simply an assault course). Oh, and sadly, unlike in the British version of the TV programme, you don't get the "Stare at Ulrika Johnson and get all lathered up" event.



Powerball is also rather mundane. And the sprite animation is dismal

TAPPING TEDIUM

In typical track and field style, the events are a series of button-tapping tests and reaction testers. A couple of the events, like the Wall and the Eliminator, are actually moderately good fun to play, but the rest, because of niggling control mechanisms, are annoying and ultimately dull. Another thing I found was that one game you could swan right through to the final, then for the next three games in a row you'd get completely blatted in the first round. This seems just a little too random to make you feel like you're actually achieving anything when you win. Instead you're left thinking, "why didn't I just watch the demo?"

FALLING SHORT

The graphics are big and bold and very reminiscent of the TV show (although some of the sprite animations are a bit dodgy to say the least). Had the programmers made some effort on the gameplay side this could have been a refreshingly different sports game. For a start, the Joust could have been quite an involved beat-'em-up section instead of the two-move shambles here. As it stands, this game simply gets filed under "Well, what a sodding waste of forty quid".

Ⓜ *Andy Dyer*

"Awkward, random, frustrating... crap. Even anyone who enjoyed the show will find it hard to summon any enthusiasm for this rubbish"

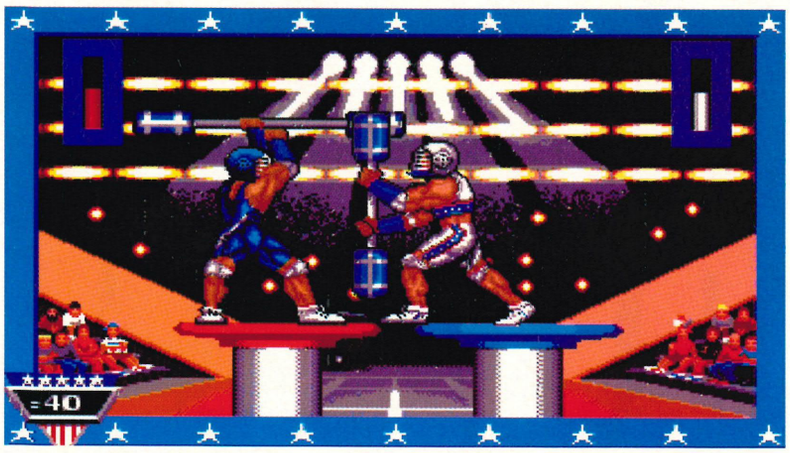
GET A GRIP!

Move, climb, target... does the lot

A — Makes you run in The Eliminator event

B — The action button for all events

C — Pick up/drop weapon in Assault, and run in The Eliminator



This could have been a great event, but with only a couple of moves available to you, it's actually very limited and very unsatisfying

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LANDMARK v2.00 PERFORMANCE COMPARISON CHART

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20 MHz	25 MHz	31 MHz	47 MHz	51 MHz	66 MHz	54 MHz	67 MHz	84 MHz	92 MHz

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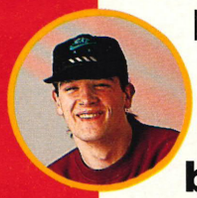
MEGA PLAY



It's another month and we've got yet more pages of amazing tips and cheats for you to get your teeth into. Paul has worked really hard to bring you the best tips around, so the least you can do is take a look

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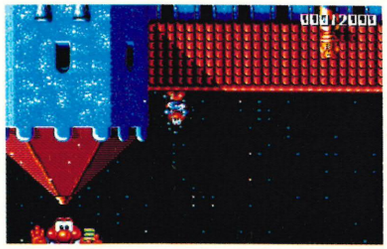
James Pond 2: Robocod

Now before you start thinking you've seen all the tips for this game, let me tell you that this one is a newie. Well, sort of. You know the CHEAT cheat? Well, you need to use that one to get this one to work. Oh, look, I'll start from the beginning.

Start the game as normal and walk left. Before you enter any of the doors, you'll see a roof. On top of this roof are five items. Collect the items in this order: Cake, Hammer, Earth, Apple, Tap. This spells the word CHEAT, and you become invincible. But to make things harder, and this is the new bit, pause the game and press A, B, B, A (Money, money, money – Neil). The screen will now flip upside down and make the game a lot more fun to play. You have to do this on every screen, but it does make the entire proceedings a lot more interesting.

Stuart Bilington, Pontypridd, Mid Glamorgan

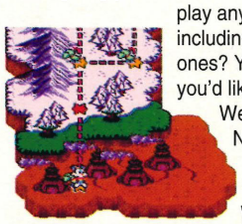
Right, so that's the CHEAT cheat (if you know what I mean) activated



Now try playing the game upside down, it's very awkward

Tiny Toons

Did you know that when you finish a level, if your pal (Gogo) is still jumping up and down on that level, then there's another, secret, way out? And even though we printed all 24 level codes last month, there are eight hidden levels to complete as well. So, how about giving you a code that allows you to play any level you like, including the secret ones? Yep, I thought you'd like that one. Well here it is...



NGQQ WWQW
QKWQ
QWWQ
WGRY

Starflight

For loads of money and unlimited fuel (which will always come in handy in this type of game) go to a Starport, and pause the game. Press A, B, B, A, C, Up, Down and C. Now just run around the place and you don't have to worry about running out fuel. Useful heh?

"I canne give ya any more Cap'n, she's gonna blow," as a certain Scot called Scotty might say

POPULOUS

OK, so the cheat might be alright, but this is still one boring and very overrated game. Zzzzzz

For six extra continues press C, A, B, A, C and A on the chapter one screen. Oh, and for all those really good *Populous* players, you might like to know that by finishing the Advanced level, an extra special, really tough (honest) Expert level appears. Try that one for size if you're hard enough.

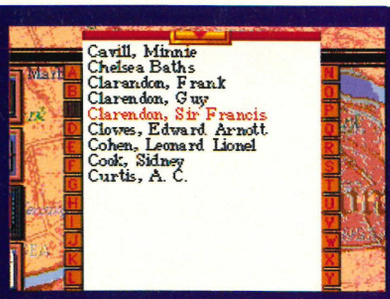
Sherlock Holmes CD

Last month we gave you the complete solution for The Mummy's Curse. And this month we've got the other two cases cracked for you. Firstly...

THE CASE OF THE MYSTIFIED MURDERESS

Talk to all the following people and then go to court and answer:
Coretta Nolan, C, B, Guy Clarendon, B

① Before you start your adventure, take a trip to see Edward Hall



② Next up on the list is Sir Francis Clarendon. And a right snooty he is too, so don't take any stick

MEGA MEDIC

FISHING FOR ADVICE

Q I enjoyed both your reviews of *King Salmon* and, trusting your judgement, waited for the English (well American) version to come out. Trouble is, I can't catch any bloody King Salmon. I've read the manual, but I'm a bit of a fishing dimbo and I'm getting lost in all the jargon. Can you please give me some plain English advice?
Tony Porter, Southampton

A Yeah, the manual is a bit on the techie side. Still, you'll need to understand a bit of the jargon to get on in the game. Trolling is basically a technique whereby you hang the bait behind your boat as you go. Now, the length of your line, the bait you're using and the depth at which you're using it all determine whether you catch any of those elusive King Salmon. Just keep varying the combinations and see which one works in the different water depths and weather settings. Keep at it, I'm sure you'll get there eventually.

Alien Storm

This tip is a bit of an oldie. It must have slipped through the MEGA tips net before, but we've caught it now so we're gonna tell you about it.

Select the Arcade Game and choose Scooter as your character. Die, but before you hit the floor press the Special Weapon button. There, you shouldn't die now, and you'll be invincible to boot.
J Brant, Watford

Blurgh! A snotty little game this one, and I mean that literally

WARPSPEED

Here you are about to embark on your last campaign. Good Luck!

Those lovely little missions are just a warm up for the campaign. For those among us who aren't any good though, here are the passwords for each section and also a complete list of those awkward black holes and where they lead you. For this tip ***Derrick Woodridge*** from Tadley in Hants has won MEGA PLAY's mystery prize.

CAMPAIGN CODES
1. W4D HLX VDX
2. W6N CWK LXM
3. W67 G5R 4DQ

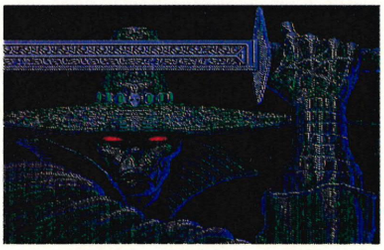
BLACK HOLE DESTINATIONS

Quadrant	Grid Ref	Destination
Alpha	1B	Beta (Base)
Beta	7D	Alpha
	3H	Theta
Gamma	5C	Alpha
	5D	Delta
	7B	Theta
Theta	5C	Alpha (Base)
	4B	Beta
Delta	3C	Alpha (Base)
	6G	Beta
	2F	Omega
Omega	4B	Delta
	5C	Alpha
	4D	Epsilon
	3E	Beta
Epsilon	2C	Alpha (Base)

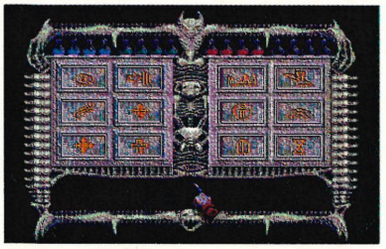
CHAKAN: THE FOREVER MAN

Ooh, there's no end of tips for this little game. Right, so you've used the cheat from issue ten of MEGA to get past the first 12 levels, but what now? Well, blindly stepping into the next 12 levels would be silly, so arm yourself with these valuable tips on which colour potion bottles make up which spells.

One blue, one green: Slow down enemies
One green, one red: Fire bombs
Two clears: Restore energy
One blue, one clear: Super jumping boots
One blue, one red: Earth Sword
Two blue: Chakan becomes invisible
One red, one clear: Cold fire sword
Two reds: Fire sword
Two green: Air sword
One red, one clear: Acts as a restart point



And tonight on this is your life... it's Chakan the Forever Man



And here are all the potions for you to practice with

SONIC 2

See, three lovely BARs and now 20 extra rings are all yours

You see, you spend all your time messing about with the options screen trying to get things like level selects and level construction cheats, and you miss a really good cheat which is already hidden (and easily accessible) in the game.

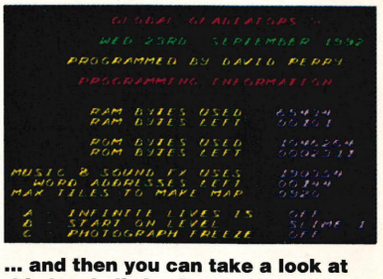
On the Casino Night level, you all like playing the little Sonic fruit machine. Just like real life, it's a bit of a gamble, but if it pays off, you're laughing. Well, if you fancy tilting the odds in your favour, try this...

When you set the machine spinning, wait until the first reel stops and press button C as fast as possible. If you've timed it right (it does take a bit of practice), the game will drop in the same symbol in the other two reels, giving you three of the same. Don't do this for the Robotnik symbol though, or you'll pay the price.
Craig Gray, Stockwood, Bristol

Global Gladiators

This is a difficult one to get to work. Switch the game on, and as soon as the Sega logo appears, press C, B, A and Start in a rhythm four (yes, four) times before it fades away. Do it right and you'll be treated to a programmer's crack screen, where you can choose your starting level, whether you want infinite lives or not, and turn the photo freeze on or off. And no, I don't know what Photo Freeze is either.

Right, do the cheat here...



... and then you can take a look at this lovely little cheat screen

The Immortal

To become invincible, wait until the level name appears and then hold A until the game appears. The game will now be paused. Release A and you will now be invincible. Quite incredible.

Splatterhouse 3

To enter stage X, which is a sort of bonus room, defeat the boss on levels one or two with more than three minutes left on the timer.

③ Your next port of call is S Goff. Nice chap, but wouldn't invite him round my house, if you catch my drift

④ What kind of a name is Porky Shinnell? It's almost as bad as Andy Charles Dyer

⑤ And after all that work you can go and have a rest in Halliday's Private Hotel

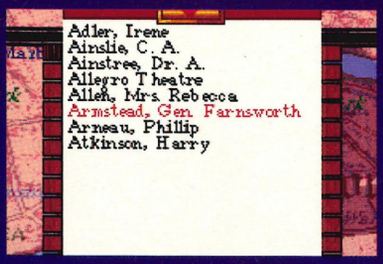
⑥ After all your intense investigation, your last visit is to Dr Percy Travelyn

Sherlock Holmes CD

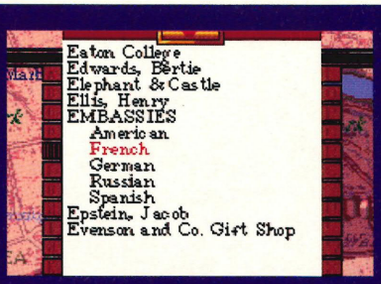
Right, last month we showed you how to do The Mummy's Curse and now you've done The Mystified Murderess, so let's finish the game.

THE CASE OF THE TIN SOLDIER

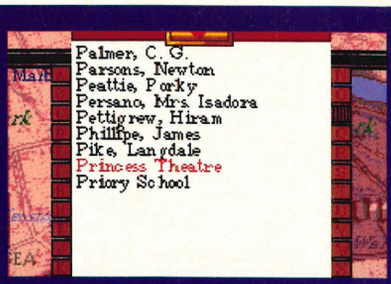
Again, follow the screenshots to take you through the game and then when you get to court, give the answers under the piccy of the judge.



① First up this time around is General Farnsworth Armstead. But what kind of a name is that?



② Oo-la-laa! It's off to the lovely French Embassy for a little bit of a chat



③ Make sure you polish your shoes and straighten your tie to visit royalty like Princess Theatre

FATAL FURY

The tips just keep on coming in for this game. Still, if you're bored of playing with the same characters, why not try playing as the big hard boss, Geese Howard (stupid name, but I'm not about to tell him so)? On the game-selection screen (one player vs two player, one player vs computer etc.) press and hold Left. Select your mode and you can now play as Geese. And to make things a little easier against the computer, press and hold button C when selecting one player vs computer and you will be able to select your opponent.

Tom Bacon, Forestdale, Croydon

Geese is very hard, very quick and very easy to win with

Look at that jump. If that connects, it's going to hurt quite a bit

SOL-FEACE

Press A, B, C, A, B, C, B, C, B and A on the title screen to access the level-select cheat. Move down to mode and press Right until it changes to MY99. Now hold the Down button and press Right until the word MUTEKI appears in its place. Now, while still holding down button A, exit the options menu and continue the game. You'll now be invincible.

Ed "Pinky" Lomas, Rochester, Kent

Did you know that "MUTEKI" means invincible in Japanese? Probably

MEGA MEDIC

GROUNDING GEESE

Q OK, OK, I know you guys don't think much of *Fatal Fury*, but it's a good one-on-one beat-'em-up and I'm having just a few problems beating Geese Howard on the Hard level. I like playing as Terry Bogard (who bears more than a passing resemblance to Paul Mellerick) and I want to know if you've got any tips for him on how to beat Geese. I would really appreciate your help and I'm sure you can help me beat him.

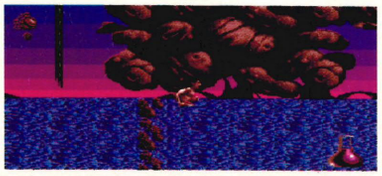
Geoff Turner, Burton on Trent

A Well, it's true that we don't think the game is as good as it could have been, but we'll still help you out, because we're nice like that. Terry Bogard's special moves are quite effective, but only a couple of them are really worth practising. The Burn Knuckle is a quick offensive move, so get a couple of them as soon as the match gets underway. Now go on the defensive and get Geese to jump towards you, by standing a fair distance from him. If you can time your Power Wave to perfection, Geese will stupidly jump towards you and land on your Power Wave, taking quite a bit of power off him. Now if you're feeling really lucky, jump towards him while he's down and then give him a quick throw when he gets up. You don't have to do this, but it looks flash and makes you feel better.

Shadow of the Beast 2

Here's a little warp that will get you past the first level boss and therefore get you well into the game.

Jump down the waterfall and fight the Blue Water Demon. Fall off the rocks deliberately and let the water carry you off. When you see the rope that says GRAB, jump on it and press Right to clear the rocks. Let the water carry you off again and you will finish up past the boss in the latter part of the first stage. There, a sort of a kick-start cheat that one.



Just swim through here and a take a short cut through the level

Bonanza Bros.

This is a bit of an odd one. Enter the first house and collect the blue triangle thingy hidden upstairs. Now watch as the early levels fly by.

MEGA MEDIC

CRAP AT BART

Q I am in great need of your infinite wisdom. After recently purchasing a copy of *Bart Vs The Space Mutants* I was pleased to find a couple of great tips in your May issue. However, I'm still having a couple of problems finishing level one. I know I must be crap, but I'm a nice person so will you help?

My problems are:

1. The purple "Mutants" sign by the Cinema
2. The "Bowlerama" sign
3. The two birds – a) On the statue of Jebediah Springfield, and b) In the window of the pet shop.

Can you also tell me what the small ball outside "Candy Most Dandy" is for? Please help me out and I'll be eternally grateful, and will buy MEGA until I die.

Amanda Burton, Birmingham

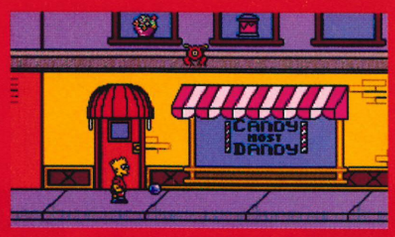
A Not a very logical person are you? Most of the problems on the first level just need a bit of lateral thinking. Still, I'm here to help so let's get on with it.

To get to the "Mutants" sign by the cinema, stand on the right-hand side of the sign and face left, being careful not to touch the squidgy thing. Now jump up and spray the sign.

The "Bowlerama" sign is again quite simple. Make sure you've got some rockets from the toy shop and set one off to go towards the sign, lighting it up and turning it red. Use the same technique again to get the bird on top of Jebediah Springfield's head. To get the second bird, stand on the corner of the shop window, face the bird and throw a cherry bomb, which will land on the floor and send the bird flying off.

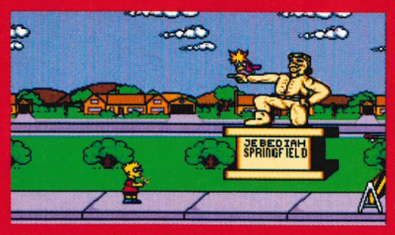
And finally, the ball. Touch the ball and it will move. Now walk in front of it and when it reaches you, jump up and you will send it flying into the air. It's there so that you can hit the paint pot and turn the canopy red.

Hey Bart, spray those purple things



Get the ball rolling...

Cherry bombs and birds don't mix



Those rockets come in very handy

④ And to put the icing on the case, let's just pop over to the Grand Hotel

⑤ Listen to the judge and then answer the following: Phillip Arneau, B, C and C

X-Men

Some games are easy to tip and some aren't. This one hasn't been around for long but we've already had a level select (last issue). Now we've got a very useful power-up cheat. It's a bit on the lengthy side, but stick with me...

Insert the cartridge, and hold down A, C and Down on pad one. Now turn on the cart with these buttons still held down. If you've got any fingers left, press and hold Start until Magneto's face appears. Now unplug pad one and put it into port two. Then press Start. Select your difficulty level and begin the game as normal. Now, at any time during the game, pause (by pressing Start) and unpause. Your power bar will now go back to maximum. You can do this infinitely, making progress a lot easier.

Jason R McGrugan, Bangor, N Ireland

Might and Magic

On the main menu, select "View Characters". When selected, the words "View Which" will appear. Simultaneously press and release Down-Left, A and C. Now your characters will appear. Move through them until you come across a list of complete strangers. Trade anything they have of value with your own characters, and this will make your quest an awful lot easier.

Paul Randell, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne

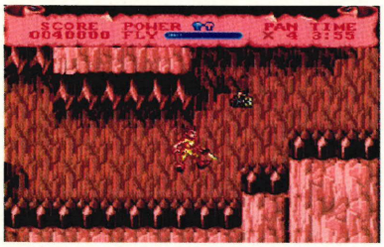
... and tip the paint pot over

"You are the light of my life"

HOOK

The first few levels of this little CD adventure are quite easy, but the later ones are a real pain. Well then, 99 lives would probably come in very handy wouldn't they? Right, follow this process then and they're all yours.

On the very first level, carry on until you receive the power of fight from the fairy and fly across the gap. Now instead of going up top to carry on with the level, fly through the cave, and collect the 3-Up. You're power will run out and you'll die. Repeat this, yes I know it's boring but stick with it, until you have enough or 99 (the maximum) lives.



A very tedious and repetitive cheat, but you can't knock 99 lives can you? What do you mean "yes"?

Bart Vs The Space Mutants

People have been having problems with this little puzzler for ages. If you can manage to get to level five, you'll find the floor codes very handy. So here they are.

Floor one – 14
Floor two – 32
Floor three – 11
Floor four – 41
Floor five – 21

SWORD OF VERMILLION

This lovely little mix of arcade action with role-playing game elements has a nice little options screen hidden away in it.

To access said options screen, plug the controller into port two and press A, B, C and Start together. There we are, it's as simple as ABC.

MEGA MEDIC

BAFFLED AT *BATTLETOADS*

Q After checking out *Battletoads* and playing it for several days, I still can't get past level three. It's that really awkward bit where you're on the hover bike whatsit and you have to time your jump to get over the obstacles. I don't keep dying in the same place, but my real problem is the long jumps you have to make. Any tips? Or better still a level select?

David Baxter, Derby

A Er nope sorry, no level select or anything like that, but I can sympathise with your problem. This level is a real pain because you have to be really careful about how much you put into each jump. The best technique for this section is to run at the ramps and then jump. Keep pressing right but don't take your ship too far to the edge of the screen, because if you do, you'll be too far over when the next platform comes into view. It's not impossible, and there are only a few jumps to get past, so keep at it.

Keep the hover bike in the air as long as possible...

... when you catch sight of land, bring the bike down quickly

PGA Tour Golf 2

Select a skins match and choose the computer as your opponent. When he is on the green, press Start and select Green from the options screen and then press A. Now move the cursor in any direction (but away from the hole) and press Start. He will now take the shot which *you've* set up instead of perfroming one of his own.

Taking on the computer and winning when you use this cheat is so much easier, and very funny too

ACTION REPLAY CODES

Chakan: The Forever Man:
FFC14 20001/FFC14 30002 – Allows you to play as Chakan's legs
T Riley, Liverpool

Fatal Fury:
FFD81 60058 – Infinite energy
FF00B F0049 – Infinite time
Tom Bacon, Forestdale, Croydon

PGA Tour Golf 2:
FF484 1000X – X = Number of strokes played
The Hackers who say "Ni", Camberley, Surrey

Super Monaco GP 2:
FFFC2 B00FF – Go 496 Km/h
FFFC0 B0000 – Only one lap in a race
The Hackers who say "Ni", Camberley, Surrey

Smash TV:
FFA37 B0007 – Infinite lives
FFA30 20005 – Shield
FFA30 90010 – Keep your weapon

Batman:
FFFE3 40009 – Unlimited batarangs
FFFE3 80001 – Unlimited guided batarangs

GAME GENIE CODES

Sonic 2:
9GZT CACJ – Need 250 rings to become Super Sonic (ie, almost impossible)
ALTA CA8J – Sonic is invisible and invincible at the start of the game
Gordon Wallace, Buttane

Alien 3:
SDXA D9XN – Ripley blows up when she jumps
SDXA D9XX – Ripley falls on her face when she jumps
AJAW AA75 – Game runs in slow motion
Glen Darroch, Portland, Dorset

Taz-Mania:
1AKA BJFA – Loads of invisible things
AK1T AAAA – Platforms have a smeared effect
Glen Darroch, Portland, Dorset

Flintstones:
ETBT AA4Y – Start with no lives
TN8T AA6N – Text moves faster

Road Rash 2:
AJST AAF8 – Start on level two
ANST AAFB – Start on level three
AYST AAFB – Start on level five
A2ST AAFB – Start on last race
A44T AA5T – No bends in the road
AC4T AA5T – Road always bends to left
BD3T AA8C – Invincibility

If you've got any Action Replay or Game Genie codes you'd like to share with MEGA, or if you've got any tips, cheats or gaming problems, write to MEGA PLAY, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

ARENA

So what exactly have we got for you this month? Well, suffice it to say that what you are about to read could change your life, well, the part of your life that's spent playing video games at any rate...

These pages are as unpredictable as the British weather. In last month's ARENA there was something of a drought, but this month we've got a total downpour. Still, we're not complaining of course; the more contributions we get from our beloved readers the better. So, before we get on with the challenges, we'll just remind you to check out the other fantastic corners of this page. See if you've won a cart for your Crazy Game Genie Codes or check out the Weird Happenings and bring life to that old and worn-out game you've haven't played for ages.

WACKY CHALLENGES

And without further ado, it's on with those crazy challenges...

1 ALIEN 3

We did an *Alien 3* challenge way back in issue three, but this new challenge is very hard and has been sent in on video to prove it *can* be done. Go to the options screen and set the game on Hard level, with one try. Now you've got to get through the first three levels WITHOUT getting hit. That's right, no hits at all. It can be done, we've seen the evidence.

Nicholas Chevin, Horninglow, Burton-on-Trent

Splonge! That was a close call. One hit and it's all over

2 SPIDER-MAN VS THE KINGPIN

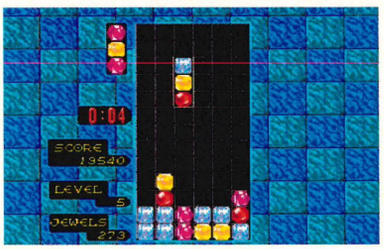
Using the in-game clock and setting the game on normal level (there's nothing easy in this life) get to and defeat Doctor Octopus before the timer reaches 24:49. You probably don't need telling that killing everybody on the way to the Doc isn't necessary, it'll only take up time.

Alex Beck, somewhere in the UK

Excuse me Mr Forklift person, can you tell me where Dr Octopus is?

3 COLUMNS

OK, puzzle fans, let's go for the biggie. You know *Columns* right, well put the game into time mode and you've got three minutes to get rid of 300 jewels. Not easy is it? Still, if you do that, try going for the record, which is 340.



Oooh, now if you put the red one there and then flip that one...

4 WORLD CUP ITALIA '90

It's a crap game, so let's have a crap challenge. Select any team you like and try losing to Japan by more than 20 goals. Believe us when we say it's not as easy as you'd think – you might even have to help them out with a few back passes.

You're 12-0 down with 28 minutes left. Can you do the challenge?

5 WORLD OF ILLUSION

This game's a bit on the easy side isn't it? Well let's try making it a touch harder. Why not forget about killing anything that's not a boss? Yep, that's right, try to get through the whole game without shooting anything else but the end-of-level guardians.

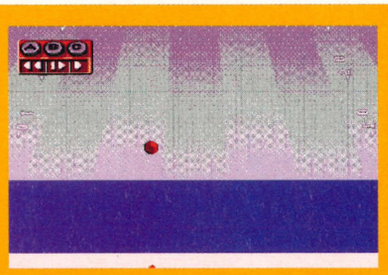
We're all for silly challenges that make easy games harder

WEIRD AND WONDERFUL HAPPENINGS

After last month's departure into the world of Sega logos at the start of game, we're back with some very strange happenings that'll make you dig out that old game and go "ooh, I'm really glad I saw that little thing in MEGA; it's brought a whole new life to my tired old cartridge". Before we get to such happenings though, we must thank ***Mark Harrison,*** who lives somewhere on the planet Earth (forgot your address didn't you Mark?) and ***Duncan Craig*** from Hounslow in Middlesex for their lovely little happenings. And don't forget that we'd be more than interested in any weird and strange things that *you've* found happening in your favourite Mega Drive game. You never know, you might even get a mention.

