

G NEW AGE GAMING

S O U T H A F R I C A

SPECIAL BIRTHDAY EDITION

SOUTH AFRICA'S OWN PC AND PLAYSTATION GAMING MAGAZINE

CIVILIZATION
CALL TO POWER

VS

SID MEIER'S
ALPHA CENTAURI

DAIKATANA

TOP SECRET
Playstation 2
Uncovered

FEATURE
Pentium 3
Dissected

Unreal
TOURNAMENT
Exposed

TACTICAL ESPIONAGE ACTION
METAL GEAR
SOLID

AWESOME
Review

RR
RIDGE RACER TYPE 4
SA First Look

NB!
IF COVER CD IS MISSING
ASK YOUR NEWSAGENT

South Africa R18.95



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ED'S Note

WE'VE ONLY JUST BEGUN...

So, this is the big birthday issue. The real question is what do our readers expect from me on this auspicious occasion? Do I use half the space wishing the magazine a happy birthday and thanking everyone for their continued support or do I come up with some insightful editorial about the gaming community? So many questions so much pressure and not even one single good idea yet. On the other hand, by using a rather clever distraction and idle banter technique, I've managed to eat up over a hundred words pondering my problem, which I'm now making yours. That's why they call me the Editor.

A thought struck me the other day - does anyone realise just how much effort goes into making a game? We often get letters from naive but incredibly ambitious readers asking how to go about making a computer game. Our answer is always the same, "Spend twenty days drawing trees, and then we'll talk". When I was a teenager, it was altogether possible to write an entire game by yourself. With a few litres of Coke, a jumbo-sized packet of crisps and a Commodore 64, anything was possible (it would only take a few weeks during school holidays to do the whole thing and then you'd be famous!). The only problem with this scenario was follow-through or the lack thereof. My friend and I would sit and plan the game while at school, anticipating the arrival of the holidays. On day one I'd draw a few graphics while he threw a few sprites around the screen, on day two I'd fiddle with a few sound effects while he successfully coded the collision detection routines. Day three saw us playing a few other games for inspiration and finally day four saw us completely engrossed in Wizardry and Paradroid - our great game would have to wait until the next holiday. If only we had just kept at it, it's all about dedication, a quality we had very little of back then. Today the picture is a little different and often gamers complain that it takes too long to make games and no-one can understand why release dates are getting pushed back so far all the time. Perhaps you should consider that it takes a graphic artist around twenty days to draw all the different trees required for Baldur's Gate. Twenty days! Multiply this by everything in the game and you'll quickly see where the years disappear to. So the moral of the story is this - if you want to make a computer game spend twenty days drawing trees and then see if it still seems so glamorous a task.

JUST ONE CANDLE

Well it is our first birthday issue but we're all too tired to do any major celebrating of any kind. Playing games is such hard work you know and then there's the buying of expensive new hardware and surfing the Internet all day and I won't even go into playing deathmatch games for hours on end. But that's not your problem now is it? Just know that we all have a serious case of keyboard finger and mouse forearm for our efforts. If you glance around the magazine, you will probably notice that we've changed a few things. It's an official refresh of the magazine. If you carefully open the issue, turn it upside down and flick through the pages a few things will probably fall out. The most important item in the heap on the floor, next to the cover CD and under the poster is our survey - don't worry we're not getting all corporate and official on you. Take a few minutes to fill it in and send it back to us, it's sole purpose is to find out what you want to see in NAG, so just do it, and make us happy - it's our birthday after all.

Michael James, Editor

PS In case you're wondering we didn't forget to get a birthday present for our one year old baby - that new Pentium III was a good choice. Happy birthday NAG!

NEW AGE GAMING

SOUTH AFRICA'S OWN GAMING MAGAZINE

AN
UNREAL DESIGN FX
INITIATIVE

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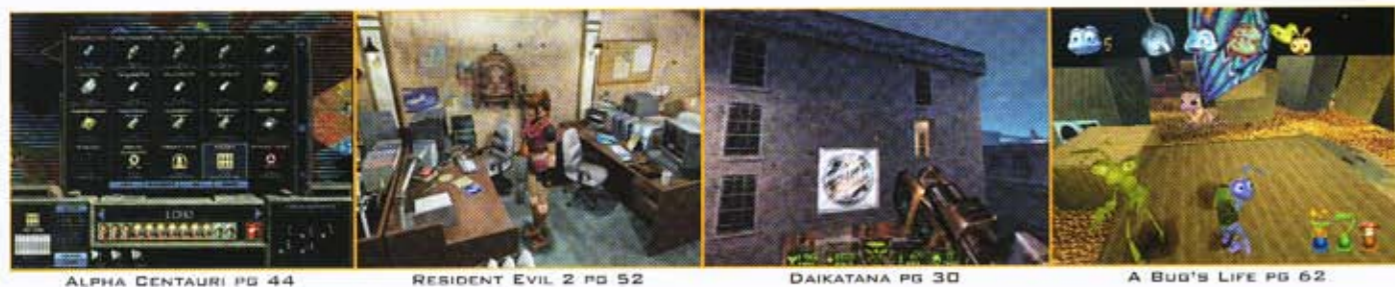
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TACTICAL ESPIONAGE ACTION METAL GEAR SOLID



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COVER CD 5 - VOLUME 2 - ISSUE 1

NEW AGE GAMING

SOUTH AFRICA

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DEMOS
 Half-Life Uplink
 Imperialism 2
 Lander • Machines
 Redline • Roadwars
 Rollcage
 Rollercoaster Tycoon
 Slave Zero
 Superbike • Turok 2
 Uprising 2
 Virtual Deep Sea
 Fishing
 Virtual Tennis
 Worms Armageddon

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NAG ALERT: STOP THE PRESS

Unfortunately the Quake 3 Movie has to be played manually due its compression format. It is located in the \Movies directory and named 'Quake 3.mov' which is a Apple Quicktime format. Double click the file to run it.

Unfortunately the X-Wing Alliance Movie has to be played manually due its compression format. It is located in the \Movies directory and named 'Xwing Alliance.mov' which is a Apple Quicktime format. Double click the file to run it.

NAG COVER CD

DEMOS

- Half-Life Uplink
- Imperialism 2
- Lander
- Machines
- Redline
- Roadwars
- Rollcage
- Rollercoaster Tycoon
- Slave Zero
- Superbike: World Championship
- Turok 2
- Uprising 2
- Virtual Deep Sea Fishing
- Virtual Tennis
- Worms Armageddon

CHEATS

New PC Cheats added every month.

MOVIES

- Star Wars Trailer - THE FORCE IS STRONG AT NAG
- Quake 3 Movie - BURGHTOUR VIDEOS
- X-Wing Alliance - BACK WITH A VENGEANCE.

PATCHES

- Baldur's Gate (Official Patch)
- Creatures 2 v1.0.38
- Dark Vengeance v1.1
- Quake 2 IAS (Sound Enhancement)
- Moto Racer 2 v1.34
- Red Baron 3D v1.0.7.8
- Sin v1.03
- Test Drive 5 v1.1
- Thief v1.33
- Tribes v1.03
- Viper Racing v1.1

ADD-ONS

- Worms Armageddon Theme
- SimCity 3000 Add-On Plug-In
- SimCity 3000 Landmark Pack 1
- SimCity 3000 Landmark Pack 2

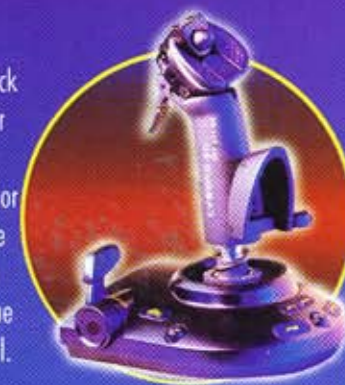
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NAG's WEBSITE OF THE MONTH

<http://www.diabloii.net/>

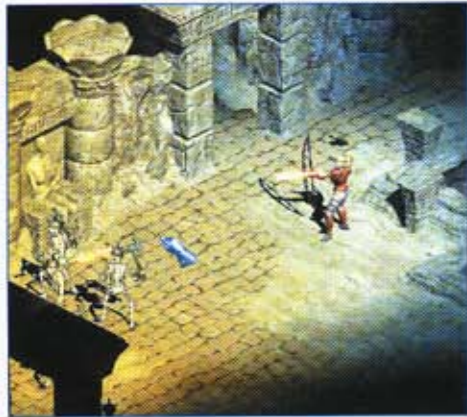
thing then that someone out there has had the foresight to do just that. Stop interviewing professional Internet surfers and point your browser to <http://www.diabloii.net/> - it has everything. Diablo caused quite a ripple in the pond when it was released, it had everything you could ever want from a game and somehow managed to combine action and RPG into one unforgettable experience. Many people said it leaned a little too heavily

over to the action side and downplayed the role playing aspect. The interesting thing is that these same people also played the game to death. With the 'imminent' arrival of Diablo 2, a multitude of official and unofficial sites have appeared to sate the public's ever-growing appetite for information. You'd be surprised just how much information is presented on this site, considering that the game is still months away from its release date. They even go as

far as analysing an interview with one of the key developers of the game and have detailed information on what date certain screenshots were released (obsessive is a mild term). The site has a nice easy to understand interface and covers every aspect of the game in loving detail. There is more than enough information here to keep you busy until the final game is released. The good news is that Diablo 2 is on it's way!



To keep up with all the information generated every day on the Internet about Diablo 2, you would need about five people working around the clock just to keep track of it all. So, it's a good



NAG's Favourite Websites of the Month

http://www.digitalanvil.com	http://www.lonstorm.com	http://www.f18.org	http://www.wizards.com	http://www.namco.com
The Wing Commander movie is coming soon and this site is the place to go to find out more. Digital Anvil also have a few other interesting products in the pipeline including Conquest: Frontier Wars, an interesting looking game with galactic domination as its focal point. Starlancer is a first person space combat game that takes its inspiration from the Wing Commander series and finally Loose Cannon sees you playing a bounty hunter pursuing criminals across the country. Chris Roberts, the creator of the hugely successful Wing Commander games is behind the company. Digital Anvil are also involved in creating some of the special effects used in the movie. There is plenty of insider information about the movie and details on how they managed to do some of the things you'll be seeing when it's released. Microsoft also has a stake in the company and will be publishing their upcoming games.	Now this is a web site. Animations and sound effects abound when browsing through this site. Lon Storm is the Development Company behind Daikatana, probably the most anticipated first person shooter this year. John Romero is the main man behind this title and is also responsible for a lot of what you saw in Doom and Quake. John Romero's game designing history has created so much anticipation for Daikatana that the Internet struggled to keep up with the demand when the first Daikatana demo was released last month. Besides Daikatana, the team are working on a few other projects that look rather tasty. The whole experience feels like you are clicking through the options screen of a game and not a web site. As usual the site has all the standard information, screen shots, news and many interesting buttons that light up to keep most people happy. Do go have a look - it oozes class.	Act 2 Scene 5. Distraught nurse to Doctor Phil, "Doctor, isn't there anything you can do?" Shaking his head the doctor replies, "No, I'm afraid not, he doesn't know what Final Fantasy is. I can't help him." Nurse pulls the plug out of the wall, the TV goes dead and all is quiet. Curtain down. Applause. Well, if you have a PlayStation you should know what Final Fantasy VIII is all about, only those of you with computers can be forgiven for going - what, hey? The game has already been released in Japan and will only be making it to our shores later this year. Don't worry though, this web site has all the information you will ever need to know about the game, screen shots, movies, story and a forum where people can discuss the game in depth even though they've never play it. The site is updated frequently and is an excellent companion to count the months down until the game is released.	People who like playing computer games also like playing card games (not everyone mind you, but most), so if you're looking at this web site thinking what has this got to do with games, then just move along to the next column. Magic: The Gathering has an impressive following with literally billions of cards in circulation around the world. If the words Forgotten Realms or Dungeons & Dragons spark any kind of interest in the backwaters of your mind, then make sure you don't miss this site on your next cyber tour. Don't feel left out just because you live in South Africa though, if this kind of thing tickles your fancy then there is a local web site that you should investigate. The Games Emporium Online can be found at http://www.geon.co.za and is full of local news and information about upcoming events. Now don't say we never tell you stuff.	If anyone tells you that the Internet is just an endless supply of boring static screens then send them to www.namco.com . This site just recently won an award for their Ridge Racer Type 4 page (although the word page doesn't do it any justice) which really comes alive on your screen. Namco has been making games for a very long time and titles such as Tekken 3 are a showcase for this pedigree. One of the most eagerly anticipated titles of the year must be Ridge Racer Type 4 and you can find out all about the game on the site. All the usual kind of Internet site stuff is there like news and support information. One area of interest on the site is their arcade section. If you thought the arcade machine was dead, think again - it's alive and well with new releases happening all the time. Give it a look, it won't hurt a bit.

WHERE & WHEN?

NEW AGE GAMING PRICE COMPARISON

Game Description	Incredible Connection	CNA Interactive	Toys R Us	Reggies
San Francisco Rush (PSX)	R399.00	R459.00	R409.99	R409.99
Devils Dice (PSX)	R399.00	R399.00	R429.99	R429.99
Premier Manager 99 (PSX)	R409.00	R459.00	R409.99	R409.99
Tiger Woods 99 (PSX)	R329.00	R329.00	R399.99	R399.99
Delta Force (PC)	R279.00	R279.00	None	None
Alpha Centauri (PC)	R299.00	R299.00	None	None
Settlers 3 (PC)	R329.00	R309.00	None	None
Superbike World Champs (PC)	R269.00	R269.00	None	None

PC RELEASE LIST

APRIL
 Baldur's Gate: Tales of the Sword - INTERPLAY
 F-16 Aggressor - VIRGIN INTERACTIVE
 Sports Car GT - ELECTRONIC ARTS
 Infinite World: Mordor 2 - INTERPLAY
 Links Extreme - ACCESS
 Magic & Mayhem - BETHESDA
 MechWarrior 3 - MICROPROSE
 Shattered Light - SIMON & SCHUSTER
 Warcraft Pro - HAVAS
 Jagged Alliance 2 - SIRTECH
 Might & Magic VII - 3DO
 Heavy Gear 2 - ACTIVISION
 Commandos: Beyond the Call of Duty - EIDOS INTERACTIVE
 Aliens vs. Predator - FOX INTERACTIVE
 Duel: The Mage Wars - VIRGIN INTERACTIVE
 MS Baseball - MICROSOFT
 Railroad Tycoon II: The Second Century - GOD GAMES

MAY

Road Wars - INTENSE ENTERTAINMENT
 PGA Championship Golf - SIERRA SPORTS
 Shadow Company - INTERACTIVE MAGIC
 Fleet Command - ELECTRONIC ARTS
 Braveheart - EIDOS INTERACTIVE
 Revenant - EIDOS INTERACTIVE
 Tomb Raider 2 Gold - EIDOS INTERACTIVE
 Descent 3 - INTERPLAY

PSX RELEASE LIST

APRIL
 Shanghai - ELECTRO SOURCE
 T.R.A.G. - ELECTRO SOURCE
 Monster Seed - ELECTRO SOURCE
 Warzone 2100 - EIDOS INTERACTIVE
 Bomberman Fantasy Race - ALTUS
 Bust a Move 99 - ACCLAIM
 High Heat Baseball 2000 - 3DO
 3Xtreme - SONY ENTERTAINMENT
 Clock Tower 2 - ASCII

MAY

Castrol Honda Superbike Racing - ELECTRONIC ARTS
 Street Fighter Alpha 3 - CAPCOM
 Vermin - EIDOS INTERACTIVE
 All Star Tennis 99 - UBI SOFT
 Dreams - INFOGRAMES
 LeMans Racing - INFOGRAMES
 American Deer Hunter - INTERPLAY
 Atlantis - INFOGRAMES
 Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver - EIDOS INTERACTIVE
 WWF: Attitude - ACCLAIM

10 TOP GAMES

E-Mail: topten@nag.co.za
 Postal: **TOP TEN**
 PO Box 2749
 Alberton, 1449

NAME
1. Baldur's Gate
2. Alpha Centauri
3. Half-Life
4. Heroes of Might & Magic 3
5. Starcraft
6. Might & Magic 6
7. Railroad Tycoon 2
8. Thief
9. Fallout 2
10. Unreal

NAME
1. Metal Gear Solid
2. Crash Bandicoot 3
3. Xenogears
4. Final Fantasy 7
5. Syphon
6. Final Fantasy 8
7. Resident Evil 2
8. Actua Tennis
9. Tekken 3
10. Gran Theft Auto

LM = Position Last Month TM = Total Months on chart RET = Re-entry

NAME	LM	TM
1. Starcraft	1	2
2. Baldur's Gate	2	2
3. Age of Empires Pack	5	2
4. Caesar 3	9	2
5. FIFA 99	6	2
6. Quest for Glory 5	3	2
7. Half-Life	10	2
8. Combat Flight Sim	7	1
9. Tomb Raider 3	4	2
10. Biggest Names, Best Games	8	1

NAME	LM	TM
1. FIFA 99	1	2
2. Tomb Raider 3	3	4
3. Tekken 3	6	2
4. Gran Turismo	4	4
5. Crash Bandicoot 3	5	2
6. Brian Lara Cricket	2	2
7. Small Soldiers	10	2
8. F1 98	new	new
9. Spyre the Dragon	7	2
10. TOCA 2 Touring Car	8	2

JANUARY/FEBRUARY

ISSUE COMPETITION WINNERS

10 Lucky entrants into our January/February issue of New Age Gaming Competition each won themselves a copy of the very popular RPG title Baldur's Gate courtesy of Electronic Arts Africa.

The winners were as follows:

Mr. J. Oosthuizen (Vryheid)
Wesley Julyan (Mtwalume)
Thys van Zyl (Parys)
Jerome Lythan (Verulam)
Dino Kiratzidis (Phalaborwa)
Willem Grobler (Pretoria)
Craig Manser (Port Elizabeth)
Roger Alborough (Durban)
Justin Rompelman (Nelspruit)
Salmo de Kock (Jeffreys Baai)

Congratulations to the winners and keep those entries coming and remember to include your contact details in your entry if you want to stand a chance to win some of the fantastic prizes sponsored by local distributors monthly.

ELECTRONIC ARTS AFRICA

WEBSITE CORRECTION

In the January/February issue of New Age Gaming we stated incorrectly that Oracle were the designers of Electronics Arts Africa's website. We apologise for the oversight and the correct company that developed the site is I*ganic Studios, <http://www.iganic.com>.

If you haven't checked out the Electronic Arts Africa website yet, head over to <http://www.ea.co.za> to see the array of current and upcoming titles from Electronic Arts. Watch out for the flying characters that appear over the web pages from time to time, they are truly amazing.



DIRECTX 7 COMING SOON

Microsoft's DirectX 7 is scheduled to make its debut in July this year and it promises some more enhancements for the developers to take advantage of. There are a few key enhancements and additions scheduled for the API, the most important would be hardware-accelerated support for transformation and lighting, which is supported by the majority of current 3D accelerators. This will free up the load on the CPU and make it available for more important tasks such as the AI or more process intensive special effects.

Some other new features include a new Pan3D algorithm for 3D sound as well as a new USB interface model, 1024 x 768 might also become the standard resolution for games this year and therefore DirectX 7 will support predictive texture loads and offer a sub-level texture cache manager. There was however no mention of AGP 4X support in this context.

LARA CROFT MOVIE ANIMATED?

Rumours recently surfaced regarding the Tomb Raider movie that is scheduled for production some time soon. The rumours stated that the film will be animated in the same vein as 'A Bug's Life' and 'Antz'. Instead of an actress playing the coveted part of Lara Croft it would be some CG animators doing all the work. Luckily the developers of the Tomb Raider series laid the rumours to rest quickly and stated that it would be a 'live action movie, release date to be determined', as they put it. So the bets are on again about which actress will take the lead role of Lara Croft. Sandra Bullock, Liz Hurley ... Place your bets ladies and gentlemen!

E3 SELL-OUT

For the fifth consecutive year the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3), the world's largest trade

show for the fastest growing entertainment industry, sold out all available exhibition and meeting space. This year there will be exhibitors from all around the world including 60 companies from outside the States and 109 first time exhibitors. The show will be held in the Los Angeles Convention Centre from the 13-15 of May. New Age Gaming will of course be attending, sending our brand spanking new Editor this year to bring all our readers the scoop on happenings for the year.

RAVEN TAKE ON STAR TREK: VOYAGER



Raven Software, the Wisconsin development arm of Activision, will be delving into a game based on the popular 'Star Trek: Voyager' television series. This was to be expected since Activision signed a deal last year giving them rights to the Star Trek brand for games. The following is a quote from Brian Raffel's plan:

"I am pleased to announce that Raven Software will be developing a Star Trek: Voyager game for Activision. The title will encompass the attributes of both intense first-person shooter action and team oriented combat, as you play the role of a security officer fighting alongside your fellow security team members. Drawing from the rich Star Trek universe, we will be focusing our efforts into creating the most amazing first-person shooter yet, with new and intriguing gameplay elements. We are developing new AI and scripting systems so the NPCs and enemies will intelligently react to their surroundings and situation. At this time we are in the early stages of development and more information will be forthcoming."

ELECTRONIC ARTS SIGNS FORMULA ONE LICENSE

Hot on the trail of the Superbike: World Championship license EA announced that it has signed a deal securing the coveted international motorsports Formula One license. EA will be developing titles based on the Formula One cars and races for leading console platforms as well as the PC. The multiyear license gives Electronic Arts world-wide interactive rights to the FIA Formula One Drivers and Constructors' World Championships including drivers, teams, cars and tracks on the Formula One circuit. The Formula One circuit visits 16 continents yearly and EA claims an estimated audience of five billion people watching the sport either in person or on television last year, making it the world's largest spectator sport.

AT LAST A CLAN BASE COMPETITION

Magic Web will be hosting a Clan based Quake 2 competition in early May, with plans for further competitions on a 2 or 3 monthly basis, depending on turnout for the first one. To enter you will need to belong to a Clan with a minimum of 2 members per clan or a maximum of 4 members allowed entering. An entry fee of R50 will be levied per person to enter, but this includes refreshments, which will be served at lunch. First prize includes add-on packs for Quake 2 as well as a roaming trophy. Magic Web is planning to host the event every 2-3 months with the trophy going to the winners of each event. The winning Clans will have their Clan name engraved on the trophy and be allowed to keep the trophy between events. Of course you will not be allowed to damage the trophy, basically you break it you replace it. The competition will be based around normal Quake 2 team DM, as well as the CTF, Paintball and Action Quake 2 mods. The competition will take place at 'The Glen' near Alberton at Magic Web's premises. Players will be allowed to use their Clan skins, which have to be supplied on a stiffy to the organisers on the day. Clans planning to enter a 2 man team remember that it is very possible that you may face a 4 man team should you make it through to the finals, this puts 2 man teams at a disadvantage and 4 man teams are encouraged, but what a win should a 2 man team walk away with the honours. The call goes out to Clans all around the Johannesburg area to enter their members in the competition. Now we will be able to see who exactly is the best Clan out there. New Age Gaming will of course attend the event and do an article on it. Who knows we might even sponsor a Clan to enter the competition? For more information and directions for getting to 'The Glen', interested Clans can contact the organisers via email at tvj30@hotmail.com or call Magic Web on 436-0336.



Kayalami here we come! That makes two big racing licenses for EA this year so far.

FINAL FANTASY VIII ERROR?

A newswire from Japan has reported that Square has said that the possibility of an error in their latest game in the Final Fantasy series, Final Fantasy VIII, is very small. They have however strengthened their customer support lines to deal with potential complaints.

Square's stocks plummeted on February the 25th as a Nikkei Wire reported that more than 1,000 copies have been returned due to a programming error. A spokesperson for Square stated that none of the software has been recalled or returned, but instead those customers have sent in their memory cards, which contain game playing data for inspection. Final Fantasy VIII went on sale on the 11th of February in Japan and has sold over 3 million units so far, given the amount of copies sold the percentage of inspections are very low in comparison. We here in South Africa will receive the European version, which means any potential problems would have been sorted out by then. As yet there is no word on a local release date.

VIVA LA FRANCE, OR NOT!

It seems that in France a French lobby group 'Familles de France' has affected the removal of the following titles from retail shelves:

- Resident Evil II
- Unreal
- Sanitarium
- Wild 9
- Grand Theft Auto
- Carmageddon II

They are currently addressing these games in court as well for an outright ban on the titles. The games are considered too violent and therefore damaging to players. Just imagine a world without Unreal or Resident Evil II. Scary stuff!

INTERPLAY GIVES BIRTH TO NEW STRATEGY DIVISION

Interplay has announced the creation of its new strategy division, 14° East. Brian Christian, an industry veteran, will head the division. 14° East will be releasing several games this year, including three Star Trek games: 'Star Trek: Starfleet Command', 'Star Trek: New Worlds' and 'Star Trek: Klingon Academy'. The division has brought together a team of producers, designers, artists, programmers and technical engineers dedicated to creating strategy games.

ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST

Game developer Infinite Machine, founded by Justin Chin, designer of 'Dark Forces II: Jedi Knight' and 'Jedi Knight' programmer Che-Yuan Wang, has announced that they have licensed the Unreal engine from Epic Games for an upcoming first person 3D shooter. With Infinite Machine joining the club a total of 18 games have been announced that makes use of the Unreal engine.

SINGLE PLAYER QUAKE III?

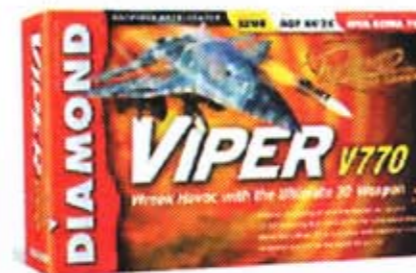
Some gamers have expressed concerns about the Quake III engine not being available for licensing for single player games since Quake III will be a multiplayer only title. Tim Willits of id Software said at the Extreme Annihilation gaming event in Dallas that this is not so, and that id has received several inquiries from designers exploring the possibility of licensing the technology for single player as well as multiplayer games. The most intriguing news along these lines is id's hope that Valve will license the engine for Half-Life 2. Continuing with



Quake III, a few new screenshots have come to light. Here they are and please refrain from drooling all over your magazine without protection first.

DIAMOND VIPER V770 ON ITS WAY

Diamond Multimedia Systems has announced the Viper V770 graphics accelerator based on NVIDIA's RIVA TNT2 Ultra graphics controller. The Viper V770 is designed to boost the realism and speed of today's 3D gaming experience to a new level. The



card will ship with 32MB of onboard memory and features the advanced 128-bit processing power with NVIDIA's Twin Texel engine design to deliver true single-pass, multi-texturing. The Viper V770 will be available for AGP 4X systems with support for AGP 2X as well, and features the RIVA TNT2 Ultra processor, the second-genera-

tion single-chip 128-bit 3D processor able to process two pixels per cycle. It will have a maximum output resolution of up to 2048x1536, an enhanced dual 32-bit colour 3D pipeline, and trilinear and anisotropic filtering, which all contribute to the visual output. The accelerator also delivers 32-bit Z-buffer, including an eight-bit stencil buffer and MPEG support.

In addition, the Viper V770 graphics accelerator is optimised for OpenGL and Microsoft's DirectX 6. It also supports the Streaming SIMD Instructions in Pentium III processor-based PCs as well as AMD's 3DNow! technology enhanced processors. Damn! Can't wait to get my hands on one of these babies...

HALF-LIFE: TEAM FORTRESS 2 TO USE INTEL'S MRM TECHNOLOGY

Valve Software has announced that the upcoming Team Fortress 2 will use Intel's Multiresolution Mesh Technology. This allows the designers to create a scalable game with detailed, realistic models that can automatically adjust performance to the gamer's PC. MRM allows for dynamic scaling of the models resolution for optimal viewing and performance, this allows Team Fortress 2 to contain more models and display them at high levels of detail and realism.

The below screenshots from 3D Studio MAX shows how models in the distance will be rendered with less detail using fewer polygons. By combining parametric animation with Intel's MRM scalable level-of-detail renderer, Team Fortress 2's characters will be among the most realistic and detailed to date.



LOGITECH GAMING MOUSE

Logitech will be shipping a Force-Feedback mouse for computer gaming coming Christmas 1999. The Logitech Wingman Force Feedback Mouse can reproduce all the effects of traditional game controllers using FEELit technology from the Immersion Corporation. Sample effects that could be included in upcoming mouse games will include gun recoil that differs by type of gun, the tap of a golf ball on a putter, the motion of or engine vibration of vehicles and more. Web developers could even incorporate sensations to their web pages in Netscape Navigator or Microsoft Internet Explorer. The three-button mouse will feature a USB interface for easy plug & play connectivity and require Windows 98 running on at least a Pentium processor. Now all we need is for Microsoft to incorporate sensations in the Windows shell. (hehehe)

"PARDON ME SIR, IS THAT BALDUR'S GATE UP AHEAD?"

The upcoming expansion to the hugely successful RPG Baldur's Gate, titled Tales of the Sword Coast, will support in-game voice communication via

Roger Wilco, an Internet voice communication product. Players will now be able to speak to each other in real-time without the need to type in messages all the time.

This will bring the gaming experience to a more personal level and enable players to strategize their gameplay better. With Roger Wilco, messages are immediately broadcast to other gamers, enabling them to communicate without interrupting gameplay, audio or game performance. It uses a minimum 28.8K modem and requires a microphone or headset for the PC that connects to a standard soundcard. The technology is specifically designed to run with Internet

multiplayer. In addition, the software supports 128 players simultaneously per channel without requiring a dedicated server. I just hope they include the option to buy the expansion with a decent headset/microphone combo included with the game.

SEAGATE BREAKS IBM RECORD

Seagate, a hard disc architect company, reached a new milestone by cramming 16 billion bits of data per square-inch onto a hard disc platter, shattering the previous record of 11 billion by IBM in 1997. This means that we might see 110 GB hard disc in the next couple of years. Some manufacturing issues still need to be sorted out and processor speed still has to catch up with the transfer rate, a reported 214 million bits per second. Even hard disc technology seems to be growing by leaps and bounds, now if only they can bring down the access time of hard discs, measured in milliseconds. This is where the big bottlenecks occur on systems today due to the fact that memory access is measured in nanoseconds as well as most of your computer.

CONTINUED PG 12

CREATIVE LABS ANNOUNCES SAVAGE4 CARD

Creative Labs will be shipping a graphics acceleration card based on S3's Savage4 chip. The new 3D Blaster Savage4 delivers spectacular performance and stunning visual quality using S3's patented S3TC texture compression. The card will support PCI, AGP2X and AGP4X and ship with 32MB of RAM.

"We have come to a turning point in the graphics industry where gamers and developers are now directing their attention to image quality. The introduction of the 3D Blaster Savage4 marks the beginning of a distinct transition for the 3D graphics business as we move beyond raw speed to satisfy the eyes' need for better image quality" - Steve Mosher Vice President, Graphics Business for Creative Labs. The 3D Blaster Savage4 is a dual texture engine capable of simultaneously processing and combining two textures, allowing software developers the ability to create realistic, real-time visual effects.

- Features:
- PCI, AGP2X, AGP4X Support
 - Single Pass multi-texturing
 - 125 million pixels/second, trilinear filtered
 - Point, bilinear, trilinear and anisotropic filtering with support for MIPmapping
 - Full Scene Anti-Aliasing
 - Motion Compensation that assists DVD playback

CREATIVE MP3 PORTABLE PLAYER

Creative Labs is currently working on a project called NOMAD, which will introduce their line of portable digital audio players. The project will offer the latest digital audio advancements as well as enhanced functionality enabled by Creative proprietary technology. The first in the line is a MP3 portable player, which has been inspired by the popularity of the MP3 format. We are currently anxiously awaiting the release of the technical specifications of this player and will keep you posted as we receive more information.

AMD'S 3DNOW! GAINS MOMENTUM

Twelve top PC entertainment software publishers

AMD INTRODUCES K6-III PROCESSOR



AMD has just introduced their newest processor dubbed the K6-III with 3D Now! Technology. It is touted as being the highest performance desktop x86 processor and is available at 400MHz and AMD has just started sampling 450MHz samples to OEM customers. Debuting in the K6-III is AMD's TriLevel cache design, an advanced cache memory architecture that significantly boosts overall PC performance by providing the industry's largest maximum combined system cache for Windows compatible PCs.

AMD's TriLevel Cache design enables the AMD-K6-III processor to process instructions faster and deliver better performance at the same clock rate as the AMD-K6-2 processor and Intel's Pentium III.

The TriLevel Cache design includes a full-speed 64KB Level 1 cache, an internal full-speed backside 256KB Level 2 cache and a 100-MHz frontside bus to an optional external Level 3 cache on the Super7 motherboard. With a total of 320KB of combined L1 and L2 cache, the AMD-K6-III processor has more internal cache memory than any other x86 CPU available today. No other x86 processor supports an external L3 cache on the motherboard.

An AMD-K6-III processor-based PC with a combined cache size of 1,344KB delivers up to two and a half times more total system cache than a Pentium III. The TriLevel Cache design is not only the largest cache implementation for desktop PCs, it is exceptionally fast. The backside 256KB L2 cache of the AMD-K6-III processor operates at full processor speed. For example, the internal L2 cache of an AMD-K6-III/450 processor operates at a full 450 MHz.

The TriLevel Cache design also offers an internal multiport cache design. This flexible design feature delivers higher system performance by enabling simultaneous 64-bit reads and writes of both the L1 cache and the L2 cache. In addition, each cache can be accessed simultaneously by the processor core.

The AMD-K6-III processor with 3DNow! technology incorporates AMD's TriLevel Cache design to enable leading-edge performance for today's consumer PC enthusiasts and business power users. The 21.3-million transistor AMD-K6-III processor is manufactured on AMD's 0.25-micron, five-layer-metal process technology using local interconnect and shallow trench isolation at AMD's Fab 25 wafer fabrication facility in Austin, Texas. The AMD-K6-III processor is packaged in a 100-MHz Super7 platform-compatible, 321-pin ceramic pin grid array package using C4 flip-chip interconnection technology.

TEKKEN 3 WORLD IRON FIST COMPETITION

Countries flocked to Namco Station at County Hall on January 27th 1999, as the world's first and biggest Tekken 3 Championship took place.

14 Website contenders from across Europe and 18 World-wide champions came together to see who would be winning the coveted Iron Fist World Champion title as well as the \$5000 cheque and Tekken 3 Arcade machine (worth around \$9000).

After many a fraught challenge the semi finals took place with Sweden battling it out with Germany and the UK Namco Champion kicking butt with Australia. After a few close challenges the finalists Sweden, playing as Nina Williams and the Namco Champ, playing as Paul Phoenix commenced their last and final battle. It was only a matter of minutes before the Namco champ, Ryan Hart, 19 from London, karate kicked his way to the top to become the Tekken 3 Iron Fist World Champion.



