

LOOK! XBOX MACHINE AND GAMES PICS INSIDE!

computer and video

GAMES



HANDHELD HEAVEN

HOT GAMEBOY ADVANCE INFO!
CHECK OUT MARIO, F-ZERO,
MARIO KART AND MORE...

GAMES AVALANCHE!

FINAL FANTASY X
BANJO TOODIE
THE BOUNCER
UNREAL TOURNAMENT
QUAKE 3: TEAM ARENA
PHANTASY STAR ONLINE
SHADOW OF MEMORIES
MUNCH'S ODDYSSEY
MARIO TENNIS ON GB
AND LOADS MORE!

GOTTA SEE!



STUNNING **GT3** RAIN SHOTS



INCREDIBLE **MALICE** PICS



SCOOP! **SONIC ADVENTURE 2**

ISSUE 232



03
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Tip
11

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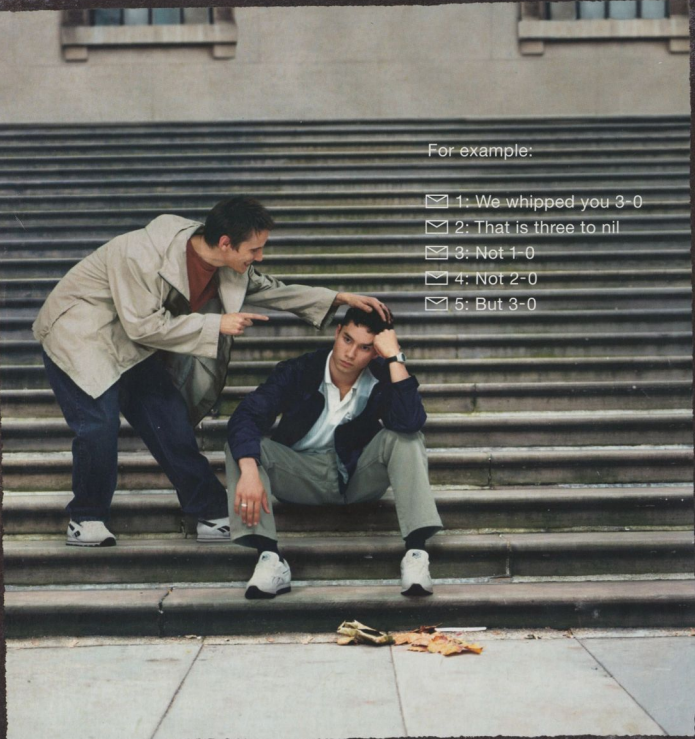
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- ✉ 2: That is three to nil
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GAMES

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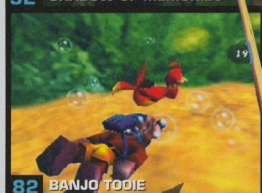
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The daddy of footy games has a beautiful baby boy



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ACCESS ALL GAMES

A WHOLE MONTH'S NEW GAMES IN ONE PLACE

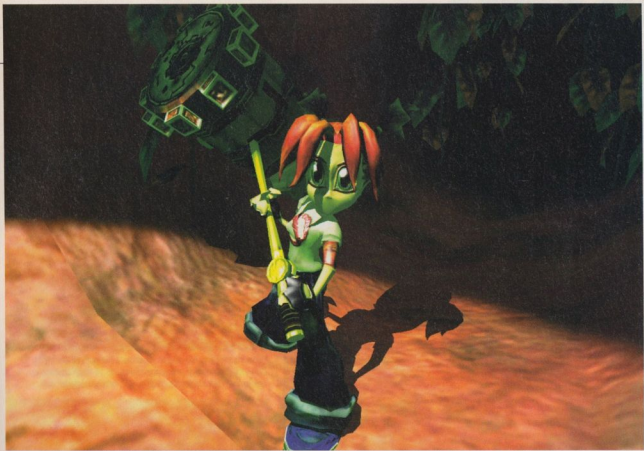


MALICE

OUT/EARLY 2002 PLATFORM/XBOX

If these screens are anything to go by, Argonaut's "dark and comic fiery adventure" should be just the job to show off Xbox's graphical power, at least in the console's early days. The game centres on the exploits of Alice, a Japanese-style character who wields a massive clockwork mallet which handily doubles as a key for locks. Gameplay looks to be standard platform fare, but a cartoon adventure has never looked this good. From what we've seen so far, Malice packs all the visual punch you'll ever need, with its intriguing character that even turns to metal. We can't wait - roll on 2002!

The environments in Malice are nothing short of spectacular; as you can see from this shot of a cave. Pipes are something of a recurring theme in the game, and you can expect to be bouncing from tube to tube from the onset. Chuck in fungus, slime and a load of giant insects, and you'll have plenty to keep you happy next year!



Yep, this is a real-time image. While little is known of the actual mechanics of Melice's gameplay, we can assure you it's one of the most beautiful games ever made. Argonaut has been working on the game for the past two years, and has another 12 months of polishing before Melice gets released, so it's going to get even more spectacular as time goes on. Alice has every chance of ending up in sequel after sequel, especially if gamers take to those big, green eyes with gusto. How could you resist?

You'll start the game as young Alice and get older as you progress through the adventure. Even as a baby, Alice is well cutie, and should keep you coming back for more. From this shot below though it seems young Alice's hand wasn't surgically welded to her hammer at birth. Just as well or going to the toilet could prove fatal



A WHOLE MONTH'S NEW GAMES IN ONE PLACE

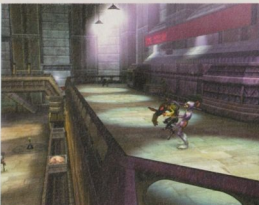


The now legendary Abe and the newly introduced amphibian creature Munch are looking better than ever in the latest adventure from Oddworld Inhabitants. Scheduled for release at Xbox's launch, *Munch's Oddysee* provides many of the gameplay elements of earlier games – such as the ridiculous but amusing way Abe speaks and the general mission to get his brethren away from the killer Sligs – but this time you'll be playing in full 3D. Throw in some of the finest graphics ever seen on a console and you and Microsoft are both laughing

ODDORLD: MUNCH'S ODDYSEE

OUT/EARLY 2002 PLATFORM: XBOX

Munch is very... odd. Starting the game as a victim of an animal experiment, our flippered friend is rescued by Abe and joins him on a quest to rid Oddworld of the evil oppressors, the Sligs. Swapping between the two characters is essential for success



Bumping off Sligs is going to make up a big part of the game. Oddworld adventures are notoriously hard as they're based on stealth, so make sure the baddies are facing the other way...



This is exactly how not to stay alive. If a Slig spots either Abe or Munch you're going to have a seriously difficult time lasting any more than 10 seconds. Sligs have high calibre weapons and aren't afraid to use them. You have a loincloth. *Oddworld* games are all about timing, sneaking and generally being as cunning as possible. Don't stand around looking dumb if you want to survive



Aren't they outa? Interaction is key to the game, and there'll be plenty of alien chatter between the two key characters and all the other weirdos you meet. Saying "Follow me!" will become second nature as you work through the game. It's just comedy all the way

SONIC ADVENTURE 2

OUTSPRING PLATFORM/DREAMCAST

Fancy a sneaky play at *Sonic Adventure 2* long before it hits the shelves in the UK? Then get thee to an import store and pick up a Japanese copy of *Phantasy Star Online*, 'cos it comes bundled with a fully playable one-level demo of Sega's super-Sonic sequel!



The action kicks off with a skateboarding Sonic, speeding down the steepest of San Francisco-style streets. If you time your jumps over ramps you can pull off *SSX* style tricks. Blind!



The brilliantly varied action of the original *Sonic Adventure* looks like it'll be taken to the max in the sequel. In this one demo alone, Sonic skateboards, runs, jumps and gets chased by a giant demon truck! There are loads of new additions such as this monkey-bastic bar-swinging move to help you reach hidden areas. Graphical detail is higher too – check out that *Chao* movie poster



Grind baby, grind. It's like Jet Set Radio with a hedgehog, only much, much faster. The B-button lets you crouch to increase speed when on rails, but changes function according to the situation Sonic's in. Leap from rail to rail to score combo points



The *Chaos* return – who! It seems in *SA2* they'll give you hints as you collect them around the massive levels. Rather than freeing trapped animals by destroying baddies as in the first game, this time they're hidden around the levels. Check behind those crates



Look at this – it's pure Dreamcast beauty. Sonic flies through rings of hoops while the lush graphics move smoothly and swiftly around him. Nothing on PS2 comes close to the speed and beauty of *SA2*. A game worth getting a DC for? Maybe...

ACCESS ALL GAMES

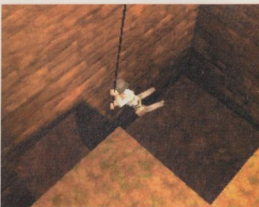
A WHOLE MONTH'S NEW GAMES IN ONE PLACE



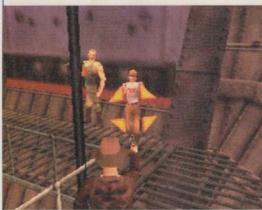
INDIANA JONES AND THE INFERNAL MACHINE

OUTSPRING PLATFORMING

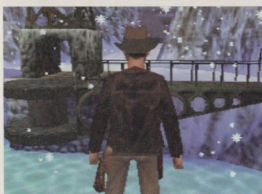
Getting worried about the number of N64 games scheduled for the year? Well THQ will ease your worries with two new games. *Star Wars: Battle for Naboo* is playtested elsewhere this issue and to follow it, there's this classic Indiana Jones adventure



Indy is searching for treasure again, this time using his brain as well as his brawn (and his whip) to defeat an eccentric Russian scientist who is searching for the fabled Tower of Babel



Taking on the might of the Russian soldiers and scientists single-handed is a good way of getting sent home stuffed into a wooden box, so Indy will have to sneak around and use crates like these to hide until the perfect moment to strike comes. And if you fancy a sneak preview of the next Indy movie, there are alleged versions of the script doing the rounds on the internet



Infernal Machine could be seen as the closest the N64 will ever come to getting its own Lara Croft game, only with a hero that's slightly more believable (if not as pretty). Tomb raiding with balls then, and with no loading times either. Sounds a treat

The crazy Russians are after the Tower of Babel, which will give them the awesome power to travel to another dimension called Aetherium. So guess who gets to stop them with a crack of his whip and a sharp one-liner? Indy's back, and this time it's biblical

With a new Indiana Jones movie soon to go into production, Indy is going to be more popular than ever, and with this conversion of the PC game on its way – hopefully with the problems of that version fixed – we'd say don't get rid of your N64 just yet

FINAL FANTASY X

OUT/BC PLATFORM: PLAYSTATION 2

At last, news on one of the most eagerly awaited PlayStation 2 games has emerged. Square has finally given up some details about FFX. There's no release date as yet, but just one look at these visuals should be enough to make you want a slice of this



The main character is a 17-year-old bloke called Tidus who seems to dig wearing shorts. He makes up for it with his weapon of choice – an awesome blade that sees off opponents in a jiffy



His favourite pastime is a sport called Blitzball, which is played underwater. There's a female character as well called Yuna, who is also 17. She's a Summoner and the daughter of the Great Summoner. So in Tidus you have a fighter and in Yuna, a powerful magician, capable of using her skills to defeat your enemies. Combine them to make short work of most of your challenges



Final Fantasy X boasts the usual mastery plotting that would leave most Hollywood blockbusters sherefeazed, while the graphics really are spectacular. Expect a load of new gameplay elements to take this RPG series to the next level



Facial expressions and subtle movements will now be visible, showing how a character feels towards you and emphasising certain things they are saying, perhaps giving clues as to what you have to say or do next. Their voices will also convey their emotions.

Although details are scarce, just these few shots appearing at our desks was enough to send shivers down our spines. With this and *Metal Gear Solid 2* in the pipeline, the PlayStation 2 may just start to deliver on some of the promises Sony made

ACCESS ALL GAMES

A WHOLE MONTH'S NEW GAMES IN ONE PLACE



MARIO ADVANCE

OUTRIG PLATFORM/GAME BOY ADVANCE

You knew Nintendo would never launch a console without its moustachioed hero making an appearance. This time they're rejuvenating *Super Mario Bros 2* from the NES (actually the weakest of the Mario games – why in MarioLand didn't they do *Super Mario Bros 3*, one of the greatest games of all time?)



Not only is GBA *Mario Advance* an awesome single player experience (like all Mario games!), as a bonus the cart will also feature a four-player game based on the very first Mario Bros game. You have to battle the other characters to collect coins while all the time looking out for Koopa shells to lob at them. With four players linked up via the link cable, this one promises to get fetchingly addictive



You get to play as one of four characters – Mario, Luigi, Peach and Toad – throwing stuff at overly cute enemies to kill them rather than jumping on their heads. Once an enemy has been clobbered, you can pick them up and throw them at anything else which happens to be on the packed game screen. Each character has unique strengths and weaknesses, so some will be suited to different levels more than others



Just as *Mario 64* wowed the gaming world when it was first unleashed at the launch of the N64, *Mario Advance* will guarantee the Gameboy Advance will rocket to the top of every gamers' most wanted list when it's launched in Japan at the same time as the machine in March. Start pestering your local importer to reserve your machine now. The world's favourite plumber is back to rock the gaming world



Grab hold of one of your unsuspecting opponents and use them as a weapon against the ever-advancing Koopas. There's no such things as a friend in a battle like this. As well as fighting for survival, you have to keep an eye on what the other players are doing so you know when they are powered up or in a position to inflict some hurt on you. It really is an awesome multiplayer spectacle – just wait 'til you get this in the playground



If Nintendo is in the mood to convert old and crusty NES games to the Game Boy Advance, then we would love to see conversions of old classics like these in the near future please: *Aurty Ninty*, *Megaman*, *Kid Icarus*, *Gauntlet*, *Super Mario Bros 3*, *Castlevania*, *Gradius*, *Mike Tyson's Punchout* and *Spy Vs Spy*. Do this for us and we'll go home very happy chappies indeed. They may be old but the gameplay is timeless



BLACK & WHITE

OUTRIG PLATFORM/PLAYSTATION

The PC version of this has been in development for years now and is promising to change the shape of God games forever, so Midas figured it'd be a good idea to get it ported to PlayStation



You get to grow and evolve a creature who will respond to how you play. Play as a bad guy and he will grow to be evil. Be nice and so will he. You determine how they develop depending on the praise you give when they get perform an action. If they kill, give them praise and they'll turn out monstrous. Sweet



Your creature can battle against other monsters that appear in the game, as well as interact with the population of the world you wander around. You also get to use your God-like powers for or against these people to achieve different mission goals. This one looks like it could shape up to be an classic



EXTERMINATION

OUT/BTBC PLATFORM/PLAYSTATION 2

The year is 2005 and a special investigation team has been sent in to find out what's going on in a secret base. This survival adventure promises plenty of Resident Evil-style thrills and spills, with your analogue stick used to perform a variety of special moves in different circumstances



MARIO KART ADVANCE

OUT/BTC PLATFORM/GAMEBOY ADVANCE

Yeah, we know we've mentioned it before, but if there is one GBA game that everyone is already itching to play it's this. Four players can compete – again, with only one copy of the game between you. If you never had a chance to play this on SNES or N64, there's no excuse to miss out on what is simply the best cartoon racer ever



MISSION WINBACK

OUT/BTC PLATFORM/PS2

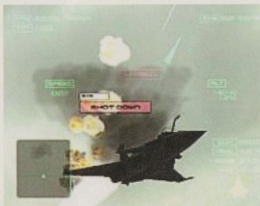
This was much underrated on the N64 and now that it's getting the PS2 treatment, hopefully more of you will finally get the chance to experience its mixture of stealth, puzzle solving and all-out action. As well as the single player game with three different endings, there will be several four-player games built in



F-ZERO

OUT/BTC PLATFORM/GAME BOY ADVANCE

Just check this out – a four-player racing game for the Game Boy Advance where you only need one cart between the four of you to play it. Plus it's one of the best racing games that ever appeared on the SNES and the screenshots we've seen look the business! You have our full permission to start drooling right about now



ACE COMBAT 4

OUT/SUMMER PLATFORM/PLAYSTATION 2

Namco's Top Gun flight and fight series returns to shoot down its rivals on PS2. Fly complex missions, blowing up ground targets and taking out huge fleets of fighters that try and stop you. It's like the Gulf War has erupted on your PlayStation 2. Expect huge explosions and plenty of intense dogfighting



EDGE OF CHAOS: INDEPENDENCE WAR 2

OUT/BTC PLATFORM/PC

Swirling epic space battles featuring some of the biggest and most powerful ships and weapons seen outside of the Star Wars universe. Who cares about the plot or storyline, just turn these majestic space fleets into heaps of floating debris – makes the old Wing Commander games look sadly dated



MAGICAL VACATION

OUT/BTC PLATFORM/GAMEBOY ADVANCE

More Zelda-style role-playing antics on the GBA. There's a huge world to explore and plenty of quests for you to carry out. Details are scarce at the moment, but we'll know more soon. It's just one of a huge list of games already announced for the GBA which sees many old heroes returning for a new lease of life



VENOM

OUT/SUMMER PLATFORM/PC

Another PC first-person shooter, although this time you have two characters under your control – so at least it's trying to be different. It's a basic run around, find weapons, kill stuff kind of game, although you are limited to the number of weapons and items you can carry. Could be one to watch out for



DANCING STAGE DISNEY

OUT/BTC PLATFORM/PLAYSTATION 2

We can see Lee reaching for his dicornet already. Bop along to your favourite Disney tracks from the hit movies. Check Mickey out as he cuts up the decks like Fatboy Slim. It'll be one of those games kids will love and adults will sneakily have a go on when no-one's looking. We know all their secrets

SCOOP!

THE PLAYERS' BEST FRIEND

X MARKS THE SPOT

MICROSOFT COMES CLEAN ON THE DESIGN OF XBOX. CVG WAS IN VEGAS TO GET THE SCOOP

THE X FACTOR

THE X FACTOR – Bill Gates on stage is a sight to behold. He's ominous, larger than life and stinks of power. It's befitting then, that the gaming machine he unveiled at the Consumer Trade Show

(CES) in Las Vegas a few weeks ago displays all the same attributes. While there are still a few questions to be answered over whether Xbox will have those console heavyweight pieces of software to back up its almost ridiculous processing capabilities,

you can be sure of this: the world, his wife and her milkman lover will be talking about this black block when it hits UK stores in early 2002. Why? Well, it's made by Microsoft, it's more powerful than the space shuttle and, er, it's got a green 'X' on top of it.



DVD TRAY Your games go right to here. Xbox also plays DVD movies, so you'll need to buy a console system with remote control to watch the likes of *Gladiator* while gaming.

EJECT BUTTON Opening and closing the tray couldn't be easier. Just hit this.

RESET BUTTON Just the thing for all those nasty crashes. Not that Xbox will have those. Of course not.

FOUR CONTROLLER PORTS Four-way action with no multitap – unlike PlayStation 2 – is a standard Xbox feature.

XTRA, XTRA

Las Vegas, USA, was the setting for the official unveiling of Xbox, and although the gloves are yet to come off in the war of the next generation console giants, things are certainly heating up. The machine Bill Gates revealed – aptly enough in the gambling capital of the western world – is the fastest, most powerful home console ever conceived. The final design of the big, black box is already the centre of fevered debate on the internet: does it represent the solid might of one of the largest companies in the world and the absolute future of home entertainment, or does it merely look like an Amiga fan heater?

POWER HOUSE

Whatever your opinion on the subject, there's no denying the fact that Xbox is one serious piece of kit. Never known as an outfit to

do things by halves, Microsoft has put together a machine capable of delivering a monstrous 150 million polygons a second, compared to PlayStation 2's 65 million. It's lighting and effects capabilities are unparalleled and, for the first time in the history of videogaming, we are looking at a console that really does have the capability to produce real-time graphics as powerful as CG movies such as *Toy Story* and *Jurassic Park*.

SAVE GAMES

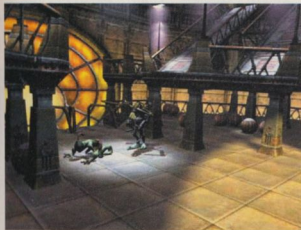
Backing up virtually nuclear processing power is an 8GB hard drive, giving gamers seemingly unlimited resources for saving games and providing everything developers need for creating all those massive multiplayer titles console gamers have been dreaming about since year dot. You'll still be able to save your progress to a BMB memory card to take round to your mates'

houses, and the four controller ports on the front of the box mean there'll be plenty of party gaming offline while waiting for the online broadband revolution to happen.

WAIT FOR IT

Yep, it means that although broadband-ready out of the box, Xbox apparently won't be able to go online using a standard modem and dial-up connection on Day One. But as has already happened in Japan with PS2, you can bet your Grandma's house that some clever so-and-so is already working on an external modem and browser software. The only question then is whether the first wave of games will support conventional dial-up play. Microsoft, like Sony with PlayStation 2, wants to wait for mega-fast connections before taking its gaming experiences to the Web – but are players prepared to wait that long?

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: PAT 'THE PROBE' GARRATT



ODDOWORLD: MUNCH'S ODDYSEE: weird as always but looking better than ever



MALICE: Say hello to Alice, the first famous face of Xbox. Cute, isn't she?

POWER SUPPLY. You won't be playing much if your Xbox isn't plugged in

DIGITAL OUT. Xbox is completely digital, and even supports the ultra-sharp resolution of High Definition TV (HDTV). This is where you hook the box up to your screen

ETHERNET PORT. You'll be able to link consoles together and, eventually, take gaming online through this super-speed 100 Megabit network port



EVG REBKONS

You'll have to wait until 2002 to get your hands on one, but, assuming Microsoft has the games to back Xbox up, it's going to be worth the wait. Welcome to the future...

■ **Game Boy Advance**
Amiga classic, *Wings*, from Cinesavars, is being converted to the GBA by Crawford in the UK. This *World War One* flight and fight game was a massive hit in the early 90s with its amazing graphics and great storyline.

■ **PlayStation 2**
Sony has announced plans to double production of PS2 hardware to make sure that by the end of March they hit their target of 10 million consoles ever. Meaning there should no longer be a shortage of machines - waiyy!

■ **Multi-Format**
Classic horror movie, *The Thing* (the John Carpenter/Kurt Russell version), is getting the videogame treatment. The shapeshifting, life-absorbing creature will appear on PC, GBA, GBC, Xbox, PlayStation 2 and Gameboy Advance.

■ **PlayStation 2**
Acclaim has announced it is bringing the thrills and spills of the Paris Dakar Rally to the PS2 and PC. The game is going to out in June and promises to be one of the most realistic ever. As in real life, absolutely any vehicle is allowed to participate - sort of a real-life *Wacky Races*.

■ **PlayStation 2**
Electronic Arts has announced a new arcade racer, *Rumble Racing*, for the PS2. It's from the same team that were behind their *NASCAR* game in the States. Early shots look promising, but there's no release date yet.

■ **PlayStation 2**
Sony has had to admit that the long awaited blockbuster *GT3* is going to slip. The Japanese release has been delayed two months, which will have a knock on effect in Europe, meaning we won't get to see it until May.

■ **Game Boy Advance**
PlayStation game *Monster Rancher* is one of the first titles to make the crossover to Nintendo's new handheld. Tecmo's *Pokémon* influenced game is in production as we speak, although no new screens have reached as yet.

■ **Dreamcast**
A Dreamcast version of *Mario Kart*-style racer, *Bombad Racing*, has caught the sharp side of an Empire lightsabre and been carried for Sega's fledgling console. PC and PS2 versions are still on course and are expected this Spring.

■ **Game Boy Color**
If you thought the old GBC would die once GBA arrived, think again. A Japanese company is launching a game that will allow you to plug it into a phone line and download software. We'd love to see this top gadget get a UK release.

SCOOP!

THE PLAYERS' BEST FRIEND

SPOT THE DAN

HE'S YOUR MAN FOR PRIZES

Spot where we've hidden Dan's ugly mug and you could win a *Insanely Dignified* Version 2. State the page number on a postcard to our seal address, marked Spot The Dan 232. Winners will be announced here next month.



GUESS WHO I AM

Do you know who these game stars are?



GIVE US A CLUE!

- 1 She can really bust some grooves.
- 2 He's been around a long time.
- 3 Can you sense his powers?
- 4 You'll barely recognize him.

ANSWERS

oneM S ehtU I
oipB B nslM-rbiqB E

XBOX IN CONTROL

THIS IS YOUR POINT OF CONTACT WITH XBOX GAMES. YOU'D BETTER BE PAYING ATTENTION: THIS IS THE FUTURE

WORDS: SCENESHOTSPAT 'THE PROBE' GARRATT

THE XBOX

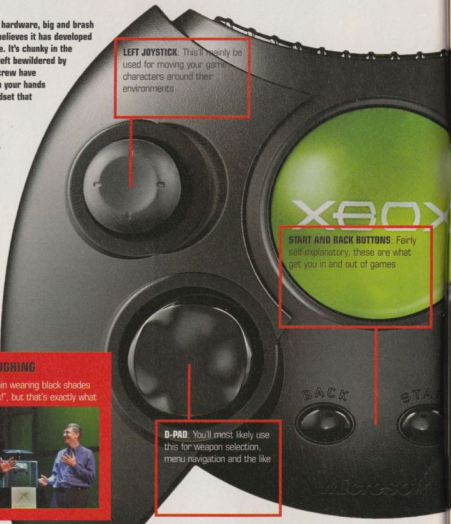
The **XBOX** controller is, like the rest of the Xbox hardware, big and brash with a green blob in the centre of it. Microsoft believes it has developed the ultimate way to interact with a console game. It's chunky in the extreme and comes with so many inputs you're left bewildered by the choices. Is this the future? If Gates and his crew have anything to say about it, it's going to be sitting in your hands early next year. Take a good long look at the handset that could change gaming forever.

INPUT BONANZA

The Xbox controller has just about every button, switch and lever you could possibly need for a videogame. You'll get two joysticks, a D-pad, six analogue action buttons (perfect for fighting games), two analogue triggers in the same vein as the Dreamcast (past driving games on the way), slots for two memory cards (or the much anticipated voice recognition and microphone unit, and maybe even a mini-cam!) a Start button, dual shock and, interestingly, a Back button for reverse select. Sounds a bit? Well, they're cramming it all onto a smaller version for Japan. Oh, and CVGs had a fiddle with one. When you finally get your hands on the likes of *Raw is War*, *Colin McRae X*, *Metal Gear Solid X* and *Jurassic Park*, you'll see for yourself how well the handset works.

ROCKING XBOX GETS EVERYONE LAUGHING

It's not every day you get to see a man-mountain wearing black shades tell Bill Gates, "It doesn't matter what you think!", but that's exactly what happened on the stage of the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas. The Rock will be the man man in the next *Shogakukan* generation but, sadly, nothing of the now-confirmed *Raw is War* game was shown. A *Colin McRae* game has also been confirmed.



LEFT JOYSTICK: This is generally be used for moving your game characters around their environments.

START AND BACK BUTTONS: Feisty full-impulsions, these are what get you in and out of games.

D-PAD: You'll most likely use this for weapon selection, menu navigation and the like.

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT!

THE LATEST BIG DVD RELEASES TO KEEP YOUR PS2 WARM THIS SPRING

BRAVEHEART

COST: £19.99
CERT: 15



WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT

Big, chest-beating, Oscar-winning epic about William Wallace, the Scotsman who led the 14th Century revolt against the English. Mel Gibson sports a mullien, even Chris Waddle would be laughed at, and rents about freedom and stuff to a bunch of Chris Evans lookalikes in kilts. Best remembered for its group arse-flashing sequence.

SPECIAL FEATURES

Commentary from that cheeky chappy Mel, along with deleted footage, interviews, behind-the-scenes stuff and more.

EXTRAS:

OVERALL: **OK**

FOUR WEDDINGS AND A FUNERAL

COST: £19.99 CERT: 15



FOUR GROOMS RUNNING TO GET SINGLE.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT

Cunningly released just in time for Valentine's Day, this smash hit Britcom turned Hugh Grant into an international star. The floppy-haired, oh-so-English lover of roadside lessons steals the show, as he bumbles his way through the quartet of nuptials and one send-off. Still a hoot.

SPECIAL FEATURES

Bit of a letdown really as you all get are a couple of trailers and precious little else. You can't help thinking someone could have done a really good audio commentary on this one.

EXTRAS:

OVERALL:



ACTION BUTTONS You get six keys and they're all analogue, so you'll get a different response depending on how hard you hit them

FEAR AND MALICE IN LAS VEGAS

Argonaut's dark platform adventure *Malice* is turning into something of a showcase title for Xbox, and the latest demo made up a good portion of the showing in Las Vegas. Sporting enough lighting tricks and



Good Gawd. How sweet is this going to look after another year's work?

effects to bring any graphics junky to their knees, *Malice* revolves around a cute red-headed girl with big eyes and an even bigger hammer. If all goes well, you'll be smashing some stunning environments to bits at the console's launch. Thumping good stuff.



This massive robot was used as a demo piece. It was damn impressive but it may not be in the final game

ABE RETURNS WITH HIS FLIPPED FRIEND

Munch's *OldSchool* takes *OldWorld Inhabitants*' franchise, makes it fully 3D and gives it a massive visual kick in the backside. The amphibian Munch has never been seen before, and you'll get to switch between the two characters throughout the game. Munch gets a wheelchair to help him get around, but Abe can still strait his stuff the bipedal way.



This is you. You're going through a bit of a purple patch



You're on candid camera, which is probably not conducive to good health and longterm survival

RIGHT JOYSTICK. Just the job for looking around in 3D. Compare it to the way the mouse works in *Quake*

BVG REBKONS

Like the console design, the joyypad's a chunky little monkey. Apparently it's ergonomically perfect and the product of consultation with 5,000 players, but is it a bit too chunky and perhaps just a little too husky? If well programmed though, the right controller could overcome many console 3D gaming problems.

PlayStation 2

It's not all rosy for the PS2 this month as Sierra has announced that a version of top PC game *Ground Control* has been put on hold for the foreseeable future. No reasons were forthcoming.

PlayStation 2

Japan will see the first batch of online playable games on the PS2 hit sometime in late April. The big hitting *Final Fantasy* and *Dragon Quest* will be playable online by the end of the year. No news on UK releases yet though.

Tomb Raider

Hollywood superstar and all-round bit of toady, Angelina Jolie, has said that she has been contracted to do another two movies in the *Tomb Raider* series. No dates have been set yet, but it seems the producers think they have a hit on their hands.

Xbox

Great news. One of the greatest shoot 'em ups of all time is getting a sequel, and it's coming to Xbox. Sierra and Valve have confirmed that *Half-Life 2* is going to be resurrected for Microsoft's new console. Life is good.

PC

The latest game in the *X-Com* series, *X-Com: Alliance*, has been sent to development hell after a series of delays. Now it seems that because of staff shortages the game has slipped again – now it's not set to hit until the last few months of this year.

Xbox

Microsoft has announced that, unlike Sony, there will be no hardware territorial restrictions on Xbox software, so in theory games from America and Japan will work on UK machines. However, games publishers will be able to put these restrictions inside the game's code – if they want to.



Totally ace, only a fool would miss quality like this



Not bad, worth a go. Best to hire or borrow, though



Total stinker. Avoid like poo on the pavement

ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW

COST: £19.99 CERT: 15



WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT

Cut: 1970s musical that gave birth to the Time Warp, giving students the world over an excuse to dress ridiculously while dancing like the camp inmates of an SSM Bedlam, now makes its totally over-the-top way to DVD.

SPECIAL FEATURES

A whole disc's worth, from the usual commentaries, interviews and behind the scenes footage, to deleted scenes, alternative endings, singalong sequences, directions for audience participation and tons more. Leather hotpants are optional.

