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**IN THIS
ISSUE**
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1500
TIPS 

IF YOUR COVERMOUNT IS MISSING PLEASE CONSULT YOUR NEWSAGENT

TINY COMPO: Name the development team behind the ground-breaking PC shoot 'em up Wolfenstein 3D. First out of the hat wins a mystery prize - full details on page 5...

**PLUS! EXPENDABLE • MECHWARRIOR 3 • DARKSTONE • PREMIER MANAGER 99 •
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WILLY CUPP



WITH JUST VIVA FOOTBALL AND A PC HE CAN CHANGE FOOTBALL HISTORY.

WILLY MAKES AN AMAZING DISCOVERY.

CRUIKEY! WHAT AN INTERESTING YET HIGHLY AFFORDABLE NEW TITLE.



SUDDENLY WILLY IS TRANSPORTED TO 1986. IT'S ENGLAND VS ARGENTINA.

LUMMIE, THEY CERTAINLY LOOK LIKE THE BUNCH OF CHEATS EVERYONE SAYS THEY ARE.



I SEE NOTHING. PLAY ON.



THEN...

I SEE NOTHING. PLAY ON.

THEY'VE GOT THE SKILL ALRIGHT BUT SEEM TO PREFER PLAYING DIRTY.



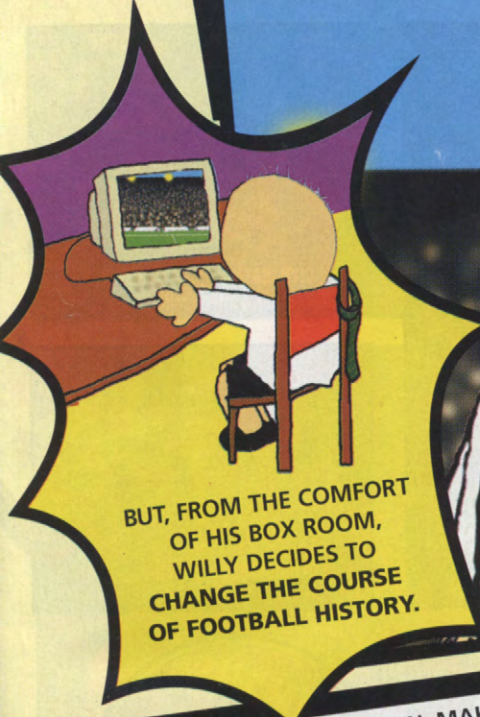
I CANNOT REACH THE BALL I MUST CHEAT!





UUHHHP!??

NOT THIS TIME MY COCAINE DEPENDENT* FAT FRIEND!



BUT, FROM THE COMFORT OF HIS BOX ROOM, WILLY DECIDES TO CHANGE THE COURSE OF FOOTBALL HISTORY.



WILLY SETS OFF ON A MAZY RUN, MAKING HIS SWARTHY RIVALS LOOK LIKE IDIOTS.



YOU HAVE TO SAY THAT'S MAGNIFICENT!

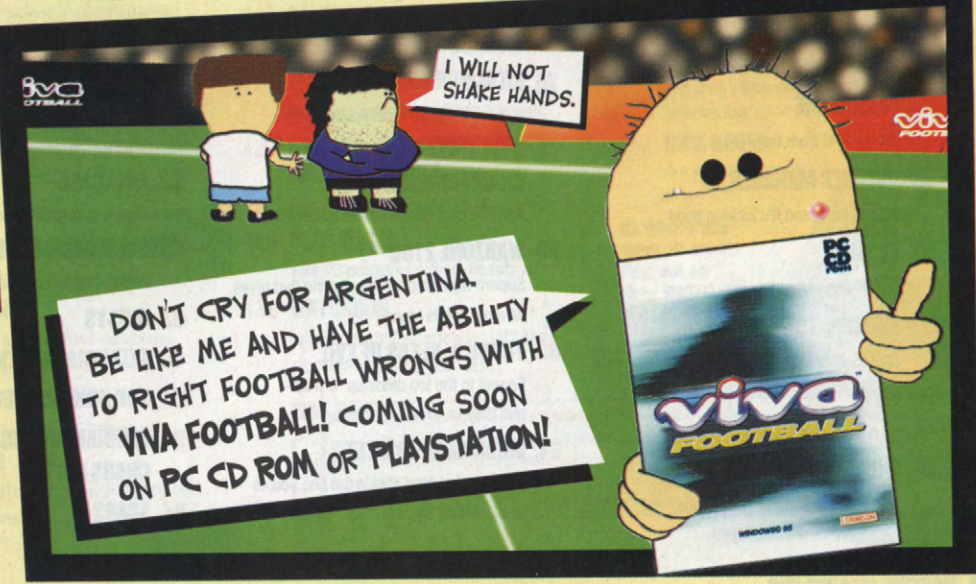
THAT'S FANTASTIC!



WE'LL NEVER BEAT THEM. NOT NOW AND DEFINITELY NOT IN 1998.

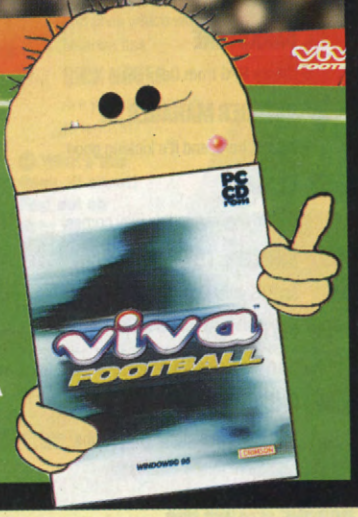
ENGLAND 2 ARGENTINA 1

BAH! WERE IT NOT FOR THE INNOVATIVE GAMEPLAY OF WILLY CUPP AND VIVA FOOTBALL OUR OILY TACTICS WOULD SURELY HAVE WONNED US THE GAME.



I WILL NOT SHAKE HANDS.

DON'T CRY FOR ARGENTINA. BE LIKE ME AND HAVE THE ABILITY TO RIGHT FOOTBALL WRONGS WITH VIVA FOOTBALL! COMING SOON ON PC CD ROM OR PLAYSTATION!





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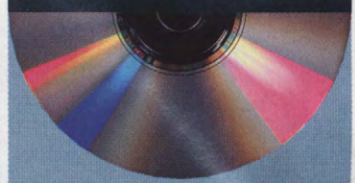
60 OBSESSED Meet the man who's obsessed with collecting old coin-op machines.



104 GAMES ACADEMY Go to school and learn how to make computer games. We are not joking.



ON THE CD



FULL DETAILS PAGE 148

That silvery thing on the cover is loaded with great demos, patches and helpful files guaranteed to ensure you get more out of your PC

DON'T MISS DEMOS OF...

- TANKTICS
- HALF-LIFE: UPLINK
- TUROK 2: SEEDS OF EVIL
- ROLLERCOASTER TYCOON
- CLOSE COMBAT III: THE RUSSIAN FRONT
- TOCA 2: TOURING CARS
- PRO PILOT '99
- WARZONE 2100

PLUS

Patches for Baldur's Gate, Unreal, Gran Fandango and lots more
Lots of useful games utilities and...
oh, just go to page 148 and see

"Quake III: Arena is a deathmatch fanatic's wet dream"



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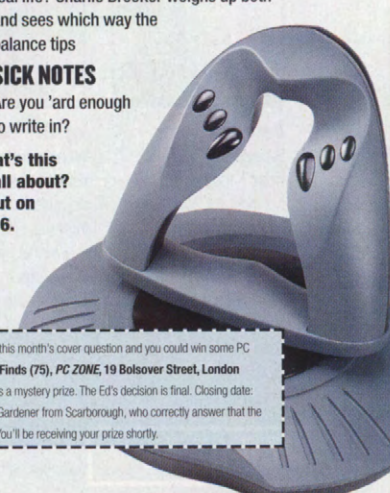
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Which would you choose – Half-Life or real life? Charlie Brooker weighs up both and sees which way the balance tips

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Are you 'ard enough to write in?

☎ What's this thing all about? Find out on page 26.



WIN! **THE COMPO NO ONE FINDS** Correctly answer this month's cover question and you could win some PC goodies. Send your entry on a postcard addressed to: **The Compo No One Finds (75), PC ZONE, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ.** The first entry with the correct answer plucked out of the hat wins a mystery prize. The Ed's decision is final. Closing date: Monday 30 March. The winner of our March (#74) cover compo was Adam Gardener from Scarborough, who correctly answer that the first Lands Of Lore game was subtitled *Throne Of Chaos*. Well done, Adam. You'll be receiving your prize shortly.

WE'RE THE NATION'S NUMBER ONE

Blimey! Have you noticed the strap at the top of this month's cover? We're rather proud of the fact that we've now reclaimed our position as Britain's best-selling PC games magazine. And it's all down to you. Thanks to your support and your suggestions as to how we can improve *PC ZONE*, we're now back where we belong. As our regular readers know, we've undergone many changes over the last 12 months. We're now bigger, cheaper and better than we've ever been.