Of course South Africa had a representative as well in the form of Donovan Morten, winner of the local Tekken 3 competition. Unfortunately he didn't make it past the first round. The International competitors weren't up to the task when they battled against Donovan, better luck next time. A great time was had by all and I don't think he took too much notice of the loss with all the glitz and glamour surrounding the event. So keep on practising and you might find yourself in one of these world tournaments just like Donovan.



and developers have announced plans to support AMD's 3DNow! Technology. AMD says it expects this support will result in a large number of 3DNow! optimised offerings coming to market and leveraging the installed base of more than 8.5 million 3DNow! Technology enhanced processors in use. The company has projected that number will exceed 30 million by the end of 1999. These twelve publishers and developers plan to deliver a substantial number of titles that will offer optimised performance when used in conjunction with AMD's latest processors.

Included in the upcoming titles are:

- Quake III Arena (Activision & id Software)
- Daikatana (Eidos Interactive & ION Storm)
- Loose Cannon (Digital Anvil)
- Drakken (Psygnosis)
- Striker (Criterion Studios)
- Slave Zero (Accolade)
- Messiah (Interplay)
- Duke Nukem Forever (GT & 3D Realms)
- Descent3 (Interplay & Outrage)

All top graphic accelerator developers, including 3Dfx, ATI, Matrox and nVidia are shipping optimisations for the 3DNow! Technology in their 3D graphics accelerator drivers. 3DNow! Technology is also supported in Microsoft's DirectX 6x application programming interface as well as the OpenGL graphics development standard developed by Silicon Graphics.

PSX2 GAME DEVELOPMENT

Metroworks, the provider of software development tools for PSX and other platforms announced that it will provide CodeWarrior the game title development tools for the next generation PlayStation. The CodeWarrior suite includes the award winning CodeWarrior Integrated Development Environment as well as the next generation MIPS ISA IV development tools for C and C++. The suite is specifically tailored for the next generation PlayStation architecture.

CodeWarrior is a GUI-based software development environment designed to run on Windows 95, Windows 98 and Windows NT operating systems, and include support for Assembler, C, and C++ programming languages. The CodeWarrior suite will be released to authorised Sony Computer Entertainment licensees under a program to be announced in the new future. So if you're in South Africa and would like to develop a PlayStation title, get in contact with Sony; just make sure your programming expertise is up to scratch and that you have financial backing. (No one ever said game development was easy - Assistant Ed.)

NOVALOGIC SPACE SIM

Novalogic, developers of the Comanche series helicopter simulation and more recently Delta Force, announced a new action-adventure space game titled Tachyon: The Fringe. The story is set five hundred years in the future where Mega-Corporations serve as law. The player is thrust into a resource rich



area on the borders of colonised-space, where you become caught in a dangerous conflict between one of these Mega-Corporations and a faction of renegade settlers intent on keeping their independence. You will be able to choose between the rewards of a megacorp or the ideals of the faction. Tachyon will be based on free form in nature meaning that players will be able to explore the story's adventure on a path of their own choosing. You literally start in the middle of space, where your choices and method of exploration will affect not only the outcome of the story, but the adventure itself.

Over 120 players will also be able to blast each other to bits on Novalogic's NovaWorld online gaming service in a single multiplayer environment.

LOOKING GLASS ANNOUNCES COMBAT SIM



Looking Glass Studios have announced Flight Combat: Thunder Over Europe, a WWII air combat simulation currently in development. The game will use the Next Generation Flight Unlimited terrain engine and enable players to fly over 1,000,000 square miles of rolling, tree-lined European terrain with persistent damage and real-world elevation models.

The 'by the book' flight model will be derived from actual test flight and authentic plane operation manuals to bring the flight sim fans a realistic representation of flying WWII fighters. Flight Combat will also feature weather effects such as rain, snow and sleet as players fly for either Allied or Axis powers in 2 campaigns. Other features include super high polygon models, including realistically rendered 3D cockpits drawn from actual source photograph, authentic squadron markings and customisable nose and tail art, moving tanks and ships as they duke it out on a dynamic battlefield as well as modelled major European historical and natural landmarks.



ACCOLADE ANNOUNCES DEMOLITION RACER

Accolade has announced it is developing a game titled Demolition Racer. The arcade racer lets players participate in fast action demolition derby races with 16 cars on 12 tracks. The game will be developed for both the PlayStation and PC platforms and the development team includes core team members from the teams responsible for titles such as Destruction Derby, Test Drive 4 and Test Drive 5. Players will be able to race and demolish as you

battle it out in intense 'last man standing' demolition derby bowl matches. Cars will take damage, visibly and with performance degradation as hoods, tires, and other bits fly freely during gameplay. These parts and fully damaged cars will remain on the road as obstacles to the other racers in promise to make for some creative driving manoeuvres. Demolition Racer also features the US Demolition Derby Association license and a rocking original sound track featuring Fear Factory and XL Records artist Empirion.

LE MANS 24 HOURS RACER ANNOUNCED

A game based on the worlds most challenging car race the Le Mans 24 Hour is coming to PlayStation and PCs soon. Infogrames has signed an exclusive five-year license for the Le Mans name, race teams, race circuits and the rights to incorporate the official Automobile Club de l'Quest rules to ensure authenticity of their titles.

Infogrames' license is the first interactive entertainment agreement issued by the ACO for the annual racing event. Developed by Eutechnyx, Le Mans 24



Hours will be available this year from Infogrames Entertainment on the Sony PlayStation and PC platforms. Statistics from 24 race teams and precise technical details about 48 cars that competed in the 1998 Le Mans race in France have been collected to accurately simulate the real event. The game will use a true physics-racing model complete with an ultra-life-like AI built into the game. Drivers can reach 368 Km/h down straightaway stretches with 180-degree hairpin turns on corners, along with Downtown City driving. All of this has been recreated in a 3D environment with texture maps that come close to the true specifications. The Le Mans 24 Hour game will also feature retrogressive and collision damage to simulate the wear and tear that occurs over the 24-hour race. The new game from Infogrames will also feature driving and lighting condition changes as well as the passage from day to night. Players will be given the opportunity to fit out and tune up their car before the race. If you always wanted to drive in the Le Mans 24-hour race, keep an eye out for this title.

MEDAL OF HONOR ANNOUNCED

Electronic Arts has announced the development of Medal of Honor, a WWII-themed first-person action adventure title from DreamWorks Interactive. Inspired by DreamWorks' Steven Spielberg, Medal of Honor marks the first WWII action adventure game developed for the PlayStation console system. The game allows players to take on the role of an agent in the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), the United States' wartime spy and covert operations agency, who aids the Allied Forces in an effort to thwart the German take over of Europe. "As soon as Steven proposed the concept for Medal of Honor in the spring of 1997, we knew we could develop a remarkable game around the idea." "The reaction within DreamWorks Interactive to developing the title was overwhelming, the game is a natural for us." - Glenn Entis head of DreamWorks Interactive. Medal of Honor begins on June 5, 1944, the night

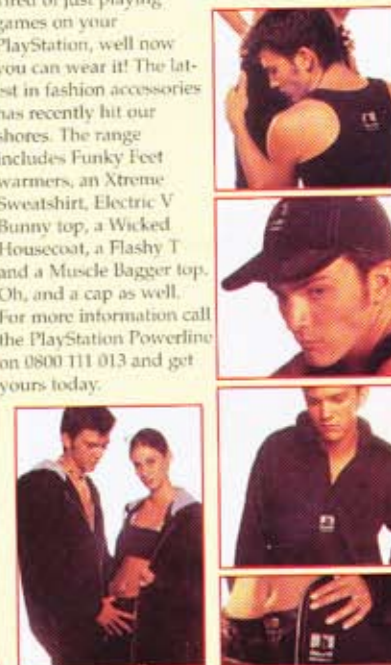
before D-day when the Alliance launched a massive aerial assault behind German lines. Assuming the role of a young C-47 pilot shot down during the operation, the player is recruited into the OSS and begins a new career as a field agent, participating in various covert operations, search and rescue assignments, and commando raids. Each mission is drawn from pivotal historical events that helped shape the Allied crusade in Europe, including sorties involving the development, capture, and destruction of secret war-making technologies.

"With the surging popularity of WWII-based projects across all entertainment forms," says Frank Gibeau, Vice President of Marketing at Electronic Arts, "we are excited to be the company that brings the WWII experience to video gamers."

To ensure Medal of Honor adequately reflects the realism and accuracy of the World War II era, DreamWorks Interactive brought in Capt. Dale Dye, USMC (retired), the top military consultant to the entertainment industry. Renowned for his contribution to such films as "Saving Private Ryan," "Platoon," "Born on the Fourth of July" and "Mission Impossible," Dye worked closely with Medal of Honor's production team to define characters, develop missions, and model accurate 3D versions of over fifteen different weapons from the era.

PLAYSTATION CLOTHING RANGE IS HERE.

Tired of just playing games on your PlayStation, well now you can wear it! The latest in fashion accessories has recently hit our shores. The range includes Funky Feet warmers, an Xtreme Sweatshirt, Electric V Bunny top, a Wicked Housecoat, a Flashy T and a Muscle Bagger top. Oh, and a cap as well. For more information call the PlayStation Powerline on 0800 111 013 and get yours today.



ATARI'S VIDEO GAME MUSEUM

AtariBaby, the guy who writes our popular 'Archives' section has a special request to all our readers. He's starting a Video Game Museum in Port Elizabeth - the first and only of its kind in South Africa. Currently he is looking for contributions to the museum, specifically: Any Atari memorabilia, games books etc. A LYNX Intellivision game set. A Coleco hand held - the ones that light up, run on batteries / mains and looked like miniature arcade machines complete with joysticks. Any Nintendo games and Watch handhelds. Will says that he will pay the freight from anywhere in South Africa, so drop him a line on 088-0066526 or e-mail will@radioalga.com

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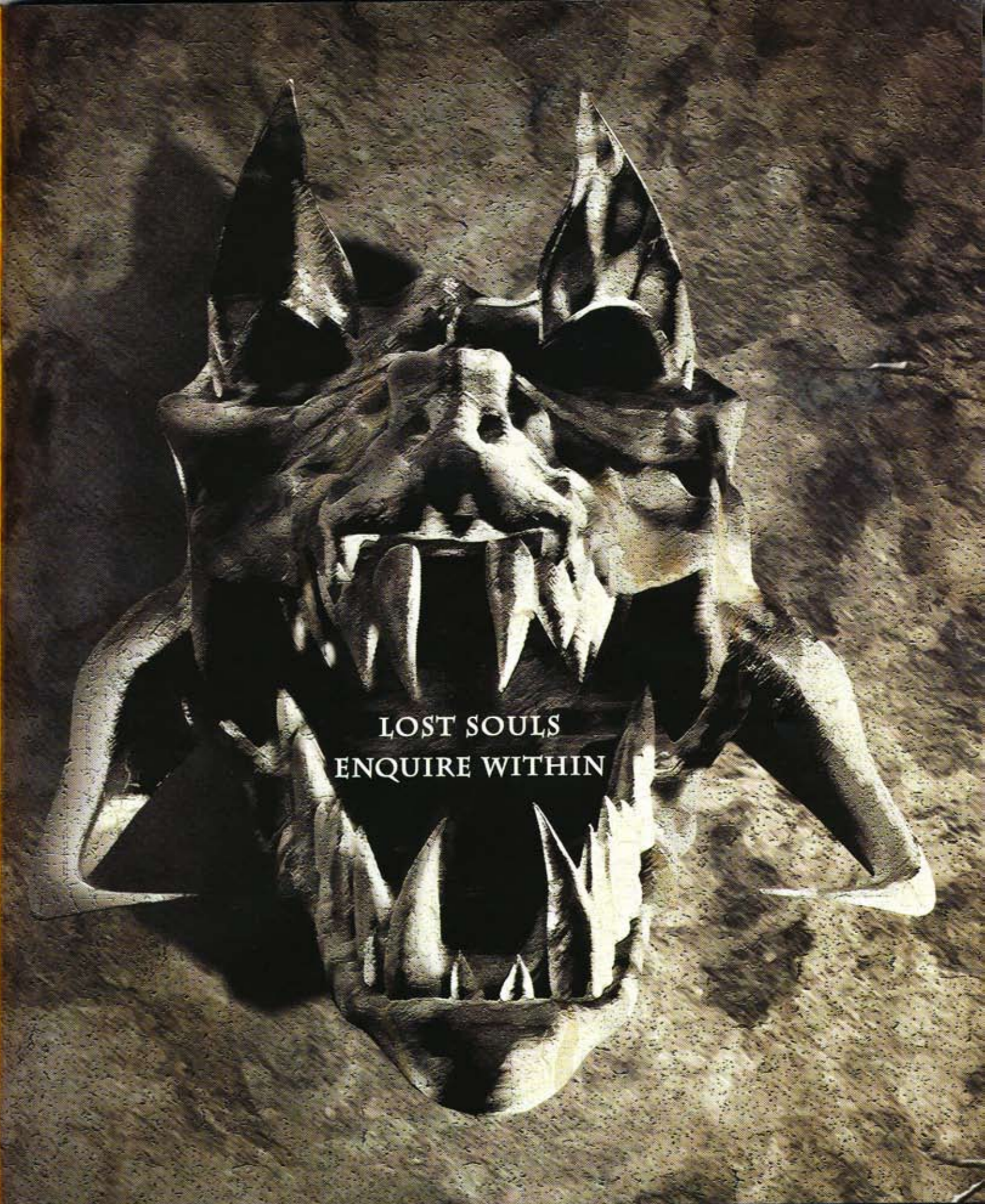


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Thank you to everyone who wrote in this month, unfortunately we cannot reply to all of the letters, but we do read them all. You can send your letters and e-mail to the addresses on the postcard. Please remember to include all your details when you write in or we can't send you your prize should you win. Don't ask us to change your prize or magically convert it into cash. As always, the Editors decision is final and that's that.

Well done to **Obi-Wan** who wins our editors choice this month - keep the questions coming. Until next month...

NEW AGE GAMING P.O. BOX 2749 ALBERTON 1449

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Howzit

Your magazine seems to get bigger & better by the month. You guys have set a high standard with your cover CD. Oh yeah, the reason I'm writing is one of fascination. What the hell is an Editor-in-Chief? Okay, wait let me start at the beginning. When I first heard that there was going to be a new Editor I wasn't too happy. Warren was great and just look what he has achieved with the magazine so far. However, when I read the editorial of the new editor I was damn impressed! As I read on I rejoiced in the fact that Warren was not cleaning toilets but has in fact been appointed to Editor-in-Chief. (How about telling us what it is that person does?) I just want to say congratulations to the both of you. The reason why us gamers have the best damn magazine is because we have two great editors and they have the best crew (reviewers). Stop here if too long! [No, no carry on this is good stuff, Ed] I remember a person saying it would be a good idea to put screenshots on the CD. Now I know it is already chock-a-block but people feel there are too few screenshots! I have to stop writing. So cheers...

Justin Reabow
Durban North

It took hours of debate and discussion until we finally decided to put in one ego-boosting letter this month - it's our birthday issue after all and we feel that we deserve it. In answer to your question about what exactly an Editor-in-Chief is or does... I discussed this with my Assistant Editor and no one here really knows, but Warren looks all official and stern in his new office so we'll leave him to his delusions while we get on with the important stuff.
Ed

Yebol

I have always wondered about the connection between PC games and console games. I don't really understand people even making games for consoles. The PlayStation for instance, will never be able to be upgraded for more quality graphics etc., while you can upgrade your PC anytime anywhere. The quality of games for the computer can and will always increase, because you can always increase your computer's power, while games made for standing consoles will never be made any better unless a newer version of the console is developed. Then, while you have your computer, you can always have extras like Internet, word processing etc. Of course there's always the price difference, but pay more, get more!
I really don't intend to hurt anybody's feelings, but I think it's a point that needed to be made.

Jans de Jager
Grahamstown

Well this is the most efficient and effective letter I've ever had the pleasure of reading. You establish an intriguing question, argue with yourself about it, make a logical deduction and finally come to a conclusion you're happy with, leaving me with nothing to say.
Ed

NAG

Just a quick question, does New Age Gaming still exist? I have not seen it in a CNA since the December issue. It just started getting good, with the cover disc and poster added and now it's gone!

Regards

Mario Olivier
Cape Town

Just a quick answer, no we don't exist anymore, sorry. This issue is just a figment of your imagination.
Ed

To NAG

I would like to congratulate you on yet another splendid issue. I received my magazine this month and opened it straight to the middle page. Shock of all shocks, call CNN, the poster was missing. Are you stopping this or have I missed out. If you have stopped, could you please restart them as my walls are getting quite dirty.

Ismail
E-mail

We are glad to see that we can contribute to the social decay of society by covering it up. There is a poster somewhere in this issue, but try using paint instead - it's not always what's on the poster that's important but what's under it. We will always print a poster if we have one, besides we're a little scared now after all the demanding e-mail we get if we don't put one in.
Ed

Dear NAG

Congratulations on a great magazine, the cover CD and posters are excellent but I was wondering if you would please put in a demo of TS, a poster and a full review next month as I am one of Westwood's biggest fans. Could you please tell me more about "Y2K" and last but not least, my computer is giving trouble because it always crashes in the middle of a program, I have tried formatting, but to no prevail so I was hoping that you could help me out. Keep up the good work

Dean Hemens
Arcadia

Hi...

I thought I'd just make a quick comment on the scoring "system" since I see you brought it up in the March issue. The current system is flawed in that it has nothing to compare it to except maybe previous reviews of similar games, which I think, shouldn't be. The problem with this method is that you eventually run out of space because better games should in theory then get better scores.

The way you mentioned it in the magazine where you start with a score of 50% for a workable, playable, medium graphics and sounding game is better, but then games should be rated individually and not be compared. I know people will say that games should be compared and you can do that in the actual review, but I think the score should show accurately what the game scores in each category.

Now, the way I think would be a lot easier for the readers and maybe even for the reviewers is to have only a scale of 0-10 where 0 = Total Rubbish, 5 = Good Effort, 10 = Bloody Excellent, or something like that. This way you have your low, medium, high and in-between scores with not too much being in-between. Use this with the different categories and get the average and you will have a pretty straightforward and understandable scoring system. It actually comes down to the fact that each game should be scored as if nothing else exists. The minute you start comparing you'll get problems with scoring because you have to go higher almost every time in graphics and sound because of technology.

Well, that is it, I think.

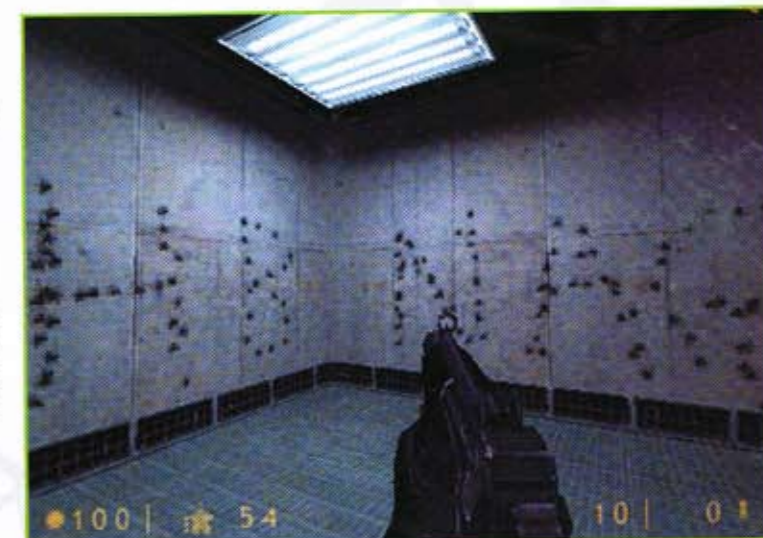
I do have one question as well. If you can tell me what the deadline is for the cover CD to be printed or whatever, so I can have some idea of what demos I should download and what demos might be on the CD.
Thanks for starting the magazine and actually getting better.

Obi-Wan
E-mail

Well you certainly have a few firm ideas on the scoring system. The way we compare games in the magazine falls into two categories. One - if a game is a sequel then we must compare it to the previous game to see if it's worth buying. A sequel is usually more of the same only better so if this isn't the case we should tell you. Two - we usually compare games that are released relatively close to each other, for example you won't find us comparing Doom with Unreal but we can compare Half-Life with Quake 2 because they use the same engine. The way we score now is by adding up the categories and dividing the result, a percentage system does leave room for argument but there is a big difference between a game that scores 80% and one that scores 89%. Now if you start using a system like 8.1 or 8.9 it all boils down to the same thing anyway. For us, a single number from 1 to 10 is a little too simplistic. Most of the time we score our games like nothing else exists but it is sometimes necessary to compare or we'd spend the whole review telling people what a first person perspective shooter is every time we review one. This issue is always open to debate, but we shout the loudest and we always have the last word... print media is a great thing! Oh, one last thing - give our regards to Luke.
Ed

BACKCHAT

Isn't it puzzling that in this day and age, with the wonders of e-mail, people still feel it necessary to write e-mail letters as if they were sending a telegram. Stop. It must be true what they say about the water down in Cape Town. Stop. Thanks for the picture - you obviously have way too much time on your hands down there. Stop.
Ed. Stop.



This is the rather inspired work by contemporary Half-Life artist, Martin Power

There is nothing like getting a nice detailed description of the problem followed by a comprehensive list of system specifications for us to be able to troubleshoot your dilemma. Try prevailing with the formatting a bit longer and stop worrying about the year 2000, it's months away - we'll be doing a Year 2000 thing in the future though. In addition, we can't always choose what goes on the poster especially if the game in question doesn't have any poster material yet. We will be doing everything we can to get exclusive material and code from Westwood, stay tuned. You can always go and have a look at www.tiberiumsun.com for more information.
Ed

Piracy Sucks

So you've heard (or read) this a million times. Here it is again...

First of all as the heading suggests Software piracy sucks. Although I feel guilty saying that out of my 20 games I own, 3 of them were illegal copies, but I'm proud to announce that I just destroyed 'em. Man! Have you ever seen (or smelt) a CD burn?

Stephan
E-mail

Lovely, we'd like to announce the official illegal CD burning quest. Destroy all those illegal copies of games and other software and send us the pictures of your gratuitous destruction - we'll publish the best of the lot in the next few issues and who knows someone might even win a prize, maybe even an original game... now those are rare. Well done on the burning, we'd like to see more of this kind of thing happening.
Ed

Hey NAG!

I have some questions that need some answering. Whenever I go to CNA, you are completely sold out. It's not that I am late with the date, but it is because you are so popular. Everybody wants you. I mean it is a race! Whenever I see all my computer buds, the conversation usually starts with, "Have you got the new NAG yet?" When I go to CNA and find out that you are completely sold out, it brakes my little heart. Then I have to put my tail between my legs and go begging to buy it from them at extra charge.... Will you please boost your production on the shelf? Believe me they will sell! Second, do you have a web site yet and if you do, please give it to me. Can we as the writer of the letter write frequently or is this just a once in a lifetime opportunity AND can we write and rate some games and discuss them with you from the players perspective. This brings me to my last question... Will you please enlarge the letters section by 1 more page? I know this is a lot to ask but I am speaking on behalf of a lot of guys and I think this feeling is mutual throughout SA. I love reading about another guys' problems.

Please shine some light on this Dark Earth!

E-mail

In answer to your questions, we have increased our circulation of the magazine but you can always ask CNA to keep a copy for you, it's called a call order and they don't charge for the service. Our web site is still under development - perfection takes time you know. You can write as often as you like, freedom of speech is always encouraged as well as the freedom to delete unwanted mail. Feel free to write in and discuss anything you like, we always love to hear from our readers because New Age Gaming is your magazine as much as it is ours. You say you want to discuss the games from the players perspective, hey I thought we are players? Even though we're all seasoned gaming veterans doesn't mean we've lost touch with our readers, does it? We are looking into increasing the size of the magazine and the letters page will eventually grow with the rest of the magazine - think of the magazine as a plant, if you water it it grows.
Ed

Dear NAG

I hope you loved your e-mail
It was a screenshot from the Half-Life Demo, oh and happy birthday
I have a PC and I think Half-Life Rules
HB stands for Happy Birthday

Martin Power
Cape Town

Hi NAG

There have been plenty of Quake and C&C clones and I am fed up with them. You really get bored playing a lot of games of the same type? There haven't been a lot of good RPG games - not one that comes close to Diablo! But now Baldur's Gate is out - which looks good. In fact I will buy it in a week or 2, that is if I do not win it in your BG competition.

Now, Diablo2 should have been out end 1998 or beginning 1999, but they held it back again. They say that it will only support 3Dfx, but does not require it, they also said that is was almost finished, before they held back the release date. Why would they do that? Either they found a huge bug or are making the game better (should then be the best game ever - should score about 99%) or they are making a few updates and adjustments, like supporting OpenGL and Direct 3D, which I think will be a very good idea. Diablo2 is now scheduled for 3rd quarter 1999!

What is wrong with these people? We buy a graphics card for R1800 (like the Riva TNT) and they make a game that does not use the card! This is one very big complaint I have heard! OpenGL rocks and should be supported in all the games - just ask id what they think about OpenGL. Even GT is making a patch for OpenGL, because they say they now have seen how easy and powerful OpenGL is, especially with the Riva TNT! I don't mind waiting for this game, but then it must be all I expect and more, with OpenGL support.

I know that you guys also like the Riva TNT - What do you think about this OpenGL, 3Dfx Glide problem? Isn't it possible to make a 3Dfx emulator? Well 3Dfx won't like what I think!

EJ.Terblanche
Beaufort West

Let me explain this again, the reason there have been delays of a few games is for one simple reason - E3. This is the ultimate product hype vehicle that the developers will squeeze every drop of free editorial out of as possible. So soon after E3, after all the publishers and journalists have returned home to get readers excited about the new releases, they start trickling through. With regards to the OpenGL issue, don't worry. There have been many games that don't initially support one chip set or another but ultimately a patch arrives that sorts everything out.
Ed

Thanks to all the writers of this months letters, keep those topical questions coming!

Last month we were left wondering whether the handheld Atari Lynx would make a similar impact on the gaming market as the VCS 2600 did in the 70's. By now it was also abundantly clear that neither the Atari ST nor the Amiga would be able to match the onslaught coming from the now very unregulated and free for all to develop PC market. Without going into too much detail Atari decided to stop the development of the ST by selling all the rights to Falcon Labs.

Amiga carried on making a niche mark on the DTP industry but finally gave up the battle and sold out as well. So the PC ended up ruling the very lucrative home roost and developed into the industry that it is today.

So the PC won the battle in the computer industry, but who was going to be the winner in the console race? For Atari it was very much life after the VCS! The revolutionary handheld colour Lynx was well ahead of its time but sales were bleak. The reason? Well it had quite a hefty price tag (\$194) to go with it. It was for this very reason that the much more simplistic Gameboy out sold the Lynx. The other contributing factor was that Atari was not able to muscle up the big game developers to support their little marvel. By 1992 the Lynx was sent to the big video game archive in the sky and Atari was left in the cold. Or were they? Although now in serious financial difficulty, Atari managed to convince the big boys at IBM to get involved in a new console project. Knowing what Atari was capable of IBM agreed and in 1993, Atari made their last attempt to save the now ailing empire.

Looking at Atari's game design résumé it was clear that they had the ability to again produce a world first. And guess what they did! It took 18 months to create the worlds first 32-bit games console. Whether the machine was a 64 or 32 bit is still debated by game collectors around the world and even on the Internet some sites will note the Jaguar to be 32 bit while others claim it to be 64 bit. As far as my research could determine though it was sold as a '32' bit system, using 2 x 16 bit processors to get the job done (maybe not true 32 bit but close). It was capable of a 800 x 576 pixel resolution, 24 bit (16 million colour) and could place multiple resolution on the screen at once. Even with its cartridge based games it featured CD-quality sound.

The Jag was capable of high speed scrolling and texture mapping, morphing, lighting and shading from one or a multiple of light sources. It came packaged with one large controller that had three fire buttons and a 12 key keypad that accepted overlays. It even had a serial port to allow for network gaming!

By 1995, Atari developed the Jaguar CD. It plugged into the top of the unit and could run CD ROM's as well as Audio and Karaoke discs. However, the CD plug ins best feature was the Virtual Light Machine created by veteran programmer Jeff Minter. The VLM was built into the CD and incorporated a psychedelic light show with any music CD you inserted into the machine... Hmm, now where have I seen that before!

Act 6 WHO? ATARI!

Timeline: 1991 - 1995

Will Granzier A.K.A AtariBaby takes his educated trip back in time to when gaming changed the worlds economy.

All in all the Jaguar was the last thing ever made by the company that on so many occasions revolutionised the gaming world! With no money in the bank and no where to go Atari finally discontinued the production of the Jaguar as well as production of any software for it. The Jaguar and the software is still on sale, however it was never developed any further. In conclusion, the Atari corporation had gone to the big video game archive in the sky. The Arcade division of Atari games, (whose last game as Atari Warner Interactive was Primal Rage) was purchased by Williams / Midway who are still continuing the Atari arcade side of things. As far as the computer / console Atari Corp goes, it was dissolved and all the stock shares were purchased by disk drive manufacturer JTS.

On Feb 23, 1998 all of JTS's Atari assets, property rights and licence agreements were purchased by the HIACXT Corporation for \$ 5 Million. HIACXI is owned by HASBRO Interactive who is one of the biggest game publishers in the USA. Who knows... maybe we will still see a new look ATARI games console in the near future! About 4 months ago the details of the then very secretive sale of Atari were made known to the gaming industry. If you want to read all about the legal mumbo jumbo and the sale of all the company's assets visit

www.sec.gov/archives/edgar/data/941167/0001

017469-98-009085.txt

So Atari had come and gone, but what now? Well as we know now, the console industry was far from dead. When the Jaguar was released, various other systems came to life. Two of the very short lived systems that could have made it in a big way if it wasn't for the 'hard-headed' rivalry between their developers, was Phillips' CD-i (CD interactive) and the Panasonic 3DO. These machines were designed very much the same as the PlayStation as both only used CD based software and were true 32 bit machines! As an owner of a 3DO I can honestly

say that most of the games are on par with most PlayStation titles. Both companies had the best of intentions with technology that was pretty good and innovative. Phillips even had plans to release videos on the CD-i format. Although they had the vision, their lack of marketing and the inability to gain support from big movie companies like WB and 20th Century soon put these plans out of touch. It might be interesting to note that the CD-i technology was eventually purchased by Sony, and some in the know say that they developed the format into what we today know as DVD.

And so in the end after all the dust settled only 2 players were left on the gaming field - Nintendo and Sega (and by 1995 the big name of Sony would be added to that list). But that my children is another story for another issue. Next month we embark on an all new history lesson as we will have a look at the stories behind the development of some of the worlds most famous 'historical' arcade games starting with a game that sold over 70 000 units in 4 years.

Until then, here is the official console gaming dateline for your amazement and as they say, the rest is history...

AtariBaby

1972	ODESSY 100
1975	PONG
1976	FAIRCHILD/CHANNEL F
1977	ATARI 2600 VCS, BALLY ASTROCADE, RCA STUDIO 2
1978	MAGNAVOX ODESSY 2
1980	MATTEL INTELLIVISION
1982	ATARI 5200, COLECO VISION 1, MILTONBRADLEY MICROVISION
1983	MATTEL AQARIUS, NINTENDO FAMICOM
1984	CRASH!
1985	NES
1986	SEGA MASTERSYSTEM, ATARI 7800
1987	ATARI XE
1988	NEC PC ENGINE ALSO KNOW AS TURBO GRAPHX
1989	GAMEBOY, LYNX
1990	SNK NEO GEO, GAME GEAR
1991	NES FAMICOM
1993	JAGUAR, 3DO, CD-I
1994	SEGA 32X, GENESIS
1995	SEGA SATURN, PLAYSTATION, NINTENDO VIRTUAL BOY

I'M SURE THIS TIMELINE GRAPH BRINGS BACK MANY MEMORIES TO THE OLD MEN OF GAMING. WE ARE ABLE TO REMINISCE ABOUT THE DAYS WHEN GAMES WERE DESIGNED AROUND GAMEPLAY AND NOT WHICH COULD RUN QUICKER FRAME RATES ON A NEW MACHINE.

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The Demo Scene

Last month I outlined how to go about designing a demo. Since then I've had some feedback on the method I outlined. Some said it was restrictive, and one or two of you said I forgot to mention "main chaining." Well, I didn't forget it - I just think it's not worth the tears and crying you'll experience to try and get it working. In case any of you are lost, here's how main chaining works. Instead of writing a timer-based script engine and then writing each part as a separate unit, main-chaining says each piece of code should be written separately and debugged separately (sometimes by different coders) and then "chained" together into a single demo. The name comes from the C language - each C program by definition has a main() function which is the program's entry point. It sounds great in theory - copy and paste all the main()'s into one and hey presto - a demo. This can work - some of the great all time demos are main chained, but I would advise against it. Firstly, as soon as some code that works fine by itself is integrated into a larger system, the potential for bugs arises. This will happen, as Murphy's Law dictates, the night before the demo competition where you want to unveil your creation. Secondly, it does depend on you using the SAME library versions between coders - and even sometimes between pieces of code that one coder has written himself. Be warned. Lastly it will be harder to sync your demo with the music.

Improving your design

Last month's column touched upon what good design is and what it isn't. Defining good design is a lot harder to do in detail so I'll cheat by analysing a classic demo and ask why it seems to be well designed. Probably the most famous demo of all time is Second Reality by the Future Crew. Coded in 1993, and running at full frame rate on a 486-33, it represents the ultimate combination of good design, fast code and good music. It's not flawless by any means - some of the art was ripped off and FLI animations were used in

DEMO DESIGN IMPROVING YOUR DEMO DESIGN

BY PAUL FURBER

- PART B

[HTTP://WWW.OVERLOAD.CO.ZA/SASCENE](http://www.overload.co.za/sascene)

E-MAIL: [SADemo@EGROUPS.COM](mailto:sademo@egroups.com)

some of the effects - but it's a good benchmark. So here are some design tips with examples taken from Second Reality. Don't go out and blatantly copy their design since the first design tip is:

ORIGINALITY

If you can't do it better, don't do it. Rather think of something that has never been done before in a demo. It's not easy but it is possible.

Examples from 2ndR: Most of the effects were original at the time - the city fly-through, the delayed-dot tunnel, rotating texture maps and bouncing pictures. These have all been copied to death - think up some new ones!