EXTRAS:



OVERALL:



DOGMA

COST: £19.99
CERT: 15



WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT

Religious malarkey from the folks that brought you the low-budget smash, *Clerks*. Matt 'n' Ben play two fallen angels trying to scam their way back into heaven and, subsequently, bring about the end of the world. Worby singer Morrisette confuses matters even further by starring as God. Fun for a while, before it resorts to cheap special effects.

SPECIAL FEATURES

TV spots, trailers, and interviews with cast and crew members. A compact package, but the special features are entertaining enough to warrant a look.

EXTRAS:



OVERALL:



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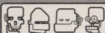
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Computer and Video Games uses



30 cards to make Team Arena rock



WORK & SPOON SHARLEY SKITRELL/POSKENNY P THANKSNAMCO STATION

O! BLAIR - NO!

MINISTERS RECKON OUR GAMES SHOULD BE EDUCATIONAL. WE RECKON THEY ALREADY ARE

WHILE GAMEPLAYERS

across the UK have been enjoying hits like *Majors's Mask* and *Shemmo*, UK Government ministers have been busy asking developers to make games more educational. Tony

Blair's Education Minister Michael Willis even invited games manufacturers to a conference to discuss ways in which new software and games hardware can be used both inside and outside the classroom to make learning more appealing. But we

reckon it ministers took the time to properly check videogames out, they'd see that everybody's favourite games are already educational. Here's four mighty fine reasons why Ministers should either join in and learn something or just butt out.

DANCING STAGE EURO MIX



to dance, especially on tracks like La Senorita, where you really have to winkle those hips to win. The best PE lesson in the world.

TEACHES: Just look at Johnny in our pic! That was taken before he discovered the aerobic joys of that renowned example of physical education, *Dancing Stage*.

Sustained dance mat action helped the pounds fly off, and also improved his stamina, balance and coordination. *Dancing Stage* also teaches you how to

MICROSOFT FLIGHT SIMULATOR 2000



with his pilot friend, who then fell ill, he successfully landed the light aircraft – all with no official training. Birney, videogames really can save your life!

PC

TEACHES: If you can get your head around the myriad intricacies of the Professional version of Microsoft's big-selling flight sim, you'll be in a good position to actually pilot a real-life plane. It's that realistic. Don't scoff – it's true. Newspaper stories include one about a guy who's played the sim so much that when he went flying with his pilot friend, who then fell ill, he successfully landed the light aircraft – all with no official training. Birney, videogames really can save your life!

FIFA 2001



scenarios of real-life play. Playing as team-mates helps communication skills and if you ever get to be someone's boss, the team management side is handy.

PlayStation 2

TEACHES: If football is the new religion, then the most up-to-date footy games can arm you with a load of handy bluffer's knowledge for networking when climbing the career/social ladder. Especially useful for name-dropping with sporty types. They'd also give you a good grasp on advanced playing tactics for multiple

ZELDA: MAJORA'S MASK



logical sequence – while up against an incredibly tight three-day deadline. We reckon this is fantastic training for a high-flying job in the City.

N64

TEACHES: Any player who completes *Majora's Mask* can never be accused of being badly organised or not being community-minded. To win the game you have to actively seek out people and make a big effort to help them for rewards. You'll also have to cope with having lots of tasks to complete – often in a lengthy but

YOU HAVE YOUR SAY - HERE! NOW!

Here's four game-makers' reactions to the Government's ideas. Mail your comments to mailbag.cvg@cmzap.com, marked 'education'.



Ian Johnson, 17, from London: "They're meant to be fun, not educational. It's a bad idea and would spoil games."



Patrick Eyles, 17, from London: "If games were made this I just wouldn't want to play them."

BVB RECKONS

Videogames are about action, adventure, thrills and challenges. They're about doing things you can't in real life, about escapism and, most importantly, about pure entertainment. Perhaps ministers should spend more time investing in making schools safer and more enjoyable places to be in, rather than meddling in an industry designed solely for entertainment. They couldn't get any nuttier trying to interfere in Hollywood blockbusters, so why do they think they can in the world of games?

LEE'S LAB TESTS

GAMING ADD-ONS UNDER THE MICROSCOPE
After extensive PlayStation 2 peripherals testing (go to page 53 now!), the Prof is thankful for some non-Sony specific products to get his teeth into in this month's Lab Test. As well as Game Boy gear here, there's the P5one gun fun and sexy cinematic surround sound to severely scupper your savings.

GAME BOY BATTERY PACK

GBC/NGPC £17.99
Play Game Boy and NeoGeo Pocket without using loads of batteries. Sweet! Charge up the pack unit, clip it to your belt and it'll last over twenty hours per charge. The retractable power cable may be a little short for older players. ★★ ★

GAME BOY TRAVEL PACK

GBC £29.99
The ultimate kit for gaming on the go. The travel pack comes bursting with a rechargeable grip unit, GB light and magnifier, stereo speaker system, link cable, mains adapter and a fantastic joystick/joypad unit. A bargain price too! ★★ ★★



YAMAHA TSS-1 HOME THEATRE SOUND SYSTEM

PC/PS2 £169

Enjoy the delights of home theatre surround sound with this Dolby-compatible monster. It may seem expensive but it's an impressive piece of kit. Will work with a PC and PS2 with an optical cable. The sound quality is incredible. ★★ ★★



SCORPION LIGHT GUN II

PS £19.99

Blaze releases an updated version of the already brilliant Scorpion light gun. Features improved laser-sight accuracy and it's still one of the best feeling guns around. You probably don't need it if you've got the original, otherwise its great. ★★ ★



360 MODENA RACE WHEEL

DC £39.99

This officially-licensed wheel wants to give you that classy Ferrari feeling but doesn't quite pull it off. It feels more plastic than the PS2 version but at least you can play with it on your lap. Not bad, but should be better given the licence. ★★ ★

GAMECUBE

Camelot, the company behind *Mano Terra*, has confirmed they are working on a GAMECUBE RPG. Rumours abound that it will be a GC version of their GBA game *Golden Sun*, with some kind of link possible between the two versions.

Game Boy Advance

Nintendo and Namco have confirmed the GBA will get its own version of mighty smack 'em down *Tekken* during the months following its Japanese launch.

Resident Evil

Capcom has announced the next batch of *Res Evil* survival horror epics. *Res Evil 4* will hit the PS2 this year, with other versions in 2002, while *Res Evil D* will appear on GAMECUBE in 2001, with number 4 to follow in 2002.

Arcade

Sony will unleash its next generation of beat 'em ups with *Vertus Fighter X*. The game launches this month and rolls out across Japan in March. Machines should hit the UK in April and hopefully a GC version of the game will follow.

Movie News

The makers of the *House of the Dead* movie have snapped up the rights for girl-on-girl slapfest, *Dead or Alive 2* and have more game-related movie deals in the pipeline.

WIN £100

TO SPEND ON WHATEVER YOU WANT

1 Star Wars offshoot, *Battle for Naboo* is on which format?

- A DVD
B PSone
C GC

2 Project Justice is what sort of game?
A Beat 'em up
B First-person shooter
C Role-player

3 How many stars did the Prof give the new Scorpion Lightgun II in his Lab Test this month?

- A 3
B 4
C 5

4 Which new game is 'Iain the hero' of?

- A *Banjo Tonic*
B *Dark Cloud*
C *Armored Core 2*

5 How many Tex 4x4 cars are we giving away in Win This Lot Now?

- A 1
B 2
C 3

6 Where did Johnny go to talk to the developers of *Shadow of Memories*?

- A Home
B America
C Germany

7 How much does *Vanishing Point* on DC cost?

- A £19.99
B £29.99
C £39.99

8 Which upcoming game lets you run your very own banana republic?

- A *Gaangsters 2*
B *Tropica*
C *GTA3*

9 Volt Krueger, Son Barzard and Kou Leifoh appear in which game?

- A *The Banisher*
B *Shadow of Memories*
C *Phantasy Star Online*

10 Which fantastic game is this great screenshot from?

- A *Team Arma*
B *Fear Effect 2*
C *Shadow of Memories*



LAST MONTH'S ANSWERS

- 1/ C *Dissid Back*
2/ B *Jay Set Radio*
3/ A *Hello Kitty*
4/ B *Zidane*
5/ A *Tony Hawk*
6/ C *World's Most Interesting Bomb*
7/ B *Naked*
8/ A *computerandvideogames.com*
9/ B *VVVV*
10/ B *The same as Ludos War*

The lucky winner of issue 200's compo and one hundred quid is **Dale Evans of Aylesbury**

IT'S EASY TO ENTER

Post to us at: Win Some Money 232, Computer and Video Games, Angel House, 339-346 Goswell Road, London, EC1V 7DP. The first correct entry out of the hat wins. Entries must be in by March 15th, 2001. So hurry up.

1
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3
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6
7
8
9
10

NAME: _____ AGE: _____

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CHECK US OUT NOW

CVG WEBSITE GETS A MAJOR MAKEOVER

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS STEVE FULPHY/JAMES

■ **DC**
Sega is going *Shenmue* mad at the moment. A movie based on the game has just opened in Japan featuring several parts of the sequel to the first game. Also, the game sequel is said to be nearing the end of development. The word is that it will feature a 15-minute intro to allow anyone who didn't play the first game to catch up with what they missed.

■ **PlayStation 2**
Stock update: Sony announced that by the end of March they will be bringing another 400,000 machines into the UK to try and satisfy the hardware lust of UK gamers. That should keep Arn Robinson and Watchdog happy.

■ **PlayStation**
Tony Hawk has stated that he and Activision may be working on a new game to appear on the PSone before a fully fledged sequel appears on a more powerful console. *Tony Hawks 2.5* (not the final title) should appear sometime in the Summer.

■ **Game Boy Advance**
Developer Majesco has announced ten new titles for the Nintendo handheld. Can you work with titles like *Earthworm Jim*, *Caesar's Palace*, *MDMs: Lost at Time*, *Indian 3-D*, *Aerial Aces*, *F-1B Fortress*, *Jelly Belly*, *Pitfall* and *Paintball* to appear?

■ **PlayStation 2**
A sequel to the gore-fest movie *Blade* is in the works, and what a sequel, a game is underway as well. It's being developed in the UK by Mucky Foot for the PS2 at first, although they are expecting to convert it to other systems nearer to its release.

■ **PlayStation 2**
EA has delayed the launch of the promising *Bond* game *The World is Not Enough* on the PS2. The reason? They want to make *007 Racing* their first *Bond* outing on the system. Hope it's better than the PlayStation game which, unfortunately, sucked a fat one.

■ **Games World**
If anyone ever tells you how sad playing games is and how it isn't nearly as fun as it used to be, the UK games industry broke all sales records last year, and is now worth a cool total of £344 million. That's combined sales of consoles and games. This makes it one of the most profitable and fastest growing industries anywhere. Not bad for an industry that started out with *Pong*.

IF YOU'RE **REALLY** a regular visitor to the CVG website (www.computerandvideogames.com), you'll have noticed that we ripped it to bits and started again

just before Christmas. If you aren't, here's why you need to fire up that modem and check it out. One great change is that the number of image files each page has to display has been reduced, so everything

loads quickly. Keep an eye out for more cool developments throughout the year, including tips, game guides, forums and secret stuff that we guarantee will change the way you use game sites

Games [find what you want... **SEARCH!**]

NEWS PREVIEWS REVIEWS DOWNLOADS

FILTER DC GB N64 PS2 PS PC Xbox

DC *Full Chalmers List: All the Birds!*

GB *Darkstalkers: The Fightin' Genies*

N64 *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*

PS2 *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*

PC *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*

Xbox *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*

HEADLINES **BUT SOON**

RECENT PREVIEWS **RECENT REVIEWS**

Every page has a large search box at the top, so you can always find what you want. Just type in a game name, format or developer to see everything we've got. If the site can only find one match, you'll be whisked straight to that page

Games [find what you want... **SEARCH!**]

NEWS PREVIEWS REVIEWS DOWNLOADS

FILTER DC GB N64 PS2 PS PC Xbox

DC *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*

GB *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*

N64 *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*

PS2 *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*

PC *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*

Xbox *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*

DON'T MISS THIS! **Game Boy Advance screenshot overload**

Indiana Jones picture madness

Final Fantasy X details emerge

Final Fantasy X details emerge

One of the features we're most proud of is the 'filter', which appears on all index pages. This lets you decide which format you want to read about - clicking on one will just show articles relevant to PS, PC, or whatever you choose

Games [find what you want... **SEARCH!**]

NEWS PREVIEWS REVIEWS DOWNLOADS

Metropolis Street Racer

FACT BOX

GENRE Racing / Driving

RELEASE Friday, 3 November 2000

PLATFORMS 1 - 8 (online)

DEVELOPER SCE

REVIEWED *****

PREVIEWED

When you've read a review or preview, each article has a link to the game's talking about so you can see all the accumulated news, movies and screenshots in one. We just wanna make it easy for!

Games [find what you want... **SEARCH!**]

NEWS PREVIEWS REVIEWS DOWNLOADS

FACT BOX

MADE BY Sony

PRICE £279.99

WEB SITE www.playstation-europe.com

RELEASE Friday, 24 November 2000

AVAILABLE EUROPE AMERICA JAPAN

81 PlayStation 2 games

IN THE NEWS

PLAYSTATION 2

If you're looking at us on a Dreamcast or other TV-based browser you'll be delighted to know that the site has been designed with the lower resolution of text screens in mind, so there's none of that ugly horizontal scrolling

SCREEN SCENE

PORTABLE PLAYSTATIONING WORDS & SCREENSHOTS LEE SKITTELL

GOT YOURSELF **NOT YOURSELF** a PSone? Then get ready for proper 32-bit gaming on the go as third-party peripherals manufacturers Mad Catz and Wild Things both launch their own PSone screen systems.

PRICEY, BUT NICEY

Pictured left is the Screen Station from Mad Catz, retailing at £99.99. The unit plugs into the back of your PSone and comes bundled with a mains adapter and a car cigarette lighter.

adapter to relieve the boredom of those marathon drives to Grandma's on a Sunday afternoon. The screen measures 10.5 cm and there's a brightness and volume control. The second third-party screen-dream is from Wild Things and costs £109. It comes with a mains unit, cigarette-lighter adapter, 10.5 cm screen and features controls for colour saturation, brightness, contrast and volume. Both are on-sale now but, if you're not convinced, wait for a Lab Test very soon.

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For even more chances to win, visit www.nicktv.co.uk

IN THE SHOPS SOON

WHAT TOMORROW'S BIG GAMES ARE LIKE TO PLAY

THE MAN BEHIND METAL GEAR REVEALS HIS SECRET WEAPON: ZOE

HEAVY METAL

WORD: GALEX SIMMONS SCREENSHOTS: VARIOUS

ZOE

OUTMARCH FORMATS PLAYSTATION 2

Robots are supposed to be man's best friend, designed to make coffee and pick the spots on your backside. But something, somewhere has gone very wrong. The giant battlemechs in ZOE don't chirp like R2-D2 or play ball like AIBO, they tear through skyscrapers with plasma swords and trash entire towns in a hail of nuclear tipped missiles. They were put on this planet to strip us of our flesh as fast as possible. But you're one of the lucky guys. Laugh at the poor saps as they're flattered by a 15-ton big toe, because you're in the hot seat of one of these droids and carnage is your speciality. Get in close and back with a razor-sharp blade the size of Blackpool Tower, or stay back and spit energy balls like lethal light bulbs. Y'know, everything about ZOE is big: the robots, the explosions and, more importantly, the action.

LEO SLAYER

There is a point to all this destruction. A mining colony orbiting Jupiter has been ravaged by a robot army. No-one knows why, but the future of the colonists is in the hands of a kid called Leo. Thing is, the bowl-haired boy isn't some kind of gifted saviour or "Chosen One". In fact, the only reason he's at the front line is because he accidentally stumbled into the cockpit of a tooted-up orbital frame and the onboard computer wouldn't release the child safety lock. So in the blink of an eye Leo is skimming low over the neon lit city, weaving between buildings and singing the tops of trees with the robot's afterburner. And then the fun begins...

"THEY'RE ALL OVER ME!"

The first battle starts like the ambush in Aliens. At first all is quiet. Then, when you switch to the map, enemy units blink into view. First one, then another. Before long you're surrounded by battle droids carefully scouring the colony for survivors. Get too close and they'll turn and attack which, although fun to begin, is essentially



Use Jehuty's afterburners to get in close to the enemy, then grab them by the throat and toss them into a building. See ya, loser



Although burning buildings look very cool, innocent civilians die in the wreckage and so your score goes down



TEMPEST
This october is the first boss you'll encounter. It spits fire from its tentacles and its weakspot is its belly

writing your own death warrant. You'll deal with the first batch of bots easily enough, but it's the waves of reinforcements which could prove a problem. That's because the enemy is intelligent. Chances are they couldn't take the jackpot on Who Wants to be a Millionaire, but they're smart enough to know a one-on-one battle is futile and if they gang up and attack from all sides they have a better chance of winning. That's why it's better to stay back and take on squads one at a time, rather than wading in guns blazing.

CLOSING FOR THE KILL

Piloting your battle droid is a doddle. Ease the analogue stick forward and you'll gracefully glide through the air like a mechanical bird of prey. Flick on the afterburners and your jet-pack glows blue, allowing you zip from one area to the next in seconds. This sudden burst of speed is also invaluable in combat, giving just enough oomph to avoid inbound missiles. Jehuty, the orbital frame you're strapped inside, is equipped to fight close-up and from a distance. The initial plasma cannon is pretty pathetic, but it's possible to power up a shot and unleash a slow but deadly bolt of electricity. Likewise, your sword: any skillful enemy can block your attacks without breaking a sweat, but charge up and let rip and no shield can release them from death's cold grasp. However, if you really want to impress your mates, get in close and grab your opponent by the throat. They'll buckle under Jehuty's vice-like grip, allowing you to drag them around to face another enemy and throw 'em like a bizarre game of robot bowling. Very cool.

POWER-UP

It's not long before you're desperate for a weapon with a bit more kick. However, ZOE's power-up system works in a very unique way. Rather than buying a bigger gun or being awarded proton death by notching up a high score, you have to download new weapons to Jehuty's memory. First, find the passcode needed to unlock the

SELECTION BOX OF DESTRUCTION

ZOE offers some spectacular ways to dish out carnage, from the standard-issue blaster that's bolted to Jehuty's arm, to limpet mines that stick to walls and spew laser death. Pick a fight with the biggest droid around and let the fun begin!



GEYER: Chuck them at the enemy and watch the lighthouse



PHALANK: Rapid-firing cannon, perfect for downing small robots



HALBERD: A close-range laser beam which slices through armor



PLASMA BLAST: A slow but deadly energy ball which nukes anything



JEHUTY
The Orbital Frame you fly. Solid as a rock and reamed with the coolest weapons



JAVELIN: This giant spear looks nasty but is pretty pathetic



LIGHTNING SWORD: When charged, the sword can destroy anything



POWER GRAPPLE: Grab the sucker, then throw it at another enemy



SNIPER: Offers pinpoint accuracy, but isn't particularly powerful



ZOE's lightshow is more spectacular than Guy Fawkes's night. Here a Raptor is shredded by Geysers' blasts

access program, then hack into the system to upgrade Jehuty's capabilities. Although most of the secondary weapons are included simply as another means of causing mass destruction, a handful have specific uses. The sniper cannon can fire through energy fields and proves invaluable when targeting power generators protected by shields, while Decoy jettisons a hologram Jehuty which draws enemy fire away from your orbital frame.

BRING THE HOUSE DOWN

The locations in ZOE look as fantastic as the robots themselves. Residential zones stretch out like giant, sci-fi council estates, cities are cluttered with towering buildings and weaving highways and the parks... well, they're crawling with enemy droids out for your blood. You can destroy anything you want, no through houses with laser fire and nuke the tiny trucks abandoned in car parks, or bring a skyscraper toppling to the ground by throwing another robot into its side. But for every building trashed and innocent civilian killed, a black mark is chalked up against your name. Since Leo is only a kid, he doesn't believe in killing for the sake of it, and therefore you'll only get the best ending if you go easy on the megadeath. Take the SOS sub-missions as an example: occasionally you'll pick up a distress signal. You can choose to ignore the call, but help out innocent civilians and your hero rating goes through the roof. It's not always that easy though, and if you don't act quickly, people get killed. It's too easy to take out buildings in the heat of battle, and the only way to ensure you don't wipe out civilians with a stray missile is to get in close and hack with your blade.

THE FACE OF DEATH

So you've out your teeth on ZOE's smaller droids, but nothing can prepare you for the giant boss bots which test your muscle in combat. These hulking behemoths fill the screen, spewing out death like there's no tomorrow. They're extremely tough and can only be crippled by discovering their weak spot, then throwing everything you've got at it. Tempest is a huge warbot that looks more like a cyborg jellyfish. Walls of flame erupt from its tentacles, so stay back and crack open its dome skull with Jehuty's shoulder



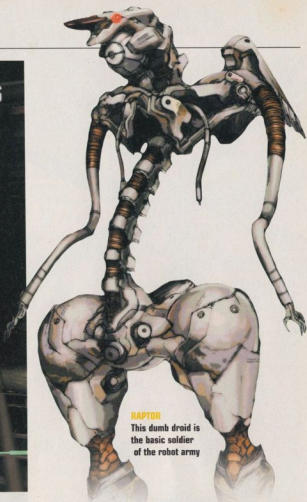
Cut down on civilian casualties by getting in close and cutting robots with your lightning sword



The background detail is simply breathtaking. Check the buildings



If you're low on energy, do a U-turn and run away from the enemy, get some health then have another pop



Cold-blooded Killer or Platform Ponce?



<http://213.219.42.200>



NEITH
Your arch-rival and, unsurprisingly, a fearsome opponent

DEATH HAS MANY FACES

Your Orbital Frame is as tall as a mountain, but is nothing compared to some of the boss robots you'll encounter. Be afraid



NEBULA: Lashes out with its tentacles, before chucking hundreds of mines at your puny frame



TYRANT 1: Drop a decoy to draw the Tyrant's hyperblast away from Jehuty, then let rip with shoulder cannons



TEMPEST: Target its fragile dome, watching out for the flames, then focus all fire on its underbelly



TYRANT 2: When it transforms, use afterburners to dodge its ram, then switch weapons to Gauntlet and target its cockpit



You can switch between Orbital Frames during the game, but if we tell you how it'll spoil the fun. Sorry, you'll have to play for yourself

cannons. Then, when the beast flies into the air, rip open its weak underbelly with a couple of plasma balls. That's only the second level too, and by the time you've honed your fighting skills you're battling even bigger robots, desperately trying to avoid missile locks and waves of mines which slowly home in on your bot.

DROID DEATHMATCH

As you cripple enemy robots and complete levels, they're added to the multiplayer deathmatch option. Yup, you and a mate can fight it out one-on-one in any of ZOE's rock-solid battlemechs. While deathmatch is nothing new, ZOE's approach is unique for a console game. The screen isn't split – instead the camera sits behind one droid and tracks the opposing player in the distance. It's effective too, and it's just as easy to dish out pain when you're far away as well as close up. And because the action isn't split down the middle like most other multiplayer games, it looks fantastic and is every bit as fast and exciting as the one-player experience.

ZOE RECKONS

ZOE's intense gameplay grabs you by the throat and the special effects blow your mind. This is heavy metal that's guaranteed to rock anyone's world.

ZOE

BIONICLE

FIND
THE
POWER

On the island of Mata Nui the evil Makuta rules and times are dark.

Legend says that six heroes will come to restore peace. Now the legendary Toa have arrived on Mata Nui.

To defeat Makuta the Toa must find the Great Masks of Power.

The Toa set out in search of the masks. Many dangers await them...

...before they can fulfil their destiny and free the island.



Collect the Toa and join them on their quest for the Great Masks of Power. There are 72 masks to collect, plus rare, powerful and mysterious editions. And more to come: Software, music, watches, clothing and new exciting characters. Enter the Bionicle. Live the legend.



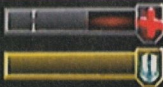
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www.bionicle.com

LEGO **TECHNIC**

Head Shot!!

You killed Rath



AIMING FOR THE HEADSHOT

UT HAS Q3 IN ITS SIGHTS ON DC

UNREAL TOURNAMENT

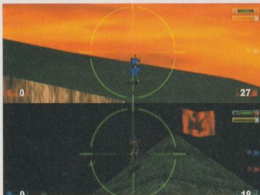
OUTMARCH FORMATDC

Unreal Tournament's huge Facing Worlds level must be the best sniping map ever seen in a first-person shooter. Picture two huge towers equipped with rifles and loads of ammo either end of a long, thin, exposed hill which everyone is forced to run across to capture enemy flags. It's headshot heaven. Until now, only sniping out with expensive PCs got to enjoy the full head-bursting splendour. But come March, both PS2 and now Dreamcast will be spreading the joy. The downside? The tedious 'is *UT* or *Quake 3* better' debate will spread - is PS2 *UT* better than DC *Q3*, are the PC versions better than the next-gens, etc etc. Garh! We say: chill out - they all rock.

ASSAULT ON DC13

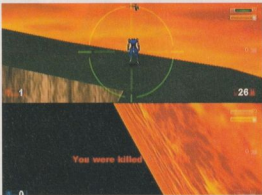
The core gameplay and framework of DC *Unreal Tournament* remains essentially the same as the PC original. It's still a case of sneakily sniping and furiously fragging your way through increasingly complex arenas and opponents, unlocking new modes of play and maps as you go. Much like the PS2 version, some of the biggest maps have had to be cut, and numbers and difficulty settings of enemy bots reduced, the modes of play dropped or adapted so Sega's

console can handle them. Fear not though, many of the best modes and maps (including Facing Worlds) remain and *UT*. It's still every bit a glorious blood-fest, the ultimate goal being to skill up on computer-controlled bots until you're ready to take on the real thing - other human players, both online and at home in four-way split-screen.



DOMINATRIX

Progressing through several maps in standard Deathmatch mode unlocks Domination mode where you have to be continually on the move to control key map locations. Complete several of these and Capture The Flag is opened. Domination and CTF are team-based, so you'll have to adapt your style of play to suit the



As you'd hope, multiplayer is still a real blast in *UT*, but lining your mate up for a sneaky headshot using the jypad can be frustratingly fiddly



Facing World secrets: get damage multiplier power-ups in each base by firing your personal teleporter onto those lamp ledges on the ground level, teleport to them, then fire again onto the ledge above. Easy



Ain't that a pretty sight? Not the view, you fool, the Redeemer. One of the best weapons in any game in recent years, the one-shot behemoth is best in guided-missile mode. This guy's got a bad headache coming

objectives and learn to issue orders to your bots if your squad is to successfully defend and attack at the same time. One of DC *UT*'s most ingenious modes, though, is the all-new Challenge mode. PC veterans will remember the tough, final one-on-one Hyperblast level – now there's a series of them to master, and these guys ain't no walk in the park in the default Skilled setting, let alone in Godlike. Dotted among classic original maps, some of which are tarted up, are a few well-designed new ones.



complete with the usual array of bobby trap-style switches, low gravity environments, power-ups and weapons as well as, no doubt, secret areas we've yet to find.

RODENT RULES

Some players claim *UT*'s weapons and level design lend themselves to a more tactical game than *Quake 3* and make the one-player game more satisfying than its rival's, but multiplayer



is still what it's all about. And while neither next-gen version of *UT* has as much choice as *PC* in terms of multiplayer modes (bye-bye Last Man Standing, sniff), the DC version can handle a respectable eight players/bots online, with multiplayer maps unlocking as you progress in one-player. We've yet to try it online, but if DC *Quake 3* is anything to go by, *UT* should be playable despite lag issues. Crucially, though, while four of you can get head-to-head with pads offline, *UT* on DC also makes full use of the mouse and keyboard combo. Although it will set you back another 40 quid, for fast and accurate jumping, moving and shooting, it's an essential investment.

STILL NEEDS WORK

Some players might whinge that Dreamcast doesn't really need another PC-inspired FPS, that, lacking any plot and centring on botmarching, it's not really a console-type game and visually isn't all it's cracked up to be. Sure, the code we played was still early and buggy with occasional slow-down at intense moments of action, and it had yet to compare with the coloured lighting and subtle shading of the PC version. But some of the more complete levels were still graphically impressive and sometimes improved on the PCs, and it's a compelling experience if you're into FPSs. We reckon *UT* offers a more varied tactical experience than *Q3*, but doesn't look as polished – yet. What's more, you won't have to stick up a cool quid on a hot PC to get in on all that ultra-cool sniping action. And if DC owners really want to feel good about their machine, chew on this: the PS2 version, out two weeks before the DC, currently offers no online games. Hmm.



EVG RECKONS

With its tactical twist and online play, *UT*'s set to be a worthy addition to DC, but can it challenge *Q3*?



WHAT TOMORROW'S BIG GAMES ARE LIKE TO PLAY



EVERY CLOUD HAS A SILVER LINING

AN EPIC ADVENTURE OFFERING BOTH JOY AND DISAPPOINTMENT

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS BY LEE SKITRELL

DARK CLOUD

OUTMARCH TBC (UK) FORMAT/PS2

You're sitting on the sofa, feet up, watching the King of daytime soaps, *Neighbours*. Madge barks out her baritone lines, fit Felicity drapes her pretty self across the wobbly scenery, and everyone's favourite plastic soap couple, Drew and Libby, grumble to each other about who ate the last of the cornflakes. It's rubbish but you still sit through it, and what's more, you genuinely enjoy it. Now, we're not saying that, like *Neighbours*, Sony's massive PS2 RPG *Dark Cloud* is rubbish. But we do reckon that, while remaining hugely enjoyable and rewarding, it has undeniable flaws.

TWO BECOME ONE

Dark Cloud's most interesting hook is that it attempts to merge two very different styles of game together. The traditional RPG exploration, puzzle-solving and dungeon-crawling are all here, along with loads of characters and objects to interact with. But where *Dark Cloud* offers most innovation is in its *Sim City*-style village building sections. And rather cleverly, the styles are linked by an epic story, managing to never be as disjointed as you might expect.

GENIE IN A BOTTLE

Your adventure begins with an intro sequence that uses the game engine rather than fancy FMV. Nice, but not as awe-inspiring as we hoped from such a high-calibre title. The sequence kicks off with a bunch of religious tribal duties, dancing in an attempt to raise a massive genie demon from a bubbling cauldron, and it's this dancing that is the most impressive thing in the intro sequence. Even when the action switches to your home village, the locals are still dancing that same strange, superbly choreographed dance. Cool. The story centres around an army general who has been able to command the raised genie, and their combined attempts to wipe the world entirely clean. Towns, people, lakes and animals have all been sucked up and sealed into pods, then scattered around the most dangerous dungeons the world over. The intro ends with the game's hero Toan leaping to save a trapped villager from a falling windmill. Just as he



Dark Cloud has plenty of strengths but the dreary dungeon levels seriously let it down. The concept of randomly generating dungeon maps may sound appealing, but in reality it's far too frustrating, and the dank, grey environment can begin to really wear you down



Your mission is to hunt down pods, scattered through the dungeons of the world, that have imprisoned all civilisation. A likely story then

makes contact with the distressed lady, he's zapped away and brought to safety by the King of Spirits. He then tells you it's your task to find all the pods and rebuild all that's been lost!

YOU'RE NOT ALONE

You start your adventure in the barren wastes that was once your hometown. The sun moves swiftly across the sky to let you know you don't have time to hang around. Looking around in first-person mode reveals that maybe you're not quite as alone as you first thought. It seems an airship has crashed in the distance and a man inside is your first contact in this massive quest. Exploring the dungeon for the first time, the King of Spirits pops up again to give you handy tips on gameplay basics. These are done via hilarious cartoon sequences that look like they were drawn in felt pen and make you chuckle all the way through the game. It's a lovely touch and gives the game a light-hearted feel that's missing in many other po-faced RPGs.