We've stuck by our principles – even when they've cost us sales and advertising revenue. But we've never lost sight of the fact that it's you, the readers, who are spending money on game releases. If a game's shit, then we say so (no matter how big the publisher), because we know that £40 for a game is a lot of money – money that you can ill afford to waste.

And as the pressure heats up, we're preparing for an even better year ahead. As our rivals chuck weak CDs at you in a bid to justify their ludicrously high cover price, we're determined to keep our price low and our editorial integrity high. It's a formula that we hope will work but, as ever, we want your input.

If you want more CDs, bigger reviews, shorter previews, or anything else for that matter, then *please* write in and tell us. It's only by listening to what you have to say that we can ensure that *ZONE* stays at Number One. We never rest on our laurels. In fact we've already lined up some awesome changes which we'll be implementing over the next few issues.

The major change is a complete rethink of our games scoring system: in future we'll have a benchmark title in each genre, and we'll re-rate every game in relation to that title. It's a mammoth

undertaking, but it means that when you go to buy a title you'll always know exactly how it stacks up against the competition – no matter how old it might be. We can't go into too much detail just yet, but give us a couple of issues and you'll be dead impressed.

Anyway, you've heard enough from us. After what's been a torturous issue (getting those brand new *Quake III* shots on pages 38-43 has been a headache and a half), we're now retiring down the Crown And Sceptre for a celebratory piss-up. We'll have one for you.

The address to write to is: *PC ZONE*, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ, or email us at chris.pcz@dial.pipex.com. We're waiting to hear from you. And thanks again.

See you again next month, and all the best.

Mark Higham, Editor-in-Chief

PCZONE

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Distribution Seymour Distribution

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WIN! What's the first game John Carmack ever played? Send entries on the back of a postcard to: I've read the small print, *PC ZONE* (75), 19 Bolsover Street, London, W1P 7HJ by Friday 20 March. Winner and prize announced same place next issue. Mark Trounce from Penarth wins the *ZONE* grab bag of goodies from last month's compo for the correct answer *Throne Of Chaos*.

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Thursdays 1.30pm – 5.30pm only

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NEXT ISSUE: *PCZ #76* (May) goes on sale on Thursday 8 April. Don't miss it



PC ZONE is published 13 times a year by Dennis Publishing Ltd. Company registered in England, number 1138891. Entire contents



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MEET THE ZONE TEAM

All *PC ZONE*'s reviewers are experts in their field. We like to give every game that comes in for review the best chance, which is why we give it to a reviewer who's a fan of the genre



Chris Anderson
What's on your hard drive? *Ultima Online*, because it's the best role-playing game in the history of the universe. I've also got *SIN* on there as a back-up for when the *UO* Europa server is down.
What was the last game to take over your life? Guess!



Paul Mallinson
What's on your hard drive? At the moment, *Half-Life*, *Myth II*, *Rollcage*, *Mask Of Eternity* and *Worms Armageddon* – a real healthy mix, don'tcha think?
What was the last game to take over your life? Probably *Half-Life*, although *Redguard* (reviewed on page 74) had an unhealthy grip on me while I was reviewing it.



Richie Shoemaker
What's on your hard drive? *Chaos Gate*, *Ultima Online* and a very early version of *Aliens Vs Predator*. Why is anything on my hard drive? Why are we here? What's the point of it all?
What was the last game to take over your life? *Ultima Online*. And it's all Chris's fault.



Jeremy Wells
What's on your hard drive? The latest build of *CM3* – it's excellent, though still a little slow on my P166. Also *Fighter Squadron* (reviewed on page 86). It's got the most realistic flight model I've ever flown.
What was the last game to take over your life? *CM3*. Also *Zelda 64* and *GoldenEye*.



Steve Hill
What's on your hard drive? *Half-Life* and *Caesar 3* (still).
What was the last game to take over your life? *Half-Life*. I bet everyone's said that.



Charlie Brooker
What's on your hard drive? *Rollercoaster Tycoon*, *UltraHLE N64* emulator and some new cartoons.
What was the last game to take over your life? That sodding *Rollercoaster Tycoon* game. I hate it!



Paul Presley
What's on your hard drive? *You Don't Know Jack* and *FIFA 99*. I was having an all-night gambling with games session. I came out 20 quid on top.
What was the last game to take over your life? *Colin McRae Rally* recently took me hostage for four days and demanded a £750,000 ransom. It ended after the police bought it a puppy.



Keith Pullin
What's on your hard drive? *Alpha Centauri*, because it's so utterly involving, and *CM3*, of course (beta version).
What was the last game to take over your life? *CM2*. I would actually phone my girlfriend from the office and pretend to have loads of work on, but actually I would just sit there and revel in Portsmouth's European glory.



Adam Phillips
What's on your hard drive? *Half-Life* and *Carmageddon II*. They're both exemplary games in their field.
What was the last game to take over your life? *Carmageddon II* is my kind of game – fun, challenging and, more importantly, utterly twisted. It's the kind of game you keep coming back to even if you've completed it.



David McCandless
What's on your hard drive? Nothing. It's been scrubbed.
What was the last game to take over your life? *Half-Life*. It halved my life – geddit?! (No – Ed.)



Warren Christmas
What's on your hard drive? *Superbikes World Championship*, *Silver*, *Myth II*, *SimCity 3000*, *Alpha Centauri* etc etc. Why? Cos I'm a games journalist.
What was the last game to take over your life? None have ever 'ruined' my life. *CM2* caused lots of arguments with the woman though, and several games since have kept me up all night – oo-er!



Phil Wand
What's on your hard drive? *Half-Life*. No life. Can't stop playing it. Help! Don't want to leave my computer. Can't stand up. Aargh! Can you go to the toilet for me please?
What was the last game to take over your life? Um...

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PC CD-ROM

MAILBOX



Build yourself a new PC, problems buying *Ultima Online*, and one reader claims that Mailbox contributors are only in it for the money. As if

★ ANSWERED BY Chris Anderson

CONTACT INFO

If your letter is selected as Letter of the Month we'll send you some promotional goodies, a game and maybe even some hardware!

WRITE TO Mailbox, PC ZONE, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ

EMAIL letters.pczone@dennis.co.uk

CHAT FORUM If you've got something pressing to say, check out the 'lively' chat forum on our website. Point your browser at www.pczone.co.uk for further info.

“FIFA '99 on the PSX and N64 is average, at best, and is easily beaten by *International Superstar Soccer 98*”

GRAEME WOOD

UNBELIEVER

I was reading your Supertest and, as I own a PC, N64 and PlayStation, was surprised that you gave *FIFA '99* the 'best football game available' accolade.

On the PSX and N64 it's average, at best, and is easily beaten by *International Superstar Soccer 98* on both formats. I was wondering just how good this game would be on the PC?

Graeme Wood

★ The PC version of the game is far superior to both the PSX and N64 versions – better graphics, smoother control and better presentation, to boot. If you're not convinced, track down a demo of the game before buying it.

THE CD THAT TIME FORGOT

I just read the March issue of *ZONE*, and I can't help feeling I missed something. What's that about the 'Quake add-on' CD that came with the mag? I bought all of them for the last year and I ain't got one

from the Christmas issue – or did the guy writing the letter mean the one you gave away a year ago?

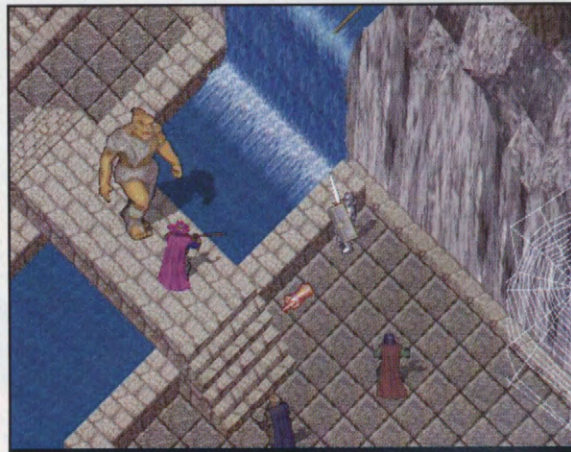
PS: Best mag on the market. Hail Brooker!

Matt

★ Yes, he meant the *Quake* CD we gave away for Christmas '97. You wouldn't believe the number of letters we've had about this. It's almost enough to make us want to do another one. Hmm...

CALLING EA

It's nice to see that you plan a regular series of articles on *Ultima Online*, but could you perhaps draw attention to the fact that a copy can't be bought for love nor money in these fair isles? I've been trying for months to track one down, with no luck whatsoever. Origin have been kind enough to set us up with two UK servers, but if you want to buy a copy of the game to actually play then it's tough luck. I'm probably going to have to order a copy from the US, which no doubt



Ultima Online: brilliant – if you can get your hands on a copy, that is.

will cost me a fortune in postage and take another couple of months to be delivered.

Also, I've never seen a copy of *Ultima Online: The Second Age* in any shops – which, considering that it's been out in the States since last August, is pretty shocking, to say the least. Do you know the official line on this state of affairs from Origin? Any tips on tracking down a copy would be most appreciated.