1 EURO CLUB SOCCER

This one is a bit tricky to get right, but it's a goody nonetheless. Substitute one of your players when he is in line with the bench, but make sure you can see the number on his shirt. As soon as the sub comes on, replay the substitution and take a look at the number of the player coming off – it's the subs number. Stupid? Yes. Weird? Certainly.



2 JOHN MADDEN AMERICAN FOOTBALL '92

Here's one very strange American football happening. Score a touchdown and then convert the kick. As soon as you have converted the kick, go to the instant replay option and scroll down the pitch to the other posts. Press C and you should be able to see the ball going through the posts.

3 SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

OK, so this is an old one, but it's still a Weird Happening and some people might not know about it yet. Turn the game on, and then just sit back and watch the demo. Now press A, C and Up and watch Sonic do all sorts of strange things which will prevent him from progressing through the level. It's certainly very strange, and it's quite funny too.

GAME GENIE CRAZY CODES

Take a Game Genie, add several Crazy Codes, mix them all together and get some really funny effects on your favourite games. That's what we line up for you every month, and this month is no exception. But we still want more. Get cracking on those codes and send them in. There are loads of games out there, so you've no excuses. In the meantime, let's see if this month's codes can inspire you.

After Burner 2
YTNA AABW – ATOT AA4T – BJ6A AA26
Enter the code, change the trigger controls (you *do* need to do this) and start the game. This will allow you to change the colour of the game, have infinite rockets and not lose planes when you die.
Edward Cheung, Stockport, Cheshire

ToeJam & Earl
GXAA CA4T – Tomatoes stay in mid-air until someone hits them
LV8A DT2Y – Disappear in the lift
TD2A AWAJ 6D2A ACAN – Move as fast as jet skates
Chris Martin, Eye, Peterborough

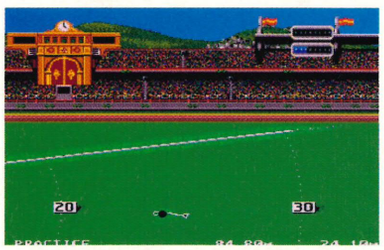
Even Andy Dyer can finish the game with loads of ammo and armour

Desert Strike
7E1A AADC – 233 lives, 7VET ABGT – 4076 armour, 6PST W6GJ – 3811 hellfire, 8BST X7EN – 40688 chain gun
Richard Smith, Doncaster

And the prize for this month's craziest Game Genie code goes to ***Chris Martin*** from Peterborough. Get in touch with us Chris to tell us which cart you'd like, and we'll make sure you get it pronto.

6 OLYMPIC GOLD

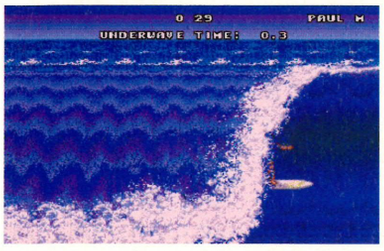
So just how good at the hammer throw are you? 80 metres? 90? Well, let's reverse that shall we? See how far you *can't* throw the hammer. You've still got to spin and release the ball, but what is the shortest distance you can get? We can go as low as 19.40 metres.
Rosemary Rance, Boxmoor, Hemel Hempstead



Well, that was crap, but it wasn't crap enough. Try again

7 CALIFORNIA GAMES

OK you rad, hip dudes you. Select the quite fabbo surfing bit and ride the waves. Now, using all your skill, try to ride under the wave for more than forty seconds. It's very tricky, because if you go too fast, you'll come out. Go too slow, however, and you'll be eaten up.



Eh? Er, where am I? Oh, yes, I know. Water, water everywhere...

8 STREETS OF RAGE

This is one very Wacky Challenge. Anybody got a Commodore 64? If so, you may have noticed that the joystick plug-in thingy is the same shape as that of the Mega Drive. Right, so get hold of a C64 joystick, plug it in, and play the game. You'll find you can move easily enough, but because you've only got one fire button, you can't do anything else but punch. The challenge is to finish the game.

Oi, you. Come over here and say hello to Mr Lead Pipe!

9 HOME ALONE

Yes, there are some extremely silly people who actually went out and bought this game, so to bring a little bit of life to this sad, shambling mockery of an attempt at a game, here's a little challenge. Choose any house you like and using only three booby traps and your BB gun, see if you can get rid of the robbers. Trouble with this challenge is that you actually have to play the game. If you don't fancy playing it, you could always drop it from the top of the Sears Tower in Chicago and see how many pieces it breaks into – our record is 4,467.
Graeme McCoy, Eltham, London

Wow, what a stereo. Shame it's a lot better than the game

10 ROAD RASH/ ROAD RASH 2

You've heard about the blind downhill skiers, who receive instructions telling them when to move and all that. Well, our *Road Rash* challenge is just as much fun. It works on both versions of the game, you just need a mate that's all. Blindfold the player and get your friend to navigate for you by shouting left or right when appropriate. Don't worry if you fall off, because you automatically run back to your bike. Don't worry if you fall off, because you automatically run back to your bike.
Graeme McCoy, Eltham, London

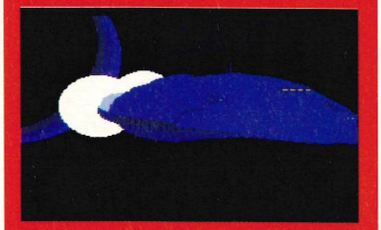
Now this is a challenge that I would like to see in action

11 MEGA-LO-MANIA

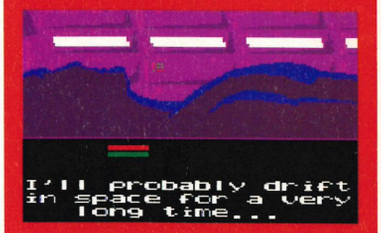
To completely break with tradition we are going to add yet another wacky challenge to this month's ARENA. And here it is... Enter the first level of a normal game, but only enter with ten (yes, ten) men. Now see if you can get through the first stage. If you can, try it all over again with even less men, and keep knocking the number down until you can no longer complete the stage. Ⓜ

GAME OVER FLASHBACK

There are some lovely close-up graphics and animation sequences in the game, but what's the end sequence like? Well, as you'd expect, it's more than up to scratch. If you don't believe me, take a look at the screenshots below, and if you want to play through the game yourself and feel real satisfaction, then check out pages 67 – 70 for the first part of our brilliant *Flashback* solution.


Conrad leaves the planet just in time

And checks the computer

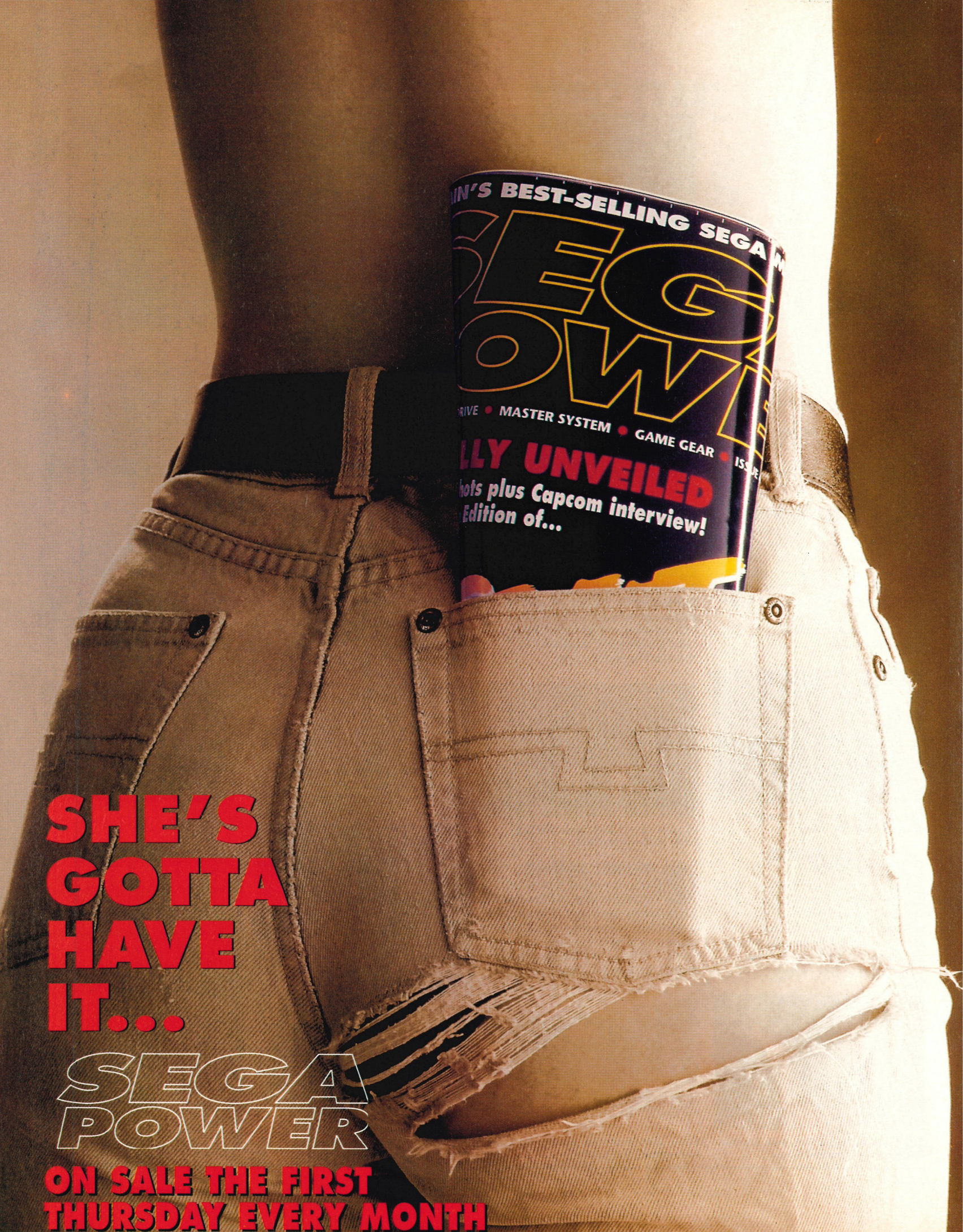


Then he decides to take a nap

Do you feel a sequel coming on?

ROSEMARY'S BABY

Choosing the winner of this month's mystery prize was a difficult decision because we've had loads of people sending in good stuff to different sections. But we've made up our minds and decided that, wait for it, the winner is ***Rosemary Rance*** from Boxmoor in Hemel Hempstead for her unique *Olympic Gold* challenge. She wins herself a prize so mysterious that *we* don't even know what it is yet. But it will be winging its way to you as you read this Rosemary. If anyone else fancies getting their name in print as well as having the chance to win a mystery prize, then send all the relative stuff – Weird Happenings, Wacky Challenges and the like – to ARENA, MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.


IN'S BEST-SELLING SEGA
SEGA POWER
RIVE • MASTER SYSTEM • GAME GEAR • ISSUE
LLY UNVEILED
hots plus Capcom interview!
Edition of...
SHE'S GOTTA HAVE IT...
SEGA POWER
ON SALE THE FIRST THURSDAY EVERY MONTH

ANOTHER WORLD

PART TWO

This month's half of the guide is a bit different to last month's because levels 7 to 15 are bigger and harder to describe. So rather than just show a piccie for each level, we'll give you a detailed rundown on what to do.

If you thought the first six levels of this game were hard (see last month's issue of MEGA), then, as old Brucie would say, you ain't seen nothin' yet. Read on for the second part of our RIP 'N' TIP solution to *Another World*...

LEVEL 7
ACCESS CODE: KRFK

At the start of level seven you are standing triumphantly on this rock

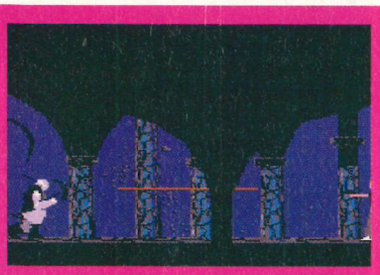
Right, you're standing on this big rock. What now? Well, walk off the left-hand side of the rock, turn to the right and power up your gun for a Mega Blast. Release the blast and the rock will topple over enabling you to run up. Run to the right, jumping over the gaps as you go, until you come to the water room. Stand on the far left of the room and fire a Mega Blast at the wall. Now, instead of waiting for the water to come rushing out, leg it (or you'll drown). Don't forget the jumps or you'll fall down and drown. Jump over the final gap (this is where you came up in the first place) and stand on the stone to the left. The cave will now fill up with water and you'll be safe.

LEVEL 8
ACCESS CODE: KLFB

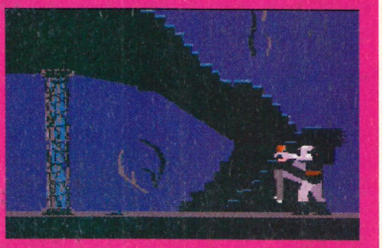
Run to the right, down the steps and, as you pass the second background pillar, fire your gun. This should take out the alien as he appears on screen. Carry on to the right, down using the teleporter and then, still running, go left. Run into the room, stop just in front of the first background pillar and fire at the alien.

Run left again, up the stairs, but turn around and fire at the chandelier. This will help your friend later on. Now run back right all the way to the teleporter, try to run onto the next screen and get knocked over by the guard. When he picks you up, kick him in the happy-sacks and then run to your gun, pick it up and blow him away.

Walk right into the next room. Stand just to the right of the background pillar and, facing right, set up five shields. Now turn around, walk a couple of paces and set up four more shields. Now walk a bit to the right to bring the two aliens on screen. Go back to the left, take his shields out using a Mega Blast, then kill him. Turn back to the right, make a shield, take out his shield using a Mega Blast and then kill him too.



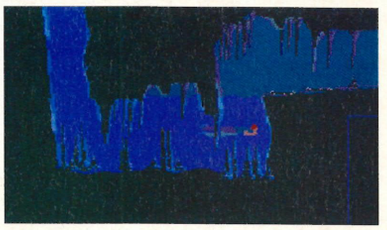
Where are you? Well, actually you're on the far right of the screen trying not to be seen



A swift kick in the old happy region and most aliens will drop just like us Homo sapiens

LEVEL 9
ACCESS CODE: DDRX

It's time to swim and learn to use those lungs to full effect. Dive into the water and swim down – don't worry, just keep going. At the bottom, swim left into the next room and along to the second tunnel (on the far left). Swim up here because you'll need some air – our Lester doesn't like water so don't hang about. Get a good gulp and swim back down. Go down into the next screen as well and go to the right to get out of the water. Be very careful as you get out here because you've got two chompers right in front of you. Jump over these two with one leap and walk into the next room, shoot the power line and you've finished this section. Now go back the way you came all the way back to the start. And don't forget to get that gulp of air again. It's quite funny really because you'd expect Lester to be wet when he gets out of the water, but he isn't.



Swim through here, but be careful when you get out – don't get eaten

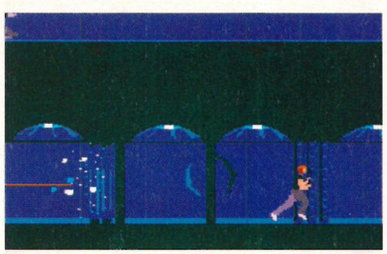
Take this guy out as soon as you come running up the stairs, because he's a bit quick

This guy is a bit dim. I mean, how stupid can you get, getting blown up by your own bombs? Doh!

LEVEL 10
ACCESS CODE: HRTB

Climb out of the water on the left-hand side and walk left. Go up in the teleporter and up the stairs. As soon as you reach the top of the stairs (ie the next room) shoot the alien. Go right into the next room and create a shield next to the doors. Edge forward until the doors open, and when the alien rolls his bouncing bombs towards you, edge back to the left to close the doors. The bombs will bounce off the doors back towards him and blow him up. Now run right through the room taking out the door with a Mega Blast. Run right, past the gun recharge thingy and into the next room. Below you, you will see (and hear) an alien. Crouch down and watch for his reflection in the green globe. When he stops walking, fire at the globe and it will fall on top of him. Go back left, up in the teleporter to recharge your gun, and then run back to the water where you started from. Swim across the water, run right past the unconscious guard and then go down the hole in the next room to level 11. And level 11, thankfully, is quite a simple little level.

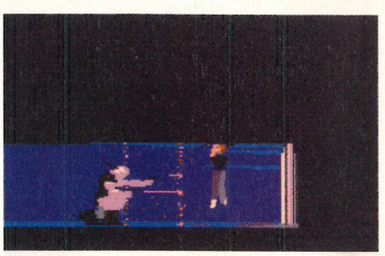
Power up your gun as soon as you touch the floor. If you don't, you'll get fried quite nastily



Now just keep button A held down and press, er, Right on your faithful old joypad. Keep running

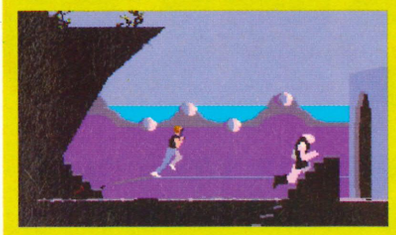
LEVEL 11
ACCESS CODE: BRTD

As soon as you fall down, face right and power up a Mega Blast to blow a hole in the right-hand side wall. Now hold down the run button (button A in case you've forgotten) and leg it all the way to the end. When you reach the end you should see a hatch above you. Stand under it and put up some shields in front of you (you should be facing left). Keep placing shields until your mate pops his head through the hatch and picks you up.

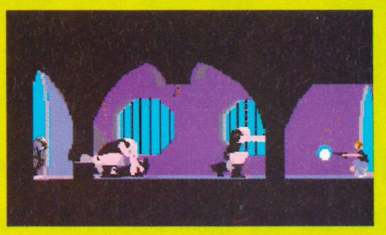


Make sure you're standing in the right place and keep placing shields until your mate rescues you

RIP 'N' TIP



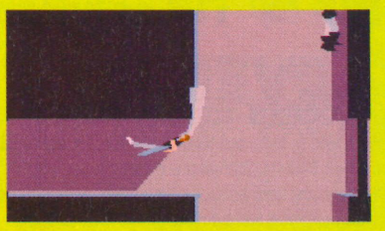
Run up and right to follow your mate, and go behind the building



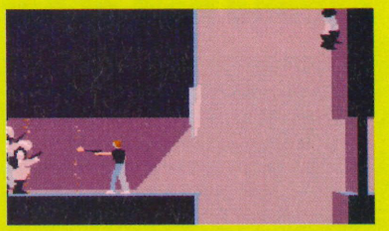
Go round the back and take out one guy while your mate takes the other

Then get your friend to help you out, and laugh as he tries to jump

Leave your mate "dangling", and jump off the edge. Don't worry..



... because you'll catch this little canopy sticking out



But as soon as you land, make a shield, because you'll need it

LEVEL 12
ACCESS CODE: TFBB

This is a very big complex level and if you make one mistake, you'll go right back to the beginning. As you come out of the hatch, your mate will go right into the building. You need to go left and then up on the steps behind you, then right so you can run behind the building while your mate is being searched. Walk into the building and crouch down, quickly make a shield, then edge forward slightly and power up a Mega Blast to take out the alien's shield. Now kill him, and your mate will have overpowered the guard. You'll both run to the right and have to stop because there seems no way across. Go to the left side of the screen and when your friend summons you, run towards him and he'll hurl you across the gap. He now tries the same jump but fails. As he hangs on for dear life, stand on the edge and jump down. You'll land on another canopy and swing down onto a platform. As soon as you land, make two shields and edge forward slightly to power up a Mega Blast and kill the two aliens.

LEVEL 13
ACCESS CODE: TXHF

Follow these steps:

1. Start here, but don't go up the steps – just run left into the next room.

2. Run over to the door (not past it), and hold your gun up. The alien will activate a switch for you.

3. Go right and then up the steps. Stand where shown and create four shields. Then edge forward and blast the door open. Let the alien roll four bombs down the steps and then kill him and go down in the teleporter.

4. Power up your gun to a Mega Blast, take out the shield around the alien and then kill him.

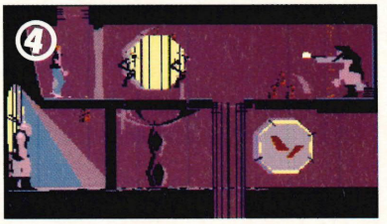
5. Now go all the way down in the teleporter and shoot the switch on the wall. Go back up around and down the steps and then fall through the hole in the floor.

Run right and don't stop. As you are about to leave the second screen, jump. Run to the edge of the room and pull down the lever. Fall down the hole and hold down the run button and run all the way to the right then go up in the teleporter. Now walk left and your mate will drop down. Go back right and both go up in the teleporter and then right into the tank.

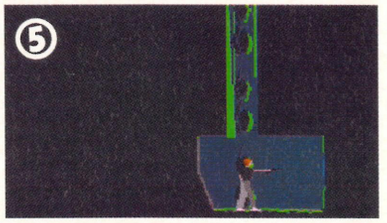
And here's where it all starts

Oi you, put your hands up

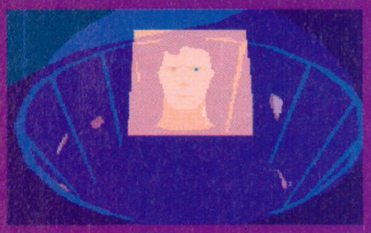
Use your shields or you'll get shot



Power up a Mega Blast to finish him



And then fall down here and shoot

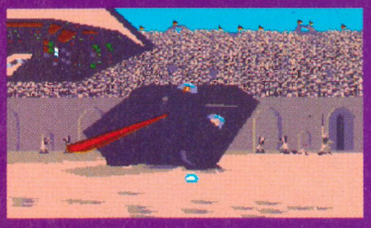


I suppose that this is a sort of tank initiation bit, but to be honest I don't have a clue

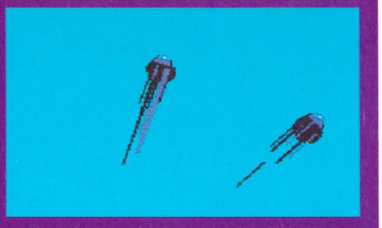
LEVEL 14
ACCESS CODE: CKJL

Getting into an alien tank and getting it to move wasn't such a great idea, so you'll need to get out, and the only way out is through the escape pods.

To set the pods off, you need to get a flashing white light. To get that, do the following. Press all the grey buttons in the centre of the console and some more will appear on the left. Press all six of these and the flashing white light will appear. Press that and away you go.

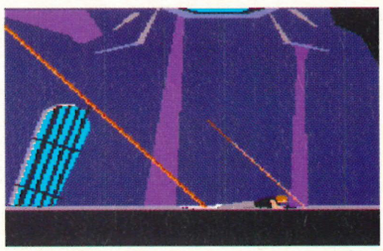


Once inside the tank, you decide you want to get out. Press the buttons on the console...



... and out you pop, both you and your mate. Where will he land? Er, level 15 actually

Crawl over to the levers on the right-hand side and, using your timing, kill the alien who's beaten up your mate



Then switch the second lever and crawl back straight away so that you don't get burned by the lasers

LEVEL 15
ACCESS CODE: LFCK

Run out of the pod as it lands, and as soon as you get to the next screen, make a shield. You've got four aliens to kill here, so use the old shield-edge-forward-Mega-Blast-shield technique to kill them, then run off, with your mate leading the way. As you fall to your doom, a hand grabs you. Trouble is, it's not a friendly hand. As he beats you up and kicks you into the next room, your mate catches up with you and fights the evil alien. This is where it gets tricky. Tap Right on the D-pad as fast as possible and you'll crawl to the right-hand side. Your mate will lose the fight and fall off the edge, but don't worry about him. You should have made it across to the level panel. As the other alien comes towards you, and he's in the middle of the screen, pull the first level to vaporise him. Now, straight away, pull the second level and tap Left to crawl back into the centre of the room. If you do it quickly enough, the lasers will miss you and you'll be teleported up to the top, where your mate will join you and you'll fly off into the distance. THE END.

FLASHBACK

PUBLISHER: U S Gold

PRICE: £44.99

RELEASE: June '93

MEGA SAYS: What can we say about this game that hasn't been said already? It's a huge game, full of lovely animation and gorgeous puzzley platform gameplay. This is a must for every Mega Drive owner, so good it's number three in our Top 100. **94%**

As probably the most complex platform game yet, we thought a step-by-step guide was probably the simplest way to approach this, with nice clear maps for the most difficult bits. Most of this solution is for those playing on the easy level, but the only difference for all you show-offs who want to play on the harder levels, is the increased volume (and toughness) of villains (in other words, they're well 'ard!). There isn't actually any difference to the end result on the higher levels, but if you insist, who are we to question? Anyway, enjoy.

It's big, it's got six levels and it's a real brain teaser to boot. Still, with our amazing, nay brilliant, complete (yes, complete) solution, you shouldn't have anymore sleepless nights. Now get out there and kill those pesky aliens

LEVEL 1: PLANET TITAN

Passwords: EASY – Pixel, NORMAL – Falcon, HARD – Clic

The first thing you need to do on this level is get the Holo-cube, which is on the screen directly below your starting point, in the top-left corner. It's on a pressure pad, so you need to get it even if you know what it says. Go back up to the start screen and head right for a few screens until you can't go any further. At the bottom left of the screen is an extremely ugly specimen of mutanthood; he's guarding the cartridge, so you want to blow him away with extreme prejudice, and pick the cartridge up.

Once that's done, it's down to the next screen and along to the right, eliminating any mutants you come across and avoiding the disintegrator, then right again. Jump over the first electricity bolt, and the lift should come down. Jump up to the lift and charge the cartridge at the energy generator.

Now go to the top of the screen and off to the left, shooting the mutant as you go. Now go up. To move the lift to where you want it, activate the pressure pad on the bottom right of the screen, and then jump over the pad in the middle; repeat this on the middle platform. Once you reach the top of the screen, head right and you will find a wounded man, begging you to find his teleporter (being the nice, kind, helpful, secret agent that you are, of course you're going to help him. Besides,if you don't, you're stuffed!).

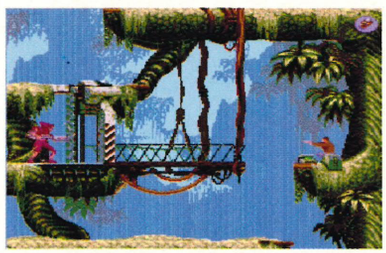
Head back to the energy generator, and then go back three screens to the left, until you find the cartridge lock. Use the, now fully charged, cartridge, and a wibbly bridge will appear. Carry on left, jumping the electricity, and go up on the lift, and then left.

There's a stone in the middle of the screen here. Pick it up and drop it on the pressure pad on the right of the screen. The lift will now come down and stay down. On the lift is the teleporter. Head back to the wounded man, and give him the teleporter, in return for which he'll give you the papers.

Go back to where you found the teleporter, pick up the stone again, and go down. Jump right and go down the hole where the lift was. Lower yourself to the floor, blasting the guards, and go to the right. Activate the switch to turn off the disintegrator, and jump over the pressure pads (which reactivate the disintegrator, and we can't have that now, can we?). Roll right onto the next screen, butchering the assorted nasties, and pick up the 100 credits. Go right again, picking up the key and another 50 credits, then right again, up to the top-right platform, and get another 500 credits (I'm rich, rich!).