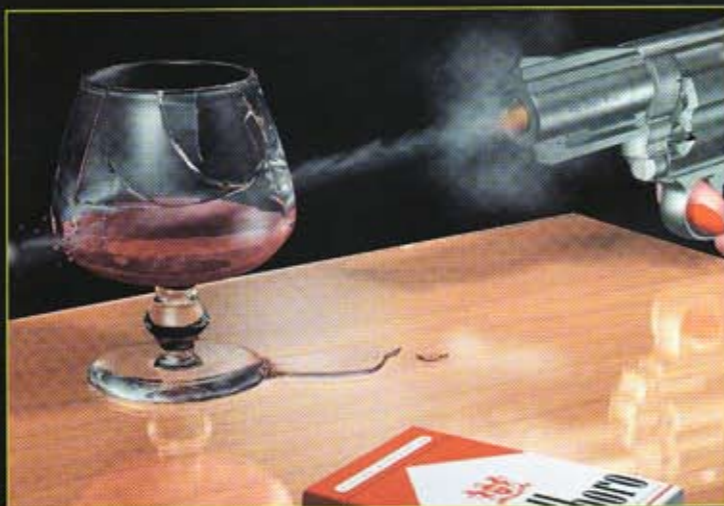
SYNCHRONISATION

This is a key element in design. Your audience will notice when the music and effects are synchronised and might forgive some slow code or lack of originality if they are well synched. Examples from 2ndR: The bouncing polygon bounces in time to the

music. A nice touch. The transitional fades come in in time to the drumbeats - listen out for "get down!" You can make sure your demos are synched from the ground up by making sure the first thing you write is a scripting engine. The rest will be much easier.

TRANSITION

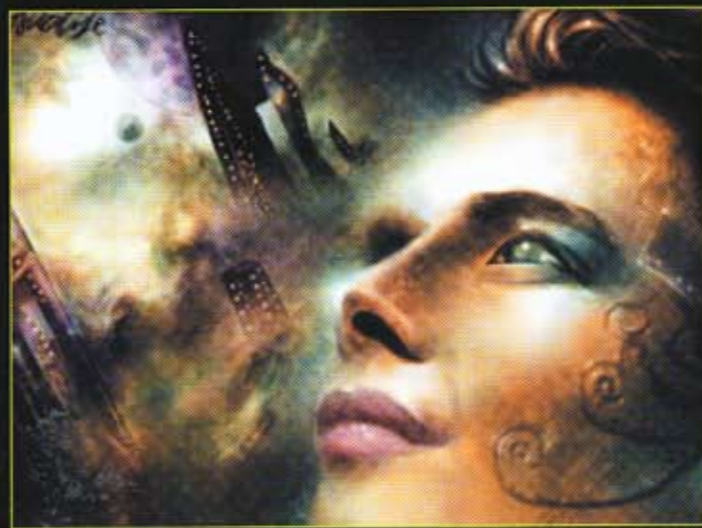
Work as hard on the transitions between effects as on the effects themselves. Examples from 2ndR: The flash of the first explosion becomes a white screen that fades out into the title picture. Cross-fades



between sections. The way the rotating polygons from the previous effect become part of the city fly-through introduction. In fact, just about every little section goes smoothly from one to the other. Nuff said.

Some news to finish off this week: Optimise 99 is in planning stage and will hopefully be held in a few months' time. A venue and some sponsors are being organised as we speak. I'll keep you posted but the most important message is Participate! Visit <http://www.overload.co.za/sascene> and enter! You can also send a message to sademo@egroups.com to subscribe to the local demo scene mailing list.

Paul Furber - 'Maverick'



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If you're looking for interactive, there's nothing quite like glaring across a table at an opponent whose strongest desire in life is to end yours - as quickly as possible. Magic: The Gathering is being touted as the gaming phenomenon of the decade, with gamers around the world shuffling carefully constructed decks of cards to cream the opposition. Last count had over 5-million players in 50 countries taking part - some of them on a professional level. But what's all the fuss about? New Age Gaming tore open a few packs and looked inside.

Caffeine Upgrade

New Age Gaming welcomes a new section into its realms of gaming, this time the overwhelmingly popular card game series of Magic the Gathering enters our domain. 'Why?' Well as most dedicated gamers know, we normally divide our time between the screens and the tables, so we decided we would support our next best passion. Jokes aside Magic the Gathering is growing on a daily basis and we want to be a part of it. Now if only I could get a glimpse of Soul Assassin's deck.

Give Away

SPECIAL BONUS ISSUE

NEW AGE GAMING APRIL 1999

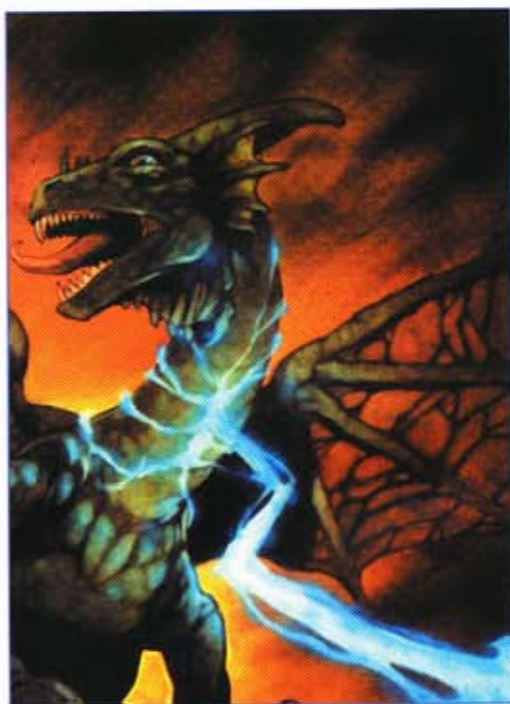
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-3 -2

It's a kind of Magic. The basic idea behind the game is relatively simple. You have 20 life and the moron on the other side of the table has the same. Whoever loses all their life first is just that - the loser. How you take your opponent apart though is what makes the game interesting. Each card works in a different way, and it's how you put the cards together in your own deck that makes the difference. In addition, when you consider that there are over 4 000 cards to choose from, you start realising how complicated this game can get. "There are basically two kinds of cards," explained Martin Frain, partner in Games Emporium, the company that distributes the game. "Your resource or land cards, and your spell cards, which do the damage and protect you. The more powerful the spell, the more resource cards you need on the table." What he's trying to say is that it's not the guy with the biggest stick who's going to win. You need to balance your deck with a variety of cards to deal with any threat at the start of the game, as well as the more powerful problems towards the end. "The best place to start playing is with Portal, or Portal Second Age. Then move onto the 5th Edition Game, or the soon to be released Classic Game, then all the expansions," says Martin. "All the cards are compatible with each other."

Big tournaments around South Africa

Tickets to tournaments overseas - including the \$250 000 World Championships in Japan - are up for grabs to top South African Magic players. Regional Champions will be crowned in Johannesburg and Cape Town on April 11, Port Elizabeth on April 17, Durban on April 18, Bloemfontein on April 25 and Pretoria on May 2. Top players from each of these events will meet each other and last year's National Team, in the National Championships at Eastgate on June 5 and 6, where the top four players left standing will be chosen to represent South Africa in Japan. There they will meet the top players from around 40 other countries. In July at the GenCon Games and Comics Fair you can qualify for



\$150 000 Pro Tour London, with two tickets up for grabs. If you want to get some practice in for these events, there are tournaments held around the country every week. You get an international rating and free membership to the Duelist's Convocation International (DCI). This is an international club of Magic players, who vie for honours and invitations to top events. The top 25 ranked players in South Africa will be invited to play at our National Championships for instance. Last year's team of SA Champions Ruaan Marais (Cape Town), Michael Nurse (Johannesburg), John Bromberger (Cape Town) and Kelvin Bosch (Durban) will be fighting off challengers to their crown over the grueling two day tournament.

Where to get it

Magic: The Gathering is now available at Incredible Connection outlets countrywide and better bookshops. You can expect to pay around R69.95 for a starter pack and R21.95 for a booster pack. If you buy a Portal starter at Incredible Connection, you get three Portal boosters worth R66 free of charge!

In the bag

New Age Gaming and Games Emporium have teamed up to give you a present to celebrate NAG's first birthday - a freebie Portal Demo pack, or a booster pack. The Demo pack gives you a brief run-down on how the game is played and some sample cards. The booster is a random assortment of cards, which you can put towards your first deck.

On the web

Details of events and lists of retailers, plus more information on how to get started can be found at <http://www.geon.co.za>. It's a South African based site run by the distributor, Games Emporium.

Rush out and get your Starter Pack or upgrade today, you won't regret it.



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A GLIMPSE OF THE FUTURE



WE HAVE SOME NEWS FOR YOU AND I THINK YOU'D BETTER SIT DOWN FOR THIS.

March the second will stand out as a day to remember for any PlayStation fan. It is the day Sony Computer Entertainment announced details of the successor to the highly successful PlayStation gaming console. Their research and development project for the design of the next-generation system is finally complete, and from the specifications, it seems that PlayStation enthusiasts are in for one hell of a ride.

With the release of the Dreamcast from Sega at the end of 1999 everyone knew that Sony would announce the specifications for its next generation console soon afterwards. Nobody knew just how long afterwards and some of us were beginning to have doubts about the next console from Sony. Finally all PlayStation fans have an official reply from Sony on their upcoming console, which at the time of writing this article still has not been named. Call it PlayStation 2 - call it PlayStation 2000... Call it whatever you like for the moment, but for this article I will simply refer to the next generation console as the PlayStation 2 which everybody has been calling it since rumours started flying around on the Internet.

The PlayStation 2 will be incorporating some of the most advanced technology available to date as well as some cutting edge new technology, which will be developed by Sony and its partners.

THE LOW-DOWN ON THE PSX2

The new console sports technology such as a DVD, USB, a 128 bit CPU, MPEG 2, Graphics Synthesiser and RAMBUS among others. Below we will take a detailed look at what all these acronyms mean and how they relate to each other.

STORAGE

The next generation console from Sony will ship with the latest disc storage medium - DVD (Digital Versatile Disc). DVD enables the PlayStation 2 to read a DVD-Disc, which has a data capacity of over 17GB of information. This is 26 times the amount of information that can be stored on today's PlayStation CD-ROM discs. An important aspect of a DVD drive is that it can also read today's PlayStation disc. This makes it possible for Sony to make the PlayStation 2 backward compatible with current PlayStation titles (taking into consideration all the other aspects that have to be compatible). A DVD disc looks very similar to a CD-ROM with the exception that it can contain data on both sides. Each side can contain just over 9GB of data using two-layers on each side, each containing 4.7GB. Currently the DVD-Disc medium is primarily used for bringing high-quality digital movies into the average household via expensive DVD-Players or PC-DVD drives. Up to now very few gaming companies have made use of the technology available via DVD and Sony is set to change all of this. We can expect full-featured games, with



EARLY DEVELOPMENT PICS OF A TITLE TO BE RELEASED ON PSX2.

character voices throughout, quality soundtracks and high quality movie scenes - all of this on one disc and then it might not even take up half the space. Initially most games will ship on standard CD-ROM, but eventually Sony predicts that the developers will make the move to DVD-Discs as their need for additional storage increases.

CONNECTIVITY

Sony will employ Universal Serial Bus (USB) technology which will be supported in its new Input / Output (I/O) processor for connecting peripherals to the console unit. USB's strong point is its transfer rate, it can handle data transfer rates between 1.5Mbps and 12 Mbps making it 20 times faster than the serial connection which is used in the current PlayStation.

The new I/O processor will also support IEEE 1394 which can handle data transfer rates between 100Mbps and 400Mbps. These new interfaces allow the PlayStation 2 to connect to other systems and consumer products such as VCRs, Digital Cameras, Printers, Joysticks, Keyboards in the future.

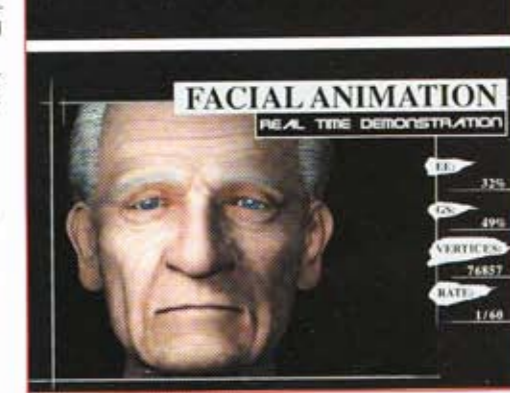
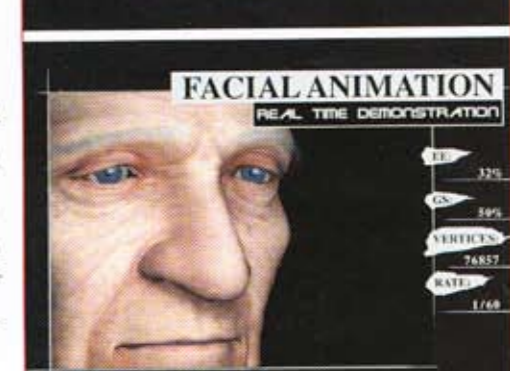
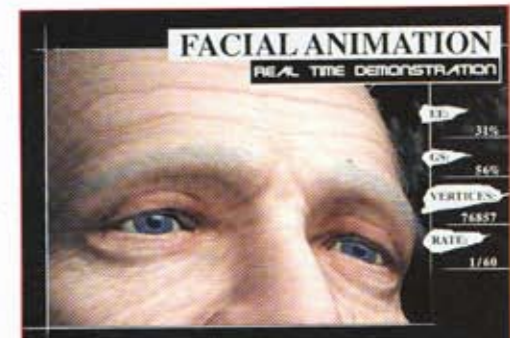
CENTRAL PROCESSING UNIT (CPU)

At the heart of the PlayStation 2 there will be a 128 bit CPU that has been co-developed with the Toshiba Corporation and dubbed "EE" or "Emotion Engine". In order to process massive amounts of multimedia information at the fastest possible speed the data bus, cache memory as well as all the registers will be a 128 bits. All of this is integrated on a single LSI that will be manufactured using state of the art 0.18-micron technology. The development of a full 128-bit processor is a landmark and is the first of its kind in the world.

Built into the chip is a MPEG 2 decoder circuit, a high performance DMA controller, two 64 bit integer units with a 128 bit SIMD multimedia command unit and two independent floating point vector calculation units. The massive combined performance of this CPU permits complicated physical calculations such as NURBS curved surface generation and 3D geometric transformations, which are difficult to perform in real-time on today's PC CPUs.

This means that the PlayStation 2 will be capable of simultaneously processing high-resolution graphics at the same time as high quality DVD images due to the incorporated MPEG-2 decoder. The main memory supporting the high

speed CPU uses Direct RAMBUS in two channels to achieve a 3.2 GB/second bus bandwidth, this is com-

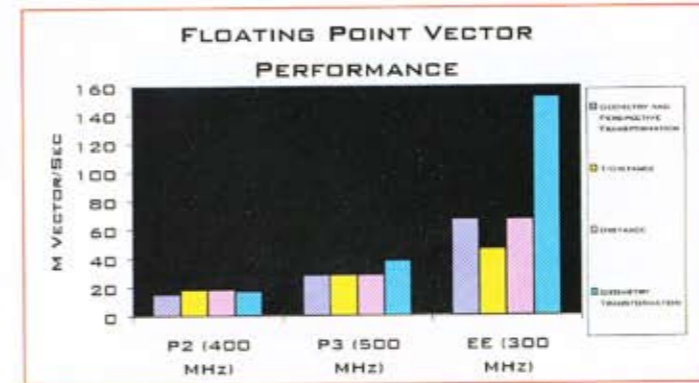


EXAMPLES OF THE FMV QUALITY ANIMATIONS.

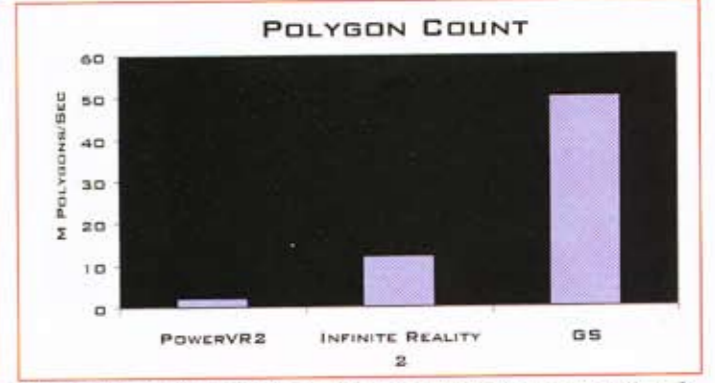
parable to four times the performance of today's latest PCs that are built on the PC-100 architecture. The CPU will have a floating-point calculation performance of 6.3GFLOPS/second making it comparable to that of a super computer. When this is applied to 3D graphics the peak calculation performance reaches 66 million triangles per second, this is on par with that of high-end graphics workstations used in the making of motion picture production.

GRAPHICS RENDERING PROCESSOR

Sony has developed the Graphics Synthesiser (GS) for the next generation PlayStation incorporating a massively parallel rendering engine that contains a 2,560 bit wide data bus, 20 times the size of today's leading graphics accelerators. Using imbedded DRAM process technology, pioneered by SCE for use in advanced graphics technology, the Graphics Synthesiser will be capable of very high draw performance



ALL QUAKERS WILL FIND THESE FLOATING POINT STATS INTERESTING.

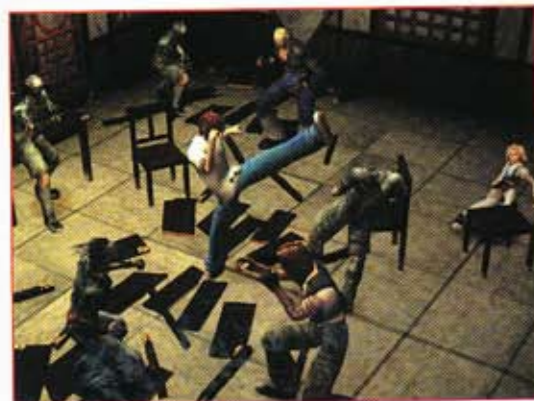


AVERAGING 50 MILLION POLYGONS PER SECOND WITH Z-BUFFERING & ALPHA BLENDING.

EMOTION ENGINE FEATURES AND GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

Cpu Core:	128 bit Risc (MIPS IV-subset)
Clock Frequency:	300Mhz
Integer Unit:	64bit (2-way Superscaler)
Multimedia extended instructions:	107 instructions at 128bit width
Integer General Purpose Register:	32 at 127bit width
TLB:	48 double entries
Instruction Cache:	16Kb (2-way)
Data Cache:	8Kb (2-way)
Scratch pad RAM:	16Kb (dual port)
Main Memory:	32MB (Direct RDRAM)
Memory Bandwidth:	3.2GB/Sec
DMA:	10 Channel
Floating point performance:	6.2 GFLOPS
Geometry:	
Perspective lighting:	66 Million Polygons/sec
Lighting:	38 Million Polygons/sec
Fog:	36 Million Polygons/sec
Curved Surface Generation (bezier):	16 Million Polygons/sec
Image Processing Performance:	150 Million Pixels/sec

and pixel fill rates. The current PlayStation introduced the concept of the Graphics Synthesiser via real-time rendering of 3D objects. The new GS rendering technology is the ultimate incarnation of this concept - delivering unrivalled graphics performance.



The new architecture can also execute recursive multi-pass rendering processing and filter operations at a very fast speed without the assistance of the CPU or main bus access. In the past this was only achievable using very expensive, high performance, dedicated graphics workstations. For everyone out there that understood the above technical specifications - "You can close your mouth now and stop drooling all over your New Age Gaming magazine!"

SOUND

PROCESSOR

In the area of sound processing, Sony have gone beyond the capabilities of the current PlayStation to allow for even more advanced and complex digital enhancements for the processing of sound effects and music. Using the

In the design of a graphics system, the rendering capability is defined by the memory bandwidth between the pixel engine and the video memory. In a traditional graphics system external VRAM is used, which is reached via an off-chip bus, this limits the total performance of the system and Sony has taken a totally different approach. The new GS will have a memory bandwidth of 48 GBs, this is achieved by integrating the pixel logic and the video memory on a single chip. This allows a greater pixel fill rate than that of today's best PC-based graphics accelerators. The GS will have a peak drawing of 75 Million polygons per second when rendering small polygons and will be able to render 150 Million particles per second. Taking into consideration Z-buffering, textures, lighting and alpha blending the GS should be able to sustain a drawing rendering rate of 20 Million polygons per second. This makes it possible to render movie quality images in real-time.



DON'T TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT, BUT THIS IS A DEVELOPMENT PIC OF THE LATEST PLAYSTATION 2 MOTHERBOARD. HONEST! (PS: NOTICE THE 2 HEATSINKS)

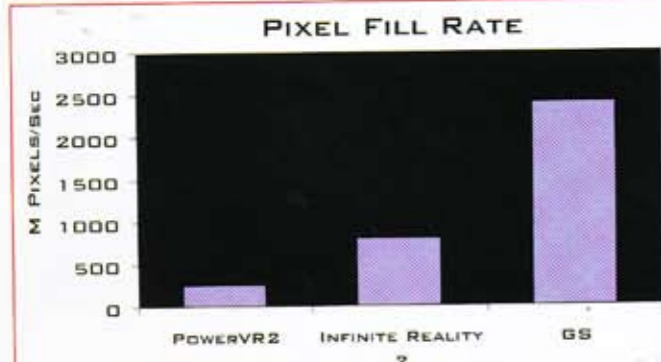
new consoles massive calculation performance and complex enhancements to the sound processor, the new console will allow for the encoding and processing of advanced 3D digital sound techniques such as AC-3 (Digital Dolby Surround) and DTS. With this leap forward in technology the PlayStation 2 will deliver unsurpassed audio quality in the console market and deliver in an area that is usually neglected.

SAY WHAT?

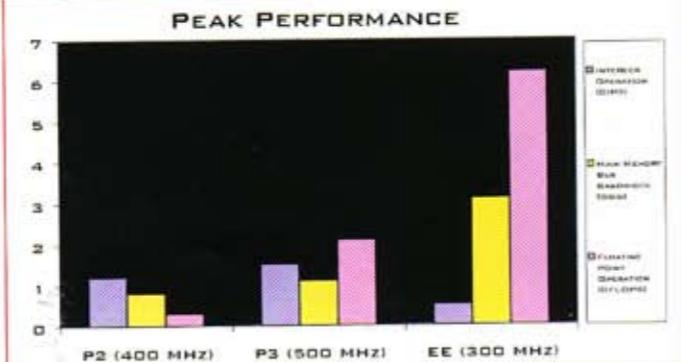
Essentially all the technical ramblings above state that the PlayStation 2 will ship with the first 128-bit processor, which is capable of out performing today's state of the art PCs. The PlayStation 2 is capable of displaying high-resolution DVD graphics and video using an on chip MPEG 2 decoder. Running at its full potential the PlayStation 2 will be capable of making Laura Croft look as detailed in game as she is on the cover of your PlayStation game case. This opens up a whole new dimension for game developers and we can only hope that we will see them use these advanced and cutting edge technologies for furthering our gaming experience. They now have the tools to bring us ultra-realistic graphics and high quality sound for a total gaming immersion experience. We are looking at a new era where movies, music and computer technology will converge into a new form of digital entertainment. It is hard not to get excited by all the new developments and what it means for the future. Now all we can do is wait. The next generation console is projected for release by next year March in Japan, June-July in the States and probably September in Europe. Since we lag behind the European market I think it is safe to say that we will only see the next generation console from Sony at the end of 2000 or early in the year of 2001.

NAG WILL KEEP YOU INFORMED OF DEVELOPMENTS ON THE PSX 2.

Soul Assassin



WERE TALKING MAJOR PC EATING FILL RATES, BRING IT ON!



THE NEW P3'S HAVE THEIR WORK CUT OUT FOR THEM.

TACTICAL ESPIONAGE ACTION METAL GEAR SOLID

GENETICALLY ENGINEERED, RUTHLESS MERCENARIES, HAVE SEIZED HUNDREDS OF NUCLEAR WARHEADS...
THE THREAT OF A NUCLEAR HOLOCAUST LOOMS...

SOLID SNAKE HAS BEEN RECALLED. THE MISSION: INFILTRATE AND ELIMINATE THE TERRORIST THREAT... SINGLEHANDEDLY.

SOLID SNAKE

real name: unknown
sex: male
age: 30s
NAT: USA
height: 182 cm
IQ: 180.
Ex-FOX-HOUND member.
Speaks 6 languages fluently.
Expertise in parachuting.
SCUBA diving, free climbing.

10 / 10 The best game ever made.

OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE

98% Unputdownable, unforgettable...

EDGE MAGAZINE



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What's the ultimate gaming system? Well I recently had the opportunity to spend some time with Intel's latest offering, a 500MHz Pentium III that had been supplied by Mustek. My conclusion - it rocks! - James Mellars

PENTIUM III

It Rocks!

Although Intel's marketing blurb on their web site claims that the PIII was "designed with the Internet in mind", what a waste, we gamers know better, we want high-resolution, millions of colours and triple figure frame rates. Well I don't place much value on dedicated benchmark applications like Winbench et al, I feel an objective test like playing the game is the only way to get a handle on how a system performs. With this in mind I launched my "old faithful" Quake 2 and was initially very impressed with frame rates of 80 plus at 640 x 480. This represents a 33 percent improvement over the Pentium II 350, an increase I was hoping to see at higher resolutions as well. Unfortunately, as is often the case with performance upgrades there is a bottleneck, in this case it was the RIVA TNT (see graph below). Can you believe it, the RIVA is the fastest 3D gaming card around, which is unable to keep up with the PIII. With earlier systems the performance of the CPU was the limiting factor and was particularly noticeable amongst users that had upgraded their 3Dfx Voodoo 1 to Voodoo 2 but were still running early generation Pentium 133, 166MHz systems. These systems showed only a small improvement over the earlier card and only through upgrading the CPU to 233MMX or Pentium II technology are real performance differences seen. The core of the problem lies in that the older CPU's can't shunt enough information through the bus fast enough while the PIII performance has yet to be tested. Fortunately our wishes are soon to be realised as RIVA has recently launched its TNT2, a vastly improved (is that possible?) 3Dfx slayer that early tests show is already way ahead of the Voodoo 3.



PENTIUM III IS POWER!

land however, and Intel might have designed a great chip but their decision to include a unique ID number on each Pentium III chip has a number of interest groups crying 'foul'. The ID number effectively allows Intel to track usage and many feel that Intel is infringing their rights to privacy. The unique identifier will mean that over-the-Net communications will carry what amounts to user fingerprints. Consumers can turn the ID feature off, but it turns itself back on each time the computer is restarted. If the serial number can be linked in databases like your Social Security number or is used by credit bureau and marketing companies, it allows a massive profile to

can display 1920x1200 at 32-bit colour with at 85Hz. Gaming on the Pentium III is sure to increase once Intel release the AGP 4x technology expected later this year but at the moment it is very quick. Playing Half-Life is amazingly smooth on the PIII and in fact feels a little too quick at 800x600 so I had to increase the resolution to 1024 to make it playable but I didn't notice any real difference.

All's not perfect in Pentium

be collected and sold. Intel has relentlessly tried to minimise the damage by developing an application that allows users to disable the onboard ID chip. "Not enough" is the general consensus as recent developments of two net based viruses has shown how the ID chip can be turned back on without the users consent. Arguments are still flying back and forth and I am sure we have not heard the last of this controversy.

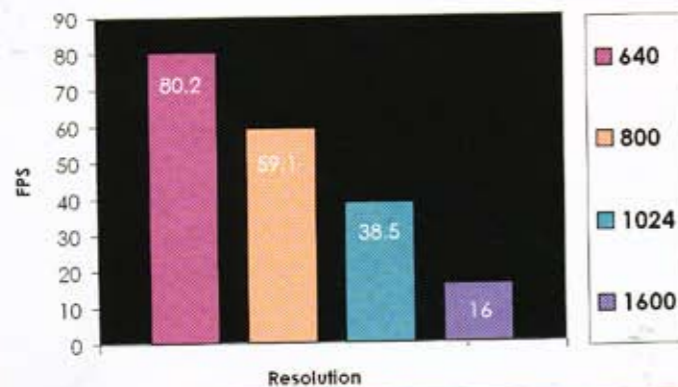
The Pentium III (known under the code name Katmai) has no obvious features that suggest an immediate performance increase. The justification for the new name lies in a set of 70 new multimedia instructions, known as 'SSE' standing for 'streaming SIMD extensions'. These new instructions enable the PIII CPU to perform multiple floating-point calculations at the same time, which has brought it to the attention of us gamers. Although the earlier MMX standard was a great addition the Pentium range AMD beat Intel introducing their 3DNow! technology which greatly improves performance on 3D gaming. Unfortunately much like AMD's 3DNow, the application has to be programmed for SSE. Which means that we will have to wait until software vendors begin to develop for this standard. Without enhanced software the PIII will run identically as on a Pentium II at the same clock speed. In order to take advantage of the new features it requires DirectX 6.1.

James Mellars

Specs

- 0.25 micron processor, 2 V.
- Katmai core, modified Deschutes core with SSE that uses Slot 1.
- 512 kB external second level cache running at half the processor clock frequency.
- SSE floating point SIMD instructions, a single pipeline that is able to perform four 32 bit single precision floating point numbers at the same time.
- Currently available at 450MHz and 500MHz.
- SSE supported by DirectX 6.1 and up.

Riva TNT Frames Per Second



PERFORMANCE COMPARISONS AT DIFFERENT RESOLUTIONS USING A 16MB RIVA TNT ON THE NEW PENTIUM III CPU SHOW INTERESTING PERFORMANCE RATIOS.

Critically Acclaimed, Award Winning Speakers

CAMBRIDGE
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-PC Gamer

MICROWORKS
BY HENRY KLOSS



"THE ONLY SPEAKERS YOU'LL EVER NEED." PC MAGAZINE

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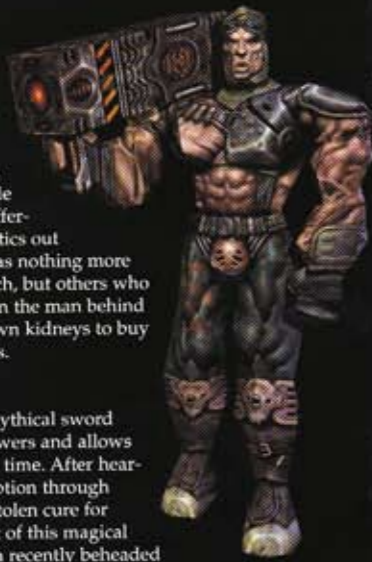


Anyone who has a game like Quake to their credit needs little introduction. John Romero left id software a while back and started his own company called Ion Storm, and ever since, he has become completely consumed by a game called Daikatana. Anticipation dulls the senses, and the last few days before receiving the first demo of this game was spent in a constant state of aimless wonder, nothing received any attention other than the front gate - a portal from which the true sequel to Quake would arrive. **RedTide**

John Romero has always believed in one fundamental axiom, design is law. You might not realise just how much design goes into a game but often you hear of 3000 page design manuals that must be bashed out before the first line of code is ever written, and it's no different with Daikatana. The sceptics out there have hailed Daikatana as nothing more than a glorified Quake II patch, but others who have more than a little faith in the man behind Quake might just sell their own kidneys to buy a copy when it hits the streets.

Mine is bigger than yours is

Daikatana in the game is a mythical sword that holds several hidden powers and allows the wielder to travel through time. After hearing a distressing tale of deception through the misuse of time travel, a stolen cure for aids and the murderous theft of this magical sword from the daughter of a recently beheaded scientist, you decide to accept her request to set



maters right. Hiro Miyamoto is the unlikely name given to you by your mother and after spending years doing push-ups and eating rice you use your martial arts expertise to face your greatest challenge and make a few bucks too. The year is 2455 AD and you must acquire the Daikatana from Benedict's fortress at Kyoto, Japan. Benedict is the evil presence that you must dislodge from his perch among the living to successfully complete the game. In the game, Mikiko Ebihara, the slain scientist's daughter, will accompany you and during the

JOHN ROMERO'S



DAIKATANA

GENRE: FIRST PERSON SHOOTER

DEVELOPER: ION STORM

PUBLISHER: EIDOS INTERACTIVE

SUPPLIER: DATATEC CREW
TEL: (011) 233-1000

INTERNET: WWW.DAIKATANA.COM

assault on the fortress, you will free a new ally - Superfly Johnson. You must all work together in the game to achieve success. After you find the sword you must return to the year 2030 AD to set history right but along the way something goes horribly wrong, landing you in 2300BC - Ancient Greece. After battling giant scorpions and other mythological creatures you arrive in Norway, 560 AD. Dragons and wizards must now be hacked through



BEFORE REDTIDE



AFTER REDTIDE

THE CLASSIC EXAMPLE OF A PERFECTLY DESIGNED 3D WALL BEFORE REDTIDE ENTERED THE VICINITY AND NAMED HIMSELF THE NEW PICASSO.



FANCY MEETING CLEOPATRA IN A PLACE LIKE THIS.



THE HEALING CUBICLE BRINGS BACK MEMORIES OF HALF-LIFE.

YOU NEVER READ THIS HERE!

Many people downloaded the demo and discovered to their horror it could only be played on Mplayer.com. Now this isn't a problem in the land of cable modems and high speed Internet connections, but here in South Africa it is. Fortunately a few days after the Mplayer.com demo was released some bright spark at the Extreme Annihilation Tournament had the foresight to grab a few DLL files and the Daikatana.exe from a fully functional version. A crack was shortly conceived, unlocking all the other in-game options, including extensive multiplayer options allowing you to play an unrestricted Daikatana deathmatch on any network. You can find the patch on almost every Quake related site in cyberspace. You have to love the Internet.

to finally get back to 2030AD for the final showdown at Alcatraz, which is authentically modelled on the real life version. Each era is broken up into seven different levels with a secret level on each, and there'll also be a number of specially designed deathmatch levels, by John Romero himself.

Guns & Ammunition

Each episode will feature around six different weapons, including special sword powers, giving the player 30 different weapons throughout the game. Each era will have specific weapons suitable

to that time and expect to end up using Poseidon's Trident in Greece and more futuristic weapons in Japan. Unlikely as it may sound, carwax also features in the line up of collectable items alongside



LIKE LAMBS TO THE SLAUGHTER.



THE RAIN EFFECT IS ACCURATELY PORTRAYED BY THE ENHANCED QUAKE 2 ENGINE

armour and jet boots. The sword and your character also have attributes that, like experience points, accumulate during the game. Movement speed, acrobatic ability, health, attack power and attack speed must all be improved on for you to be tough enough for the challenges that lie ahead. The Daikatana is the key to all these abilities and will eventually release seven secret powers if used during battle. The idea is that if you use the sword for fighting enemies it will gain the powers, accumulating power as you go. The game will present a num-

ber of different strategies when using the sword, so be careful not to drop it down a well in Greece.