Stephen Nicholson

★ EA originally released *Ultima Online* in limited numbers in the UK to see what the reaction in this country would be to an online-only game. Since *UO* now has a massive following in the UK, you would expect the latest version of the game, *Ultima Online: The Second Age*, to get an official UK release soon. However, an EA spokesperson could not confirm that *The Second Age* will be released in the UK. Our advice? Buy it on import now – it's worth it!

LETTER OF THE MONTH

BUILD YOUR OWN – IT'S EASY

I think you should do more to encourage readers to upgrade or even rebuild their old computers. It's cheap, quick and rewarding. I rebuilt my old P200 into a very quick AMD K62 350 with 128Mb of 100MHz memory for the princely sum of £300 – an absolute song. I had never done this before, and how long did it take to do this amazing heart surgery on my beloved toy? Two whole hours! I know all the arguments about the cost of new computers compared to the price of an upgrade but, at the end of the day, you can use most of your old components and just replace the ones that are past their sell-by date. A brand new 40xCD-ROM can be had for £35, a new 100MHz motherboard for £50, a 350MHz AMD chip for £80, all inc VAT and delivery via mail order.

You don't even need any great technical ability, no matter what the fellas from the high street shops might tell you. If you can put square pegs into square holes (if it don't fit, it don't go there) and can read your motherboard manual and identify which square hole is which, you can rebuild a computer. I think this is especially important because of the constant change in what is considered a fast computer.

Chris Britton

★ It just goes to show what you can achieve when you put your mind to it, although we wouldn't advise readers to try this themselves without a helping hand. To this end, we'll be running a two-part guide to upgrading your PC in the June and July issues of *PC ZONE*, on sale Thursday 6 May and Thursday 3 June respectively. And you, Chris, for your useful advice, win a bag full of gaming goodies!

GOODIES WINNER!

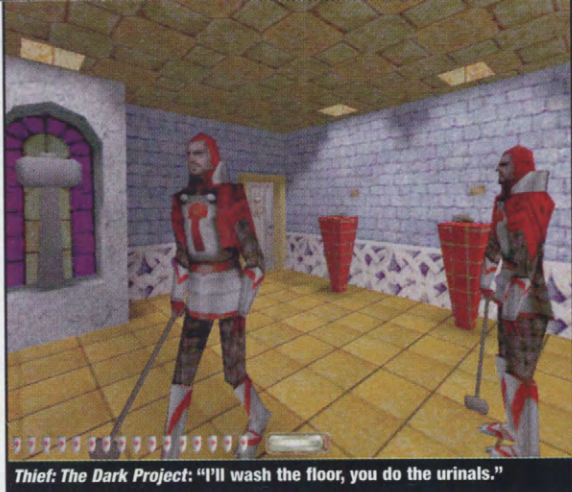
After reading the March issue (*PCZ* #74), it seems you've taken a greater interest in *Ultima Online*, what with your Editor's leader and that issue's Obsessed feature. I have been trying to get a copy of *UO* for some time now, and I've been utterly unsuccessful.

So how about flexing your journalistic muscle to get OSI to ship more copies to the UK so that we don't have to scour the country or go through the still ominous world of Internet shopping to get it? With the advent of the two European servers, which local gamers fought tooth and nail for, it seems madness not to make more copies available.

Stuart

CHEERS FOR SUPertest

The way you review games by talking about them at the pub (as in the Supertest) is a great idea. The conversations put across all the best points and are often funny. More articles or reviews should be done like this. Too many would leave people searching for a review with the full facts, but a regular slot dedicated to the best of each genre will keep everyone happy, especially if it involves rethinking the review score of a past game. This will probably please you, too, as it is no doubt very easy to write – go down the pub, put the dictaphone



on and then write it up the next day. Keep up the good work, and I expect to see more of these in the future.

Thief

★ We feel that round-ups written in this way get across how members of the ZONE crew feel about an entire genre and, judging by the response we've had to the 3D shoot 'em up round-up, the vast majority of you agree.

Look out for an adventure game Supertest, written in the same style, in next month's issue, on sale Thursday 8 April.

ZONE RUINED MY LIFE

The combination of the demo and your review of *Thief: The Dark Project* (PCZ #72, 90%) inspired me to go out and buy the game.

I've just finished several days of solid playing. Your review was spot on: gripping atmosphere, but a bit clichéd with the excess of undead about. Now, however, I'm afraid that the review and demo (which I've just played) of *Alpha Centauri* (PCZ #74, 92%) mean that I'll have to get the full game.

You're ruining my social life – keep up the good work!

James

AN 'INTELLIGENT' LETTER

Dear Chris Anderson, please print this letter because I think that intelligent people will agree with me.

I think most of the Mailbox section is utter crap, because the letter writers are only writing to you to win prizes. It is so blatant. If you took away the prizes, nobody would consider writing a letter.

What I find funny is that they write any old crap. Example: Neil Barrington (PCZ #74) wrote that he bought *Half-Life*, then he says he can't play it (sob) because he hasn't got enough RAM or hard disk space. So what? Do I give a damn? He should have read the recommended specifications printed on the box.

The letter by Jonathan Mayshar (PCZ #74) was equally funny. He talks about how good your *Quake* CD was and how everybody thinks it's brilliant. Then at the end of the letter he goes "thanks". He is obviously trying to please you and make you feel good so that in return you'll give him a prize.

I think the people who send these letters should not think of a topic on games, then write about it. If they do

this, they'll never win Letter of the Month. The letters that should win are the letters that are spontaneous and are not obviously trying to win the prizes. PS: I am only writing to you to win the prizes!

CY Chung

★ Interesting you should slag off Neil and Jonathan for writing boring letters and then proceed to write the single most boring letter I have ever had the misfortune to read. And no, you haven't won anything.

MRS POINTY

Psssst... just a quick word to see if you can possibly help. Ya see, the problem is, since the boffins have given us 3D this, surround that and hyper the other, games have gone the same way, which is tops for people like myself (having completed *Half-Life* and now dribbling in anticipation of the next big offering), but not so good for 'her indoors'. The thing is, she loves point-and-click adventures (probably because it only requires a mouse, no keyboard and can be played in bed) such as

the *Monkey Island* trio, *The Dig*, *Hocus Pocus Pink* (Eh? – Ed) and *Discworld*.



Another hapless reader who tried to ingratiate himself with Mailbox.

She gets to play this lot, and in return I get my precious allowance of computer time to play my stuff, namely *Half-Life*, *Blood 2* and the like. But as the developers are all moving towards first-person/third-person shooters (which she hates) and 'ye olde point-and-clicks' are being fizzled out, I can see my 3D game-time being cut off in its prime.

So come on guv, see if you can't influence some of the developers into letting their apprentices or someone continue to give us the pointy-clickies, ta!

PS: Keep up the good work – excellent mag!

Thanx, Biggsy

★ Hey, Biggsy, the future is not so bleak. She's got *Grim Fandango* to get stuck into, *Gabriel Knight 3* is on the way, and games like *Mask Of Eternity* and *Redguard* (see review on page 74) should appeal to her – although, admittedly, they involve a modicum of people-twatting. But that's not your fault. Tell her she has to move with the times if she wants to stay in the game. She won't hit you, or divorce you, or anything like that, honest (snigger).
Look out for our

adventure game Supertest next month. The missus may find an adventure or two in there that she hasn't checked out yet.

SMALL PACKETS

A simple question. With the PC games market being highly competitive and a severe lack of shelf space in the UK's games stores, why the hell do software houses use such huge boxes to hold one CD and a tiny manual?

Surely smaller packaging would mean retailers would have more room to display a larger selection of games?

Of all the games that I own only *Civ 2* and possibly *Fallout 1* and *2* really need the large boxes, so what's up with the rest of them?

Sorry, one for Crap Corner – more commonly known as Sick Notes.

Jeremy Chudley

★ That's a good point, Jeremy, and one that's been a topic for discussion ever since PC games boxes mysteriously grew in size almost overnight (they were a third of their current size when PC games first came to market).

The problem is, software houses want their titles to stand out more than other games on the shelves. They could do this by using a little imagination and flair when putting their packaging together, but instead it appears they prefer to just dump everything in an enormous box instead.

That said, if you think packaging in the UK is OTT, you should see the American imports we're sent sometimes, which are invariably twice the size of their UK counterparts. [K]

id software

VERSUS

bullfrog

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TOP STORY



09/11/99

6055 REC

Four new themes – Lost Kingdom (above), Space, Fantasy and Halloween – provide extra scope for more varied parks.

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

DEVELOPER Bullfrog
PUBLISHER Electronic Arts
EXPECTED RELEASE DATE Summer '99

IN SUMMARY

Design your very own fun park and make stacks of cash. Sky-high rollercoaster rides may attract the biggest crowds, but you've got to balance the books – and we wouldn't want any fatal accidents, would we?

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

The original *Theme Park* remains one of the most original and best-selling games ever. The combination of designing a viable park and successfully managing it (in 3D) throws up a whole new set of challenges. The fact that you're now able to ride your attractions, coupled with the introduction of advanced new behavioural AI should ensure there's more to *Theme Park 2* than just building bigger rollercoasters.