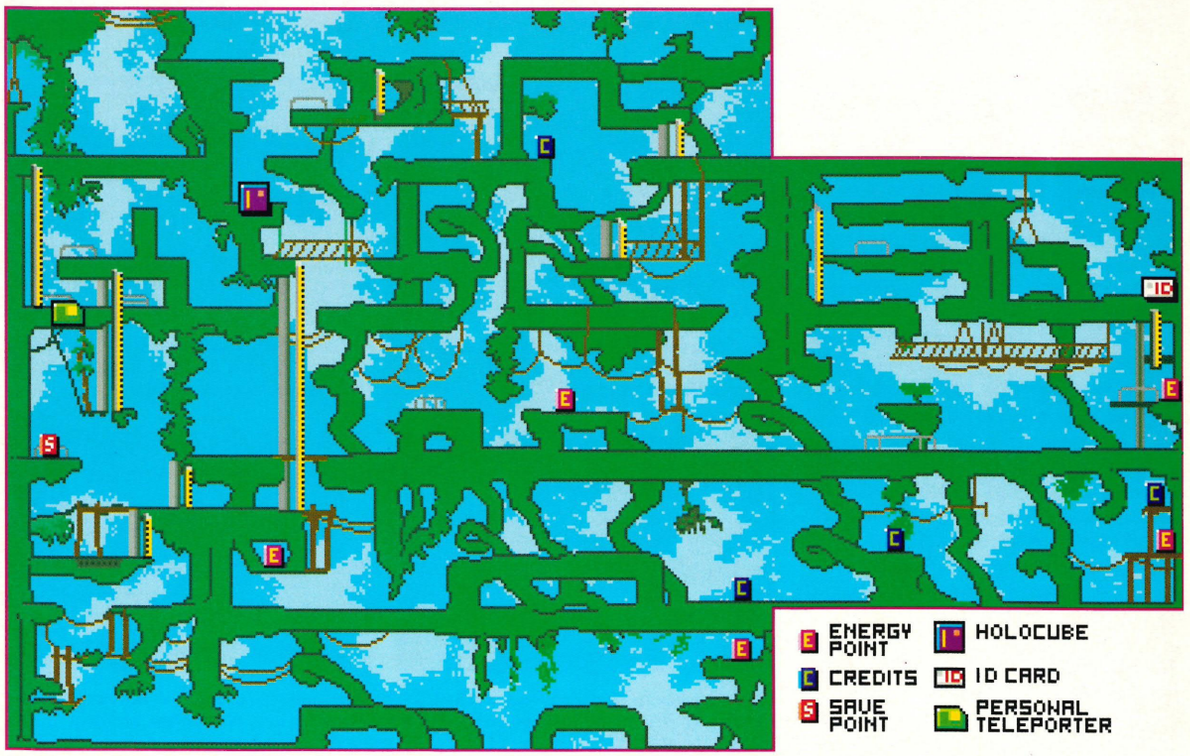
Go back left four screens, go to the top left and onto the next screen. Use the key, then go down and use the card on the card lock.

Lower yourself down, blast the baddies, and go right twice. Buy the Anti-grav from the old man, and fall down the hole. You'll get one of the many lovely animated sequences and that's level one completed!



This here blokey's got the cartridge that you need, and, unfortunately, a polite request isn't going to get you very far, so blow him away. Yeah!

That little grey blob in the middle of the screen is a stone. Drop it onto the sensor you're standing on at the moment, and you can get the teleport from the lift. Lucky you, eh?



RIP 'N' TIP

LEVEL 2: NEW WASHINGTON

Passwords: EASY – Betsy, NORMAL – Data, HARD – Acrtc

To start with, go right, lower yourself down the hole, and bring the lift up. On the middle platform, take a running jump onto the top platform and go left. Climb up and draw your gun. Shuffle right and blast the cops before they blast you, then walk over and talk to Ian. Go and sit in the chair and you're treated to the story of your life. Once that's finished, go and talk to Ian again, and get the force field.

Go right, lower yourself down the hole, and shoot the mutant swine. Get the fuse that he drops, go up and put the fuse in the switch. Activate the switch, which calls the lift, get onto the lift, and go up. Get onto the next lift, and go up again. Walk left, talk to the man (who'll give you a map – wooh!), call the lift, get onto it and go down to the subway station. Board the train, and then get off at the next stop (America) . Keep going up on the lifts, until you can go up no more, then walk left into the bar and talk to the barman. Go right twice, talk to the forger (Jack), and he'll tell you that you need some dosh.

Head back to the subway, board the train and get off at Africa. Go up on the lift to the top, then go left. Talk to the first man, go to the first floor, and talk to the women until you can see the boss. Give the boss your papers and he'll give you a work permit. Go back down to the subway,and go to Europa. Again, go up to the top, walk left three screens, and walk to the screen with lines on it. Activate it and you'll get your first job.

JOB ONE: COURIER A PARCEL TO THE TRAVEL CENTRE

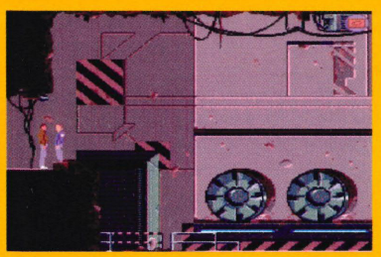
This first job of the game is dead easy. Go back to the subway, go to Asia, then up to the top, and walk right twice. Talk to the woman at the desk and get the parcel, then go back to the subway and along to Africa then go up to the top and right into the travel centre. Give the woman the parcel and your first job is complete! Walk back to the job centre and get your second job.

Well, here's you picking up the parcel. Exciting, isn't it?

JOB TWO: ESCORT THE VIP TO THE RESEARCH CENTRE

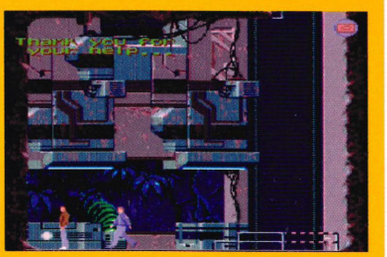
Get the subway to Africa and take the lift up one level to Restricted Area 2. Walk right and talk to the VIP (He's a very nice man – a very, very nice man). All through this level you've got to open doors and move lifts for him, 'cos he's a bit weedy, and not as athletic as you (poor baby). Bring the lift up for him, wait for him to walk onto it, then take it down. Climb up to the open door at the top, go right, jump over the mine and lower yourself down. Head left and escort the VIP right to the lift, then take the lift down. Now climb up to the middle platform, climb over the first wall, drop and shoot the nasty mutant person. Pick up the key that he drops and climb over and off to the left. Open the key lock, then go left for two screens, shooting any baddies who you come across. Shoot the two little flying droids on this screen (this will open up the doors for you) and pick up the key on the top platform. Go back right through two screens, open the key lock, and escort the VIP to the lift. Take the lift down and walk to the left of the screen. He will now thank you for a job well done and you can feel all self-satisfied. You'll now teleport out of there and back to the job centre. Next!

Well, funnily enough, this is what you have to do. And we're gonna show you how to do it...



"And this is me meeting the VIP," you tell your grandchildren, "just before I raised that lift for him"

These mutants, eh? They just get everywhere. Wipe out this one, and climb your way off to the left



Well, that's that. You've successfully completed your second job. Aren't you clever!

JOB THREE: THE REPLICATOR

In an obvious Blade Runner rip-off, your mission (should you choose to accept it) is to blow away a rogue replicant. To start with, go right two screens, and show the photograph to the man. Nice, helpful person that he is, he'll tell you that he'd seen the replicant in the bar. So, surprise, surprise, you want to go to the bar.

Once you get there, go and talk to the man on the left and he'll tell you to go down to Restricted Area One. Head down there, talk to the cop, and he'll tell you to go back to the bar. Up you go again, go left at the bar, and you'll see a man stood to the left. Draw your gun, shuffle towards him, and a mutant will appear on your right. Blow him away, and go and talk to the man. Guess what? You've got to go back to Restricted Area One. Off you go, shoot the cop and pick up his key.

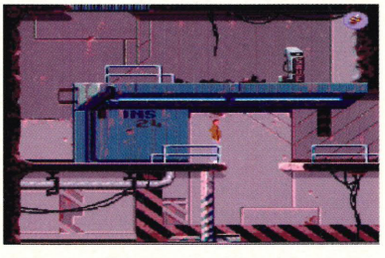
Go back to the room to the left of the bar and use the key to open up a hole in the floor, which, naturally, you go down. Head right, kill anything you see, and you've completed the job.

This is your mission brief, should you choose to accept it. Let's get on with it then shall we?

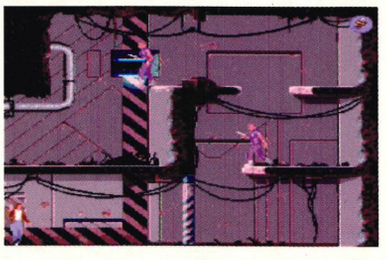
On the trail, the fat guy in the bar can give you a blatant hint. Ah, what happened to mystery?

The crooked cop is a friend of the fugitive replicant, so his help may be more of a hindrance

What a shock. It was a trap. What a surprise. We weren't expecting this. Honestly we weren't



Well now it looks like we're getting somewhere, ie almost at the replicant's base



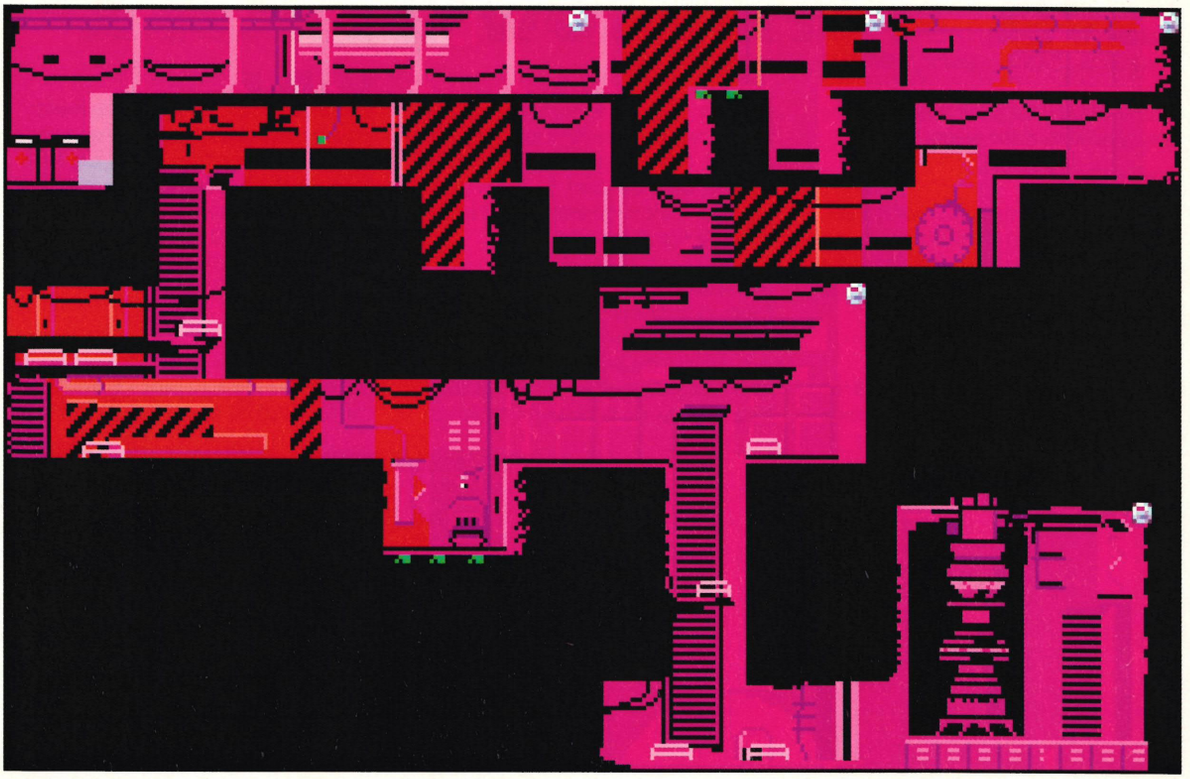
And here are the psychotic replicant twins. Blast their circuits and you're well outta here

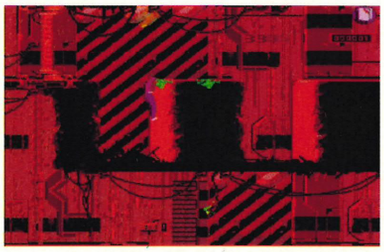
JOB FOUR: SAVE THE POWER PLANT

This job is pretty self explanatory, but being the nice kind magazine that we are, we'll run you through it anyway. Are you ready? Then we'll begin.

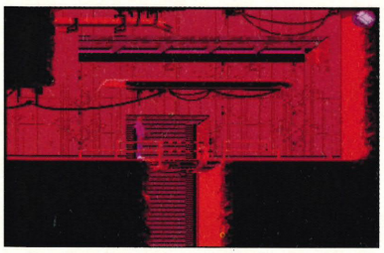
Climb the ledge and run as fast as you can until you reach a pit. Running jump it and you should avoid the electricity bolts. Standing jump the next pit and carry on running to the right, until you reach a switch. Use it, and the floor will open. Climb down and run to the left, rolling under the gas jet, then climb up and jump the pit, again rolling under the gas (it doesn't matter too much if you get hit once or twice as far as energy goes, but you lose precious seconds picking yourself up).

Get the lift down then run to the lift on the left and get that down. Run to the right, leap the pit and then run till you get to the next pit. Climb onto the platform, and this summons a lift for you (they do have some obscure ways of doing things in this game , don't they). Go down on the lift, head right, and you've got to make sure that you're holding the board (We do state the obvious sometimes, don't we?). Then go to the end console and use the board there. It takes a bit of practice, but just make sure you save before the mission.

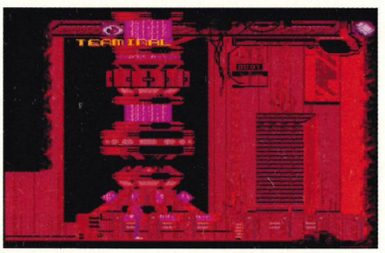




Climbing straight up into an electrical pulse, so you can be electrocuted, is not a very clever thing to do



For some reason, you've got to climb onto the platform to call the lift. This game really has some weird and wonderful touches!



As your final objective on job four, you've got to put the board into the terminal on the right (the third one that is)

Here you are, back at the job centre, and ready for some more action. What a sucker for punishment you are

JOB FIVE: MUTANT INVASION

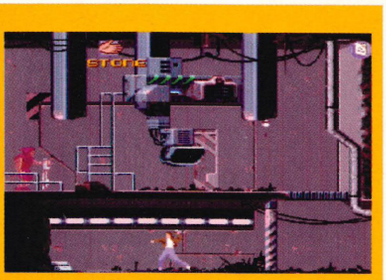
Hordes of smelly mutants, who haven't seen a roll-on deodorant in years, are trying to invade the city. Head over to Restricted Area Three in Europa, go right, kill mutants, lower yourself down, kill mutants, get the key on the bottom, go down, kill mutants (did I mention that there are rather a lot of mutants to kill?).

Head left, open the door with the key, walk off to the left again and then take a running jump to the left. Kill the mutants, and activate the pressure pad. Then drop down, and off at the top right of the screen. Shoot the cop, then get the key, and the credits at the bottom of the screen. Go back left and kill the mutant at the bottom of the screen, then go right at the bottom, and down. Kill another policeman (Ice-T eat your heart out) and use the key in the key lock. Shoot the flying droid, and you've finished your mission. Well done.

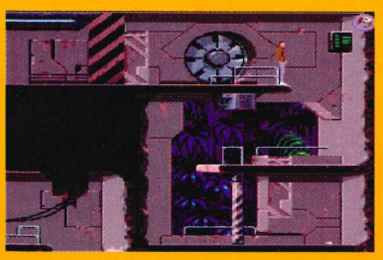
You've now got enough credits to buy your papers, so go back to the bar, and the barman will tell you that Jack is waiting for you. Go and get the papers, then go to the Death Tower at Europa. Give the lady your papers and you've finished the level!

"Your mission is to clean up this zone". Why do we get the feeling they don't mean with soap?

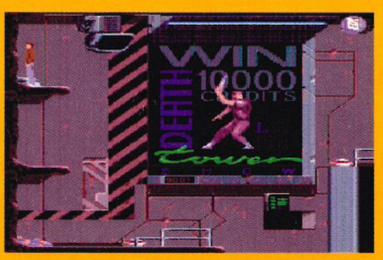
The classic Mexican stand-off. Your gun's pointed at his head, his is pointed at yours



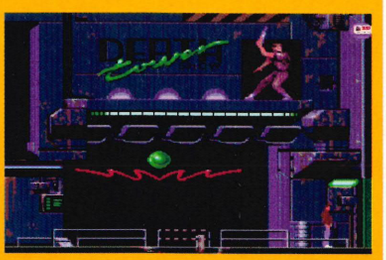
Here you are, throwing rocks at things, 'cos that pressure pad needs pressuring



Down at the bottom right of the screen are some extremely useful credits, and a key



That switch at the top of the screen has to be activated to open a switch elsewhere



The end of the New metropolis. You've got the looks, you've got the papers, and you're ready to go

RIP 'N' TIP

LEVEL 3: DEATH TOWER

Passwords: EASY – Pancho, NORMAL – Milord, HARD – Blob

You've reached the Death Tower, and the only general tip is, if it moves, blast it.

LEVEL 8

Run left for four screens, and activate the switch at the bottom of the screen. Then run back to your starting point, and run another three screens right, through the door on the middle platform, and take the lift up.

LEVEL 7

Go up to the top of the screen, and off to the left, then activate the switch to open a section of floor. Fall through the hole, go left through two screens, climb to the top left platform, and left again. Drop to the middle platform, shoot the droid, then drop to the bottom and shoot the other one. Then run to the left and go up in the lift.

LEVEL 6

Climb up to the right, activate the switch and run back to the right. To get past the gun, roll onto the pressure pad and crouch under the platform, then as soon as the gun fires, jump up. Go to the top of the screen and go left through three screens. Jump the pits, go left again and up on the lift.

LEVEL 5

Roll to the left and jump up to the middle platform. Roll through the pressure pads, jump to the top platform, go left and then jump left. Climb to the left-hand platform, take one step forward and activate your force field. This will make the mine drop. Go left, jump the pits, go left through two screens, then up in the lift.

LEVEL 4

Go right, and climb up on to the central column. The pressure pads will release the contestant above you, so kill him, and then activate the switch. Climb to the top left platform, and take a running jump to the top right platform, then walk right. Go to the middle platform, and head right, activate the pressure pads, go back left and drop down. Go right, jump the mines and take the lift up.

LEVEL 3

Walk around and kill everything, and then take the lift up.

LEVEL 2

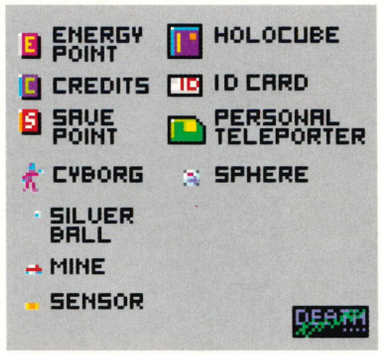
Open the switch, waste everything, and then go up in the lift.

LEVEL 1

Shoot one guy, and you've finished the level.

1

2



3

4

5

6

7 8↓

LEVEL 4: EARTH

Passwords: EASY – Studio, NORMAL – Quickly, HARD – Stun

To start with here, go down in the lift, give your papers to the man and walk left. Go left and drop to the bottom level. Take the lift down, and kill anything you see. Go right through four screens, murdering all and sunder, and call the cab (Don't forget to get into it).

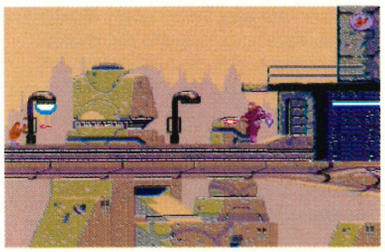
You now arrive at the studio club. Climb to the top platform and take a running jump off the right of the screen. You should grab a platform, so haul yourself up. Take another running jump to the platform on the far right, and shoot the glass in front of you.

Run off to the right, call the lift and walk right again. Take a running jump up to the spotlight rig, shoot the glass and jump across to the top left platform. Get the key, lower yourself down and go right twice. Go up to the top of the screen and walk left for two screens. Activate the switch, and walk back two screens. Go down and open the door, then go down on the lift.

Climb up through the hole in the middle of the screen, go right at the bottom left of the screen, kill everything and get the key. Then activate the switch on the top right of the screen. Go back left and lower yourself down to the top right of the next screen down. Then go right, and activate the switch. Then go left and down to the bottom of the screen. Walk right and open the door, then go up on the lift and right.

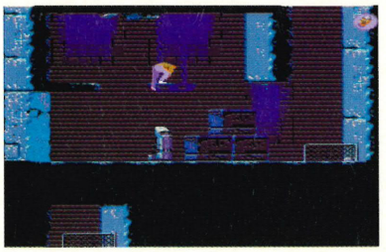
Climb to the top platform, take one step forward, and roll to the right. You should now be on the middle platform. Activate the switch, and head back to the left and down. Activate the switch to open the door, and take a running jump across to the top right platform. Go right and get the key, then head back left and up. Go right and use the key, then go right through three screens, and up to the middle platform.

Now jump the mine and run as fast as you can to the right (you're being followed by a travelling disintegrator!). Jump the pit, go right and shoot the droid as rapidly as possible. This will open up the door, so roll through the small passage beyond it. You'll fall down and you've finished this level. Congratulations.



Definitely not fair. The cop has got a jetpack, he looks cool, and he's got a bigger gun than you. The git

Stand up on this platform and shoot out the window on the top right of the screen. Oh, the destruction!



Climb up onto this platform and a hidden switch will activate, moving a wall and summoning a lift

Just to show you it can be done – climb to the platform, take one step forward and roll to the right

LEVEL 5: THE SECRET BASE OF "PARADISE"

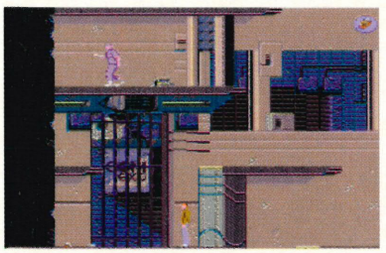
Passwords: EASY – Toho, NORMAL – Bijou, HARD – Mimolo

So, you wake up in prison. To escape, you want to roll past the guard off to the right, the run down to the bottom left of the screen, and pick up your gun. Blast the guard, and pick up the key he drops. Walk right and activate the switch, then open the door and climb up and off the top of the screen. Making sure that you time the movement of the disintegrator, climb up to the top platform and off to the left.

Climb up to the middle platform, and when the disintegrator turns off, jump down to the bottom and blast the guard. Pick up the teleport and the teleport receiver, and then climb back up to the middle platform. Jump up to the top platform and shoot the guard, then grab the key. Go back right and climb to the top platform. Now throw the teleport receiver to the right, and use the teleporter. You'll appear on the next screen, where the receiver is. Pick it up and open the door, then throw the receiver down the hole. Teleport again, pick up the receiver, and go left and down.

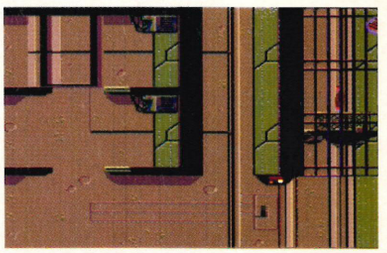
Shoot the morph, go right, and left at the bottom. Then go left and fall into a pit, climb out and go left again. Lower yourself down and walk left into a big teleporter.

You've got to avoid that roving disintegrator, and it's a bit tricky, 'cos it's a bit fast



Having just killed a guard, you're about to pick up the teleport and the receiver. They're massively useful

Having just escaped from prison, there would be a gun just in front of you, if you hadn't just picked it up



It's a lift. You don't really have to use it at all, but some people actually *enjoy* going up and down!

GET A GRIP!

Walk, run, jump, duck, roll, and move lifts

A Shoot yer gun, use yer switch, move yer lift and jump yer gaps

B Use keys, look at whatever you're holding

C Draw your weapons, pardner!

GENERAL TIPS FOR THE GAME

Throughout the game there are various moves which will help you through the hostile terrain you're going to come across.

① THE RUNNING JUMP
This is actually dead easy, and possibly the most useful move in the game. If you need to jump up to a platform, just run towards it and you'll automatically launch yourself at it. If you need to cross a gap, run towards the edge and press up at the last second.

② HOW TO KILL COPS
This is a technique that may take a little practice, but it does work. Fire at the cop and then, very quickly, use your force field. Now you can squeeze off another two shots, before you have to use your shield again. If there are two or more cops on screen at any one time, just walk balk onto the previous screen, and bludgeon them as they follow you.

③ HOW TO KILL MORPHS
This is fairly easy on the easiest level, but when you've got more than one morph around, unfortunately you're going to be in trouble. All you have to do is draw your gun and crouch, and then roll past the morph as it comes towards you. It'll soon stand up, and you can shoot it. Also, if you press the draw gun button as you're climbing up or down, then it's a great deal faster.

④ SAVE AND RECHARGE
As a last and fairly obvious tip, do save and recharge as often as possible, and if you get low on shield, it is always worth going back to the last energy generator (If you can get there!) to recharge it.

⑤ THE FINAL PASSWORD
Although each level has its own password, the end sequence is the same no matter what level of difficulty you play on. So if you want to see all the close-up bits of animation and the end sequence, without doing any of the hard work, enter this password: CYGNUS.

RIP 'N' TIP

LEVELS 6 & 7: PLANET OF THE MORPHS

Passwords: EASY – Akane, NORMAL – Bubble, HARD – Hector (level 6)
Passwords: EASY – Incbin, NORMAL – Clip, HARD – Kalima (level 7)

You're now on the planet of the nasty, and rather hard to kill, morphs. So to start, head off to the right, and up to the top platform, then right again. Use the switch (By the way, there's a generator two screens to the right). Go back left, and down to the bottom, then right and down on the lift. Head off through the bottom of the screen, and get the stone from the bottom right of the screen.

Go left, roll under to the bottom left of the screen and throw the stone to the left. Go back up to the middle platform and walk left. Climb up to the switch, activate it and this will open a gap in the middle platform. Climb down to the bottom, and shoot the door at the bottom left. Activate the switch, and a morph will appear. He will shoot the man on the middle platform, and then come down to get you. Kill him, and then climb up to the middle platform, and walk left, getting the atomic charge from the man.

Get the diary from the middle of the screen and take the lift down. Lower yourself down, activate the switch and then go down again. Now go right twice and take a running jump onto the central platform. Now take the lift down and shoot the morph. Now drop down and shoot the mutant Lassie from hell. Walk left, and climb to the top left platform, then walk left. Roll to the left, kill the morph and walk right. Pick up the key and walk under the green thing to the right. This will teleport you up a platform. Walk back right, go up and up on the lift. Now go right twice, open the door and you're on the next level!

And so, to continue the saga of Conrad on the Planet of Morphs, take a running jump up to the top central lift, and go up. Kill the baddie and go up. Climb to the top of the column, and take one step forward. Then activate your force field to blow up the mine. Lower yourself down and drop the teleport receiver. Climb to middle right platform, and go right. Take the lift up to the top and activate the switch. This will send the lift back down and the gun will stop firing. Head left and lower yourself down to activate the switch, then teleport fast to avoid the morph.