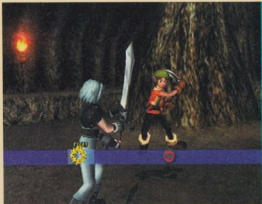
Search for gems and sacred stones to improve your weapon's power



Otherwise, it's RPG business-as-usual as you start to navigate your first dungeon level, hunting down those precious pods and engaging in fast-paced combat.

DUNGEON KEEPER

The dungeoneering in *Dark Cloud* is what will cause most consternation among RPG fans. Each floor of every dungeon is randomly generated and will be different every time you enter it. This random factor is good because it offers new maps and challenges every time you visit a particular floor, but it also proves heart-breakingly frustrating. The random structure doesn't allow for any kind of innovation in the design of the caves and you'll find yourself yearning for even the simplest *Zelda*-style dungeon puzzle. Entrances and exits move around and even healing waterfalls, and the location of treasure chests and their contents vary wildly from play to play. Trekking through samey-looking tunnels and caverns gives very dull, very quickly. There are a couple of lights at the end of these



Ventriloquist: "See my talking chest? Next trick, I'll talk out my..."



randomly generated tunnels though. First, every so often you'll encounter a boss who challenges you to a *Shermoe*-inspired button-pressing Quick Timer Event, and certain areas hold new weapons to equip and experiment with.

NACKY SLASHY

Dark Cloud's combat system is an unashamed *Zelda 64* rip-off, but sadly it's not as intuitive, nor does it offer you as many moves or ways to attack. You can lock on to the various generic skillies and once you meet, then circle around them, slashing and blocking until they fall. The battles are fast, but not all that exciting. What is potentially exciting is the way your sword deteriorates as you fight, leaving you the tactical option to attack for goodies or conserve strength. It works really well, though running out of sword-power at important moments is inevitable and annoying. You can collect and use ranged weapons like bombs and magic spells to help fry the baddies too, and these are a god-send when your sword is weak.

IN THE SHOPS SOON

WHAT TOMORROW'S BIG GAMES ARE LIKE TO PLAY

WORLD ME UP, BATTLE DOWNS

Once you've recovered the various bits and pieces of civilisation from their pod prisons in the dungeons, you can now start the long but rewarding process of re-constructing your town. Even with Japanese text, the process is relatively simple and building a working village, populating it



This is the building menu. The icons in the right-hand menu are the various parts of the town. The options on the left tell you what you need to build



First of all you have to place the correct pieces into their sockets. Then scroll down the list of buildings to see what you want to construct



Pretty soon you'll have built all you can afford and have a pretty little village. Time to get on with more dungeoning to save some more bits



Now you can explore the new village, built by your own hand, in glorious 3D! The water effects on the fishing pond are particularly special

with its own inhabitants and then exploring it in full 3D really does make you feel all warm inside. It's very likely that later in the game the people you rescue will help you in the dungeon quest and the two worlds and playing styles will fuse even closer together. Check out our efforts at creating the ultimate village estate below.



With all of its elements correctly in place you can plot out precisely where you want the house to go. Rotate buildings by using the shoulder buttons



It's really easy once you get the hang of it and you should add new items to the buildings and then put them in place as quickly as you can



Rebuilding your homestead lets you talk to villagers and get advice. You also receive new items from the many hidden treasure chests



Like *Majors's Mask*, people wander around the village and tell you different things at different times of day. Don't forget - it's good to talk



Despite its faults, *Dark Cloud* offers plenty of RPG enjoyment. It hurries along at a good pace, constantly keeps you busy and holds your attention by splitting the action between the two different styles of play. Some of the better graphics are pretty exciting too

TORVIL AND DEAN

Like the game as a whole, *Dark Cloud's* graphics are a mixture of superb and a bit naff. The insides of buildings are packed with detail and water effects are lovely. Your village creations look beautiful too as they shimmer in the sunlight of the day and twinkle in the dark of midnight. The dungeon graphics are less impressive. Draw distance is adequate but the caverns and tunnels are uninspiring. The enemy characters are well animated, but they are neither original nor all that special to look at. The floaty poison ghosts especially let the side down and are no scarier than a *Pac-Man* ghostie. Heck, your hero also gives the unsettling impression that he's ice-dancing rather than walking or running.

IT'S BAD! IT'S GOOD!

Although they work well together, the two playing styles don't offer much in the way of depth and innovation. The dungeon sections are simplistic and often frustrating, and the *Sim City*-style sections don't give you enough freedom to create as you might like. The funny thing is, despite the fact it's clear that *Dark Cloud* isn't going to trouble *Zelda* or *Final Fantasy*, we've still been playing it to death and enjoying it massively. We can only imagine how much more fun it will be if these problems are given some attention before UK release.

EVG RECKONS

Exciting RPG action, but some of the obvious flaws really need to be ironed out for its UK release.

END

And you thought your
sex life was private.



Do you really want your Sex life to be a Spectator Sport?

In the red corner: your Mates and hers, winding you up. In the blue corner: your parents and hers, threatening surgery.

And in the middle: you. With enough pressure in your pants to run a power station. And enough on your back to crush a bus.

With all this going on, is it any wonder so Many of us rush into sex and screw it up?

So relax. Do it when you decide you're ready - not someone else. And don't take too much notice of what your Mates SAY they do.

Most girls don't have full sex until they're at least Seventeen (Many wait a lot longer). And the average gap between a first kiss and full intercourse isn't ten seconds - it's actually several years (some snogging session).

So take your time. You'll enjoy it more. She'll enjoy it more.

And, when that happens, you'll both find it a whole lot easier to forget about everyone else.

sex

Are you thinking about it enough?

If you're under 18 and need advice about Sex or contraception, phone Sexwise on 0800 28 29 30 or visit us at www.ruthinking.co.uk The call is free and confidential. Textphone (for people with hearing impairments) 0800 328 1651.

WHAT TOMORROW'S BIG GAMES ARE LIKE TO PLAY



Your mission is to free the planet from the grasp of the Trade Federation. You'll need to pilot numerous craft and make allies of other Naboo species, as only a united front can extinguish the enemy threat

JEDI OR NOT, HERE I COME

IT'LL TAKE MORE THAN THE FORCE TO GET OUT OF THIS ALIVE

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: LORD MINKLEY VADER

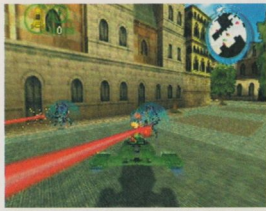
STAR WARS: BATTLE FOR NABOO

OUTSPRING (UK)FORMATING64

In the titanic struggle between good and evil, there will always be blazing heroes and maniacal villains, and when the forces of light and dark clash, lives are always lost. History always remembers these heroes and villains, but what it neglects are the little people – those faceless individuals whose tireless endeavour makes it possible for the heroes to triumph. Well, this is your chance to be one of the little people, in the greatest struggle of all.

PREQUEL SEQUEL

Battle for Naboo takes place parallel to the events of *Star Wars: Episode 1*. The Trade Federation has sent an invasion force down to the planet's surface, and while the Jedi attempt to rescue Queen Amidala and take her to Coruscant, you, as Lt. Gavyn Sykes of Naboo's Royal Security Forces, must fight to free the planet from their clutches.



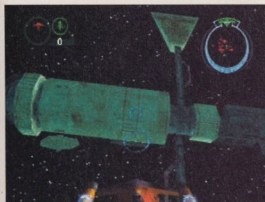
Buzz around city streets, blasting enemies with laser fire. Sweet!



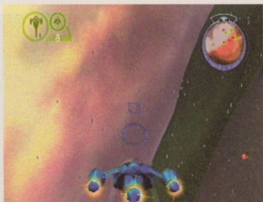
Unlike *Regus Squadron*, you can actually see to the horizon in *Naboo*



At hectic moments, sometimes the graphics let *Naboo* down a little



Who needs The Force when you're armed with photon torpedoes?



Controls are very similar to *Rogue Squadron*, which is no bad thing



One cool innovation is you can select a different craft mid-mission



WHO LET THE FOG OUT?

Anyone who's played the excellent *Rogue Squadron* on N64 will be right at home here, as *Battle for Naboo* is in many ways much the same beast. The game's controls are practically identical, which is certainly no bad thing. Movement of each craft using the analogue stick is responsive and smooth, and other controls are intuitive, allowing for immersive play. One problem with *Rogue Squadron* was the hideous spectre of fog that haunted each level. This has now been radically overhauled, and although there is a degree of pop-up, you can now see right up to the horizon, which is a liberating feeling for fans of *Rogue Squadron*. The actual graphics are a little rough around the edges, however, and on some of the levels we've played this can make distinguishing enemy craft from the background difficult. A further problem occurs on the levels set in space. This is as a result of the radar, which although displaying enemy and friendly craft, gives no indication of height. Thus, even if you try to follow the radar's readout, much of your time can be spent aimlessly flying around, unable to find the enemy, as they are either somewhere above or below your ship.

SONIC ADVENTURE

Fortunately there are no such problems in the sonic department, and the game contains a stunning rendition of John Williams' brilliant score, plus some excellent variations. It's all presented in awesome surround sound too, and the music acts dynamically, altering its intensity according to the action on screen. And of course, sound effects are all classic Star Wars stuff, and really add to the game's atmosphere. There's absolutely loads of well-scripted and well-acted dialogue too, and from mission briefings to in-game commentary, it's all very well implemented.

WHO'S HAD ALL THE TIES?

From the levels that we've played so far, mission objectives seem fairly repetitive, mostly involving you attacking the enemy forces one way or another. But one new feature that does provide variation is the ability to change craft mid-mission, altering your perspective of the current objective. Apart from the similarity to the previous game, the one thing that might prove to be a problem is the licence itself. Though *The Phantom*



Menace is a fantastic movie, craft such as the Heavy Star and Flash Speeder aren't anywhere near as iconic as the original X-Wing and TIE-Fighter, and the game does miss such established classics. No matter how good the game is, piloting *Naboo's* ships just ain't as much of a buzz. This gripe aside, however, *Battle for Naboo* is shaping up to be a shooter of considerable quality, with some genuinely exciting gameplay, plus a whole heap of secrets to uncover. If you're a Star Wars fan, it could well be worth a look.

GVG REBKONS

A solid shooter, but for many it might prove too similar to *Rogue Squadron*.

END



IS IT A GAME? IS IT A MOVIE? NO, IT'S... ERM... BOTH!

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS
JOHNNY MINKLEY

THE BOUNCER

OUTMARCH FORMATS/PS2

Volt Krueger, Sion Barzakh and Kou Leifoh are three bouncers who work the door at the Fate bar on Dog street. In the midst of the daily ritual of expelling drunks and protecting their business, each has their own secrets, but all are friends and life is good. One stormy night, however, this harmonic state is shattered by Special Forces agents kidnapping Sion's love, Dominique. It quickly becomes apparent that she is the prisoner of the Mikado Group, currently involved in the launch of a powerful new satellite, with potentially destructive capabilities. But why would they kidnap her? And what is the importance of the satellite? From the heart of these very questions, your adventure is born.

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

What really makes *The Bouncer* stand out from the crowd are the genuinely jaw-dropping visuals. It's more of a cinematic experience than a straightforward action game, so the game is filled with stunning video sequences and sharp cutscenes. Indeed, there's over an hour and a half of movie footage in the game, used as a vehicle with which to tell the



story from the viewpoint of each of the main characters. These sequences rank alongside those in *Metal Gear Solid 2* as some of the most impressive ever seen in a videogame. Each scene has also been directed in an exciting and dynamic way, giving the overriding impression that you're watching a Hollywood blockbuster, and excellent voice acting from all the characters complements this.

SONIC GLOOM

In-game graphics are good too – the main characters are superbly detailed, with hair and clothes that swing and stretch in an entirely convincing manner – but there's a slight blur to the action so it looks like a layer of vaseline has been smeared across the screen. It would have been nice to see a little more variation in your foes too. There are plenty of awesome special effects to accompany the action, and although purely superficial, they do make for some impressive eye-candy. One of the most notable graphical effects is witnessed when you perform a tag move, which is accompanied by a sweeping close-up, drenched in motion-blur. Good stuff. Sonically speaking, *The Bouncer* is a bit of a mixed bag. Sound effects are feeble, with each hit sounding like someone rustling a bag of crisps, but the music does have its moments, such as the stirring orchestral piece with haunting vocal samples that accompanies a mid-air fight on a shuttle. However, for every peak there's always a trough, and *The Bouncer* is no exception. The soundtrack does, on occasion, slip into guitar hell, with some horrendously inappropriate multi-rock. Overall, the game feels aurally confused, the clash of styles and dodgy track selection only weakening the cinematic atmosphere created by the visuals.



Graphically, fight sequences are great – despite the unexplained layer of vaseline obscuring your view



But it's rather ruined when you realise that by repeating the same move you can defeat any opponent



Clearly, dodging Tube fares is taken far more seriously in Japan



CONTEXTUALLY AMBIGUOUS

OK, so the game looks like the mutt's nuts, but how does it actually play? The first point that needs to be made clear is that *The Bouncer* is probably best described as an 'interactive movie', as the action often seems subservient to the storyline. Indeed, it could be argued that *The Bouncer* doesn't really know exactly what it wants to be, caught in a confused half-way house between a beat 'em up and a CG movie. The end result is two halves, regardless of their respective strengths and weaknesses, that seem to hang together rather awkwardly, as the generic fights can sometimes undermine the tension that is carefully created in the script. In fact, if you were feeling cynical, it could be argued that the whole fighting side of the game feels like it may have been an ill-conceived after-thought.

THREE'S COMPANY

The essential game mechanics are quite straightforward. The game makes full use of the PS2's analogue capabilities, as every button is pressure sensitive, giving a different move depending on how hard you press them. Each button on the face of the pad gives a different attack: either a low, medium, or high attack, or a jump attack. Furthermore, by holding down R1 and combining it with other buttons, you can get your character to perform various special attacks. You don't have any to start with, and must purchase them with Bouncer Points that you collect every time you whop baddie ass. These points can also be used to build up Life, Strength and Defence stats for your chosen character: your powered-up character can then also be used in the various multiplayer modes on offer.



ASKED VIEW

The gameplay is reminiscent of old-school 2D beat 'em ups, except it's in 3D (obviously). When the story dictates it, you will be thrown into a battle against various foes, and must defeat them to further the story. It's disappointing that despite the range of moves available, you are still able to beat most people with repeated use of the same move. The biggest problem we've had, however, is with the terrible camera work, which always seems to be placed in the least useful position to provide maximum annoyance. If they're gonna tweak anything for the western release, this should be top of their list. Another big problem is size. We managed to play the game from start to finish using Kuu in about two hours. Although each character has their own plot-line to follow, that's still a short gaming experience by most people's standards. And it ain't that difficult either.

COULD DO BETTER

The Bouncer, then, appears to be a bizarre mixture of pros and cons. We have the astonishing visuals; the fantastic storyline; the three different paths you can follow; a vast range of moves to learn, and lots of unlockable stuff. Equally, however, we have simplistic, repetitive fighting; confusing camera work; low difficulty, and a short-lived one-player mode. Iron out these problems and it could be great, but at present, the flaws are a little too obvious to be excusable.

BVG REBKONS

The flashy exterior can't mask rather weak gameplay.

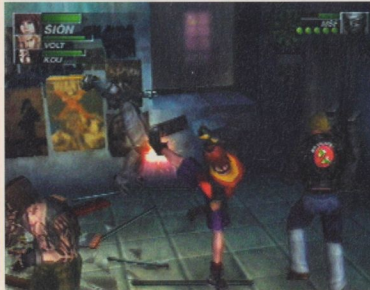
ENG



Cinematically speaking, it's highly impressive



Jokes about Volt's acne did not go down well



That may look like a powerful kick but it sounds about as deadly as a headbutt from a sick snail



Brain of Britain or Brain Dead?



<http://213.219.42.200>

ARE YOU SHERINGHAM?



It's no wonder McVitie's Jaffa Cakes are Man United's favourite half-time snack, after all, they are low in fat and high in energy. The problem is, with all that real chocolate and delicious orangey centre it can make even the most seasoned attackers a little defensive. www.manutd.com/jaffacakes.

McVITIE'S
Jaffa Cakes
 THE FAVOURITE HALF TIME SNACK
 OF MANCHESTER UNITED

SYPHON FILTER 3 - ALMOST

C-12 LIVES UP TO ITS NAME - IT'S THREE TIMES MORE EXPLOSIVE AS C4!

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS **LES ELLIS**

(C-12) FINAL RESISTANCE

OUTMARCH FOR MATPISONE

We already know what you're thinking, *Syphon Filter* right? We must be psychic or something. Maybe it's because it looks the same and has identical gameplay - right down to missions changing on the fly and you running around blowing away anything that moves like your average disturbed American citizen. At this point we'd normally tell you how different it really is - but it's not. Some would say 'same old, same old', but we say if it ain't broke, don't fix it. If the medicine works, then keep on taking it, and another dose of something as good as *Syphon Filter* is surely no bad thing.

LOVING THE ALIEN

Oh wait...there is a difference - instead of shooting people, you're shooting aliens, and suspiciously robotic ones at that. They're also responsible for dropping ammo, weapons and health, so it's not all needless slaughter (although that's the way we like it). The action itself is faster-paced than *SF* and there's none of that creeping about business; just run like hell and target stuff when it appears. Puzzles come in the form of locked doors or forcefields that need the right keycard to be opened, or a downed colleague who needs you to find something for him.

SHOOT UP TOWN

The locations tend to be a little more interesting than in *SF*, with town streets, bases and all sorts of weird architectural monstrosities to charge around. And, instead of having all too obvious locked doors to keep you from going into places you aren't allowed to yet, there are some far more interesting



The default camera irritates when you get shot from off screen



Your standard weapon - very effective for close-up combat



Reducing alien freakouts to crab paste is the name of the game



Use this device and you get extra info about enemies and puzzles

devices - like collapsing buildings or electrified routes. It makes things slightly less linear, spicing up the experience somewhat.

But as fun as all this sounds, the game still needs work.

Although the camera is adjustable, there are some horrendous problems with the default angle in the game. You quite often find yourself running towards the screen, with aliens shooting you from off screen - very frustrating and hopefully they'll fix it before the game goes on general release.

TOUCHED UP

If you fancy a game that every so often will shoot you dead in your tracks and make you think, 'Wow, that's pretty cool', then *SF-12* could be just what you're after. Without doubt, it should provide you with some pretty entertaining surprises. There's plenty to explore and the action is all-out when it really gets going. The puzzles, while hardly brain-busting, provide a good distraction from the wholesale slaughter and, while it doesn't look like it's going to be as intense an experience as *Syphon Filter 2*, it'll certainly serve as an unofficial *Syphon Filter 2b*.

BUG RECKONS

Needs work on the camera but the action promises much. As Syphon Filter is now PS2 bound, this could make a handy PS1 stopgap.

END

PROJECT JUSTICE

OUTMARCH FORMATDC

You know that school down the road from you? It's full of gimps right? A bunch of boring dweeboids who think they're the coolest kids in town. And there's nothing you'd like better than to wipe the smug grins of their spotty faces, be it on the football pitch, or in a spot of good old fashioned fisticuffs behind the bike sheds after hours. Not that we'd condone that sorta thing of course, but it's a fact of life that rival schools detest each other, from the pupils down to the staff, and it's a constant struggle for supremacy, academic or otherwise. Evidently this is the case in Japan anyway, where they've come up with a way to let kids blow off some steam - all safe and legal like. It's called Project Justice, and you get to take control of a gang of kids, battling against the browling-might of local schools. Yes!

THE NEVERENDING STORY

Project Justice is basically Rival Schools 2, renamed for the western market, and is yet another in the seemingly never-ending stream of beat 'em ups that Capcom's churn out. And the remarkable fact is that they always seem to be rather good. Anyone that's ever played the Street Fighter series will feel right at home, as many of the moves are performed in much the same way to Capcom's magnum opus. Although it's presented in 3D, the game mechanics are essentially 2D, with the addition of a side-step feature. What really makes this game are the brilliant, completely mad characters, and their equally bonkers moves. Momo is a cute little tennis player, who serves balls at her opponents; and then there's Roberto, the goal-keeper, who boots footballs at enemies and performs spectacular diving saves that inflict serious damage. Generally, you'll play in teams of three.

which allows for some cool tag moves, such as volleyball-serving an opponent into your partners' direction, where he smacks him with his baseball bat. This rules. There are also Party Attacks, where team members perform outrageous unified assaults.

SAVOUR THE FLAVOUR

FU looks brilliant, with big, cartoony characters and fantastic, animated backdrops, and a distinctive Jap feel. It plays like a dream, and there's stacks of combos to learn and partner combinations to experiment with, so it should keep you playing for ages. The only things that count against it are that, although excellent, it's still not as good as the awesome SF games on DC, and its quirky nature might put some Westerners off. Having said that, we applaud Capcom for putting some thought and humour into a well-worn genre, and if you fancy something with a different flavour, this may well satisfy your needs.

WE DON'T NEED NO EDUCATION

KICK ASS IN THIS SWEET BEAT 'EM UP FEAST FROM THE EAST

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: JOHNNY MINKLEY



Roberto gets a taste of his own medicine. The goalie may be wearing the footy boots, but Vetsu's the one that got the Vinnie Jones video for Christmas. There's never a rol when you need one

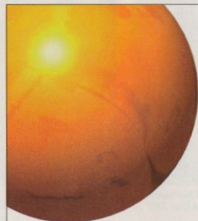


"Whuddys mean football's a more violent game than baseball?! You're the one with the stick"

BUG RECKONS

It may be utterly crazy, but it's got loads of fighting fun - so don't be put off by its niche appeal. This game's got it where it counts.

END



Premiership or Sunday League?



<http://213.219.42.200>

WHAT TOMORROW'S BIG GAMES ARE LIKE TO PLAY



We don't like to be hard on Frank as he's a lovely fella, but it's uncanny how realistically his glass jaw shatters as Ali tries a tentative first round jab. Sorry Frank, but it's full marks to EA for accuracy



Heavyweight world champion Lennox Lewis puts in another professional performance to hang on to one of his belts – well, at least until Don King decides he wants it back for one of his own fighters

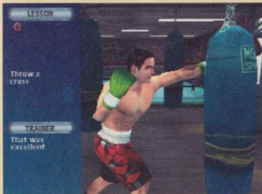
FIGHTING FURY

EA CALLS ON LENNOX LEWIS AND HIS FIGHT BUDDIES TO GET IT ON IN THE RING

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS LESLIE



So who would win if current champ Lewis met all time legend Ali? Find out who's truly 'the greatest' in *Knockout Kings 2001*



KNOCKOUT KINGS 2001

OUT/FEBRUARY FORM/PLAYSTATION 2

Fighting in the streets gets you in trouble with the law, but do it in a ring and you get paid millions and have it shown on TV. While big-time boxing has lost ground to wrestling when it comes to games, there's still a large audience out there who want to be able to pummel their mates the traditional way, and PlayStation 2 should have the power to make it seem more brutal and realistic than ever.

TONIGHT MATTHEW I WILL BE...

The likes of Lennox Lewis and David Tua are available if you want to rearrange the facial features of a mate in a straight fight. But the Career mode offers the chance of training up a nobody and taking him up the rankings to take on the big boys – it's a struggle, but the rewards are there as you get the chance to do some real damage to the guys at the bottom of the ladder. It'll take a few hours of leathering before you face the likes of Lewis or whoever the champ is at your chosen weight. And if it's all just too macho, you can have a go at women's boxing instead.



FANTASY FIGHTING

One original element is the fantasy fighting section. No, it's nothing to do with catfights between supermodels, but it does let you see what would happen if fighters of yesteryear, such as Muhammad Ali, met boxers from another era. Thanks to the oomph of the PS2, EA has gone to town on making the fighters look as realistic as possible, even down to the way their faces get marked up and bleed when you're pounding at them. Throw in some TV-style presentation and you have a game that might make a worthy addition to the EA Sports range.



Hard to believe you can take this skinny runt to the top of the rankings – some serious training may be needed first though

EVER REBKONS

Any game that lets you break Lennox Lewis's nose has got to be worth a look.

END

MARINE ENGINEER

ARTIFICER

NURSE

OPERATOR MECHANIC

PILOT

WARFARE OFFICER

STEWARD

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DEADLY ACCURATE.

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NO
FOOD

THE MOST VITAL PART OF THE HARPOON ISN'T THE COMPUTERISED INERTIAL GUIDANCE SYSTEM. IT'S THE PRACTICAL GENIUS WHO UNDERSTANDS WHAT ONE OF THOSE THINGS IS AND KNOWS HOW TO MAINTAIN IT.

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WHAT TOMORROW'S BIG GAMES ARE LIKE TO PLAY



If shots like this don't make you even the slightest bit moist, you need to check your pulse. Burning rubber has never looked this good

KING OF THE ROAD

GRAN TURISMO 3
OUTMAY FORMATPS2

Games don't get more hardcore than *Gran Turismo*. The effort required to truly master it really does separate the men from the boys, and only the finest, most committed players can honestly say they've played it to death. Both the original and its sequel were utterly revolutionary, and completely rewrite the book on how to make a driving game. Quite simply, there had never been a more accurate, thrilling, awe-inspiring recreation of what it's like to race a car. Several years on, its realism has still yet to be bettered, and *G3*'s incredible legacy looks set to continue in the stunning-looking *Gran Turismo 3*.

LOOKS TO DIE FOR

G3 isn't a true sequel to *G2* alas, and is essentially the same game, with a few extra tracks and only 160 cars, compared to *G2*'s staggering 600. But as the first version on the PS2, this is still gonna rock your world. The car count may be down, as a result of the much greater effort involved in realising the models in their full PS2 glory, but those present are astonishingly realistic and are practically indistinguishable from the real thing. In fact, visually *G3* is the finest looking driving game ever seen. Vehicle detail is staggering, and from the wheels, to interiors, to

PREPARE FOR THE DRIVE OF YOUR LIFE IN SONY'S PSEUDO SEQUEL TO ARGUABLY THE BEST RACER EVER

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS JOHNNY MINKLEY

badges on the bodywork, everything has been recreated with a passionate sense of precision only true car nuts would lavish on a videogame. The two tracks we've played so far both feature in *G2*, but they've been furnished with a dramatic face-lift that makes excellent use of the PS2's power, with incredibly detailed skylines, and much-improved trackside detail.



Dust kicks from the back of the car as you powerslide



The light reflecting in the puddles is incredible



IT'S DEEP, MAN

There's a dazzling array of effects, with real-time reflections on the cars as they weave around the track, beautiful beams of light that pierce through a forest of trees, and amazing heat-haze effects in the replay mode. Anyone who's played the prequel will know what to expect in terms of gameplay, as *G3* handles in much the same way. The main difference here is that, thanks to the PS2's enhanced number-crunching abilities, handling is even more accurate and convincing, offering a deep and compelling experience. *G3* looks set to make PS2 racing fans' dreams come true. Its similarity to *G2* may disappoint those that cared PSone versions, but with its staggering looks and unparalleled realism, it should destroy the competition.

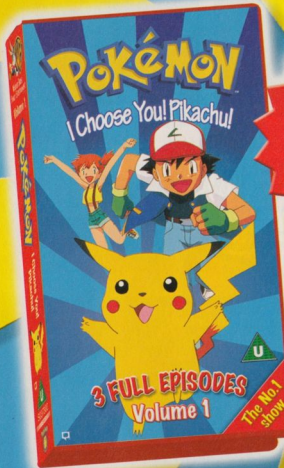
EVG REGIONS

Let's face it: there's more chance of Les wearing white than this not rocking.

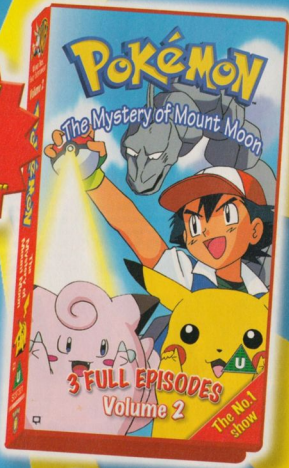
EVG

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See in-pack for details of the
POKÉMON
Collector Club

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GODFATHER OF GANGSTA

GANG WARFARE IS BACK - AND THIS TIME IT'S PLAYABLE

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS LES ELLIS

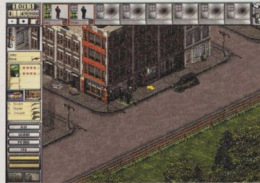


So you think you're big time? Mess up and you're gonna die, big time

GANGSTERS 2

OUTMARCH FORMATIC

Remember the first *Gangsters*? If not, you didn't miss much - it had some great ideas but was exasperatingly difficult to play. Developers Hothouse have taken all this on board and come up with a sequel that's playable and actually worthwhile. Your family has been devastated by your father's murder and it's up to you to honour his memory and take revenge. To get to the killer, you must become the Don, dominating the criminal fraternity by setting up and running a Mafia empire.



The plot develops steadily as you build up your network of crooks

CRIME DOES PAY

The new control interface means you don't have to keep an eye on a dozen active windows at the same time, so you can keep more on the action. And on that front, the game doesn't just drop you in at the deep end; as the story progresses it introduces new elements of gameplay to ensure you never feel completely lost. So by the time you've got your team of safecrackers, minders, drive-by shooters and general muscleheads working for you, you won't be confused by what's going on. With plenty of missions and a mixture of real-time strategy and out-and-out action, *Gangsters 2* could go a long way to fixing the damage done by the first game.



All set in a world of hoods, classy cars and even classier dames

BVG REBKONS

A gangster's paradise? Well, it may just be the Don of mafia games, not that there's much competition right now.

END

FOOTBALL FOCUS

DC GETS ITS FIRST FOOTY MANAGEMENT TITLE

GIANT KILLERS

OUTLATE FEB FORMATIC

Football's a funny old game. Unless Hale and Pace do a sketch about it, of course. Nevertheless, management's a tough business, and despite a mixed bunch of footy titles, the DC has yet to entertain a management game. That's about to change with *Giant Killers*. A conversion of the PC game for under-16's, you take charge of your favourite club side and steer them to glory.

NEW AND IMPROVED

GK has most of the important elements you'd associate with the big boys of the genre, just in a simplified form, so young 'uns and novices can ease themselves gently into their sheepskin coats. Changes have been made since the PC version was released, including a redesigned interface and training mode.

WORDS JOHNNY MINKLEY
SCREENSHOTS AAA GAMES



So it's not all about big match days then?

SIM (MAN) CITY

There are heaps of stats for you to leaf through, without many of the less secondary facts and figures that other games are so bogged down in. Unnecessary complications are kept to a minimum, allowing you to get into the game without too many problems. The flipside of this is that if you've played and enjoyed other management games, you will crave the detail they offer, so if you're a hardcore management nut, this will struggle to satisfy you. However, if you want a solid management sim without all that anal detail, this might well be what you're looking for.

Sheffield United Tactics



Fancy the Blades having a lass called Tracy in nets. What would Sean Bean make of it all?

BVG REBKONS

Could be on the ball for youngsters and novices, but experts will be as sick as a parrot.

END

THIS IS THE JOURNAL OF KIT SCOTTESQ,
ADVENTURER AND EXPLORER, AGED 10½.

We've set up camp at the foot of Mount Aander, the least deadly of all the mountains. Loreth, is my guide. Apparently she was once a feasted warrior and she's covered in scars and tattoos. Already she's taught me how to make an arrow and build a weather-proof, camouflaged shelter. She could teach my dad a thing or two. We've brought with us some sweets from the Rowntree. They look like bugs, and when I first saw them I swear they were really creeping towards my hand. Loreth just laughed at me and bit into one.

Uh oh, I thought.

Not sure how comfortable
I am in the company of a
woman who
eats insects for
pleasure.

But then I saw what they were. I picked one up and gave it a squeeze and all its guts wriggled around inside, so I bit its head off and they all oozed out. I filled my bag with them, pretending it was because

We would need them for the journey, and that I was being really sensible. I think Loreth fell for it.