The proof is in the tasting

The demo itself weighs in at a hefty 30 plus megs and is only available for play over the Mplayer network, which, as usual has no presence on our dark continent, but a quick overseas hop on the Internet proved that once again bandwidth isn't Africa's strongpoint. Oh, well we'll just have to make do with what we have then. After spending some time playing the two levels on offer the report is a throbbing thumbs up. Daikatana is another Quake II engine overhaul that miraculously features the one ingredient that Quake II never had - speed. Now don't go thinking frame rate or polygon pushing here - it's all about how the game plays. Daikatana is lightning fast and brings back the one thing John Romero fully supports, gore. Buckets of giblets and blood rain down after a successful strike, the walls retain the gruesome hallmarks of rockets tearing through flesh, the bullet holes actually look like they're on the walls and everything moves as fast as the original Quake. A solid prediction might be a little optimistic at this stage and the competition is going to be fierce this year in the first person arena, but there can be only one! Daikatana is definitely going to rock your world!

REDTIDE



For decades now Microsoft's Flight Simulator series of civilian aviation simulators have been setting the standard for civilian flight simulators. Competitors have come and gone. Some have almost toppled the Flight Simulator series and others died without so much as a whimper. Now there is another brave contender... Fly! from Terminal Reality. - Reaper

Light will reflect time of day and weather conditions will be fully configurable. The game will also model built-in GPS navigation systems.

What about the planes you ask?

Well this title will include single, dual or turboprop and of course, the obligatory business jet. You will be able to fly anywhere in the world and several US cities are accurately modelled to scale. Multiplayer is important in any new game and Fly! hasn't skimped over this aspect of the game. Fly! includes multiplayer in the so called "Flight Party" which is internet support out of the box. It will also support LAN and modem play. Of course, Flight Party will be server based and there is thus also the Briefing room which is a non-server based multiplayer where you can simply connect together without going through the server.

The game will also offer online flight sectional charts and a vector based navigation system. It will also provide a map in a map window so that you can determine where you are at any given moment.

If you're like me, you'll find it difficult to avoid getting bored on those long stretches from city to city. Well Fly! caters for us with the Distance Compression feature that will compress distances by actually shrinking the simulated world and thereby allowing you to get to places quicker without speeding up the game time. This little feature is a blessing, but remember to keep those coffee breaks short.

Terminal Reality promises reality (excuse the pun) in spades with regards to flight models and from what I saw in the beta they are going to deliver everything they promised.

Well so far you may be thinking that there doesn't seem to be anything new in this game that hasn't been incorporated in other propeller head games already. Well for one thing they are going to include everything all the others have and then add some unique features in an attempt to create the ultimate civilian flight simulator. All in all Fly! seems to be an attempt to marry the fantastic flight models of Microsoft's Flight Simulator with the graphical splendour of Looking Glass' Flight Unlimited II. Considering how great these two titles were in their respective areas this can't be a bad thing. Only time will tell if Microsoft really has something to worry about and from what I've seen they better get working real hard on their Flight Simulator 2000 if they intend remaining King of the Civil Flight Simulators because Fly! is the new kid on the block and he is fighting fit!

Reaper



So what's going to make this particular contender different from all the others? Well how about beautiful true colour graphics for a start? How about integrated Air Traffic Control and realistic interaction with airports and other aircraft? How about dynamic scenery and a global digital elevation



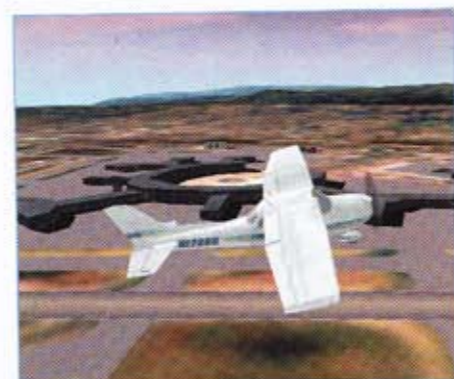
THE CITIES ARE ALL AUTHENTIC MODELS OF THEIR REAL LIFE COUNTERPARTS.

model for realistically modelled terrain. The cockpits will be fully functional and you can click on all the dials and buttons, including the radio stacks. Realistic vehicle activity at all the airports will add to that feeling of being there. The changing



EVERYTHING IS CRAFTED WITH LOVING DETAIL.

GENRE: CIVILIAN FLIGHT SIMULATOR
DEVELOPER: TERMINAL REALITY INC.
PUBLISHER: GATHERING OF DEVELOPERS
SUPPLIER: MULTIMEDIA WAREHOUSE TEL: (011) 315-1000
INTERNET: WWW.TERMINALREALITY.COM



HOUSTON, WE HAVE A LIFT OFF!



OH, HOW I WISH I HAD A FEW BOMBS ON BOARD THIS THING!



THE TERRAIN IS LOVELY TO LOOK AT AND DOESN'T GET ALL UGLY WHEN YOU FLY CLOSE TO THE GROUND.



It hasn't been too long since the Quake II killer would-be Unreal was released. The game was plagued firstly by poor performance on the Internet and later on by non-existent OpenGL support. The latter has only recently been fixed while the better Internet code was introduced late last year. Now we are sitting on the verge of the release of Unreal Tournament, which is designed to draw your average day computer user into the thrill of Deathmatch and Capture the flag. Just how is Epic going to implement this is the question? And how do you a new gamer buy a multiplayer only product? - Soul Assassin

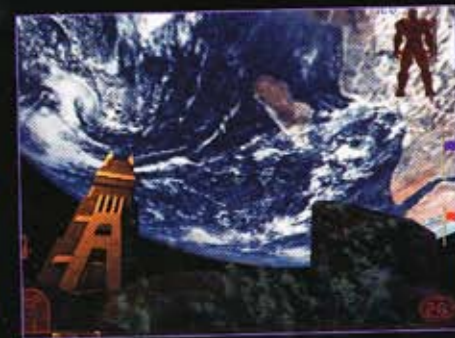
I remember when Unreal was released how excited I was, the Ed brought me back a copy from E3 due to the late availability in South Africa. Now Unreal Tournament is just over the horizon and I am getting all excited again. The question is just what has been changed in Unreal to warrant calling Unreal Tournament exactly that.

The answer is that Epic has used the Unreal engine to create a game that caters for your average day computer user who has no idea what the terms Deathmatch and CTF are. To introduce these people to the thrill of first person action gaming Epic has created a set of tutorials to explain how each of the different types of multiplayer games work. In addition there are a couple of different variations to your standard Deathmatch games

such as Domination and Assault. All the different modes have tutorial levels to introduce new players to the different playing styles. A voice instructor accompanies you and arrow prompts on screen relates the different HUD statuses and their purpose. Unfortunately UT being a beta product still, I had little luck in getting the Domination or Assault tutorials to work and some of the new levels still use the old HUD from Unreal. The new HUD uses a paperdoll mechanism to display your health status. This makes it easier to see what condition your character is in and if you should run for the nearest health. The most noticeable new feature in Unreal Tournament are the user-friendly menus, which look absolutely amazing. They make it easier to configure all the video, sound, network and control options. Unfortunately to get to the true power of the Unreal engines features you still have to use the advanced settings as they are found in Unreal. Epic could truly do some work on these options as they are often cryptic and can confuse new players not to mention one wrong setting can screw up your whole game if you don't know what you are doing.

There are also some new textures and weapons in UT. The new weapons include the Translocator, a CTF teleport weapon, the Pulse Gun, which shoots green light-

GENRE: 1ST PERSON MULTIPLAYER
DEVELOPER: EPIC MEGAGAMES
PUBLISHER: GT INTERACTIVE
SUPPLIER: DATATEC CREW TEL: (011) 233-1000
INTERNET: WWW.EPICGAMES.COM



the BFG making it hard to duck. Most of the textures and weapons from Unreal have a new look and I honestly think they look a hell of a lot better, not that there was anything wrong with the old weapons. The new look has a more futuristic feel to it and offers more graphics detail on the weapon itself. One other improvement includes revamped sound effects for the weapons, they sound

more powerful now and you get a kick out of firing the weapons. There are still some tweaks to be done here and there in UT but overall the game is looking excellent at this point. As for levels all I can say is WOW! The new levels are up to the usual Epic high standards and some of them even surpass the standard. Two of the levels made a big impression on me, them being a CTF level based on a rotating asteroid just off the Nali homeworld, the other an assault level where you have to disable a moving train's control room. On the train level you really have a sense of speed as rock cliffs go zooming by while you move from train car to train car. I also saw a one-way mirror on one new level and it will be interesting to see just how the Unreal fans will be using it in their levels.

UT also features some new and improved AI code for the included bots to make training for CTF and DM that much easier. You can even order the bots to do basic tasks such as 'Flank Me' or 'Get the flag'. Steve Polge the AI programmer for Unreal has been very busy and is introducing some new concept to playing with bots. A couple of features are still missing such as bug free OpenGL support and Epic has announced that they will be sorted out when the final version is released. Apparently the manufacturers of some of the OpenGL cards still have some driver issues to resolve as well.

So far UT is looking excellent and I think Unreal fans will appreciate the new features in UT. I can hardly wait to get my hands on the release code. Whether UT will succeed in bringing in new people to

play multiplayer games is anyone's guess, but if new gamers are looking for an introduction to the ultimate gaming experience then UT is a good choice to teach them the ins and outs of multiplayer.

SOUL ASSASSIN

UNREAL TOURNAMENT



A NEW RANGE OF BATTLE EQUIPMENT WILL IMPRESS ALL SHOOTER FANS.

ning plasma type energy, and the Redeemer, which launches a small warhead. Clearing out a room with the Redeemer reminds me of the power of the BFG in Quake II, its projectile, which looks like a rocket, just moves a lot faster than



At its core R-Type Delta is a nineties resurgence of the archetypal arcade shooter R-Type. The game's developer and the entire series in fact, all but disappeared until now. R-Type is back, and will command your undivided attention when it's finally released. - RedTide

R-TYPE Δ

Spot the Difference
R-Type Delta is a side-scrolling arcade action title that unbelievably manages to bring a few strategy elements to this forgotten genre. From its infancy right up to the early nineties the computer games market was dominated by games like R-Type. Real Time Strategy didn't exist and everyone was happy just going up against the toughest aliens the galaxy had to offer in a flashy spaceship. R-Type Delta is a glance back into the past when people knew how to put a game together.

Unique Selling Points
The first thing you'll notice is that the game is now polygon based and offers the player a true blasting frenzy in

defenceless, unable to fire any other weapon. Besides collecting missiles and miniature orbs each ship is equipped with a different Force Unit - this is a large indestructible satellite that comes in three different versions. For the R9 'Delta' ship the force unit is standard from the previous games and either attaches to the front or rear of the ship or floats freely around the screen. The R13 Ship, the Albatross, has an Anchor



THIS IS THE MIGHTY DELTA WEAPON IN ACTION!

100% saturation - once this level of charge has been attained you can unleash your Delta Weapon. This special Delta charge is a screen warping super weapon that destroys anything on the screen, it won't destroy a boss that hasn't been softened up a little so trying to use it on initial boss contact will prove fatal for you.

Promises and Lies

The developers are promising cut scenes to advance the story along, perhaps giving a point to all the destruction. Besides the three standard issue ships there will be a fourth 'hidden' ship with its own unique weapons and Force Unit. Over seven levels will be on offer and each level will have up to four bosses to get past. The game has a different approach to the credits system, the more you play the more credits you get - they are limited and this will prevent finishing the game in one sitting.

It's been a long time since the last R-Type Big Boss was defeated and this late nineties update has everything the original game had and much more. Highly anticipated is a mild term and welcome back Irem, you've been missed.



SPECIAL EFFECTS ABOUND IN R-TYPE DELTA

Force Unit that is connected to your ship using an electric strip of energy that destroys anything it touches. The last ship is the RX, 'Cerberus' and it uses the Tentacle type force unit which can best be described as an automatic sphere of death, it does all the hard work for you leaving the important task of dodging bullets in your fumbling hands. Now

the third dimension. Polygons always increase the scope of the game and admittedly look rather nice on the screen but this extra dimension and visual stimulation always comes at a price, speed. Fortunately, all evidence from the R-Type Delta beta preview is that speed isn't going to be a problem, the game flies along happily even when there are swarms of aliens everywhere. There are three ships you can fly in the game and depending on which one you select before playing you'll get slightly different weapons and abilities. The ships all have a super charge weapon which keeps increasing its charge rate the longer you hold down the fire button. The upside to this is that it destroys most things on the screen with one shot and the downside is that it takes time to charge it up, leaving you

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DEVELOPER: IREM
PUBLISHER: SCEE
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This month we've been swamped with preview copies of PlayStation titles, so we scratched around in the Editor's 'new stuff' box and came up with eight of the best. These games are all in various stages of completion and when we have the final releases, we'll bring you in-depth reviews. So read, dream and drool for now.

SMASHING...

ANNA KOURNIKOVA'S SMASH COURT TENNIS

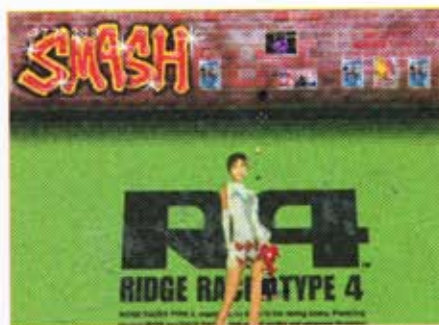


Namco are currently working on an interesting tennis game featuring Anna Kournikova. If you do a quick Internet search for Anna Kournikova you'll discover just how popular this young tennis player is, making her the perfect choice for a tennis game license.



SMASH THAT BALL, BUT WATCH OUT FOR GARB

We received a very early preview copy of the game, which bears an uncanny resemblance to Everybody's Golf, in that it has a distinct cartoon feel to it which is a little odd considering the Anna Kournikova 'real-person' license. This cartoon representation of players allows for some creative latitude when dealing with character animations resulting in a game that's fun to play and also fun to watch with angry stamping of feet and desperate dives for the ball. So far there are four different types of games you'll be able to play including Exhibition, Tournament, and two different practice



A LITTLE PRACTICE SESSION, THE MORE YOU HIT THE WALL THE MORE SCREEN SCROLLS DOWN.

modes. There is support for up to four different players on the same court along with an interesting variation to the game of tennis, the Bomb Ball, an explosive slant on the traditional game. Playing the early preview proved to be a lot of fun and despite the wide range of shots and techniques required to send the ball over the net, everything becomes clear once you discover that it's all down to timing and positioning. The game has a long way to go until it's finished and if the developers manage to retain the fun feel of the game it should prove to be a winner - game set and match.



YOU ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT PERSON IN THE GAME - BUT DON'T LET IT GO TO YOUR HEAD

STARTING...

POPULOUS 3: THE BEGINNING

Bullfrog have always managed to gain a massive loyal following with basically any game they release. Following on the success of the PC version of Populous 3: The Beginning, they are now releasing a PlayStation version. Populous is a god game where you must control the destiny of your worshippers playing as their shaman. The larger your tribe is and the happier your people are, the more mana your villagers generate. Mana is an ethereal substance that allows your shaman to cast spells and fight the enemy tribes. The early release preview we have is remarkably different to the PC version in that the control mechanism has been redone to suit the PlayStation controller. Some might say that this pseudo-mouse interface is too much trouble and PlayStation owners don't like complicated control systems. On the other hand, to play something of this quality and design a few sacrifices must be made and ultimately the control system works well if given enough time and practice. Populous 3 is an engrossing game that will waste away many hours of your life when it's released.

POUNGING...

TANK RACER

We've seen every conceivable vehicle raced on the PlayStation and more variations of the old tired games than ever before. With a name like Tank Racer you have to wonder what they will think of next - Oil Tanker Racing? Anyway, Tank Racer is a



YOUR TANK GOES SUPERNOVA!



tank racing game, now don't think of these tanks as those slow lumbering armoured behemoths seen in World War 2 movies. These tanks are fast and will blast anything that gets in their way. Playing the game can be described as a hectic battle that



SPLIT SCREEN MAYHEM!

sometimes moves away from racing and on to seeing who can blast whom first. The final game will have plenty of levels and around fifteen different kinds of tanks to race. There will be two multi-player modes, battle mode and racing mode where the idea is to either beat your opponent on the track or blow him up in the arena. If that seems a little tame to some of the more hardcore gamers out there then you'll be happy to know that there will also be a number of power-ups scattered on each track that offer different abilities such as mine laying, turbo and homing missiles. We're anticipating the release of this game which might just prove to be something really different.

SNAPPING...

CROC 2

That charismatic crocodile has returned and this time he must find his family and defeat the evil Baron Dante, again. Information is scant on this title from Fox Interactive, but this second game promises new enemies and huge levels to play



through. The crocodile now also has a few new moves to add to his repertoire. The developers have decided to make everything bigger and better than the last game which is good news for fans out there.



HOT IN THERE?



BURSTING...

BUST-A-MOVE 4

Addictive in the way that Tetris was addictive sums up this cute title quite well. The object of the game is to shoot balloons from the bottom of the screen to the top where they stick to the other balloons up there. When three of the same colour are lined up they pop, reducing the total number of balloons.



TINY BUBBLES GO POP, WHAT IS THAT DRAGON DOING?

The balloons work their way to the bottom of the screen until either you, a friend or the computer loses. This fourth game is more of the same kind of game but has a whole host of new features and



IT'S WAR!

enhancements. There is the new chain reaction, where a whole screen can be cleared with a single lucky pop. There will be five modes of play including Puzzle mode, single player, multiple players, Challenge mode and an edit mode. The edit mode allows you to create your own puzzle boards and save them to a memory card. Much more is promised for the final release and if you liked any of the previous titles then this one promises more - only bigger and better.

SHAPING...

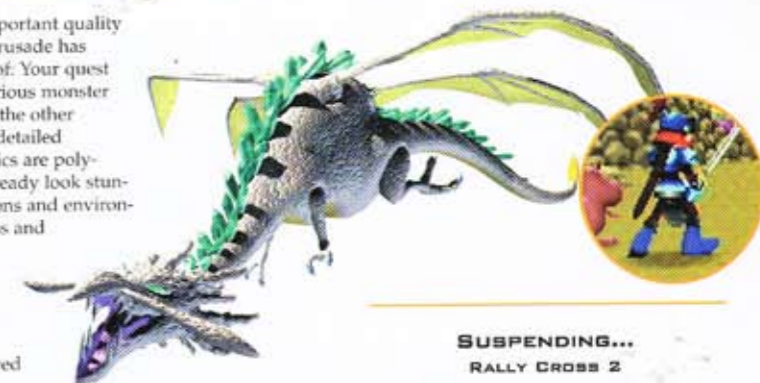
GUARDIAN'S CRUSADE

You're a knight on a quest, nothing new for any seasoned RPG players out there, but execution of the



ARE THESE DAMSELS REALLY WORTH THE EFFORT?

game is the all important quality that Guardian's Crusade has ample quantities of. Your quest is to find a mysterious monster and guide him to the other side of the richly detailed world. The graphics are polygon based and already look stunning, the animations and environments are top class and everything simply oozes quality. From the preview, the monster was a big hit and proved to be a hilarious entity that actually helps you fight your battles by morphing into different things. The final game will have plenty of weapons and magical



SUSPENDING...

RALLY CROSS 2

We've had the preview of this game for quite some time now and just as our issue deadline slipped past the full version arrived at our offices. So we'll have a full review for you next issue but for now get



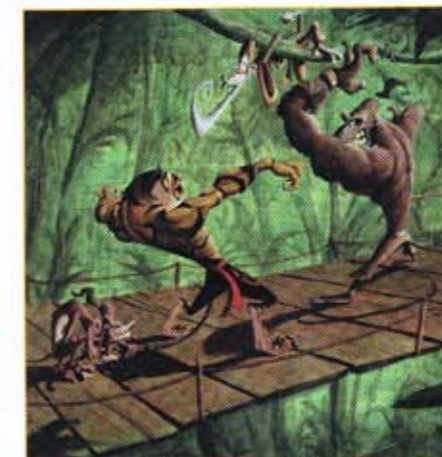
GUARDIAN'S CRUSADE OFFERS A HUGE WORLD TO EXPLORE.

items, all in typical RPG style. The list of features is endless and Guardian's Crusade might just be the definitive PlayStation role playing game this year.

CHOPPING...

TAI FU

Set in ancient China, Tai Fu is a 3D action adventure where you play as a Kung-Fu fighter. Your quest in the game is to destroy the dragon master, who is causing trouble in this otherwise peaceful land. The game will have you exploring 20 levels of suitable Chinese vegetation and features. There is a large number of special moves to master during the



SOME OF THE WACKY CHARACTERS FROM TAI FU

game and if you don't learn how to Pounce Attack then you'll end up fertilising some of that lush vegetation yourself. Your enemies will include monkeys and leopards that are all animated with painstaking attention to detail. This game is set for release soon and looks decidedly atmospheric.



FLYING HIGH!



ready for Rally Cross 2. Sporting a new 3D engine and twice as many tracks as the first Rally Cross this game is looking rather good, if a little bouncy, a problem with a super sensitive suspension system. You'll have more than 20 cars and trucks to choose from and all the vehicles attributes can be fiddled



LET'S PLAY CHICKEN, HEHEJAAAA!

with to your hearts content. The best news is that there will be 24 racing tracks to test your driving skills. The preview showed us realistic body damage after colliding with other cars and some realistic handling of the car, now all they have to fix is the suspect suspension and the invisible walls that confine you to the track. Looks good though and will receive our most critical attentions next month.

Well that's the lot for now, we'll bring you reviews of these exciting games when they're released.

39% - 0%

Any game scoring in this dreaded range isn't even worthy of bargain bin status. Avoid completely. Go lower down the scale and these games just keep getting worse, although titles scoring in the single digits might be good for a laugh. It got 20% for doing something right after all.

49% - 40%

Very poor games fall into this range. Terrible they may be but a few redeeming qualities rescue them from dropping into the next bracket. Sometimes worth a look if they sell in Rands what they scored.

59% - 50%

Middle of the road. Games scoring here are average games, not too good and not too bad. Games like these usually end up in your Christmas stocking from well meaning but clueless grandparents.

69% - 60%

Good solid games usually score around this mark. Combinations of serious flaws or lacking features prevent these games from scoring anything better. Fanatical gamers or fans of the genre will probably love these titles.

79% - 70%

Tricky territory here, there is usually no good reason for not buying a game that scores in this range. Good games here suffer from a tired formula or lack of innovation. Technically flawless but just not very inspired.

89% - 80%

Any game reaching this status deserves your attention. Good in every way but just lacks that little extra that separates it from classic status. No game is ever perfect but some come very close and here is where you'll find them.

100% - 90%

The ultimate achievement for a game is to get over the magic 90%. It represents an automatic purchase if you enjoy the type of game on offer. Also a good place to shop if you're tired of one kind of game and would like to broaden your horizons.

Our recent request for your comments, feelings and general opinions on how we rate our games sparked a deluge of mail on the subject. The consensus so far is that we should keep our scoring as it is. There have been some interesting insights we would like to share with you, one in particular from a man who obviously has way too much time on his hands, we're sure you'll find it interesting, if you can understand it!

Dear NAG

I was delighted to see that in your most recent issue, you were pondering the most informative scales through which to gauge game quality. Being one of the few doddering persons lucky enough to make a living surrounding themselves with such questions, I have several things to say in response to your "E for effort" editorial. Firstly, you are attempting to polarise game quality. A scale of 1-5 is no doubt a little too coarse, whereas a percentage scale vastly exceeds the precision of measurement you (or anyone else) is capable of. In addition, if the objective is to provide a rating system that is understandable and useful to the reader - why not remove the accent of concern from the exact scale used and instead incorporate some device to modify the nature of the scale based on your readership's preferences? [Still with us? Ed]

I suggest a generic scale of 1-7 within each rating category. This is essentially what you arrived at, but you categorised things by percentage. A seven-point scale is a marvellous thing in the statistics used in market research, and a good way to measure psychologically meaningful contrasts. Such a scale would probably mediate the type of ordination (contrasting power) you require. Furthermore, I recommend weighting the scale (i.e. placing more emphasis on some features than others) to reflect different genres of

NUMBER CRUNCH - DERANGED OR JUST SMARTER THAN ALL OF US?

games. For example, story may be less important in some games than graphics (e.g. platform or flight simulators). Sometimes, your reviewers hit against a dead end and have to assign a big yellow 'NA' in the category where it does not seem intuitively obvious. Why story should be any more important to a combat flight simulator than to a racing simulation I don't know - perhaps others do. Certainly, your methods are sometimes subjective - and very much dependent on the particular reviewer. Although, I would not doubt your reviewer's expertise, I'm sure you wonder how and when the opinions and preferences of your readership may differ from those of your reviewers. So, what can one do?

This brings me to my last point. I suggest obtaining such weightings from your reading audience. This would entail carefully designing a questionnaire and asking readers to write in and to voice their opinions about what matters in different genres. You are fortunate not to have to worry about a biased self-selected group of respondents - since NAG readers are a vociferous and spirited bunch it seems. You could then compliment your standard rating with a user-adjusted weighted rating, which would sometimes reflect differences with your overall game ratings. Or, you could use the questionnaire results to understand what to emphasise when reviewing different types of games. In this way, the scaling of your ratings is de-emphasised, and your ratings are filtered through the readership's preferences before being presented to them. The actual scaling need not be important, but the meaning behind the values should be. That's what you are aiming for, right? [Yes, umm, that's right! Ed]

Daniel Polakow
Department of Statistical Sciences
University of Cape Town



TACTICAL ESPIONAGE ACTION
METAL GEAR SOLID

The NAG Editors Choice this month certifies the PlayStation's meteoric rise to fame because of quality games such as Metal Gear Solid.

Espionage and action are as popular as ever, feeding on the communities hunger for more interactivity and intrigue.

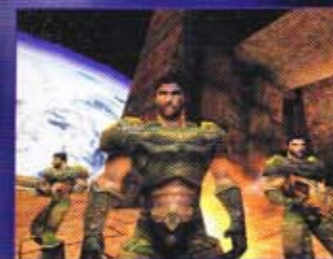
See
PG 66

The Awards Ceremony

	Alpha Centauri PG 44		WWII Fighters PG 60
	Delta Force PG 56		Premier Manager PG 64
	Superbike WC PG 58		Tiger Woods 99 PG 72

UNREAL TOURNAMENT

ALL-NEW. ALL-POWERFULL. ALL-UNREAL.



WELCOME TO THE NEW TEAM SPORT OF EXTREME GAMERS

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If you take a look at your hard drive you've probably still got Quake and Quake 2 installed. Not only do these games provide the very best deathmatch gaming you will ever experience they also support a wide range of modifications created by fans of the game. Extremities represents the best of these modifications picked by id Software themselves. - RedTide

Many games come standard with map editors these days and as far as customisation goes, not counting cheat modes or altered configuration files, this is where it begins and ends. Not too long ago a game arrived on the scene and changed this thinking forever - that game was Quake. Quake had an open architecture that allowed novice and professional programmers and artists alike the opportunity to modify the game at its most basic level. In the same way Quake 2 has garnered a similar kind of cult following out there and the Quake community has grown from strength to strength. Extremities isn't an add-on pack but rather a multiplayer tool kit that has everything a Quake 2 deathmatch fan needs. The following modifications compliment the multiplayer game of Quake 2 in ways you've never even dreamed of.

Action Quake 2
The only thing that looks vaguely familiar in this modification is the engine that drives the game, other than that nothing has been left untouched. There are new maps, weapons and skins. The game closely follows real



CHAOS DEATHMATCH IS ONE OF THE FINEST MODIFICATIONS YOU'LL EVER PLAY. IT CHANGES SO MANY THINGS FROM THE ORIGINAL GAME YOU'LL WONDER IF IT'S STILL QUAKE II.

life action movies where the emphasis is on realistic interaction with the environment and other players. There are no weapons of mass destruction and if you take damage, you carry on bleeding until you stop to bandage the wound. The maps provide more real world locations and you are even required to press a key to open doors. When playing a deathmatch you need to watch your back all



Chaos Deathmatch

This modification has new ideas for every weapon in the game. It's almost as if every good weapon and item idea for the last two years has culminated in one modification. Some of the more unusual items include a rocket turret that can be placed anywhere on the map, differently coloured trip mines and homing rockets. It's fast and fun and somehow amidst all the new toys a fair deathmatch balance is struck. Definitely the best of the lot.

Eraser Bot

The Eraser Bot is by far the ultimate deathmatch bot. It learns each level as you play it, becoming better all the time. A large number of robots can be spawned on a single level and this is the best way for you to brush up on those deathmatch skills you claim are so good. One funny thing to watch is the way the robots communicate with each other, taunting and insulting has never been this vile!

Jail Break

This modification is based on the extremely popular Capture the Flag - but in this game, if you're killed you are sent to jail. If your entire team ends up in jail, you lose the match. The real fun element to this modification is the fact that you can also free your captured team-mates from the enemies base.

Kick

It's soccer, Quake style. The idea here is to kick the ball into the goal and rack up a hefty number of points. There are different game options and you can gain points for killing the opposing teams players. The maps are slightly unusual and all look like soccer fields with a goal on both sides and some

one bullet is usually enough to cash in your chips. Add to that the fact that falling from a height will also kill you and you've got a game that plays like real life. It's fun, fast and very real.

Capture

This modification combines elements of Capture the Flag, Rocket Arena and Jailbreak. The idea is to capture the enemies flag, which is standard stuff but if you're killed in action you are transported to a holding area. In this 'jail' you will have to wait until a member of the opposite team is also captured. You are then both trans-

ported to a deathmatch arena where the winner gets out and the loser must wait for another player. It's fun for a while but the waiting becomes annoying sometimes. This modification must be played with around eight people to be any real fun, go lower and you'll spend most of the game banging on your cell walls.



BELIEVE IT OR NOT ALL THOSE PLAYERS DOWN THERE ARE CONTROLLED BY THE COMPUTER. PLAYING AGAINST BOTS WILL IMPROVE YOUR DEATHMATCH SKILLS.



THIS IS A LOOK AT POWERBALL, THE IDEA IS TO GRAB THE BALL AND PUT IT THROUGH YOUR OPPONENTS GOAL.



Zumlin!

Also included in the lucky packet is Zumlin, a unique Player Model for Quake 2. If you're tired of looking at the same guys and gals that fight it out in a Quake 2 deathmatch then the Zumlin will be a welcome change. He has his own story about where he fits into the Quake 2 universe and is a typical example of dedication to a project. The Zumlin boasts 691 Polygons in total and has some amazing animation.

even include spectator's grandstands.

Powerball

Grab the ball and make your way to the opposing team's goal - the scoring is geared towards getting the ball through the goal and not killing everything in sight. A good team game that gives direction and purpose to the proceedings.

QWar2

QWar2 can best be described as a first person strategy game where you never fire a single shot but rather control a small army of monsters from the game to wipe out your opponents power core. This modification must be the most unique of all the ones on offer but it just isn't the same as being there yourself.

Rail Arena

Similar to Rocket Arena and using only the Railgun you must rail your opponent - the weapon has been modified to only inflict 25 points of damage to balance out the game. It's fun, but slightly limited.

Red Rover

You begin the game as 'it' and everyone is out to kill you but if you kill opponents, they change over to your side and must eliminate the remaining players. The last person to survive becomes 'it' in the next game. Good fun to be had here and the running commentary adds some unique excitement to each game.

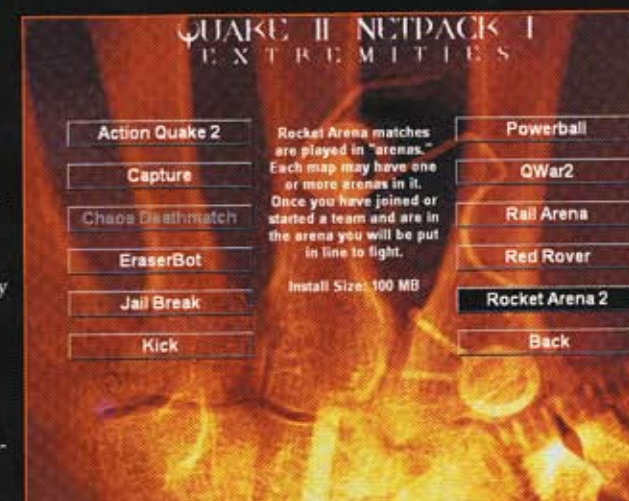
Rocket Arena 2

If you tire of battling against twenty people on a single map then Rocket Arena 2 might be the answer for you. Two players fight it out in an arena with the winner staying and the loser moving to the back of the fighting queue. There is also a team-based version but nothing demonstrates skill like a good one-on-one match.

Besides all these excellent modifications you are also given GameSpy, a useful utility that allows you to 'spy' on Quake servers to see who's playing what. The Quake Patch 3.20 is also included on the CD as are a number of maps and skins. The whole thing is nicely presented but there are two problems. We simply don't have enough on-line servers run-



A NEW WEAPON FROM THE CHAOS DEATHMATCH MODIFICATION



EVERYTHING IS ABOUT AS PLUG AND PLAY AS YOU CAN GET WITH THE MENU INTERFACE.

ning variations of Quake 2 for most of these patches to be of any use. There is a local Action Quake 2 server up at the time of writing but as for the others, they are better suited to LAN games. The other thing you must consider is that all of these modifications, maps and skins are available for free download on the Internet and most of them have already been updated since this title was released. Overall, a good well put together product that gives something back to the Quake community.

Although burdened with a somewhat clumsy interface, and not visually spectacular, this game is well thought-out and offers substantial depth. It will prove very enjoyable to anyone who likes to sit down and play and think for an extended period of time.