POTENTIAL PITFALLS

The original was highly entertaining but lacked longevity. The introduction of four themes, more advanced AI and the facility to upload/download parks from the Internet, however, should help Bullfrog weave in some extra hours worth of gameplay

STRAP YOURSELF IN AND GET READY TO RIDE THEME PARK 2

After what seems like years, Bullfrog announce the sequel to one of the most original games ever

• SCREAMING LOUDLY Jeremy Wells





The sequel retains the same cutesy cartoon-style that helped make the original release so popular.

Thanks to a new 3D engine the rides really come to life.

Improved AI means that you have to work harder to plan your park and please the punters.



Hooray! Thanks to new scalable technology you won't necessarily need a 3D card to play *Theme Park 2*.

Some five years after the original world-conquering *Theme Park* (PCZ #17, 93%) was released, developers Bullfrog have revealed that work is now well under way on the sequel.

For those unfamiliar with the concept, the ground-breaking game that launched the Guildford-based developers' 'Designer' series required you to design and maintain a commercially viable fun park, and at the same time send rival parks bankrupt by fair means or foul. Cutesy cartoon-style graphics, impressive artificial intelligence and an imaginative range of rides and money-grabbing attractions and restaurants made it an instant worldwide hit thanks to its mass-market appeal.

Various personnel at Bullfrog have always maintained that they would like to bring the game bang up to date, and now, thanks to the

advance-ment in 3D technology, that desire has become a reality. "We've built on the success of the original *Theme Park* game using the best that design and technology have to offer," maintains Jeff Gamon, the sequel's Producer. "Building and managing the park is only half the fun; what everyone really wants to do is ride

“Not only can you ride the attractions you've designed in *Theme Park 2*, you can also save off your fun parks and upload them onto the Net”

the white-knuckle rides they've created. Now, in *Theme Park 2* you'll have the chance to ride your own rollercoaster!”

Whereas the original sported endearing though blocky low-res 2D visuals, *Theme Park 2* looks easy on

the eye thanks to an impressive new 3D engine.

A new, easy to use interface ensures that even novices will have little trouble in creating a sprawling 3D land of fun, while four new themed worlds – namely Lost Kingdom, Space, Fantasy and Halloween – mean that there's now the potential for more variation than ever.

Underneath all this new 3D eye candy is a sophisticated new artificial intelligence system that controls each character's behaviour and decision making. The result is that different types of people in the game now have quite distinctive behavioural traits, all

of which must be understood and catered for if your park is to become a success. Try putting too much salt on the fries and too much sugar in the pop, and this time round you could find yourself in hot water.

While the original game enjoyed immeasurable success, critics maintained that after a short while the gameplay became repetitive, and that as a result longevity suffered. To combat this Bullfrog have not only enabled you to actually ride the attractions they've designed in *Theme Park 2*, but they've also developed the facility to save off their fun parks and upload them onto the Net for everyone to experience.

Although the shots on these pages are from a very early build (the game isn't due to hit the shelves for some months), it's obvious that *Theme Park 2* is heaving with potential and is definitely one to watch whether you're a fan of the original or not. Just don't be tempted to build a fun park near Paris – it'll never catch on. **PCZ**



"I'm just going for a walk. Anyone want to come along?"

BETTER THAN SEX?

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

DEVELOPER Ion Storm

PUBLISHER Eidos Interactive

EXPECTED RELEASE DATE Winter

IN SUMMARY

James Bond meets *The X-Files* in an enormous, unorthodox, action-oriented RPG using the *Unreal* engine

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

This is Warren Spector's thirteenth game, so he should know what he's doing by now

POTENTIAL PITFALLS

Traditional beard-twiddling RPG fans may gag on their real ale

DEUS EX

An exclusive look at the game that Mallo's been barking about for months

★ UNPROFESSIONAL Steve Hill



BA's new livery design was poorly received.



Hong Kong is among the exotic locations visited in the game.



I can't believe it's not Buddha.



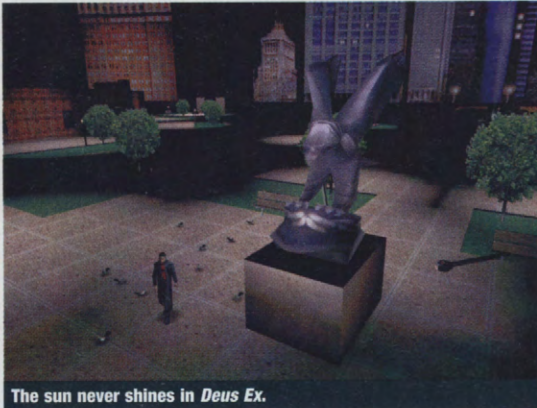
The top of the Statue of Liberty is missing. David Copperfield is helping police with their enquiries.



The catacombs of Paris have been recreated in minute detail. They're under this street.



Underground rocket silos. Where have we seen those before?



The sun never shines in *Deus Ex*.



Sam Carter: "I clink therefore I am... a machine."

My brief from ZONE was short and to the point: "Find out about *Deus Ex* or don't bother coming back." And so it was that your correspondent met with the game's designer, Warren Spector, in the demo room-cum-cinema of Ion Storm's swanky office high atop the second-tallest building in Dallas. Fortunately, Spector can "talk for days", as he readily admits, and he then proceeds to demonstrate: "The critical thing to remember, the one message that I have to get out there, is that *Deus Ex* is a role-playing game. It's a first-person perspective role-

playing game. Since *Underworld 1* and *Underworld 2* and *System Shock* and *Cybermage* and *Shadowcaster*, every time I do a game everybody looks at it and says it looks like *Doom* or it looks like *Quake* or it looks like *Wolfenstein*, so it must be a shooter. Even now sometimes people look at *Deus Ex* as it currently exists and they see a shooter. It's not a shooter."

TRUST NO ONE

So it's not a shooter. What is it then? Well, originally it started as an idea called *Troubleshooter*, whereby you played the part of an anti-terrorist agent, rescuing hostages, preventing hijacks, and generally recreating Hollywood action movie clichés.

However, the story changed due to a number of factors, as Warren explains: "My wife got totally hooked on *The X-Files*. There's all this weird millennial stuff going on. I don't know what it's like in Europe, but over here people are getting really scary crazy and believing all sorts of amazing stuff. Millennial fever is taking hold of the world, and there are more and more people who think the world is gonna end in 200 and something days, and there are plenty of people who think aliens are gonna land and that armageddon is around the corner. It's just bizarre to me. I love it.

"So I started thinking what if we take like a James Bond, a guy who really believes in good and evil, black and white, right and wrong, and we throw him into an *X-Files* world."

HANG ON TO YOUR EGO

In the course of the game, each player is forced to select different skills, such as weaponry, swimming, and lock-

picking, enabling problems to be solved in entirely different ways depending on your character. As Warren says, "What we're after is recreating a unique alter ego. Everything in the game is designed to differentiate character."

As a glance at the accompanying screenshots suggests, all the action takes place at night – a deliberate ploy: "You will never see the sun in this game. I'm inspired by German expressionist films and all sorts of stuff, and I think it looks great. I just think it's cool. Think about how many times you see Mulder and Scully walking around in the daytime. It's an artistic choice. It seems to fit the dark conspiracy feel, bright shafts of light punctuating the darkness." [E]

"Millennial fever is taking hold of the world. More and more people think the world is gonna end... that aliens are gonna land and that armageddon is around the corner. It's just bizarre to me. I love it"

WARREN SPECTOR, *DEUS EX*'S DESIGNER FOR ION STORM

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"TOCA 2 IS TOCA TIMES 2...
YOU WON'T BE DISAPPOINTED."

PC-GAMER
92%



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WE NEED YOU

Games developers,
a word in your ear

NEWS EDITOR Richie Shoemaker



"Hang on, that's not Mallo's mugshot," you exclaim. And indeed it isn't.

'Tis I, the rubber-lipped one with the comedy surname. And if you haven't guessed already, I have taken over the reigns as Propaganda Minister (aka news editor). As is traditional with the newly appointed, I have set forth a program of reform – a manifesto, if you will – to improve on the successes of my esteemed predecessors.

You may have noticed a few small changes already. But for the future I want to hear more from the 'little people' in the games industry – the developers who are always sidelined to make room for the big boys.

The point is that most magazines' news sections rely on information from publishers' PR departments, which usually have their own agendas. While PR has an essential role to play, I've noticed in the last few weeks that there are so many games in development that are either unsigned (like *Terminus*, page 29) or sadly overlooked because the publishers' main concern is to maximise coverage of their more immediate 'triple-A' titles.

So developers, you know it makes sense. If you want people to hear about your game, tell us about it. And if publishers are giving you the cold shoulder, we can help. On more than one occasion, publishers have taken a keen interest in games they first read about in the pages of *PC ZONE*. Who knows? Within a few short weeks they could be knocking down your door instead of you ceaselessly beating at theirs.

Write to the usual address or email me at: richie.pcz@dial.pipex.com.