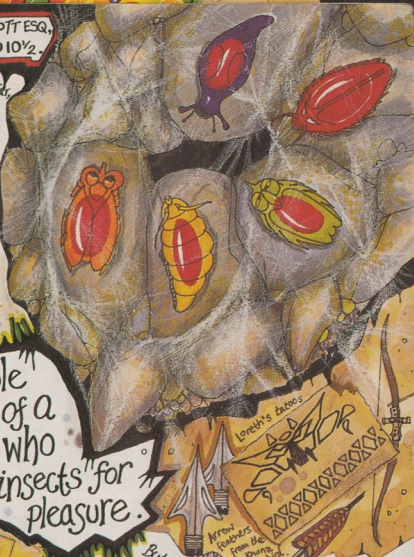
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LORETH

SIM BANANA REPUBLIC

HEY GRINGO, WANNA RUN YOUR OWN COUNTRY?*

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS LES ELLIS

TROPICO

OUTMARCH FORMATPC

You've heard the stories about crazy South American dictators who rule their countries ruthlessly, relying on the military while creaming off the Treasury to top up their Swiss bank accounts. It sounds crazy on the news, but if you had total control over your people and the country's bank accounts, it would just be business, which is where *Tropico* comes in. This is your chance to be the next *Insert your favourite corrupt dictator* here.



DICTATORS HAVE MORE FUN

You are responsible for taking your lowly island from a poverty-ridden land to a booming industrial and tourist haven. Think *Sim City* meets *Theme Park*, set in South America from the Sixties onwards and you've basically got it – only with some slightly ominous political undertones as you try to keep the USA and Russia happy (or annoy them depending on how you play). Keeping your people content so they don't rise up against you is the key, so you have to keep your eyes on what they need – more industry, farms, entertainment, health – the list is virtually never-ending. One tip: look after the military. If you're unlucky enough to find yourself in a political quagmire, it's always handy to have the might of the military on your side, just to give you that extra room for manoeuvre. Cheese-off the men of war and you'll probably find they're at the heart of your woes. It's more in-depth than the *Theme* series, but it doesn't take itself as seriously as the *Sim* games, allowing you to have some fun among all that brain-ache inducing strategy. What's more, it's from the makers of *Railroad Tycoon 2* on PC. So forget about the 'What the hell...?' first impressions – this could get fiendishly addictive. Don't suppose the banana republic stereotyping will go down well with people from South America, though. But hey, it's only a game. Right?



Keep the military happy: free chicks and cigars should do the trick

BVG REBKONS

Offers plenty of innovations on the *Sim* and *Theme* series. Looks promising.

ENB

LEE'S POKEJOURNAL

WE'VE BEEN PLAYING GOLD AND SILVER EVERY SPARE MINUTE WE GET, AND NOW OUR MAGICAL POKEJOURNEY IS DRAWING TO A CLOSE... JUST IN TIME FOR THE OFFICIAL RELEASE!

JANUARY 1, 13:47 HOURS

Having put my adventures on hold for the Christmas festivities, what better way to continue on the massive *Pokémon Gold/Silver* quest than on the first day of the new Millennium? With a sore head from a little too much, or fizzy pop, last night, I gingerly switch on my GB and I'm instantly sucked back into the land I love. It's amazing how much you can get done when you dedicate a whole day to



Pokémon, and how scarily quickly time flies. Before I tuck myself up for bed I've slammed through Goldenrod, Ecruteak and Olivine cities, caving the gym leaders and catching more *Pokémon*. And the best bit about this is that Bill has fixed the Trading Time Capsules. By 'borrowing' the office GB I can trade all my super-tough Yellow monsters into Silver!

JANUARY 2, 11:25 HOURS

Just one more day until we all head back to work at CVG Towers, so I need to be concentrating on getting my work stuff together, not playing *Pokémon*...



again. Aww. And I cured Jasmine's sickly Shuckle too. All this and top-gym leader fights as well. But it looks like my adventure is coming to a close, with just two more gyms to go.

JANUARY 6, 20:13

That's it! I've done it – *Pokémon Gold* and *Silver* all done and dusted, and I have attained *Pokémon Master* status. Time to enjoy the end credits and then check those tricky areas for rare *Pokémon* to catch and – hello! – what's this? This isn't the end after all!

maybe just one quick go. Wow – I could be a vet with all my *Pokémon* healing skills. The first poorly critter is at Moo Farm. Glad I've been stocking up on those tasty berries, as the former's Miltank needs loads before it gets well.

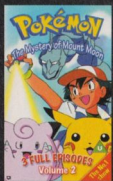


Elm has given me a ticket for the SS Aqua that sails me back to the original, *Red* and *Blue* *Pokémon* world. After picking my jaw off the floor, I cross the water to Kanto, back to Vermilion City. May the PokéJoy never end! Check our review next issue.

HAVING WITHDRAWALS?

After more *PokeThrills*? Then enter our wicked competition! You can win the first two volumes of the excellent *Pokémon* cartoon series from those lovely bodes at Warner Home Video. Answer the question and send to: *PokeVideo* compo, at the usual address.

Q: In *Pokémon Gold/Silver*, who makes your custom *PokeBalls*?



ALL THAT
STANDS
BETWEEN
YOU



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5 TO WIN GAME BOY BATTERY PUCK

MAD CATZ

£17.99

Charge it up, clip it to your belt and you're set for hours of Game Boy and Neo Geo gaming on the go with this brilliant battery puck. It looks dead cool too, like the funkiest tape measure in the world, or an... er... um... ice hockey puck. It means you don't have to worry about batteries ever again.



10 TO WIN LOONEY TUNES RACING

INFOGRAMES

£29.99

We've teamed up with publishing giant Infogrames once again to offer you a whole bunch of wicked Warner Bros/Looney Tunes treats. First up are ten shiny new copies of *Looney Tunes Racing* on PlayStation. Race as all your favourite characters in a cartoon world.

2 TO WIN SYLVESTER & TWEETIE FIGURINE

INFOGRAMES

£50

These sturdy Sylvester and Tweety resin figurines are true works of art. Perfect for adding a touch of Looney Tunes class to any shelf or coffee table and sure to make your mates jealous. Admit it - you'd love one of these beauties.



1 TO WIN 3FT BUGS BUNNY FIGURE

INFOGRAMES

£30

The ultimate piece of Looney Tunes memorabilia - this 3ft tall Bugs Bunny stuffed toy will take pride of place in your gaff and looks mint. We all want one here at CVG, but we're so nice we're gonne give it away to one lucky CVG reader.

1 TO WIN PSONE + ACTION MAN GAME

HASBRO

£100+

Become Action Man in his *Destruction X* game. Take part in a selection of varied mini-games and cause mess destruction while saving the world. And blag yourself a tasty PSone while you're at it. An extra four copies of *Destruction X* for runners-up.



This could be the only chance you've need to enter. Every month we give you the chance to win the coolest, funkiest, most splendid products you'd otherwise have to fork out for. It's dead easy to enter – just fill out the coupon with your name and address and we'll make a different draw for each prize. What could be simpler? Get entering, now!



3 TO WIN TAZ 4X4 CAR INFOGRAMES

Vroom! These Taz-tastic cars were so popular when we gave 'em away last time that we've smuggled in some more! The chunky red cars have big black wheels and Taz decals, plus high and low gear ratios for those tricky off-road stunts.

£25



6 SLOTS MEGA MICROSOFT BUNDLE

MICROSOFT £300 PER BUNDLE

PC gamers will be in gaming heaven when they win one of our mammoth Microsoft bundles.

There's something for everyone with copies of the *Age of Empires 2* expansion pack, *Metal Gear Solid*, *Midtown Madness 2*, *Links 2001* and *Combat Flight Simulator 2*, plus the awesome *Strategic Commander* for improved RTS control and the blinding *Game Voice* for barking commands in FPS games online. We're too good to y'all.

5 TO WIN GAME BOY TRAVEL PACK MAD CATZ £29.99

It's the ultimate travel pack for Game Boy players and we're giving 'em away! The pack contains everything you could ever need for your handheld, including a mains adaptor, battery charger, joypad add-on and a magnifier. The best GB travel pack around? Just maybe.



AND THERE'S MORE!

Don't forget to check out pages 53-57 for the chance to win one of our awesome selection of PS2 add-ons. There's over £300 worth of goodies up for grabs. Go there now!



Last month we featured the excellent Smart JoyPad 3 (pictured left) in our Lab Test and comparison pages. Go to the CCL website if you want to get your mitts on one of these clever pieces of kit. The address is www.co.uk.net

WINNERS UPDATE – ISSUE 230

THEME PARK WORLD PS2

Sam Scott, Cumbria; Mark Tuten, Warwickshire; Paul Brown, E Sussex; Lee Parry, Devon; M Webster, London

THE GRITCH VIDEOS

Stephen Fuller, Northants; Matthew McDonnell, Herts; Tom Pees, Co Armagh; Matt Johns, Cardiff; P Llewellyn, Cambs; Arne Jones, Essex; J Davies, London; Mike Neave, Aberdeen; Gary Stone, Northants; Dean Smith, Warwickshire

WILD MOOSE

Joe Ritchie, Co Tipperary; Mike Judge, Hereford; Kieran Hicks, York

POKEMON MONOPOLY

Adam Preece, Glasgow; C Welsh, Kent; A Birch, Northumberland

UNDERWORLD DVD

Ronan Foxwood, Bristol; Jo Pettas, Herts; Cleo Conry, Liverpool; David Verning, Mxixco; Andrew Hart, London; Peter Blaisdale, Essex; Ricky Smith, Cheshire; Craig Simpson, Lincolnshire

SPACE FRANKLIN

Scott Franklin, Co Durham; B Willis, Somerset

BONE LIGHT

John David, London; Harry Neagle, Ayrshire; Thomas Hunter, London; Jesse Welsh, Nottingham; S Burns, Derbyshire

WHAC-A-MOLE

P Sillow, Portsmouth; James Peyton, Cambs; A Foster,

Cheshirefield; Mrs Anderson, Cardiff; John Scott, Glasgow

E-JAY BUNDLE

A Cleaver, Cambs

CYBER MOUSE

Andy Manning, Glasgow; Darren McFarland, Tyne & Wear; Chris Smith, Sussex

LEGO ROBOTICS INVENTION & VISION COMMAND

Lloyd Flavet, E. Sussex

YOSEMITI SAM RESTIN STATUE

Sam Carter, Devon; Nathan Pearson, Rochdale; Lisa Wainwood, Co Devon

LOONEY TUNES KEYRINGS

Jermy Gair, London; Ryan Lee, Cheshire; Grant Leiper, Aberdeen; Arthur Foster, S York; Valeria Henderson, Perth

LE MANS 24 HOURS DC

Tom Willis, Herts; Chris Underhill, Staffs; Paul Denning, Kent; Alan Daving, Surrey; Nick Swainey, West Yorks

ORIGINAL ANIMATION CELL

Gary Smith, London

LE MANS SCALETRIC

Henry Dalton, Dorset; Roy Ho, London

TAZ 4X4 CAR

D McCullen, Co Tyrone; Anthony Spence, Northants; Nick Daren Cheshire

LOONEY TUNES SPACE RACE DC

Dan Elvy, Cornwall; Robert Gough, Herts; Richard Sunley, York; Andrew Allen, Mel Glamorgan; Kristian Inoch, West Midlands

GO ON – WIN IT!

It couldn't be easier to enter. Fill in this coupon and send to: Win This Lot Now 232, Computer and Video Games, Angel House, 338-346 Goswell Road, London, EC1V 7DP. First correct answers out of the hat for each prize win. Entries close March 15th.

NAME: AGE:

ADDRESS:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

EMAP Active Ltd may contact you about other offers, or pass your name directly or email to other reputable companies whose products and services may be of interest to you. Please tick the box if you do not wish to receive such offers.

**Out there &
on the edge...**

KERRANG!



LIFE IS LOUD

TO SOME PEOPLE MUSIC IS A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH.

Out there every Wednesday.

MP BIZKIT • FOO FIGHTERS • THE VILANS • THE SHIFTER • ONE MINUTE
LENCE • RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS • THE PERFECT CIRCLE • NAPALM
DEATH • BLOODHOUND GANG • QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE • LESS THAN JAKE • KID ROCK
LACER • EMINEM • PEARL JAM • SOULFLY • RANCID • PRODIGY • NOFX • RUSH • SKIN
MASHING PUMPKINS • INCUBUS • MONSTER MAGNET • IDLEWILD • (HED) PLANET EARTH
USE • MARILYN MANSON • KORN • SLIPKNOT • GREEN DAY • THE OFFSPRING • BLINK 182
• RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE • HOLE • MY RUIN

WORDS: LEE SKITRELL PICS: KENNY P

- Einzigartiges Lenkrad mit variablem Schraffell- und Vibriereffekt
- Technisch führendes Design mit Touch Sense Technology
- Plantele puzadoro con inclinación variable y efecto vibratorio
- Diseño de puzadoro con la Tecnología Touch Sense

ESCAPE THE PS2 ADD-ONS MAZE

Puzzled by the daunting array of peripherals already available for PS2? Our guide'll sort you out

By the time you read this you can buy a PlayStation 2 from your local Woolworths, so your mate who pre-ordered last September can no longer charge a fiver a go of Tetken Tap. But with the machine comes an optional extras list that's as overwhelming as the demand for PS2 itself. In fact, if you count all the official pads, leads and cards, as well as the tidal wave of third-party options currently splashed all over the shelves, the PS2 has more add-ons available from launch than any other console in history. But such a massive selection isn't necessarily a good thing. What pads are hot, and which feel like a brick in your hand? What lead gives the sharpest picture? We've tested a range of 21 pads, leads, wheels and other plug-ins so you know where to spend your cash wisely.

VIBRATING

For use with
PlayStation®
2
Gaming consoles

STORAGE FOR:

- 2X CONTROLLERS
- 2X MEMORY CARDS
- 2X GAME OR DVD DISK

THE ULTIMATE PS2 PERIPHERALS TEST

We sort the PS2 peripheral magic from the mediocrity so you don't have to

WILL THEY MAKE THE GRADE

We have divided our test criteria into four separate categories to give you the most in-depth product test ever, helping you decide where best to splash your cash. We've given each of the PS2 peripherals a score for each of these categories, as well as an overall score. These criteria are explained below. The overall score is not an average of the others, but a final definitive score for all-round greatness.

HOW DOES IT LOOK?

The PS2 took a lot of stick for its appearance when first unveiled – it doesn't really look like a traditional games console – but people have now come to love its sexy, sleek black look. We tell you how well each product captures PlayStation 2's cutting-edge design.

NEW TREAT OR OLD HAT?

You don't want a dodgy, old PSone controller, so we'll be looking to see how innovative the products are. We'll score well if something boasts new features and dish out the bests if it's a tawdry refresh.

BUT DOES IT WORK?

A joypad may look incredible, or it could be constructed from a rare titanium alloy, but what's the point if, at the end of the day, it doesn't do what it's designed to do? This test then is to see how well the peripherals perform at its particular task.

DO YOU REALLY NEED IT?

Is it an essential item that will enhance your games playing experience, or an unashamed luxurious frivolity? There's nothing wrong with either choice but we'll tell you who'll get the most out of each thing.

BEST BUY

We've even made 'best buy' recommendations for what we believe is the most essential PlayStation 2 add-on – how it looks, how innovative it is, and how well it does its job. If you want the best peripheral for your bucks, we'll help you find it, and that's a guarantee.



PRODUCT: GAMESTATION 2
PRICE: £14.99
FROM: Logic 3

WHAT IS IT?

A storage unit for two PS2 pads, two memory cards and two game discs.

HOW DOES IT LOOK?

Like Logic 3's Sound Station 2, the GameStation 2 looks great next to your console. ★★ ★★

NEW TREAT OR OLD HAT?

Old idea, but the shape and style of the GameStation 2 makes it something a bit

special to look at. ★★ ★

BUT DOES IT WORK?

Kind of. Holds pads and cards snugly, and lets you carry memory cards around securely. But only two CD spaces? ★★

DO YOU REALLY NEED IT?

If you're always going round your mates for TimeSplitters sessions, yes. But limited game storage is a real downer.

OVERALL

A stylish piece of kit that's let down because it only holds two games. More drawers next time, huh? ★★

PRODUCT: TOPDRIVE SPACEWHEEL

PRICE: £29.99

FROM: Logic 3

WHAT IS IT?

A table-top steering wheel with digital pedals.

HOW DOES IT LOOK?

Looks like a dinner plate, but in a good way.

The grey, minimal approach is tasty. ★★ ★★

NEW TREAT OR OLD HAT?

Almost identical to PSone's Spacewheel, but very different from the generic steering wheels available. ★★ ★★

BUT DOES IT WORK?

Yes, very well, but it's a touch over-sensitive. After you get used to the handling, the angle of the wheel is a lot like driving a truck. ★★ ★★

DO YOU REALLY NEED IT?

If you don't have the cash or space for a massive wheel, check out the Spacewheel.

OVERALL

Not bad, but not the best wheel we've ever used either. ★★ ★★



PRODUCT: SABOTAGE PAD 2

PRICE: £17.99

FROM: Wild Things

WHAT IS IT?

A small analogue pad that boasts a lovely, curvy design.

HOW DOES IT LOOK?

Feels great in your hands, but the disgusting blue D-pad spoils the design. ★★ ★★

NEW TREAT OR OLD HAT?

S2's curvy, ergonomic design is different and the analogue sticks are as good as the official option. ★★ ★★

BUT DOES IT WORK?

Comfortable to use and the analogue sticks are nice and tight. ★★ ★★ ★★

DO YOU REALLY NEED IT?

Only if you don't like the Dual Shock 2.

OVERALL

A great alternative. ★★ ★★ ★★



PRODUCT: 6MB MEMORY CARD

PRICE: £24.99

FROM: Mad Catz

WHAT IS IT?

The only third-party, MagicGate PS2 memory card available.

HOW DOES IT LOOK?

Subtle, see-thru and sexy. ★★ ★★ ★★

NEW TREAT OR OLD HAT?

6MB? More than just another PSone card then. ★★ ★★ ★★

BUT DOES IT WORK?

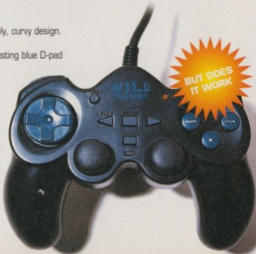
Works a treat. We made loads of SSX and Dark Cloud saves and had plenty more space. ★★ ★★ ★★

DO YOU REALLY NEED IT?

Cheaper than the official card, so yes.

OVERALL

The classier choice for the hardcore PS2 player. ★★ ★★ ★★





PRODUCT: 360 MODENA WHEEL

PRICE: £39.99

FROM: Guillemot

WHAT IS IT?

A chunky steering wheel and sturdy pedal unit for PS2 racers.

HOW DOES IT LOOK?

With its official Ferrari license, this is certainly a nice looking piece of kit. Still pretty basic stuff though. ★★★

NEW TREAT OR OLD HAT?

You have to clamp this beast to the underside of a desk or table, just like a PC wheel. A new concept for a console wheel, sure, but we don't really dig the idea. ★★★

BUT DOES IT WORK?

Clamping the wheel to a desk in front of a PC monitor is one thing, clamping it to a desk in front of a TV with your PS2 is another. It's impossible to play with in your lap. Limited and disappointing. ★★

DO YOU REALLY NEED IT?

Not unless you play regularly at a table-top.

OVERALL

Looks swell but doesn't cut it in practice. The actual mechanics of the thing are sound and it plays well, but those goddamn clamps... Nobody plays PS2 at the table! ★★★



PRODUCT: DVD

WIRELESS REMOTE

PRICE: £24.99

FROM: Mad Catz

WHAT IS IT?

A PS2 DVD, TV and Video

remote, all in one.

HOW DOES IT LOOK?

The black and blue handset looks the jive, and the clear plastic buttons are also very nice indeed. ★★★

NEW TREAT OR OLD HAT?

The unit's triple function — switching between DVD, TV and

VCR — is tremendous. ★★★★★

BUT DOES IT WORK?

Has a good range, and is dead easy to program for your TV and video.

Should work with all modern

systems. ★★★★

DO YOU REALLY NEED IT?

Beats using a jypad to watch DVDs, and is essential if you have loads of remotes and want to use just one.

OVERALL

A great add-on. Big enough so you don't mash two buttons at once, and stylish enough to look good on a coffee table. ★★★★★



PRODUCT: 8MB MEMORY CARD

PRICE: £29.99

FROM: Sony

WHAT IS IT?

The official PS2 memory card.

HOW DOES IT LOOK?

Like PSone memory cards but can hold 8Mb of info. ★★★★★

NEW TREAT OR OLD HAT?

Does the same job as the old memory card, but is eight times the size. ★★★

BUT DOES IT WORK?

It's Sony, of course it does. ★★★★★

DO YOU REALLY NEED IT?

Definitely, otherwise you have to start a new game every time you play.

OVERALL

£30 is a lot to pay. Check out the cheaper Mad Catz cards before you make your choice. ★★★



PRODUCT: STABILIZER

PRICE: £4.99

FROM: Logie 3

WHAT IS IT?

Stops your PS2 from

falling over.

HOW DOES IT LOOK?

Functional rather than pretty, but

by no means ugly. ★★★

NEW TREAT OR OLD HAT?

Standard design, but it does have enough 'give' in it to absorb shocks. ★★★

BUT DOES IT WORK?

Well, yes, unless you accidentally give it a boot when you're walking past. ★★★★★

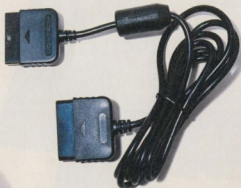
DO YOU REALLY NEED IT?

If you're especially clumsy and in danger of knocking something to your console.

OVERALL

Certainly not essential but it does add a certain something to your set-up.

Not a smart as the Sony stand, but half the price. Bargain. ★★★★★



PRODUCT: CONTROLLER EXTENSION CABLE

PRICE: £7.99

FROM: Joytech

WHAT IS IT?

Add an extra 2 meters to your controller's cord.

NEW TREAT OR OLD HAT?

Nothing revolutionary, but so what? ★★★

BUT DOES IT WORK?

Yep, and from a long way away. ★★★

DO YOU REALLY NEED IT?

Only if you want to sit as far away from the TV as possible.

OVERALL

Not essential, but still useful. ★★★

PRODUCT: Dual Shock 2 joypad

PRICE: £19.99

FROM: Sony

WHAT IS IT?

The official Dual Shock 2 pad.

HOW DOES IT LOOK?

Like the original PS pad but in a sexy shade of black. ★★★★★

NEW TREAT OR OLD HAT?

The analogue sticks are tighter for more precise control, and the buttons are now fully analogue. ★★★★★

BUT DOES IT WORK?

The sticks are great, and the analogue buttons really add something to racing games. ★★★★★

DO YOU REALLY NEED IT?

Without it your PS2 is useless. Yes then.

OVERALL

A superb mix of old and new makes you feel right at home with your new console from the start. ★★★★★



PRODUCT: SCART CABLE

PRICE: £5.99

FROM: Logic 3

WHAT IS IT?

Gives better picture definition compared to RF.

HOW DOES IT LOOK?

The phono socket unit has a nice grip moulding so it's easier to pull. ★★★★★

NEW TREAT OR OLD HAT?

Old idea, but still the best. ★★★★★

BUT DOES IT WORK?

Much better than using the RF lead. You'll be amazed at the difference. ★★★★★

DO YOU REALLY NEED IT?

If your TV supports it, most modern TVs do, you should definitely have one.

OVERALL

Sturdy, with good definition. ★★★★★



PRODUCT: SOUND STATION 2

PRICE: £49.99

FROM: Logic 3

WHAT IS IT?

An amplifier and speaker system, giving you phat sounds as you care your mates.

HOW DOES IT LOOK?

Perfectly captures the PS2 look, and is designed to stand next to a vertical PS2. Together, the two units look stylish and the satellite speakers have those lovely black ridges too. ★★★★★

NEW TREAT OR OLD HAT?

We've seen speakers before, but they don't look like this. ★★★★★

BUT DOES IT WORK?

The bass is powerful, and Soundstation 2 is more about sheer power than depth of sound. Works fine for videogames though. ★★★★★

DO YOU REALLY NEED IT?

PS2 sounds great, so get the most out of it.

OVERALL

Reasonably priced and pretty powerful. ★★★★★

PSONE COMPATIBLE

If, like us, you're worried that £300 for a console plus extra cash for games and peripherals will make too much of a hole in your pocket, you may want to try out your original PSone controllers on your PS2. Well you're in luck, because pretty much all official and third-party add-ons will work fine on PlayStation 2 games, with just two exceptions. Original 1Mb memory cards fill up really quickly when used with a lot of PS2 games, and may not work at all with some others. You can still use PSone peripherals on PSone games running on PlayStation 2 though.

Games that require the full analogue support of the Dual Shock 2's squidgy buttons, like *Gran Turismo 3* and *Metal Gear Solid 2*, won't be fully playable with an original pad either, so be sure to check for compatibility when forking out on your games. But, if you're really skint, you can easily get by using your old PSone games. Besides, you get one Dual Shock 2 when you buy a PlayStation 2 anyway, just watch out for when all PS2 games need a fully analogue pad.



PRODUCT:

VS2 VERTICAL

STAND

PRICE: £4.99

FROM: Wild Things

WHAT IS IT?

A stand to help keep your console erect through the night.

HOW DOES IT LOOK?

The PS2 ridges feature again, but the blue? Urrgh. ★★

NEW TREAT OR OLD HAT?

New for PS2, but that's it. ★★

BUT DOES IT WORK?

The vertical stand works just fine and absorbs knocks well. ★★★★★

DO YOU REALLY NEED IT?

A vertical PS2 is way cooler than the flat one, this is the worst of those on offer.

OVERALL

Not quite as stylish as the Logic 3 stand, and loses marks for that dodgy blue colour. ★★



FIVE THINGS NOT TO DO WITH YOUR PS2 ADD-ONS

The instruction books for your sexy new add-ons are full of dos and don'ts about looking after your new purchase. But we say "Nuts!" to that and show you the five quickest ways to void your warranty. Mwa-ha-ha!

■ **SLEEP WITH THE FISHES**

Your favourite goldfish buddy will love it, but once immersed in water your precious pad will never work again

■ **KUM BA YAH, M'LORD**

Stuck for kindling for your campfire? Use scart cables instead, but watch out for toxic fumes!

■ **GOOD VIBRATIONS**

Save money on expensive vibrating muscle-massage tools and sit on your game pad instead. Fat blokes will knacker the mechanism in no time

■ **A GOOD SHIBB-ING**

Add pizzazz to your plates of meat by attaching a PS2 vertical stand to each foot and stroking around town

■ **SKIMMED MILK**

Skin Memory Cards across the local reservoir with your mates. £30 a shot? Ouch!

PRODUCT: ANALOGUE JOYT CONTROLLER 2

PRICE: TEC
FROM: Joytech
WHAT IS IT?

An analogue PS2 controller with a groovy blue light in it. **HOW DOES IT LOOK?**

The Joit is a giant, but still sits happily in your hands. ★★★★★

NEW TREAT OR OLD HAT?

Similar in shape to previous Joytech pads, but that glowing blue indicator add a definite style to this new pad. ★★

BUT DOES IT WORK?

Yes, quite well, but the analogue sticks are just a touch too loose. ★★

DO YOU REALLY NEED IT?

If you want a pad that vibrates like crazy.

OVERALL

Loose sticks means less points. ★★

PRODUCT: DVD
REMOTE CONTROL
PRICE: £14.99
FROM: Logic 3

WHAT IS IT?

Remote control for PS2's DVD. So you don't need to use a pad.

HOW DOES IT LOOK?

Dirky, and lightest too, but doesn't feel flimsy. ★★★★★

NEW TREAT OR OLD HAT?

Again, new for PS2. ★★★★★

BUT DOES IT WORK?

The range is good, and skipping through your favourite scenes couldn't be easier. ★★★★★

DO YOU REALLY NEED IT?

If you can't be arsed to get off your backside, yes.

OVERALL

Good, but not as versatile as Mad Catz's controller. ★★★★★

PRODUCT: PS2 Vertical Stand
PRICE: £9.99
FROM: Sony

WHAT IS IT?

Keeps your PS2 upright.

HOW DOES IT LOOK?

Cool blue colour, but a bit plastic-y. ★★

NEW TREAT OR OLD HAT?

Well, your PSone didn't need one. ★★

BUT DOES IT WORK?

Holds your PS2 very securely. ★★★★★

DO YOU REALLY NEED IT?

Well, not really. But worth checking out.

OVERALL

Nice, but expensive. ★★



PRODUCT: MULTIPLAYER ADAPTOR 2
PRICE: TBC
FROM: Joytech

WHAT IS IT?

It's a PS2 multibay for hardcore deathmatch and multiplayer sessions.

HOW DOES IT LOOK?

The unit has the trademark PS2 ribbing and the lights are subtle yet useful. ★★★★★

NEW TREAT OR OLD HAT?

It does the same job as a PSone multibay, but certainly looks next-gen enough. ★★

BUT DOES IT WORK?

Yes, just fine, and is essential for burning the midnight oil on FIFA. ★★★★★

DO YOU REALLY NEED IT?

If you're a fan of multiplayer games then you should definitely splash out on one of these beauties.

OVERALL

You can't go wrong with this multibay, and it's only marred by the slightly hollow feel. ★★★★★



PRODUCT: DUAL FORCE 2

PRICE: £19.99

FROM: Mad Catz

WHAT IS IT?

Analogue PS2 pad with 'macros', which can be programmed for one-touch combos.

HOW DOES IT LOOK?

The dark see-thru plastic is suitably subtle and the buttons are all in logical, comfortable places. Quite large but still perfectly pleasant to use. ★★

NEW TREAT OR OLD HAT?

The programmable macros are great for killer Tekken Tag combos. ★★★★★

BUT DOES IT WORK?

The macros add a easy edge to a pad that already works well, but like other third-party pads the analogue sticks are way too loose. ★★

DO YOU REALLY NEED IT?

Great for fighting games like Tekken.

OVERALL

Rubbish wobbly sticks, but neat macros make this stand out from the rest. ★★



CVG RECKONS

Think of the DVD remote controllers really hint at something which really separates the PlayStation 2 from PSone. Still, one thing which has remained the same over the years is Sony dominance when it comes to add-ons. Sure, the official Sony pad and memory card is expensive, but you're guaranteed quality. We torture our PS2 pads every day and they still work like they were new. However, third-party extras are essential if you want to expand on a tight budget, or simply want to go for something which looks a little different. It's really down to personal choice and how much cash you have to splash around. Use our guide to help you on your way.

That's the steadily growing selection of PlayStation 2 games available right now. They're quite similar to PSone games that have gone before them, right? And most tread familiar ground and don't take too many risks. In fact a lot of them have only scored an 'OK' three out five in CVG, and there's only one or two truly original must-haves.

Well pretty much the same can be said for the range of PS2 peripherals currently swarming the shelves of your local games store. There are no real strikers to avoid – all the peripherals we tested functioned well enough, but there are pro and cons, such as price, cosmetic appeal and durability, to consider before parting with your hard-earned cash.

COMPETITION

YOU WANT THESE, SUCKA?

Still can't decide which of these red-hot extras to go for? Then let us help make up your minds for you. We've got one of every third-party PlayStation 2 peripheral featured in this test to give away. That's a massive 16 brand new accessories for 16 lucky readers. To stand a chance of winning, all you have to do is correctly answer the question below and send your answer on a postcard, with your name and address, to Gimme Treats.com, Computer and Videogames, Angel House, 338-346 Goswell Road, London, EC1V 7QP. Good luck!

When was the original PlayStation released in the UK?