Developer: Activision	Publisher: Activision	Supplier: Multimedia Warehouse (01) 315-1000	RRP: R 329.00
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<http://www.activision.com>

Multiplayer	Comparitives	Pro's	Con's
Yes	Sid Meier's Civilization Alpha Centauri	Update of the Original Depth of Concepts	Barely Adequate Control Unimpressive Visuals

Graphics	Sound	Control	Story	Continuity	Playability
75	69	75	84	88	87

REDTIDE

GENRE
Strategy

Min Requirements	Recommended
Pentium 90 16 MB Ram 2 X CD Rom 1 Mb SVGA Video 300 Mg HD Windows 95/98 (DirectX 6)	Pentium 133 32 MB Ram 8 X CD Rom 2 Mb SVGA Video 300+ Mg HD Windows 95/98 (DirectX 6)

80

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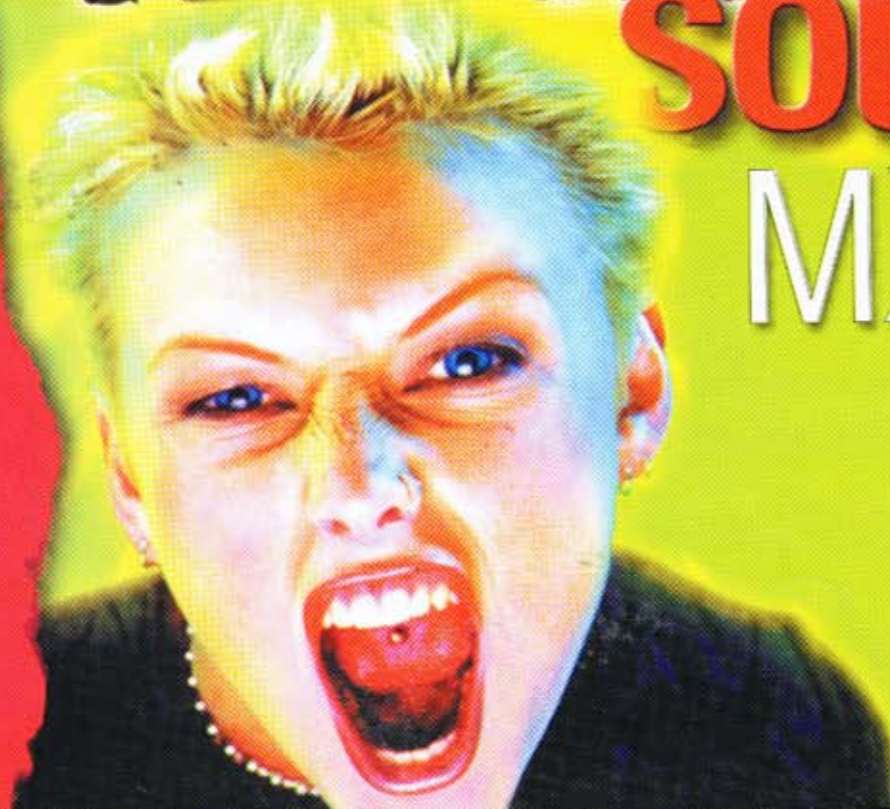
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Monster sound MX300



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**CYBERSTORM
COMPUTERS**

Some of you will remember, with some considerable nostalgia, Sid Meier's first offering - Civilization. Several remakes and "sequels" have since floated around the market. Now, at last, a true heir to that old classic has been released, and it lives up to the standards set by the original.

Almost a decade ago (wow, has it been that long already?) Microprose, who until then had specialised in flight simulators, released a title named Sid Meier's Civilization, which introduced a new breed of turn-based strategy games, in stark contrast to the classic hex-grid battle simulations that abounded at the time. Although a wild success back then, it has since faded into obscurity, having been overshadowed by the advent of real-time strategy games. Firaxis Games's latest offering, Sid Meier's Alpha Centauri, breathes new life into this classic genre.

SID MEIER'S ALPHA CENTAURI



THE SEVEN FACTIONS THAT CAN BE YOUR MOST VALUED ALLY OR YOUR MOST HATED ENEMY, YOU DECIDE WHICH.

SMAC is set immediately after the original Civilization, which culminated in a colonising mission to our closest interstellar neighbour, Alpha Centauri. The Earth has been ravaged by industry, overpopulation and war and is essentially a dying planet. This prompts the mission to Alpha Centauri in the hopes that humankind may find a new home. However, shortly before the planet falls an accident occurs and the colony ship's reactor undergoes a meltdown, disabling the ship (the Unity) and destroying the chain of command. In typically human fashion, the survivors band into seven separate factions and make separate landings. Thus divided, the survivors of the Unity begin a new age of strife and struggle...

At first, I was sceptical about the ability of a turn-based game to grab the attention of modern gamers. However, much to my surprise, I soon found myself totally engrossed. The first thing one notices are the rather simple graphics. These, while quite basic and not in the least bit spectacular, are crisp and clear enough and perfectly adequate to the theme. The terrain is attractively contoured (though if you find this confusing you can disable 3D terrain and switch to a flat alternative view) and very clearly depicts the geography of Planet. In stark contrast to the in-game graphics, the numerous video sequences can only be described as spectacular. Those of you who have played Civilization will recall the major undertakings called "wonders" that had to be built in order to attain an edge. In SMAC these are known as "secret projects", and there are thirty-two of

and is pleasantly soothing. The sound effects are as good as can be expected, considering that this is not a fast-paced action game. For Civilization veterans, the game interface will prove comfortably familiar. In fact, the entire game has been designed to be a true sequel to Sid Meier's original. The controls are logical, and those who haven't played any of SMAC's precursors will not struggle to learn them. No new ground is broken, but the detail that has been paid to empowering the player to control every single variable is truly impressive. Not only can units be pushed around the map, but also sectors of the population may be directed to work various quadrants around each base, or be designated as specialists such as technicians, engineers, doctors and empathists. In order for your fledgling civilization to flourish, you will need to manage resources at every base you build. To ensure that there is enough food for the settlement to grow, to provide enough minerals for the construction of facilities and units, and for the collection of energy, which is required both for the maintenance of base facilities and as currency. Minerals must also be available to support all units out in the field. Besides managing your resources you must also manage your society (via Social Engineering, mostly). Keep your populace happy (else they'll riot), your fighting force effective and your economy as efficient as possible, while limiting damage to your environment (though you may opt for a far more military approach, and disregard the ecological consequences, which are, at times, quite dire.)



If you think all this sounds very complex, then you are right. That is the appeal of SMAC, and this trend is reflected in the tech-tree, though in this case that term is something of a misnomer. Included in the game package (besides a 200 page manual) is an A1 poster depicting the "tech-tree" and it is filled by only technologies (no



SIMILARITIES BETWEEN SID MEIER'S EARLIER DEVELOPMENTS AND ALPHA ARE SIMILAR IN ALL ASPECTS.



STATS AND INFORMATION ARE ABUNDANT WITHIN THE ALPHA CENTAURI MANIFOLD, INFORMATION JUNKY HEAVEN.



IN ORDER TO SURVIVE AND CONQUER YOU NEED TO RESEARCH AND DISCOVER NEW AND WONDERFUL CREATIONS.

you may choose to emphasise one or more of the above, or attempt to advance all four. It is, of course, impossible to pursue any one of the above to the exclusion of all others and expect to win, and a careful balance must be maintained. Furthermore, as all four tech-paths are intertwined, it is necessary to follow each to some extent in order to further the chosen one. The interface features automation options for almost every task imaginable, making the empire somewhat easier to control. None of these are mandatory, but any or all may be customised and activated as desired.

Bases feature "governors" which may be used to automate construction within that base, and all units may be set to fully automatic mode. Diplomacy has not been omitted, and follows similar lines to Civilization's politics. New and innovative political options have been included, and you may even call a vote to melt the icecaps in order to raise ocean levels should you feel that it benefits your strategy, to name but one. Diplomatic victory is one of the four alternative ways to win, the other three being conquest (eliminate all opponents), transcendence (achieved via research, mainly) and economic victory (corner Planet's energy market). Among mishaps that may befall you are plagues, droughts and

units or structures are shown.) This "tech-tree" follows four main paths which cross, link up and diverge often. These paths are Explore, Discover, Build and Conquer. These four concepts are central to the game, and determine what your priorities are. Depending on how you wish to develop

automate construction within that base, and all units may be set to fully automatic mode. Diplomacy has not been omitted, and follows similar lines to Civilization's politics. New and innovative political options have been included, and you may even call a vote to melt the icecaps in order to raise ocean levels should you feel that it benefits your strategy, to name but one. Diplomatic victory is one of the four alternative ways to win, the other three being conquest (eliminate all opponents), transcendence (achieved via research, mainly) and economic victory (corner Planet's energy market). Among mishaps that may befall you are plagues, droughts and

With an intensely science-fiction feel to it and some mysticism and 'New Age' thinking, this title really stirs the mind and raises questions about mankind's future. Please note the warning: severe sleep deprivation may result!

Developer: Firaxis Games
Publisher: Electronic Arts
Supplier: Electronic Arts Africa (011) 803-1212
RRP: R 299.00

<http://www.alphacentauri.com>

Multplayer	Comparitives	Pro's	Con's
Yes	Sid Meier's Civilization Call to Power	Stunning Videos Automation Features Variety and Complexity	Basic Graphics No Real-Time A Little Slow

Graphics	Sound	Control	Story	Continuity	Playability
85	80	80	95	90	95

RAVEN

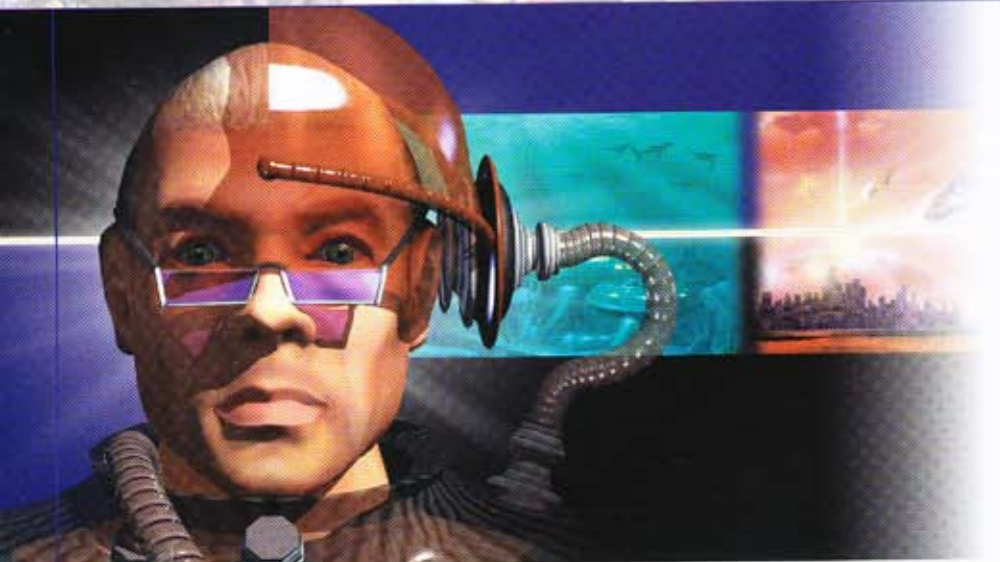
GENRE
Strategy

Min Requirements: Pentium 133, 16 MB Ram, 4 X CD Rom, 2 Mb SVGA Video, 60 Mg HD, Windows 95/98 (DirectX 6)

Recommended: Pentium 200, 32 MB Ram, 8 X CD Rom, 4 Mb SVGA Video, 110+ Mg HD, Windows 95/98 (DirectX 6)

88

SHAKE DOWN



It seems not only are remakes and sequels in fashion, but competition between various game developers is creating alternative options on the same concepts. This is probably a good trend, as it should stimulate the design of better games. In this case, here we have another title based on the award-winning Sid Meier's Civilization. - Raven

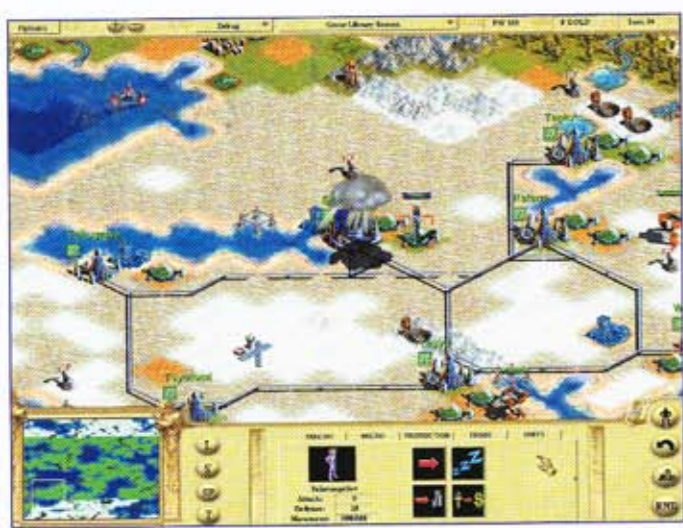
Civilization heralded the advent of the turn-based strategy genre, which preceded real-time strategy by several years. This old classic is now revisited by the latest offering from Activision. The approach adopted for this project has been to remake and resurrect the original while expanding the timeline and options in the late game. As Civilization enthusiasts will remember, one starts the game with a wide variety of ancient cultures to choose from, including such worthies as the Egyptians, Mayans and Chinese. All in all, there are 41 races to choose from, each beginning with a different outlook and different starting technologies and opportunities. Also, the difficulty level, map size and map shape can be preselected. The rules may also be customised, to suit personal preferences or in order to explore a specific approach. One may also determine the exact placement of the first town, according to the availability of various resources

and commodities. Managing your civilization is achieved by a combination of global and local settings. Global settings affect your empire-wide variables,

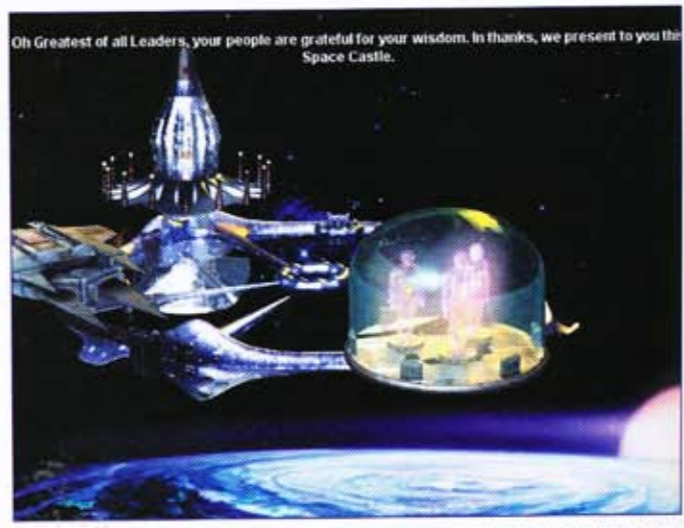
CIVILIZATION CALL TO POWER

ensures that riots don't break out. Local settings and commands direct the day-to-day activities of each individual city. Food, gold and production are not the only resources available. The countryside contains scattered deposits of jade, coffee, various animals and other natural and valuable commodities, to name a few. Workers may be allocated to tend various resource squares around the city, and this is useful in order to fine-tune the city's priorities - is it primarily concerned with population growth (food as the main pursuit) or the construction of various units, facilities and wonders (production as the foremost enterprise)? Or perhaps this city is a commercial centre and is concerned mainly with the generation and accumulation of gold. These are set by means of the local settings, and there are buttons that enable the player to max out any of the abovementioned fac-

and include such factors as length of working day, standard workers' wages and percentage of production and revenue dedicated to public works. These factors have a great impact on your citizens' happiness levels, and managing them carefully



CALL TO POWER INCORPORATES THE BEST OF WHAT WAS AND ADDS A BIT MORE TO THE INTERFACE TO MAKE IT MORE STREAMLINED.



CALL TO POWER OFFERS AN EXTRA THOUSAND YEARS AND WILL HAVE YOU BUILDING TO CLOSE ON 3000AD.

(CONTINUED)



HEY, MAN HAD TO START SOMEWHERE. THIS COULD BE THE JOHANNESBURG OF ANCIENT TIMES.

tors as efficiently as possible. Wonders are projects of monumental scope, which require very long periods of time to build and confer specific benefits to the race that owns them. Only one of any wonder may be built during the course of a game, and therefore, in a multiplayer situation, this leads to hot races for specific, highly beneficial wonders. Each wonder, and there are thirty-five of them, results in a video sequence being played, and these are generally visually pleasing and well put-together. The in-game graphics are fairly clear but while functional, are fairly bland. The terrain is not rendered in any true 3D fashion, but rather consists of cramped little forest and mountain graphics. Despite this lack of realism, unit movement and behaviour is determined by terrain type, and generally only infantry can enter mountains, for example. Occasionally one of many backdrops is displayed, and these have been beautifully rendered. The Great Library is the repository of all knowledge pertaining to your fledgling civilization, and appealing videos have been rendered to illustrate all the relevant concepts.

The sound effects are also informative and functional, but rather uninspiring. As graphics and sound are not central to the playability of this game, these factors do not detract too much from the game. However, the interface could use some sprucing up. It is in a classical Civilization format, but redone following a very "windowed" model. As such, it is quite good, but I have found it somewhat unresponsive and slow, and at times a bit clumsy. Also, the buttons are generally very small, requiring very precise mouse manipulation, this combined with the fact that the mouse driver is not sensitive enough, and quite sluggish. The timeline, as mentioned above, has been extended, and now stretches to a hypothetical year 3000. As a result, of course, new and speculative technologies have been added in the late game, including orbital and sub-orbital transportation, space and undersea cities and futuristic weapons. The conse-

quence of adding submarine and orbital colonisation is that the late game is also subject to land-grabs, especially in multiplayer, thus spicing up the game considerably. As is to be expected from a Civilization-type game, Civilization - Call To Power is almost infinitely replayable, and different approaches may be tried from one game to the next. Therefore, original Civilization fans should derive great enjoyment from this title. If you've never played Civilization or one of its clones, but

enjoy turn-based strategy on a grand scale, this game could also be for you. As is increasingly the case with all genres of computer entertainment, it is the multiplayer capabilities that will truly decide whether this game succeeds. Civilization - Call To Power supports up to 8 players on a LAN, using either IPX or TCP/IP, and Internet support is also built-in. However, please note that a multiplayer game of Civilization - Call To Power could easily take up to several hours, or even as long as a couple of days!



RAVEN

GENRE
Strategy

PC CD-ROM

Min Requirements	Recommended
Pentium 90	Pentium 133
16 MB Ram	32 MB Ram
2 X CD Rom	8 X CD Rom
1 Mb SVGA Video	2 Mb SVGA Video
300 Mg HD	300+ Mg HD
Windows 95/98 (DirectX 6)	Windows 95/98 (DirectX 6)

Although burdened with a somewhat clumsy interface, and not visually spectacular, this game is well thought-out and offers substantial depth. It will prove very enjoyable to anyone who likes to sit down and play and think for an extended period of time.

Developer: Activision	Publisher: Activision	Supplier: Multimedia Warehouse (011) 315-1000	RRP: R 329.00
http://www.activision.com			
Multiplayer Yes	Competitives Sid Meier's Civilization Alpha Centauri	Pro's Update of the Original Depth of Concepts	Con's Barely Adequate Controls Unimpressive Visuals

Graphics	Sound	Control	Story	Continuity	Playability
75	69	75	84	88	87

80

We looked our resident Strategy buff Raven away for two weeks to dissect Alpha and Civ 3. Only after the polls were alerted to an unusual email in the vicinity of his office did we realize that his intentions were not to be released. Once the Jews of Life were used to pry open the door and a fumigation team sent in to recover the Shakedown Docs, only then were we able to finally find out the low-down on the two games.

NAG SHAKEDOWN

SID MEIER'S
ALPHA CENTAURI

VS

CIVILIZATION
CALL TO POWER

Given that two major titles have emerged based on Sid Meier's Civilization, it is only appropriate that we should provide our readers with a handy comparison of the two, seeing as few of us are in a position to buy games indiscriminately. While both releases are of a high standard, different people have different preferences, and so, below you will find a

listing of the two games' similarities and differences.

Hereafter, Sid Meier's Alpha Centauri will, for convenience, be referred to as SMAC, while Civilization - Call To Power will be abbreviated to Civ - CTP. Enjoy, and we hope this brief guide will be of assistance.

Graphics

SMAC boasts a 3-dimensionally rendered landscape, generated by means of a fractal algorithm. This feature may, however, be disabled at will at any time in the game, or reinstated if it's been turned off. The unit graphics are fairly basic, consisting of sprites, and animations may be enabled or disabled. The video sequences are frequent, long and spectacular.

Civ - CTP employs a simple flat terrain model, with sprite-like graphics denoting various features and terrain types. This game also features numerous video cut-scenes and, while generally somewhat shorter, these are also of a very high standard.

Continuity

In this respect, both games are almost identical, and potentially infinitely replayable. Both SMAC and Civ - CTP are strategy games on a grand scale, and as such each individual game will entertain for many hours, or even days. Multiplayer games of either title will be epic affairs.



Sound

Both games feature full soundtracks. However, Civ - CTP's musical soundtrack is far more varied, and inspired by the various cultures that are represented within the game, while SMAC's somewhat more monotonous soundtrack focuses on setting a mood and atmosphere.

Neither game boasts exceptional sound effects, as these are not central to the game concept. SMAC, however, does include very extensive voiceovers from notable writers, politicians and philosophers, as well as some purely fictional ones.

Control & Interface

While Civ - CTP employs a typically "Windowsy" interface, SMAC's control interface is substantially more intuitive and easier to use. Both games suffer from something of a speed problem, though in neither case does it appear to be a hardware performance issue, but rather a "game feature".

Other Notes

Should hard disk space be a consideration, please note that SMAC may be installed to about one fifth of the size of a Civ - CTP installation, thus it is far more hard disk economic. Neither title is particularly heavy on other system resources, as fast frame-rates and fancy 3D graphics are not part of either package.

Summary



Gameplay

Well, this is, of course, what it's all about. Both the differences and similarities are numerous. Both titles are based on similar concepts, i.e. a more modern version of the old Civilization classic. As such, both are concerned with growing an empire consisting of cities, and the management of various material and human resources. In this respect, Civ - CTP offers a little more variety where commodities are concerned, while SMAC focuses more on the social engineering aspects, affording the player greater control over social attitudes.

As far as wonders are concerned (a concept that Civilization veterans will be very familiar with) both games offer in excess of 30 of these (in SMAC they are referred to as "secret projects"). In both cases, each wonder/secret project is accompanied by a video sequence and explanatory notes on game effects.

Both titles allow the randomisation of maps and factors, and the customisation of the game rules. SMAC offers greater control over the world-shaping forces, to the extent that one may fine-tune the severity of erosive forces, the humidity of the planet, the topography and the abundance of native life (SMAC's equivalent of barbarian tribes).

Should none of the above factors be important, then the determinant should be as follows:

Civilization veterans who would like to re-experience the original as faithfully as possible should opt for Civilization - Call To Power, as it deals with all the original concepts without diverging too much except at the end. Other Civilization fans, who would like to see what Sid Meier is up to these days, or who would prefer to continue the story begun with

Civilization, should take a good look at Sid Meier's Alpha Centauri.

Players who have never experienced the original classic may opt for either. SMAC has a more modern feel to it, while Civ - CTP takes a more classical approach, and both are worthy of exploration.

- Raven



F-16
AGGRESSOR

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The third incarnation of Blue Bytes popular Settlers series hit our shelves recently. Settlers III continues on from Settlers II with lots of enhancements but sadly adds nothing significantly different to the game. **Soul Assassin**

The story behind Settlers III revolves around demigods who got lazy - Jupiter (Lord of the Roman gods), Ch'in-Yu (Dragon Legend of Ancient China), and Horus (Egyptian Sun god). Now they are in trouble as the main god takes notice and calls for them. He decides to punish them for their laziness and ineptitude to lead their respective nations to glory, the punishment - repaint the universe. There is however an option for one of them to escape punishment, all three must choose a representative from their respective nations and instruct them to conquer each other and the winner will escape the grueling task of painting the universe. This whole sequence is beautifully portrayed in a 'Hercules: The Movie' type animation. The intro is of such high quality that I almost thought I was watching a DVD movie. This is where you step into the fray as one of the three representatives - Septimus Marius for the Romans, Ramadamses for the Egyptians, and Tsu-Tang for the Chinese. Picking a character has more to it than simply choosing a nation to play as they determine the difficulty of the game as well, being easy, medium and hard respectively. The whole object is to conquer your neighbours during a single player campaign or single missions. Unlike the usual isometric perspective real-time strategy game, Settlers III focuses more on

THE SETTLERS III



economy and logistics than the actual battles taking place. You actually have to have a pretty well established community before even attempting to engage your opponents. The three main groups of settlers are diggers to level the ground so that you may build on it, carriers who supply the building site with material, and builders who actually build the structure. All in all there are 34 different settlers ranging from the average day swordsman to pig farmers and gun powder makers. A major task of the carriers is to supply all the different goods to various buildings - an example of this would be the making of wood planks for construction. Just to get planks for building the woodcutter would have to cut a tree down, a carrier will then move the tree to the sawmill, there it's cut into planks and only then can a carrier take it to a building site. The whole economy evolves around interdependencies and can get quite frustrating and complex at times. In Settlers you expand your starting borders by building guard towers on the dotted edges representing your boundaries. Once built your border expands to the site range of the tower. This process is continued until you actually border your neighbour. This whole procedure is probably the most strategic matter in the game, if you don't expand your borders soon enough you might



TROOPS FIND THE CASTLE A PLEASANT STAY AND ONLY COME OUT FOR FOOD.



BORDERING ENEMY SETTLERS NORMALLY ENDS UP IN CONFRONTATION OF SOME KIND.



ENEMY SETTLERS RUN AMOK AFTER DEFEAT HAS BEFALLEN THEM.



A DETAILED AND FUNCTIONAL INTERFACE ONLY TAKES UP A QUARTER OF THE PLAYING AREA.



TRADE AND TRANSPORTATION IN THE GRAND OLD GALLEY STYLE.

find it hard to gather the resources necessary to later attack your opponent. Of course attacking would be an over statement. It isn't really necessary to destroy an opponent's whole 'base' to win, you only need to take-over his military buildings. Once a building is in your control your border expands once again to include the new building. Everything that belongs to the other nation within site of it is instantly destroyed and the opposing settlers in the area move inside their now decreased border range. You do however have the option to attack individual buildings just to annoy your opponents, but taking out his towers is much more fun not to mention a hell of a lot quicker. One gripe that I have about the Settlers III interface is that you don't have enough easy access to settlers around. There is only a handful that can be shunted around while the majority just go about their task automatically. Most of the game is controlled using sliders, while this does work it would have been better if you could actually click on a building and tell it to construct a certain item without having to go to your menu and click on a slider. Most of the time you have no idea where the item will be produced, especially if you have 2 or more of each structure type. The gameplay does become a bit

repetitious after a while as you basically keep having to form a new economy on each mission. It takes time to get it up and going before you are able to actually attack anybody, which I find the most interesting part of the game. Fortunately you can also play online with other Settlers III fans, or over a LAN with your friends. The graphics in Settlers III are vivid and detailed and the game uses a sprite-based engine to represent the world. Your settlers and their surroundings are displayed using bright colours. Each of the different types of settlers have a variety of unique animations and at times you just sit watching the different settlers go about their tasks to see if you have missed any interesting animations. Graphically Settlers runs smoothly and the game actually caters to those of us who still have original Pentiums sitting around. Gamers should find the game runs smoothly even on the minimum required specification of a Pentium 100MHz. Unfortunately the sounds leave something to be desired. It is pretty much standard and there is nothing that will make you go "Wow! That sounds interesting." The sound effects really don't add that much more to the game unlike the background music track, which sets the mood as you relax, and watch your settlers go about their business. Taken as a whole Settlers III delivers improvements and some enhancements to the Settlers series but fails to add any remarkable new features to the game. Settlers II fans will love it and enjoy playing the game, unfortunately the game does become repetitive as you are basically doing the same thing on all the maps, fortunately multiplayer does extend the life span of the game. If you're a Settlers fan be sure to add it to your collection, and if you find empire building interesting you might want to give Settlers III a try. Just keep in mind that there are far more interesting empire building games such as Caesar III or Age of Empires available.

Settlers 3 continues on the success of Settlers 2, but unfortunately doesn't bring any spectacular new gameplay features with it. Build your own empire by conquering your neighbours. Settlers 3 does however revolve more around your economy than actual battle.

Developer: Blue Byte	Publisher: Blue Byte	Supplier: Datatec Crew (011) 233-1111	RRP: R 329.00
http://www.settlers3.com			
Multiplayer Yes	Competitives Caesar 3 Settler 2 Age of Empires	Pros Detailed Animations Interesting Story More Than Just Combat	Cons Weak Sound Effects Repetitious Needs More Control
Graphics 88	Sound 72	Control 75	Story 85
Continuity 65	Playability 80	78	

SOUL ASSASSIN

GENRE
Strategy

Min Requirements

- Pentium 100
- 32 MB Ram
- 4 X CD Rom
- 2 Mb SVGA Video
- 250 Mg HD
- Windows 95/98 (DirectX 6)

Recommended

- Pentium 166
- 32 MB Ram
- 8 X CD Rom
- 2 Mb SVGA Video
- 250+ Mg HD
- Windows 95/98 (DirectX 6)

PC CD-ROM

Horror is very hard to pull off effectively - often scary special effects and terrifying situations end up looking comical and drowning in cliché's. You've probably watched countless predictable horror movies in the past and thought, wouldn't it be nice for a change if the pretty blonde wandering alone in the woods at night in a skimpy outfit didn't end up running into a graveyard fully of rotting zombies? As it is directors find it difficult enough trying to convince cinema goers to be scared, so imagine the impossible task when doing the same thing in a computer game. - RedTide



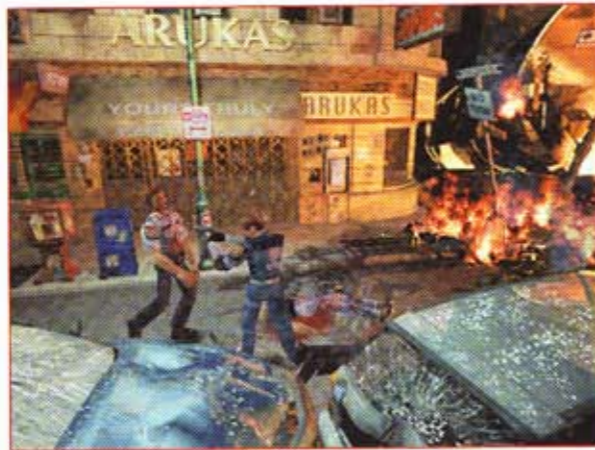
Once again a small town plays host to an intriguing tale of an airborne virus that turns people into zombies. If you think

able provides a better sense of direction and doesn't make things so overwhelming. So, the small town of Raccoon is infested and playing as Leon Kennedy, a rookie cop or Claire Redfield, sister of Chris Redfield from the previous game, you must discover the origin of the virus and try to make it out of the town alive. The plot ties between this second

game will affect things in the current Claire game. For example if Leon leaves a box of bullets behind during the game, Claire will find it. Slideshow

RESIDENT EVIL 2

about it, it's always a small town many miles from anything else where the worst things happen, so the idea would probably be to live in the city to avoid the monsters and worry rather about crazy serial



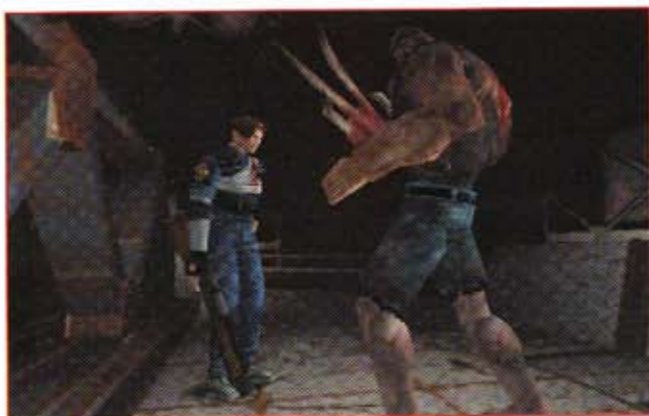
LEON, PAINTING THE TOWN RED.

game and the first are a bit ropy considering that this game is supposed to follow closely on from the previous one. The game comes on 2 discs, one for Claire and one for Leon, the two characters do meet up occasionally in the game itself but you can only control one of them. One unique feature that bears mentioning is the game's continuity. You can play it through to completion as Leon and then by reloading your Leon save game while playing as Claire, things you did in the previous Leon

creepy atmosphere - you play the game with a sense of terror from the opening movie right up to the final scene. At any second, a rotting hand could grab you from behind a board-up window -

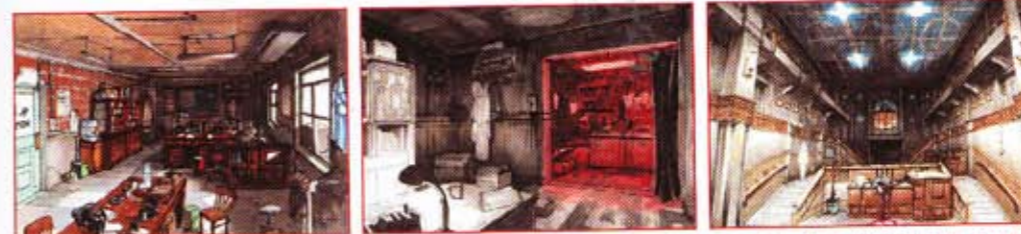


you often find yourself pressing the keys carefully, too afraid to stray into a fatal situation. This sense of terror is accentuated even further once you have encountered some of the uglier and deadlier monsters in the game. All it takes is one false move, and you're in a potentially deadly situation, and it is this sense of mortality that keeps you on the edge of your seat from beginning to end. The thing that does detract from the tense experience is the fact that you can shoot monsters even if you can't see them, often you can



THIS GUY MUST HAVE SOME SERIOUS TROUBLE PICKING UP CONTACT LENSES

killers and earthquakes. The reasoning behind using a small town every time something goes awry is one of focus, if you had to rid a city the size of New York from evil vermin it would probably take you ten years, making for a boring movie or game. Keeping it small and manage-



THIS IS WHAT THE GAME LOOKED LIKE DURING THE EARLY DEVELOPMENT STAGES. NOT EVERYTHING MAKES IT INTO THE FINAL GAME AS NEW IDEAS ARE ADDED AND CONCEPTS REFINED.



GO GIRL GO! - THE FLAMETHROWER IN ACTION.



PROBABLY THE ONLY TIME IN YOUR LIFE YOU'LL JUMP WHILE PLAYING A GAME.

can clear an entire corridor of zombies without even seeing one of them. Not a major problem though but it is silly and does spoil the experience somewhat. The game plays as an action game with a few simplistic puzzles to negotiate. Both characters have a slightly different selection of weapons to play with and as the game gets harder you'll start finding

Evil PlayStation

As some of you might know, Resident Evil 2 is probably one of the best games released on the PlayStation last year. The big question as with Final Fantasy VII, is how it converts across from console to PC. Developers always seem

to think that by sprucing up the graphics and converting the game code it will magically give them a whole new product they can sell. Well, it doesn't work like that people, you can't simply port PlayStation graphics, no matter how good they are, over into the PC and think it'll be acceptable. The only evidence of any graphical enhancements in the game are the game characters. The monsters, players and zombies have all received some polygon



THESE ARE THE DISGUSTING KIND OF BOSS ENEMIES YOU'LL BE ENCOUNTERING DURING YOUR TOUR OF RACCOON CITY.

better weapons, so play balancing is well taken care of. Besides getting tougher the story unfolds with a few surprises and shocking facts, it's a tough game to get through and will have you playing for a while to finish it.

plastic surgery and now look lovely but this is all lost when these 3D polygon creations are placed in blocky and relatively static environments. The backdrops are visually appealing from an attention to

- one can argue that it represents an 'authentic' experience but it seems a tad limited when sitting on eight gigs of hard drive space.

Yes or No?

Is it worth getting? Well, yes and no. The game offers plenty of gameplay considering the two different characters and the replay incentives. When it comes down to atmosphere it is also one of the scariest games you'll ever play. It is good but the dated graphics and annoying PlayStation gameplay quirks end up ruining all the potential.