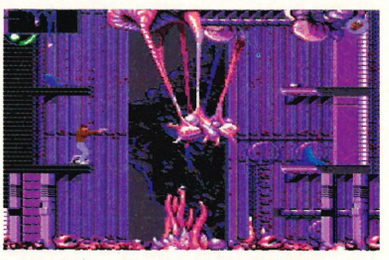
Pick up the receiver and walk right. Kill the morph and pick up the key that he drops. Use the key and take the lift up, then climb up again. It's a good idea to save here, then walk right. Leap over the disintegrators as they turn off, then go down on the lift. Activate the switch, and then walk to the bottom of the screen and bring the lift up. This will blow up the mines. Now throw the teleport receiver to the right, down the hole. Teleport, kill the morph, and then shoot the rotating sphere. Well done, you've killed the back-up brain. Now for the real thing. Pick up the receiver and walk to the far left. Turn to the right and throw the teleport receiver down the hole. Teleport (don't pick up the receiver this time), and then go left through six screens and then take the lift down.

Head right and shoot the brain thing in the middle of the room, alternating from right to left, until the morphs stop appearing. Walk right, activate the switch and take the lift up. Go right and kill the morph, getting the key that he drops. Open the door and take the lift down. Go right for two screens, and jump the disintegrator. Walk to the end of the platform and drop the atomic charge. Now teleport. Walk left, and take the lift (which is behind the column) up.

WOW, YOU'VE FINISHED THE ENTIRE GAME!!!!!!! Now watch the fabby end sequence.

There's a weird mutant dog here which doesn't appear anywhere else in the game. And the git just bit me

You're mystically shifting through time and space, as the only way to get out of this is the hidden teleport



You've got to blow small green chunks off this brain thing, alternating from left to right. Splat!

The End. Just behind the strut is a lift that will take you to the ship and to safety. Hurrah!

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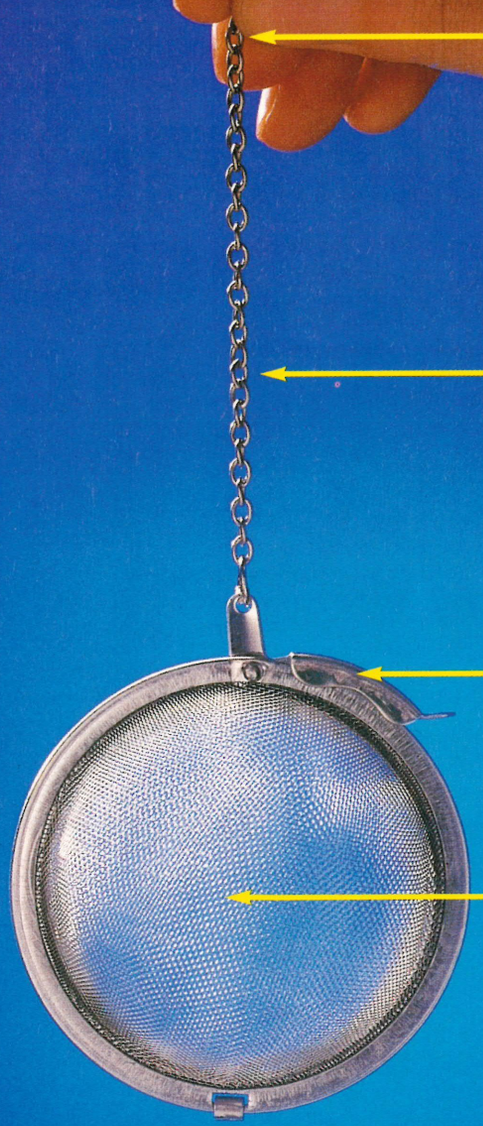

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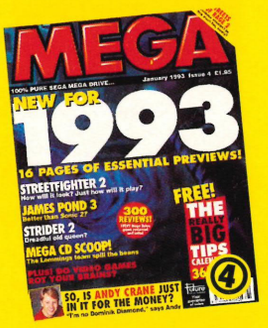

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TOP 100

Welcome to the constantly updated Top 100. It looks a bit different this month because we've put the position index up front. Read, enjoy and tell all your friends about it...

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1. JOHN MADDEN '93 (INC. MADDEN AND MADDEN '92)

Publisher: EASN
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 3 of MEGA

The third version of the best game on your Mega Drive and it's been improved upon again. If you're fed up with playing through the normal teams, try your hand against the best teams of all time. There are eight Superbowl-winning sides to play against and you can even enter the best of the best playoff to see who is ultimately the best.

One word of caution though: if you own either the original *John Madden American Football* or *John Madden '92*, don't buy this version expecting a whole new game.

MEGA says: The best just got better, but not by that much.

FOR SALE: *John Madden Football*
£20 – 0509 816117
FOR SALE: *John Madden '92*
£25 – 0663 742695
£20 – 0793 750390
FOR SALE: *John Madden '93*
£25 – 091 2621 748
WANTED: *John Madden '92/'93*
081 311 5739

2. SONIC 2

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 2 of MEGA

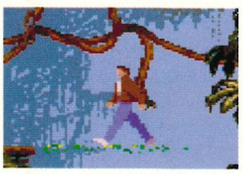
Hey, you want top grade video game entertainment? Then you got it. This game has fast, smooth colourful graphics, top sound and playability that would make most game programmers' eyes water. Even if you do finish it, you've still got the two-player races and all those time challenges to have a go at. What is the fastest time possible for the Emerald Hill Zone act one?

MEGA says: You might find it too easy to finish, but it does leave the original sobbing in a damp corner.

FOR SALE: *Sonic 2*
£20 – 091 2621 748
£20 – 0734 662562
£25/Swap – 0734 340896
£20 – 0367 253194
£20 – 0663 742695
£20 – 0326 374666
(Jap version with adaptor) £20 – 081 561 2804
TO SWAP: *Sonic 2*
0236 760422
WANTED: *Sonic 2*
0822 833018

3. FLASHBACK

Publisher: US Gold
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 9 of MEGA

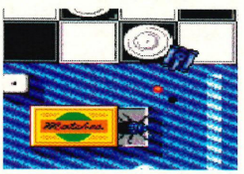


Stick some nice animation into a game, and most people will tend to get very excited about it, ignoring the rest of the game completely. With *Flashback* though you can sit down, watch the animation and then get completely involved in a great arcade adventure.

MEGA says: This is in many ways a perfect game. It's amazing to look at, it sounds brilliant, it's tough, involving, easy to control and addictive. What more could ask for? Buy this now.

4. MICRO MACHINES

Publisher: Codemasters
Price: £34.99
Reviewed in Issue 5 of MEGA



It may not be the best looking or sounding game in the world, but the gameplay and playability are amazing and the head-to-head fun rivals that of even the *John Madden* series.

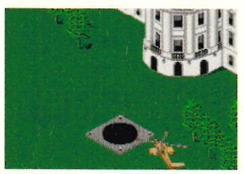
With loads of courses for the one-player game, the two-player tournament game, and 12 different characters to choose from, this game is going to be slotted into your Mega Drive for a very long time to come.

MEGA says: Frantic two-player action and a tough one-player challenge make for a fantastic game.

WANTED: *Micro Machines*
0343 552696
0305 820602
0822 833018

5. JUNGLE STRIKE

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 9 of MEGA



This is the fabulous follow-up to the brilliant *Desert Strike*, and this sequel has everything you could want and more. There are more missions (50 in all), more campaigns (9 this time around) and there's even the chance to get behind the controls of some different vehicles. The gameplay though similar to the original, is varied enough to provide real interest.

MEGA says: Tough, even better looking than the original and just good clean shoot-'em-up fun. *Desert Strike* was an incredibly popular game, but EA haven't sat on their laurels. They've brought us (yet another) classic Mega Drive game.

6. NHLPA HOCKEY (INC. EA HOCKEY)

Publisher: EASN
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

Just as *John Madden '93* remained firmly fixed to its predecessor's roots, so does this, and the new version is just as much a classic as the original.

The top-down scrolling viewpoint still works beautifully, and the gameplay is as perfect as you could ever hope for it to be. Mind you, just like in the real thing, the best bit is when the gloves come off and the punch-ups start. Not as involved as *John Madden Football*, and the naïve or short-sighted player will tell you that scoring's more down to luck than skill, but for nerve-tingling tension that's absolutely second-to-none you still won't find a pulse-raiser much better (or tougher to master) than this.

MEGA says: Even better than the original (MEGA rated it 92% – it would have got more if it hadn't been a sequel). *NHLPA Hockey* is bigger, better and bloodier than its older brother, and it truly kicks. It is a fantastic game, which no Mega Drive owner should be without.

FOR SALE: *NHLPA Hockey*
£25 – 051 356 3384
WANTED: *NHLPA Hockey*
081 311 5739
FOR SALE: *E A Hockey*
£20 – 0509 816117

7. HELLFIRE

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

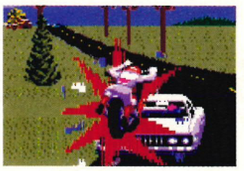
Hellfire is the only serious competition to *Aero Blasters* in the space-blast department. A clever and imaginative shoot-'em-up, *Hellfire* makes you think before you zap with four switchable weapon systems which, if you're going to make any progress through the game, have to be employed with expert speed and accuracy. The end-of-level bosses have had a bit more thought put into their design than the usual "find the weak spot and sit and pummel it for a couple of minutes" routine, and the graphics change enough from level to level to make it a real joy to discover what's in store in each new stage. You get a lot of continues, which makes it a bit easy to complete, but nothing's perfect.

MEGA says: Great stuff. If you find *Aero Blasters* a bit too demanding, though, this'll be right up your street.

FOR SALE: *Hellfire*
(Jap) £20/Swap – 0822 833018
TO SWAP: *Hellfire*
0236 760422

8. ROAD RASH 2 (INC. ROAD RASH)

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 4 of MEGA



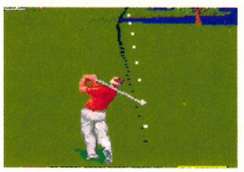
Not entirely different to *Road Rash*, but it improves on the original enough to make it even more enjoyable. The two-player mode split-screen is a god-send and the intense rivalry it produces is unbeatable. The one-player mode is also that bit tougher, and with more bikes and better graphics and sound this really is a great improvement.

MEGA says: Speed, violence and bikes – what more could you ask for?

FOR SALE: *Road Rash*
£20 – 0367 253194
£25 – 0222 711376
£10 – 0236 760422
£20/Swap – 081 311 5739
£30/Swap – 0203 543912
FOR SALE: *Road Rash 2*
£20 – 0734 662562
£25/Swap – 0275 393397
£25 – 0222 483233

9. PGA TOUR GOLF 2 (INC. PGA TOUR GOLF)

Publisher: EA
Price: £44.99
Reviewed in Issue 5 of MEGA



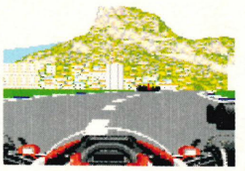
What was wrong with the original *PGA Tour Golf*? Well, not a lot actually. Perhaps you could have done with a few more courses and possibly some other bits and bobs to improve the game generally. Well, that's what *PGA Tour Golf 2* does. There are three more courses, the chance to put draw and fade on the ball and all sorts of other options. There's even a bit of speech in there as well. Now what more do you want?

MEGA says: The best multi-player game has been improved and if you and your mates like nothing better than playing a round, this is for you. Be careful though if you've got the original, because this one isn't drastically different from the previous one.

FOR SALE: *PGA Tour Golf*
£20 – 071 834 4644
£30/Swap – 0203 543912
FOR SALE: *PGA Tour Golf 2*
£25 – 051 356 3384

10. SUPER MONACO GP 2 (INC. SUPER MONACO GP)

Publisher: Sega
Price: £44.99



Super Monaco GP was the most popular driving coin-op before *Out Run*, and the staggering graphics were thought by many to be completely impossible to simulate on a Mega Drive. And, indeed, they were, but disappointment turned to joy within seconds of loading this cart into the slot – the graphics may only be alright, but the gameplay is astonishing. Superb, definable control, high-speed adrenaline-pumping driving, *and* a bit of strategic depth to keep things interesting after the first few days.

The sequel improves significantly on the earlier game especially in the area of car handling, but with something that started off as fab as *Super Monaco GP*, that's still just window-dressing.

MEGA says: The competition isn't really up to much as far as Formula One racing goes (yet), but even so,

you'd have to go a long, long way to come up with a better driving game than this one.

FOR SALE: *Super Monaco GP*
£15 – 0732 352253
FOR SALE: *Super Monaco GP2*
£30/Swap – 081 311 5739
£20 – 0559 363323

11. SHINING FORCE

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 10 of MEGA

We all complain when games are too easy to finish and we also complain that the hardest games to complete, RPGs, are boring. Well if you're of that ilk, you should definitely check this out 'cos you're in for a surprise. It's got cute characters, a do-the-right-thing storyline and gameplay most games can only dream about.

MEGA says: Very soon we're going to have to stop taking the mick out of RPGs, because they're getting quite good now.

12. LEMMINGS

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 2 of MEGA

180 one-player levels, 20 two-player levels and addictive puzzling gameplay that's going to keep you stumped for an incredibly long time. Excellent use of a password system and a stunningly easy control system make this a must for all gamers.

MEGA says: It's addictive, brain teasing and we can't get Neil away from it. What more of a recommendation do you need?

FOR SALE: *Lemmings*
£30 – 0222 711376
TO SWAP: *Lemmings*
0942 200051
WANTED: *Lemmings*
0305 820602
0622 726579

13. ECCO THE DOLPHIN

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 6 of MEGA

Once in a while a game comes along that is just that little bit different from the rest. It may be cute, it may even look nice, but its real pulling power is the gameplay. Such a game is *Ecco*. You've got to help out your fellow dolphins (and help yourself) in this deep (pun number 343) underwater adventure. There are puzzles to solve, routes to find, dangers to avoid and even some shooty bits. This is a classic all-round game which will appeal right across the board.

MEGA says: It brings a whole new realm of gameplay to the Mega Drive. It's slow, hard, beautifully presented, and a real joy to play.

FOR SALE: *Ecco*
£25/Swap – 0734 340896
£25/Swap – 0275 393397
£25 – 0222 483233
TO SWAP: *Ecco*
0236 760422
0606 551698

14. STREETS OF RAGE 2

Publisher: Sega
Price: £44.99
Reviewed in Issue 4 of MEGA

Well, after all the fuss and bother over the first official English 16-Mbit game, it finally arrived – the follow up to *Streets of Rage*. We reviewed it in issue four of MEGA, but we didn't play it enough to give it a mark. Now it's out and it's every bit as good as we'd hoped. You won't find a better beat-'em-up on the Mega Drive and it's even better than some arcade ones too. Additional features include two new characters (Max and Skate), a head-to-head mini game, amazing graphics, the best ever sound on the Mega Drive, and playability as well.

MEGA says: You won't find it tough enough if you play on easy level with loadsa continues. So if you're a hotshot gamesplayer, do yourself a favour and play the game on hard level with only a couple of continues.

FOR SALE: *Streets of Rage 2*
£25/Swap plus £10 – 071 221 3656
£35 – 0222 711376
£30 – 0898 215504
£22 – 0392 579364

15. QUACKSHOT

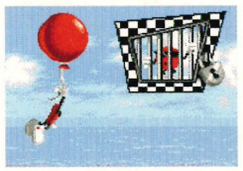
Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

Yes, it's another platformer; yes, it's another Disney licence; yes, it's a bit of a clone of *Castle Of Illusion*; but none of that matters one little bit. Why not? Because *Quackshot* is excellent fun. This is the game that *Fantasia should* have been. It looks lush, it sounds lovely, and it's action-quacked (sorry about that) from start to finish.

MEGA says: We say get it!

16. COOL SPOT

Publisher: Virgin
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 9 of MEGA



This ultra-cool, cute and loveable little dude sits brilliantly inside this fabulous platform game.

MEGA says: Playable, cute, large, difficult game with a great soundtrack.

17. ROLO TO THE RESCUE

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 5 of MEGA

Platform games can be found in abundance on the Mega Drive, but with the exception of *Sonic*, you won't find a cuter, more loveable character than Rolo. Then, when you find out his Mom has been kidnapped, you're pulled in and there's no way out unless you finish the game.

MEGA says: Cute graphics and lovely sound we've had before, but there is more to this game than that. There are loadsa secret rooms, puzzles to work out using Rolo's various friends, and bosses to defeat.

WANTED: *Rolo to the Rescue*
0343 552696

18. TINY TOONS

Publisher: Konami
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 8 of MEGA

Cute, big and easy to play, this platformer has got it all. With a password for each level, seven different "worlds" to get through, loads of characters from the cartoons and some nasty end-of-level bosses to defeat, this scores highly in all areas.

MEGA says: Platform games come, and platform games go and only a few remain. *Sonic, Rolo* and now *Tiny Toons*. Fast, colourful, cute, playable... the list is endless.

19. MEGA-LO-MANIA

Publisher: Virgin
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 6 of MEGA

BUCK ROGERS

NUMBER 74

Remember that little robot from the TV show? What was his name? Twiki? Tweakie? Yeah, well, it's a shame he's not in this game really...

Domonic attacks, and fails dismally. And let that be a lesson to you for not training your troops properly

Ah yes, those were the days. You'd rush home from school on the number 14 bus to get in front of the TV in time for your weekly dose of Buck Rogers in the 25th Century. You could put up with the, er, acting talents of Gil Gerrard (the guy who played Buck) because everyone fancied that woman Erin Gray (she played Wilma), and you could laugh at Buck's little robot pal, Twiki.

Trouble is, this has nothing to do with the game, because none of these characters, except Buck himself, are in it. And if you've got any preconceived ideas about a Buck Rogers game being all shoot, shoot and shoot some more, then your illusions are about to be shattered. *Buck Rogers: Countdown to Doomsday*, you see, is an RPG. Don't worry though, because it's quite a good one. As with all role-playing games, there's a real life-threatening storyline and this one concerns the Earth.

Check out the health of your team and all sorts of other vitally important information

To cut a long story short, the RAM forces have decided to destroy the Earth using a massive laser cannon, and you've got to stop them. Yes, you, because contrary to popular belief, you don't actually play the game as Buck Rogers – you do get to meet him later on in the game, but it's just you and your wits against the RAM forces. That's a bit of a lie actually, because you're not strictly on your own; you do have five friends to help you.

You choose these five at the start of the game. Give each one a job and train him/her in it. Although this may sound very complex, it's all very easy to get used to and even if you are blinded by statistics, you can always use the team which is already built into the game.

The game is viewed from a 3D perspective, and it shows you moving from room to room searching as you go. If you come up against anybody and you need to fight, the viewpoint zooms in on the action, allowing you to move all the individuals of your team into their best fighting positions. Once you've defeated whoever you're fighting, the viewpoint shifts back to the bigger scale and you carry on your quest.

Even with average graphics and sound, this is one of those rare little RPGs that manages to appeal to hardened gamers as well as complete novices. You can get really involved with the characters, or you can go for the more straightforward charge-in approach. Either way, you'll get a real kick out of it.

PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts
PRICE: £39.99
RELEASE: March '92
CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit
CONTACT: EA 0753 549442

MEGA SAYS: A great RPG that manages to be both entertaining to novices and exciting to the hardened role players. You'll have a really good time playing this. **78%**

TOP 100

Ever wanted to know why a "God-game" is a called a "God-game"? Well just take a few minutes of the murder, mayhem and madness on offer in *Mega-Lo-Mania* and wonder no more. Their lives are in your hands (cue evil laugh) and you can do whatever you want. There's more to this, however, than killing a few people. It's an intense strategy game which, if you're not careful, will make hours pass by like minutes.

MEGA says: Although heavy strategy like this won't appeal to the more *Sonic*-minded among you, if you're after a bit of brain-bending, then this should suit you down to the ground. Every little detail is great and the gameplay is very smooth.

FOR SALE: *Mega-Lo-Mania*
£25 – 071 834 4644

20. SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

It's quite possible that this is the most famous video game ever – it's certainly the one which, more than any other, lifted console games out of the spotty schoolboy ghetto and into the real-world limelight where they truly belong.

Yeah, it's a bit easy to finish, but why be selfish? Isn't it nice that everyone gets a chance to see the end sequence for once? Anyway, there's so much hidden away in *Sonic The Hedgehog* and it's just so much damn fun to play that you'll never get bored with it, no matter how many times you whip nasty ol' Dr Robotnik's ass. And, if you don't still get a buzz when Sonic loops the loop at maximum speed with his super-fast boots on, get someone to check your pulse – it is possible you're dead.

MEGA says: Still the most technically stunning game the Mega Drive's ever seen, and the standard-bearer of a whole new era of video games. Completely amazing, completely brilliant.

FOR SALE: *Sonic*
£10 – 0734 662562
£20/Swap – 0734 340896
£15/Swap – 0305 820602
£10 – 0732 352253
£17/Swap – 0273 596009
£12 – 0727 825060
TO SWAP: *Sonic*
0942 200051
0986 873456

21. RAINBOW ISLANDS

Publisher: Taito (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

Already hailed as the best 16-bit computer game of all time, *Rainbow Islands* has come to the Mega Drive and, miraculously, has got even better. The impossibly addictive platform action is the same as ever, the amazingly cute graphics are as sweet as ever, and the devilish, fiendishly hidden bonuses are as devilish and fiendishly hidden as ever. And with Mega Drive's *Rainbow Islands* you get a whole extra game on top! Well, it's more of a variation than a completely different game, true, but the extra, harder version extends the life of a game which was already practically immortal, and makes it just about the best value-for-money investment you'll ever see in an arcade platformer.

MEGA says: If you've got a UK Mega Drive, this game alone makes it worth buying a Jap adaptor. Seriously beautiful, incomparably playable and unbeatably addictive.

WANTED: *Rainbow Islands*
0343 552696
0768 899773

22. SWORD OF VERMILLION

Publisher: Sega
Price: £49.99

Try not to be put off by the fearsome price tag on this one, because if you're into all that RPG hacking 'n' slashing malarkey, this'll be money well spent.

Sword Of Vermillion is probably the best game of the type on the Mega Drive and, in a market that's becoming more crowded by the day, that's no mean feat.This game is big, slick and sexy.

MEGA says: Look, you're as well to spend £50 on something excellent as waste £35 on something average, aren't you? Quality costs (and in this case it certainly does), but it's usually worth it.

FOR SALE: *Sword of Vermillion*
£25/Swap – 0275 393397
£20 – 0663 742695
TO SWAP: *Sword of Vermillion*
Swap for *Phantasy Star 3* – 0734 340896

23. PHANTASY STAR 3

Publisher: Sega
Price: £49.99

A completely huge RPG, with loads of different worlds and a whole gang of characters to control. Try to complete *this* one in a night without using the battery back-up...

MEGA says: It's a lot of money, but in terms of hours of fun per pound, you'll be hard pushed to beat this one.

FOR SALE: *Phantasy Star 3*
£25 – 0274 621731
£20 – 0367 253194

24. AERO BLASTERS

Publisher: Kemco (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

If you're one of the not-very-many people who've played this brilliant game in the arcades (under the name of *Air Busters* more likely than not), you won't need telling what a fantastic, all-action, exciting and varied blastathon it is. If you aren't one of *those people*, then be told right now – *Aero Blasters* is the fastest, meanest, sexiest, joypad-grippingliest, sweatiest shoot-'em-up there's ever been.

It is more impressive-looking than most Mega Drive zappers, more innovatively designed, better off in the end-of-level boss department, and it has frighteningly fast and dangerous tunnel sections, which provide the biggest wide-eyed thrills you'll ever get from your console.

MEGA says: This is one of the best Mega Drive shoot-'em-ups ever without the tiniest shadow of a doubt. Your game collection shouldn't be without it.

FOR SALE: *Aero Blasters*
(Jap) £25/Swap – 0822 833018
£20 – 0204 709076

25. X-MEN

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 9 of MEGA

Although superheroes are popular sources of games, the games themselves usually end up being dire little platformers. This is a platform game, but thanks to the ingenious use of the characters and the team effort needed to play the game, it lifts itself above the rest.

MEGA says: Paul loves this game for two reasons; 1) He's a big X-Men fan, and 2) the game is fab. So, if it's good enough for him, it's good enough for everyone else.

26. GOLDEN AXE 2 (INC. GOLDEN AXE)

Publisher: Sega
Price: £19.99

What's that? You want some beat-'em-ups? OK, here's a real golden oldie. If you're one of those strange people who likes nothing better than to wander in straight lines through strange lands kicking lumps out of the previously-happy inhabitants, then you'll probably like *Golden Axe* a great deal.

The sequel did nothing to alter the linear gameplay (Ax, Gillius or Tyris still start heading right and just keep going) and the two games are to all intents and purposes identical. It's still a simple walk-along-and-hit-fire-a-lot-whenever-you-meet-anyone kind of affair, but the execution is lovely with impressively muscular sprites and some great attacking moves. The five big levels will keep you entertained for quite a while and, while it's all very repetitive, the scenery is pretty enough to make you want to keep at it until you see the end.

MEGA says: This is the best game in a very limited genre, but why are beat-'em-ups always so easy to complete? Who knows? Just buy it and enjoy.

FOR SALE: *Golden Axe*
£10/Swap – 0904 702251
FOR SALE: *Golden Axe 2*
£15/Swap – 081 311 5739

27. DESERT STRIKE

Publisher: EA
Price: £34.99

Yes, OK, so it's in extremely poor taste, but you can't deny that *Desert Strike* is one of the most excellent pieces of blasting fun that the Mega Drive's ever played host to. Sometimes it can feel like you're fighting the entire war yourself, what with missions to complete, hundreds of enemies to blast and all manner of stuff to rescue with your helicopter's all-purpose winch. But even if you're not the xenophobic type, you'll be hard pushed not to have a great time with this atmospheric and action-packed shoot-'em-up.

MEGA says: Never mind the plotline, go out and get yourself enlisted today. *Desert Strike* is a great game, and that's what matters.

FOR SALE: *Desert Strike*
£20 – 0734 662562
£20 – 051 356 3384
£20 – 0732 352253
£20 – 0935 25494
£20 – 0392 579364

28. THUNDERFORCE 4

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

The sequel to the sequel of the conversion of the coin-op looks prettier than ever before, but gameplay wise it offers nothing more than *Thunderforce 3*. If anything, the groovy graphics (and they really are rather groovy, er, "dadio") get in the way of the action – there's too much going on on-screen at any one time.

MEGA says: Looks great, lots to blast through, looks great, solid shoot-'em-up action, looks great and er, nothing *really* that could be described as particularly special. It really is a great looking game though.

TO SWAP: *Thunderforce 4*
0622 726579

29. WORLD OF ILLUSION

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 3 of MEGA

This game is way too easy in one-player mode, but for its brilliant two-player game it earns this position. It's hard, interactive fun. Gorgeous graphics and amazing animation add to the game, and it makes *Castle of Illusion* look old hat.

MEGA says: Don't think about buying this unless you've got a mate to play it with.

FOR SALE: *World of Illusion*
£20/Swap for *Castle of Illusion* – 0276 857971
WANTED: *World of Illusion*
0343 552696
0822 833018

30. MIG-29

Publisher: Domark
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 9 of MEGA

The more they say you can't do something, the more you try to do it. At least that's they way it works with flight sims on the Mega Drive. This famous PC sim has been simplified for the Mega Drive, but still provides you with a great flying experience.