- a) Before 1995
- b) 1995
- c) After 1995



PULL-OUT POSTER

computer and video

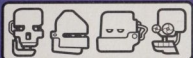
Games

FEAR EFFECT 2: RETRO
HELIX: Guns, gals and
quality gameplay. Make a
date with Hana and Rain





Are you good enough at games to win a tanner for your troubles? If you can come up with some mega-useful tips, codes or cheats for a game on any format, then we'll reward you to the tune of ten quid. Send your entries to the usual address.



EASY

TIP OF THE MONTH

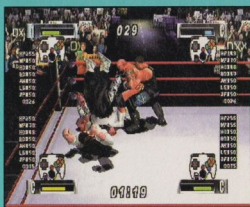


■ WWF NO MERCY

Paul Blake, of Dungeness, gets Perfect Dark for these...

HIDDEN CHARACTERS: Go to the wrestler selection screen and highlight one of the wrestlers listed below. Press C-Left or C-Right to reveal the corresponding hidden character.

WRESTLER	HIDDEN WRESTLER
Teri	Debra
Mae Young	Fabulous Moolah
Taka Michinoku	Funk
Pat Patterson	Gerald Briscoe
Godfather	The Godfather
Kory	Jacqueline
JR	Tim Kutz
Earl Hebner (C-Right)	Howard Finkel
Earl Hebner (C-Right, C-Right)	Paul Besner
Earl Hebner (C-Right, C-Right, C-Right)	Michael Cole



Unlock hidden fight stars in awesome ruckfest **WWF No Mercy**



PC CD-ROM

■ GUNMAN CHRONICLES

More dome-capping tips courtesy of David Rankin from Barnstable.

First go to your PC Start menu and click on Run. Then enter the following command:
C:\siemr\gunman\gunman.exe-dev-console

You should now find that a Console option has been added to the Gunman Chronicles game menu. Press ~ at any time during gameplay to call up the Console. Once this is done, type in any of the following codes to access these awesome chests.

CODE	WHAT YOU GET
God	God Mode
Impulse 101	All weapons and ammunition
Give	Type in any of the following items after typing the word 'Give' to get the item:



- weapon_fists
- weapon_gausspistol
- weapon_shotgun
- weapon_minigun
- weapon_bsmgun
- weapon_dml
- weapon_SPCchemicalgun
- ammo_gaussclic
- ammo_buckshot
- ammo_mingunClic
- ammo_bsmgunclic
- ammo_dmlclic
- ammo_chemical
- item_healthkit
- item_armor
- player_armor
- vehicle_tank



■ ALICE

Alice is a weird and very difficult game, but these cheats, supplied by Ross Perry from Cardiff, should make the Alice experience much more bearable.

Access the Settings Menu, choose Game Options and put a cross in the Console box. Now simply press ~ to call up the console when playing Alice and type in any of the following codes.

CODE	WHAT YOU GET
God	God Mode and Infinite weapon energy
give all	All weapons and ammunition
wuss	All weapons but no ammo



■ GIANTS: CITIZEN KABUTO

'Big' Chucky Sadler from Gravesend has sent us some right beltlers for the very weird Giants: Citizen Kabuto. Ta very much Chucky, here's a tanner for your efforts.

If Giants has got you going and you fancy trying any of these little beauties out, while playing the game press either T or Y. Now enter one of the following codes and then press Enter to activate them. Happy cheating folks!

CODE	WHAT YOU GET
Fr	Display frame rate
Basefillerup	Full base energy
Pleasehealm	Full health
Gimmegifts	Instant gift shop
Basepopulate	Instant smartly work force
Magashowitall	Reveal whole map
Basegovernyfast	Fast base construction
ineedspells	Unlimited Mana
almissionsreppootzogo	Unlock all levels

CODE	WHAT YOU GET
God 1	God Mode
Infammo	Unlimited Ammunition
Giveall	All items
Invisible 1	Invisibility





MONEY



PLAYSTATION 2

■ X-SQUAD

Trigger-happy Andrew Healy from Swarnick has sent us some great codes to improve a less-than-great game.



RANK	PRESS	WHAT YOU GET
Lieutenant	R1, L2, L1, R	Level 2 shield, 10,000 point bonus on finishing the level Michaels 8mmS, Taylor M82 and 99 clips
Captain	Circle, R1, Circle, L1, Triangle, R2	Taylor M82, Michaels 8mmS, 99 clips, no weight limit, radar
Major	L2, Square, R2, Triangle, L1, Circle, R1	Level 3 shield and sensor plus all the Captain extras as outlined above
General	L1, L1, L2, L2, R1, R1, R2, R2	As Major plus all weapons - intermediate level
Master of X-Squad	Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Triangle Square, Square, Square, Square	As Major plus all weapons - master level

All codes should be entered at the title screen. Expect to hear a sound to confirm that you've entered the code correctly. Start playing a new game to use the code.

■ NHL 2001

Pete Peters from Camden has sent in these pucking good cheats.

PLAY WITH NO GOALIE: Pause gameplay. Highlight Controller Setup and switch the controller to the

opposition. Now go to the first menu and choose the options for the opposing team. Highlight Goalie Status and remove the Goalie. Go back to Controller Setup and switch the controller back to your side. Resume the game and you'll be playing against a team with no goalie.

How eas is that?

PLAY AS THE HAMMER: Select the Rosters menu and go to Create A Player screen. Make up a new player, call him Hammer. The in-game announcers call him The Hammer when he plays.

GAME BOY COLOR

■ POKEMON TRADING CARD GAME

Wayne Turney from Darlington sent us these pukka Pika hints.

EXTRA BOOSTER PACKS: Access a Gym computer, select the menu with Japanese letters and choose any item listed to get a booster pack. **INFINITE ENERGY:** Every time you fight Mikasa in Dr Ooyama's laboratory you get two booster energy packs. Very handy when you're running low on energy.

PLAYSTATION

■ MEDAL OF HONOUR UNDERGROUND

Thanks to Jane Adams from Rugby. All the codes are entered in the Cheats screen and only work in levels that have been completed.



CODE	WHAT YOU GET
LATIFUSE	Podolski Mode [1 hit kill]
BALLESVITE	4 X Firing Range
PUISSANCE	Invulnerable
AUTODINGLUD	Wacky taxi mode

DREAMCAST

■ RESIDENT EVIL 2

Thanks to Lucy Walters for sharing her knowledge. Have a tannen UNLIMITED AMMO: Go to the Item screen and press Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Right.

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BUYING VS RENTING

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: JOHNNY MINKLEY PICS: KENNY P

2.50 5 night rental
on selected games

£3.50 2 night rental
on new release games

£2 1 night rental
on selected games



New games aren't cheap and regularly purchasing the latest, greatest releases is a luxury many simply can't afford. But fear not, 'cos there's an alternative that'll allow you to play all the new releases for a fraction of the cost of actually buying them – rental. Thousands of people are already renting games every week, and year-on-year more and more players are turning to the hire solution to get their gaming kicks on the cheap. What's more, with the advent of online rental, you don't even need to get off your backside to get the games in. But when is it worthwhile, what does it cost and where do you go to rent? Our guide will help you decide whether you should join the rental revolution.

SHOULD I BUY OR RENT

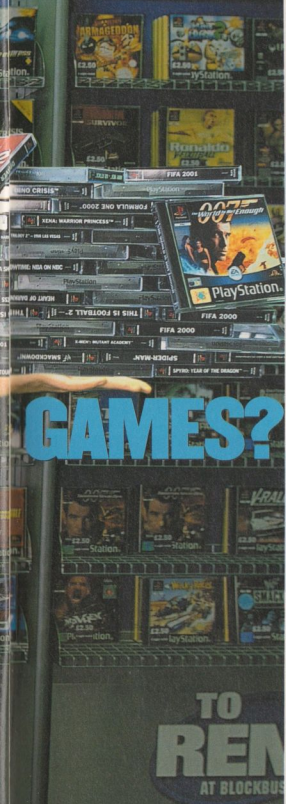
Weigh up the pros and cons with our essential guide

**TO
RENT**
AT BLOCKBUSTER

RENT
AT BLOCKBUSTER

£3.50 2 n
on

£2.50 5 n
on



WHAT'S THE DEAL?

To give you an idea of the offers out there, we've checked out the biggest players in the UK rental market, providing details from some of the main rental chains, as these are likeliest to have the widest and most up-to-date range of games.

KEY



Either you can rent online, or there's almost certainly a store near you



Obviously really - the store has the very latest releases on the shelves



You guaranteed to be able to rent games for all the major console systems



Company: **Blockbuster**
 Contact: **0845 741 3561, www.blockbuster.co.uk**
 No. of stores: 660
 Rental details: New releases: £3.50 for two nights
 All others: £2.50 for five nights
 Membership: Free (but must be over 18 to join)
 Once adult has joined, under 18's can get their own card
 Formats: PS1, PS2, DC, N64
 Games also available for purchase



Company: **Global Video**
 Contact: **www.globalvideo.co.uk**
 No. of stores: 265
 Rental details: New releases: £3.00 for two days
 All others: £3.00 for seven days
 Membership: Free (but must be over 18 to join)
 Once adult has joined, under 18's can get their own card
 Formats: PS1, PS2 (coming soon)
 Games also available for purchase



Company: **Choices Video**
 Contact: **www.choicesvideo.co.uk**
 No. of stores: 180
 Rental details: New releases: £3.50 for two nights
 All others: £2.50 for five nights Plus special budget range: £1.75 for one week
 Membership: Free (No age limit, though parental endorsement required.)
 Formats: PS1, PS2, DC, N64, GB
 Games and hardware available for purchase



Company: **Apollo Home Entertainment**
 Contact: **www.apollovideo.co.uk**
 No. of stores: 124 stores
 Rental details: £2.00 overnight
 £3.99 for three days
 Membership: Free (must be over 18, but once a member, under 18's can rent with card)
 Formats: PS1, N64, PS2



Company: **loan-gamer.co.uk**
 Contact: **08454 585885/www.loan-gamer.co.uk**
 Online rental and retail store
 Rental details: All games: £4.75 for five days (no membership required)
 Option 1 - M1: £9.99 per month - a different game each month for a month
 Option 2 - M2: £14.99 per month - two games each month for a month. Under 18's can rent if they have a bank account.
 Formats: PS1, PS2, DC, PC
 New and second-hand games available for purchase
 One-two day delivery wait
 Postage is free with all orders



THE BOTTOM LINE

In terms of expense, the deals offered by most of the chains are very similar. Which one you choose, therefore, is down to which store is closest to you and which rents games for your system. Alternatively, there's online rental, which has very different offers (see the box overleaf).

RENT OR SPENT?

Here's **CVG's** top five games to rent to buy, and those you should avoid at all costs

Certain games clearly lend themselves to the rental market, as they're the sort of titles that, although great fun in the short term, you'll tire of quicker than it takes our Dan to down a pint of toilet water. Other games however, will last you a lifetime, with replay value so high you'll keep playing time and again. We're still playing *Super Mario World*, and that's almost ten years old.

DECISIONS, DECISIONS

When deciding if you want to rent or not, it's worth taking a look at your games collection. How many of them do you actually play regularly? There'll only be a choice handful of titles that you'll play over and over again. If that's the case, it's worth considering that although your other titles are quality games,

maybe you could have saved stacks of cash by renting them instead. Look at all those redundant boxes sitting on your shelves. Wouldn't they look much nicer with a neat stack of **CVG's** nesting proudly on them? You'll save space, you'll save money, you'll get to play more top games for a fraction of the cost — the benefits are many when you're in the know.

HIT, MISS OR MAYBE?

Check out the lists below and then compare them with your games collection. If you own any in our 'worth renting' list and paid full price, can you honestly say they were good value for your gaming buck? True, they may have offered a brief glimpse of gaming heaven for the short while they lasted, but are you really gonna play them again? And if you own any in the 'don't even rent' list, then what's the matter with you? These games are so bad they'll make you ill, but make sure you keep reading **CVG** and we'll do our utmost to help you steer well clear of such hideous gaming travesties.

TOP FIVE GAMES TO RENT



1: *Metal Gear Solid* (PC)



2: *Silent Scope* (PS2, DC)



3: *Fantasia* (PS2)



4: *Mario Party* (NG4)



5: *Bust-A-Move Millennium* (GB)

TOP FIVE GAMES TO BUY



1: *Metropolis Street Racer* (DC)



2: *Zelda: Majora's Mask* (NG4)



3: *Pokemon Gold/Silver* (GB)



4: *Final Fantasy IX* (PS)

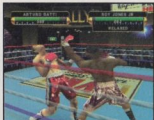


5: *TimeSplitters* (PS2)

TOP FIVE GAMES NOT EVEN WORTH RENTING



1: *HBO Surfing* (PS2)



2: *HBO Boxing* (PSone)



3: *Toy Racer* (DC)



4: *Buffy The Vampire Slayer* (GB)



5: *W.W.T.S.A.M.* (PSone, DC, PC)

THE BOTTOM LINE

The point at which it is cheaper to rent than buy depends on the cost and quality (i.e. length and replay potential) of the game. While recommendations from friends and **CVG** about just how good a game is will help you decide if it's worth buying, you'll only be totally certain when you actually play it. If you buy a

game and then discover you don't like it, you can try to take it back, but you'll save yourself a lot of hassle if you test the water by renting it first — just make sure someone else doesn't hire the last copy the day you rent it. Even if a game's received good reviews, that doesn't necessarily mean that it'll float your boat. Check a game out first and you could save serious wonga in the long run.

PLAYERS' RENTINGS

CVG sent a roving reporter onto the wild, dangerous streets of London to fight his way through the concrete jungle, and get right to the heart of the issue. It seems you're all generally in agreement that games are too pricey for regular purchasing, unless you're well minded. Here's what other players have to say about renting...



Andy Kirk, 19, London
"I never tried renting myself, but I reckon it's definitely a good idea in principal, as you can try a game before you buy it without having to shell out loads of money in the first place."



Kevin Smith, 20, London
"Games are so expensive nowadays, that as a student you just can't afford to keep spending 40 quid a go on the latest releases. Because of this, I'd rent a lot more than I'd buy."



Prateesh Barai, 20, London
"I personally think it's better to actually own games, so you can play them whenever you want. But being a student, I can't afford to buy that many, so I'd probably rent a lot of games."

PERIPHERAL VISIONS

Sorry guys, looks like you'd better start saving if you wanna bust those moves

Certain games are virtually designed for the rental market: titles like *Samba De Amigo*, and *Jungle Book Groove Party* are simply too expensive for many people to buy due to the peripherals required. However, those of you with visions of doing a Steps impression in front of your PlayStation for a couple of quid are heading for the land of disappointment. Though some tried it in the past, the main stores don't rent out peripherals anymore, due to the regular damage inflicted on them, and the fact that certain thieving swines would also swipe them. This is a crying shame as it means many people will never have the opportunity to strut their funky stuff like slaving lions, in front of all their mates. Indeed, it's a daily ritual we swear by here at CVG, and watching Les frantically dancing to Seventies disco classics is a genuinely magic moment that can reduce staff members to tears of joy.

THE BOTTOM LINE

The games that cost the most to fully enjoy are the ones you can't rent. Rightly or wrongly, it's still a pain in the arse, but there you go: blame society. In a perfect world, we'd all be able to rent exactly what we like, and blissfully skip down the sunny streets arm-in-arm, in perfect harmony. Alas, the real world is a much harsher place in which to live, so with certain top games requiring add-ons to get the most out of them, renting clearly ain't the way forward for peripheral lovers.



ONLINE: THE FUTURE OF RENTAL?

UPPERS

- You can rent from the comfort of your own home, and the postage and packing from most online rental services is free. Can't be bad
- Not everyone lives near a rental outlet, so if you're out in the sticks, this is the solution
- You don't even need a computer, as they also accept phone orders
- This is the only place you can currently rent PC games
- You can rent games for up to a month, so you can properly care them to death without paying top whack. You'll probably have enough time to check out all the secrets too!

Currently the only site of its type in the UK, Loan-gamer.co.uk offers a serious and convenient alternative.

DOWNERS

- You can't rent games for cartridge-based systems, due to their fragile nature when in transit
- Once a member, you must rent a set number of games for a fixed period, but it still works out cheaper
- Waiting up to a couple of days for it to arrive is also a bit of a bind

THE BOTTOM LINE

This type of rental has proved popular in the US, so there's no reason why this couldn't give the high street stores a real run for their money in the future.

LEGAL WRANGLINGS

It's not fun, but you need to be aware that each time you step into a rental store or shop, you're subject to certain rules and regulations that dictate what you can walk out with

We've received letters from confused readers regarding age certification of videogames, and obviously this directly affects which games you're able to rent. Here's the deal: every new console release is given an ELSPA rating, which basically tells you which age group the game is suitable for. These are not recommendations however, therefore you can't legally be stopped from buying or renting a game even if you're in a younger age group than suggested.

CAN I SEE YOUR ID?

Certain games receive a rating from the British Board of Film Classification though, and these, in exactly the same way as movie ratings, are enforceable by law, and it's up to each store to verify the age of their customers. The only games that get these ratings are those that, as the ELSPA website states, "depict real acts of sex or violence". *Perfect Dark* and *Tenchu 2* are among recent games to receive the maximum 18 certificate.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Only a small minority of games receive a rating from the BBFC, and while some of their decisions may seem a little extreme, we all understand the need to keep graphic, violent material away from youngsters. And as technology improves, games start to look ever more realistic, so you may well find the frequency with which the BBFC intervenes increases. The ELSPA ratings are only recommendations however, so if a shop refuses to give you what you want, then it's not the law that's stopping them – though it may well be company policy. That said, while one shop may refuse to give you the game you want, another shop might be happy to serve you, and it's all academic anyway if your parents are happy to rent the game on your behalf regardless of certification. This applies to both buying and renting games, so neither has much advantage when it comes to age regulations. Know your rights, kids.

CVG RECKONS

There's nothing quite like owning your own games, and nothing will ever completely replace the pride people take in their collections. However, as Neil Musgrat from Choices Video states: "The volume of games released in the UK will continue to increase. The most practical and affordable way to access these releases is through rental."

DO YOUR SUMS

You might not have realised exactly how much you could save, so we're gonna make it easy for you. We reckon that if you rented during the school holidays, you'd be able on average to finish most games in under a week. If a new PS game costs £39.99, and rental from Blockbuster, for example, is £3.50 for two nights, that works out at £10.50 for six nights – roughly 30 quid cheaper than actually buying the game.

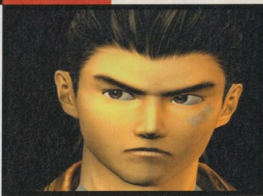
TRY BEFORE YOU BUY

The rental market is here to stay and it's on the up, so it's good to see the major players keen to support new formats as they are introduced – you're almost guaranteed one of the companies we've featured should offer a rental deal that suits you. It's annoying that you can't hire hardware or peripherals too, since these are usually the biggest expenses. However, until systems are made totally idiot and damage proof, we'll have to live with that.

THE VERDICT

Rental is something we certainly recommend you give a try, as it's the best way to play a hell of a lot of games relatively cheaply. Just think how many games are out there – there are loads of titles that you'll rent and enjoy, that you'd never dream of buying. With the range of deals available, and an ever-expanding number of outlets, there's never been a better time to join the renting game. Although there are certain games that will last you for years – and you can trust CVG to tell you about them – sadly, most won't. So would you rather buy and play four games a year, or rent and play fifteen?

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



Shenmue: So you can't find the Phoenix Mirror? Look no further...

SHENMUE

I'm desperate to see more of Ryo's adventures but I'm a bit stuck. I've been to the antique shop and got the family crest, but I still need to find the precious Phoenix Mirror. I've searched the Dojo and found a key but I don't know what to do with it.

Gerry Smith, Boodle

Go to the sparring room where you practise with Fuku-san. Use the key to open the small rectangular brown box on the right. Examine the right-hand scroll on the back wall. Ryo will then remove the scroll and notice the hole in the wall behind. Place the sword in the hole. Then remove the left-hand scroll and place the family crest in the crest-shaped hole to open a door to the secret basement. You'll need several items before you start to search the basement, including a torch and a light bulb. A torch can be found in the main Dojo, but there's another one to buy in the Tomato convenience store in Dobuta, where you'll also find light bulbs. Use the torch when you enter the basement, then screw the light bulb in and switch on the light. Search the room for goodies and artefacts. Then look in the mirror and notice a townsman on the side of the shelves. Look on the left side of the shelves and you'll notice scratches on the floor: Ryo will now be able to push the shelves and reveal a tightly covered hole in the wall next to the mirror. Use the axe on the other side of the room to smash through the plaster and get the mirror.

ORPHEN: SCION OF SORCERY

Can you help me get past the evil spider? It keeps using webbing to trap me and then finishes me off with a deadly poison attack. I don't even have time to put up my shields.

Diane Bright, Cirencester



Final Fantasy IX: Don't worry if you can't find the Zodiac Stellazios

Carefully study the spider's attack pattern. During each attack he'll fire either one or six webs. When he takes a long time to charge up it means that he's getting ready to fire six webs. Use the time that he's charging to raise your shields. When he only fires one web you can concentrate on attack rather than defence. Don't use any magic as you won't have enough time. Use your sword to chop away the webs and then use three or four ice projectile blasts when you have a clear shot at the spider. Follow all this and get your timing right and you'll blow the eight-legged nasty away.

FINAL FANTASY IX

I'm well and truly hooked by Square's latest installment to the immense Final Fantasy Series. Where do I find the hidden Zodiac Stellazios?

Danny Owen, Bradford

The Ares Stellazio is in the windmill in Dali. Scorpio is in the bottom right of Queen's house, to the East of Treno. Taurus is behind the Treno Item shop, and you'll find Leo in the Neptune statue room in Alexandria Tower. To get Gemini, throw 10 gil into the Treno fountain 13 times in a row. Look behind the cart at the entrance to Burmeia to find the Cancer Stellazio. Find Virgo in the Black Mage Village inn. Look on the right side of the Madain Sari fountain for Libra. Sagittarius is on the left side of the Pickle Cart in Lindblum's Business district, but only from Disc three onwards when the town is being rebuilt. Capricorn is in the water on the right side of Deguerra. Aquarius is in the chest by the right pillar in Ipsen's Castle entrance. You'll have to wait until Disc four to get Pisces. When you get control of Kuja's airship and have time to wander around you'll find the fishy Stellazio in a chest in the hold. When you've got all twelve and given them to Queen Stella in Treno she'll give you loads of fantastic items.



Is gaming frustration making your brain ache and temples throb? Relax, because **The Masters** bring you instant relief. Send all your queries to the address in the bottom right-hand corner.

computer and video

GAMES GUARANTEED WINNERS

We've searched the ends of the earth to bring the very best cheats right here to you, perfectly preserved in a glowing orange box of cheat-stardust goodness. If you fancy earning yourself £10, send your own fab cheats into Easy Money on page 60.



DREAMCAST

■ **MTV SPORTS SKATEBOARDING UNLOCK ALL LEVELS, SKATERS, BOARDS AND COSTUMES:** Select Lifestyle Mode and instead of your name enter PASWARD. You should now have access to everything.

■ **STAR WARS DEMOLITION UNLOCK LOBOT, BOUSHI AND DARTH MAUL:** Go to Main Menu and click Options. From there click Preferences. Next press L and R and you should get a Password screen. Type in Wirtzo_Shop. Back to Main Menu and you should find three new characters in the Character Select screen.



PLAYSTATION 2

■ **MIDNIGHT CLUB: STREET RACER SECRET CAR:** If you have got a copy of the PlayStation 2 game *Smuggler's Run*, and have saved data from the game on your Memory Card, use the same card when you next play *Midnight Club*. Select the Arcade Mode from the *Midnight Club* Main Menu and you will find a new Dune Buggy to drive amongst the regular vehicles you get to pick from. You will also get a message from the developers: "Thanks for buying both games". Aaah, now ain't that just the sweetest thing!



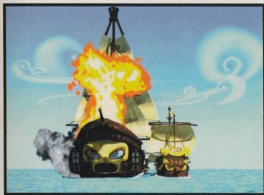
GAMEBOY

■ **DAVE MIRRA FREESTYLE BMX:** To access the full game go to the Password screen and enter: RBK2BS7L1CTGMH



PLAYSTATION

■ **ARMY MEN: SARGE'S HEROES 2**
The following codes are entered after you press Start during game play to pause the game.
INVINCIBILITY: Press Square, Circle, L1, R1.
When you resume game play, 'Invincible!!!' should be written on screen if the code has been entered correctly.



Escape from Monkey Island: Help poor Herman get his memory back

DYNASTY WARRIORS 2

I'm having trouble beating Lu Bu. He takes me out with Musou every time. I'm playing as Dian Wei.
Jon Price, Swansea

Kill as many of the enemy warriors as you can before you try to tackle Lu Bu – enemy morale is lowered while your stats are as pumped up as possible. When the time comes, avoid close quarters' one-on-one combat with Lu Bu. He's so strong he can stun you even when you're blocking him. You should also avoid using Musou on him or he'll then counter with his own Musou, (as you've already discovered). To give yourself a much needed advantage, approach him on horseback and take out his four guards. When they're out of the way, go for Lu Bu himself. Hold down strafe and keep moving around him, circling and slashing your sword about as much as possible so that you present him with a moving target rather than a sitting duck. When he's lost roughly half of his HP, retreat and fire normal arrows at him. Then, when his HP is close to empty, try and catch him off guard with a quick Musou combo.

ESCAPE FROM MONKEY ISLAND

I'm an Act III and going crazy because I don't know how to help Herman Toothrot get his memory back. I've chucked everything in my inventory at him, or at least tried to, but Herman remains clueless.
Jimmy Ryan, London

Throw a coconut at Herman then talk to him. Go and get the banana picker from the canyon. Use it to pick up the bananas on the beach and then give one to Timmy. When he follows you to the canyon use another banana to lure him to the door inside the mine. Throw a banana through the vert and another one into the portal to open the door. Get the weed whipper with the



Theme Park World: Cash tips to help you be a Theme Park tycoon

banana picker and head for Vista Point. Throw a rock into the right-hand canal, then a second rock in the middle and a third in the left. Go to Le Chuck Church and get the two shields with the banana picker. Chat to the priest and go on the Lava Boat Ride. Head for the boiler; moving the weeds with the weed whipper. Knock over the tree and return to the church. Back in the boat and use the banana picker to reach the bottle in the water. Go to Herman, hit him with the bottle and talk to him. Return to the village and talk to Jojo. Examine the musical monkey and examine the shields in your inventory. Give the monkey the cymbals and get the accordion from him. Back to Herman, hit him with the accordion and talk to him to get the Gubernatorial symbol.

THEME PARK WORLD

Any quick tips to help me make big bucks quickly when I'm building my theme park?

Crispin Peters, Windsor

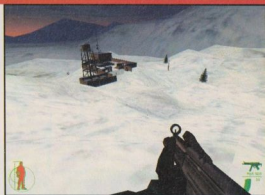
Make sure you raise your entrance prices every time you add a new attraction, otherwise you'll get in debt. When you first start, concentrate on building shops rather than ploughing your money into rides as shops will initially bring in more money. Make sure you have loads of entertainers at the entrance to entice the public inside. Finally, fix your sideshows so that the customers win most of the time. They'll flock to the sideshow and once you've hooked 'em in you can hike up your prices and watch as your coffers swell. That should set you on your way to being a Theme Park tycoon.

ESPN WINTER X-GAMES SNOWBOARDING

How do I perform Terje's secret special trick?

Snowy, Bristol

Terje's Hakon flip trick can only be performed on



Project IGI: Learn how to escape the deadly Russian attack chopper

half-pipes and quarter-pipes. To execute it, approach the lip in Switch stance and hold down X and L2. When you reach the top of the pipe keep holding L2 and press Down and slightly Right together to pull off the Hakon flip.

PROJECT IGI

How do I escape the relentless Attack Helicopter on the Russian Border level?

Gordie Wright, Fort William

It's tricky, but you've just got to make clever use of all available cover. Look for a building near the jeep between the first and second encampments. Hide behind the building until the Attack Helicopter passes by overhead. Make your way to the burned out hut up ahead, steering clear of the tanks on the road. You should then be able to reach the mountain on the East side, where you'll have to take care of five guards with your sniper rifle.

THE GRINCH

How do I get the Scout uniform?!

Sid Reith, Walsall

You should be at Whokale in the Whoforest if you want to get the Scout uniform. Swing on the branches of the house to get to the roof (which is not as easy as it sounds - you have to time the jumps with careful precision) and then drop down the chimney and breathe on the man inside to get the hat. Death-breath him again and sit on him to get his shirt. Then, stand underneath one of the mounted Moose heads and, when the man runs towards you, jump aside at the last moment. He should get trapped by the Moose head and you'll be able to get his trousers (oh-err!) to complete the scout uniform.

ALL WEAPONS AND AMMO: Press Square, Circle, R1, L1.

If the code has been entered correctly you should see the words 'Power Up!' when you resume game play.

PC CD-ROM

STAR TREK DEEP SPACE 9: THE FALLEN

All of these codes should be entered after pressing TAB during play.
BIG JUMPER: Set plyr.ds9_name jumpz 1000
Replace the word 'name' with the name of your character in the game.
UNLIMITED HEALTH: Set plyr.ds9_name health 9999
Replace the word 'name' with the name of your character in the game.



NINTENDO 64

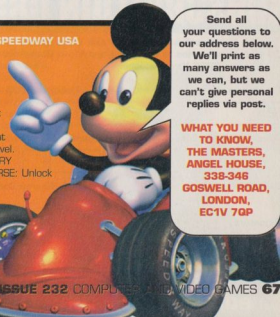


POKÉMON PUZZLE LEAGUE

INSTANT MEVITWIG: To access Mevotwo's level go to the Trainer Selection screen, hold Z and press B, Up, L, B, A, Start, A, Up, R. It only works when you've finished the game on the SH-Hard Difficulty setting.
MORE SPEED: First you have to score 10,000 points or more in the Time Zone to enable this cheat. Then go to title screen, hold down Z and press B,A, L, L. Now go to Speed Selection in Marathon option and raise speed level beyond the usual 55 to 99.
VERY HARD: To access the V-Hard Mode you must first have finished the game on Hard setting. Select Normal game from the Main Menu. In the Game Settings screen, hold down Z and press L, L, A and B.

MICKEY'S SPEEDWAY USA

UNLOCK DEWEY: Win the first three courses at Amateur Level.
UNLOCK LOUIE: Win the first three courses at Intermediate Level.
UNLOCK VICTORY VEHICLES COURSE: Unlock the first three Professional courses.



Send all your questions to our address below. We'll print as many answers as we can, but we can't give personal replies via post.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW, THE MASTERS, ANGEL HOUSE, 338-346 GOSWELL ROAD, LONDON, EC1V 7QP

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STAR LETTER

STICKY SITUATION

Your 'Expert Guide to Cheating' nearly got me put into a foster home. The tip about floating air biscuits to put my older brother off during a two-way game of FIFA really worked for a few minutes, but when I super-glued his accelerator button during GT2 his finger got totally stuck to it. He only managed to remove it after half an hour soaking in soapy water. It ruined the joypad, my Mum did her nut and my brother won't play games with me ever again, but it was worth it to see the expression on his face. Cheers!

Danny, via email

Hmm, well we did warn you. We reckon your brother won't stick (ouch!) to his promise and will play you again, so have a new PlayStation controller on us!



ILLUSTRATION: JOHN ALLISON

"Mum did her nut and my brother won't play"

Danny, via email

EARTH TO PLANET POKEMON

We would like three Pokémon lands and three Pokémon gyms in Swanscombe, Dartford and Gravesend because everyone loves Pokémon. PS: Please keep it a top secret, so no fuss, and please send the concept to the nearest science lab to work on.

Chantelle and Daniel, Gravesend
Top secret? No problem... er, oops. Come to think of it, just what planet are you guys from? Here at CVG Towers we pride ourselves on our network of contacts with all the big developers, but even we can't bring the Pokémon universe into the real world.