REDTIDE

GENRE
Action Adventure

Min Requirements Recommended

Pentium 166 24 MB Ram 4 X CD Rom 2 Mb SVGA Video 100 Mb HD Windows 95/98 (DirectX 6)	Pentium 200 32 MB Ram 8 X CD Rom 4 Mb SVGA Video 550 Mb HD Windows 95/98 (DirectX 6)
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Resident Evil 2 is oozing with atmosphere - it's the only game you'll ever play that will have you running scared. The problem though is in the conversion, the developers ported it straight over to the PC and changed the character graphics and it shows.

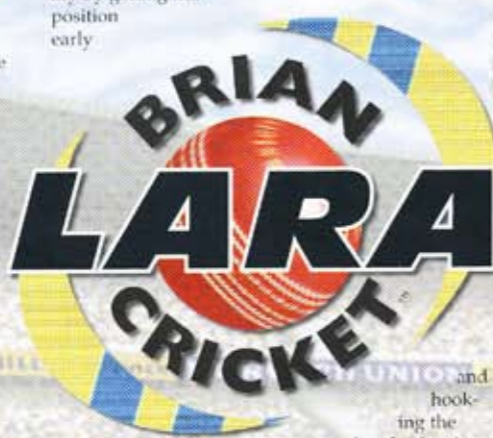
Developer: Capcom	Publisher: Virgin Interactive	Supplier: Multimedia Warehouse (011) 315-1000	RRP: TBA
http://www.residentevil2.com			
Multiplayer: No	Comparitives: Resident Evil	Pro's: Atmospheric It's Really Scary Strong Story	Con's: Poor Conversion Average Graphics Gameplay Glitches

Graphics	Sound	Control	Story	Continuity	Playability
74	83	79	89	74	91

82

Normally developers overlook cricketing games because it pertains to countries of less interest in interactive software. It has been almost two years since we have seen anything remotely interesting but because of the World Cup the interest has started to take cricket into the next phase. - Storm

I guess when you put a name like Brian Lara on anything, peoples first impressions are slightly biased towards perfection. But NAG's impressions stem from Codemasters ability to bring out successful titles time and time again. With a string of hits over the last year we expected nothing less than perfection from Brian Lara Cricket and we were not disappointed. Simulating the sport of cricket has been a difficult task for developers over the years with only EA Sports Cricket 97 showing any true signs of normal playability. Filling in the shoes could be considered easy for Codemasters if you consider their track record, but maintaining those levels is even more difficult. The first sign of improvement with BLC is the much-needed change to a 3D engine and the use of intense motion capture techniques which bring the players to life. It may seem a little off-putting to mention the downside to the engine so early on in the review but there is definite room for improvement. Character clipping occurs regularly and texture shifting needs to be addressed to fine-tune the overall performance of the engine. Besides these few minor glitches the graphics are the best yet seen in the cricketing genre. Utilising a proprietary engine, Codemasters have accurately designed and reproduced all 46 world stadia including South Africa's own batch of quality venues. BLC boasts all nine test playing nations and the select few ICC qualifiers such as Zimbabwe and Kenya. What this leads to is a large selection of players and stats, which are supplied by the guru of online stats - Cricinfo (www.cricinfo.org). Disappointingly the updated squads have been left out with the South African squad still hosting players such as Dave Richardson (retired by the way), but fortunately offers enough of the current squad to maintain authenticity of playing your own virtual World Cup. Being able to play in the one-day World Cup is only one of the many options available and these all



reflect the depth of the title. Test series, friendlies, one-days and test seasons will keep you occupied for many moons. The inclusion of classic matches breathes new life into the golden era of cricket and is an excellent way to relive famous rivalries and competitions. If it's shots and strokes you want then BLC is the game to lead Cricket into the virtual arena. Gameplay enters a new dimension with a wonderful array of player animations representing all the shots available in cricket. Hansie's famous sweeplog might not be the easiest to perform but it's in the arsenal. Head hunting bouncers can be whipped over the boundary by getting into position early.

and hooking the bowler for six. Bowlers also have a different range of deliveries that add depth to their attack. Googlies, arm and slower balls as well as the different bowling strengths of a fast, swing, off-spin, leg-spin and chinamen bowler keep the batsman on their toes. The control mechanism is simple and effective to use with special attention given to the timing of the shot. Miss timed shots will more often than not have you silently swearing at the umpire for showing you the finger. Batsmen have the choice of normal, defensive and attacking shots which are easily performed with a simple 4-button gamepad. Bowlers also have the choice of adding speed to a delivery by tapping the action button but with the compromise of direction (sometimes). Normally the downside to cricketing titles is the AI of the computer, which leaves the single player easily beaten. This is certainly not the case with BLC which has three difficulty settings of village, county and test. What is interesting is the fact that on all levels you won't battle to take wickets but will battle with putting scores on the board. The different

pitches and weather conditions play a big role in spending time out at the crease but the computer has the knack of taking a few critical wickets at the most opportune times. You might call this whinging but when you notice the trend you will get a little more irritated than usual. BLC has a large amount of camera angles to choose from but with only a few playable options. We found the rest to be used more in the replay modes to get the best view of the action. Unfortunately the use of manual fielding is affected by the camera angles' inability to offer certain fielding angles and with the computer fielding being top class on all levels, it almost always has you using the computer option.

Having played the PSX version to death it is a little disappointing that Codemasters have not offered more in the way of fielding positions. There is still a lack of custom fielding positions leaving a sour taste in your mouth when another fielder is hogging the Gully position and not Jonty. Nevertheless there are plenty of options to dabble with and most of them offering some sort of solution to your bowling attack.

One very big oversight is the lack of LAN and modem play for BLC. It is nowadays regarded as a crime to leave out these key features. Codemasters somehow think that playing with your mate is good enough on one machine. This definitely needs to be addressed and we are sure that EA's World Cup Cricket 99 won't miss out on this opportunity to get one up on BLC.

BLC is a blessing to us neglected virtual cricketers and was sorely needed a year ago. We won't complain about the neglect but hope that the steady flow of these titles keeps coming. Brian Lara is lucky to associate himself with this title because if you take his and his teams track record before and after South Africa demolished them, then you would be forgiven for thinking the title performed as well. No, BLC is excellent quality and is a great example of how to start the ball rolling. We do feel there is definite room for improvement in the graphical areas but they are too small to affect the excellent playability and gameplay.



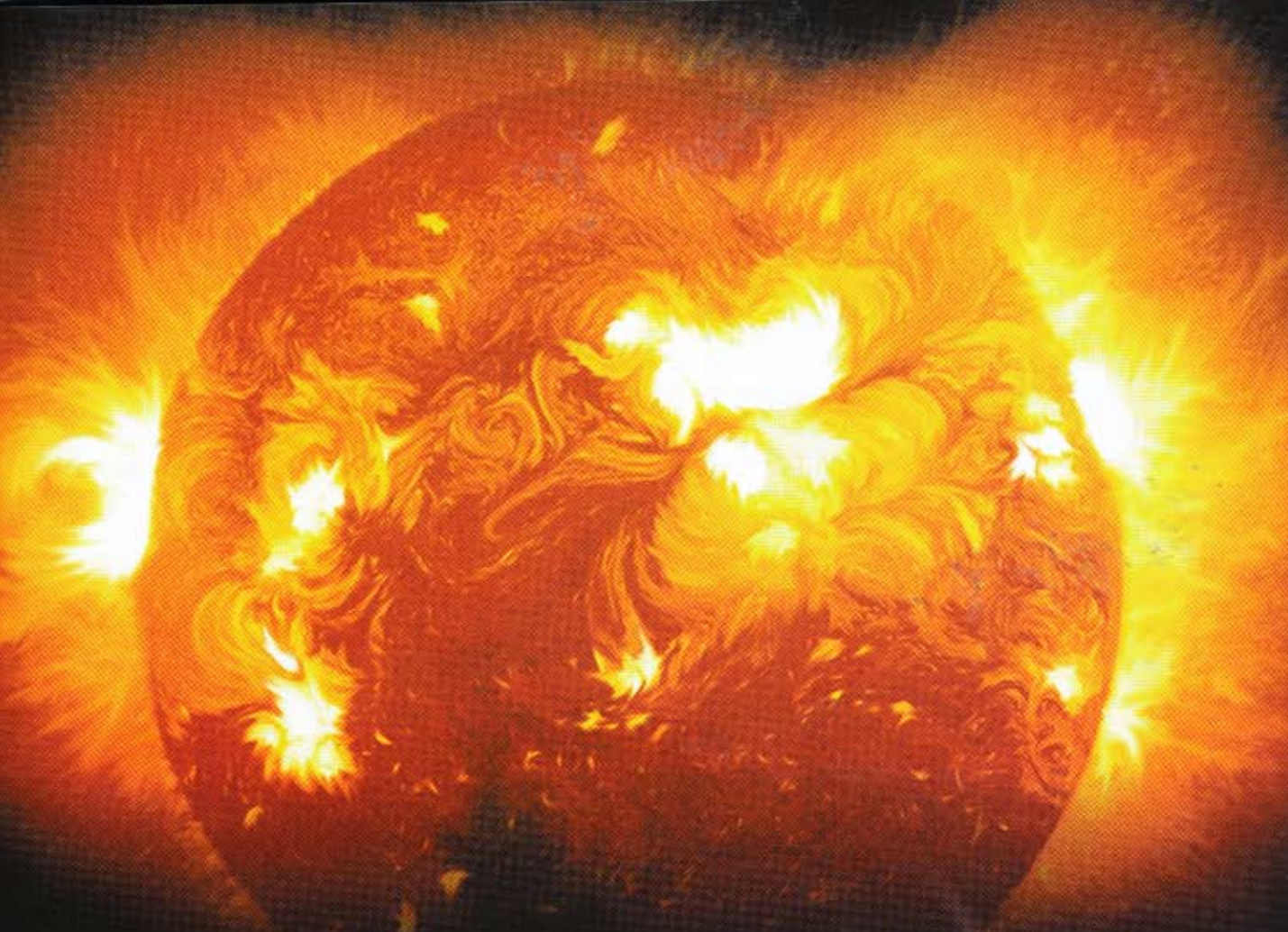
Brian Lara lends his name to Codemaster's first venture into the cricket arena. Motion captured animations and redesigned stadiums along with all the shots from real cricket are present and accounted for, making Brian Lara cricket top of it's game.

Developer: Codemasters	Publisher: Codemasters	Supplier: Multimedia Warehouse (011) 315-1000	RRP: TBA
http://www.codemasters.com			
Multiplayer	Comparitives	Pro's	Con's
Yes	EA Cricket 97	True Depth Realistic Animations Updated Statistics	Clipping Problems Difficult AI
Graphics	Sound	Control	Story
78	83	91	NA
Continuity	Playability	85	
85	90		

STORM
GENRE
Cricket Simulation

Min Requirements	Recommended
Pentium 133 16 MB Ram 4 X CD Rom 2 Mb SVGA Video 120 Mg HD Windows 95/98 (DirectX 6)	Pentium 200 32 MB Ram 8 X CD Rom 4 Mb SVGA Video 220+ Mg HD Windows 95/98 (DirectX 6)

PC CD-ROM



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Memories of painting my face with shoe polish and camouflage cream are vividly remembered as we trained in the Bloemfontein bush for weeks on end during Army training. I always wondered why I was actually participating in the foolishness of practical warfare. Now I truly understand that the reason why I braved those warm days and cold nights was to prepare myself for Delta Force. This was my calling, or is that falling? - Storm

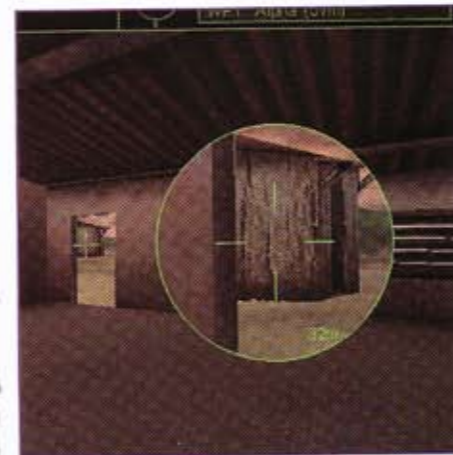
To put things into perspective from the start, Delta Force was not planned for release in South Africa because of a lack of support for games of this nature. But as the Gaming God's would have it, low and behold a sealed copy of Delta Force landed in my possession. With similar titles that received this treatment in South Africa it was difficult to allocate precious space to late product. But after countless hours completing Delta Force it dawned on me that a sleeping giant had been grossly overlooked and deserved the praise that was normally reserved for over-hyped product. The first and most obvious find in the gam-

ing expedition of DF is Novalogic's seemingly arrogant non-accelerated 3D engine that utilises an in-house design called Voxel Space 3. Now let me be candid, there is nothing truly awe inspiring about this engine except that it has the ability to tenderly represent the environment with sharply detailed realism. This might sound quite strange but with the type of gameplay that DF offers the engine stands up admirably, but with a price. Being non-accelerated means

much higher system specs and resource strains, leading to a recommendation of nothing less than a PII 300 with 64Mg of RAM to get the full enjoyment out of DF. Picking up on the same line as Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six (a special forces simulation), DF pits you in the role of leading a task force of highly trained soldiers into some of the most dangerous terrain's in the world. Novalogic spared no expense in creating this first and third person simulation of intrigue and danger by hiring special force members to help create realistic conditions and physics. Delta Force's five single player campaigns are some of the best we have played tackling everything from



DELTA FORCE



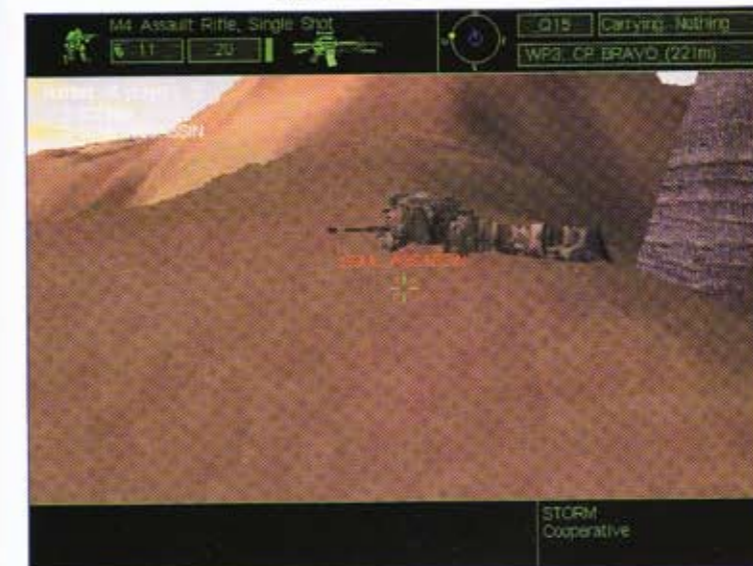
WE LIVE TO SNIPER.



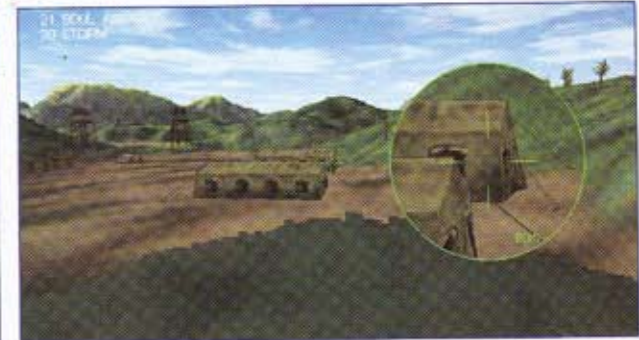
SEE, YOU EVEN GET AN AMBIENT RELAXING SETTING IN AN ACTION GAME, ONLY THIS TIME YOU HAVE TO FORGET ABOUT ADMIRING THE VIEW AND WATCH ONE SHOT SNIPERS.



NIGHT TIME ESCAPADES ARE COMMON IN DELTA FORCE AND ARE RICHLY REALISTIC



SOUL ASSASSIN DEMONSTRATING THE CORRECT NAG TECHNIQUE FOR PICKING OFF YOUR FOES AT LONG RANGE.



and sniper positions a necessity for survival. If it's true to life contents and physics you want then DF is ripe for the picking. All equipment that the Delta Force units utilise is available for your different needs of each mission. Planning your assault is unfortunately left up to the computer and with strange results. Most of the time the computer generated waypoints have you

This leaves you with the challenging situation of single-handedly taking on the opposition - hey who said it would be easy? The game offers Dolby Pro Logic 3D positional sound with amazing realism. Sound effects are superbly presented, immersing the gamer further into the world of Delta Force. The continuity scored a major boost with Novalogic's Novaworld offering online-play over the Internet but unfortunately with almost unplayable ping times. Nevertheless the LAN play is excellent with modes such as 'Capture the Flag' and 'Deathmatch' detracting from the disappointment of the Internet play. Ultimately I found Delta Force to be a thoroughly entertaining and charismatic game that could be considered the sleeping hit of 1998 (yes that is when it released overseas). Don't let the lateness of the title scare you off, there are so few mature games that offer this kind of playability and depth. But be warned, you will need a powerhouse machine to play Delta Force at reasonable resolutions (640x480) and frame rates. If you fall into this category then pull out the old army boots, shine them up and get ready to take apart the worlds terrorist organisations with only a mouse and keyboard as your guide.

drug lords to terrorists. Interestingly enough the objectives are not only seek and destroy missions but have large elements of tactics and stealth. Objectives can be from assassinating a high ranking cartel official to finding a laptop computer for recon information, creating gameplay that goes beyond the normal 'hara-kiri' of action games. Taking that you can adjust the computer AI to vary the levels of difficulty, it would be a sin to play DF on anything but its hardest level. But beware, DF gives new meaning to the term 'one shot kill', making stealth

heading straight into the hornet's nest. A tactic of ignoring the first five waypoints until you have sniped the majority of the opposition comes highly recommended. But staying hidden is a difficult task, showing off the AI of DF. If a weapon is fired you are almost always assured of a volley of bullets in your general direction. There is however a downside to DF's AI in that it's let down by the computer controlled team members that are somehow always wiped out by waypoint five, especially Charlie Team.

Delta Force dares to be different by offering no 3D acceleration, but instead uses Voxel technology. Where it is purely a 3D-action game, it combines elements of strategy and stealth to give the player an unique experience.

Developer: Novalogic	Publisher: Novalogic	Supplier: Electronic Arts Africa (011) 803-1212	RRP: R 279.00
http://www.novaworld.net			
Multiplayer: Yes	Comparitives: Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six	Pro's: Respectable AI Intense Gameplay Specialised Single Player	Con's: High System Specifications Outdated Engine Buggy Internet Play
Graphics: 82	Sound: 88	Control: 89	Story: 93
Continuity: 91	Playability: 87	88	

STORM

GENRE
First Person Action

Min Requirements

- Pentium 166 MMX
- 32 MB Ram
- 4 X CD Rom
- 2 Mb SVGA Video
- 130 Mg HD
- Windows 95/98 (DirectX 6)

Recommended

- Pentium II 233
- 64 MB Ram
- 4 X CD Rom
- 8 Mb SVGA Video
- 320+ Mg HD
- Windows 95/98 (DirectX 6)

Playing Evel Knievel was a childhood pastime inherited from copying our motorcycle stuntman hero. Who would have guessed that the dawning of a new age of heroes would culminate into a world-wide showdown every second week of the racing season? These intrepid heroes trust their lives to a 300Kph+ machine that plays a careful balancing act on only 5cm of rubber. After slipping into the leathers we felt a little more comfortable reviewing this fast paced racer.

Storm

SBK SUPERBIKE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

What would be the first thought that goes through your mind when thinking about how to simulate a Superbike in full glory? There can be only one way to describe the true exhilaration of powering a monster along a stretch of tar that makes the M1 look like the Panama Canal. Speed! Objects pass you by with such a blur that you would easily be forgiven for thinking that a visit to your optometrist was needed. Having dreamed and experienced these exact feelings it became vividly clear that reproducing this into a computer game was not going to be easy - boy was I wrong. Electronic Arts acquired the licence for the Superbike World Champs through subtle means but by the looks of the title they approached the development head on with realism as their key feature. Every title nowadays has such eye candy graphics that we as gamers take nothing less than perfection from Developers. Trying to judge just how good SBK's graphics are was an easy and pleasant task because of the lack of suitable titles to compare it with. As usual the 3D acceleration takes the game into new areas of realism but interestingly enough it shows excellent scope in software mode. The five modified production bikes of Honda (personal favourite), Ducati, Yamaha, Kawasaki and Suzuki are impressive to watch in any graphical selection. The animations are some of the most impressive I have seen, highly comparable with FIFA99. Combine this with pinpoint motorcycle reproductions and incredibly accurate courses and you will be forgiven for thinking you were trackside. With little room for error EA have taken the time to polish off the finer details so as not to offend the delicate relationship those gamers have with their Superbike heroes. Camera angles are not plentiful with the on-bike camera being superbly realistic but

unfortunately ineffective for gameplay reasons, leaving the behind camera as the common choice. All the stalwarts of the Championship are fully available for your enjoyment, each character mapped with personal identification and even a friendly smile that Aaron Slight might have something to say about, especially after taking second place to John Kocinski constantly. Being a great fan of the televised coverage I was overwhelmed at the realistic representation of the tracks and after playing racers that utilise the same tracks as Donnington and Hockenheim we realised that these were the best reproductions available in a computer game. Many people are asking whether SBK suits all types of gamers? The answer is a resounding yes. There is little doubt that beginners and serious racers will not only enjoy SBK, but also be thoroughly entertained and challenged to the limit. The two modes of play will dictate which difficulty you will follow. Action mode will feature fast full throttle racing with very little attention given to crashes and realistic physics and is NAG's first choice because it is designed for fun racing. Simulation mode is another racing game altogether with a little too much attention given to physics. This brings



THE TIMES LIKE THESE WHEN I BRUSH MISS LARK!



OBJECTIVE NOT! FAILED. PLEASE PARTICIPATE IN THE RACE, ON THE BIKE.



DAUNTING HIGH SPEED CORNERS COME AT YOU AT BREAK NECK SPEED.



DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME!

up my first gripe about SBK, the Simulation mode is way too touchy resulting in more time spent building sand castles than burning rubber. This can be interpreted in two ways - you have the Action mode to fall back on when Sim mode starts to frustrate you or it tests the patience and resilience of the gamer to the absolute maximum, pushing the continuity to a very much longer time frame, a tough call. As with most gamers after completing Action mode at its most difficult (which can be scaled through more options from beginner to realistic) the next objective would be Sim mode and this is when the true char-

would have been enjoyable to have a few drivers falling off their bikes, even if only to help alleviate the embarrassment that the human racer normally goes through. This makes the AI seem a little rigid and almost impregnable but as the game goes on you notice that the co-ordination of the AI is spot-on but there seems to be a lack of crash detection somewhere within. It is common to have a multiple rider pile up that is almost always started by myself but with a domino effect from behind. Another interesting feature on the AI is the rider's reaction to your



YOU WOULD THINK YOU IN THE PARIS - DAKAR RALLY AT THIS RATE!

acter of the game shines through. Starting from either a Single race or Multiplayer game over LAN, you will no doubt end up tackling the Championship. This incorporates all the elements of a real race season, excluding the business dealings. Try fine tuning your machine by undergoing practice sessions, a recommendation for being a 'grease monkey' will more than certainly help. Go through the tough qualifying days and then finally onto the race day to compete against (debatable) AI system which has more ups than downs. It

close presence. At lower levels the computer will tap off the throttle to let you pass but in Real mode don't expect an inch to be given, this we found a very nice touch to the AI's scalability. Normally fast paced soundtracks accompany EA's sports titles, but don't expect too much with SBK. The most you will want to hear is the growling of the engine under redline and this takes precedence over the game music. Sound effects are well done with true recordings of all the effects taken from actual occurrences. Certain little touches impressed us at NAG, especially the full crash mode that means you have to go and fetch your bike after a fall, pick it up (quite an effort) then run and jump to re-mount the beast. Another is the Replay mode, which is top calibre, and more than likely will have you watching your tumbles and race's over and over again. The manual also deserves a mention for its efforts to try and explain the reasoning behind the physics of the motorcycle and why it won't stay upright when told to. The gameplay also follows the rules of the SBK to the tee in Simulation mode with the traditional yellow flag representing danger and the irritating black flag representing disqualification for a transgression that you made. Within reason I found SBK to be the best there is on the market for its ability to entertain all levels of gamers with exceptional gameplay and realism. Add the additional afterthought (certainly looked that way) of the SBK history, which comes in handy researching where it all began, and you have an unrivalled motorcycle racer. Superbike World Championships comes highly recommended for all gamers looking for quick action and serious simulation. Now I only wish somebody had told me to replace the board on my knees after each race, anybody wishing to donate some skin for my knees please?

For the fun seeker and the intrepid simulation fan, SBK takes the fairly uncharted genre of motorcycle racing and catapults it into classic status. Realism and extreme playability are instrumental in entertaining the player beyond the norm. It's a must buy for racing fans.

Developer: Electronic Arts	Publisher: Electronic Arts	Supplier: Electronic Arts Africa (011) 803-1212	RRP: R 269.00
http://www.ea.co.za			
Multiplayer: Yes	Comparitives: Motor Racer 2	Pro's: Realistic Scalable Difficulty Many Gameplay Options	Con's: Simulation Mode Difficult Lacks Camera Angles

Graphics	Sound	Control	Story	Continuity	Playability
92	86	88	NA	93	92

STORM	
GENRE Motorbike Simulation	
Min Requirements	Recommended
Pentium 166 32 MB Ram 4 X CD Rom 2 Mb SVGA Video 145 Mj HD Windows 95/98 (DirectX 6)	Pentium 233 64 MB Ram 4 X CD Rom 3D Accelerator 402 Mj HD Windows 95/98 (DirectX 6)

90

Another day another WWII flight simulator. With its recent release of WWII Fighters, Jane's has provided us with yet another excellent flight simulator to add to the WWII flight sim genre. Let's have a closer look at Jane's version of combat in the skies around 1944. - Reaper

Welcome to the Museum Jane's has gone for a complete revamp of its recent interface designs by providing a completely innovative and intuitive interface design. They have created the virtual museum. Entry into any of the various rooms takes you into a different sphere of the sim. The War Room takes you into the various options for action such as instant action, single missions, mission designer and campaign. The Historical Room takes you into the History part of the sim where you can find out all there is to know about the Ardennes Offensive of 1944 and the famous



YOU CAN'T REALLY FLY INTO THE 'DANGER ZONE' WITH ONE OF THESE.

Battle of the Bulge (and we're not talking of the battle caused by excessive beer). The Hangar Room will take you into a room containing the various planes available for flight in the game. The amount of information contained in this virtual museum is truly amazing and well worthy of the Jane's name. You will find photos, newsreels, technical data, voice information and even interviews with some of the aces that flew those beasts.

Ladies and Gentlemen fasten your seatbelts Climb into the mount of your choice and off you go. You can choose either the mission generator where, with a few clicks to configure the mission, you're ready to kick butt or you can climb into the scripted missions, including a variety of training missions. The other choice is the Campaign. This is the major

problem with this sim, no dynamic campaign. The Campaign is set in 1944 in the Ardennes region. The Campaign is actually a set of semi-scripted missions strung together with a little randomness thrown in for good measure. The problem is that scripted missions get old pretty quick and that means boring.

WWII FIGHTERS



Were it not for the mission builder included in this sim, I would have to say that there was absolutely no longevity in this game.

The other problem with this game is that it seems to cater more for the middle-of-the-range game player than the hardcore sim pilot. The flight model seems just a little too easy, hardly any stalls and certainly no spins. Your wingmen's AI is not the greatest, coupled with the fact that there is no provision made for giving them any commands. However, the enemy AI is something completely different. Those guys are lean, mean fighting machines and will chew you up in no time. It has by far the best graphics of any of the recent WWII releases.

Although Combat Flight Simulator beats it hands down as far as terrain graphics are concerned, nothing beats WWII Fighters in the remaining graphics. The planes are beautifully detailed, explosions are awesome, damage graphics are the best ever, the 3D clouds are awe-inspiring and the dynamic lighting when you fire your guns are ... well you have to see it

to believe it! The cockpit is a 3D virtual cockpit, and is extremely detailed and realistic and adds to the immersing nature of this sim. The first time you see a broken windscreen with blood smears on it you'll know what I mean, not to mention the sound of your airframe creaking and your pilot grunting. However I found the terrain very bland and consisting of nothing more than green forest and snow and it seems to borrow a lot from the bland terrain engine of Jane's F15. The objects in the game are extremely well detailed and include tanks, infantry, buildings and everything else you can imagine including deer, yes deer!

Give me options Unlike some other games WWII Fighters lets you customise to your

hearts content. There are millions (okay, hundreds) of options to choose from including customising clouds, ammo, weapons, damage, difficulty, flight models and many more. Air to air combat is where it's at in this sim. As I mentioned, the enemy is tough. However, in the beginning the AI pilots had an annoying habit of turning themselves into lawn darts (i.e. diving into the ground) whenever you were dog fighting low down. This has been fixed in the first patch.

(Speaking of patches the latest patch adds numerous fixes including some wingman commands, but I review the product on the shelf!). Dog fighting in



THEY SAID, "CHECK PANEL PIN C, NOT D YOU FOOL!"

the graphical splendour is truly an amazing experience and highly recommended.

And the prize goes to... Is World War II Fighters the best WWII flight sim? Well that depends what you're looking for. Graphically nothing touches it. I did find it a little short on flyable aircraft if you consider that EAW has 20 aircraft and CFS has seven but you can import millions more into it. Also, CFS had better terrain graphics by far. WWII Fighter on the other hand has a mission builder which none of the other two had but it lacks a dynamic campaign, which only EAW has. As you've realised by now it's pretty difficult to choose the winner. Perhaps the only way to end this is to say that WWII Fighters can hold its head high and can stand proud amongst the competition.

REAPER

GENRE WWII Flight Simulator

Min Requirements	Recommended
Pentium 200	Pentium II 300
16 MB Ram	32 MB Ram
4 X CD Rom	8 X CD Rom
2 Mb SVGA Video	4 Mb SVGA Video
250 Mg HD	250+ Mg HD
Windows 95/98 (DirectX 6)	Windows 95/98 (DirectX 6)

Developer: Jane's Combat Simulations	Publisher: Electronic Arts	Supplier: Electronic Arts Africa (011) 803-1212	RRP: R 329.00
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<http://www.janes.ea.com>

Multitplayer	Comparitives	Pro's	Con's
Yes	European Air War Combat Flight Simulator	Graphics Excellent AI	Too Few Aircraft No Dynamic Campaign No Replayability

Graphics	Sound	Control	Story	Continuity	Playability
93	90	88	NA	80	88

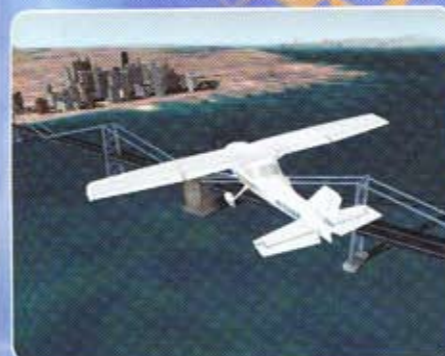
88

The most graphically amazing WWII simulation ever but a little short on the flyable aircraft and the longevity. The graphics more than make up for its minor shortcomings and overall Jane's has another winner.

YOUR EARS MIGHT NOT POP BUT YOUR EYES WILL



by Terminal Reality Inc.



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The Ultimate Flight Simulator

They say an ant can lift up to 20.4 times its own weight. Now consider that a small garden-variety ant weighs about 0.0184 grams and your PlayStation weighs around 2.976 Kg fully loaded with a standard memory card, controller and game. Applying an advanced scientific formula to these figures, and also bearing in mind that an ant will always land on its feet if dropped from a height of not less than 1 metre, we arrive at the following conclusion - there is no way that you could fit enough ants under a PlayStation for them to carry it away. - RedTide

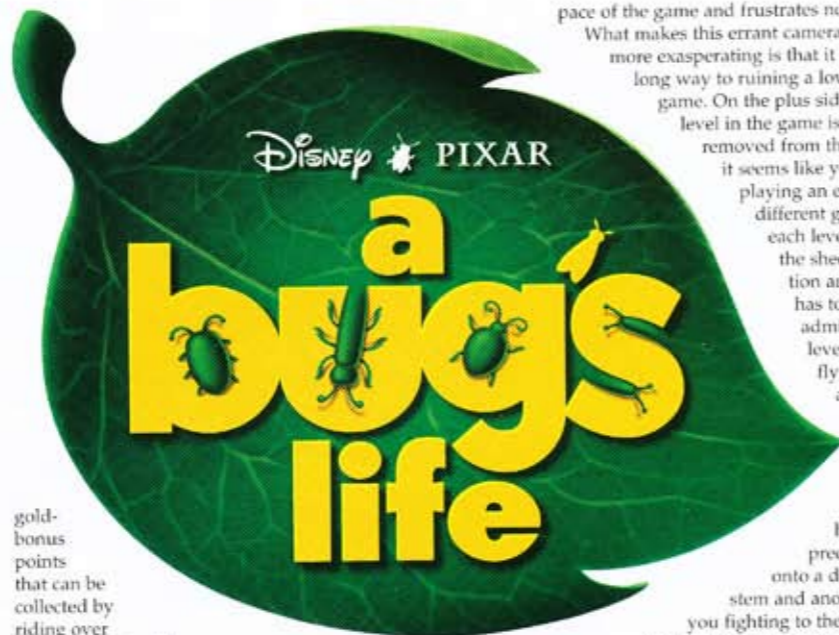
Hollywood is eventually going to make everything famous. The movie industry is currently insect mad, with two animated films on the international circuit focusing on what you might describe as the ultimate underdog - the ant. Inevitably the first movie-to-game conversion arrives, A Bug's Life, and even after pulling off its wings and legs it still manages to get into the sugar bowl.



COLLECT, DODGE AND PLANT ACORNS - IT'S A BUG'S LIFE ALRIGHT!

The ant and the hair

On Ant Island, things are not ideal. Similar in some respects to the old tale about the grasshopper and the ant, A Bug's Life sees a colony of hard working ants that must give up a large portion of their harvest each year to a gang of nasty grasshoppers. The grasshoppers in question are lead by the evil Hopper and once a year they fly to Ant Island to lay claim to the ants harvest, leaving only enough grain to ensure that the ants will survive another year to do their bidding. No one dares oppose the bullying grasshoppers for fear of their lives, so Flik, part-time inventor, general misfit and the games' main character decides to go for help. The game follows the movie's plot closely, capitalising every now and then on specific scenes in the movie which end up forming the basis of some of the game levels. The first indication of this is one of the earlier levels where you must grasp a single fluffy dandelion cluster and drift across the dry riverbed. Ties to the movie prevail throughout the game and there are many stunning animated sequences taken directly from the movie. Besides the sequential movie snippets that move the story along, in addition a few hidden movies become available if you manage to complete all the extra game objectives. This is similar in some respects to Crash Bandicoot 3, where there are three different objectives in each level. In A Bug's Life these extra incentives involve collecting 50 pieces of grain, all the letters of your characters name F L I K and special



gold-bonus points that can be collected by riding over enemy insects with your home-made harvester or by killing insects with the gold berry. This bonus movie option provides some motivation for playing each level thoroughly and making sure you collect and find absolutely everything. These additional cut-scenes can all be viewed via a special menu option and it's always easy to see which level must be replayed to complete the whole collection.