Rant over. Enjoy the rest of the issue.

THE PCZONE CHARTS

More comprehensive than ever

P.22

ChartTrack

TECH-HEAD

Intel in the news, plus a DirectX update

P.26



MARIO GOES TO WAR

Nintendo join Sony in the battle against emulation

In last month's Console Zone, we harped on about the new wave of emulators that have been sweeping the Net – specifically PlayStation emulators.

Well, someone's gone one better and created *UltraHLE*, a Nintendo 64 emulator that not only runs games like *Mario64*, *GoldenEye* and *Zelda*, but also runs them full-screen through 3Dfx. On a P300 these games look the business – arguably better than on a real N64 – and can be downloaded via Internet sites of debatable legality.

Nintendo are not best pleased. *UltraHLE*'s developers have gone into hiding and Nintendo have unleashed the lawyers to hunt them down.

"Nintendo is very disturbed that Reality Man and Epsilon (the developers of *UltraHLE*) have widely distributed a product designed solely to play infringing copies of copyrighted works developed by Nintendo and its third-party licencees," said Beth Llewelyn of Nintendo US. "We are taking measures to further protect and

enforce our intellectual property rights which, of course, includes the bringing of legal action."

UltraHLE appeared on Emulators Unlimited's website on 28 January. Then, within hours, it was gone. But before its disappearance, thousands of people downloaded the 400k file. It is estimated that, globally, *UltraHLE* is already in the hands of hundreds of thousands of people. And judging by the reactions in the *ZONE* office, none could have failed to be impressed.

"The *UltraHLE*/N64 legal thing is a shame, really," says Stephen Richards, webmaster of Emulators Unlimited. "The developers did not break the law, as no copyrighted files or documents were used in the process of making it. And when the guys released the final version, it was to see if it would be used correctly. After it was used as a piracy tool, the decision to discontinue it became inevitable."

The piracy issue surrounding *UltraHLE* involves the use of code from ROMs. Unlike PlayStation emulators, which can read PSX CDs, *UltraHLE* can only read illegally

ONLINE ZONE

How to find online games in minutes

P:28



CONSOLE ZONE

We check out *Metal Gear Solid* and *Ridge Racer 4*

P:31



MAN WHO KNOWS

The very latest industry gossip

P:32



HOTSHOTS

A sneak preview of up-and-coming game releases

P:34



copied games that have been transferred onto the Net. Much as we are impressed by what the *UltraHLE* developers have achieved, we can't help but feel for the developers of N64 games, who see three years of blood and sweat being banded about on the Internet. The whole legal issue is just as much about why *UltraHLE* was created as whether any copyright infringement occurred during its development. *UltraHLE*'s developers

question of copyright infringement has hung over them all, but until now it has never been challenged in the courts. And it's easy to see why when you realise that until very recently, emulation has not affected sales, simply because the emulated machines were no longer available.

But if it's just a question of copyright, why has no one taken emulator developers to court? It may simply be down to money: emulation



"The developers of *UltraHLE* did not break the law, as no copyrighted files or documents were used in the process of making it"

STEPHEN RICHARDS, EMULATORS UNLIMITED

say their emulator was created just to see if N64 emulation was possible, but it was naive of them to release it on the Net and hope it wouldn't end up in the hands of people who would use it to play pirated games.

Nintendo aren't the only ones on the legal warpath. As predicted last month, Sony are out to bring down Connectix, having announced that only court action can halt commercial sales of the *Virtual Game Station* for the Mac. As with Nintendo, Sony believe Connectix have "infringed its intellectual property rights".

Surprisingly, the *VGS* is still on sale in the States. Attempts by Sony to place a restraining order on shipments have failed. But even with Connectix claiming that orders are up to \$3 million and a PC version is on the horizon, the war is far from over.

The truth is that until now, emulation, mainly of old coin-op machines and old home computers, has been tolerated openly. The

of the N64 and PlayStation means lost revenue for the manufacturers - not to mention loss of face.

Whether they become commercially available or not, emulators are here to stay. Programmers see emulation as a challenge, and with most console games remaining exclusive, the Net is a perfect host for PC gamers to try out the games they would usually never see.

As a result of legal action, the emulation scene will just be driven further underground.

❖ Unlike Mario, Nintendo aren't smiling about their corporate mascot appearing on PC screens.



Mario64 running on a PII 300 and 3Dfx: nothing less than stunning.



BLUFFER'S Guide to...

EMULATOR SPEAK

★ EMULATORS

Software that fools your PC into thinking it's something it isn't. Emulators are next to useless without the software to run on them (either ROMs or CDs), and some also require illegal hardware ROMs that have been copied from the original machines.

★ ROMS

Can be classed into two groups: ROMs of machine hardware and game ROMs - both of which are generally illegal to copy or download without consent. Not all emulators need ROMs, but that doesn't stop console manufacturers from screaming copyright infringement.

★ WAREZ

Pirated software that exists on the Net, and which can be downloaded for the price of a phone call rather than bought for the full price from a shop. Apart from cracked N64 games, most warez software is comprised of full-price PC games minus FMV. The most recent warez premiere is of the PC version of *South Park*.

NOW PLAYING

Who'd have thought these games would end up on the PC



Tekken 3: the Bleem demo doesn't include sound or hardware support, but the final release will.



Metal Gear Solid: like *Tekken 3*, it's minus sound. It's also pretty slow, even on a P300.



GoldenEye: no backdrops or sound, but apart from that it works fine, even on a P233.



Legend Of Zelda: Ocarina Of Time: perfect emulation in hi-res, but it needs a seriously meaty PC.



Bet the guy on the left has problems getting the right size shoes.

Apparently we can look forward to fully interactive terrain.

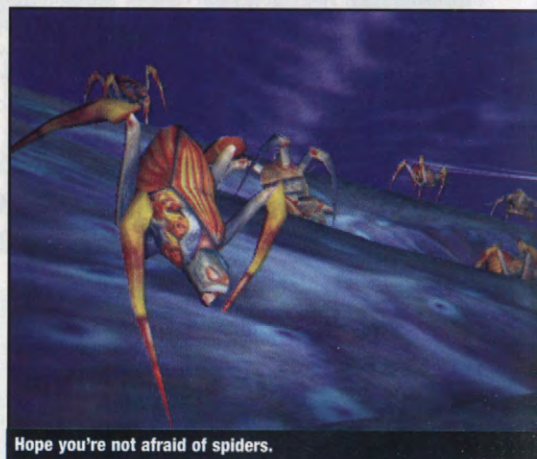
EVOLUTION BABY

After over two years in utero, *Evolva* is almost reaching full term

We first got wind of *Evolva* back in November 1997 when *Organic Art*-ist William Latham announced that his team was working on a *Quake/C&C* hybrid with 'psychedelic' overtones. Since then the game has come a long way. Far from being the mutated son of *Battlezone*, *Evolva* comes across like some twisted genetic experiment, with the squad-based 3D action of *X-COM Alliance*, the plot from *V2000* and the AI

from *Creatures 2* all going into the same test tube.

In control of a team of genohunters, your aim is to stop the spread of an alien parasite by absorbing genetic material from organic sources, which helps you adapt your hunters to defeat the alien guardians. With a potential billion variations of genohunter, each of which can be traded over the Internet, the game promises unlimited replayability when it's released in June.



Hope you're not afraid of spiders.

MONOLITH MADNESS

Following on from the success of *Shogo* (PCZ #71, 92%) and *Blood II* (PCZ #72, 88%), Monolith have announced details of their next LithTech-powered game, as well as details on LithTech 2.0, their next-generation 3D engine which will focus on creating the best outdoor environments yet seen in a 3D game.

For now though, Monolith are preoccupied with *Sanity*, a third-person action adventure based in a future where humanity struggles against its innate psychic power. Taking on the role of Nathaniel Cain, it's up to you to rid the world of rogue psionics, while at the same time trying to master your own abilities without going bonkers in the process.

Sanity is set for a Christmas release.



That Billy Corgan gets everywhere.



Nathaniel never was light-handed with plasma spheres.

SHORTS

NEED 4 SPEED

High Stakes is the fourth title in the *Need For Speed* series. Featuring old and new high-speed cars, the game includes an enhanced Hot Pursuit mode where you can drive for the fuzz, and a new High Stakes mode where you can customise cars and wager them against your opponents. No PC shots were available, so here's one from the PlayStation - just to piss you off. *High Stakes* is set for a PC release this summer.



HIGH AND RISING

Fresh from the success of *Warlords III: Darklords Rising* (PCZ #67, 90%), developers SSG are rumoured to be working on a new sequel, imaginatively titled *Warlords IV*. However, before then we can expect a remake of their old turn-based sci-fi strategy game *Reach For The Stars*, which is due to be published by Microsoft this summer. Expect something along the lines of *Alpha Centauri* in 3D with full multiplayer options.

DESERT ISLAND GAMES

If Chris Sawyer, designer of *RollerCoaster Tycoon*, was stranded on a desert island with nowt but a PC, an unlimited power supply and five games, which games would he choose?