TAKING THE PING?

OK, so I never seem to get my letters printed, so I've chosen to send nothing but pointless 20 lists each month until, um, I get my ugly mug on your team page. So here's DaRKWOLF's Top 20 made-up words.

- 1/Wobbleapplechunks
- 2/Nibbleleobonding
- 3/Zippoc
- 4/Pamogist
- 6/Cleggy etc,etc

DaRKWOLF, no address supplied

Keep sending 'em in then DaRKWOLF. We can take the pain. Perhaps you'd like to include definitions next time. We quite like number 17 though, Ping.

WHAT'S THE CRACKDOWN?!

How do some developers pack so much more into a game than others? Take Smackdown! 2 and Tekken 3 for example. Don't get me wrong, these are two of PlayStation's finest fighting games and I love them both, but I have to know THQ managed to cram so much into Smackdown! 2, it's quite unbelievable. Over 50 superstars, countless backstage areas, a whole load of the WWF's official matches, hundreds of authentic moves, taunts, PPUs and so on. The only thing Smackdown! 2 doesn't have is FMV sequences. Is that the reason why Tekken only has about half what Smackdown! has? Please enlighten me.

Tim George, Chesham

It's got little to do with how much data you can store on a PS disc, if that's what you're thinking. It's more down to what the individual developers consider to be worthwhile cramming into a game to deliver an enjoyable experience and how long it'll take them to do that, set against how much money they're likely to make in sales. It doesn't make sense to spend decades cramming the world onto one disk that only three people will buy. With the world in the grip of WWF mania, THQ knew it was worth spending the extra time and effort, so that's what they did. We reckon PS2's Smackdown! will probably include some FMV too. It's still early in development though, so THQ is keeping quiet. In fact, with changes already underway to the Smackdown! tally show in the US, it might not even be called Smackdown!.

PS2 GRINCH

I was the proud recipient of a PS2 on Christmas Day. I couldn't wait to get it open. I plugged it in and turned it on, went through Setup and pressed the button to open the DVD drawer. Nothing happened! I hear I'm not the only one with similar problems. How could Sony let this happen?

Mark Page, via email

Anyone else visited by the PS2 Grinch? Email us at the usual address.

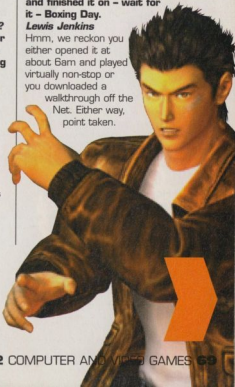
SHEN-POO

Shenmue sucks. I got it for Christmas and finished it on - wait for it - Boxing Day.

Lewis Jenkins

Hmm, we reckon you either opened it at about 4am and played virtually non-stop or you downloaded a walkthrough off the

Net. Either way, point taken.



"Listen, you vile critters, each computer or console is unique, so stop squabbling!"

Sean Hughes, Yorks

IT'S A JOKE

What did the big lightbulbs say to the little lightbulbs? You're too young to be turned on. Jason Sharples, Manchester
Doesn't anybody in this country know any decent jokes? Alright, we'll try what do you call a woman who balances pints on lager on her nose? Answer: Beatrix.

WHAT THE FUCKS?

I recently bought FIFA 2001 for PS2. In a bid to raise some Hum Utd to the dizzy heights of glory in the Season mode, I decided to take advantage of some value-for-money, quality Brazilian players on the transfer market. What I found was a Palmeiras defender name A. Fucks, costing £10,424. Is this a real player, or is someone at EA Sports having a laugh? Cader, Maidenhead



Check out the above picture for your answer. His full name is Angelico Fucks. For another cheap laugh, check out former German international striker and the current trainer for Karlsruhe: Stefan K* @ *S!

RETURN TO SENDER

Redeye email #1 to CVG: "Do I get a big kiss now?"
CVG: "You what?"
Redeye email #2: "Oops. Sorry, sent you the wrong email first time round. Was meant for girlfriend."
CVG: "I should think so, too."
Redeye email #3: "PS2, DC, Xbox and GAMECUBE are all good machines, I just think if you start putting one down for this and another for that, then you're putting them all down, because every one of the next-gen machines have a fault somewhere!"
CVG: "That's better."
Redeye email #4: "PS2, DC, Xbox and GAMECUBE are all...etc etc"
CVG: "Grr."

Wow, the whole world's come over all niceynicity. What next, world peace? Anyway, a word of warning about love letters to your girlfriend - didn't you hear what happened to Claire Swires' email? You'd better sort your email skills out sharpish. By the way, no, you don't get a big kiss - frankly, you deserve a slap for even asking!

MISSED PLEASURES

After browsing your excellent website, I found a report on the Games of the Year for PlayStation. The five games in the list are great games, agreed, but the 'industry panel' seem to have a sports sim bias. Think about the games you left out.... Resident Evil 3, Parasite Eve 2, Gran Turismo 2
Chris Reilly, Birmingham

SHOCKED OF LONDON

After reading your Star Letter in CVG 228, I was shocked at the way Roy's mum was behaving. Sometimes I play videogames a little too much and my mum asks me to put my Game Boy or Dreamcast away, but she never throws them out the window. Roy's mum should be ashamed of what's she's doing!
Very, Very, Very Shocked, London

JUST GROW UP

My letter is aimed at the sad creatures who constantly slag off other consoles or computers. You

POKE-ROCK!

Ha ha ha ha! 151 pokémon in 88 hours? Pathetic! Take a look at mine - 151 in 29hrs 38min! For all you Pokéman fans, take a peek at some of the stuff I got. Oh, the Pokéman time thing was achieved through two games and Pokéman Stadium!
Anthony Cheng, Rhyd
We were well impressed when we saw your Game Boy print out... until you gave it all away at the end. With some crafty transfer cheating, we reckon we could rack up the same tally in around five hours. Nice PokéCollection, though.



Check out this PokéCollection. Anthony, you're clearly a certifiable PokéManiac. Good on yer!

know the type: "My console's better than yours, my dad's bigger than yours," etc etc. Listen here you vile critters, each computer or console is unique and can do one thing the other can't. So just stop this childish squabbling right now! And if you think I don't know what I'm talking about, I've got 26 computers and consoles ranging from Atari 2600s to the Dreamcast. So there.
Sean Hughes, West Yorkshire
See, that told us all. Fair point, though, gaming's ultimately almost about enjoying the best games and machines for the money you can afford. Still, bet our PS2's better than yours... (settle down boy - ed)

MASK OF FURY

I received the new Zelda game at Christmas. I'd love to be writing to you saying how much I enjoy it and how it's the best game ever and so on, but there's a problem. I don't have an Expansion Pak. I went to every single games shop I could think of and they all said the same thing: "We're out of stock." It's disgraceful they sell games that need it when the packs aren't actually available.
John Mills, via email
Yes, it's a bit of a farce and you certainly weren't alone in venting your anger at the shortage of official Expansion Paks. Like, D'oh! Maybe it's some crafty way to spread the few remaining N64 releases across

the rest of the year until GAMECUBE arrives - buy now, play later:

WHO ARE YOU?

Are they going to forget about N64 altogether? Software support for this machine has more or less vanished with very few games coming out in recent months. Those of us who bought N64s are getting stuck for good games.
Harry Vane, via email
Well guys? We're waiting for an answer:

POKE-BLUES

That's it. I can't take anymore. I've been into gaming since Lunar Jetman ruled and 3D Deathchase was cutting edge. But I'm throwing down my joypad for the very last time: you had Poké@B@ll! *ks on the cover (issue 230). WHY?! Please, stop the spread of this infernal PokéDisease.
Andy Hale, Muswell Hill, London
So, Andy, you don't like Pokéman? PokéTough, millions do and so do we!

WHO WROTE TO MAILBAG THIS MONTH

Chris Bestow, Northampton; Paul Partington, Merseyside; Mike Lynch, Birmingham; Colin West, Glasgow; Tim George, Chesham (again, you serial quiller, you); Gavin Lane, Worthing; Ben Jones, London; Andrew Lynch, Eire; Adz (no address supplied); Brian Corcoran, Kilkenny; Ross MacDonald, via email; Lee Usher, via email; Ciaran Mc Donnell, via email; Ross, via email; Roboc, via email; Jameel Ahmad, Bicester; Dillon Finn, via email; Barry Cahill, via email; Michael, via email; Lionel, via email; Piefcoe, via email.

"Please, stop the spread of this infernal PokéDisease"

Andy Hale, London

Return of the living dead

SOUL REAVER 2



IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE OF

THE
player
PLAYSTATION 24-7

FREE
FINAL FANTASY 9
GUIDE
132 PAGE
BOOK

ALSO Last year Final Fantasy sold more than STEPS. We look into an RPG phenomenon

The world's first and best games mag brings you reviews you can trust

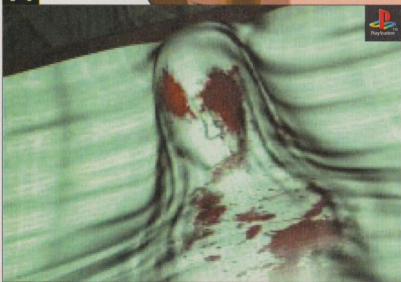
REVIEWS

WHAT'S IMPORTANT

The Computer and Video Games Five-Star Award is your guarantee of a great game. When you see the logo, it's like having an informed best mate recommend you a game.



74



74 FEAR EFFECT 2: RETRO HELIX

PSone may be on it's way out, but PS2 ain't got nothing to touch this little baby. PSone is dead! Long live PS1!

HONEST Regardless of hype, reputation or advertising, if it's a great game we'll say so and if it's poor, we'll tell you the truth.

FAIR We're not biased. A good game is a good game, regardless of format or who has made it.

THROUGH We play games longer and harder than anyone else. And we don't rate games on half-finished versions, either.

KNOWLEDGE Our writers are all experts, have years of experience and know what makes a cracking game.

Any game that earns Computer and Video Games' Five-Star Award is truly exceptional. It'll do more than just look good and play well, it will rank with the most enjoyable and rewarding games in existence on that format.

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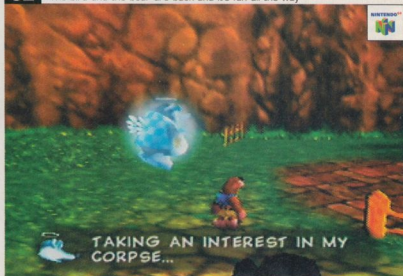
78 PHANTASY STAR ONLINE

Looks awesome and represents a real landmark for console gaming



82 BANJO TOOIE

The bird and the bear are back and it's fun all the way



86 UNREAL TOURNAMENT ON PS2

A real threat to TimeSplitters?



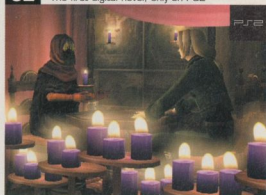
90 QUAKE 3 TEAM ARENA

(Friends for multiplayer not included)



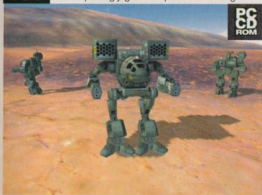
92 SHADOW OF MEMORIES

The first digital novel, only on PS2



100 MECH WARRIOR 4: VENGEANCE

A surprisingly good sequel for a change



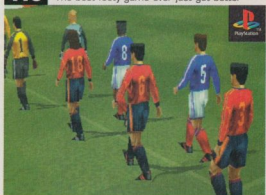
102 VANISHING POINT

Another DC challenger tries for MSF's crown



110 ISS PRO EVOLUTION 2

The best footy game ever just got better



97MOTO GP 98ARMORED CORE 2 104MINI REVIEWS, INCLUDING EMPEROR'S NEW GROOVE, WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SNOOKER, BURSTRICK, CHAMPIONSHIP MOTOCROSS 2001 FEATURING RICKY CARMICHAEL, THEME PARK INC, BLAIR WITCH 3, 106HANDHELDS, INCLUDING MARIO TENNIS, FLINTSTONES BURGER TIME IN BEDROCK, BLADE, XENA WARRIOR PRINCESS, HELLO KITTY'S CUBE FRENZY, MERLIN, BUZZ LIGHTYEAR OF STAR COMMAND, WALT DISNEY WORLD QUEST MAGICAL RACING TOUR, ROAD CHAMPS BXS STUNT BIKING

Why settle for just one hard-ass hero when you can have four, all fighting, shooting and puzzling their way through a murky Manga-influenced world? *Fear Effect 2* will take you and your four mercenaries on a blood-thirsty, brain-busting, trigger-happy journey to the very darkest corners of the human condition. Viral outbreaks, genetic experiments and a little poetic guff about the meaning of life, combined with stunning cinematic direction, incredible visuals and heart-stopping gameplay. *Fear Effect 2* manages to improve on virtually every aspect of the already excellent original and will make you remember just why you love playing games so much.

FEAR





COST: £29.99

OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: NO

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: LEE SKITTELL

EFFECT 2 RETRO HELIX

Big guns, blissful babes and brain-taxing gameplay. Welcome to videogame paradise



PERFECT AND DARK

Fear Effect 2 takes the dark, brooding atmosphere of the original and pushes it way beyond the next level, packing the game out with some shocking, often upsetting scenes. In spite of its animated Manga look, the adult themes and unexpected plot twists could quite easily trouble your sleep.



Fancy getting jiggy with Hana? We thought so too, 'til we saw what happens to her latest fella



This is the razor-wielding Planner's handiwork. He loves to make a mess and has plans for ~~you~~ girls



What a fine pair. You're going to have to be a sharpshooter as danger lurks around every corner



Fail to out-run these hungry rats and they'll munch on your face. Death scenes are varied and vicious



Did it suddenly get hot in here? There's breasts aplenty as the girls take advantage of their 'assets'



It's getting hotter! The adult storyline sees the girls and guys getting naked a lot. And mostly just for fun



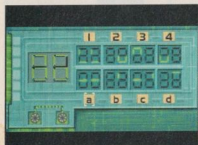
This lass isn't happy about being genetically modified, so to cheer up, she snaps a few necks



There are moments of top humour – our favourite is this crazy group of partygoers doing the Macarena

MOVE OVERMASTERMIND

FEZ's puzzles will really stop you in your tracks. The head-scratching challenges are utterly devious. You'll inevitably be stumped for ages, but the beauty is that, if you keep trying different tactics and approaches to the puzzles you'll eventually suss them out, often in a rush of inspiration.



The first static screen puzzle. Combine six of the eight shapes to make the numbers on the left



This one's lovely. The code is on the top right but it's faded. Trial and error will see you through



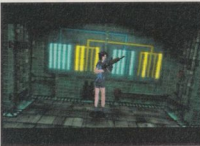
Budding Carol Vordermans will get off on this maths extravaganza. Not tough, but initially baffling



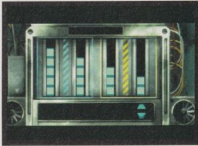
Resident Evil-style puzzles feature too and are the easiest. Find the cog, then put it in the hole. Sorted



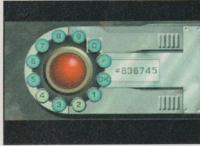
There are lots of locked doors. Don't worry, you'll stumble on their codes when the time is right



One of the more obscure challenges. Remember the number and colour of the bars that light up here...



...then input their equivalent on here. It's obvious when you see how, but this troubled us for a while



Finding keys is for wimps. These crazy multi-digit doorlocks are what the hardcore player wants

AWESOMEANIME ACTION

FEZ features a wicked mixture of all-out blasting action and truly hardcore puzzles, all linked together with brilliantly directed cut-scenes. The dialogue is especially good and is scripted and acted out to perfection. Check out this sequence to see just how well the game gels together.



Hana needs to distract the robotic Fixers and nab a computer chip, so she sets some blasting caps



As the pipes burst, the Fixers automatically rush to fix the leaks. Hana swiftly hides in the shadows



While the robotic pests busy themselves with the repairs, Hana makes a quick dash to the exit



With all the Fixers busy, our lady can grab that useful chip and move on to the next puzzle. Mint

INSTANT PLAYER GUIDE INSTANT PLAYER GUIDE INSTANT PLAYER GUIDE
REMEMBER REMEMBER

There's always loads to do and even more to remember in *Fear Effect 2*. Follow our steps to ensure gaming success.



The dazzling scene and costume changes should remind you that you have all-new equipment to use. Remember to check your inventory regularly



Watch the cut-scenes intently. The smallest clues can lie in what characters say or do, or even in a background animation. Keep your eyes peeled



Although some buddies may appear weak, never take any prisoners, as even the squelchy ones will do you serious damage given half a chance



The game does reward a careful approach and stealthy kills, but when your cover is blown don't be afraid to unleash the bullets. It feels good too

A WORD WITH THE BOSS

The original was littered with pretty but way too hard set-pieces and boss battles. *FE2* is more structured and flowing, and while it may be a less original approach, it works far better. Boss battles appear less often, but are far more special, while the brilliant cut-scenes help keep the tension high.



Get your assault rifle ready, as just down this ladder lies the dreaded Planner. A good stash of bullets would be kind of handy too



You can blast away at this mutha but it's far more effective to force him backwards with your bullets, right into the streams of electricity

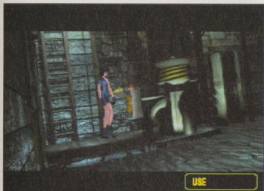


Fry the Planner's ass a couple of times and he'll be burnt toast. Don't laugh too hard though, as the ugly mug pops up again later

“One of the first games whose adult content is matched by adult difficulty”

THE COOLEST OF STUFF

While the less good points of the first game have been tweaked out of existence, the best bits have been retained. The Fear meter returns to replace the standard action game health-bar and the Areas of Attraction are back too, letting you know instantly where the important objects in a room are. Sweet.



No more randomly pressing the action button! *FE2* gives you hints at the bottom of the screen as to what to do next. So pay attention



The mixture of gameplay challenges will simply blow you away. Run away sweetheart, run from those nasty face-chomping rats



This is not a cut-scene. You have to make Hana run from the fireball behind her. It's like your own Hollywood blockbuster. Just awesome

WHAT WE THOUGHT...

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...

Resident Evil Code: Veronica (DC),
Hard Edge (PS),
Fear Effect (PS)

OH... MY... GOD...

Fear Effect 2 is one of those rare gems that oozes quality. As soon as you witness the incredible scene-setting sequence at the start of the adventure, you know you're in for a classy experience. And when you play through the first few sections, the game will have taken hold, leaving you totally immersed in the action. The clever Motion FX technology that made the first game so special to look at, has a welcome return and makes *FE2* look even sexier. The beautifully drawn locations all seem alive and bursting with a kind of unspeakable, threatening malevolence. Playing

the game truly is an emotional experience and the overall cinematic polish only heightens the effect.

BETTER THAN BEFORE

The brick-wall learning curve and those aggravating reload times after dying have been removed entirely, leaving an even more enjoyable adventure that will test both your trigger finger and your thinking cap. Some may find the difficulty too high, but *FE2* is a far more balanced game than the first, and it rewards perseverance, patience and intelligence, along with wanton flesh-shredding. As such, it's one of the first games whose adult content is matched by its adult difficulty setting.

A WARNING

While it draws its inspirations from enjoyable, but brainless, action movies, *FE2* is one of the most challenging titles to appear in the world of console gaming. But it's also one of the most rewarding too. It's likely that more casual players will simply be overwhelmed by the vicious puzzles and nitfy fingerwork required to progress, but the sense of satisfaction for those who do persevere is the sweetest. We love *FE2* as it doesn't pull its punches, either with its mature plot or the level of challenge on offer. It's awesome, plain and simple.

COMPETITION

We've got five copies of this brooding action-puzler up for grabs. Answer to our usual address marked Fear Effect 2 compo.

Question:
FE2's heroines are called...

A/ Hana and Rain
B/ Fanny and Lightning
C/ Minger and Thunder



COST: **£39.99**OUT: **NOW**MULTIPLAYER: **1-4 ONLINE**

Once in a while a game comes along that stops the gaming world in its tracks and takes it in a completely new direction. *Doom* did it, as did *Super Mario 64* and now, *Phantasy Star Online* is poised to take console videogaming to fantastic heights in the new Millennium. Join a cast of refugees from a doomed Earth – along with the rest of the entire gaming world – in a mammoth quest to help solve the mysteries of the missing spacecraft Pioneer 1 and its efforts to populate the lush green haven of Ragol.

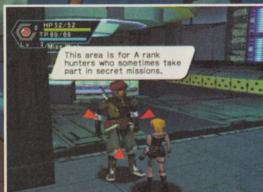
Get lost in (cyber) space with Sega's groundbreaking RPG

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: LEE SKITTELL

PHANTASY STAR ONLINE

HUBBAHUBBA

Your adventure starts on the Pioneer 2 spacecraft. The key game areas are accessed from a main hub: a hospital, a bank for money and items, worried natives, a couple of shops and traders to talk to. When playing online, this is where other adventurers hang out. Check the Hunter's Guild regularly too for sub-quests and new adventures.



Access to Ragol's surface – and your main adventure – lies beyond these doors and soon you'll be feeling like a proper A-rank hunter.



Family and friends of those missing on Pioneer 1 millie around the beautiful hub. Depending on your mission status, they'll offer hints



The three Tekkers are trader types who evaluate different mystery items you find on your quest. Each has a particular speciality

GUILD THE LILLY

As well as *PSO*'s massive solo quest and online adventuring, there are loads of sub-plots and mini-quests at the Hunter's Guild. Early missions give you basic training for the main quest. Later ones offer a range of challenges from locating lost citizens to collecting data on the angry animals. All earn you cash and experience points.



Guild missions come in sets and, once you've cleared one set, more open up. You can even download new challenges from the *PSO* site



After accepting the challenge to find a greedy landowner, you beam down to Ragol to find him. Once located, drag him back to Pioneer 2



With your mission completed to satisfaction, the lovely Guild lady rewards you with 700 Meseta, *PSO*'s currency. Not too shabby, eh?

MAGMADNESS

Every *PSO* hero gets a MAG, a robotic buddy floating behind your character. Feed them the potions and fluids you take on your travels to help them level up, and at certain levels your buddy learns a special attack. As your hero takes damage, your MAG gets closer and closer to its limit. At its peak you can unleash a devastating attack.



The yellow hexagon at the top left shows the MAG's damage bar and, when full like this, you're ready to unleash some serious pain



This MAG's Photon Blast summons a strange fishy lizard dude who flies high into the air then strikes with a deadly thunderbolt. Tasty



Your MAG, and its subsequent skills, differs according to the type of character you select at the start of the game. Experimenting is fun

"PSO is poised to take console videogaming to fantastic heights in the new Millennium"

DOMINATE THE BEASTS!

However you're playing, one thing's constant: you must fight. Something's made native beasts very vicious and 'til you find out what's going on you must kick their furry arses. Combat is sound, but a *Zelda*-style lock-on feature is sadly missing and initially you'll be die frequently.



Scary guys with glowing scimitars! Pick up items dotted around to top-up healing and attack points



Surely this Grass Assassin should burn up in this lava cave...? You've no time to ponder that though



Enemies respawn. This watery baddie reminded us of the mighty Chaos in *Sonic Adventure*



The graphics look so gorgeous that you hardly mind replaying more difficult sections if you die

LET'S PLAY DRESS-UPS

To ensure playing *PSO* is a truly immersive and personal journey, you can customise your hero. There's loads of character templates to choose from, each with different strengths and weaknesses, and their own natty style. Once chosen, you can then tweak them even more.



The base templates look lovely enough. You get a run-down of basic skills before you accept too



You can adjust style of dress, hair, skin colour, facial features and even their proportions



Choosing your character attributes wisely. You can't change 'em and can only store one per VMU



We created one-eyed Miss Wink and sharp-shooting hero Barney for contrasting styles

“It’s the type of DC game you can use to show up your PS2-owning mates”

LOOK AT IT!

PSO is the type of DC game you can use to show up your PS2-owning mates. The graphics are consistently beautiful and the lush forest areas so detailed you'll almost feel the warm sun on your skin and a gentle breeze caressing your face. Trekking through these sections isn't as fast-paced as you might expect, but it gives you time to admire the detail in your surroundings.



There are four main types of area in *PSO*: forests, mines, ruins and caves. The caverns' waterfalls are very easy on the eye



Use the map in the top right of the screen to keep track of your movements through the lava-filled mines and ruins



Top fireball action! The various special attacks all look superb - especially when playing with others online

INSTANT PLAYER GUIDE INSTANT PLAYER GUIDE INSTANT PLAYER GUIDE

THE ART OF COMMUNICATION

Playing and chatting online in *PSO* has been made as painless as possible but it'll take you a while to get to grips with the plentiful options. Let us help you...



Call up the sub-screen with Start and select 'chat' to create easy one-touch shortcuts. Pre-set phrases are translated into players' own language



Type in anything you want. Here, the pressures of massive adventuring prove too much for our poor Miss Wink. We love the cool chat bubbles



Type in some shortcuts then call them up with the D-pad and keyboard keys. They save loads of time when trying to find buddies to adventure with



The quickest chat method is with these icons. You can even design your own to convey a single thought or message. Dead cool

BLOODY HELL!

So you've been trekking through the gorgeous dungeons, solving a few simple puzzles and teaching monsters a few lessons when suddenly you see a teleport pad. This one's bigger than previous pads and glowing strangely. But in you step and it's not long before you wish you'd run a mile instead. It's a boss battle, and it's bloody brilliant.



It's the biggest dragon you've ever seen and it wants to play with you a while. He's tough, so watch out if you're not at a high level



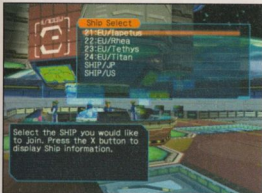
Like most boss characters this dragon has a specific pattern. He'll fly into the air often then try to stomp you. So keep moving



The trick to slaying this brute is to avoid his attacks then nip in quickly and start hacking away at his legs. He won't like it though...

ONLINE EXTRAVAGANCE

PSO has a clever plot system that lets you play through the main adventure online, offline, or choose a variety of sub-quests to get items and experience. Playing online for the first time gives you that rare feeling that you're experiencing something very new, and very exciting.



Getting yourself online is pretty straightforward. Enter the pass keys, register your character, then choose a lobby or ship to enter



We played online with US and Jap players and experienced no lag or slowdown. You really enjoy looking after and chatting to teammates



Here's that easy-as-pie online chat working perfectly. The multiple chat options really help to keep your quests chugging along nicely

“Get PSO, go online and become a part of videogame history”

WHAT WE THOUGHT...

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...

**Diablo II (PC),
Final Fantasy IX (PS),
Zelda: Majora's Mask (NG4)**

NEW HAT

Online adventuring may be old hat to PC-ers but for console RPG fans, PSO is a revelation. Sociable console RPG fans can finally rejoice as PSO offers not only a gripping and expanded quest, but also truly revolutionary online functions. And for the first game of its type on a home console, PSO gets it pretty much spot-on first time in terms of how well the whole package works.

A GAME FOR LIFE

The initially bewildering array of communication options with other players are just the first taste of PSO's real depth. The pre-built sentence system which translates phrases into other languages is a

work of genius. It's in this kind of expert design that the depth lies, rather than in the main quest itself. PSO's main story is engaging, but fairly simple and the dungeon puzzles are largely no-brainers. Where the real lasting gameplay challenge lies is in the character building and nurturing aspects. By only allowing one character and his or her MAG per VMU, you really do start to view your on-screen buddy as an extension of yourself – especially when you're talking and adventuring with other players from around the world online.

NEW DIRECTION

There are niggly flaws in PSO, but when held up next to the game's

impressive achievements they pale into virtual insignificance. The occasionally plodding nature of the main quest, and the relatively tactice-free combat will no doubt cause a frown or two amongst *Final Fantasy* fans, as will the initially tough first sections of the game. But PSO marks a step in a new direction for console adventures and there's so much right with the game that to even mention these faults doesn't quite feel in the spirit of what PSO represents.

BE A PART OF IT

As a single player game, PSO is very good. As an online experience, it's jaw-dropping. The level of character interaction, and the ways

in which your hero grows and learns new skills as you play gives PSO a huge amount of longevity. Our only concern is that players may be put off by the call changes you'll rack up when playing online – though even without the online quests, the adventure still shines. Buy a Dreamcast while you can, get PSO, go online, and become a part of videogame history.





COST: £44.99

OUT: MARCH 1

MULTIPLAYER: 1-4

We keep hearing Nintendo's little black box is on the way out and yet they are still spoiling us with the likes of *Perfect Dark*, *Majora's Mask*, and now *Banjo Toxie: The Tooie Witch*. *Banjo Kazooie* was a revelation on the N64, a sumptuous 3D platformer with all the quality hallmarks of genuine Nintendo classics such as *Super Mario 64*, yet bristling with bizarre British humour. It was also fiendishly difficult, but never frustratingly so. We've waited a long time to welcome back the feabag Breeguil and the gormless Honey Bear but it's been worth it. Once again Nintendo and Rare prove they still king of the hill when it comes to creating the perfect platform game. Grunty's back from the dead, and she's mad as hell.

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: MAURA SUTTON

BANJO TOOIE

The bird and the bear are back!

SOME OLD, SOME DEAD, SOME NEW

Grunty's scummy sisters Mingella and Biobbeida resurrected her after she died last time. She may be lacking a body but she's determined to put some flesh on those old witchy bones by sucking the life force from the earth.



Banjo's a gentle honey bear who likes wearing yellow shorts in all weathers. This time around he gets to ditch Kazooie and let his backpack flap freely



Kazooie is the world's most sarcastic bird. She makes the most incredibly callous remarks. We'd like to say she's got a heart of gold, but she hasn't



King Jingaling is the cheerful ruler of Jiggly village. Unfortunately he gets trapped into a zombie which makes him a party pooper at the best of times



Banjo and Kazooie must complete Jigglywiggy's challenges when they have enough golden Jiggies. He then shows them the way to the next world

BIG BAD BOSS

Banjo Toxie may be dripping with high-tech 3D loveliness, but it harks back to the good old days of platform gaming when it comes to the spectacular boss battles. Each boss will take lots of practice to vanquish. Once you've fought a boss you'll be able to access them from the main menu for as many rematches as you like.



Targitzan the Despotix Dirty Totem God hasn't seen a firing soul for thousands of years and boy is he pleased to see you. He's not too hard to beat, just take him apart layer by layer



Old King Coal, the Grubby Boiler Monarch, lives in Chubby the train's boiler. Kick his backside and Chobby will become Banjo and Kazooie's personal choo-choo. Sweet



Mr. Patch, the Strange Wobbly Inflatable Thing, lives in the circus tent. He says he's not vicious, then proceeds to hurl deadly beach balls. Don't take it lying down, tear him to pieces!



Chilly Willy, the Cold 'n' Icy Dragon, lives on Haillire Peaks. He doesn't like people trespassing so he hurls huge ice bombs at anyone who gets too close. Best stay back then

"Nintendo and Rare prove again they're king of the hill when it comes to creating the perfect platform game"

PRACTICALMAGIC

Banjo and Kazooie used to visit Mumbo Jumbo when they needed magical assistance. Mumbo's still around and you even get to control him, but this time around it's his shamanic rival Humba Wumba who helps Banjo and Kazooie change shape. First they have to give her a tiny Glowbo and then jump into her magic pink pool.