MEGA says: Although this is a great achievement, as a game it does fall a bit flat. Not your typical console game, but definitely worth a look from the more cerebral among you.

31. STREETS OF RAGE

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

If every third Mega Drive game that gets released is a beat-'em-up, how come hardly any of them are any good? Thankfully, that's a question that *Streets Of Rage* doesn't have to answer, because it's great stuff – if it were only tougher to beat!

Lovely backdrops, loads of athletic fighting moves, excellent two-player action and an imaginative approach to special weapons (the police car firing rockets from half-a-dozen screens back and still managing to pick off the bad guys with pinpoint accuracy is brilliant!) all go together to make this one of the most rewarding games the Mega Drive has to offer in the genre.

MEGA says: If you want a beat-'em-up, this, or its sequel, is the only one worth more than a passing look (well, except *Golden Axe 2 perhaps*).

FOR SALE: *Streets of Rage*
£20/Swap – 0734 340896
£20 – 0294 823771
£15 – 0732 352253

32. CHAKAN

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 6 of MEGA

A spooky platform hack-'em-up, that although initially confusing, quickly becomes very addictive.

MEGA says: Very nicely done and engrossing too, but very similar to lots of other stuff already on the market. All you old Mega Drive hands will have seen it all before, but you newies should check it out.

FOR SALE: *Chakan*
£25/Swap plus £10 – 071 221 3656

33. TAZ-MANIA

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

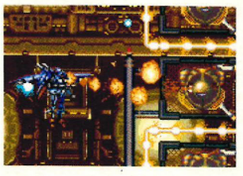
The most cartoon-like Sega game so far, *Taz-Mania* stars that lovable psychopath, the Tazmanian Devil, in a *Sonic*-like game of epic (in everything but game size) proportions. It's beautiful, it's hilarious, but it's also a bit repetitive and none too tough to get to the end of. If you've got a Looney Tunes-loving younger brother or sister, though (or if you *are* a Looney Tunes-loving younger brother or sister), this is absolutely ideal.

MEGA says: *Taz-Mania* is brilliantly entertaining, but not all that demanding.

FOR SALE: *Taz-Mania*
£20 – 0663 742695
TO SWAP: *Taz-Mania*
0622 726579

34. RANGER X

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 10 of MEGA



It's a shoot-'em-up and it's a good one. It's not a big release and there's no cute character to sell the game. It's just a straight blasting shoot-'em-up and it plays well.

MEGA says: One of Andy's fave games at the moment – he loves it and if it's good enough for him...

35. JAMES POND 2 – ROBOCOD

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99

Converted from, but significantly improved upon, the 16-bit computer classic, *Robocod* was the game that took on Sonic at his own game and didn't make a half-bad stab at it. Exceptionally pretty, this is one of the best hedgehog clones you can buy.

MEGA says: Great little game, with a different feel to most platformers.

FOR SALE: *James Pond 2*
£20 – 0734 662562
£20 – 0367 253194
£20 – 0372 372023

36. TURTLES: THE HYPERSTONE HEIST

Publisher: Konami
Price: £35
Reviewed in Issue 7 of MEGA

Now that Konami are in the Sega

business we can look forward to some cracking games. They've started well with a conversion of the coin-op game *Turtles*. Graphically cool, it plays well and sounds good too. The action may be slightly repetitive, but the cartoon tie-in and general ease of play make this a great game.

MEGA says: OK, so it's no *Streets of Rage 2* beater, but the action is thick and fast. A few good moves as well as some special ones make this game very good fun to play.

WANTED: *Turtles: The Hyperstone Heist*
0768 899773

37. SIDE POCKET

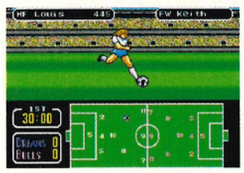
Publisher: Data East (IMPORT)
Price: £35 (see importer)
Reviewed in Issue 2 of MEGA

A novel coin-op conversion. You can try to beat the one-player game, play a mate, or show off your skills in the trick game. Smart graphics, great sound and fun gameplay go to make a welcome breath of fresh air.

MEGA says: We all luv a game of pool, and this beats paying 30p a go down the pub nearly every time.

38. TECMO CUP FOOTBALL GAME

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 10 of MEGA



Water and Electricity. Chalk and Cheese. Football and RPGs. They're not supposed to mix, but they do. The world's first football role-playing game is very playable and although not as in depth as say, *Shining in the Darkness*, it's infinitely more exciting.

MEGA says: As the Mega Drive gets older, the games become more obscure. But sometimes, obscure is good.

39. POWERMONGER

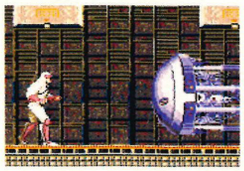
Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 5 of MEGA

Strategy is the name of the game, and if you're looking for some serious head-scratching, then *PowerMonger* could be for you. Also, if you like a bit of domination, then this game could well be the best game you ever buy.

MEGA says: Very, very in-depth and very tough.

40. REVENGE OF SHINOBI

Publisher: Sega
Price: £19.99



Revenge Of Shinobi, the excellent follow-up to the popular arcade beat-'em-up, looks great and sounds excellent, and although you've seen the format a hundred times before, this one's so well done that you can forgive it any lack of originality.

MEGA says: Super stuff, with top special effects and very special gameplay.

FOR SALE: *Revenge of Shinobi*
(Jap) £20 – 0663 742695
(Jap) Swap for *Super Monaco GP* – 0986 873456

41. THE HUMANS

Publisher: Imagitec
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 5 of MEGA

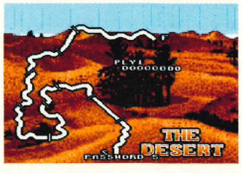
If you're going to bring out a puzzle game, then you've got to make sure it's a bit different from the rest of the genre to guarantee success. *The Humans* is much like *Lemmings*, but it has enough differences to make it worth a look. If you've tried *Lemmings* and you've either finished it or got bored with it, *The Humans* should fill that missing puzzle gap in your life.

MEGA says: Initially a bit complex, but give it a few goes before you condemn it. Try before you buy.

WANTED: *Humans*
0305 820602
0768 899773

42. LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 3 of MEGA



Driving Lotus Elans or Esprits across various terrains might not sound like fun, but with great graphics, fab sound and a two-player head-to-head game, this one is definitely worth buying.

MEGA says: It beats games like *Out Run* and *Turbo Out Run* hands down. If racing is your thing, buy this fab game.

FOR SALE: *Lotus Turbo Challenge*
£23 – 0367 253194
£25 – 051 356 3384
£25/Swap – 0305 820602
£25/Swap – 081 311 5739

43. TERMINATOR 2

Publisher: Arena
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 4 of MEGA

The first *Operation Wolf*-type game that's appeared on the Mega Drive, *and* it's even better for the fact that it's compatible with the Menacer light gun. It also plays well with a joypad.

MEGA says: A decent shoot-'em-up and a tough one too. It's got great graphics, superb sound and also some really nice gameplay.

FOR SALE: *Terminator 2*
Sell £20/Swap plus £5 – 071 221 3656

44. CASTLE OF ILLUSION

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

Mickey Mouse appears in this lovely platform adventure, with all manner of strange and beautiful Disney-style fantasy creatures trying to off him as he tries to rescue his sweet mouse babe from the excellently-named witch Mizrabel.

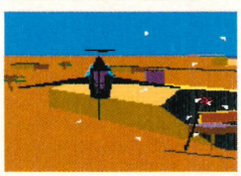
MEGA says: This is a lovely platform epic. Gorgeous to look at and gorgeous to play. The whole family will love this one.

FOR SALE: *Castle of Illusion*
£20/Swap – 0734 340896
£20 – 071 834 4644
£20 – 0326 374666

TO SWAP: *Castle of Illusion*
(Jap) – 0822 833018

45. LHX ATTACK CHOPPER

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA



The Mega Drive's first chopper-'em-up and only the second genuine flight sim. The graphics are supremely detailed and suffer from only a slight jerkiness, while the action remains fast and furious.

MEGA says: Anyone who's ever seen *Apocalypse Now* or *Wings Of The Apache* will relish this chance to spray heat-seeking death at anything that moves. And anyone who fancies "having a go" at developing their own military tactics and completing a whole Eastenders (long drawn-out series) of missions will find plenty to get their teeth stuck in to.

46. DECAP ATTACK

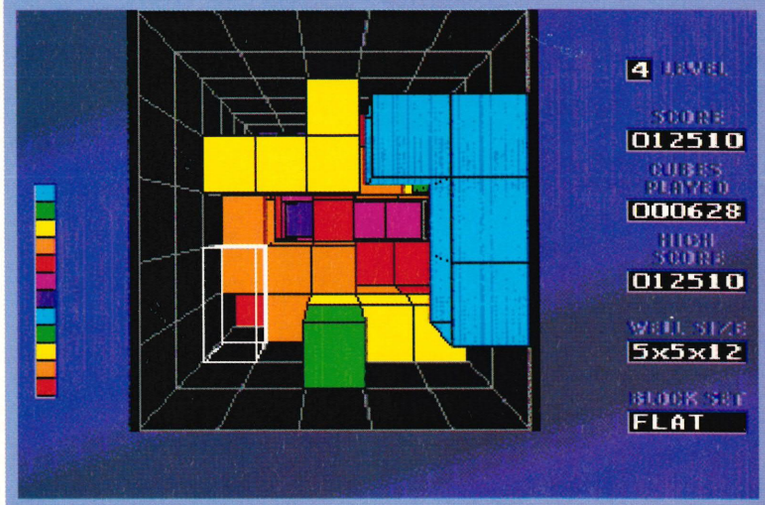
Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

Decap Attack (originally released as *Magical Hat Turbo Adventure*) may at first glance make you go "yuck". But if you persist past the first 20

BLOCKOUT

NUMBER 86

Give me an X, give me a Y, and give me a Z. Put them all together and what do you get? Yep, that's it, another puzzle game...

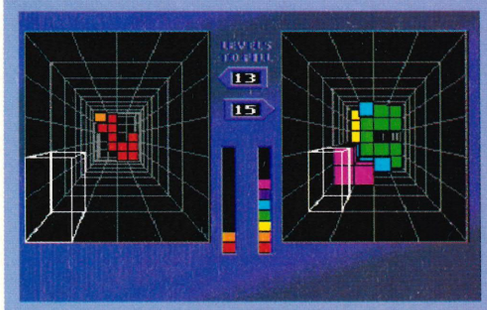


Well, this rather attractive and colourful screenshot shows that you don't know what you're doing and you're losing horribly

Imagine a game similar to *Tetris*, but with a devilish 3D twist to completely throw you off the scent. Well, that's the obscure and tricky thinking behind *Blockout*.

As with all the best puzzle games (and this is one of them), the idea is simple. There's a 3D well into which blocks will fall. These blocks are under your control, and using the D-pad to move them about and by pressing one of the three buttons, you will rotate the block through one of its axes. Button A controls the Y axis, button B the X axis, and button C the Z axis.

Flipping through all these axes to place the blocks in the right place may sound a bit confusing at first, but all you really need is a few plays and you'll be flipping through them like you've been doing it for years.



The two-player game gets the adrenaline flowing by dropping the same blocks for each player. This tests your skill to the limit

Once you've got the control system sorted, you can then get onto the business in hand. As the blocks fall into the well, you've got to move them into position to fill up one layer of the well. Fill up the layer and it disappears, moving everything down one level. The whole idea of the game is to keep this going as long as possible. The only way to lose is if the well fills up to the top with blocks, but there's no end to the game either, so you'll never actually finish it.

As with the control system, the graphics take a while to get used to (more to do with the novel viewpoint than bad graphics), but everything is drawn very accurately and you'll soon be placing the blocks in the right place without a second thought. But it's not all good news. Although the essential puzzle elements are there, I think the game suffers from being just a tad too technical. Play the basic game and everything is fine, but you'll soon get bored of that and you might decide to try one of the other modes. Trouble is, the other modes are not as accessible, and some of the shapes which the game throws at you would give the most talented mathematician some problems. Because of the very nature of the game, this is going to appeal to some and not others. Buy this and you may well enjoy month after month of brain-aching action, or you may just get a couple of hours enjoyment from it and then shove it to the back of cupboard until the next rainy Monday evening.

PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts
PRICE: £19.99
RELEASE: Ages ago
CARTRIDGE: 8 Mbit
CONTACT: EA 0753 549442

MEGA SAYS: A hair-pulling puzzler that some people will love, but some will find just a tad samey. However, if you buy it, it'll probably be a game you'll play for years to come. **65%**

Turn over

seconds, you'll suddenly discover that you're having a brilliant time, thanks to the rollicking platform escapades that make up this wonderfully tasteless game.

Controlling a character who can chuck his proper head and who has an extra, telescopic, head in his ribcage is simply great fun, and the cheesy music complements the gameplay perfectly.

MEGA says: Ropeyish graphics, but don't let that put you off this gorgeous and funny platformer.

FOR SALE: *Decap Attack*
£20 – 0367 253194

47. GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS

Publisher: Sega
Price: £44.99

A frighteningly tough coin-op conversion, but hey, it's not as if you have to shovel money into the thing, so who cares? You certainly won't be seeing the end of this one during the same day you buy it, and that's even with infinite continues. The graphics and sound are practically flawless, as brave Sir Arthur scuttles his swathe through legions of platform-placed zombies, monsters and vultures.

MEGA says: *Ghouls 'n' Ghosts* is the business – and, for once, the tough difficulty tuning guarantees decent value for money as well as being great short-term arcade fun.

48. POPULOUS

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99

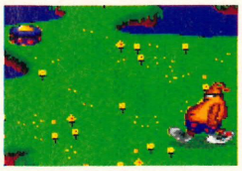
Immensely strange and original God-simulator game in which you hold sway over the very shape of the land itself, as you try to create an army of followers to defeat an opposing deity. Slightly forbidding at first with a mass of controls to get the hang of, but once you're in, you'll probably never want to come back out.

MEGA says: One of the most compulsive games ever made. Ego-maniacs everywhere, don't miss it.

FOR SALE: *Populous*
£20 – 0734 662562
£20 – 0367 253194

49. TOEJAM AND EARL

Publisher: Sega
Price: £19.99



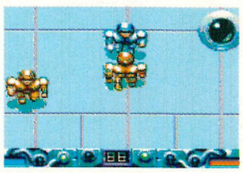
Multi-player action doesn't get a lot more entertaining than this. ToeJam and Earl are two of the grooviest aliens you could ask to have a close encounter with, which is part of the reason why it's such a pleasure to help them out on their quest to rebuild their crashed spaceship. The rest of the reason, though, is the superbly manic and zany action which takes place as our two heroes career around the screen, causing havoc wherever they go. After a few plays, the lower levels tend to drag a bit (there's no password option), but this game is both original and insane.

MEGA says: Another OK game, which becomes completely essential when played with someone else.

FOR SALE: *ToeJam & Earl*
£20 – 0367 253194

50. SPEEDBALL 2

Publisher: Virgin Games
Price: £34.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA



This game is Mega Drive violence at its most extreme. Nominally a future sports sim, *Speedball 2* is actually football meets rollerball meets bare-knuckle boxing in a frantic and immensely brutal festival of blood and guts. There's also plenty of room for skill and strategy, which means that for an all-round sporting experience *Speedball 2* is hard to beat – especially in two-player mode.

MEGA says: Very much an arcade sports game (rather than the more tactical approach favoured by, say, *John Madden Football*), this is about as good as arcade sports games get.

FOR SALE: *Speedball 2*
£12.50 – 0252 874932

51. SUPER KICK OFF

Publisher: US Gold
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 6 of MEGA

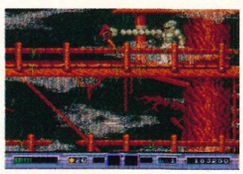
The greatest football game of all time (ask anybody to name a football game and they'll most likely say *Kick Off*) turns out to be a rather good console game after all. With enhanced graphics and a dead simple playing method, *Super Kick Off* ends up relegating the likes of *Euro Club Soccer* and *World Cup Italia '90* to the lower divisions.

MEGA says: It plays well and there are loads of options too. To get the best out of the game you're definitely going to have to play this with another person, because then you can both make mistakes and stop the computer walking all over you.

WANTED: *Super Kick Off*
0768 899773
0793 750390

52. EX-MUTANTS

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 6 of MEGA



Another platformer with more than a hint of shoot-'em-up in there somewhere. A nice-looking game (due to the comic book tie-in), but again it's nothing to set the originality fires burning. It is very playable though and fairly tough in places.

MEGA says: Although the comic book is not that well known, the game *does* succeed on its comic book feel. It's not the most original game, but it is surprisingly tough, and thanks to some clever options, you won't finish this one in a night.

53. MUHAMMAD ALI BOXING

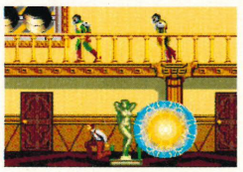
Publisher: Virgin
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 6 of MEGA

Boxing is one of those sports that has never really worked well on any format. Just take a look at *James "Buster" Douglas* or *George Foreman's KO Boxing* if you want proof. That was until *Muhammad Ali's Boxing* appeared. Programmed by the same people who came up with *John Madden Football* and *NHLPA Hockey*, this ace 3D boxing game is fun and playable, and it fills a hole nicely.

MEGA says: With two different player modes, a nice control system and some really good graphics, this is the ONLY boxing game really worth considering. If you're a boxing nut, then you should get this now. It'll knock you out.

54. ROLLING THUNDER 2

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99



A direct copy of the arcade version, this basic shoot-'em-up does what every shoot-'em-up should do – makes you come back for more. Addictive, hard and great fun to play.

MEGA says: Simple, and some may say boring. But stick with it for a while and you'll find a highly playable, spot-on arcade conversion.

FOR SALE: *Rolling Thunder 2*
£20/Swap – 081 886 8477
TO SWAP: *Rolling Thunder 2*
Swap plus £4 – 0768 899773

55. SPLATTERHOUSE 3

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 10 of MEGA

If you like gore, you'll love this. Splat by name, SPLAT by game. Although the gameplay isn't original by a long way, there are a couple of neat touches to keep you interested and lots of gruesome monsters to splat into oblivion.

MEGA says: Don't get this confused with *Splatterhouse 2* – this game is a whole lot better.

56. JACK NICKLAUS POWER CHALLENGE GOLF

Publisher: Accolade
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 10 of MEGA

There's plenty of golf games around, but this one does offer a few new features (digitised footage and the like) and the usual stuff as well. It's all very nice and all that, but it just isn't as good as *PGA Tour Golf 2*.

MEGA says: It plays nicely and it's very professionally done. But if you want golf, go for that *PGA* game.

57. SUPER BATTLETANK

Publisher: Absolute
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 6 of MEGA

This one is a strange little game; a simulation, strategy and shoot-'em-up rolled into one, and with some nice digitised sound and graphics, it's very nice to play too. Serious simulator freaks will probably not find enough in here, and shoot-'em-up fans may find all the realism a little off-putting, but it's all jolly good stuff.

MEGA says: A nicely polished game that tries to mix various types of gameplay. Some will love it, others will say that it's trying to be too many games at the same time, but that's just a cop out. Give it a look.

58. PIT FIGHTER

Publisher: Tengen
Price: £37.99

Ooh look, it's another beat-'em-up. Ah yes, but wait... this one's different. How come? Well, it's got digitised graphics, guv. That means the fighters you take on in this simulation of that ugliest of "sports" (pit fighting, that is) look incredibly realistic, which means you can imagine that it's a real human being you're knocking the living daylights out of. Well, if that's what you're into, great.

MEGA says: Pretty dull and morally dubious beat-'em-up fare. You won't find much prettier BEUs, but gameplay-wise you could do a lot better than this.

WANTED: *Pitfighter*
0622 726579

59. SHINING IN THE DARKNESS

Publisher: Sega
Price: £49.99

A mammoth, gorgeous RPG (as opposed to a gorgeous mammoth RPG, which would be a completely different proposition involving attractive elephants, wouldn't it?) with lovely aesthetics and gameplay which will keep you entranced for months. *Shining In The Darkness* is probably the Mega Drive's most accessible RPG, so comes highly recommended to anyone who fancies giving the genre a try.

MEGA says: A bit of a must for RPG fans, but even if you're not into the genre, give this a try. You might find that you're pleasantly surprised.

FOR SALE: *Shining in the Darkness*
£20 – 0274 621731

60. PHANTASY STAR 2

Publisher: Sega
Price: £59.99

Not quite as big and sexy as *Phantasy Star 3*, obviously, but pretty impressive all the same.

MEGA says: Great stuff, but at this price it's strictly for absolute fanatics of the genre.

FOR SALE: *Phantasy Star 2*
£20 – 0274 621731

61. F-22 INTERCEPTOR

Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99

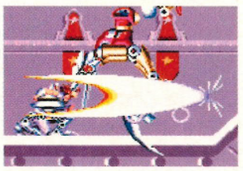
There aren't many flight simulators around on the Mega Drive, which, to be honest, is most of the reason why this is the best one. The graphics are fabulous, but the gameplay gets repetitive a bit too quickly.

MEGA says: If you want a flight sim, this is about as good as they currently get. Luckily Microprose have some fantastic up, down, flying around, looping-the-loop-type stuff in the pipeline. We'll keep you posted, so keep an eye out.

FOR SALE: *F-22 Interceptor*
£25 – 051 356 3384
£18 – 0732 352253
TO SWAP: *F-22 Interceptor*
041 956 4196
0236 760422
TO SWAP: *F-22 Interceptor*
0622 726579

62. STRIDER

Publisher: Sega
Price: £19.99



Amazing graphics, superb sound, lovely animation and some of the biggest and baddest enemies you'll ever meet, are the ingredients of *Strider*. Pretty simplistic platform-leaping beat-'em-up is the order of the day here, but *Strider* does it better than most, and it does it looking better than almost anything. Oh yeah, and the "running down the side of a mountain" sequence is just about worth the cost of the cart all by itself.

MEGA says: You'll finish it in two days, but if you want something which will show your friends the power of the Mega Drive, this is the game (second to only *Sonic the Hedgehog 2*) that'll make them go "gosh, wow" the most.

FOR SALE: *Strider*
£30/Swap – 0203 543912
TO SWAP: *Strider*
0236 760422

63. ESWAT

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

Bearing only the slightest resemblance to the coin-op of the same name, *ESWAT* luckily manages to be an even better game than its arcade counterpart. It's got a bit more to it than the coin-op's limited beat-'em-up formula, and although it's still no *Sword Of Vermillion*, there's just about enough thinking to keep you interested to the very end.

MEGA says: There are literally dozens of this type of game around, but this is one of the relatively few which are actually worth having. Pretty simplistic, but still involving and addictive.

FOR SALE: *ESWAT*
£15 – 0367 253194
TO SWAP: *ESWAT*
0236 760422

64. SHADOW DANCER

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

ESWAT with a dog, basically.

MEGA says: More fab scrolling beat-'em-up action, and you'll find yourself getting really attached to your little ninja pooch, too. The baddies are truly bad and the ninja scum that Joe's fighting against put up a decent enough fight. There are plenty of secret bonuses and hidden goodies to keep the interest factor up. This one is well worth a bang – so check it out.

65. DAVID CRANE'S AMAZING TENNIS

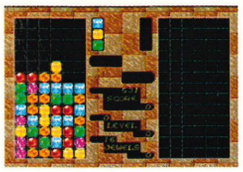
Publisher: Absolute
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 10 of MEGA

Tennis is a popular little game, and console tennis games are just as popular. This one, however, uses a unique in-game perspective, and although it's awkward to play at first, a few goes will soon iron out any problems. You can then settle down to a nice game of tennis.

MEGA says: You won't find earth-shattering gameplay in here, but you *will* find a decent tennis game despite the strange perspective. What more could you want?

66. COLUMNS

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99



The game they give away with the Game Gear, and it's easy to see why – it's worth buying one of the fabby little machines just to play this, except, of course, you don't have to. This brilliant cross between *Tetris* and *Klax* is better on the Mega Drive than anywhere else, thanks mainly to the fact that the graphics are big enough to let you actually see what's going on. great stuff solo, but the two-player head-to-head "flash" game is totally wonderful. The best Mega Drive puzzle game going.
MEGA says: Buy another joypad, buy *Columns*, and then invite some of your friends round. Then see if you can get them to leave...

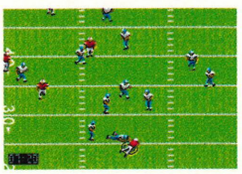
67. KID CHAMELEON

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

Ultra-cute platform thang with lots of really neat touches, but it's too easy and not all that exciting. Sega hyped this game almost as much as they did Sonic *The Hedgehog*, so they must have been more than a bit disappointed with its lack-lustre performance sales-wise. The game isn't at all bad, and remember – you don't have to be great to be good.
MEGA says: If large platform games are your thing, then this might be one of the best you ever buy.

68. JOE MONTANA 3

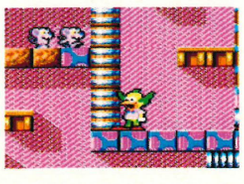
Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 3 of MEGA



The only serious (ha) threat to the *John Madden* crown comes back for a third time. It's got several things *John Madden '93* hasn't, notably a league, three different viewpoints and a zoom in mode. However, it's not as playable or friendly to use.
MEGA says: Sega try again, but they fall just short. It's worth checking out if American football is your thang.

69. KRUSTY'S SUPER FUN HOUSE

Publisher: Flying Edge
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA



The Simpsons always threatened to invade the world of Mega Drive games, but they arrived about six months too late to cash in on the height of the hype. Luckily for Krusty, his game is good enough to make a good impression in its own right. There's lots of puzzles, lots of fun and lots of cartoony graphics in here.
MEGA says: *Krusty's Super Fun House* is one of a rare breed of game: a licensed title that manages to combine a big name with a decent game. Good rat-splatting stuff.
FOR SALE: *Krusty's*
£20 – 0372 372023
WANTED: *Krusty's*
0343 552696

70. TERMINATOR

Publisher: Virgin
Price: £39.99

You're really enjoying yourself, you're marvelling at the lush graphics, you're being blown away by the non-stop all-action platform shoot-'em-up gameplay, you're blasting through the fourth level and... er, then you finish it.
MEGA says: Lovely game, but there's not nearly enough of it.
FOR SALE: *Terminator*
£20 – 0392 579364
TO SWAP: *Terminator*
For *Sonic 2* or *Speedball 2* – 0534 35037 after 6 pm

71. TWO CRUDE DUDES

Publisher: Data East (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

Well, it's a beat-'em-up and it's got some crude dudes in it. Er...
MEGA says: A fairly accurate version of the coin-op *Crude Busters* and it's OK. The game looks and plays well but it's too easy to finish.
FOR SALE: *Two Crude Dudes*
£20 – 0294 823771
£24 – 081 366 3375
£25 – 0222 483233

72. AFTERBURNER 2

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

The arcade version of *Afterburner* (all style and no content) threw the player and his lunch all around a hydraulic cockpit while simultaneously flinging huge graphics at the screen so fast that all you could do was wrench the joystick around wildly, keep your finger locked on the trigger and hope desperately for the best.