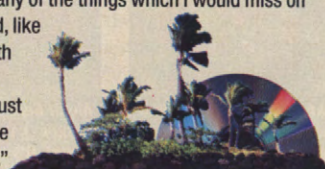
- ★ COLIN MCRAE RALLY (Codemasters)
- ★ POPULOUS II (Bullfrog/EA)
- ★ HALF-LIFE (Valve/Sierra)
- ★ SETTLERS III (Blue Byte)
- ★ ROLLERCOASTER TYCOON (MicroProse)*

* Choice if allowed only one

Comment

"If I was stuck on a desert island I'd miss being able to drive, hence *Colin McRae Rally*. I'd like *Populous II* and *Settlers III* so that I could play with my own little worlds full of people, and *Half-Life* would help get rid of some of the frustration and anger at being marooned.

"I could play *RollerCoaster Tycoon* for years on end, as there's always something more to do in it. And it would fulfil many of the things which I would miss on a desert island, like interaction with people, being creative, and just watching those rollercoasters."



WOLVERHAMPTON

Home of Steve Bull, a crazy one-way traffic system, and shedloads of PC games stores

✦ WOLVERHAMPTON WANDERER Craig Vaughan

WANDERING



Electronic Boutique's Wolves store is surrounded by fierce independent competitors.



EB's Christopher Turner: the whole of Wolves at his feet.

Christopher Turner, 27, is Electronic Boutique's main man in Wolverhampton, and he's got his work cut out against weighty competition from nearby stores Game, Game Station, Games Galore and Trance. "The game scene is thriving in Wolverhampton," he gloats. "It's a very console-based market, but we sell our fair share of PC titles."

Now that the only evidence of Christmas is fading memories and bulging waistlines, things have settled down somewhat as the industry suffers its usual post-festive period lull. Turner summarises: "Everyone's after *Championship Manager 3*, *Tiberian Sun* and anything to do with *Star Wars*. Of our current stock, *Baldur's Gate* has sold really well, with *Tomb Raider III*, *Half-Life* and *SiN* fighting it out for second place. It must be a local quirk, but we sell an awful lot of sports games too, especially the *FIFA* and *Actua* brands. Other than that there are no real surprises.

"I keep a beady eye on flight sim releases because I'm a qualified pilot. It's an expensive hobby, so I rely on the power of the PC when I can't afford the real thing. It's a general truism that Microsoft flight sims are worth their weight in gold.

"I think there's an interesting year ahead for gamers in general and for PC owners in particular," he concludes. "They've got *Voodoo3* and DVD to look forward to, both of which should help to maintain the machine's healthy edge over the competition."

WHO LIVES IN A CITY LIKE THIS?



GARETH JOHNSTON 14, student

What brings you to Electronics Boutique today?

"I've smashed up my joystick, so I'm buying another one."

Which games are you playing at the moment?

"*Half-Life*, *Worms 2* and *Actua Soccer 3*. I've nearly finished *Half-Life*, and I'm looking forward to *Delta Force* and the new *Duke Nukem*. *Quake III* sounds interesting too."

Aren't they all a bit violent for one so young?

"It's only fantasy. It doesn't make me violent."

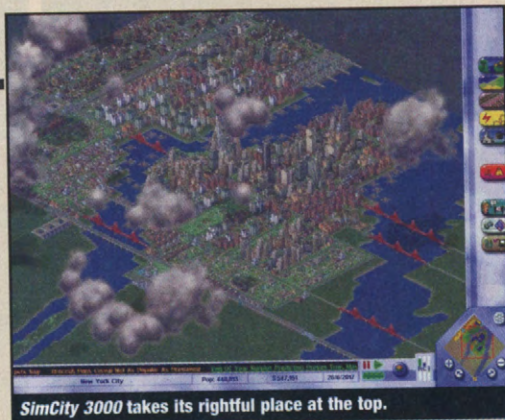
WHAT KIND OF GAMERS WILL RELISH THIS CHALLENGE..?



...VETERANS?

CHARTS

All you need to know about which games are selling by the shedload, plus the buzz on the streets – where you tell us what you think



SimCity 3000 takes its rightful place at the top.

CHART COMMENT

Big changes to the Top 10 this month, with five new releases storming into the charts. It comes as no surprise to see both *SimCity 3000* and *Alpha Centauri* poaching the top spots, especially with *CM3* having been delayed by another tortuous month.

Judging by the heavy promotion in London alone, *Delta Force* is another unsurprising chart raider. Sub-standard though it is, it shows that many people are getting bored of the regular *Quake* clones of yore, and want something more 'real'.

Still, at least *Baldur's Gate*, *FIFA 99* and *Half-Life* are hanging on in there – let's hope they stick around a good while longer.

Richie Shoemaker

THE MEGASTORES TOP 10

FEB MAR	TITLE	LABEL	GROUP	REVIEW SCORE
- 1	SIMCITY 3000	MAXIS	ELECTRONIC ARTS	92%
- 2	SID MEIER'S ALPHA CENTAURI	FIRAXIS	ELECTRONIC ARTS	92%
- 3	DELTA FORCE	NOVALOGIC	NOVALOGIC	66%
1 4	BALDUR'S GATE	INTERPLAY	INTERPLAY	85%
5 5	HALF-LIFE	SIERRA	CENDANT	95%
4 6	BIGGEST NAMES, BEST GAMES	ELECTRONIC ARTS	ELECTRONIC ARTS	NOT REVIEWED
- 7	WORMS ARMAGEDDON	TEAM 17	HASBRO	90%
- 8	FOOTBALL WORLD MANAGER	UBI SOFT	UBI SOFT	60%
- 9	FIFA 99	EA SPORTS	ELECTRONIC ARTS	92%
8 10	TOMB RAIDER III	CORE	EIDOS	91%

THE TOP 10

JAN FEB	TITLE	LABEL	GROUP	REV SCORE
- 1	SIMCITY 3000	MAXIS	ELECTRONIC ARTS	92%
- 2	SID MEIER'S ALPHA CENTAURI	FIRAXIS	ELECTRONIC ARTS	92%
- 3	DELTA FORCE	NOVALOGIC	NOVALOGIC	66%
- 4	A BUG'S LIFE	DISNEY	DISNEY	NR
2 5	HALF-LIFE	SIERRA	CENDANT	95%
1 6	BALDUR'S GATE	INTERPLAY	INTERPLAY	85%
- 7	WORMS ARMAGEDDON	TEAM 17	HASBRO	90%
- 8	THE SIMPSONS: VIRTUAL SPRINGFIELD	FOX INTERACTIVE	FOX INTERACTIVE	NR
4 9	FIFA 99	EA SPORTS	EA SPORTS	92%
- 10	FOOTBALL WORLD MANAGER	UBI SOFT	UBI SOFT	60%

(Compiled by Chart Track © ELSPA 1999)

THE BUZZ ON THE STREETS

"It's easy to see why hunting games are so popular in the US when you look at *Delta Force*'s position over here: those poor souls without 3D accelerator cards are buying them."

Chris Jones, Swansea

"Where the hell did *The Simpsons* spring from (no pun intended)? I can't stand all that multimedia crap – why do Chart Track insist on including it in the Top 10?"

Wav, Nottingham

"I went to see *Bug's Life* the other day. Not a bad film really, but there's no way I'd spend £30 on the game. I'd rather eat more salty popcorn."

Eddy Francis, Edgware

"Quite a change from last month, I see. Apart from the strategy games though, there's nothing there that tempts me all that much. *Half-Life* – got it. *FIFA* – got it. *CM3* – where is it?"

Dave Jobson, London

"Looks like a top quality Top 10 – apart from *Football World Manager* at number 10. It must be all those people champing at the bit for *CM3*. Oh, and *A Bug's Life*, could that have anything to do with the all-encompassing media blitz at the moment? Now let me think!"

Jonathan, London

"By the time *CM3* does come out (*Which should be about now – Ed*), the football season will be all but over, which prompts the question: Will we have to fork out again in August just to get an official update?"

Reg, Market Harborough

COMPETITION

WIN THE ENTIRE VIRGIN TOP 10!

PC ZONE and Virgin have teamed up to give you the chance to win every game in the current Top 10. All you have to do to enter the draw is answer this simple question:

Question: How many *Sim* titles have Maxis released on PC – not including expansion discs or budget re-releases?

Just answer the above question and send it on a postcard, along with with all the information requested, to the address below

- Name / Address / Postcode / Daytime phone number / Email / Job title / Company name / Age if under 18
- Please tell us if you do not wish to receive details of further special offers or new products from other companies
- Are you a current subscriber to PC ZONE?

Send your answers on a postcard to: **PC ZONE Chart Compo (75), 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ. Closing date: Wednesday 7 April**

Terms and conditions: Winners will be notified by post. No cash alternative. Prizes not necessarily as shown. No correspondence will be entered into. The Ed's decision is final. All the other usual competition rules, conditions and restrictions apply. Capiche?