In the Mayhem Temple world Banjo and Kazooie can transform themselves into a Stony to enable them to talk to other Stonies and play the wicked Mayan Kickball. This game really is full of surprises



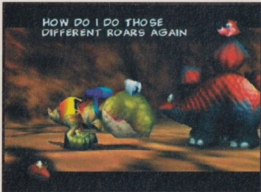
Humba Wumba changes Banjo and Kazooie into a dynamite detonator in Glitter Gulch mine. Now they can blow open boulders and ignite barrels of dynamite. This promises to be a lot of fun



Now this is top fun! In Witchyworld, Banjo and Kazooie transform themselves into a seriously cute shorts-wearing delivery van and get to drive around the huggastic theme park making deliveries



Banjo and Kazooie plumb the depths of Jolly Roger's Lagoon in this torpedos firing submarine. Advance successfully through this underwater world to open up secret doors and play subgames



In Torderydland, Banjo and Kazooie change into both a Daddy F-Rex and a Baby F-Rex. Being the Daddy is a great laugh, especially because he roars so loud that he makes the cavernome pee



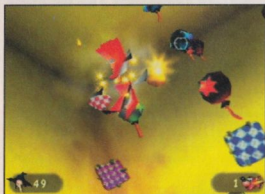
In the industrial hellhole of Grunt Industries, Banjo and Kazooie must become a washing machine in order to wash the unfles of hapless rabbit workers. Urgh, sounds like a stinky deal to us

SUPER SUB-GAMES

Banjo Toxie boasts some awesome mini-games, all of which can be accessed from the main menu once you've played them. The mini-games are also available in multiplayer mode so you can get your mates to join in the fun. Even better, if you find certain objects in the main game you can unlock secret multiplayer characters.



Mayan Kickball is kind of like Jurassic football without the flesh-eating T-Rex. Members of the Stony tribe try and score points by pushing boulders into their own nets.



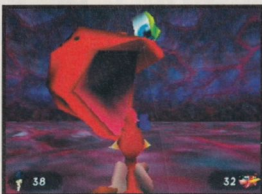
The Balloon Burst Challenge uses Kazooie's pin-sharp beak to burst the balloons. Pop a red one to get a single point, go for green to get two and blue ones award three points.



The crazy Ordnance Storage Challenge has Banjo using his bird buddy Kazooie as a powerful Breegull Blaster to defuse rebellious sticks of dynamite. Weird.



In this challenge you get to ride around in cool dodgem cars, ramming into your mates to make sure you're the first to collect all the different coloured gems.



In Chompa's Belly Banjo and Kazooie get eaten by a huge dinosaur. But rather than dissolve in his stomach acid, they agree to help out by killing the parasites in his gut. Like, right!



Only Stonies can play Colosseum Kickball so Banjo and Kazooie must use Wumba's magic first. This time the least number of points wins. Should be good for Bradford fans then.

“The multiplayer mini-games are almost good enough to be a separate game”

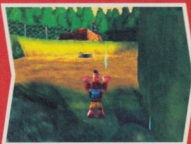
INSTANT PLAYER GUIDE INSTANT PLAYER GUIDE INSTANT PLAYER GUIDE

LISTEN TO THE MOLE

As soon as you reach a new world hunt down Jorja's hatches, so he can teach you the essential new moves. There are loads to learn – here are some of the best.



Clockwork Kazooie Eggs: These awesome eggs allow you to control and detonate little toy replicas of Kazooie. Use them like smart missiles.



Grip Grab: Use this to reach difficult areas. Press B when Banjo is swinging along and Kazooie will emerge from the backpack and peck the enemy.



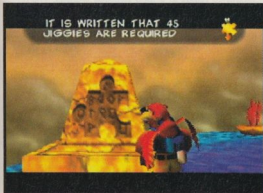
Tides Torpedoes: When swimming pressing Z will shoot Kazooie out of the backpack and through the water like a torpedo. Use to break through walls.



Shack Pack: When Banjo is away from Kazooie hold down Z and press C-D-pad. He can then climb inside the backpack for protection in hot water.

WHAT U NEEDED

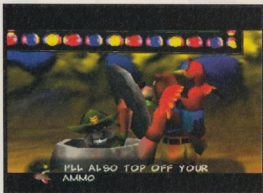
As in the first game, there's loads of hidden of stuff that you have to collect in order to progress in *Banjo Toxie*. You're constantly on the look out for the next bit of treasure, and when you do manage to get your hands on something you've been search after for ages, it really is a fantastic feeling. Many of the objects will be familiar to *Banjo Kazooie* fans.



There are ten Jiggies on each world, and some of them can't be obtained until you've learned cool new skills from some of the worlds which appear later in the game



Jinjo Village has been destroyed by the evil witch Grunty. Each bubbly Jinjo you find earns you Jiggies as a reward, but watch out for the evil Jinjos

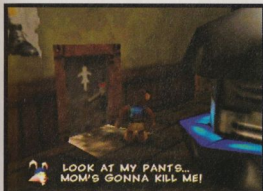


Collect Notes and give them to Sergeant Jamjar. If you have enough Notes, Jamjars will teach Banjo and Kazooie useful skills which prove invaluable later in your adventure

"It'll take at least 40 hours to finish"

SICK THINGS

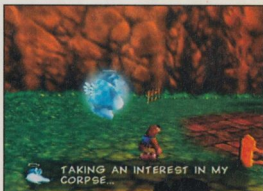
It's unusual to find a mainstream platform game that features such dubious, tasteless and often brilliant jocularity. Those naughty *Fur Fighters* have got a lot to answer for. Cartoon game characters used to be all fluffy and cuddly and utter nothing but cute catchphrases. Here they are talking about their smelly toilet habits and games of poke-har. Ooo, Mastron!



One of gaming's great moments. Stand outside this bog in Grunty's factory to hear about some poor bloke's pongy bowel emissions



This fruity barkeep would make Graham Norton blush. Check out his humble hospitality for some suitably saucy seaside innuendo



Bottles the Mole may be dead but he still likes a laugh. Hang around Banjo's house to hear Bottle's full death defying repertoire

WHAT WE THOUGHT...

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...

Banjo Kazooie (N64), *Super Mario 64* (N64), *Rayman 2* (N64, DC, PS2)

BEAR NECESSITY

For a platform game to be a true classic, the controls need to be intuitive and the learning curve carefully pitched, so you're just dying to play that next level, to beat that seemingly impossible boss to see what's coming next. Too easy and you'll get bored quickly, too difficult and you'll throw the whole box out the window. *Banjo Toxie* fits the bill with sublimely smooth controls that manage to juggle a host of different skills and items without ever feeling laboured or awkward. After playing for an hour or so you'll be able to handle the bird, the bear and their pals with consummate ease.

BIRD'S EYE VIEW

Although the different worlds in *Banjo Toxie* represent traditional platform game locations (ice, lava, seaside, dinosaurs, industrial) they are presented with such a wealth of imagination and humour you don't really mind the occasional lack of originality. The attention to detail is awesome and there are loads of cool sight gags, as well as some truly mad characters.

PRESS PAWS

One of the best things about *Banjo Toxie* is the way Rare has painstakingly ironed out all the usual gaming kinks that can be so frustrating. You're saved from wandering around the massive

levels by handy warp pads that take you to important areas, and you can even jump between unlocked worlds via Jamjar's missile silos. You won't find yourself repeating the same tasks again and again, meaning virtually every second you spend playing is overflowing with fresh gaming goodness.

WORTH PLAYING?

Not if you're a boring old misery who withers and crinkles at the mere thought of endless hours of fun and frivolity. If, however, you love to laugh and get sweaty palms at the prospect of a monumental challenge you should dust off the N64 pronto. Cartridge games may be a little more expensive to buy,

but in the case of *Banjo Toxie* you really do get plenty of value for money. It will probably take you about 40 hours to finish the game without collecting every Jiggy or Jinjo and the multiplay mini-games are almost good enough to be a separate game, ensuring the game's longevity. Your precious pounds will be well spent and your N64 will love you forever:





COST: £39.99
OUT: MAR

MULTIPLAYER: 1-4

If the initials *UT* mean nothing to you by now, then the chances are you've spent the last couple of years bound and gagged in your psychotic uncle's cellar. In the world of videogames, *Unreal Tournament* has been as talked about as much as would the invention of a washing-up robot in a land without women. Third-person shooters are to PC gamers what foreign players are to Premiership clubs – they're what they spend all their money on – and for a while the only dilemma anyone had was whether to sign up *Quake 3* or *UT* for a season of carnage. But the walls surrounding that very exclusive clubhouse, where PC gamers go to blast seven shades out of each other, are slowly being knocked down to let in all you eager console owners out there. First came *Quake 3* on Dreamcast, and now *UT* has landed smack-bang in the disc drive of PS2. So, what with everyone starting to get a piece of the action, the question remains: is the release of this PC classic the answer to PS2 players' dreams or a case of too little, too late?

UNREAL TOURNAMENT

The PC classic hits PS2. Will it slay 'em all or shoot itself in the foot?

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: STEVE O

BACK TO BASICS

Gamesplayers not in the know may be as thin on the ground as bobbies on the beat these days, but for those who don't know their *UT* from their elbow, and for those whose memories need that little bit of refreshing, here's a gentle little reminder of what it is that makes *UT* the gore-laden giant it is.



UT has long been recommended for having some of the finest and most imaginative arenas in any FPS



The one-ups are top class power tools and, to add to the mix, each of them has a secondary function



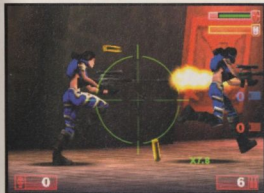
There are several game types apart from the classic Deathmatch. Try Capture The Flag for size



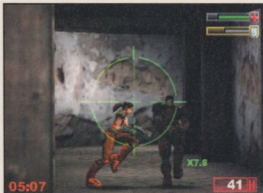
UT rewards a variety of playing styles. Sniping, lurking, camping or rampaging – all pay dividends

OUR FAVOURITE BITS

What is it that makes *UT* so special? What is it that makes even the mighty *G3 Arena* break into a cold sweat at the sight of it? The variety of weapons, the innovative modes of play, the cool character models and intelligent bot AI all help. It's packed with cool gameplay that bring tears of unadulterated joy to some of our blackened hearts.



The Facing Worlds Capture the Flag arena is one of the finest pieces of level design in all Christendom. Two great big towers on a floating rock-face. Sniper heaven and a really brilliant team level



One of the greatest feelings in *UT* comes after taking someone's head off with a single round from your sniper rifle. The voice-over bellows 'headshot!' and you cackle gleefully at your decapitated foe



Get several kills in a row and 'killing spree!' booms over the PA. Get a few more and it's 'rampage!'. The best kicks come when, following a mega sequence of kills, you're dubbed 'dominating'

"The voice-over bellows 'headshot!', and you cackle gleefully at your foe"

ONE PLAYER VILLAINS

PSS *UT* looks best single screen. That usually means one-player. Which is a shame, because the single player side of *UT* is not its strongest point. If you're new to *UT*, you'll marvel at the visuals and imagination behind the levels, but the lack of a connected campaign may leave you grinning.



In one-player you work you way up a ladder system, winning ever-harder hot matches



The basic game style is Deathmatch, a word now found in the Oxford English Dictionary. Probably



Winning games pits you against awesome harder bots and opens up new arenas and game modes



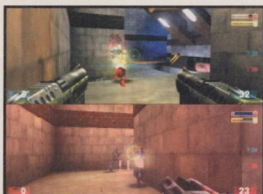
As well as Capture the Flag, you'll also get to play attack and defend in Assault and Domination levels

TWO-PLAYERTALES

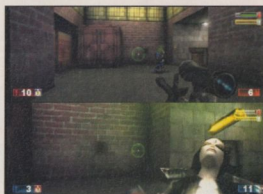
It's all well and good talking about single player *UT*, but the solo game was really only ever a warm-up for multiplayer. As the name Tournament suggests, the whole concept of *UT* was and is a way to get some people together and let them duke it out in a frenzy of shattered bodies and gruesome gibbets of offal. Here's how it is in two player.



Play in split-screen against one other mate and *UT* still looks a real treat. There may be a little slow-down on some of the more visually complex levels, but nothing to write home blubbing about



You can play all the modes, against each other or in co-op by adding computer controlled bots to either side. Domination games against each other are a treat, as you battle for control of the three beacons



But as much fun as it is, you can't help but wishing a few more of your mates could join in and get a taste of the carnage too. Killing the same person time and again can get a touch too vindictive...

FOUR-PLAYERMESS

It should be the ultimate. Four of you, palms sweating, clustered round the PS2 ready to unleash merry hell on one another. Ready to invoke the gods of blood and battle from the comfort of your own living room. Ready to mercilessly take the mick out of the poor sap whose head you pop ten times in a row. So... what went wrong?



You eagerly wait for the thing to boot up, sure you've got your hands on the next *GoldenEye*, the fragfest to end all fragfests...



...but when the action starts it's not long before you're reduced to a blubbering mess by the bone-jarring jerkiness of the screen



And you realise that only some of the more simple levels are playable four-way without the action slowing to a snail's pace

"A top conversion of a stone-cold classic"

CONTROL YOURSELF

PS2 *UT* is almost indistinguishable from the PC version with the one crucial difference – the control method. For those of you without a USB keyboard and mouse to hook up, you're stuck with the humble analogue pad to kill people with. It handles pretty well, but as any smug PS2 owner will tell you, it's simply not as accurate as a rodent.



The analogue sticks control movement and looking. The configuration is customisable and works quite well, as it does in *TimeSplitters*



There's a vital but tricky 180° spin function that you'll have to get the hang of if you want to become a genuine *UT* expert



But it will take a lot of option tweaking to reach a control style and sensitivity level that you're anywhere near comfortable with

INSTANT PLAYER GUIDE INSTANT PLAYER GUIDE INSTANT PLAYER GUIDE

KILLER TIPS

Pummeling your mates on PS2 *UT* will be a whole lot easier if you bear these in mind...



All the weapons have got secondary fire. Make the most of the possibilities: do you lob a grenade round the corner or let rip with a rocket?



Don't fight without armour. It pays to know where all the tasty pick-ups are slashed as a guy wearing a shield sure is much harder to kill



Learn your levels. If you know where attacks can come from, then you'll be able to keep yourself alive for longer. Seek out the good sniping spots



Sort out the controls. Though it may be a bit of a pain, you really have to trial-and-error it until you get the configuration that best suits you

BIRDS OF A FEATHER

You could put a PC monitor next to a game of PS2. *UT* being played and you'd be hard pressed to tell them apart. In one-player, the PS2 version plays like it does on a fairly hi-spec PC. That's definitely good news, but only to a point. Because – let's not forget – we're talking about a game that's high-on two years' old now. Could do better?



Most of the arenas from the PC version are in there but re-worked, as well as 15 new ones which seem a little better suited for PS2



With an analogue pad you'll find the PC ones tougher since they need plenty of looking up and down, which is best suited to a mouse



Gameplay feels much like the PC. The downside being that if you were a fan on the PC, then there's nothing much new for you here

I-LINKUP

Where *UT* really shines is when two players link up a pair of PS2s and two TVs with an i-Link cable for simultaneous full screen carnage with no noticeable slowdown. Like this, *UT* is, without a doubt, one of PS2's finest moments so far. While we haven't tried it, two sets of split-screen (ie four players) should be smooth too.



The perfect set-up for a game of *UT* is having two machines i-Link and both of you using USB keyboards and mice. It reigns supreme



This way, you get absolutely no slowdown, and all the action can be viewed by both of you in all its full screen glory



It may be that eight players can use two PS2s and i-Link, but it's so weak on one four-way split-screen, why bother with two?

“With no online mode, *UT* is a bit of a let-down, but it's still one hell of a frag-fest”

WHAT WE THOUGHT...

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...

Quake 3 Arena (DC/PC), **Deus Ex** (PC), **TimeSplitters** (PS2)

PREACH TO THE CONVERTED

On the face of it, this is a near-perfect conversion of the PC classic. And playing it reminded us just what a blinder it is. Ferocious weapons and atmospheric locations produce a high-adrenaline blaster of titanic proportions. If you're new to *UT* then we can only envy the kicks you'll get out of this. So why only a Four Star rating? This is a top conversion of a stone-cold classic, isn't it? Well, yes it is – up to a point. In the transformation from PC to console, a few problems under the bonnet are apparent.

HARSH BUT FAIR

Let's face it, converting a year-old PC game lock, stock, and barrel to

the PS2 doesn't take a lot of imagination. *UT* was among the very best of its time when it hit the stores, but things move on. More recent PC FPSs like *Deus Ex* and *Elite Force* have upped the ante with sharper visuals, more interactivity and stronger one-player aspects. So in essence, what you get for your cash here is an ageing, if classy, game. And these roots lead to some of its problems. The graphics certainly won't be the best you will see on PS2. The original *UT* was programmed with a mouse/keyboard control system in mind and, despite tweaks, still features many multi-story levels that are tricky with the analogue pad. And

for a PC *UT* veteran, there's really nothing new to get excited about.

CATCH-22

The biggest snag, though, connects to the whole point of *UT* – the multiplayer game. On PC you play *UT* online or networked together. All fine and dandy. But on PS2 you have to play split-screen. This seems an acceptable trade off as you can at least have all four of you in the same room yelling at each other, even if you're all squinting at try quarter screens. But it just doesn't work with many of the levels. Two-player is usually fine but four-player can slow down way too much for a good fight. PS2 *UT* looks best in single player – the very mode it's weakest to play in.

WORTH BUYING?

So *UT* plus one PS2 is a Four Star game. Two-player plus two PS2s, two TVs, two mice and keyboards is Five Star fun. But how many of us can sort that kind of setup? With no online fighting, *UT* is a bit of a let-down. Nonetheless, it's still one hell of a fragfest and it's a tough call between *UT* and *TimeSplitters*.



PC
ROM

COST: £19.99

OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: 1-32+

QUAKE III TEAM ARENA

It's *Quake*. It's an official id add-on! It's... totally hardcore

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: PETER WALKER

While console players have been getting all excited about *Quake 3 Arena* on DC and PS2, the world of PC *Quake* has moved on. In the past year since the original PC *Q3A* release, the online *Quake* community has come up with all sorts of unofficial, free, new modifications, maps and weapons – everything from *Team Fortress* to *Mario* and *Matrix* arenas to flamethrowers. So what have *Q3A* developers, id, been doing all this time? Working on the first official expansion pack, *Team Arena*, that's what. But was it worth the wait...?

BUSINESS AS USUAL

If you've played the original (and you'll need a copy to play this), you'll be at home from the start. A little too at home, perhaps. You'll quickly realise it's just a tweaked interface and a handful of new maps, modes of play, power-ups, bots, skins and weapons, with added emphasis on team play (unsurprisingly).



One-player botmatches are a warm-up for multiplayer. No good long-term if your modem sucks



TA focuses on the team matches, either with all-human sides online, or with bots both on or offline



What few new maps there are reek quality design, but some are just tarted up versions of old ones



DC beat PC to some id-approved maps that were packaged with the console's *Q3A* – a gaming first

ONE FOR THE hardcore

PC *Quake* veterans will spot the most significant additions immediately and will be in frag heaven, mastering new weapons, learning new arenas and discovering the subtle variations in gameplay offered by new modes and pick-ups. The rest of the world may wonder what the fuss is about.



Old favors the Nailgun and Chaingun returns. Prox Launcher mines go off if you get too close. Cool



Team power-ups remain until you die - Scout is a pumped-up haste, Guard gives you health and armour



The Kamikaze one-use pick-up bomb is a very powerful addition that needs to be deployed wisely



One Flag CTF: get the flag and assault enemy bases to score - more challenging than the original CTF



Harvester: take fragged enemies' skulls to their goal spot - watch for sudden reversal of fortunes



Overload: destroy the enemies' goal obelisk, another neat twist making attackers a lot more vulnerable



Some maps are better suited to particular modes of play, while others are too big for small teams



Despite a better system for giving bot orders, the teamplay really comes into its own online

"Quake heads will love what there is of it"

KICK IN THE OBELISKS

TA is very much about refining your combat skills to the Nth degree and adapting your style of play and tactics to suit the new modes and arenas. If you're into teamplay, this expansion pack rights some wrongs of the original release. But even big *Quake* fans will have to begrudgingly admit: TA has its faults.



The new team skins are weak - less inspired and you can't always tell who's red and who's blue



We reckon you'll need a 600MHz PC with a top 3D card for smooth offline play with a lot of bots



Bots seem more accurate but AI is a little patchy and their new voice samples sound, frankly, pants



Online servers can be set for higher ping players only but most don't. Bad unless you have ADSL cable

WHAT WE THOUGHT...

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...

Quake 3 Arena (PC, DC), **Unreal Tournament** (PC, PS2), **TimeSplitters** (PS2)

TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE

Let's get this straight, first - we love *Quake*. We also love *Unreal Tournament*. We've played them both to death. But an expansion pack aimed mainly at teamplay for any first-person PC shooter, even one as seminal as *Quake 3*, is almost always going to have limited appeal. *Quake* heads will love it - what there is of it.

HOW MUCH?

But *Team Arena*, addictive as it is, simply doesn't offer enough to justify the £20 price tag. Not when

there's loads of great free *Q3A* add-ons already available off the Net. When it comes to value for your games money, PC *Unreal Tournament* owners should feel free to smirk quietly. Epic's title, which is as old as original *Q3A*, offered the variation in modes of play and weapons that id has taken another year to come up with.

FEEDING FRENZY

While hardcore *Quake* heads (like half of CVG) will enjoy the subtle innovations of TA, three new modes

of play, three new weapons, a fistful of new maps and skins doesn't exactly constitute a major addition to the *Quake* universe. But then, as id knows, the online community will tear the code apart and come up with a mass of variations to feed the hardcore's seemingly insatiable appetite for all things *Quake*.

WORTH BUYING?

Buy this if you're a *Quake* nut who loves teamplay (in which case you'll already have forked out for the necessary high-end PC and speedy

connection). Or, get online and start downloading some free mods. Meanwhile, *Quake* freaks enraged by our score should email us at youwilnevertakeusalive@totallyanonymous.planck.



COST: **£39.99**OUT: **MARCH**MULTIPLAYER: **NO**

SHADOW OF MEMORIES

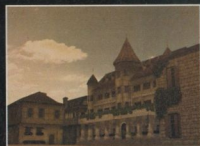
A thinking man's masterpiece that refuses to hide in the shadows

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: JOHNNY MINKLEY

You've just been murdered. Under normal circumstances, it wouldn't be long before you were six-foot under, left to fester in the earth, as hungry worms ravage your rotting corpse. Eike Kursch is a lucky boy, however, as he is miraculously brought back from the dead and given a second chance at life. Granted the ability to transcend the very boundaries of time, our hero is given a mission to solve his own murder by travelling into the past, changing his destiny and ultimately saving his own life. Only by unearthing centuries of history, will Eike be able to discover the reason behind his remarkable salvation.

TIME WAITS FOR ONE MAN

The essence of the game is built around Eike's remarkable ability to travel back through time in order to prevent his own death. Through the action of a Digipad, you may visit the town of Lebensbaum in four separate time zones, each with direct relevance to your plight.



The 16th century is a time of alchemy, and of wondrous but often dangerous experimentation



Time moves on. At the turn of the 20th Century, Eike meets Alfred Brum and his daughter, Sibylla



In 1980, Bana is born and her mother is murdered. Can Eike prevent this from happening?



The present day and time of Eike's death. Everything you do in the past impacts on what happens now

WATCH YOUR BACK

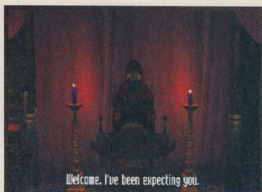
The first time Eike is murdered, it's a knife in the back. Which is nice. At first, our hero is in a state of utter confusion, unable to accept what is happening around him. The immediacy of his situation means contemplation is not a luxury he can afford, and he must immediately travel back to the real world and prevent his stabbing.



The old knife-in-the-back routine. Now that's just plain cowardly. An unfigured exit – you're not gonna stand for that are you?



The Homunculus will return you to 30 minutes before your murder. Do you watch Eastenders or try and save your life? Tricky one



Welcome. I've been expecting you.

Go check out the fortune-teller in the Alchemist's house. She'll tell you to surround yourself with people at the appointed hour

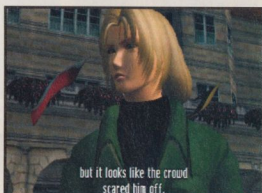


Ho? You want me to come to the square at 2:30?

Run around and quickly chat to everybody in the centre of town and arrange to meet the old lady and girl in the square at 2:30 pm



Boo, hiss, here comes the bad guy. But wait, he's a coward, and when he sees the crowd gathered around you he does a runner



but it looks like the crowd scared him off.

Well, congratulations, you successfully scared your would-be murderer away and saved your bacon. You're safe, for now...

“SoM’s dramatic cut-scenes and haunting musical score make it more appealing than Britney Spears and Billie mud-wrestling”

HIT THE TOWN

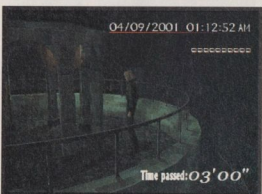
The game is set in the imaginary German town of Lebensbaum. There are only a handful of buildings which you are able to enter; but each one is steeped in centuries of history, containing dark secrets relating to your fate. By travelling through time, Eike is even able to change the very nature of these locations in order to save himself.



The Alchemist's house is at the heart of the game, being the original home of Dr. Wagner and the place of the Homunculus' creation



The town square is a vital meeting place for people in all ages, and Eike must prevent his own death here on more than one occasion



The tower is annexed to the present day museum, and is the scene of your murder later on in the game. How can you prevent your fall?

FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH

CVG was so intrigued by SoM we went to Heidelberg in Germany to interview the writer and director of the game, Junko Kawano. As the only female director in Konami, she has worked her way up through the ranks as a designer, this being the first title she has directed.



Junko Kawano says she had been thinking about the story since her days as a student. She has managed to impose her own unique perspective to SoM, notably creating unusually strong female characters for a videogame



Spot the difference. Ugg is the excitable film director in the game, and is based on Wolfgang Ebert, who actually looks after PR for Konami in Germany and is now immortalised in a brilliant game forever. It's alright for some, eh?



The production team made visits to various towns in Germany to ensure all the architecture in the game would be authentic. Germany was chosen as the game is based on Goethe's book Faust, which was also set in that country in the 16th Century



The 'voicé' of the cat in the game was actually provided by Junko Kawano herself. Who says the bosses don't get their hands dirty? The cat plays an important part in one of the game's many sub-stories. Time travelling pusscat, anyone?

“Without doubt this is a brilliantly conceived, wonderfully executed game”

LOST THE PLOT

There are many scenes and events that branch-off from the main story. You can still finish the game without seeing them, but the story is so gripping that you won't rest until you've uncovered every last detail. This scene involves preventing Miniam Eckart's murder. It doesn't affect your fate, but will change the future nevertheless.



Travel back to just before her murder and convince her to take a different route, as the road ahead leads to deadly danger



Being a complete stranger, she'll think you're a nut-case, and carry on regardless. Your only chance is to chase after her. Silly girl!

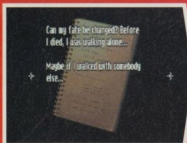


Keep up, and you'll dive to push her out of the line of fire. You may not realise it, but your noble actions will save a marriage

INSTANT PLAYER GUIDE INSTANT PLAYER GUIDE INSTANT PLAYER GUIDE

THE KNOWLEDGE

When you begin your quest, it's vital you become familiar with these items...



This is Eiko's Shonenwa-style diary, in which he will note important facts. It's worth checking regularly, as it contains hints on what to do next



The town map is essential to navigation. Funny that. The glowing green blocks are the locations you can visit and are closely entwined in your fate



The top clock is time in the present, the bottom one where you are now. You know the hour of your death, but can you change history before it arrives?



The Dipped is your key to time travel. You must collect energy balls, which replenish the gauge in the top corner, allowing you to make use of it

CAST FROM THE PAST

OK, this might not be Shakespeare, but compared to videogame plots in general, it might as well be. Each of the main characters plays a vital role in Eike's final destiny, and the way that they interrelate is often remarkable – you'll grow to care about the fate of each and every one of them.



Eike Kirsch is the troubled hero, who must try to prevent his own death... and get his roots done



Dana is flung back into the past. Can Eike save her? Or leave her and save his own ass instead?



The mysterious Homunculus. It gives you a second chance at life, but for what reason?



Dr. Wagner devotes his time to the study of alchemy and the search for eternal life. Cool dude



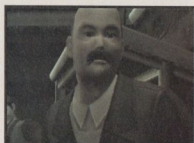
The fortune teller guides you early on, and her true identity will shock you like a cattle prod up the arse



Old, fat and balding, (no, not Ron Atkinson) Mr. Eckart will do anything to recover his daughter



This sweet, young thing is Margaret, daughter of Dr. Wagner. Wonder if she'll play Dr and nurse



Can you convince Bruce Grobbelar, sorry, Alfred Brum to open his lovely home to the public?



Hugo Wagner is a precocious young boy from the 16th Century, who discovers your true origins



Mram Eckart is the mother of Dana, and must endure the tragic kidnapping of her daughter



Sibylla is the daughter of Alfred Brum. Her family home was renowned for its giant door-knobs



Helena Wagner is bed-ridden and dying when you first encounter her. Her spirit lives on though...

WHAT WE THOUGHT...

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...

*Shenmue (DC),
Zelda: Majora's Mask (NG4),
Silent Hill (PS)*

THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

SoM is a fine achievement. In an industry plagued with meaningless, inept plotting, and dull, repetitive action, it is genuinely refreshing to see a title with such an intelligent, involving and beautifully structured storyline. Of course, there will be those among you who thrive on violent, non-stop action with total disregard for the story. You are some of the few players that may not fully appreciate the beauty of this game. However, if you want an unpredictable, thought-provoking who-dunnit, you really won't find anything better on the PS2.

GOTTA SEE 'EM ALL

SoM is to some extent on rails, but by its very nature it needs to be. Only set time-zones are accessible, and you are often told which one to go to, but because the story is so tightly-written, such focus is vital if

the plot's complexity is to make any kind of sense. Play through the game for the first time, though, and you may well miss many side-stories offset from your primary goals, which nevertheless are key to your understanding of the tale as a whole. Indeed, there are six endings on offer, and you'll really want to see them all as you piece together the mystery of Eike Kirsch's murder.

FANTASTIC FACIALS

Don't forget to get the popcorn in either, as the cinematic effect achieved in the game is often breathtaking. Anime-inspired direction makes for plenty of dramatic cut-scenes, while solid voice-acting and a sparse, haunting musical score create a package more appealing than Britney Spears and Billie mud-wrestling. Though textures are a little bland, graphics

are extremely stylish, and in particular, facial expressions and the architecture of a German town were well realised.

THE VERDICT

On a platform currently starved of originality and innovation, SoM arrives like a breath of fresh air in an abattoir. The first in a series of what Konami calls, 'Digital Novels', SoM has more unexpected turns than Lee after a pint of shandy, and you'll be in a constant and gripping state of anticipation, desperate to gorge yourself on the next juicy chunk of story. You will, however, need to consider if this concept appeals to you, as without action or violence in their conventional senses, it certainly ain't Jeffrey Dahmer – The Game. But frankly, we couldn't care less about that. Without doubt a brilliantly conceived, wonderfully executed game.

COMPETITION

We've got five copies of this PS2 treat to give away. Just send your answer to our usual address marked 'SoM Competition'. Compo closes 15th March.

SoM's storyline is loosely based on which landmark 16th Century novel?

- A) Faust
- B) Canterbury Tales
- C) Inferno



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KISS

KISS only on Sky digital

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sky a digital vision for everyone



MOTO GP

Wheelie great or burnt out?

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: LES ELLIS

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Namco has obviously been stung by complaints that *Ridge Racer V* is just a shiny version of a regular PlayStation *Ridge Racer* game, because it's pulled out all of the stops to make sure that *Moto GP* is more than just a shiny *Super Hang On*. In the process they've combined high adrenaline arcade racing and some elements of *Gran Turismo* – but this time you've only got two wheels.