Mega Drive *Afterburner* recreates the feel of the coin-op perfectly, except that you'll have to get someone to come round and jiggle your chair for you while you play. What else is there to say?
MEGA says: *Afterburner 2* (ie *Afterburner*) is excellent short-term blasting, but it's thinner than gold plating on a window, and there are plenty of other shoot-'em-ups that'll give you bigger thrills. Try *Hellfire* or *Aero Blasters* first.
FOR SALE: *Afterburner 2*
£20 – 0222 711376

73. THUNDERFORCE 3

Publisher: Sega
Price: £35.99

Of course, with the arrival of *Thunderforce 4*, it might seem a bit ludicrous to rush out and buy this now. But if you don't, you'll be missing out on some of the best blasting mayhem this side of, er, anywhere. But not only that. You'll also be missing out on the chance to make your mates go "Woo!" at some of the best visual effects yet seen on the Mega Drive. It's not all cosmetics though – *Thunderforce 3* is also a damn fine shoot-'em-up in its own right with great weapons, loadsa power-ups and loadsa baddies. If you're a zapping fan, this is another one of those "must-haves", basically.
MEGA says: An incredibly slick and gorgeous blaster which is perhaps slightly better to look at than play, but that's probably because it's so bloody wonderful to look at. You shoot-'em-up fanatics will love some more of the same, but those new to the genre had better check out *Hellfire* or *Aero Blasters* first.
FOR SALE: *Thunderforce 3*
£20 – 0204 709076
TO SWAP: *Thunderforce 3*
(Jap) – 0822 833018

74. BUCK ROGERS "COUNTDOWN TO DOOMSDAY"

Publisher: EA
Price: £49.99

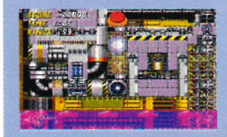
Not one of the most spectacular games you'll ever see, but it's got tons of depth. Searching around this futuristic strategic role playing game thing will keep you interested for a while, but MEGA wants to know why they left out the old Twiki the robot?
MEGA says: Very nice, but wouldn't it have been better to use the licence for a good old-fashioned shoot-'em-up? MEGA thinks so.
FOR SALE: *Buck Rogers*
£20 – 071 834 4644

75. NEW ZEALAND STORY

Publisher: Taito (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

TOP FIVE BACKDROPS

Which games have the most spectacular scenery?



① SONIC 2

Look at all that lovely scenery, all those layers, and the speed at which Sonic flies through them. Oh, and don't forget all those lovely bright colours. Couldn't you just go on holiday in the Green Hill Zone and spend a fortnight in Camp Sonic?

② ECCO

OK, so most of the action is underwater, but the atmosphere set by the little coral reefs and fish and all sorts of other underwater stuff is just breathtaking. It's also very realistic and makes you go all gooey and environmentally friendly.

③ QUACKSHOT

This is arguably the best-looking Disney game. With all those different destinations to go to like the South Pole and Dracula's Castle, this game is a real graphical masterpiece. And if you don't agree, you can just go away, 'cos we don't care.

④ FLASHBACK

Although you may think of *Flashback* in terms of animation only, the realistic backgrounds make the game look more like a film than a console game. And all the levels vary greatly, giving you a real sense of atmosphere in which to play the game.

⑤ WORLD OF ILLUSION

This Disney game may not be up to the standard of *Quackshot*, but it's still incredibly good. There are some lovely effects and stuff, but the really excellent bit is the cake level. Yes, we know it's a bit of a rip-off of *Castle of Illusion*, but it's still fab.

TOP FIVE ANIMATED SPRITES

Here are the Mega Drive's five smoothest movers...

① CONRAD HART FROM *FLASHBACK*

This guy runs, jumps, rolls, walks, creeps and falls down in such perfect animation that you could be forgiven for thinking you were watching a film. Absolutely stunning.

② SPOT FROM *COOL SPOT*

He's cute, he's fast, but more importantly, he's got loads of frames of animation – from wiping himself down after a long fall to playing with his yo-yo when he's bored – it's all done brilliantly and adds a helluva lot to the game.

③ SONIC FROM *SONIC 2*

Just because *Sonic 2* is a fast moving platform game doesn't mean the sprites are boring. Just leave Sonic alone for a while and wait for him to lie down until you pick up the pad. Excellent. And standing on a ledge is just sooo funny, isn't it?

④ MICK AND MACK FROM *GLOBAL GLADIATORS*

Although the game isn't up to much, the characters are very cute, and when they start blowing bubble gum because they're bored, well, our sides nearly split open.

⑤ AXEL, BLAZE, MAZ AND SKATE FROM *STREETS OF RAGE 2*

This is the first official 16-Mbit game, and if you take a look at some of the character animation, you can see why – very macho, very hard, but also very good.

TOP 100

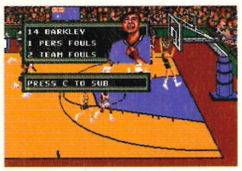
Another classic coin-op that's seen incarnations on just about every format imaginable, but the Mega Drive version takes an unexpected twist by being less of a conversion than a rearrangement of the original. All the same features found in the arcade game are present and correct, but the level layouts and structures are almost completely different. While this is a bit of a bummer for arcade perfectionists, it means that *New Zealand Story* fans now have a whole new game to play.

MEGA says: *New Zealand Story* on the Mega Drive is as cute, clever and addictive as it ever was.

WANTED: *New Zealand Story*
0343 552696

76. TEAM USA BASKETBALL

Publisher: EASN
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA



This is the best Mega Drive basketball game so far. Excellent two-player action and wacky signature moves make this the essential purchase for all basketball fans.

MEGA says: Shame its: a) just a tad too easy; and b) not quite up to the usual EASN standard. But apart from these two quibbles, it's lovely.

77. TRUXTON

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

Shoot-'em-up, huh? Vertical scrolling, huh? Bit easy to beat, isn't it?

MEGA says: Well yes, but on the whole, *Truxton* is a decent enough effort. It's good fun to pick up and play every now and again, but it'll never change your life, or even give you one especially wonderful evening. Mmm, sorry.

78. DRAGON'S FURY

Publisher: Tengen
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

It's a pinball game.

MEGA says: And it's lovely.

79. OLYMPIC GOLD

Publisher: US Gold
Price: £39.99 The graphics may be lush, but at the root of it all, it's just a creative way to pummel the living daylights out of your joypad.

MEGA says: Pretty dull by yourself, but excellent fun when you've got a few mates round.

FOR SALE: *Olympic Gold*
£25/Swap – 0274 571085
£20 – 0935 25494
£20/Swap – 0904 702251

80. KING SALMON

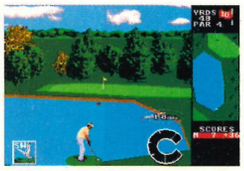
Publisher: Vic Tokai
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 10 of MEGA

Although the Japanese version may have been as unfathomable as an unfathomable thing, this has turned out to be an, er, interesting game. Not everyone's cup of tea, but nowhere near as dull as sitting on a riverbank for four hours trying to catch a stickleback.

MEGA says: Give this a go rather than dismissing it out of hand – you might be pleasantly surprised by the Mega Drive's first fishing simulator.

81. WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD

Publisher: US Gold
Price: £37.99



Well, it's pretty good, but it's not really *PGA Tour*, now is it?

MEGA says: No it isn't. Unless you're absolutely golf loopy nuts and just *have* to have every available sim, get *PGA* and settle for that.

82. BATTLE SQUADRON

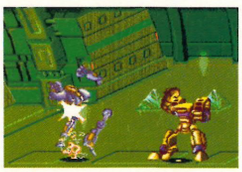
Publisher: EA
Price: £39.99

It's Amiga conversion time again, but this vertically-scrolling blaster looked pretty dated even when it originally appeared about two years ago, and it hasn't really improved with age.

MEGA says: Bog-standard vertical zaperama with little or nothing to make it stand out from the crowd.

83. CYBORG JUSTICE

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99
Reviewed in Issue 9 of MEGA



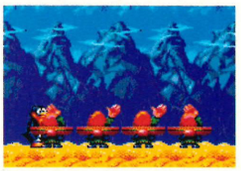
Walking along level after level of other Cyborgs, beating seven shades of shimmering metal out of them and then repeating the process may not sound like the best game idea in the world, but thanks to some fab gameplay and graphics, it turns into a real romp.

MEGA says: A fab off-the-wall beat-'em-up which has the very nice addition of allowing you to take the bits from the Cyborg you've just beaten up and use them as part of your own armour.

FOR SALE: *Cyborg Justice*
£30/Swap plus £15 – 071 221 3656

84. AQUATIC GAMES

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Price: £39.99



Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

James Pond is back. This time, however, he's taking part (with his friends) in the Aquatic Games. Work out the best tactic for each event and get those gold medals. Lovely graphics and some taxing events make this a fun game, especially for those younger Mega Drive owners.

MEGA says: It's button bashing alright, but not as we know it.

85. BIO-HAZARD BATTLE

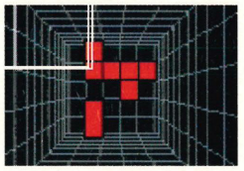
Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 3 of MEGA

Sexy graphics and spooky sound don't make a game, but they do go a long way. Thankfully *Bio-Hazard Battle* has some exciting shooting action to go with it.

MEGA says: There's nothing new in here, but it's very playable.

86. BLOCKOUT

Publisher: EA
Price: £19.99



Your brain will never forgive you. Imagine *Tetris*, played looking down a well, with three-dimensional vector-graphic wire-frame blocks which can be moved, turned and rotated in each of the three axes. Having problems imagining it? Just you try playing it, mate.

MEGA says: Complete mind torture, but if you're more laid back than a particularly relaxed sloth, you'll get some serious fun out of this one.

87. F1 CIRCUS

Publisher: Nichibutsu (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

This game is second only to the *Super Monaco GP* twins, *F1 Circus* looks ropey but plays well. The Formula One tie-in is well implemented and playing the game makes a fairly realistic representation of putting you in the cockpit of the real thing, ie you'll crash a lot.

MEGA says: If realism gets your motor running (even if it's at the expense of lush graphics), then check this out.

88. DAVID ROBINSON BASKETBALL

Publisher: Sega
Price: £39.99

This game isn't up to *Team USA Basketball*, but it boasts smooth, fast action, and some of the nicest basketball effects we've seen.

MEGA says: Bouncy bouncy, bouncy bouncy, fun, fun, fun, fun.

89. SUPER HANG ON

Publisher: Sega
Price: £19.99

Road Rash, without all the violence. Yes, we know it sounds like a bit of a bad idea, but if what you're after is pure high-speed racing thrills, then this is still your best bet. A near-perfect rendition of the coin-op, too – just try to stop yourself from leaning into those bends...

MEGA says: It looks lovely, it plays beautifully, it'll last for ever. In addition to *Super Monaco* and *Road Rash*, this is the only other genuinely essential racing game.

FOR SALE: *Super Hang On*
£10/Swap – 081 311 5739

90. SPORTS TALK BASEBALL

Publisher: Sega USA (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

A decent baseball game, that tells you what's going on as it happens.

MEGA says: As with *Joe Montana Football 2*, great for people with no friends.

91. DODGEBALL

Publisher: Sega Japan (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)
Reviewed in Issue 1 of MEGA

Volleyball meets *Speedball* in this strange, but entertaining Japanese game. The idea is to knock your opponent's team members out of the court with a high-speed chuck of a medicine ball. Decidedly strange, inevitably violent and great fun.

MEGA says: Not sure about this vulture/anorak business, but *Dodgeball* remains a good two-(or more) player game.

WANTED: *Dodgeball*
0986 873456

92. SUNSET RIDERS

Publisher: Konami
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 8 of MEGA

This fast-paced shooting action, set in the Wild West, is great fun. It's a shame they left out the other two characters from the coin-op though.

MEGA says: Um, the game is a bit on the easy side.

93. ARCUS ODYSSEY

Publisher: Renovation (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

A lovely looking 3D game, which scores points for offering some of the best simultaneous two-player action that's going.

MEGA says: This is OK by us.

94. INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE

Publisher: US Gold
Price: £39.99
Reviewed in Issue 4 of MEGA

One of the greatest adventurers of all time (and he's fictional too) appears on the Mega Drive. The graphics are nice and the film tie-in is handled very effectively. However, owing to some little gameplay glitches the game ends up being very tough and furthermore very frustrating.

MEGA says: Take a careful look at this before you buy it.

95. WWF SUPER WRESTLE MANIA

Publisher: Flying Edge (IMPORT)
Price: £35
Reviewed in Issue 4 of MEGA

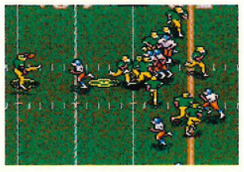
Big, beefy, and as tough as nails. If you fancy getting your hands on a few American wrestlers and giving them the suplex treatment, then this might be the game for you.

MEGA says: The two-player head-to-head mode is quite good fun, but the one-player game lacks excitement.

FOR SALE: *WWF Super Wrestlemania*
Sell £20/Swap plus £5 – 071 221 3656
£20 – 0252 874932

96. JOE MONTANA 2

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99



Even this sequel to the original "not too bad but let's face it, it's not as good as *John Madden*" American football game fails to lace the boots or plump the padding of the boy from Electronic Arts.

MEGA says: This game is not as good as *John Madden Football*, but it does talks to you, which has got to be something.

97. FIGHTING MASTERS

Publisher: Treco (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

Solid two-player beat-'em-up action is the name of this lovely looking game. It's just a shame that the beast is not a bit more substantial in one-player mode.

MEGA says: Two-player pommelling can be a great laugh, but you'd be well advised not to bother with this if you're a solo scrapper.

WANTED: *Fighting Masters*
0622 726579

98. CHUCK ROCK

Publisher: Virgin Games
Price: £39.99

This is an old Amiga game which has been brushed up a bit for the Mega Drive and, as you might expect, it's a bit of a lush looker. What you might not expect is a fabby prehistoric platform game which plays like an episode of The Flintstones (except it's funnier) and in which you dispose of your enemies by bouncing them off your gigantic beer belly.

MEGA says: This is a really enjoyable platformer, packed to the brim with variety, lovely little touches and more imagination than a dozen lesser efforts in this genre.

TO SWAP: *Chuck Rock*
For *Sonic 2* or *Speedball 2* – 0534 35037 after 6 pm

99. TETRIS

Publisher: (IMPORT)
Price: (see importer)

OK, hands up everyone who doesn't know about *Tetris*. Three of you, eh? Well, where have you been for the last couple of years? On Mars for goodness sakes?

MEGA says: The biggest and sexiest puzzle game of all eternity comes to the Mega Drive. If, by some incredibly fluke, you don't already have a *Tetris* game, then get this one now. Either that or get a Game Boy!

100. 688 ATTACK SUB

Publisher: Sega
Price: £34.99

Nice, atmospheric submarine simulator with a bit of zapping and some pleasant aesthetics.

MEGA says: Not the kind of thing you ever imagine anybody buying a Mega Drive for, but good at what it does.

OTHER CARTS FOR SALE OR TO SWAP

ALEX KIDD
£15 – 0935 25494
ALIEN 3
£20 – 071 352 7117
£15 – 0473 622905
£20 – 0793 750390
Swap – 0227 767804
Swap – 0236 760422
ALIEN STORM
(Jap) £15 – 081 451 5424
Swap – 071 377 6990
ARNOLD PALMER GOLF
£15 – 081 5540050
£15/Swap – 0527 503023
£20/Swap – 0734 340896
£15 – 0904 701590
ASSAULT SUIT LEYNOS
£20/Swap – 0734 340896
BART VS THE SPACE MUTANTS
Swap – 0276 26334
BATMAN RETURNS
Swap – 0803 558575
BONANZA BROTHERS
£15 – 0428 683319
BUCK ROGERS
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£20 – 081 561 2804
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£15 – 0935 25494
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Sell/Swap – 021 459 7576
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Swap – 0343 552696
CORPORATION
£25/Swap – 0275 393397
£15 – 0773 550366
DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS
£25 – 0274 621731
£20 – 071 834 4644
£17/Swap – 0836 696710
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£20 – 0768 66856
FATAL REWIND
£15 – 0372 372023
FERRARI GP CHALLENGE
£20 – 0442 213617
GEMFIRE
£20 – 071 834 4644
GEORGE FOREMAN'S BOXING
£22 – 071 221 3656
GRANADA X
£20/Swap – 0734 340896
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Sell/Swap – 021 459 7576
£12/Swap – 0836 696710
HERZOG ZWEI
£20/Swap – 0734 340896
£20/Swap – 0203 543912
THE IMMORTAL
Swap – 0256 56240
£20 – 081 451 5424
£20 – 071 263 4907
LAKERS VS CELTICS
£25/Swap – 0274 571085
LAST BATTLE
£20 – 0203 543912
£10/Swap – 0904 702251
THE LITTLE MERMAID
£20 – 071 834 4644
MARBLE MADNESS
Swap – 081 468 7042
MUSHA ALESTE
£20/Swap – 0734 340896
OUTLANDER
£22 – 071 221 3656
RAMBO 3
£20 – 0367 253194
SPACE HARRIER 2
£15 – 0732 351220
SPIDER-MAN
£20 – 0734 662562
£15 – 0935 25494
£20/Swap – 0559 363323
Swap – 0254 264427
STARFLIGHT
£27 – 0202 516400
SUPER REAL BASKETBALL
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TALESPIN
£25 – 081 503 0878
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Previews are a waste of time. (Dyer... – Neil) We can't judge games, and the screenshots speak for themselves, so text is pointless. So I'm not going to write anything this mon... (Reconsider while I oil this baseball bat – Neil)

JURASSIC PARK

Tranquillise this huge beast thus

All of a sudden my head is awash with ideas, brimming with eloquent prose, and I can now appreciate the value of a well-written preview

Sega • August

If you can't stand the heat, what the hell are you doing in a volcano? Don't fall too far or you'll burn in the lava pits. Stay up top and get eaten instead

John Hammond is a scientist. His job is a difficult one. The mental effort involved is immense. He also has to put in very long hours. One night, while working late on a new formula for self-cleaning Blu-Tack (it is, after all, a foul substance when it gets full of hair and stuff), he feels hungry and prepares himself a Pot Noodle.

Unfortunately for Hammond, he fails to stick closely to the instructions, puts less than boiled water in it, leaves it for ten minutes instead of five and singularly fails to stir the sachet of ketchup in properly. The next day, Hammond discovers, to his horror, that the remnants of his late night beef and tomato snack have turned into a Tyrannosaurus Rex. Horror ensues.

And, of course, such a chilling and spectacular tale of prehistoric woe is perfect Mega Drive fodder, which is why Sega have been busy producing the Mega Drive game you see here. Before I go on, let me make it clear that this game is as yet only 50% finished, so by the time the game actually comes out, it could be significantly different to what you see here.

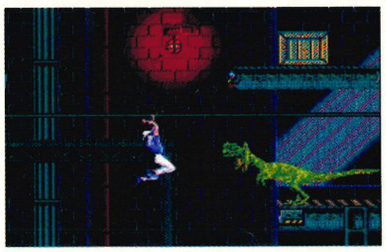
Looking rather special

Unsurprisingly, it's a platform game which is vaguely reminiscent of *Flashback*, only, erm, not quite. As yet, the structure of the gameplay is unclear. There are no real puzzle aspects at the moment and it's restricted to shooting dinosaurs and collecting weapons. However, there is evidence of more cerebral elements, in that certain sections contain blockages and obstacles and so on that, although impassable at the moment, will undoubtedly need cracking in the finished game.

Graphically, the game is already looking rather special. The backdrops are very rich and jungly and it's perhaps this that makes it similar to *Flashback*. And then there are the dinosaurs. There are tiny little ones that bite your neck, flippin' great man-sized ones that kick you to death (and they can also do flying kicks which is a bit curious) and beyond that there are a few really huge mothers to make your bowels move involuntarily.

Sadly, the game won't be released until August, while the CD version won't be out until Christmas, but if you're getting all worked up about some red hot dinosaur action, don't forget the film will be, wait for it, at a cinema near you from, ooh, round about now.

Care must be taken when piloting a boat, as waterfalls often drag you to your doom. This chap looks positively ecstatic about it though



Not the best of positions to be in. Your hands are busy holding on, leaving your more vulnerable bits at the mercy of that, er, thing

Not really a lot to say about this castle cellar, except that the floor seems to be covered in Butterkist (Butterkist? Ra, ra, ra! – Neil)

Weirdness is the order of the day. As well as these axe-wielding kids, you also come face-to-face with killer babies. How odd!

It may not actually be called this when it finally hits British shores, but for now, take a look at...

ZOMBIES ATE MY NEIGHBOURS

Konami • November

Ever seen the arcade version of this game? No, neither have I. And that's because there isn't one. The game looks like it's been faithfully recreated from an arcade smash but it is, in fact, entirely original. It's a sort of variant on the *Gauntlet/Smash TV* theme, which can be played simultaneously by two people. The idea is to wander around the various play areas (like people's gardens or a spooky castle) collecting, or rather rescuing, normal everyday folk while blasting, beating, freezing and generally destroying zombies, monsters, killer babies and so on.

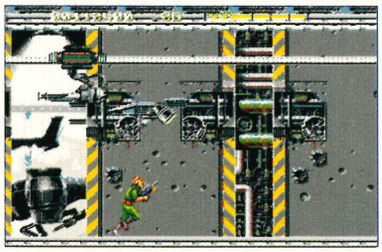
Visually, the game is very humorous, and while the animation isn't particularly sophisticated there's plenty of comic atmosphere in there. The two-player mode is particularly good, because at times the game becomes very frantic and if you run out of firepower at the wrong time, you'll need your partner to help you out. And as we all know, two-player games are really the most popular thing around at the moment, so this can only count in Konami's favour.

Heaven only knows what the ultimate aim of the game is, but this is definitely one of the more humorous, individual games out there, so it's almost bound to instantly grab a big following (if the gameplay turns out well enough of course). Anyway, enough of my inane waffle, just take a look at the screenshots, try to work out what the hell it's all about, then find out for sure when you read the review in a month's time.

This bloke looks familiar, but rather than ask him where you've seen him before, run like hell from his chainsaw. Or you may get cut up about it

TERMINATOR

Virgin • TBA



The Skynet building. It's a bit bare at the moment but that will change

The film's pretty old now, but Virgin's got a licence and they're gonna use it. And besides, *Terminator* on cart went down rather well, so Mega CD gamers should be on for a bit of Arnie-bashing too.

We all know the story, Kyle Reese is a resistance fighter from a future earth which is terrorised by machines. He travels back to the present day to chase and destroy a Terminator cyborg who has also come back in turn to kill the woman who's going to give birth to the future leader of the resistance.

Fine, so with that in mind you take on the role of Reese and battle your way through level after level of platform shoot-'em-up action. The early stages take place in the future, with Reese trying to get into the skynet building

Well, if you will wear a green shell suit, you should expect some grief

When back on earth, Reese has to find and protect Sarah Connor while avoiding the various hazards that Los Angeles has to offer. He's initially armed with a shotgun, but, as is usually the case with platform shoot-'em-ups, you can pick up additional weapons along the way. The animation on Reese is particularly good and, in fact, the graphics throughout the whole game are pretty good. The future scenes are suitably red and post-apocalyptic, and Reese has to get to, and fight his way through, the Skynet building in order to get to the time chamber. Once you've travelled back to 1984 in Los Angeles you need to clamber across buildings, ultimately reaching the factory and the final encounter with the Terminator.

In between each level, there will be Full Motion Video clips taken directly from the movie, which will, we hope, add oodles of atmosphere to the proceedings. *Terminator* on the Mega Drive was, frankly, not bad, but a bit shallow and far too short. Many thought it was a bit of a waste of a licence. Hopefully the Mega CD version will more than make up for this.

UP 'N' COMING...

To be completely honest, these may appear when we say, but then again they may not. It's this kind of speculation that makes the world of consoles such a lovely industry in which to work. (Quick call the doctor, Andy's finally snapped – Neil)

ANY MINUTE NOW

Cool Spot – Virgin
A rather fab little platform game with some lovely animation. What more could you ask for from a game?

Final Fight CD – Sega
A spot-on arcade conversion and thankfully the arcade game was fab. If you're after a bit of bloodthirsty beat-'em-up action for your Mega CD, this more than delivers the goods.

Mazin Wars – Sega
Using two very different viewpoints, this scrolling slash-'em-up falls into that already large "mediocre" category.

Captain America And The Avengers – Sega
We reviewed this some time back on American import. The official version is the same, which means it's a bit crap really.

King of the Monsters – Sega
Urgh! This very dull, unplayable beat-'em-up is due to hit the streets. Run for your lives, it really it quite awful.

Afterburner 3 – Sega
Although this isn't the graphical jaw-dropper that everyone thought it might be, it isn't all bad and might be worth a look.

Night Trap CD – Sega
Ignore the controversy surrounding this game and just sit back and get completely drawn in by one of the better CD games around.

Robo Aleste – Sega
Otherwise known as *Nobunaga And His Ninja Force*, which we reviewed on import a while ago. It's just a bog-standard vertically-scrolling shoot-'em-up.

Superman – Virgin
If you want more information about this comic-related game, check out the full review on page 53 of this issue of MEGA.

Outrun 2019 – Sega
Well, the original *Outrun* was crap in the 1980s and, in keeping with tradition, it's crap in the year 2019 too.

X-Men – Sega
Lovely, lovely, lovely. All those frisky little mutants running around some nice scenery make this quite a cool little platformer.

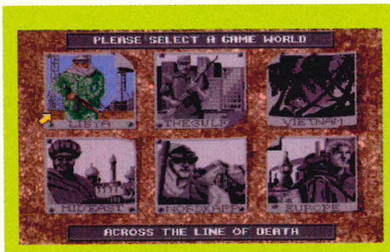
Ball Jacks – Sega
Every now and then a game comes along that shows just how bad console games can really be. Well done lads, you've succeeded.

Jungle Strike – EA
And every now and then a game comes along that shows just how brilliant console games can really be. Well done lads.

Shining Force – Sega
A mammoth role-playing game that is so polished that it should appeal to all gamesplayers. Give it a look, you'll love it.

Double Clutch – Sega
Ever heard of a game called *Micro Machines*? Well, it's a top-down racing game like this one, but this one's crap, and *Micro Machines* most definitely isn't.

Flintstones – Sega
It's not a bad little game, but as with most games that have big licences, it doesn't live up to the name. I mean, there's not even that famous shout of "Wiiiiiiiiiimmaaaaaa!"



Okey dokey skip, where do you want to go? Apparently Libya's very nice at this time of year

Quite simply, the mission briefing screen tells you exactly what the next mission will involve

A flight sim just wouldn't be a flight sim without an internal view of the pilot would it now?

F15 STRIKE EAGLE

Climb into the cockpit, blah, blah, jet fighter aircraft etc, etc, zoom, dagga, dagga, and so on. Oh... just read the preview for Pete's sake

Microprose • September

Yes, I don't know if you need an explanation, but this is a bad thing to happen. Don't do this if you can possibly help it

Hot on the tail of *MiG-29* comes a flight sim from Microprose, the people who have always had a reputation for being somewhat fab at producing flight sims.

Now personally, I'm not into all this derring-do, and bravery above and beyond the call of duty crap. Frankly I'd prefer a nice civilian charter flight across to Jersey and back but that wouldn't make good video gaming would it? No, so I was dragged kicking and screaming down to the Microprose offices knowing full well that I'd get all worked up, forget all the usual techniques and end up prematurely ejecting over Libya or something like that.

And I was right, but at the same time it was jolly good fun. Apparently the programmers have had the devil's own job trying to cram the whole of *F15* on to the Mega Drive (it was an Amiga game previously you see) but after much tweaking they've managed it.

It's a big game, but fortunately there are four different skill levels (Rookie, Pilot, Veteran and Ace). Rookie's a sort of training level for people who are notoriously crap at flight sims (that's me). It contains all sorts of useful features for crap people, like an autopilot that kicks in by itself if you're going off course. It also places you straight in the air so there's none of that awkward taking-off business.