Lights, camera and action...

The game itself is a 3D-action adventure affair that sees you in control of the movies' central character, Flik the ant. There is a quick tutorial level that proves useful in understanding all of the moves and nuances

of the control interface while preparing you for what is to come in future levels. The graphics engine is a little dated by today's standards and cannot compare with other games of this style like Tomb Raider 3. The immediate horizon is never completely visible until you move closer, then plants, enemies and other decorations appear to fade into existence. The flawed engine that powers the game isn't a problem though and is still as functional as any other. The biggest flaw in the game however is the camera that follows you around each of the levels and a few nasty clipping problems. The camera is a frustrating and annoying entity that is so unbearable that you never seem to forget its shortcomings no matter how wonderful and different each level is. Instead of snapping around to behind Flik it slowly drifts around and there is no quick way of getting it to do what you want other than to wait - this drastically reduces the

pace of the game and frustrates no end. What makes this errant camera even more exasperating is that it goes a long way to ruining a lovely game. On the plus side each level in the game is so far removed from the last that it seems like you're playing an entirely different game with each level change. The sheer inspiration and variety has to be admired. One level has you flying across a dry

riverbed hanging precariously onto a dandelion stem and another has you fighting to the death with a giant bug inside a rolling tin can. Granted there are a few stock levels that require you to get from A to B but these are usually populated with a number of puzzles that must be solved before continuing. You will have the opportunity to explore the city which is made up of glass bottles that you can climb into, playing cards that must be jumped on and a giant spider that must be avoided - it's a small world you're playing in and everything is sized just right. As you progress through each stage you have certain objectives that are linked to the on-going story. Everything in the game is linked to the story so



IT'S CRAPS IN A TIN CAN WITH A BUG.

you're never left wondering why you had to fight your way through a hundred screens of mosquitoes, spiders and wasps.

Polish that acorn

To aid you in your quest you are given a number of tools and abilities - it's all down to berries and acorns. Your first line of offence is the berry; you



BUGS ON THE INTERNET
THE DISNEY SITE FOR A BUG'S LIFE HAS PLENTY OF INTERESTING INFORMATION ABOUT THE MOVIE AND ITS CHARACTERS. ONE UNIQUE FEATURE ON THE SITE IS THE AREA WHERE YOU CAN DOWNLOAD THE BLOOPERS FROM THE MOVIE. THEY ARE HILARIOUS AND GO A LONG WAY TO SHOW HOW MUCH LOVE AND ATTENTION WENT INTO THE FINAL PRODUCT. ANOTHER INTERESTING SECTION ON THE SITE SHOWS YOU HOW THEY PUT A FULL LENGTH ANIMATED FEATURE TOGETHER USING ONLY COMPUTERS. FOR ALL THE BLOOPERS AND OTHER INFORMATION CHECK OUT THE SITE BELOW.
DISNEY.GO.COM/DisneyPICTURES/BUGSLIFE/MAINFRAME.HTML



THINGS HEAT UP TOWARDS THE END OF THE GAME.

Purple berries are more powerful, while others home in on targets out of your immediate view, but nothing beats the gold berry. On all the levels you must try and find the elusive gold berry, this is the ultimate weapon and is always well hidden or just out of reach, requiring some serious acorn

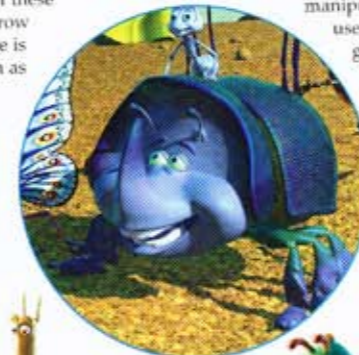
HOW BIG?

If you have a PC and can sit back content with a 4 GB Hard Drive here are a few facts that'll scare you.

Each frame of film is 7,143,424 bytes in size. A typical movie runs at 24 frames a second. A 90 minute movie consists of 129,600 frames. So, the final film took up roughly 925GB of storage space. Now with all the dry runs and video resolution frames that must also be stored the entire movie ends up at 2000 Gigabytes or 2 Terabytes. So, how's that 4 GB Hard Drive looking now?

have an unlimited supply of these berries and the idea is to throw them at your enemies. There is never any need to aim them as they usually always find their target automatically. This automatic targeting is a good thing because the awkward camera would probably make aiming nothing short of impossible. As you progress you will often find different coloured berries which have various functions and are sometimes more powerful. Red berries are the weaker type and won't do any damage to things like worms or some of the bigger beetles.

manipulation or leaps of faith to get to. You use your acorn manipulation abilities to grow different plants in order to reach some of the higher locations. In the tutorial you are given a scant lesson on acorns, but as the game progresses you'll soon discover just how this acorn ability becomes a vital tool



to completing levels and learning all the secrets on offer. If Flik stands in front of an acorn he can change its colour and then jump on it. By

changing the colour, the acorns will turn into different things when jumped on. This acorn changing aspect of the game is brilliant and effectively changes the game into quite a complicated puzzle solving exercise. They aren't the most hair tearing of puzzles and most are easily solved but what is impressive is the sheer number of changes that can be applied to the acorns. There are healing acorns, cannon plant acorns and even acorns that can be changed into dandelions, which can then be used to fly around a level. In this department, A Bug's Life is head and shoulders above many other movie-to-platform game conversions.

Pity about that camera...

A Bug's Life is a good game for the younger audience, but not too young though due to the nature of some of the puzzles. The only problem with the whole hive is the stupid camera that effectively ruins an otherwise excellent title. But it's not all bad news though, the quirky nature of the camera is tolerable and if you think you can live with the flaw then go grab a copy and give those grasshoppers something to think about.

A Bug's Life tries to be different and succeeds in a number of ways - the acorn manipulation is a clever touch and forms the basis for some unique puzzles. It's a good game with many strong points, just a pity about that annoying camera...

Developer: Traveller's Tales	Publisher: Sony Computer Entertainment	Supplier: Ster Kinekor Interactive (011) 445-7900	RRP: R 399.00
http://www.playstation-europe.com			

Multiplayer: No	Comparatives: Soyro The Dragon Crash Bandicoot 3	Pro's: Stunning Movies Good Story Involvement Acorns	Con's: Dumb Camera Old Graphics Engine Frustrating At Times
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Graphics: 76	Sound: 78	Control: 84	Story: 83	Continuity: 87	Playability: 69
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80

REDTIDE

GENRE
3D Platform

Controller Support
Dual Shock Analog Controller

Optional Extras
1 Memory Block

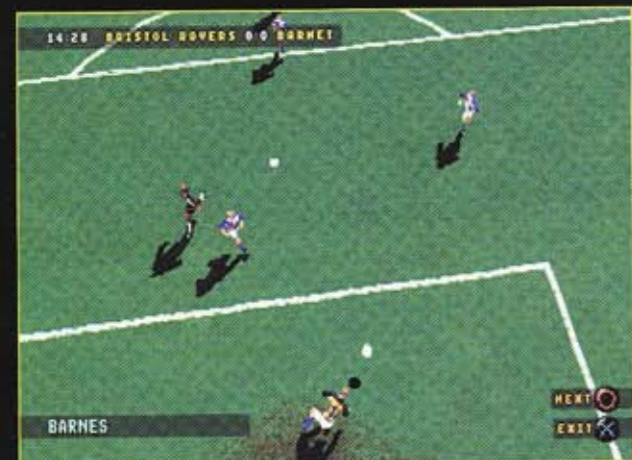
We all know that competing on a soccer field against rivals is one of the most satisfying things to do. But we give little thought to the nervous guy who is puffing on his seventh cigarette, jumping up and down, swearing at all who come into his train of thought and vision. This is the role of the Manager and after playing Premier Manager 99, I have a new found respect for their presence.

Storm

Football management sims are the actual reasons that my gaming passions took off the way they did. On our trusty old ZX Spectrum there was a little title that did its rounds among the football fanatics, it was called Football Manager. Many week-ends were spent in the company of two or more friends trying to build our favourite side (I won't mention which side for fear of flying missiles) up to, in those days, Division one. Gaming highlights were simulated by stick men that glided across a green background, kicking a square pixel around. Now we are thrust into the world of high-powered gaming computers and consoles, the gaming developers have battled to reproduce the intense excitement and depth of a

being given the arduous task of managing England, it will be interesting to see whether you have the ability to match his rise to fame. PM99 plants you in the hot seat of some of the biggest and most famous sides in the world. There are two key modes of play, these being either a Management orientated game where you take control of a divisional team and decide its destiny on the playing fields. Or the more enticing role of Career mode that has you dealing with all aspects of the football business, right down to the type of polish used for the boots (ok, almost). In Career mode your objective is to take a third division side all the way to the show, all the while keeping your club financially footloose and healthy in all respects.

PREMIER MANAGER NINETY NINE



HIGH QUALITY MATCH SEQUENCES LIFTS PM99 TO THE TOP OF THE FOOD CHAIN.

twelve-year-old title. That is until now. Premier Manager 99 comes from the Actua Soccer stable of Gremlin Interactive and has a long history in the genre of football management. The 1998 version picked up much applause for its refined techniques and match sequences. This updated version offers a lot more in the way of Database information of the English and Italian leagues. Some might say that it is too restrictive but the amounts of information on each player, side and stadium are widespread and up to date. PM99 is being endorsed by Kevin Keegan, the player maestro and somewhat of a legend in his management escapades at Newcastle as well. After

One of the first things you will notice is the enhanced Actua style match highlight's that are the best I have seen in my twelve years of silicon management. Accurate commentary and an ultra impressive 3D engine are amazing to behold. The indescribable joy that you get while watching your team perform (in Liv..., oops let that one out) in an eye candy fashion, with heart-pounding action. Most highlights leave you with your nails nibbled away and a heavy case of heartburn. The unfortunate thing is the inability to stop and ring changes during the highlight's, but if you did your homework before the game, why

worry. PM99 has a fair amount of new AI tweaks that will keep you guessing as a Manager. The interfaces have been smoothed over and are easy to understand. Intuitive control is given to the training sequence with more options available for individual training for your star players and whip sessions for your lame mules. The financial aspects are normally pet hates for management lovers but PM99 uses a streamlined system of only controlling the much needed systems such as ticket prices, stadium upkeep and player wages. This lets you get on with what makes football management sims exciting and fun to play, planning and strategizing. For my first look at a management sim on the PlayStation, I am thoroughly impressed. The console handles the gameplay with precision and

Date	Squad & Formation	Player One																																				
THU 5 AUG 1998	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Rating</th> <th>Fit</th> <th>Goals</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1 Lee Harrison</td><td>★★</td><td>92%</td></tr> <tr><td>2 Sam Stockley</td><td>★★</td><td>98%</td></tr> <tr><td>3 Mike Harle</td><td>★★</td><td>99%</td></tr> <tr><td>4 Stevie Searle</td><td>★★</td><td>99%</td></tr> <tr><td>5 John Ford</td><td>★★</td><td>99%</td></tr> <tr><td>6 John Doolan</td><td>★★</td><td>99%</td></tr> <tr><td>7 Steve Barnes</td><td>★★</td><td>99%</td></tr> <tr><td>8 Kevin Ratray</td><td>★★</td><td>99%</td></tr> <tr><td>9 Sean Devine</td><td>★★★</td><td>99%</td></tr> <tr><td>10 Ken Charley</td><td>★★★</td><td>99%</td></tr> <tr><td>11 Philip Simpson</td><td>★★</td><td>94%</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Rating	Fit	Goals	1 Lee Harrison	★★	92%	2 Sam Stockley	★★	98%	3 Mike Harle	★★	99%	4 Stevie Searle	★★	99%	5 John Ford	★★	99%	6 John Doolan	★★	99%	7 Steve Barnes	★★	99%	8 Kevin Ratray	★★	99%	9 Sean Devine	★★★	99%	10 Ken Charley	★★★	99%	11 Philip Simpson	★★	94%	BARNET
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STATS AND INFORMATION GALORE IN PM99.

finesse without losing authenticity. I can only say that we are proved wrong, and our copy of Championship Manager 2 has finally been relegated to the bottom division. To all you aspiring Managers with a PlayStation, kick those boys into shape.

STORM

GENRE
Football Management

Controller Support

Dual Shock Analog Controller

Optional Extras

15 Memory Blocks

Developer: Gremlin Interactive	Publisher: Gremlin Interactive	Supplier: Star Kinekor Interactive (011) 445-7900	RRP: TBA
http://www.gremlin.com			

Multiplayer	Comparatives	Pros	Cons
Yes	Premier Manager 98	Excellent 3D Matches New AI Tweaks PlayStation's Finest	No In-Highlight Changes Terrible Background Music

Graphics	Sound	Control	Story	Continuity	Playability
92	78	82	NA	93	90

87

Streamlined interface and stunning 3D sequences are the stable diet around the success of Premier Manager 99. Exciting highlights keep the nerves in check and bring excitement to a normally placid gameplay. The best of its genre for the PlayStation all stem from Gremlin's impressive history of football titles.



THE ULTIMATE SPACE COMBAT GAME

BABYLON 5

SIERRA FX BABYLONIAN PRODUCTIONS, INC. WARNER BROS. YOSEMITE ENTERTAINMENT

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It's cold and wet, your breath mists in the Antarctic air as it leaves your quivering lips and your heart is pounding in your chest. After silently slipping out of your wetsuit and taking cover behind a crate, you watch two guards deep in conversation. The talking ends and they continue patrolling unaware of your presence. It's time to move, lives are at stake and everyone's counting on you. - RedTide

Metal Gear Solid is a remarkable game and nothing has raised an eyebrow this high since Resident Evil 2. You play a tough Special Forces character called Solid Snake who must infiltrate a terrorist stronghold, save a few hostages and then go on to save the world from a potential nuclear disaster. Now, to this theatre of intrigue you can add the fact that the terrorists are actually members of Snake's old covert operations unit, Fox-Hound. The story leans heavily over to the slightly cheesy side with all the evil marine protagonists sporting unlikely names like Psycho Mantis, Vulcan Raven and there's even a girl called Sniper Wolf. All we are missing from this line up is Killer Anvil and Mortal Terror. The apocalyptic threat in this case is a giant robot with nuclear capabilities, a terrifying product of the Metal Gear project. You must rescue the hostages, establish the exact validity of the terrorist threat and either disable or destroy it. Looking at all this, they do seem to be asking a little too much from a single man, (isn't there a small army of commandos to help out here?) and all they give you is a packet of cigarettes and a pair of binoculars. It is a



TACTICAL ESPIONAGE ACTION METAL GEAR SOLID

bit overwhelming, but the idea here is not to alert the terrorists or they might launch the nuclear missiles. Stealth is the key - infiltrate and make like an invisible shadow for most of the game. If you pry a little deeper into the story and read the background information, you can't help wondering if things seem a little over the top for a seemingly simple action game, but



then Metal Gear Solid is far from simple. The story framing this engrossing game has to be one of the most involving tales ever encountered in a PlayStation game, it could literally be a movie in its own right. The tale is told and primarily played out using the game engine with plenty of additional background information that can be accessed via a special menu from the options screen. But that's not all, you also get a handful of training missions that don't need to be completed to play the game but come highly recommended to play it well and not fumble your way through the first few levels.



THE WORST PART ABOUT ALL THIS SLAUGHTER IS THAT YOU DIDN'T CAUSE IT, WHAT'S AROUND THAT CORNER?

Stealthy Shadow

The game begins with you entering the base through an underwater canal. To illustrate how the game works, the idea on the first level is that you must make your way to the lift on the other side of

pressing it but rather hold it down and then press down on the directional pad, you will drag the guard backwards - his stupid colleagues will now fire those bullets into his body. It is also possible to throw a guard. If you throw a guard into another guard, both go down and throwing guards from a height also kills them.



THE TWO PHASE ALARM AND SENSOR JAMMER. IF IT'S RED THEN YOU'VE GOT TROUBLE - THE GUARDS ON A LEVEL WILL MOVE TOWARDS YOUR POSITION INTENT ON KILLING YOU. IF IT'S YELLOW THEY'LL SEARCH FRANTICALLY FOR YOU AND IF YOU'RE SPOTTED AGAIN IT'LL GO BACK TO RED. THE JAMMER ALARM APPEARS IF ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT IS BEING JAMMED.



QUICK GUIDE

Metal Gear Solid Play Guide (M.G.S.P.G.)
Next time pay attention when that drill instructor screams in your ear. It's a tough life being a highly trained soldier and we understand that after all those evil terrorist leaders have brainwashed and tortured you there might be some problems you experience coping with the trauma. Read this to survive the first day, study it to make it to the final boss.

General

- Time the routes of the guards so you can slip by unnoticed.
- As you walk through snow you leave footprints, guards notice footprints and investigate - to avoid this crawl on your stomach.
- Avoid puddles of water and metal grates, they make a noise if you walk on them.
- Keep an eye out for dark shadows and hidden areas and always avoid being seen by the guards.
- Taking out a guard by surprise usually rewards you with ammunition or an item.



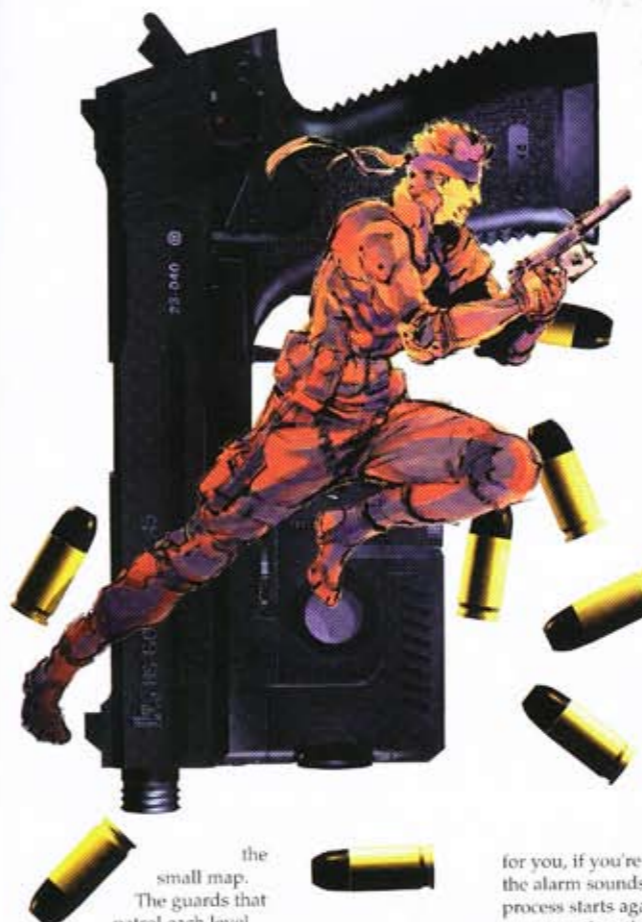
can also knock on the wall to attract a guard's attention causing him to deviate from his usual patrol. Make sure you have left the area before the guard arrives.

Quick Weapon Reload

The R2 button will enable you to select a weapon. Pressing the R1 button will automatically select the last weapon you were holding. During a fire-fight, tap this button twice to quickly reload your weapon.

Breaking necks and the human shield

Sneaking up behind a guard allows you to break his neck if you repeatedly press the square button. If you do not keep



the small map. The guards that patrol each level have a cone shaped field of view that extends about ten meters in front of them, if you move into this cone, they will sound the alarm and you'll end up eating lead. If a guard does spot you a two-



QUICK GUIDE CONTINUED

Codec Frequency Table

During the game you'll need to communicate with a number of people, these are all the numbers you'll need:

Campbell	140.85
Naomi	140.85
Mei Ling	140.96
Master	141.80
Otacon	141.12
Meryl	140.15
Nastasha	141.82
Deep Throat	140.48



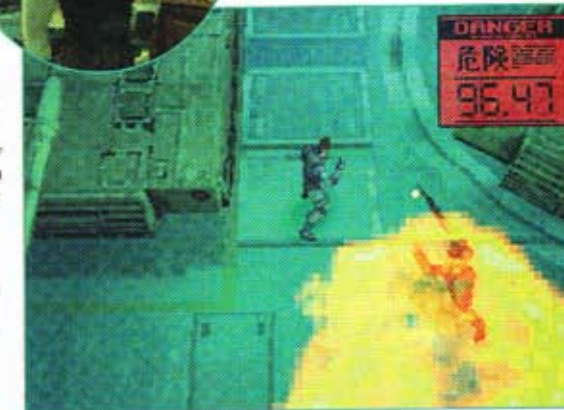
DON'T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT YOUR CODES, CHARACTERS IN THE GAME USE IT TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOU.



YOU'D BETTER PRAY HE DOESN'T TURN AROUND.

phase alarm sounds and all the guards on that level and a few mysterious others rush towards you with guns firing. If you manage to evade them for long enough the second phase kicks in, where the guards are still on full alert but they don't know where you are and will start looking

for you, if you're spotted again the alarm sounds and the process starts again. If you do get away then the guards all return to their original positions and carry on as if nothing happened. This creates an extremely intense game that has you thinking you're constantly under threat no matter where you are. Seeing you isn't the only way you can be discovered - should you leave footprints in the snow they will follow the footprints until you either return to concrete or get away by leopard crawling on your stomach. If you make too much noise by walking over metal plates or puddles of water for example, you'll be detected. Besides the guards, surveillance cameras and spotlights will also raise the alarm. It's a tough experience but don't let that phase you, you're supposed to be a tough marine.



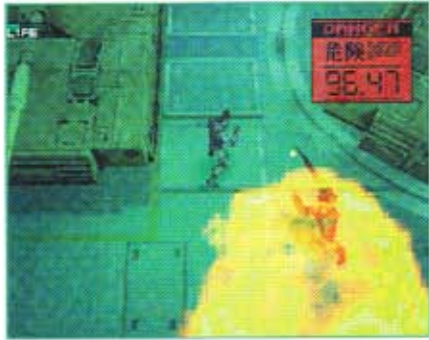
IF YOU STRAP C4 EXPLOSIVES ONTO GUARDS THEY'LL GO BOMB AT THE PRESS OF A BUTTON!

THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT INFORMATION DISPLAY IN THE GAME. IF YOU USE IT WELL IT CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE!

Weapons

- The SOCOM - has a laser sight if you hold the square but ton down, letting it go fires the weapon.
- C-4 Plastic explosives - placing them near recently plastered walls will blast a hole in them. You can usually see these patched walls in first person perspective.
- If you fire the SOCOM with a noise suppressor or silencer it will not attract guards.
- The FA-MAS - is a lightweight Machine Gun. Very loud but can withstand adverse conditions and works well after being in water, mud or snow.
- PSG-1 - a Sniper Rifle with a silencer. Speaks for itself and is good for removing enemy threat from a distance.

- The Stinger - a heat seeking rocket launcher, good for destroying cameras or people. It is very loud and guards will come running for miles.
- The Nikita - a remote controlled rocket launcher, which proves useful for scouting out areas before you go into them, and if you find anything you don't like just guide the rocket into it. Also very loud.
- C-4 Explosive - we all know what this is, useful for remote murder or destroying recently plastered walls. Up to 16 can be laid and detonated one at a time.
- Claymore Mines - are useful for ambushing guards. Use the thermal goggles to detect them or the mine detector. You can crawl over them to pick them up.
- Chaff Grenades - disable electric sensors and cameras, just remember they also jam your sensors.
- Stun Grenades - stun the enemy.
- Hand Grenades - big bangs kill all enemies but will attract more, useful on tanks.



IF YOU STRAP C4 EXPLOSIVES ONTO GUARDS THEY'LL GO BOMB AT A PRESS OF A BUTTON!

Point of view

Metal Gear Solid can accurately be described as an action adventure game with the emphasis placed on 'stealthy infiltration'. Trying to play the game by slaughtering everything in sight will only result in your early retirement from the festivities in a pine box. You must cleverly use the environment to hide and sneak your way around most of the levels, shooting is important in some cases but you'll find that using your head and not your gun is the way to play. Some serious criticism has been levelled at Metal Gear Solid regarding its 'unique' camera angle. Most of the game is played from a steeply inclined isometric angle. The problem here is that you can never see much of the particular level you are playing on and must rather rely on a miniature map in the top right of the screen. This criticism is somewhat misplaced though and if you think about what



the developer is trying to achieve it makes sense - in a way. By limiting the view of the game to this forced perspective you must react quickly and lurk in the shadows to avoid detection by the guards. You also have a first person view, which can be activated at any time with the press of a button, although this sounds ambitious for a game of this nature it only really proves useful for looking around, as you can't do anything while in this view. The camera does also swing back and move around a little depending on where you are in the level, so it won't leave you wondering where you are while it's trying to film through a solid wall.

As the game progresses, you will meet all the bad terrorist elements and each encounter brings a new gameplay aspect to the table, you'll be up against tanks and stealth suit wearing ninjas. There are even

characters that you must co-operate with to achieve common goals. While you play you'll often receive messages from the boys back at base camp, helping you through the game and offering advice, this is all done via a portable electronic video phone device which has a shrill ring that only you can hear. You know a game has you by the proverbial throat when the shrill ring

of this radio gives you more of a fright than encountering a guard. You pick up weapons as the game moves along and you can look forward to playing with a remote controlled rocket launch-



er, stun grenades and C4 plastic explosives. There are so many small touches in the game that enhance the atmosphere such as the metallic clucking as you crawl through a ventilation shaft and the fact that you can hide in a cardboard box to escape detection. Most of the time the limited camera does leave you feeling like you have no control over the action especially when you are getting shot by guards you can't even see. The only other major problem with the game is the fact that it's a touch unrealistic, it's silly things like the fact that the guards always seem to forget that you ever existed right after you've strangled one of them to death. It also takes more than one bullet to the back of the head to kill a guard, these discrepancies disappoint you a little because everything else is so ultra realistic.

Resident Gear Evil

In many ways you can compare Metal Gear Solid to Resident Evil 2 but that is only from a subtle feel point of view. The two games are worlds apart but are also both classic games that have managed to lift the standard of the average PlayStation game. Metal Gear Solid is a fresh, new and exciting title that will preoccupy your thoughts when you're not playing it. Forget all the little unrealistic quirks in the game and enjoy it for what it is - some serious escapism that will satisfy your hunger for action adventure titles until the next James Bond movie.

Metal Gear Solid manages to do something unique in just about every possible way. From stalking around avoiding enemies to the varied 'boss' encounters it just keeps getting better the more you play it. One of the best PlayStation games around.

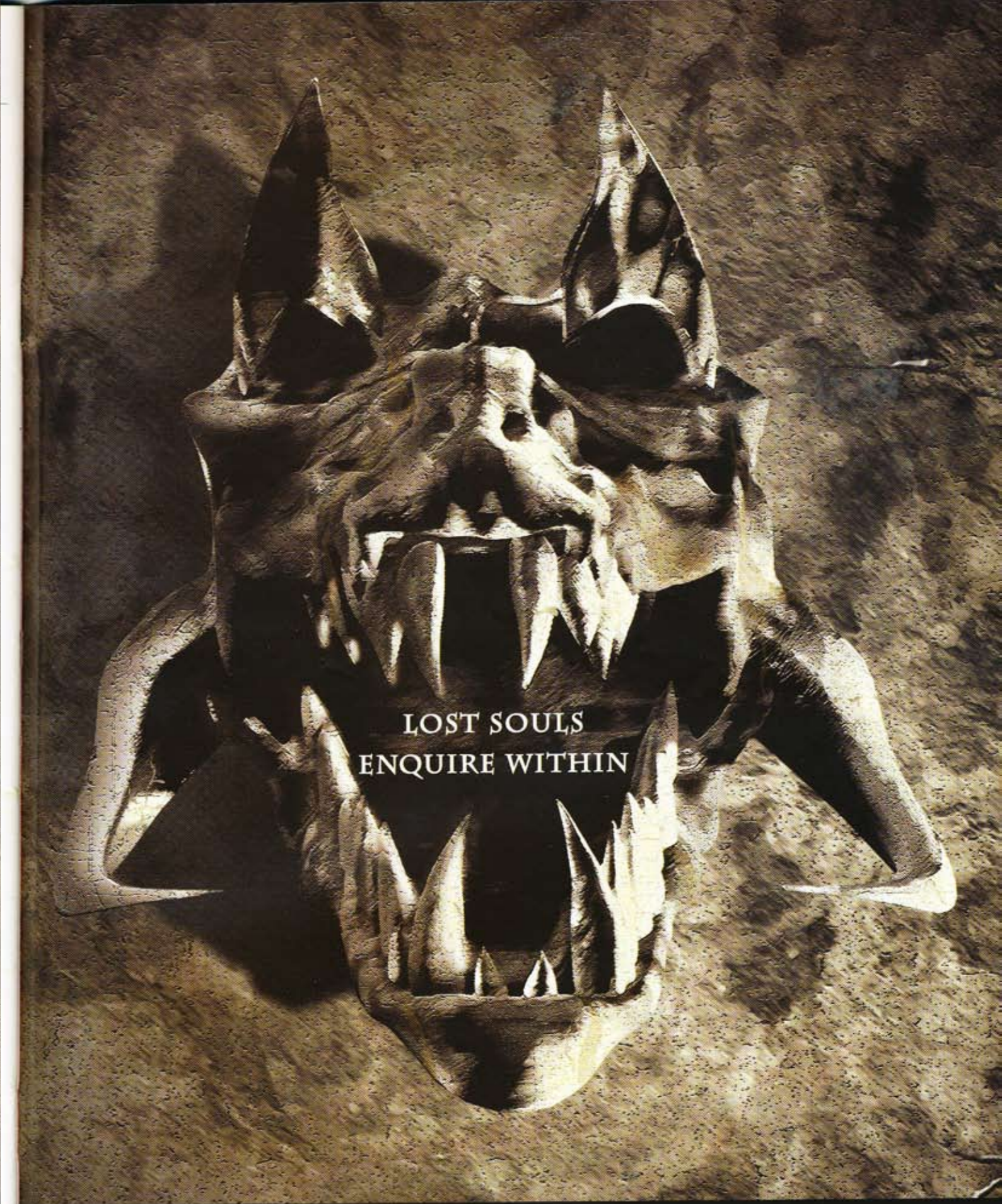
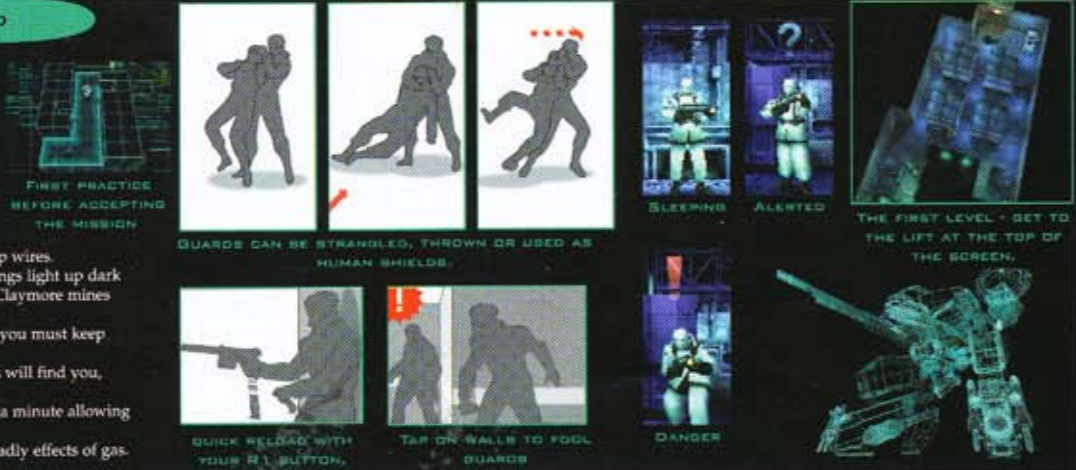
Developer: Konami		Publisher: Sony Computer Entertainment		Supplier: Star Kinekor Interactive (011) 445-7900		RRP: TBA	
http://www.konami.com							
Multiplayer		Competitives		Pro's		Con's	
No		Resident Evil 2		Good Story Innovative Engrossing		Limited Camera Angles Continuity Unrealistic at Times	
Graphics	Sound	Control	Story	Continuity	Playability	90	
92	88	86	90	87	94		

QUICK GUIDE CONTINUED

Items

Some of the more interesting and useful items in the game.

- Rations - these heal you should you take any damage. If they freeze you'll need to wait for them to defrost or you can speed the process up by taking them to the bathroom hand dryer.
- Cigarettes - beside shortening your life they are useful for finding hidden laser trip wires.
- Thermal Goggles - these sense heated things light up dark rooms, they also prove useful for finding Claymore mines and stealth suited advisories.
- Cardboard box - in which you can hide, (you must keep very still in there).
- Medicine - if you sneeze or cough guards will find you, take the medicine to stop that cold.
- Diazepam - calms Snake down for about a minute allowing for accurate sniper shots.
- Gas Mask - keeps Snake safe from the deadly effects of gas.



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LANDS OF LORE III
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Westwood Studios
www.westwood.com
PC CD



Pool is one of the very few sports that has yet to be represented in an electronic form on either the PlayStation or the PC. Gremlin Interactive, the creators of the highly successful Actua Sports series (including the much-acclaimed Actua Soccer games) are set to change this with Actua Pool.

MadMan

At last, for all of you who are too lazy or too scared to actually get up and play the game, comes the long awaited armchair version. Now you too can hone your pool skills with 14 different sets of rules in the comfort of your own home! A new pool game has been a long time in coming, the only example so far worth mentioning is Virtual

actua POOL

Pool which unfortunately can't go

among them power, English (exactly where the cue strikes the ball) and of course aim. Luckily for most of us, it is a lot easier to perfect your skills in Actua Pool than on the real table. When it comes to variety the game definitely is not lacking. Modes include Quick Start (pretty self-explanatory), Hustle (1 player game against all of the CPU characters in an attempt to become the champion),

head to head with any of the latest sports sims. Actua Pool, known elsewhere as Pool Shark, is set to change all that. The game boasts a number of different locations, opponents of different skill levels and tables along with all the different rule

Match which lets you compete against any opponent of your choice (including human controlled characters) and Tournament Mode. Did I mention that the game supports up to 16 human controlled players?