HIDE AND SEEK

Initially there isn't a lot open; depth only emerges when you unlock new tracks, riders and options in Challenge mode. The challenges range from getting from A to B in a certain time without going off the track (not as easy as it sounds), to going through seasons or overtaking a certain number of riders on a certain lap of a certain course. Go through the Season mode on the various skill levels and as well as getting introduced to new



On long, open straights you get to really open up the throttle and find out just how fast your well-tuned hog will go



Be the last to brake and you'll fly through at corners



Check yourself out in super-realistic Replay mode



Maybe bunnyhopping at 75mph was a bad idea?



Two-player's a laugh but it's just the two of you, so keep close if you want some action



COST: £39.99
OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: 1-2



elements, like qualifying for races, you find yourself completing the challenges almost by accident. Meaning you don't just have to wade through the huge list one at a time, as in *Gran Turismo*.

WORTH PLAYING?

It's more challenging than *Hang On* and with that challenge comes the satisfaction – knowing that if you get it right when you dive into a corner you'll fly past other riders. Watch them look over their shoulders as you shoot by – awest. It gives you the desire to be a better racer. The best motorbike game ever? Hmm. Certainly the best on a console.

computer and video
Games



IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...
F1 2001 (PS), *GP 500* (PC),
Gran Turismo 2 (PS)

LORD OF THE ARENA

So you tried a mission and got your metal ass kicked straight away, huh? That'll teach you to rush in. Go to the arenas and get yourself half-way up the league table of pilots to earn some serious cash. Spend it on new weapons and body parts to get your Mech up to speed, then try the missions.



You can only take on the guy who is in the slot directly above you, so moving up the league is a slow process (just ask Chelsea)



The Arenas let you develop your battle tactics and earn cold hard cash to boost your Mech – and dying doesn't cost you anything



Test out strategies for different locations as there are different arenas to fight in – take the cash and run when you're done

TAKE ON THE WORLD

Money makes the Mech world go round and there's no cash for chillin', so if you want to earn big bucks you're going to have to get out there and get real nasty on some missions. You get paid for success and the amount of carnage you cause – failure and you go into debt to pay for repairs.



Get into the missions and read the briefings to see which you fancy. There's anything from blowing up a bus to taking out an entire base



Whatever your target, there'll be a gauntlet of nasty enemy Mechs guarding it. Do you stand and fight or focus on the main target?



High targets can be taken out with guided missiles and you have jets that let you take to the high ground to get up close and personal

“Big Mechs, big guns and even bigger fights.”

WHAT WE THOUGHT...

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...

Gungriffon Blaze (PS2), *Krazy Kean* (PSone), *Mech Warrior 4* (PC)

MECHING A MEAL OF IT

Armoured Core 2 is a game with concealed depths. So well concealed that many will never discover them, having been put off by the apparently slow and clumsy Mech handling and seemingly impossible missions early on in the game. But those players who are put off this easily can go running back to their Golf games because this is one rollicking robo-comp, chock full of all your favourite robo-cliches – big Mechs, big guns and even bigger fights. Furthermore, *Armoured Core 2* throws a few new features into the mix to separate it from *Gungriffon Blaze* and the rest.

ARENA WITH A VIEW

After the brief training mission, you hit the game proper, with a chance to go straight into the missions – do this and you're dead. Worse than that, you'll be dead and in debt due to the cost of repairs. Trying to clear this debt is too much of a pain so you may as well restart. The key to success is a series of one-on-one battles with the other Mech pilots in a choice of arenas to earn the cash to build up your Mech. You can make more alterations than a soap opera cast, fiddling with every part of your machine – then, when you think you're tough enough, you can try the missions. We like.

GOES FOR THE THROAT

The whole structure of the game works well: the arenas teach you that just standing around and firing isn't such a good idea. The tricks you learn here serve you well in the missions as you have to make use of cover and learn how to manoeuvre at speed to avoid becoming a pile of scrap. While failure is annoyingly costly, on the plus side, these missions are where the really intense action awaits you and success is all the more satisfying. But if you like your action to be steady and predictable with time to catch your breath, you're in the wrong game here – this goes for the throat straight away.

NUTS AND FAULTS

AC2 is crammed full of new ideas and the missions offer plenty of challenge. Probably too much for some, as the learning curve is a tad steep and until you spend the hell of a lot of money on your Mech it handles like a pig, which could spoil your fun initially. But if you like your challenge long-term, then this could well do it for you.



PC
CD
ROM

COST: £29.99

OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: 1-16

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: LEB ELLIS

MECH WARRIOR 4: VENGEANCE

Are they taking the Metal Mickey?

In these days of high-tech weapons, wars are becoming too clean. Smart weapons fired from hundreds of miles away? Where's the fun in that? Wouldn't you rather get up close and personal to whoever's arse it is you're kicking. And if you're going to get close, wouldn't it be better to be in a towering Mech armed to the teeth with lasers and missiles – and just maybe a tin opener?

DIY: MECHING A MESS

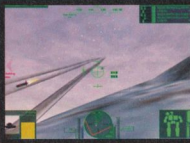
If putting together an MFI wardrobe is your idea of hell, then try your hand at making your very own Mech. It's bags more fun and you don't have to worry about missing pieces. Once he's up and running, take him out to play with the other Mechs to see if he can hang with the big boys.



Here's your new friend, treat him well, lead him nicely and he'll save your ass. Do you go for speed and low armour, or a hard but easy-to-hit Mech?



Shadowcat – small, fast but if hit they feel it. Not the Mech for newbies but if you face one online and a veteran is at the helm, it could be trouble.



Now he's asking for it – no armour and weapons that'd hardly scratch you. Let him have it with all three sets of weapons for total satisfaction.



Get too close to a missile tower and you'd better pray that one more shot will kill it or you'll take serious damage. Oh, and watch out for that Mech

ROBOTWARS

With three different grades of firepower and more weapons than your average American post office worker, you have more than enough to really trash your opponents. The lowest level of firepower are lasers, then low-grade and high grade projectiles, including earth-scorching missiles. Check these targets – they deserve to be leathersed!



Tanks can be nippy but they have no real armour and can't do much damage to you. If you can't hit them with lasers, one mighty stamp should squash the annoying little guys. You big old bully, you



Buildings are not likely to do you any damage so when you've had your wicked way with all the other nasty Mechs, why not take a breather and pick them off at your leisure. Total carnage guaranteed



Now try picking on someone your own size. This is where your skill as a pilot really comes in, taking out those other mighty Mechs while not taking too much damage to yourself in the process

JUST A DAY IN THE OFFICE

Rusted piles of twisted metal, scorched buildings and more scrap than you'd find in the Chelsea first team – that's the sign of a good day out in the field for you. So give your team-mates a shout, jump into your Mech and get ready for some action.



The briefings have a tendency to go on, so to summarise, go to your new point and kill absolutely everything that moves. If it doesn't move, make it



It may be fun but you don't have to get up close and personal – get a target in your sights and zoom in for the ultimate long-distance frag



You've taken a battering but all the Mechs are down, so clear up by trashing some buildings. Then let your salvage guys tread through the wreckage



Taking a bit of a pasting? Need some help? That's what your team-mates are for – hit F1 and give them orders that can make your life a lot easier

“It won't change the world but it will help you blow a few holes in it”

WHAT WE THOUGHT...

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...

Armoured Core (PS),
Gungption
Blaze (PS2)

FOURTH TIME LUCKY

You'd think that after three games based on the Battletech licence, all consisting of the same basic ingredients, that maybe this series would be running out of steam. But Microsoft have gone back to Mech Warrior's roots for the latest game and have actually managed to come up with something that is an improvement on what has gone before. Mech 4 is more focused on combat between huge Mechs than the previous games, with less emphasis on strategy. It's a good thing leaving all that strategy stuff to the sister series Mech Commander (and there's another one of those on the way too.)

CAPITAL CARNAGE

Despite the expanded campaign (30 missions instead of 20 in the last game) and the Instant Action option that lets you jump in anywhere, the basics of the game remain the same. Get in there, find something and trash it in spectacular fashion. Later in the game you get some team-mates to call in and give orders to, but most fun is finding that shiny new enemy Mech and firing as much into its face as you possibly can. Target the head to hurt it, the legs to disable it or the weapons to render it harmless. Hit the multiplayer game and this gets really vindictive as you find a weak opponent and really go to town.

ROBOT) THE BUILDER

The Campaign and Instant Action modes can get a bit samey to play after a while, so to add another level of interest you can enter the Mech Lab and design your own walking rustbucket: to try out against the game's metal creations. You get to pick your Mech's chassis, the armour and, most importantly, the weapons. Surprisingly, this is slightly more restricted than in the last game, but it's still a section worth toying with, especially if you're going to play online, where you get to try out your creations against real live opponents to see just how your Mech measures up.

RAISING HELL

Mech vets will probably find the campaign mode a little easy but the Instant Action mode allows for that five minute blast-fest. Depth comes in tinkering with Mech design, and there's enough to keep you hooked for a while. Linear but fun, especially for Mech virgins. Mech Warrior 4 won't change the world, but it will help you blow a few holes in it.



WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: LES ELLIS

Will it give *MSR* a run for its money?



COST: £29.99

OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: 1-2

VANISHING POINT

Releasing a racing game on Dreamcast right now is almost as blatantly stupid as stepping up to Lennox Lewis, fixing him with your most fearsome gear, and calling him a 'slack-jawed girly wuss'. With competition like *Metropolis Street Racer* out there, contenders have to be supremely confident they can punch their weight. *Vanishing Point* may be full of bravado and has got some pretty neat moves, but can it take on the mighty *MSR* and prove that it's The Daddy of the racers?



CRASHCOURSE

Like the classic racing games of old, there's as much fun to be had driving dirty as driving properly. By including regular traffic as well as your opponents, the developers have gone to great trouble to make sure there's always plenty of vehicles on the road. So it would be rude not to, er, interact with other vehicles in a violent way.



Racing in a big, tough old truck means that ramming people into walls, spinning them and ruining their chances is no problem at all



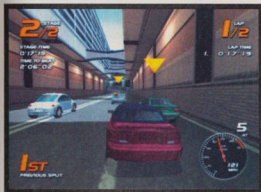
Hit them at the right angle from behind and you can see them off just as efficiently, even if you're in a slightly less robust vehicle



The other drivers will make mistakes so make sure you avoid piling into any smashes ahead of you - no matter how tempting it looks

WACKY RACES

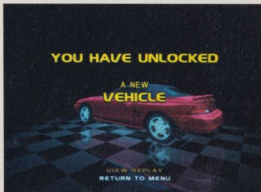
Metropolis Street Racer is all about sleek racing machines burning off the opposition, unlocking even meaner sleeker machines to thrash around awesome courses based on real locations – but it's not quite as straightforward as that when you get behind the wheel in Vanishing Point. You will get some sexy motors but check out the bangers in between...



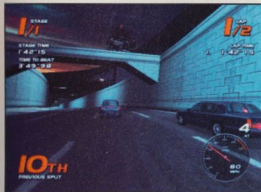
Don't laugh at the crap cars. Like it or not, you'll be in one soon



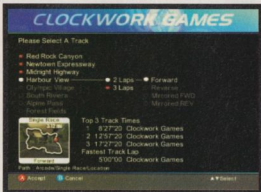
VP focuses more on recording fast times than crossing the line first



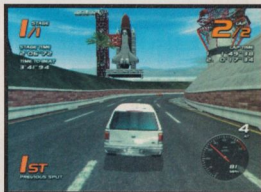
But get ahead of the pack and the rewards will speak for themselves



Hardware racers will go for the first-person mode every time



You can do all eight tracks in all directions – that's 32 tracks in all



Race past the sights: fairs, windmills, trains and, er, space shuttles

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

The Trick mode is almost as much fun as the game itself. It presents some awesome challenges and at the same time sneakily teaches you flawless driving techniques as you complete spectacular stunts and drifting feats. Precision driving is called for – you don't get to be a stunt-king without serious skills you know.



Balloon bursting – not usually in the driving test but useful for learning car handling at speed



Barrel Rolls – in first-person mode it's absolutely perfect for making irritating spectators feel sick



Twists 'n' Turns – push your high speed steering skills to their limits and learn a few new ones



Long Jump – be a four-wheeled Eddy Kidd. Hit the ramp at top speed to get a record jump distance

WHAT WE THOUGHT...

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...

Metropolis Street Racer (DC), Gran Turismo 2 (PS), Ridge Racer (NG4)

WHO'S THE DADDY?

Oh how badly we wanted this to be another dose of MSR, something that made you go "Wow!" as soon as you started to play. With the introduction of Kudos and all the other different modes, there was so much more to MSR than your average racer, and they'd have had to have made Vanishing Point a truly exceptional game to even get it on the same starting grid. Sadly, it isn't exceptional.

OOMPH UNDER THE BONNET

Vanishing Point does boast some cool features. It's a nice touch that there's normal traffic on the road as well as your opponents, so there are always new things to overtake. The trick challenges, which are almost as much fun as the game, also opens up some alternative entertainment. But, despite all this and the promise that the physics are the most realistic you'll see – this just isn't as much fun as MSR.

CAR WARS

It does have a lot of courses, although you will race over the same ones repeatedly as you progress through the challenges. There are 80 'openables' in the game – either new cars, tracks and the like – so there's always something new to find. It's fun for a while but gets a flat tyre before too long. Yeah, it has a two-player mode, but that's not as much fun as MSR either and the online option

just leads to submitting times and seeing how well you do against other players – not what we want to see in online gaming. This has potential, but MSR is still way out in front.



EMPEROR'S NEW GROOVE



£29.99 OUT NOW

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Step into the hooves of new Disney hero Kuzco, a once-spilled ruler now turned into a llama by an evil sorceress type. It features wickedly varied platform puzzling all the way and captures the spirit of the movie perfectly with some hilarious moments. Hoof it around the levels, destroying baddies, solving simple problems and collecting all manner of treats.

WORTH PLAYING?

Younger players will adore *New Groove* and older fans of the movie will enjoy the platforming on offer. There's nothing new here but it's all done with heaps of flair and remains a hugely enjoyable - if mostly predictable - romp. Groovy indeed.

★★★

PC CD ROM WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SNOOKER



£29.99 OUT NOW

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

If the thought of Jim Davidson 'Snookering you tonight', or 'Dias & Dave going 'Snooker Loozy' does it for you, then welcome to heaven - this is the official PC snooker game, featuring all the real players in there just waiting to thrash you as you struggle to understand spin and position. Play in tournaments, practice matches or go online to take the ultimate snooker challenge.

WORTH PLAYING?

It's very easy to get to grips with and to control. Even Pat, who has no control over his cue, managed to pull off some impressive breaks. Almost looked like he meant to do some of them as well. Great presentation makes this a must for snooker fans.

★★★

BURSTRICK WAKEBOARDING



£24.99 OUT NOW

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Based on wake boarding, a ludicrous 'extreme' sport that's a kind of cross between water-skiing and surfing, with you performing jumps and tricks. There's a load of phat surfer dudes and bodacious boards to choose from, and two main game modes: a race around a circuit where you amass points through stunts, and a trick mode, where you perform combos to pull-off swanky tricks.

WORTH PLAYING?

Floor graphics, dreadful music and the gameplay is mundane. Steer towards ramp, jump, avoid obstacles. That just about covers a race, and the trick section is a poor man's rhythm-action. Fun for a short while, but not worth returning to.

★★

PS2 CHAMPIONSHIP MOTOCROSS 2001



£29.99 OUT NOW

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

A gaming series that has managed to avoid troubling the charts gets another instalment. Dull and uninspiring racer that has the usual plethora of one- and two-player modes as well as practice tracks. We've seen it all before and it didn't impress us then either: it may be pretty fast and look alright, but playing it is as boring as hell. There's little need for the brakes and pointless tricks.

WORTH PLAYING?

If you are a totally obsessed motocross fan then maybe you can find some fun in this - but real gamers will be able to get their two-wheeled racing thrills elsewhere. So move along please, there's nothing to see here.

★★

PC CD ROM THEME PARK INC



£24.99 OUT NOW

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Not really a sequel to the last *Theme Park* game, but a slightly different take on the gameplay. Instead of just building parks you are now helping to run a business, trying to achieve business goals and manage your way up the corporate ladder. Basically, it's *Theme Park* with added strategy. All the different parks present you with different challenges and objectives to tie in with your business plan.

WORTH PLAYING?

If you're bored with just plopping rides down and watching people go on them, then this presents you with a fresh set of challenges. However, it's doubtful whether the new business model will make it different enough to buy if you already own the previous game.

★★★

PC CD ROM BLAIR WITCH 3



£19.99 OUT NOW

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Third instalment of the series based on the most overhyped pile of trash horror movie ever made. And guess what? The games haven't been much cop either: The connection between the game and the movie is tenuous at best and, unfortunately, it uses the aging *Nocturne* engine to bring you its adventure-filled world, with you solving puzzles and experiencing the so-called horror.

WORTH PLAYING?

God no. Why would you want to do that. It's short, not frightening and unless you have the turbo nutter PC from hell, there's no point even trying to play it. It's trying to be too clever for its own good and ends up being a bunch of pretentious arse. Avoid.

★



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COST: £24.99**OUT: NOW**MULTIPLAYER: **1-2 (LINK-UP)****MARIO TENNIS****WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW**

Game Boy gets a shrunk-to-fit conversion of the excellent N64 title of the same name. Choose from your favourite Nintendo characters – each have their own strengths and weaknesses – or choose an unknown and train

them into a champion in Story mode. What's more, it's Transfer Pak compatible, so you can play your champ N64-style.

NEW BALLS, PLEASE

Along with standard one-off games, each character has a sub-game to master. Moreover, there are plenty of players, courts and mini-games to unlock. Story mode is an excellent addition – you wander around a town chatting to people who impart their tennis wisdom, and take part in various challenges.

WORTH PLAYING?

What stops this game from being a classic is the control system. Having to tap combinations of buttons can be awkward, and while there are loads of moves to perform, they just don't feel as intuitive as something like *Virtua Tennis*. However, this is a great achievement on the GB, and there's more than enough here to keep you playing for months.


COST: £24.99**OUT: NOW**MULTIPLAYER: **1-2 LINK UP****FLINTSTONES
BURGER TIME IN
BEDROCK****WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW**

Look what they've done to *The Flintstones!* *Burger Time* is just crushingly, upsettingly, heartbreakingly awful.

BRAINGLESS BURGER

Fred has to build bronto burgers in what must be the slowest fast-food joint in the world. Each screen features an old school layout of ladders and platforms. Badly-drawn baddies creep around, hunting Fred with all the intelligence of a Pac-Man ghost. Fred can defend himself only a limited number of times, and there's nothing as annoying as running out of attack power when swamped by meanies. You build the actual burgers by walking over the various layers, making them fall to the level below.

WORTH PLAYING?

If you can be arsed to avoid or attack all of the baddies and trudge across the levels building burgers, you'll eventually be whisked off to the next screen for more of exactly the same. There are power-ups and collectibles but they're either too far away or so ineffective that they're not worth the effort. *Burger Time?* Burger off.



SMASH HITS

WORDS AND SCREENSHOTS: LEE SKITTELL AND JOHNNY MINKLEY

We play through the biggest new handheld releases to sort the blinding aces from the foul services





COST: £24.99
OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: NO

BLADE

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Retro gamers, consider this: imagine the best bits of classic shooter *Operation Wolf*, the pugilistic pleasures of scrolling beat 'em up *Streets of Rage*, and the hardcore one-on-one

fights of *Street Fighter II*, all rolled into one adult-oriented action adventure based on the bloodiest, vampire movie ever: *Interested? Meet Blade*, a new breed of GB action hero.

ADULT-ORIENTED? REALLY? Well, sort of. The graphics are cartoony for sure, but they're more graphic novel than Tom and Jerry. There's plenty of blood spattering around the levels and *Blade's* finishing move where he rips out his opponent's heart is grisly. Varied gameplay styles make sure you're kept busy and the story chugs along nicely.

WORTH PLAYING?

Blade is cool and the bloodshed is a welcome change from all the syp-drizzled adventures out there. The main drawback is the difficulty setting and frustrating level restarts. It isn't massive but there are some tough fights, especially in the *Street Fighter*-style boss battles. If you have the patience though, you'll enjoy *Blade* heaps.

computer and video
Games
★ ★ ★



COST: £24.99
OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: NO

XENA WARRIOR PRINCESS

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW She's larger than life, but now you can have the lovely Lucy Lawless, aka Xena, in the palm of your hand. You start off with

nothing but your ample bosom for protection but soon collect swords, gems and special items as you trek around the sparse, uninteresting maps.

XENA YUCKS

Xena must be the ugliest videogame character ever. She looks lovely on the tite screen, but in the game she's a big blue biffer. She moves swiftly around the screens but the controls are sloppy - especially the clumsy sword swipes. And get this: if Xena is such a Warrior Princess, then why does she take damage from cute little bunnies in the forest areas of the game? Gaaaah!

WORTH PLAYING?

Whether you see the game as an RPG or an action adventure, it's unquestionably weak. You can see the seeds of good ideas, but they've been left to choke in action/RPG mediocrity. If you want RPG action, get *Zelda*. If you want action, get *Martian Revenge!* and *Martian Alert!* instead.

computer and video
Games
★ ★



COST: £24.99
OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: NO

HELLO KITTY'S CUBE FRENZY

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Hello Kitty's cube-related antics have been a massive hit in Japan and we enjoyed the PlayStation version first issue. Now it's time for GBC owners to get some hot kitty action. You

control both the falling blocks and your little Kitty in an attempt to gobble all the sweet treats dotted about the level. Odd, but good.

JELLICLE CATS

Hello Kitty was great on PS due to its natural control system and the two-player game. The handheld version boasts neither of these and it loses a lot of its charm. To nudge Kitty in the right direction you have to hold Select, and this can get awkward in tight spots. You'll find yourself cursing your pussy for getting in the way of your strategic block placing.

WORTH PLAYING?

Hello Kitty's is a good puzzler but won't be to everyone's taste. It's very fiddly to get to grips with and the small graphics won't endear it to uncommitted players either. It's dead cute, but the sweet looks hide a challenging beast beneath, so it's likely that the game's younger target audience will struggle. This Kitty's got a touch of the mangle.

computer and video
Games
★ ★ ★



COST: £24.99
OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: **NO**

MERLIN

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

An angry, vengeful dragon has nabbed the spirits of the world and it's Merlin's task to get medieval on his scaly butt and rescue them. It's yet more handheld platform action, but this

time there really is an edge to it. The game's split into different realms such as Earth and Air, and in them there are two main styles of play: superb scrolling sections and brilliant shoot 'em up areas.

YOU'LL BE SPELL-BOUND
For once in a platform game, you can't kill baddies by leaping on their heads. Instead, you have to use your magic spells to blast away at the impish enemies. You can shoot in any direction and collect power-up spells. Best of all, the more mearnies you trounce, the more spell power you have.

WORTH PLAYING?

There's just one annoying quirk to stink the sheets - you can't move in the air while falling. Not a major problem though, and while it may not look as good as some recent platformers, *Merlin* is a joy to play. The variation in challenges, neat little touches and awesome boss battles will make you smile with joy. A medieval marvel.



COST: £24.99
OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: **NO**

WALT DISNEY WORLD QUEST MAGICAL RACING TOUR

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW
Handheld, *Magical Racing Tour* is a corker, and loads more fun than the console versions. Help

Chip, Dale and other B-list Disney stars in a race to find the parts of the broken fireworks machine in time for the pagant tonight.

IT'S A SMALL WORLD

Ignore the diffy story and you've got a decent racer. The races are viewed from side-on, and the tracks are based on areas and rides found in the real-life Disney World. Only a few tracks are available initially, but coming in first unlocks more attractions, bonus rounds and more racers. The Disney tunes are especially good.

WORTH PLAYING?

There are absolutely loads of cartoon racers on GBC and this Disney offering is one of the better titles. The side-on view allows for super-swift racing and there are power-ups, obstacles and shortcuts all over the place. The game offers loads of replay value too, with plenty to collect and hidden features tucked away. *Magical Racing Tour* is cute, fast and addictive - check it out.



COST: £24.99
OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: **NO**

BUZZ LIGHTYEAR OF STAR COMMAND

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The Game Boy game of the hit TV cartoon show follows a

similar pattern to the PS and DC versions and sees Buzz racing, hover-boarding and blasting his way across the galaxy. It's kind of a cross between a platformer and a top-down racer and there's loads of Buzz humour and Disney charm.

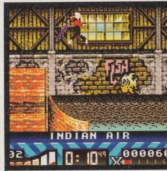
BUZZ UNJUNCT

You have to chase each level's guardian in their getaway point, blasting minions and collecting coins to exchange for power-ups.

The action's slower than the console versions but it's still great fun. The level replays and time challenges are all in here too, making for a big game.

WORTH PLAYING?

If you're a fan of Buzz and his new cartoon adventures, *Star Command* will send you sky-high as everything that makes the cartoon show so cool is recreated on your little screen. Players looking for something that's more than just another platformer should also have a gander at this.



COST: £24.99
OUT: NOW

MULTIPLAYER: **NO**

ROAD CHAMPS BSX STUNT BIKING

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

All the fun of the BMX stunt park, without the grazed knees and bruised shins. *Road Champs* does for handbike biking what Tony Hawk's did for skateboarding and

is a real stunner. Gorgeous visuals, an extensive menu of stunts, and a massive championship make for a fantastic handbike game.

BIKE LIKE A PRO

Before you start racing against pro-bikers, you have to take part in gruelling training sessions where you'll learn fifty-plus tricks and the best ways to tackle the obstacles that will be thrown at you. The tricks themselves are the key to scoring big points and become increasingly difficult the more you learn - it feels mint though when you pull off an impressive combo.

WORTH PLAYING?

Like Tony Hawk's, *Road Champs* gets better the more you play, and opening up new areas and learning new skills is always satisfying. The game is sometimes tricky, but you never feel the challenges are unfair and you'll be forever pushing yourself to get further and score higher. A great game to play both in quick hits and for extended sessions. Ace.



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COST: £29.99

OUT: FEB

MULTIPLAYER: 1-4

ISS PRO EVOLUTION 2

The closest to real-life footy a PlayStation can manage

WORDS & SCREENSHOTS: EILEÉ

There is a football game out there that isn't FIFA. It's a no-brainer to buy the EA game - all your favourite players are in it and there's someone's famous mug staring at you from the box. As far as sports brands go, the FIFA name just screams 'football'. But ask yourself this: are you going to buy *Changing Rooms: The Ninja Missions* over *Metal Gear 2* if they get Jennifer Lopez to pose half-naked on the box? Er, of course not. So it's high time you re-evaluated your position on the greatest soccer series ever created, *International Superstar Soccer*.

WHAT'S IT GOT?

For the first time ever, an ISS game has got all the real players in it. It's international teams only for the most part, and we'll talk about club teams later on. It has also got the most realistic gameplay ever: soft goals and fancy tricks are practically non-existent. Skill on its own doesn't guarantee success: you also need good tactical awareness.



Unmistakably Zidane. Even with the camera zoomed right out for the first view of the pitch



Animation is truly awesome throughout. Players always connect with the ball. Totally convincingly



Computer AI, especially the goalkeeping, takes all your finely-honed abilities to get the better of



Throwing an extra midfielder in can bring a game your way. tactically, ISS is beyond reproach

NEW AND IMPROVED?

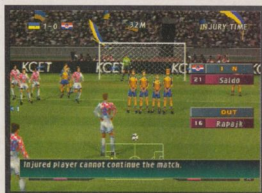
ISS Evo 2 looks disappointingly like the last game. The *ISS* hardcore should still snap it up. The gameplay feels slightly different, and it's a tougher game even for superstar players. The jink that let you dance round advancing keepers at will? Almost impossible to pull off. Some will find it infuriatingly tough to score.



Keeper bring you down? Then he's off. *ISS* plays by FIFA's rules 100%. Your opponent can bring in his reserve stopper, but play against ten men in *ISS* and you can really tell the difference.



Players volley the ball much more in the new game, but true to real-life they don't fly in all that often. Overhead kicks are especially tricky to keep down, so expect to hit Row Z if you attempt one.



Get seriously hammered in a tackle, and the player has to hobble off. You're best advised not to use this fact tactically though: if the ref sees you lunge in viciously, chances are you'll get a red card.

"ISS Evo 2 lets you experience some of the most compulsive, competitive multiplayer action a console can offer"

JOIN THE CLUB

If you want to play club football in *ISS Evo 2*, head for Master League mode. You start with a team of nobodies and try and mould them into European champions, each win racking up points to buy new players. Problem is, it's woefully imbalanced. Every new player you sign makes winning easier, and the game never compensates back to offer more of a challenge.



Man United, Arsenal, Liverpool, Chelsea, Leeds and West Ham are the English teams featured. Sadly for Bradford fans, the Bantams miss out.



Initially you're outclassed by the opposition. Tactical nous will help you seek out the odd win. Playing a 4-4-2 formation shores up the defence.



Then you buy a few quick players, and the wins come even more frequently. Pace is the most crucial attribute for Master League success.

Rank	Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
1	Manchester United	10	6	2	2	18	10	8	18
2	Manchester City	10	5	3	2	15	11	4	16
3	Chelsea	10	5	2	3	14	11	3	15
4	Liverpool	10	4	3	3	12	10	2	14
5	Manchester United	10	3	4	3	11	11	0	12
6	Manchester City	10	3	3	4	10	12	-2	10
7	Chelsea	10	2	4	4	11	14	-3	9
8	Liverpool	10	2	3	5	10	14	-4	8
9	Manchester United	10	1	4	5	10	15	-5	6
10	Manchester City	10	1	2	7	10	18	-8	4
11	Chelsea	10	1	1	8	10	19	-9	3
12	Liverpool	10	0	2	8	10	19	-9	2
13	Manchester United	10	0	1	9	10	20	-10	1
14	Manchester City	10	0	0	10	10	21	-11	0

Get to the top division, and the points you win are doubled. Building a Euro dream team is then a breeze, and you just can't help but keep on winning.

WHAT WE THOUGHT...

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NOT FOR THE FAINT HEARTED

In many respects, *ISS Evo 2* is as hardcore as any *Street Fighter*-style game. Pick it up for the first time and the computer teams will hammer you. A skilled friend will annihilate you, but get to his level and you'll experience some of the most compulsive, competitive versus action a games console can offer. The downside? You need to be a football fan to feel these effects most strongly.

TEAM UP

If you play footy games with your mates, this title will last you right up until the next *ISS* game appears.

with no let-up in intensity. One-on-one, it can rival chess for tactical intensity, and playing as team-mates feels like real football. Carving open the computer's defence by exchanging passes with your mates makes the goals feel even more satisfying. Four mates on one team just must be experienced. You can peel off to the wing, take a pass from a mate, then tell them exactly where you're going to play it, so they'll be in place to receive it. When you score, it's brilliant. And if your mate misses you can pause the game and give him some verbal. We do it all the time.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

ISS is one of a rare breed of games that you never feel satisfied that you're good enough at. There's always room for improvement, and you'll even find yourself back on the training pitch from time to time trying new things. Few games can offer this kind of replay value over a long period of time.

ISS EVOLUTION 1.5?

Some players will be disappointed at this update, because it's not obviously better than the last game. We'd really have loved selectable club teams on this version, but that's the only downer really. *Evo 1*

plays a slightly more open game and is easier to score in. *Evo 2* is more bitterly contested and you have to earn every single goal. We prefer it for the subtle animation and rule tweaks that make it even more like footy, but if cash is tight, the older version will still take you to digital football's promised land.



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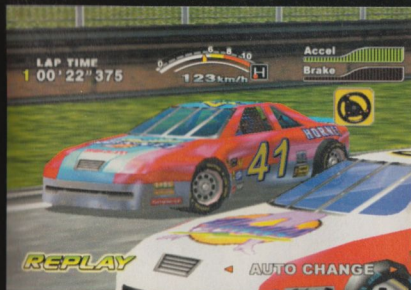
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