Then, when you feel confident enough, you can take on the big boys in the higher levels.

All the usual in-flight options are there. The increasingly popular time warp feature is included in this game also. "What is it?" you ask. Well, if a mission requires you to travel huge distances, switch on the time warp and you get there a whole lot quicker. It has to be used carefully though because dogfighting or locating targets at this speed is a virtual impossibility. Always remember to switch it off when you run into trouble. There are also several views you can select, such as side, rear, above, about five o'clock at a slightly jaunty angle, and so on.

But what does it have that other flight sims don't? One of the features that is more commonly found on PC games is the ability to change the level of detail in the scenery. In the Mega Drive version you can have two levels. If you want to fly around a detailed landscape, the speed of play will suffer. If you fancy a fast game, the scenery suffers. It's a simple idea, but it's a nice touch to let you tailor the game to your individual tastes. And perhaps it's this attention to detail that has made Microprose such a success in the flight sim field in the past.

F15 Strike Eagle is looking very slick indeed, so, as usual, our advice to flight sim folk is to keep an eye on our review pages for the full story (we'll probably be doing it next ish, so keep reading).

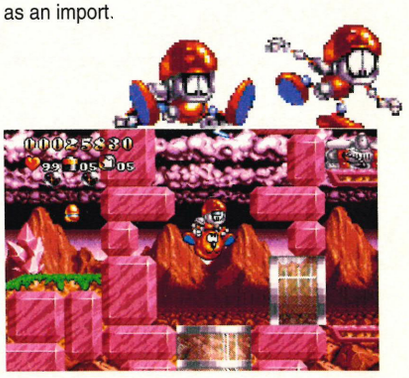
This is me, letting fly with a missile. Of course in this example I'm not actually aiming at a target, but...

... here, my missile is safely locked onto a radar station and has, in fact, already made contact

TIN HEAD

Microprose • TBA

Much to our dismay, this game is unlikely ever to appear in the UK officially. But we're telling you about it anyway because no doubt it will ultimately become available as an import.



Unlike real life Space Hoppers (which bob up and down apologetically) this one sends Tin Head high into the air

It's a platform game featuring a little character who has a, yes that's right, tin head. He can flip his head back and shoot bullets from it, which is pretty handy. And his other talents? Well, actually he doesn't have any (apart from looking uncannily like a certain chucklesome part of a man's anatomy) but that doesn't matter at all because all he needs to get through the various hazards is his big red domed flip-top head.

The graphics are gorgeous, with some neat animations and some of the most whopping great bosses you've ever seen. That's all the information we have for you at the moment, but the screenshots say it all anyway. More news as it arrives.

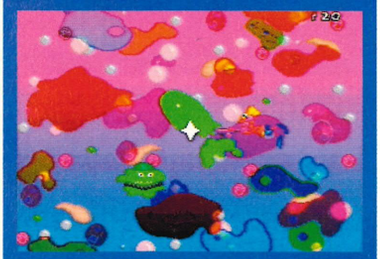
Just cop a load of that huge boss. All that shrapnel around him is, erm I don't know how to tell you this, poor old Tin Head exploding

Not the most thrilling of shots, but it shows you the lovely backdrops doesn't it? Well, doesn't it? Oh, please yourselves...

BART'S NIGHTMARE

Acclaim • August

I played this game on the Super NES ages ago and while many Super NES owners think it's a hoot, I frankly did not. However, rather than get all depressed about it, let's instead hope that the Mega Drive version will be better – after all, it wouldn't be the first time the Mega Drive has shown the SNES how to do its job properly would it?



No Mega Drive shots available, but the SNES game's the same

This is the Indiana Jones bit. Colourful little game isn't it?

The plot is a good one. Bart's been doing his homework but has rather stupidly fallen asleep at his desk. He enters a bizarre nightmare in which his homework has been blown away by the wind and he has to get it back. Each time he finds a page, he enters one of many strange levels. There's a Bartman shoot-'em-up, a Bartzilla shoot-'em-up, a curious Bart's bloodstream level in which our hero has to blow up vile anti-bodies or viruses with a bicycle pump, a Bart-plays-Indiana Jones section, and, finally, Itchy And Scratchy, a very cartoony squash-'em-up.

It must be said, many of the sections are quite good, it's just that in the SNES version, the controls are a little "odd" so it doesn't play very smoothly, but we'll let you know next month if any improvement has been made on the Mega Drive version.

The Bartzilla level is very weird indeed. Mind you, so is the cartoon on TV so that's OK then

This is one of the scrolling shoot-'em-up sections. Curiously, you can fly just as well under the water as you can in the air

Comedy is never far away in this game. On this level the rather crap enemies have set their bottoms alight. Strange but true

Konami's latest hero is a, well we're not entirely sure what he is

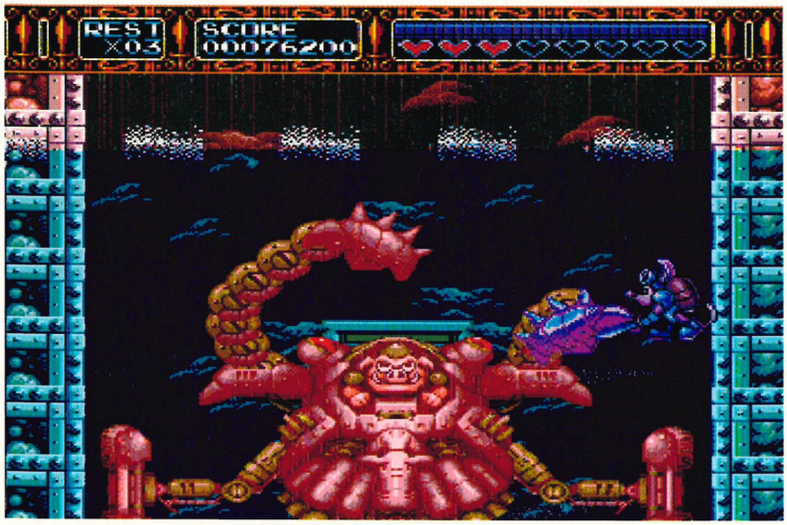
ROCKET KNIGHT ADVENTURES

Konami • September

This game is fairly similar to *Tiny Toon Adventures* – lots of collectibles, lots of leaping and so on. The main character can perform a number of little tricks to enable him to overcome obstacles and opponents. There's the straightforward stuff like running jumping and crouching, but he can also use his tail to hang from branches and so on. And as well as this, he has, of course, got his jet pack. For the most part, he can simply power it up to fly in one short burst over tall obstacles or bounce up the walls of a vertical tunnel. However, on certain stages, he picks up a sort of power booster and the game then becomes a horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up.

The graphics are very well-drawn and incredibly cartoony, but, unlike many games of this sort, many of the sprites are on a very large scale. The majority of them are of normal size, but even mid-way through the level you'll suddenly encounter an enemy sat inside a very large mechanical walker or something. And then, just when you think it's got as big as it can get, you encounter the bosses, and they're, well, huge.

There are few games that you can get straight into and enjoy right from the start, but this is one of them. It's been a while since we've seen a game which we all looked at and immediately said "Ooh, that looks a bit smart!" so we're expecting good things from *Rocket Knight Adventures*. Read more next issue.



If this game's got one thing, it's huge bosses, and here's a prime example. Huge robotic crustacean fun, for absolutely everyone

UP 'N' COMING...

Tecmo Cup Football Game – Sega
The Japanese are world famous for their obscurity. And a role-playing football game definitely fits into that obscure category.

Time Gal CD – Sega
She's sent into the future, and indeed back into the past. If games were measured in years, this would be the biggest.

Marky Mark CD – Sega
This Make-Your-Own-Video malarkey is getting a bit on the tedious side, and with tedious people like Marky Mark, it's not (immediately anyway) getting any better.

INXS CD – Sega
But with sexy Michael Hutchence at the helm of this lovely (choke!) Australian band, this might be quite good. We want real music.

Chester Cheetah – Kaneko
Er, dunno really, it's bound to be a platform game though. I mean what else can you do with a guy who advertises crisps?

AUGUST

B.O.B. – EA
Another one that's just managed to sneak in in time for review. For all those lovely review-type details, check out page 47.

Technoclash – EA
And the same can be said for this game, funnily enough from EA as well. Those boys at Electronic Arts think they're really funny you know. See page 50 for the review.

Ultimate Soccer – Sega
After checking out our big football feature (whaddya mean "What football feature?") starting on page 20 you should be really excited about this one.

Instruments of Chaos: Starring Young Indiana Jones – Sega
This game, starring Indy as a younger bloke, is looking good and has some really neat sounds for you to listen to as you play.

Jurassic Park – Sega
The film is going to be massive and everyone loves dinosaurs (not literally, but you get my meaning) so the game is going to be big as well. Take a look at the preview on page 88 for more information.

Golden Axe 3 – Sega
This is the third in the series of this classic and very popular slash-'em-up. Expect to see some new characters and really amazing magical effects in this one.

Ranger X – Sega
A no-nonsense shoot-'em-up in every sense. Just blast away and ask questions later.

MiG-29 – Domark
When consoles first arrived in the UK, computer snobs said they couldn't do proper simulations. MiG-29 (among others) proves them wrong. Ha!

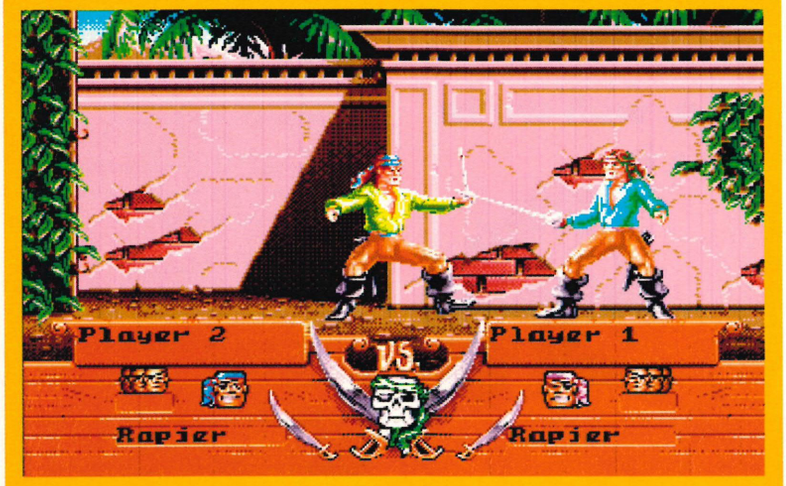
Two Tribes – Virgin
Don't be confused by the name, this isn't anything to do with Frankie Goes to Hollywood – it is, in fact, the sequel to *Populous*. Head scratching ahoy!

Batman Returns CD – Sega
If CD versions of cart games are going to become a trend, then this is the way to go. With an excellent driving game added to the dull platform bits, this is now quite a good little game. See the review on page 42.

Ecco The Dolphin CD – Sega
This, on the other hand (as far as we know), is just going to be the same game – all underwater antics, with some CD sound added for fun.

PIRATE'S GOLD

Microprose • Sept



Here's the arcadey bit. Choose your weapon (cutlass, longsword or rapier) and basically slice the other guy up a bit. Games violent? Nah!

There's nothing like a Jolly Roger

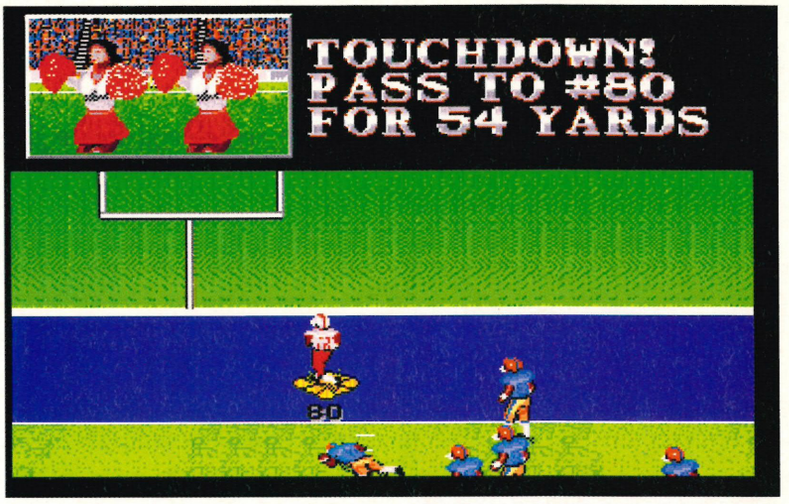
Not content with merely releasing flight sims all the time, Microprose are also working on a Mega Drive version of *Pirate's Gold*. It's a curious game which features a mish-mash of game styles. There's a bit of strategy, arcade sections and various other tasks to be performed.

Basically, some old pirate has retired, leaving you his ship and, what's more, his job. In order to successfully fill his shoes you have to do all sorts of piratey things: visit dodgy establishments to drum up a crew, sail the seven seas attacking other vessels (maybe capturing a few to build up a fleet), engage in sword fights with other pirates, and generally be as dastardly as possible.

The thing is, that although the idea is fairly simple, there are lots of elements within each section to make things more involved. For example, there's a political system which means that if the French and Spanish are at war, befriending one side will almost certainly mean that the other party involved will not take kindly to you. Also, even in something as simple as fighting, you have a choice of swords which are more or less effective in certain situations.

Quite how well all this will gel together is unclear as yet, but it's certainly looking interesting, and thankfully very different to the usual stream of platformers and beat-'em-ups we've had to suffer so far. More details on this one next month...

At last, the moment I've been waiting for. Here goes... "Ooh arr! Land Ho! Thar she bleedin' well blows!" and so on. Getting a bit sad now isn't it?



Gosh, those sprites and that pitch display look awfully familiar – almost as if the graphics engine was the same as that used in *Madden*. Surely not

And now, for real footy fanatics...

BILL WALSH COLLEGE FOOTBALL

EA • August

This is a curious one. On the one hand, if someone launched a footy game, then a similar game based on the premier league, and then several further titles with different stats and stuff, it would undoubtedly sell well. And indeed, in the US, Electronic Arts have pretty much done that with American football, the latest being this title. Also, even in the UK the trilogy of *Madden* games (all very similar but each slightly improved) has gone down a storm. But how far will this popularity extend? OK, American footy does have a following over here, but is it just restricted to the NFL and the excitement of the Superbowl? Will anyone really be interested in college football? Time will tell, but in the meantime let's see what *Bill Walsh* has that previous American footy games don't.

The display is very much the same as *Madden*. The same graphics engine has been used for both pitch and players, so visually you're not getting anything new. Calling audibles has become a lot more valuable though, in that rather than just having a choice of three, you can now define which ones you want to call. Play wise, the on-screen choice has increased. Also, one difference that will be in the game is actually a difference of real college football too. After a touchdown, a team can normally only kick the ball for extra points. In the college game, you can either kick or run the ball for additional points.

The only other changes are in the presentation, with completely new static screens, but this is, after all, only cosmetic. For those of you who can't get enough American footy, make sure you're here for the review next month.

Don't quite know what this screen's for, but it's a bench surrounded by people who are quite obviously not involved in the game

The play selection screen. As you can see, there are a few more plays actually visible on screen than in the *Madden* series of games. Yip!

GENERAL CHAOS

Fed up of all the usual run-of-the-mill game styles? Then this curious creation may be just the ticket

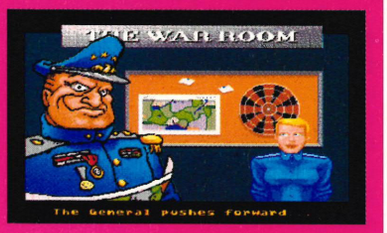
EA • August

Electronic Arts' game-making antics have taken another curious turn. This time, they've moved away from sports sims, bike racers and platformers. Now they've gone and produced what can only be described as an arcade small-scale strategy wargame for people whose brains are able to react to potentially deadly situations in a matter of nanoseconds.

General Chaos pits the player against the computer or another human opponent. Each person chooses a team of soldiers. Most teams consist of five blokes armed with guns, missiles, grenades, flame throwers and dynamite. But there's also a special team of two crack commando types who are basically mad and go berserk all over the place.

When the game starts, each team starts firing at, and attacking, each other. What the players have to do is use the on-screen cursor to reposition their troops to either move them out of danger or move them into a better attacking position. Whenever a soldier gets injured, the player has to move a red cross cursor over the injured party, and, if one is available, a medic will appear and either heal him then and there or carry him off screen to get him fixed up. Eventually, one of the players will get the upper hand and ultimately one of the sides will be wiped out.

It may all sound rather curious, but it's surprisingly easy to get into, and although the gameplay is rather bizarre, it's immediately enjoyable. It's quite refreshing to see a different style of game appearing on the Mega Drive (like *Pirate's Gold* previewed on page 92 of this section) so if you fancy a change from the normal run-of-the-mill rubbish, find out what this ingenious new title is really like next issue.



Here's the General. But, to be honest, the MEGA boys (rather sadly) are more interested in the rather shapely cartoon woman

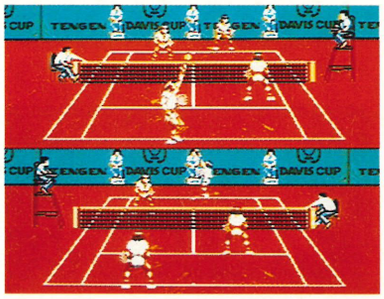
For some real fun, choose the commandos. There are only two of 'em but they're mad as hell and have no regard for anything

That geezer on the right, who has just hit the deck, is the bomb expert. He just caused that rather inaccurately-placed explosion

DAVIS CUP TENNIS

Domark • September

The Tennis games are coming in thick and fast now, and the latest news is of *Davis Cup Tennis*, from Tengen. There's not really a lot new you can say about tennis games because they all look fairly similar. It's the gameplay department that counts, so since we haven't actually played the game yet we can't comment on that. What is worthy of note, however, is that unlike many games out there, *Davis Cup Tennis* uses a split-screen mode on the two-player game rather that one person having to use the awkward smaller player behind the net. That in itself is a welcome addition. Let's just hope the gameplay is up to standard.

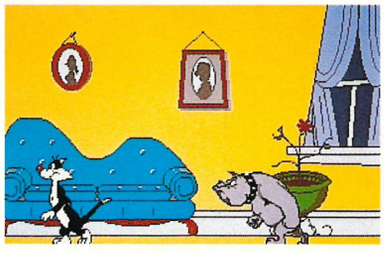


***Davis Cup Tennis* rather refreshingly has a split-screen two-player option. A decent tennis game at last?**

SYLVESTER AND TWEETY

Tecmagik • September

Cartoony games seem to be the order of the day at the moment, so here's another one. *Sylvester and Tweety* is soon to be coming from Tecmagik. Big cartoony graphics are promised (apart, of course, from Tweety who's small) and the plot is basically that Sylvester has to catch the sodding little bird. There are loads of characters in there, but we'll have to wait and see precisely what the gameplay will involve. Don't miss your copy of MEGA next month.



Sylvester and Tweety. Still after each other's throats after all these years. Peace? Love? Sod off!

UP 'N' COMING...

SEPTEMBER

Street Fighter 2: Special Champion Edition
I don't really need to say anything about this do I? Except that this game has had more name changes than someone with a lot of aliases.

Thunderhawk CD – Sega
Using all that scaling and rotation stuff to full effect, this game looks like being a real blast when it finally arrives.

Chuck Rock 2: Son of Chuck – Sega
The first Chuck was cool, and his son is even cooler. More Jurassic (sorry, but it is the word of the summer) action for you to get your teeth into.

Asterix – Sega
With the game very much on the humorous level and Asterix being such a cool character, this is looking very good indeed.

Ultraman – Sega (Japan)
Oops! Looks like a cack game I'm afraid. We don't normally knock a game before we see it, but we really don't want to see this one.

Gauntlet – Tengen
A classic coin-op that, using the new four-player adaptor, could transfer really well to the Mega Drive. But it's also quite a cracker in single-player mode.

Cal Ripkin Baseball – Mindscape
More baseball action from someone the Americans know a lot about, but for whom us Brits couldn't give a fig.

Chessmaster – Mindscape
If there's one thing that's missing from the Mega Drive, it's a decent chess game. This classic computer chess game could be a real winner, but on the other hand...

Dracula CD – Sony
Sorry, but this is really terrible stuff and we must warn anyone who sets out to buy this game that it can seriously damage your Mega CD – because you'll most likely chuck it out of the window in frustration.

Breach – Treco
Er, dunno really. Maybe it's about breaching something or other. I suppose we'll just have to wait and see.

Microcosm CD – Sony
A lovely adventure inside the human body. Very useful for Biology students and maybe a good game too. We'll let you know.

Sorcerer's Kingdom – American Sammy
The chance to rule your kingdom and rid the world of evil creatures is yours. Yes, it's another of those "right-on" games.

Puggsy – Sony
This platform/puzzle adventure is going to provide some real head-scratching problems. It's looking really nice too.

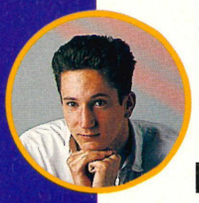
Wiz and Liz – Sony
Speed, speed and more speed. But there's also a game in here. Collect the spells and find the exit. A fab two-player mode is also included.

Metal Fang – JVC
Just what the Mega Drive needs, a nice driving game in the *Outrun* mode. Could be good, but then again it might be like *Outrun*, crap.

Keeper of the Gates – Razorsoft
The sequel to *Stormlord* sees our hero embarking on yet more platform action. There's also some gory graphics for you to check out.

Uncharted Waters – Koei
A strategy role-player all about claiming land and getting more of it than your opponent. You can lose friends and make enemies in one fell swoop.

MEGA MOUTH



(OK, are we ready? Is the hair all right? Right, well I'll take it from the top.) Hi, I'm Neil West, and I'd like to welcome you to the latest instalment of Le... (Neil, you're not on telly now you git – Andy)

PREMATURE REVIEWS

Wooo there MEGA,
Being of fairly sound mind and body, (bit rough but sound) I feel I must bring up this little point which is really ragging me off! It's about release dates and reviews. Why oh why are games reviewed months ahead of the release without the reviewer telling us that it's not out in this country for another month or so?

The classic examples that are really getting me p****d off are *Night Trap* and *Final Fight*. Both were raved about by reviewers saying buy, buy, buy, but can you get hold of them? No way Pedro! Come on Sega, get a grip with release dates instead of messing us about.
Ian Smith, Cleveland

***Night Trap*. Just one of many games that are reviewed too early?**

Dear Ian,
It's not entirely Sega's fault. True, if they only gave review games to us just before release, the problem wouldn't arise, but let's face it, they're running a business and they have to gain publicity for their releases through magazines. By sending them out to mags a few months ahead of release, they can build up a healthy interest in the game so that sales are increased when they finally come out. To criticise this practice would be like saying "Why do they advertise films when they won't be at the cinema for ages?" If it wasn't "advertised" in this way, no-one would be interested.

And secondly, magazines are to blame too. The sad fact is that, although many readers have a loyalty to one magazine, there's also a large percentage of a mag's readership who buy on the strength of what's inside. They'll browse in the newsagents to see whose got the latest games and so on.

So if a mag can bag an exclusive a month before the others, they will. It's a bit annoying perhaps, but at the end of the day it helps us (In MEGA's case, getting exclusive reviews of games like Ultimate Soccer, NHLPA Hockey *and* Sonic 2 *has, without doubt, helped to increase our readership), it helps Sega, and, most importantly, it means you guys get to hear about new stuff as soon as the info is available, and not when the news has gone stale.* **Neil**

COMBINING CHEATING DEVICES

Dear MEGA,
I found (you may already know this) that the Game Genie and Pro Action Replay can be used AT THE SAME TIME! This means that you can have up to nine codes for the same game at the same time (brilliant for something like *Sonic 2*).

What you do is have the Game Genie at the bottom with the switch on, then the Action Replay with the switch in the middle and then the cart. Switch on, enter your Game Genie codes, press Start, enter your Action Replay codes, then press Start. When the title screen appears, flick the Action Replay switch Up and voilà!
Craig Bowman, Durham City

Stack 'em up for added code-foolery

Dear Craig,
Good grief you're right. Although it must be said that we did have a little trouble with some code combinations on Sonic 2. *Still, it doesn't hurt to try. Thank you for that old boy.* **Neil**

SEGA SNUB JAP CONSOLES

Dear Sir,
Following advice from your reply to a reader's letter about a Sega Mega Drive losing colour on certain games (MEGA, May '93), I returned my son's console to Sega at a cost of £7.90 including registration. The machine was duly returned with a letter (enclosed) saying that as the console was manufactured in the Far East and not designed for use in the British Isles, the service agents may be able to repair it at a charge. May I, therefore, inform others who have Japanese consoles not to waste their money in returning their consoles to Sega. However, Japanese consoles are readily available for purchase in this country and I believe Sega have an obligation to repair these machines.
H Smith, Shalford

Dear H,
It would be nice to think that Sega would come up trumps in this area but I fear the worst. Sadly, we were led to believe that replacements would be available, but this isn't, in actual fact, the case. In genuine cases where the buyer didn't know the difference between an imported machine and an official UK one, this is a shame. But many people buy import stuff because it's not available over here yet or because it's cheaper. If that's the case, then they know the risk they take. **Neil**

GAMES TALK

Dear MEGA,
1. Is *Street Fighter 2: Champion Edition* definitely coming out?
2. When's *Sonic 3* due for release?
3. When is *Technocop 2* coming out?
4. Is there a level-select cheat for *Technocop?*
5. When are the following coming out: *Mortal Kombat, Bubsy The Bobcat, Road Rash III, Superman, Body Blows, Legend Of Zelda.*
Ozze, Coventry

BERNHARD

Well, no-one's written in to complain about him yet so we got Jo Burt to show us another instalment in Bernhard's life. This one, while being just as beautifully drawn as the first one, is just as unfathomable, comedy-wise. Still, the absence of protest proves that you must like him so he's staying put.

However, as we said last month, we'd still like you to send us your artwork. We won't take any notice of pitiful little scribblings though. We want quality cartoon strips, in colour, and if we think they're of suitable quality, we may even print them and send you a prize. If you want to "have a go" as it were, send your stuff to Bernhard's Bit, MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW.
(Oh dear that's a bit unfortunate, I've run out of things to say and I'm nowhere near the end – Neil) (Try telling a crab related gag – Andy) Right, what travels across the sea bed going "Vroom"? A motor Pike... oh. (You screwed up big style – Andy)

MEGA STAR

Dear MEGA,

Well, Sega have brought out the Mega CD at last, but after such a long wait I am wondering if it has been worth it. Will the Mega CD turn out to be a white elephant (and an expensive one at that)?

The software publishers have concentrated on the graphic and sound abilities of the Mega CD (in most cases anyway), but they seem to have forgotten the all-essential gameplay. Unless Sega and the other publishers buck up their ideas, the Mega CD is going to die a quick and painful death.

Sega may have sold out of Mega CDs, and people might be buying them up very fast, but if they do not get decent software support, the Mega CD will end up being an expensive audio CD player or something which is being sold to people who do not realise they are buying a dodo.

I totally agree with Neil West in his *Wolfchild* review; people are buying the CDs for £40 hoping they will get more game for their money and are being totally let down (OK, completely ripped off) by these companies.

I think my advice to other readers is to save your money for a while and see what happens with the Mega CD during the next six months (and after six months it will be cheaper anyway, with the introduction of the Mega CD2).

Software producers, if you want us to buy your CD-based games, make them cheaper or a hell of a lot better (or both preferably)!