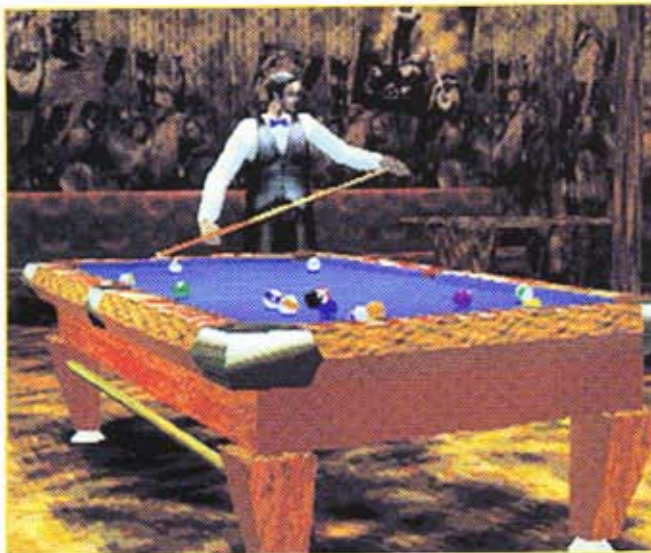
Graphically, Actua Pool doesn't do too badly. The normal chin-on-the-cue view used when taking a shot is quite realistic and the balls look good (well in a pool game you would expect that) but when the view changes to show the characters standing at the table they look more like action figures than anything else. A number of different camera angles are offered and the tables look good, each having a different coloured baize on the surface (one even has a glass top). Each of the locations offer 2 standard tables and one unusual table - hexagonal, L-shaped etc. There are also 2 typical characters per location both with differing skill levels and style of play.



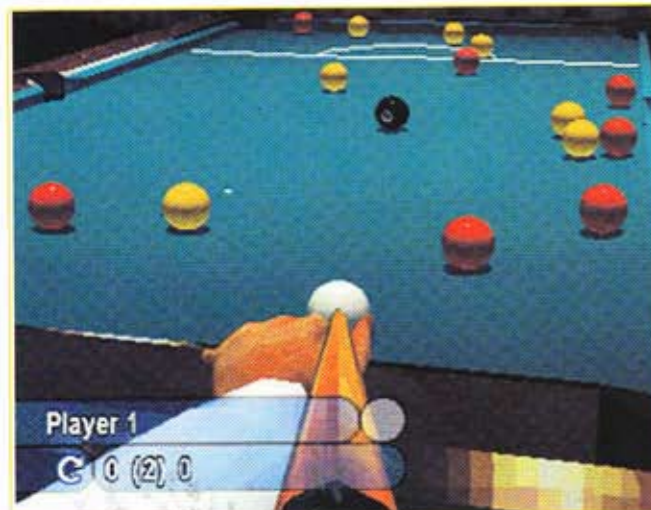
sets, the ability to play against friends or family and a School of Pool mode for those unfamiliar with the game.

The most important aspect of a pool game has to be the physics. If they aren't accurate you'll soon find yourself frustrated when the balls start flying off in the wrong direction. Luckily Actua Pool hasn't made that mistake and pool veterans won't be disappointed. The different tables each have unique surfaces (slow, fast etc.) and the balls react accordingly. Your results will depend on a number of true-to-life points,

much on offer but then again pool isn't much of a loud game. The sounds of the cue striking the ball, balls hitting each other and falling into the pockets aren't too bad but the music is far from excellent... you can always turn it off I guess. Pool is a boring sport and unless you're a lover of the sport, Actua Pool, despite the numerous locations, opponents and rule sets, isn't able to keep your attention long enough to make it worth your while. It is enjoyable when playing against another human opponent but the slow gameplay makes it a more of a time-consuming affair than anything else - you may as well go and play it for real. Die hard pool fans may enjoy it but otherwise I'd suggest you try before you buy.



A RANGE OF DIFFERENT CAMERA ANGLES DIVERSIFIES THE GAMEPLAY AND GIVES THE GOLDEN TOUCH TO REALISM



THAT EIGHT BALL HAS AN UNGANNY ABILITY OF GETTING IN THE WAY OF MY SHOTS.

MADMAN

GENRE
Pool Simulation

Controller Support

Dual Shock Analog Controller

Optional Extras

1 Memory Block

Developer: Gremlin Interactive
 Publisher: Gremlin Interactive
 Supplier: Ser Kinok Interactive (011) 445-7900
 RRP: TBA
<http://www.gremlin.com>

Multiplayer Yes
Comparitives Virtual Pool
Pro's Best Pool Sim Around Lots of Variety
Con's Gets Boring Quickly Slow

Graphics 70 **Sound** 50 **Control** 82 **Story** NA **Continuity** 72 **Playability** 86

72

Overall Actua Pool tries hard and with goodish graphics and a variety of rules it almost makes the cut. Unfortunately if you don't have anyone to play against it gets boring quite quickly and it is a very slow game to play. Go and play the real thing instead.

"Thus it is that in war the victorious strategist only seeks battle after the victory has been won, whereas he who is destined to defeat first fights and afterwards looks for victory."

(The Art of War by Sun Tsu)

MACHINES



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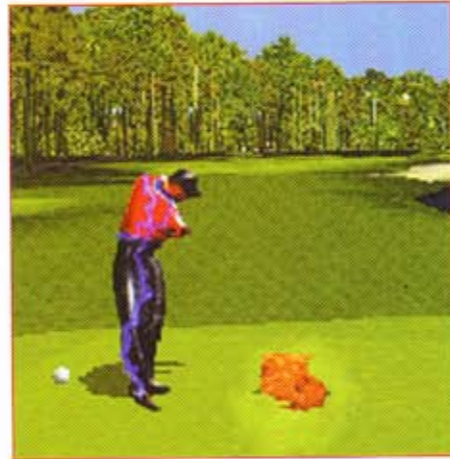
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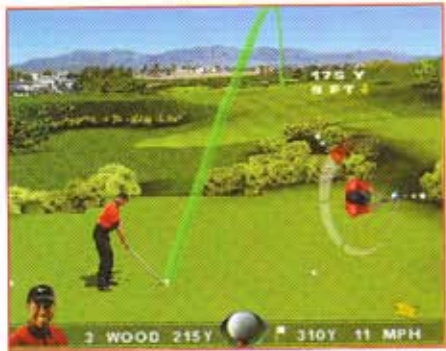
Revolutionising the sport of golf is one thing, doing it on the PlayStation is another. Tiger Woods is not satisfied with being the number one golfer in the world but wants the virtual golfer number one ranking as well. Seeing as though there is no Ernie Els game out yet, the praise must go to Electronic Arts this time for sinking the putt. **Storm**

Never before has the game of golf received so much attention, due to a golfing phenomenon that is sweeping the world, Tiger Woods. It was only a matter of time before somebody slipped him a few million dollars to become a virtual gladiator of the fairways, and who better than the leaders in interactive sports entertainment, Electronic Arts. Being an avid golfer and somewhat of a specialist computer player, I took on the task of reviewing the PC and PlayStation version. Following on the eye candy features of the PC release, it is quite hard to agree with golfing simulations on the PSX that do anything for the senses. For once I have been proven wrong, PlayStation can release anything to similar effect



PASSING WIND OR LAUNCHING MISSILES?

only get Tiger but seven other well known player such as the ever present Mark O'Meara and charismatic Peter Jacobsen. You will remember this brat pack from the past titles and they are healthy competition for Tiger (but not that healthy!). With Tiger talents sewn into this production, you will learn early on that the Tiger Shot is something most budding gamers will aspire for. All you have to do is power the swing to the red and hit it sweet, and watch Tiger fire up a huge one. There is an all new swing interface which incorporates a top down plain view of the swing which we found very simple and effective to manipulate. The gripe with this interface is the terrain sometimes shadows out the striking area and will irritate at times especially when timing is crucial. The most exciting addition we found was the Analog Swing that uses an analog controller thumb movement to simulate the swing speed and direction. What is very useful about this mechanism is the ability to almost always hit a sweet Tiger Shot and gain precious yards without much effort. The game can automatically detect which swing you're using by pressing the analog button on or off. This helps utilise the analog method for driving distance and the three-point swing for approaching precision and putting. TW99 has the largest range of courses for a PlayStation golf sim with five PGA tour courses. A disappointment that TPC Pebble Beach is not in the selection as it has never been bundled with a PSX title yet. Nevertheless the nine modes of play will keep the courses in TW99 very busy especially the all new Tour Mode. Play on the PGA tour in four Championship events and one major, all with tons of boodle for prize money and the chance to be the PGA tour Champion. This mode really brings TW99 to the forefront of golf on the PSX, not because it is the first to offer it but because it simulates the game correctly. A handicap system would have been an interesting inclusion but was left out for obvious reasons. TW99 must be the quickest golf game around, with EA boasting of finishing a round in \pm 30 minutes. We personally managed 21 minutes and this was with a decent score included. Simple touches have been slipped into TW99 to make the game more playable, such as the after touch effect which allows you to add spin and direction while the ball is in flight. This makes for more interaction while watching the shot and rewards precise control. TV style action is what really makes TW99 a true champion. Different camera angles and zoom levels watch the ball flight and action from all around the course. A simple reward you give yourself with replays for good shots and close misses. I was an admirer of Tiger Woods from the beginning but now I am an avid fan (not himself personally, how could I let Ernie down?). The sports title he put his name to is another example of how he plays the actual game. Precise, smooth, daring and excellent techniques are all represented within the PSX version of TW99. There is rather a lot of room for improvement but these are a lot of small cosmetic touches that EA normally overlooks. This is the golf game for the people at the moment, and as far as golfing on the PSX is concerned the TW99 is the one to beat, but then all the world is playing catch up with Tiger Woods, why should this be different?



ARCADE STYLE GAMEPLAY.

and better if need be. As I said before, Tiger Woods is predominantly an arcade style sports simulation that attracts the more fun orientated player. There are elements of simulation but its hidden beneath the ritz and glitz of the Tiger Woods show. Graphically TW99 is the best of its genre and more, with eye candy special effects plus excellent gradient and course representation. The cinematic animations of Tiger are well-taken and smooth to watch. Very little clipping occurs during play and a good job is done in simulating accidental water shots, bunker splashes and divot marks. Frame rates are steady throughout, except when a zoomed out camera shot takes in a little more than it can handle. Tiger Woods 99 steps from the well-known PGA Tour series and this is where TW99 shines. With full backing from the PGA and tour players you not



HOLE 1 PAR 4 167Y 8 MPH

keep the courses in TW99 very busy especially the all new Tour Mode. Play on the PGA tour in four Championship events and one major, all with tons of boodle for prize money and the chance to be the PGA tour Champion. This mode really brings TW99 to the forefront of golf on the PSX, not because it is the first to offer it but because it simulates the game correctly. A handicap system would have been an interesting inclusion but was left out for obvious reasons. TW99 must be the quickest golf game around, with EA boasting of finishing a round in \pm 30 minutes. We personally managed 21 minutes and this was with a decent score included. Simple touches have been slipped into TW99 to make the game more playable, such as the after touch effect which allows you to add spin and direction while the ball is in flight. This makes for more interaction while watching the shot and rewards precise control. TV style action is what really makes TW99 a true champion. Different camera angles and zoom levels watch the ball flight and action from all around the course. A simple reward you give yourself with replays for good shots and close misses. I was an admirer of Tiger Woods from the beginning but now I am an avid fan (not himself personally, how could I let Ernie down?). The sports title he put his name to is another example of how he plays the actual game. Precise, smooth, daring and excellent techniques are all represented within the PSX version of TW99. There is rather a lot of room for improvement but these are a lot of small cosmetic touches that EA normally overlooks. This is the golf game for the people at the moment, and as far as golfing on the PSX is concerned the TW99 is the one to beat, but then all the world is playing catch up with Tiger Woods, why should this be different?



STORM

GENRE
Golf Simulator

Controller Support

Dual Shock Analog Controller

Optional Extras

2 Memory Blocks

Developer: Electronic Arts	Publisher: Electronic Arts	Supplier: Electronic Arts Africa (011) 803-1212	RRP: R 359.00
http://www.easports.com			

Multiplayer	Comparitives	Pros	Cons
Yes	Accus Golf 3 Everybody's Golf	Fast Gameplay Extra Courses True Physics	Putting Very Difficult Disappearing Interface

Graphics	Sound	Control	Story	Continuity	Playability
91	82	85	NA	90	87

87

Fun, fast, realistic arcade golfing action breathes life into a rather neglected PSX genre. All new play modes add depth and options to the normal bash and play gameplay of these titles. Tiger Woods 99 has lifted the level of golfing on the PSX and creates a new benchmark for virtual golfers.

Amongst the plethora of racing titles for the PlayStation, ranging from the mediocre offerings such as Ridge Racer to the awe inspiring Gran Turismo there is little in the way of innovation. Blue Shift dare to be different and have brought us Running Wild - and they didn't do too badly either. **MadMan**

Speeding around the Zoo
A racer with a change and all in the spirit of fun. That's the name of the game with the aptly named Running Wild. Instead of speeding around race tracks at 300+ km/h in a modified Dodge Viper in an attempt to collect massive amounts of prize money, Running Wild is all about good, simple fun and it does it so well. As opposed to the stereotype racers of today, Running Wild changes two things - you don't utilise a car and the characters are animals. Whilst the game may look too cute to some people (as did the excellent Spyro the Dragon) the gameplay is surprisingly enticing.

New Math
The game has only 6 tracks, which at first may seem too few but when you think about it there are actually 15. By now you must be wondering what planet I come

from so let me explain. Running Wild has 3 different difficulty levels, easy, medium and yep, you guessed it, hard. When you first start the game only the easy setting and 4 tracks are available. You can unlock the medium difficulty level, which adds 1 extra track and adds different perils to the existing tracks by

very addictive. I just couldn't put down the controller until I'd managed to get the fastest lap, come first or give the bloke next door a thorough kicking. The tracks are littered with hidden power-ups and shortcuts that add to the life of the game. Also on offer are 6 different characters with different attributes. For example the elephant is strong, the bunny is fast and the zebra an all round good racer. Graphically the game has a Warner Bros. feel to it and the stages and characters look good. Sound wise the music and effects are pretty good but as expected they aren't orchestral masterpieces but thankfully they weren't in the least bit annoying. Load times were good and various tips are displayed on the loading screens. I found the website (<http://www.runningwild.com>) to be good and they have a message-board where you can post your best times. The game has support for both the Analog and Dual-Shock controllers



IT'S THE DONKEY THING AGAINST THE BULL THING.

winning the challenge race and likewise for the hard track. Running Wild boasts a variety of different modes including a practice mode, time trials, circuit and challenge mode, all of which make for fun gameplay but 2 player mode is where Running Wild really excels. The two available 2 player modes are circuit, where you race through the tracks in a certain order, the winner being whoever has the most points at the end and the simple Vs. mode where you pick any track you like and get it on. Scattered around the courses in both 1 and 2 player modes are power-ups ranging from "Get Big" power-ups (simply stand on the opposition to squish them), speed-up (pretty obvious) and various attacks to slow down your opponents.

Thank you very much, please call again Whilst Running Wild uses a simple formula it proved to be



and the vibration was thankfully not overdone but rather added to the overall experience. Acceleration is achieved by holding down the X button, which is a bit silly, but there is an AutoRun option available which lets you concentrate on jumping and the like. Control was pretty good overall and my hands didn't feel terribly punished after a long session.

Overall I found Running Wild to be quite an enjoyable experience, focusing on fun more than anything else. It dares to be different and achieves its goal well. Although it may seem geared towards the younger players, anyone looking for some good fun should enjoy it.



S.P.C.A. ALERT - RACING ANIMALS HAS NEVER BEEN THIS MUCH FUN.



MADMAN

GENRE
Racing Game

Controller Support

Dual Shock Analog Controller

Optional Extras

1 Memory Block

Developer: Blue Shift	Publisher: Universal Studios	Supplier: Star Kinekor Interactive (011) 445-7900	RRP: TBA
http://www.runningwild.com			

Multiplayer	Comparitives	Pros	Cons
Yes	Sonic R (Saturn)	Great Fun Nice Graphics Non-Violent	Too Cute for Some Non-Violent

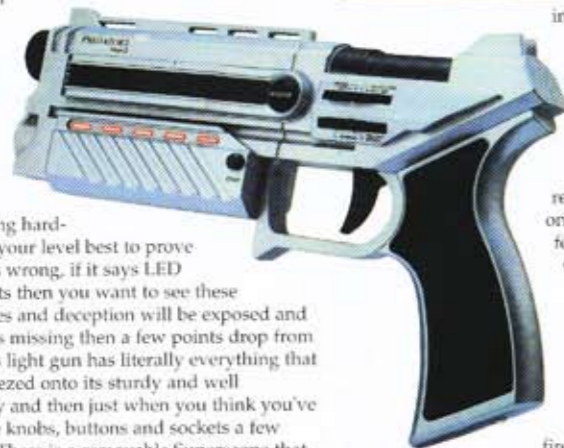
Graphics	Sound	Control	Story	Continuity	Playability
81	74	85	NA	91	90

84

Blue Shift have developed a racer that believes only in fun and does what it does exceptionally well. Excellent gameplay is complemented by good graphics and pleasant sound. Just try not to be put off by the cuteness!

Good design and functionality is always the first thing you investigate when testing out a new peripheral, and by the same token it's no good if it looks lovely but doesn't work or fails after a few sessions. The Predator 2 is a dual-format-automatic-light-gun (well that is what it says on the box) that thankfully doesn't need batteries. The first thing you do when reviewing hardware is to try your level best to prove the box blurbs wrong, if it says LED shooting effects then you want to see these effects. Any lies and deception will be exposed and if something is missing then a few points drop from the score. This light gun has literally everything that could be squeezed onto its sturdy and well designed body and then just when you think you've spotted all the knobs, buttons and sockets a few more appear. There is a removable Superscope that clips on top of the gun and has two different plastic

PREDATOR 2



inserts that must be changed depending how far from the screen you are sitting for improved accuracy (read gimmicky). There are four main buttons besides the trigger, two on either side for reloading, one special and one start button. The trigger feels a little flimsy but works well and stood up well during a pounding session of Point Blank. Scattered around the gun are five sliders that do everything from switching the vibration feature on to selecting the rate of fire. The gun can be used with the PlayStation and the Sega

Saturn and is compatible with Namco Guncon Mode and normal PlayStation mode but requires additional cabling if used in Guncon mode. It comes with a reload foot pedal that plugs into the bottom of the handle. During play the gun proved accurate enough and comfortable, with all the important buttons within easy reach, it is a little heavy towards the front and both hands are required to operate it for extended periods of time. The cable is a little on the short side and the foot pedal works very well, a unique concept that is well implemented with this product. Overall a good solid gun that not only works well but makes you look all intimidating and imposing to your three year old brother. One thing that you can consider as good advice, clean your TV screen before you play with a light gun - you won't believe the difference it makes!

Pro's: Needs no batteries
Looks good
Works perfectly
Con's: A touch heavy
Stingy cable
Loose trigger
R 419.00 (RRP)
Gametronix
(011) 886-1972
www.gametronix.co.za

86

It's the middle of the night and the house is shrouded in an inky black veil, you wake with a start - a muffled humming sound is coming from the kitchen. The humming stops followed by a clicking and a bang, terrified you cautiously climb out of bed and make your way to the kitchen. You feel a sharp pain in your right foot - you slip and go down, banging your head on the wall. After the confusion, you fumble for the light switch and discover that you now need a new PlayStation controller and two aspirins. The dialog above isn't just there to waste space, but to rather illustrate that an

Space & Disk Station



untidy lounge can prove fatal. Logic 3 have designed a new space saving device that might just save your life one day. The Space

Station is a compact storage unit that holds one PlayStation with memory cards and two controllers in a neat black box that fits neatly under your VCR. It is designed to fit under a smaller (14") TV. The tray that holds the PlayStation is a two phase drawer that allows you to access either the controllers or the PlayStation. It's robust and well designed if a little flimsy feeling, but no amount of slamming the drawer open and close could dislodge it from its hinges. In the box you also get a Disk Station that holds eight PlayStation boxes similar to a CD case. Although it feels a little flimsy, it's a good innovative product that's long overdue.

Pro's: Clever idea
Intelligent construction
Includes 2 CD Racks
Con's: Feels flimsy
R 449.00 (RRP)
Gametronix
(011) 886-1972
www.gametronix.co.za

82

Amidst a court battle and serious concerns about piracy, Diamond has released the Rio PMP300 Portable MP3 Player.

Diamond Rio PMP300 Player



Riō
PMP300
PORTABLE MUSIC PLAYER

An excellent feature of the Rio is its unique tech looking interface on the unit. It has all the basic options such as play, stop, next track, previous track as well as random track selection and repeat functions together with an LCD that displays statistics on the current track.

The unit ships with 32MB of RAM and can use add-on flash cards, which store an additional 32MB of data. With a total of 64MB the Rio is capable of storing hours worth of MP3

tracks. Loading these tracks is made simple with the easy to use Rio Manager software for your PC and link cable, which connects the Rio via your parallel port. The cable connects via a pass-through on the parallel port so that you can still use your printer in conjunction with the Rio. For recording your own MP3s from your audio discs Diamond teamed up with the makers of MusicMatch jukebox to bring you this all in one solution. It is capable of extracting music tracks

from CDs and converting them to MP3 format as well as being able to play and catalogue all your MP3s in a database. MusicMatch might get the task done, but there are far more user friendly programs

MP3 stands for MPEG 1 Layer 3. Essentially the MP3 is a compression method for audio. What makes it phenomenal and so popular is that you can encode a music track with virtually no loss in quality at about 1/10 the size of what it would be on an ordinary audio CD. Compression can be as high as 1/20 the size although the loss in quality becomes very noticeable at this level.

would have liked to see a larger memory capacity and a more affordable price though. The headphones that ship with it are also not suitable for listening to anything that has bass to it, and I recommend buying a new set should you purchase the Rio. Other than that the Rio PMP300 is the first of its kind in South Africa and offers more features than flaws.

Pro's: CD quality audio
Small and sturdy
Lengthy battery life
Con's: Price
Crappy headphones
Requires a PC
R 449.00 (RRP)
Cyberdyne Systems
(011) 327-0237
www.cyberdyne.co.za

85

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- 9 Buttons

Wingman Force

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- I-Force 2.0 & DirectX 5 compatible
- USB or serial connector
- Gearless cable drive for positive, realistic feeling



Wingman

- Designed for flying
- Throttle control
- Heavy steel base
- Sculpted grip
- Rubber encased buttons



Wingman Gamepad

- Shapely grip
- 8 way direction pad
- 6 buttons plus 3 for settings
- 2 triggers
- Digital technology



Thunderpad Digital

- 8 programmable buttons
- Precise lightning-quick play
- Digital technology
- Dual mode for second player



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MULTIPLAYER MAYHEM

As the years pass by and multiplayer gaming enters a new era of online and LAN competition in South Africa, many new Clans are starting to surface. With the advent of MWEB's Gamezone, lafrica Online Servers, Global Servers and certain big name players looking into investing, we as gamers are in for long hours honing our skills if we are to make the choice grade in our respective Clans.

Three years back gamers would carry their bulky equipment to a friend's place and spend more than half the time just getting the game working before they would engage in heavy duty combat. As LAN games became easier to manipulate a new force of Internet Cafe's entered the gaming arena and these became virtual arena's for some of the top Clan's in South Africa today. Unfortunately the aura around these venues has slowly diminished and only a few still exist but are still excellent venues for testing skills and abilities.

Thinking back two years or so, only a few Clans managed to hold profiles that interested and in some cases frightened prospective challengers. Those days were sacrifice to the likes of Damage Clan, who's allegiances were made in the Randburg Waterfront and The Glass Dragon Clan, who invented itself in Cape Town. Even though these Clans were more than a thousand kilometres away from each other, the intense rivalry positioned them almost as next door neighbours. Names such as Smoker, LuGoNn, Ghost rider, Hiro, Psyc, Romper, Speznatz (or is that TrueBlue now, I still have visions of Mage Walk's and Durban July's), Viper (machine still giving you trouble), Vertigo (yes you too Chris) and the feared Klob (remember your first meeting with Q13), all became names of stature and power. Now in today's times Clans are plentiful and

demand to be recognised as true champions. But as online gaming brings everybody closer together, so it divides them as well. Sportsmanship is lost to pride, defeat is not an option nowadays and the mere thought of it sends ripples through the community and anger sets in. Just watching the messageboards of the top

CLAN WARFARE



gaming sites in South Africa sends shivers down my spine - to think that so many people can say so much but achieve so little. It's a time of reconciliation for gaming and the mouthing off should be done in the game and the socialising with fellow gamers. As Clans arise such as MWEB's supported KK, the now proposed resurgence of the NAG supported Damage Clan and SAGaming supported SAS, they should be conscious of the exposure and act accord-

ingly to bring stability to a growing area of South Africa's entertainment. Sportsmanship and camaraderie are to be practised by all with examples such as the struggle between MWEB and SAGaming ending extremely close and accepted graciously. These examples will make the community strong and healthy to bring in sponsorships to fund projects to grow our so-called hobby.

We are no different from other communities, we do however have a rift that divides us. The time has come to bridge this rift and bring back the fun and enjoyment to our passion. Clans should unite, not physically but spiritually, to achieve the one major goal in South Africa, the Gamers League. PS: If I have spelt nicks incorrectly or not mentioned your Clan or name please be gentle with me.

RESULTS
MWEB VS SAGAMING
THE 8-ON-8'S COUNTED FOR 2 POINTS
AND THE 4-ON-4'S FOR 1.

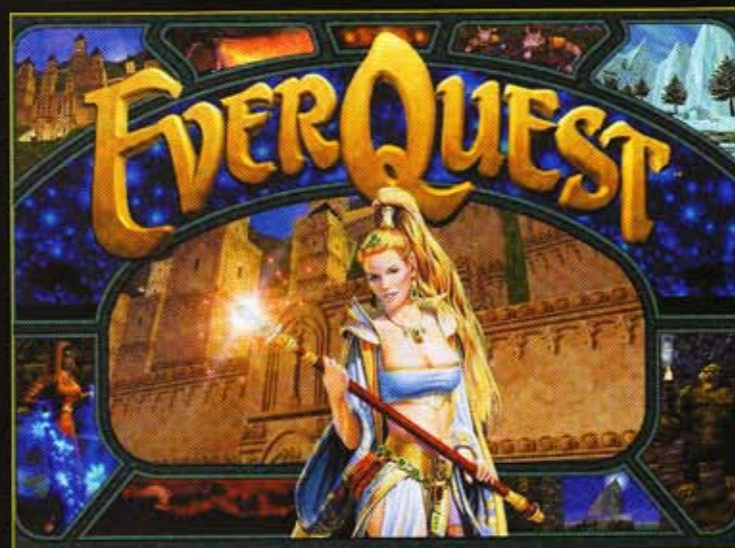
8-ON-8 GAMES:
1ST GAME: DRAW (6-6)
2ND GAME: M-WEB WIN (10-5)
3RD GAME: SAG WIN (8-9)

4-ON-4 GAMES:
1ST GAME: M-WEB WIN (10-4)
2ND GAME: SAG WIN (10-6)
3RD GAME: M-WEB WIN (10-2) <- DUCH!
SO FINAL SCORE WAS 4-3 TO M-WEB.
CONGRATULATIONS AND VIRTUAL HANDSHAKES WERE EXCHANGED AT THE END.

Pay for Play - Online Gaming

Being positioned where we are in the world and the current state of our precious economy, can we justify paying hard earned money to play a few hours everyday online? There are a thousand answers to that question and each is valid but now that serious contenders are entering the world market, we are sure it is sitting on most gamers minds. We have many choices coming to our modems, some in our own backyard. All the servers we have been happily playing on are actually for a higher purpose. The ultimate objective is to charge for the service of playing on the bandwidth, machines and software. These ventures are not cheap, but are lucrative if run in the right way. Examples such as Ultima Online, Everquest and Meridian 59 are just a few of the successful attempts made by developers to gain regular revenue for their efforts. But

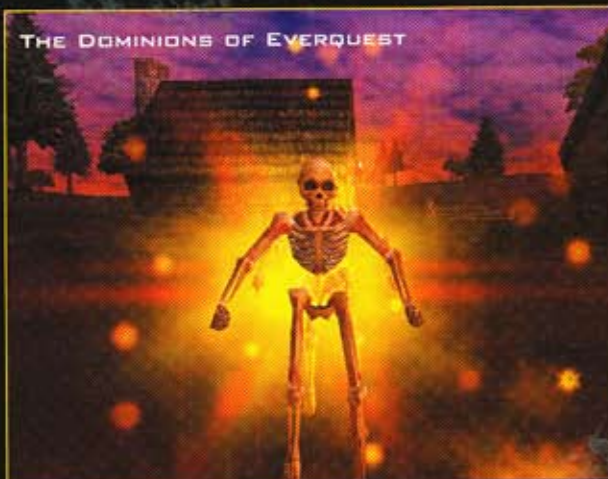
what happens when such ventures reach our shores? Many of us actually spend a few Rand converted to Dollars and are playing on the overseas bandwidth. The low pings and support are little to curb the desires to build and conquer. We played these because we don't have the opportu-



EVERQUEST, ONE OF THE NEW ONLINE PAY FOR PLAY OPTIONS.

nity in our own country to support these ventures mainly because we have a small community and that does not justify the investments. But we are sure to see new developments with the games we play at home on our ISP servers. These cannot just sit there and offer fun and enjoyment forever, they will change the concept to pay for play sometime. It is not a long way off, we should start to see developments by the

end of this year, if not sooner. Will we pay to play Quake online? A tough choice but an obvious one. The intentions are not to charge for something we already get for free, but to entice the gamer with up and coming servers that are sure to get the competitive juices flowing. We are no doubt in for something spectacular this year in the way of Online Gaming, but be assured you will have to pay for it to play it! Check these sites out for more info:
<http://www.meridian59.com>
<http://www.station.sony.com/everquest/>
<http://www.owo.com/>



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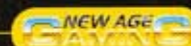
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Happy Birthday to NAG, Happy Birthday to NAG... dada da da dadada... Yes you guessed it this April New Age Gaming has been going for one year exactly. Thank you to everyone who has ever bought an issue of New Age Gaming for supporting us. As you can see we have revamped some of our sections and the general look of the magazine. We hope you find the new look just as good as the old one, actually I think it is a lot better. We also upped our distribution so everyone calling us with "Where's the new New Age Gaming issue?" will be able to find it, and the CNAs will hopefully not sell them out so soon. Ok you got me.... We hope that even with the increased volume they will sell out quickly, that just means that the gamers appreciate our magazine and we can plan even better things for the future. We have included a survey in this issue and we need everyone to send us a filled in survey form. By answering the questions truthfully we will be able to improve the magazine as well as find out exactly who is reading New Age Gaming and get a better understanding of fulfilling your needs. This month we also included a new section titled The Magic Zone, which deals with the most successful card game ever, Magic: The Gathering. This section will feature from now on and will bring an article about alternative gaming to the magazine. We also have a starting booster on the Cover to introduce those not familiar with MtG to the game. Fast

paced gameplay and strategy make MtG what it is today. Coming next month we have something special for our readers. Electronic Arts Africa will be sponsoring 3 Alien vs. Predator posters. Yes you heard me correctly 3 Alien vs. Predator posters. If you decorate your



room with gaming posters, like we do, make sure you get next months issue. The posters will most likely contain a Marine, Predator and Alien. We were suppose to show up at the LAN party this weekend but unfortunately didn't make, due to the fact that we were working on the issue. Appologies to the organisers, and we promise to

attend the next one. Luckily Errol from handmade software popped by and picked up all the prizes for the LAN party. We hope the winners will take full advantage of the products sponsored. Now onto the future as we take on the next year to bring the South African gamers the very best in gaming reviews, previews, and Cover CDs. We also have some other interesting projects planned for the year, so make sure you check out next months issue to find about our first big event for this year.

You Never Heard It From Me...

Once again this month I will be going with games that I know will make our next issue. I think I will do it from now, on purely based on fact and use the crystal ball only in emergency cases. We have some great games coming as we get closer to the middle of the year when some of the more anticipated titles will hit. Hopefully between now and then none of my choices will undergo a sudden delay, but then again developers are developers and they're word is final. We are currently setting up more channels to the overseas distributors to bring everyone timely previews and reviews. As for games in our next issue here is some of the titles you may expect:



Activision's Heavy Gear II brings all the excitement of Mechs and First Person action together. Command your mech unit into battles as one of the elite. The terrible Interpolar War between the Confederated Northern City-States and the Allied Southern Territories has reached a cease-fire on Terra Nova, and you are assigned to keep the peace. Stationed on the planet Caprice, which is the important "Gate World", you must stop any invasions from reaching your home planet Terra Nova.



Based on the legendary universe of Star Wars, created by George Lucas, X-Wing Alliance allows you to take control of 'the fastest ship in the galaxy', the Millennium Falcon as well as X-Wing Fighters, A-Wings, B-Wings, Y-Wings and other Corellian transports. X-Wing has over fifty new story driven missions for single player and new multiplayer options. According to the feature list you will also be able to fly inside the Death Star for the first time.



Having spent many months cruising around the Touring Car Circuits in the original TOCA: Touring Cars it is with great excitement that we anticipate TOCA 2: Touring Cars. If Codemasters track record of previous award winners stands up to the test then we can expect nothing less than perfection from this sequel. NAG's undercover operations have filtered back information from the distributor MMW stating this is bigger and better than before.



From Acclaim we will be looking at Turok 2: Seeds of Evil, which continues the story of Turok. By destroying the Chronoceptor in the first installment by throwing him in the volcano, Turok unwittingly awakened an even deadlier foe - The Primagen. Optimized for the PC to include new multi-player maps and modes, re-rendered hi-res textures, and Gamespy support, Turok 2: Seeds of Evil should be interesting to play to say the least.



After 2 years of intense development NAMCO is ready to release Ridge Racer Type 4 to the public. Take part in sleek, adrenaline-pumped racing action in 4 modes of play over 8 stunning tracks in 45 unique cars. Players will be able to customise their vehicles using in game decals. The companies official line is 'Ridge Racer Type 4 will turn your head, break your heart and steal your soul...' We will just have to see how true that statement is next month when we review it.

Please keep sending in those letters and comments. Tell us what you think of the new design or just drop us an email to share your viewpoints on the gaming industry in South Africa. We enjoy reading all of our mail and some letters have really caught our attention with valid concerns that we put to the publishers in South Africa. Till next month...

KEEP FRAGGIN, KICKIN BUTT, STRATEGIZING, SPORTSIZING AND PLAYING GAMES - SOUL ASSASSIN

TO GET A FEEL FOR THE NEW RIDGE RACER DRIVING GAME, RIP THIS AD OUT, CAREFULLY CUT OUT THE WINDSCREEN (PARENTAL SUPERVISION ADVISED), HOLD THIS PAGE ABOUT 3 CM FROM YOUR FACE, AND RUN REALLY FAST. OR YOU COULD JUST GET THE GAME.



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