RETRO CHARTS

1 YEAR AGO...

- Tomb Raider II** Core Design/Eidos
- Quake II** id/Activision
- FIFA: Road To World Cup** EA Sports
- Championship Manager 97/98** Eidos
- Grand Theft Auto** DMA Design/BMG

2 YEARS AGO...

- C&C: Red Alert** Westwood/Virgin
- FIFA 97** EA Sports
- Tomb Raider Core** Design/Eidos
- Championship Manager 96/97** Eidos
- Flight Simulator 6.0** Microsoft

5 YEARS AGO...

- Rebel Assault** LucasArts/US Gold
- Day Of The Tentacle** LucasArts/US Gold
- Dracula Unleashed** Mindscape
- The Journeyman Project** Gametek
- Super Strike** Commander Origin/EA



Imperium Galactica: The original game only had 2D real-time combat.

SPACE 1999

New 3D space strategy game on the way from GT

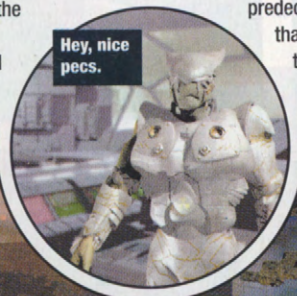
What with Sierra's *Homeworld* (see Hot Shots, p35) already close to completion, it looks like 1999 is going to be a good year for space-based 3D strategy, with the 3D accelerator-only *Imperium Galactica II* from GT Interactive set for a June release.

As with the original (PCZ#64, 77%), the game gives you the opportunity to command huge fleets of user-created ships in massive

interstellar battles, as well as taking the fight against alien civilisations down to planet surfaces. Colonies have to be built and managed, research undertaken and negotiations entered into to succeed.

Remembering how fiddly the control interface was in the game's predecessor, we hope things in that area have been improved to accommodate all the new and old features.

Hey, nice peccs.



Not all the battles are in space, you can take the fight to planet surfaces too.



Design and name your ship - just don't call it the Titanic.

SLIP AND SLIDE

We shouldn't be surprised when it happens, but we're always disappointed when games slip past their release dates, even though the theory goes that when they do eventually hit the shelves they should be honed to perfection.

After waiting practically a whole season for *CM3* to finally appear, the latest big games to fall behind schedule are *Aliens Vs Predator* and *TA: Kingdoms*, which have slipped to May and June respectively. After *Duke Nukem 4Ever* slipped last year due to 3D Realms switching from the *Quake II* engine to the *Unreal* engine, we can only hope indecision doesn't make the developers pick up the *Quake III* engine. Stranger things have happened, you know.

AvP: you're going to have to wait till it's finished.



...ROOKIES?





MOVIE NEWS

The eagerly-awaited **Wing Commander** movie has just opened Stateside, just ahead of **Star Wars: Phantom Menace** which comes out over there in May. No such luck over here though. A Fox representative told us: "It's unlikely to come out before **Star Wars** over here as we have no UK release date for **Wing Commander** as yet."

With other game-related movies in various stages of pre-production (**Doom**, **Tomb Raider**, **SIN**, **Final Fantasy** and **Parasite Eve** – whose rights haS just been snapped up by Madonna, no less), the big news this month is that filming for **Duke Nukem** will commence before the end of the year. Although no one has been confirmed in the starring role, the script is all but done.

Finally, how about this: **Half-Life: Uplink**, a five-minute action filmette that's just been released on the Net. It's no amateur effort, either; the project was commissioned by Sierra and filmed at Greenham Common. Hopefully we'll squeeze it on to next month's CD.

BALDUR'S TORMENT

More *Baldur's Gate*, and then some

Life is just one big role-playing game. Well it is to the guys at Black Isle Studios, anyway. Not content with creating two of the finest RPGs of recent years, *Fallout* (PCZ #61, 91%) and *Baldur's Gate*, (PCZ #73, 85%), they've also been forging ahead with a new adventure, this one set in the AD&D universe of Planescape, a harsh universe of linked dimensions.

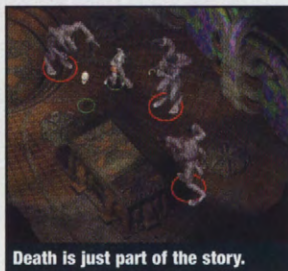
Planescape: Torment takes the traditional RPG format and turns it inside out. *Baldur's Gate* went some way to stripping away the dependency on stats that most games relied on up until then, and *Torment* takes this process to its logical conclusion. That isn't to say the characters don't have stats, it's just that you don't see them so much as read them; you gauge a

character by their actions, and they gauge you by yours. If an NPC joins your party, you can't just rifle through their pack and ditch them. Their objects are their own. *Torment* is a game as much about back-scratching as it is about throat-slitting. And it's weird.

You play the Nameless One, an immortal with no memory of his 10,000 year existence. Your aim: to rediscover your hidden past. And to help or hinder you are some very strange characters: a floating skull and an animated suit of armour, to name just two. Even weapons and objects have personalities. Imagine *Final Fantasy* set in all nine levels of Hell and you might get some idea of what's to come when Interplay release *Planescape: Torment* in the summer.



Torment uses the Infinity engine.



Death is just part of the story.



It's D&D, but not as we know it.

TALES FROM THE GATE

Baldur's Gate is about to be expanded. *Tales Of The Sword Coast*, due in April, is the next episode in the *Baldur's Gate* series and will feature new characters, spells and items. New locations include Durlag's Tower and an inhospitable island just west of Baldur's Gate. You need the original game to play it, but once you've completed it expect news of a bigger and better sequel.



Sail to distant islands – and then kill people.



Some things borrowed, some things new.



We'll just have to wait a bit longer for *Wing Commander*.



Not quite as realistic as the game, is it?



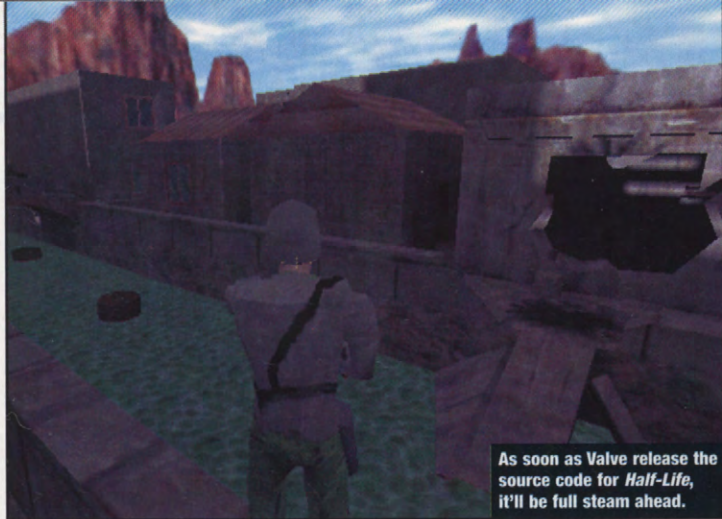
Maybe we'll soon see a full-length feature of *Half-Life*.

YOUR MOST WANTED

A look at the games you're most looking forward to over the next few months, and when they're expected to arrive

- 1 Duke Nukem 4Ever (3D Realms/GT) _____ July
- 2 Team Fortress II (Valve/Sierra) _____ June
- 3 X-Wing Alliance (Activision) _____ April
- 4 Kingpin (Interplay) _____ June
- 5 Aliens Vs Predator (Rebellion/Fox) _____ April
- 6 Quake III Arena (ID/Activision) _____ Mid-'99
- 7 C&C: Tiberian Sun (Westwood) _____ April
- 8 Black & White (Lionhead) _____ Late '99
- 9 Driver (Reflections/GT) _____ April
- 10 Messiah (Shiny/Interplay) _____ Mid-'99

WIN! Submit your vote and go into the hat for a mystery prize draw. Email us at letters.pczone@dennis.co.uk with the subject line 'Most Wanted', or write to the usual address.



As soon as Valve release the source code for *Half-Life*, it'll be full steam ahead.

CLOSE COMBAT

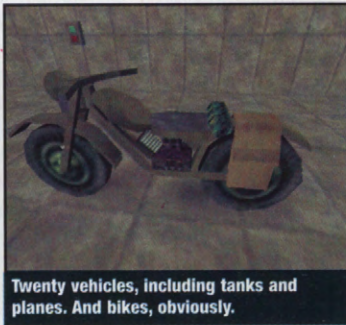
While we eagerly await the release of *Team Fortress II*, news of one particular *Half-Life* total conversion, *Russian Front*, raised some eyebrows when we stumbled across details of it recently.

With both German and Russian soldiers, *Russian Front* is a massive undertaking for the part-timers at Borderline Productions, with plans to include 15 troop variations (including medics, heavy infantry, flame-thrower infantry and tank commanders), 20 vehicles and planes, and 23 new weapons, as well as a host of new single and multiplayer maps based on real terrain data.

The maps and models are nearing completion, but the most impressive aspect to come to light so far is that the team hope to include vehicles you can use whether you're playing on your own or against your mates. We wish Borderline luck, and riches beyond compare.



That's one Panzer that certainly won't be leaving Stalingrad.



Twenty vehicles, including tanks and planes. And bikes, obviously.