Ashley Price, East Sussex

Dear Ashley,

It has been a rather shaky start hasn't it? But we must say that recently we've seen a couple of up 'n' coming CD titles that look not only like they're really pushing the machine graphically, but that there's plenty of gameplay in there too (an excellent example being Thunder Hawk *from Core Design Ltd). So although we share your disappointment, we're also rather more optimistic about the future.*

As for the prices, it does seem ridiculous that a cart costs £10 to produce and £40 to buy while a CD costs less than £1 to produce and, er, still £40 or more to buy. The argument would be that because of the vast storage potential of CD the games are much bigger and thus cost more to actually develop. At this stage, we can't do much about it. We either pay up or we don't.

And finally, you're right about a potential price drop in September. The Mega Drive 2 and Mega CD2 are actually cheaper to produce that the old models, so a reduction in price is looking very likely indeed.

There's not a lot more to say about the situation than that, but to be honest, the next three or four months will finally reveal what the future has in store for the Mega CD, and it will give a good indication of whether it will succeed or not. Neil

Dear Ozze,

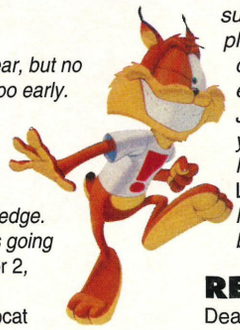
1. Yes.

2. Probably next year, but no one knows yet. It's far too early.

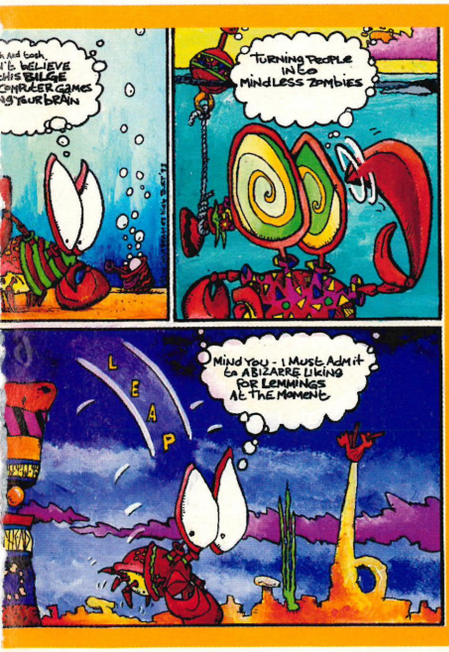
3. Why on earth would anyone want Technocop 2 *to come out?*

4. Not to our knowledge.

5. Mortal Kombat *is going up against* Street Fighter 2, *so it'll be a September release.* Bubsy The Bobcat *is scheduled for a July release. Much to our surprise* Road Rash 3 *isn't actually planned at all at the moment, but no doubt something will crop up soon enough.* Superman *should be out in July. There's no news of* Body Blows *yet.* Legend Of Zelda *is strictly a Nintendo game you berk, but apparently* Landstalker, *which is coming out on the Mega Drive in September is a real* Zelda *beater anyway.* **Neil**



Bubsy, coming very soon



RELEASE DATES

Dear MEGA,

1. What's the release date for *ToeJam & Earl 2?*

2. Is *Golden Axe* on the Mega CD a one-player game?

3. When's *Golden Axe 3* coming out?

Matthew Sawyer, Croydon

1. There are plans for ToeJam & Earl 2 *but it won't be released this year so no real details are available yet.*

2. Yes it is. For some reason, the two-player option was taken out for the CD games compilation that you get free with the Mega CD. Bummer!

3. Details are few, but it's scheduled for a Christmas release.

***Golden Axe* on Mega CD curiously leaves out the two-player mode**

SNES VS CD

Dear MEGA Team,

I've been racking my brains to find some decent questions to ask you. Here they are:

1. With the arrival of Nintendo's new Super FX graphics chip does this mean that Nintendo will sell more SNESs?

2. Are there plans to release any Super FX games on the Mega Drive?

3. Will *Street Fighter 2* ever see the light on the Mega CD?

4. As a point of interest, what type of CPUs have you got in the computers in your offices?

Paul Gallagher, Glasgow

***Starwing* on the Super NES. Pretty impressive, but no real threat**

Dear Paul,

1 and 2. The release of Starwing *(the British version of* Starfox *is called* Starwing*) and the Super NES* Starwing *bundle (you get a SNES and a copy of* Starwing *and the price could be as little as £130) will undoubtedly help to shift Super NESs. But at the same time, Mega CDs are undoubtedly helping to shift Mega Drives. However, even though Nintendo have a brief head start in the custom chips in the cart race, firm rumours are already circulating about Sega developing similar systems of their own. And besides, the market is always shifting like this. No doubt when Sega release their Mega Drive VR system, Nintendo will be preparing to release something else to sell their machines.*

3. Next year we should see a CD version of Street Fighter 2 *appearing.*

***Street Fighter 2* on CD. It's coming, but details are scarce at the moment**

4. We use Apple Macintosh computers which use um, er, a variety of processors. (Stupid question anyway.) **Neil**

ADVERTISING ANGST

Dear MEGA

After reading issue ten of your mag, the part about advertisements in games, I decided to write and tell you what I think about the situation.

Adverts in games will make some

Turn Over

ARNIE'S SOMEWHAT SERIOUS BIT

Dear MEGA,

I was wondering if Sega have any plans to bring out education packs on the Mega Drive. After getting totally fed up with people expressing their extreme concern about the craze of video games on today's youth I felt this could be the answer.

On many computers, such educational packs are already available and as a student taking his final exams, these are a welcome sight. Maybe parents likewise would be happier if a balance was found in which consoles their children use. I would be interested in your opinion as I feel education packs are the answer.

Carl Sullivan, Romford

Dear Carl,

Funny you should mention this. Mere moments ago we received a news clipping about a new Sega console that's being released in America later in the year. It's called the Pico, it plugs into a TV as usual but it functions as a sort of kiddies story book-cum-games machine. A flap on the front lifts up and the child has to use a light pen thingy on the pressure pad to make selections and manipulate the images on the TV screen. We have no real details about it yet, but we'll be finding out a lot more about it as soon as possible.

As for educational stuff on the Mega Drive, well, the only stuff that would be even remotely viable are young educational "toys". And indeed there are plans for software aimed at younger gamers. However, carts that would help GCSE students and so on would cost far too much to produce for a fairly limited audience (when you consider the range of subjects to be covered). Home computers are a much better bet for educational software, not least because they have a keyboard, and also because the software is cheaper. However, at the end of the day, I really do believe that it's up to the parent (who probably bought the console in the first place) to make their children understand the importance of study, and the fact that playing Sonic *for 24 hours non-stop could just possibly do your head in a bit.*

Oh, but going back to the Pico thing, if you want to know a bit more about it, take a look at the news story on page... er, well it's in the news pages anyway. You could also try ringing Sega Europe, but to be honest there would be little point – they know even less than us (it's all happening at the American end at the moment you see). To conclude, it would be nice to think that educational carts would be a widespread success, but at £40 a shot, I think consoles will, by and large, remain games machines. The imminent arrival of multi-media machines may change that though. **Neil**

BLAGGED!

It must be said guys, the quality of your blagged letters is absolutely appalling. Almost all of them involve alien kidnappers who, surprise, surprise, want a certain game in exchange for their captive's freedom. Give us a break. Use a little imagination. However, one BLAGGED! this month stood out a mile. It was short, sweet, and to our sad sense of humour, rather funny too. Here it is...

Dear Blagged!
I can't live with this problem. Girls say I have a small willy. So will you please give me something big enough to stick down my pants. *Lotus Turbo Challenge* should keep them quiet for a while.
Yours smallfully,
Mark Read, Stratford

Absolutely. It works for us!

And here, to make you cringe, wince, and frankly feel rather sorry for the participants are some snippets from the other entries we received...

"I myself am a bottle of Tip-ex and my family are pencils, rubbers and biros. We are being attacked by the most ruthless and heartless planet of music and animation."
Mini Tip-Ex, Sheffield

Far too weird. Go away! Next...

"I am an alien from the planet Large Chin. I am one of many members of the We Love Jimmy Hill Society. We have seen how wise he is and admire his opinions on Football."
I P Freely, Penarth

Hmmm...

"Your last issue was the best I've seen so far, the whole package most jolly, but you lied to me about Sega games being beamed down by satellite, so to convince me to buy it again, I really think you should send me *Flashback*."
Martin, Colchester

Oh all right then... pants, we lied again, sorry.

"I put up a fight and floored three or four of the burglars (honest) but could not take the rest. I grabbed my Mega Drive and tossed it onto a safe knee-high pile of socks. They tried to go and get it but were beaten back by the smell."
Richard Hughes, Bracknell

Next...

"Arriving at his icy domain, I go to pull the sword of Flashback when, oh b******s!!! It's gone missing. How will I sa..."
Chris Callow, Cardiff

Very poor Chris. One last try...

"After everybody rebelling against me over the Maastricht treaty and my old mate Norm..."
John Major, Abingdon

Right, that's quite enough of that. More dismal efforts next month. In the meantime, if you have any quality ideas for Blagged! letters, send 'em in to BLAGGED!, MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon, BA1 2BW. **Neil**

of them more realistic – in the up and coming *Sonic 3*, instead of wearing those shiny red sneakers Sonic could wear a pair of Nike Airs, and as you said, footy games and motor racing games could have real sponsors on shirts, billboards and cars. But won't this take up valuable memory space in the cartridge? On the Mega CD this won't be such a problem as there is a lot of memory space available, but on the Mega Drive it has a real problem as it doesn't have a lot of space. The only really desirable part of advertisements in games is the possible price drop.
J Oliver, Manchester

Dear J
To be honest, the memory space taken up by ads will be either minimal, or non-existent. If branding merely appears on in-game graphics like sprites of shirts, billboards and cars, there will be no extra memory needed because a blank sprite takes up just as much space as one with a design on it. If, however, an ad is displayed up front as a static intro screen, memory will be taken up, but not a vast amount. **Neil**

CRAPPY SCREENSHOTS

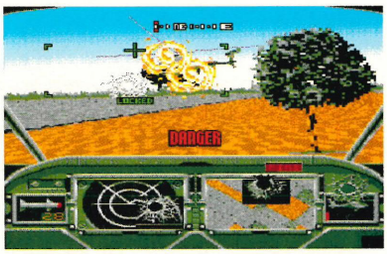
Dear MEGA,
1. In your preview of *Thunderhawk* your screenshots are of low quality and are too light compared to the pictures in Mean Machines Sega. Why?
2. Where are the results of the competitions in your mag?
3. In your review of *Jaguar XJ220* you said that the opposing cars do not jiggle around trying to stop you passing. Well they do in the Grand Prix setting, so there.
4. If *Wiz 'n' Liz* is speedier than *Sonic 2*, will it slow down horribly in two-player mode? If not, how will it combat the slow-down?
Alex Beck, Chelsea

MEGA MORONS

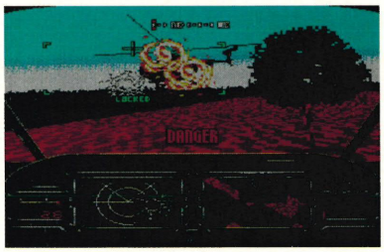
Dear MEGA,
Please could you explain why all the password codes given in your May issue for *Road Rash 2* come up as invalid on my cart.
I eagerly set up my cart for hours of intrepid cheating, but horror, what's this? Password invalid? It can't be. I even threw a large tantrum to which my wife reminded me that I was actually 34 next birthday, huh, but to no avail. All the passwords given have ten digits but my cart only accepts eight digits.
Nick Tait, Leeds

Dear Nick,
The may issue? Issue eight? The passwords in the little boxout? The very same passwords just to the right of the paragraph which said (if I just take a look) "check out the Action Replay codes to the right"? Hmmm... Action Replay. That rings a bell. I believe I'm probably right in thinking that Action Replay refers to the cheat cartridge from Datel, which accepts ten digit codes which allow you to cheat at games. Following on from this I can only deduce that when we said Action Replay codes, we weren't simply elaborating on the phrase "passwords" but were, in fact, trying to point the reader in the direction of the list of codes specifically for use with an Action Replay cartridge. I further conclude that this makes you somewhat moronic. How do you plead? **Neil**

Dear Alex,
1. Er, oh well, if you think they were too light then we'll do something about it for you. See the screenshots below.
2. We rarely print them these days. The fact is that winners will be informed by post before the results would appear in the mag anyway, so it merely wastes space.
3. Yes, you're right. Um, but this does little to improve what is basically an average driving game. So, as they say, there.
4. Surprisingly enough, the split-screen two-player mode hardly slows down at all. I couldn't notice any significant slow-down when I saw it anyway. How do they do it? Clever programming I guess, but you have to remember, in split-screen mode, you still only have one full screen of graphics whizzing around so it certainly shouldn't go half the speed. The trouble with Sonic 2 *was that the system they used compressed a full screen's graphics into both players' windows, which is why it looked both scabby and slowed down horribly. No, Psygnosis got it right with their system.* **Neil**



Here's the offending grab. Using some technical wizardry we can...



... er, oh dear. That's possibly a little too dark for anyone's taste isn't it?

ONCE AND FOR ALL

The section which answers those oft asked questions. This month...

BUYING GAMES ABROAD...

We've had several letters in which readers have stated that they're going abroad and want to know which games will work if they bring them back. Obviously, we only have a certain amount of time to get the mag out each month and the task of finding out the compatibility situation of every available American and Japanese cartridge would be mammoth. In the near future, we'll try to find out about compatibility on some of the bigger titles, but pleeeeze don't ask us specifics.

MEGA CD COMPATIBILITY...

With the arrival of the CDX cartridge from Datel and the Mega CD2, the compatibility situation has become even more complex. Let's try to list the combinations once and for all.

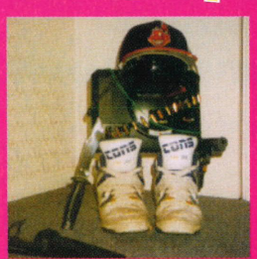
① English Mega Drive – buy a UK Mega CD. Then, if you buy a CDX cart, you'll be able to use Jap and US games too. Also, the UK Mega CD2 will be compatible too.

② Japanese Mega Drive – You'll have to buy a Jap Mega CD, but then you won't be able to play UK or US games.

③ US Mega Drive – You'll have to buy a US Mega CD, but then you won't be able to play UK or Jap games.

④ If you want to buy a US or Jap Mega CD to go with your UK Mega Drive, that's fine, but you'll have to do two things. Firstly, you have to get the Mega CD converted to work with the British PAL television standard and secondly, you'll also have to buy a CDX cart from Datel so that all the software works too.

EXCERPTS FROM THE DIARY OF A STUNT MEGA DRIVE



The Terminator Mega Drive (allegedly)

Yes well, according to ***Adam Welbourne*** of Kent, who sent this piccy in, this is a Terminator Mega Drive. I don't honestly remember the Terminator ever wearing Cons, a baseball cap and carrying a knife, but nevertheless this little guy looks more than capable of a few terminations so we'll let him off.

If anyone else out there fancies winning a cart simply by hanging a few laughable baubles and items of clothing on their Mega Drive, go ahead. And once you've had the piccy developed, send it in to "Stunt Mega Drive", MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW. Oh, and if you have a tasty sister of about 20-25 years old, why not send us a piccy of her in the bath or s... (Nooooo! – Andy)

VIDEO GAME CASUALTY

(or "Fair enough, video games do *sometimes* screw you up")

Clock this:
"I was walking down the cupboard when I met a hippopotamus and he started talking Chinese or Japanese I don't know. Then he shown me his invention. He had invented an eagle, his eagle was made of foil and its name was Dean Hitching. All he could say was, 'I'm a scrubber

THE BLOXHAM CHALLENGE

We've had a brilliant response to our Bloxham challenge. Bloxham letters have been popping up in local newspapers up and down the country. Here are a couple of them and we'll be printing a load more next month. Keep fooling the local rags chaps, who knows, you may get a prize.

Computer games fury

SIR — I am writing to "Postbag" to express my views about the violence projected in sega games, which I think is a bad influence on the youth of today. If they continue to play these horrific and violent games, they could end up in serious trouble.

I don't allow my children to watch violent TV programmes or play any computers, and I advise other parents to do likewise.

Harold Bloxheim, 15 Ralston Street, Airdrie.

This one appeared in the Airdrie and Coatbridge Advertiser. Snigger!

Thanks to ***Derek Gabriel*** for that one. We'll send you a prize (but it's a mystery). And so we move onto our next bit of newspaper tomfoolery. Thus...

Video danger

The craze of video games currently sweeping the nation's youth is both sinister and disturbing.

These games are eroding the brains of our future leaders. Youths spend hour after hour staring at screens, hell-bent on destroying all manner of outlandish and fictitious lifeforms.

In my day, children were taught to respect life. They were not sat around destroying killer blobs from the evil planet Zab.

Harold Bloxham
Salcombe Avenue, Copnor

Looks like people at the Portsmouth News can't sniff out a fraud either

Well done ***Christopher Parlett***. But remember chaps you don't have to copy the original Bloxham letter. Make 'em as ludicrous as you possibly can. As soon as you succeed, send your clippings to The Bloxham Challenge, MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW. Remember, weird is good.

I've got no curtains and my house is made of foil too' when I got my pants in between."

!!!!!

That was Peter Duckworth's attempt at a "BLAGGED" letter.

And from his brother Rob...

Q. What do you get if you cross ECCO and Sonic?
A. Swimming Sonic

... yes, quite. So there we have it. Proof positive that games can, on occasion, turn you into a gibbering git.

THE WRATH OF RUTH BLOXHAM...

Ah ha! Success. Ol' Ruthy-baby comes up trumps. EA didn't even faintly whiff our ridiculous ruse. EA as ever responded soberly, and professionally. Shame. If Ruth wrote this sort of rubbish to us we'd say "Bog off you sad, mad old fool" or something. More rantings next issue...

ELECTRONIC ARTS LIMITED
90 HERON DRIVE
LANGLEY
BERKSHIRE SL3 8XP
TEL: 0753 549672

Ms Ruth Bloxham,
2 Priory New Road,
Corsham,
SN13 0AZ

Monday 10th May 1993

Dear Ms Bloxham,

I read your letter with interest and thank you for your views and concerns.

Within the law, we at Electronic Arts respect the opinions and beliefs of all members of our community and recognise our responsibilities to them. I can assure you that the suppositions you have made are incorrect and it is unfortunate that they have offended you.

I would like to re-assure you that Electronic Arts would never deliberately include any symbol or image likely to offend.

Yours sincerely,

Iain Hancock
Customer Service Manager.

Ms Ruth Bloxham
2 Priory New Road
Corsham
SN13 0AZ

6th April 1993

SINNERS!

How can you so vehemently disregard the word of God and instead embrace the demonic ways of Lucifer? How long do you think you can continue to produce and distribute "Satan's Baubles" (for I fear calling them games would be an inadequate description of such nefarious produce) to countless innocents?

But before you dismiss me as a crank, let me point out the disturbing facts, that will prove to you that I have uncovered your occult plot to turn this society of ours into a rank pool of demon-worshipping, hell-spawned Satanists.

The first, irrefutable piece of evidence is your recently-released episode in what has so far been a trilogy of dealings with the dark Lord. I refer of course to the John Madden series of games. Is it not true that Madden is, in fact, an anagram of DAMNED?

But worse still, are the numerous other references to all things evil. The hand of Mephistopheles can quite clearly also be seen in Powermonger. It not only depicts a world controlled by a variety of evil gods intent on creating world through chaotic conflicts, but how can we ignore the 'aggression icon'. Supposedly three swords, but more obviously three upturned crucifixes.

And again in Desert Strike have you turned to the forces of darkness as the inspiration for your imagery. When your Apache crashes we see, in the rotors, the unholy image of a crucifix, engulfed in flame and rent asunder. But more disturbing is the apparent need, in the game to destroy desert roads and carriageways. Does this not directly conflict with the words of the good book. I refer to Isiah 40:3 "Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God."

Electronic Arts, practisers of the black arts, you must renounce the Dark Lord now. It is not too late to receive forgiveness. When judgement day arrives, you may yet gain salvation, despite your Satanic actions. I demand a reply.

Ruth Bloxham.

Ruth Bloxham

WRITE TO:
MEGA MOUTH
30 MONMOUTH STREET
BATH BA1 2BW

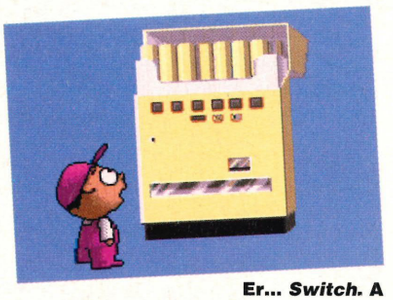
SHUT DOWN

Phew! We've reached page 98 at last. It's a nice page, because when we've finished it the rest of the mag is the responsibility of the advertising people. Bless 'em

Another hectic issue has been "put to bed" as we say in the trade. No time to rest though, because we have to prepare the next epic issue of everyone's favourite Mega Drive and Mega CD mag. The September issue should include...

REVIEWS

Super Shinobi 2, Landstalker, Asterix, Silpheed VR, Puggsy, Wiz 'n' Liz, Thunder Hawk, Populous 2, Bubsy The Bobcat, General Chaos, F-15 Strike Eagle, Switch CD, Davis Cup Tennis and lots more.



Er... *Switch*. A curious Japanese cartoon, er, thing

FEATURES

(Psst Paul, any idea what Neil has planned for the next issue? – Andy) (Not a bloody clue old boy, he's on holiday – Paul) Erm, we'll have lots of informative features no doubt and we'll also have a four-page special of Neil's holiday photographs.

MEGA Issue 12 ON SALE Thursday 19 August

NEWS

Yep! There'll be plenty of news.

NEWS

Yes, yes. And lots of this.

AND MORE NEWS

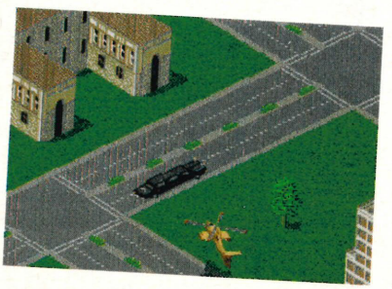
Oh for crying out loud we must have more than just news in issue 12.

TIPS?

No. Already mentioned 'em in that little red circle down there.

TOP 100?

Yes, as always. but surely we can do a bit better than this.



Next month, Paul Mellerick starts our *Jungle Strike* Rip 'n' Tip complete solution

NEWS

Look, cut it out!

LETTERS

OK, I think we'll just call it a day now, yes?

UM...

(Hang on. It's our Birthday issue next month isn't it? – Paul) YES! THAT'S IT! Next month, MEGA is one year old. And to celebrate, we'll be doing all sorts of, er, celebratory type things. In conjunction with every software house on the planet we'll be giving away the following prizes to the first 100,000 readers to send in a postcard: Ten pairs of Farah slacks, 20,000 Mega CDs, 500,000 copies of *The Great Waldo Search*, another 50,000 Mega CDs, Twelve Ferraris, five Lotus Elans, Andy Dyer, a couple of enamel badges, posters, pens, crocheted loo roll covers with dolls attached, and finally, more valuable than all the rest put together, a cash prize of £4,000,000,000,000. PLUS! (HOLD IT RIGHT THERE! I'm back, and I'm not best pleased I can tell you. Dyer you're fired. I'll take over from here – Neil) Sorry about that. Let's return to normal shall we? Next month we'll be...

TIPS We couldn't quite manage *Jungle Strike* this month so we're doing it next month instead **PLUS!** All the usual MEGA PLAY and ARENA type stuff that you're all so fond of

THE As ON THE BACK PAGE

Right, have you seen the Qs In The News yet? Have you jotted your answers down on a little bit of paper? No? Well toddle back to page 11 and do it then. And when you've sweated blood and tears to find an answer for all 20 questions, come back here and see how you've done.

1. It had a three-screen display
2. Because the platform section is exactly the same as *Batman Returns* – the cartridge game
3. André Agassi
4. Paul Mellerick (strange *F1*-hating rock bloke)
5. *Superman*
6. Saturn
7. Six events
8. On holiday (in Crete)
9. Annette (from *Annette Again*)
10. Jo Burt
11. Manchester United and Manchester City
12. Eight
13. It's a loanword. Nicked by the Japs from the English language. Used to describe Japanese-stylised animation
14. Trip Hawkins
15. Emilio Estevez
16. *Devastator*
17. *BOB*
18. *Ultimate Soccer*
19. *Doraemon Adventure*
20. *Batman Returns*

1 – 8 points: Not too good is it? If you were a football game, you'd probably be *Euro Club Soccer*, with half the features removed and absolutely no sprites whatsoever. That's how truly crap you are.

9 – 14 points: Now you are simply a normal version of *Euro Club Soccer*. Don't look too smug. That's still a pretty embarrassing thing to be by anyone's standards... chump!

15 – 17 points: Now you'd be *Super Kick Off*. Pretty good but somehow slightly lacking since all those snazzy new footy games have been developed. Try a little harder.

18 – 20 points: You must be *Ultimate Soccer* then. Over the moon and all that.

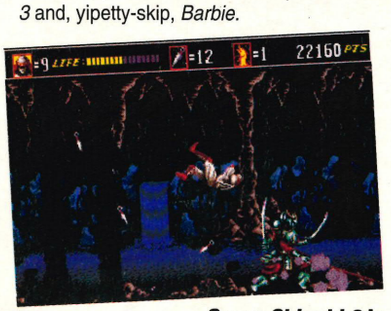
MEGA TV COMPETITION

Still no winner, so the prize now consists of infra-red joypads, a copy of *Hardball 3* and, this month's addition, an assortment of T-shirts with your favourite game characters on. The aim is simple. Get yourself into a situation, or at an event where TV cameras are present. Make sure your copy of MEGA is clearly visible. When the programme is shown on telly, video it, and send us the tape. Entries to MEGA TV Compo, MEGA, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW

Joypads, *Hardball 3* and some fancy T-shirts. Wow!

PREVIEWS

See the reviews list above. Any of those we don't get in for review, we'll preview instead, er, probably. Oh hang on, last-minute news: next month we'll definitely be previewing *Haunting* and *2020 Super Baseball*, plus more news on *Super Shinobi 3* and, yipetty-skip, *Barbie*.



***Super Shinobi 3* is still not finished. It'd better be good after keeping us waiting so long**

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Please reserve/deliver* me a copy
Name:
Address:
*Delete as appropriate

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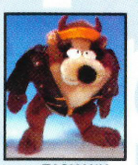

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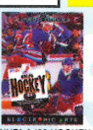

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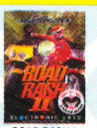

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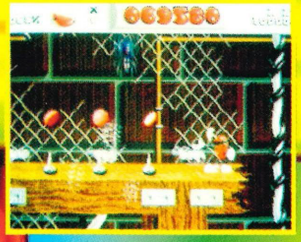

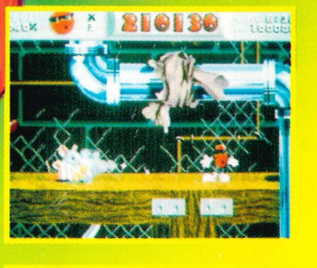

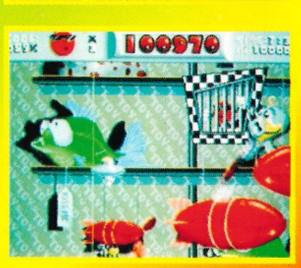

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