CRUISING FOR A CURRY



Mission Impossible: coming to the PC. This screenshot is taken from the N64 version.

Indian developers Dhruva Interactive are currently working on porting the N64 version of *Mission: Impossible* to the PC. The original game, first released last year, mirrors the events of the film as you play IMF agent Ethan Hunt, out to clear your name. Like the original, *Mission: Impossible* is a third-person action adventure that has been described as a cross between *Mario64* and *GoldenEye*, without being quite as good as either. Hopefully the PC version will far surpass them both when it's released later this year.

...OR BOTH?

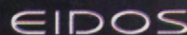


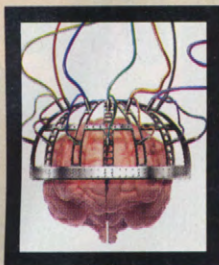
COMMANDOS

BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY

THE ULTIMATE STAND-ALONE GAME WITH 8 NEW MISSIONS FOR ACTION HUNGRY STRATEGISTS.

Visit the website for an interactive demo at www.eidosinteractive.co.uk





TECHHEAD

A major announcement from Intel; DirectX update; and another novelty controller

★ WORDS Warren Christmas

INTEL HAVE YOUR NUMBER?

Electronic serial number feature sparks 'big brother' accusations

Chip giant Intel have come under fire from privacy groups and consumers over a serial number feature in their forthcoming Pentium III processors.

Shortly after the range of processors was officially unveiled in January (see Tech-Head, PCZ #75), it became known that each Pentium III chip would carry a unique electronic serial number accessible via software including Web browsers.

According to Intel, the feature was designed to increase the security of monetary transactions



Intel: forced to make a turnaround.

over the Internet, and not for the tracking of users or stolen computers. However, critics argue that the technology is open to misuse, including the fact that it would be possible for companies to follow electronic 'footprints' through cyberspace

without the users' knowledge.

Intel have since announced that the feature will be switched off by default. Consumers now have the option of making the processor's code readable by switching it on. However, this turnaround has not appeased everyone, with opponents citing the fact that the code could be turned on by accident or possibly even hacked.

PCs based around the new processor are expected to go on sale in the next few weeks.

★ Intel: 01793 431155 / www.intel.com

FACTCANNON

★ 3Dfx Interactive (0171 546 8621) have confirmed that their forthcoming family of Voodoo3 graphic accelerator boards will be made by STB Systems (the company recently purchased by 3Dfx) and branded with the 3Dfx name. The company is seeking production partners for Europe, but these will not include third-party companies such as Creative and Diamond. No release dates have been confirmed, but the Voodoo3 board should reach UK shores by April. More info at www.3dfx.com/.

★ S3 have unveiled their Savage4 architecture featuring industry-first AGP 4X support, DX6 texture compression (S3TC), 32-bit colour rendering and digital flat panel display support. Diamond Multimedia are producing boards based on Savage4, with the first products likely to appear in the early summer. More details at www.s3.com/.

★ InterAct (0161 702 5000) have become the latest peripheral manufacturer to offer a force feedback steering wheel and pedal set. The V4 Racing Wheel is, according to InterAct, the strongest and most advanced wheel of its type in the world. It costs £99.99 and is available exclusively at PC World stores. More info at www.recoton-europe.com/.

★ Fifty per cent of homes in America now have a PC, according to 1998 data from market research firm Dataquest. That's a rise of seven per cent over the previous year. So now you know.

The Frag Master: we say stick to your mouse and keyboard.

be quite usable after a while.

The problem is that it really didn't make the games any easier to play; in fact it made things harder. Maybe we'd feel different after several weeks of practice, but frankly we're not prepared to be shot a million times to find out. Nope. Nice try, but it's back to the trusty mouse and keyboard combo for us.

PCZVERDICT

76%

MICROSOFT UPDATE DIRECTX

Microsoft have released DirectX 6.1, a new version of their gaming and multimedia APIs (Application Programming Interface) for Windows 95/98. The update includes native support for the extra Katmai instructions featured in Intel's forthcoming Pentium III family of processors, but the main addition is the inclusion for the first time of DirectMusic.

DirectMusic supports Downloadable Sounds (DLS) and features an integrated software synth which offers consistent high-quality playback across virtually any hardware configuration. It also includes a DLS version of the industry standard SoundCanvas General MIDI sound set, licensed from Roland.

In real terms, DirectMusic is expected to lead to a great use of 'interactive soundtracks' in games, as opposed to predetermined red-book audio streamed from CD-ROM. "It will mean a lot to improving the quality and interactivity of music in games of the future," says Mark Rein of Epic.

DirectX 6.1 is available now from Microsoft's website (it's a 6.5Mb download) but, as is always the case, it will come supplied with any game which actually requires the new version. Expect to see games which take advantage of DirectX 6.1 on the shelves within a couple of months.

★ Microsoft: 0345 002000 / www.microsoft.com

FRAGS, BUT NO FRAGS

Could this be the ultimate weapon of destruction for *Quake* players?

★ ThrustMaster Frag Master • £54.99 • 01276 609955 • www.frag-master.com

Another month, another novelty controller. Still, unlike the largely useless UR Gear headset reviewed last issue, this one does at least have an obvious use. The Frag Master, you see, is designed specifically for use with first-person perspective shooters (although in theory it can be used with any game).

Placed (ideally) on a desk and held in both hands, the Frag Master can be tilted forwards and backwards, twisted from side to side, and moved forwards, backwards, left and right on its base. This means you can move, strafe and look around with ease – which is the whole point of the device.

There are six buttons on the front of the unit, plus a further four triggers to the rear, which should mean you won't have to touch the keyboard for most games. Software presets are supplied for all the biggies (*Quake*, *Half-Life*, *Unreal* and so on), and more should be supplied on a dedicated website (www.frag-master.com), although the unit is fully programmable anyway.

We gave it a decent run-out with *Quake II* and *Half-Life* (the Day One version is supplied with the device) and, while initially it felt like we were using a joystick or a steering wheel (neither of which would be our weapon of choice for a *Quake* clone), we did find the Frag Master to



in the
Creative dimension, you
 don't just hear sound,
 you know where it's
coming from



PC GAMER 93%

"... if you want the best sound card there is, choose this one."



9/10



"... this is a really impressive product from Creative."

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NOW PLAYING

The Web gets fatter every day. More downloads. More maps, mods and skins. We look at ways to fight the flab

NET GURU Phil Wand

If you moved every single byte of data from the Web and transferred it to 3.5-inch floppies, you'd need more disks than have ever been produced – and a bloody big warehouse in which to store them. With this much stuff just a mouse click away, it's no wonder that 'portal' sites such as Yahoo at www.yahoo.com and AltaVista at www.altavista.com are the top destinations of most surfers. These sites process, review and categorise the inconceivably huge gob of facts, figures and flummery that is the Web, and present it in a series of hierarchical categories and links.

With the recent arrival of GameSpyder at www.gamespyder.com, online gamers now have a proverbial one-stop shop for every website relating to



A new Yahoo for Internet gamers.

computer entertainment. Looking like a negative plate of Yahoo, in its launch week GameSpyder had collected close to 2000 different links to game-related websites. Want *Half-Life* maps? Two clicks away. Links to 3Dfx hardware manufacturers? Just one click. Tips on how to play *Total Annihilation*, *Myth II*, *Age Of Empires*, *Grim Fandango*? It's all here, as well as a search

engine to help reduce the clicking. Bookmark now.

Meanwhile, Blizzard Entertainment have been getting excited about their multiplayer system at www.Battle.Net. Recent figures show that it has no fewer than 2.1 million active users, and is thus by far and away the world's largest online game service. Much of its success is down to the continuing popularity of *StarCraft* – the latest expansion pack, *Brood War*, saw the user base increase in size by some 800 per cent. Wowser! If you think you're missing out on all the fun, it won't cost you a penny to get involved as the service is free. All you need is a Blizzard game, an Internet connection and a second mortgage for the phone bill.

Become quick on the draw

SCRAWL

scrawl.msn.com

Those of you who feel crippled by a lack of artistic talent when playing Pictionary will be delighted by *Scrawl*, MSN's online interpretation of the game. Drawing freehand in a top-notch graphics package like *Adobe Illustrator* is bad enough; doing so against the timer over a jerky Internet connection and with people constantly asking questions is enough to turn even the most skilful draftsman into a gibbering, scribbling wreck.

The game itself is a standalone application that's fired by clicking a link in your Web browser. The interface is functional but attractive and easy to understand, and has a rolling chat window at the bottom. The rules are simple: you or one of your competitors is given a word or phrase, and you then have to draw that word using a combination of pictures and symbols.

Although the server is US-based, we found the connection speed to be more than adequate. Unlike a fast-paced action game where lag can cripple gameplay, *Scrawl* has a sedate pace (you're given three minutes for each word) and isn't affected much by pings and latency.

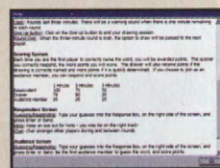
Our only gripe is that cheating is rife, with frustrated players simply writing down the answer.



Can you tell what it is yet?

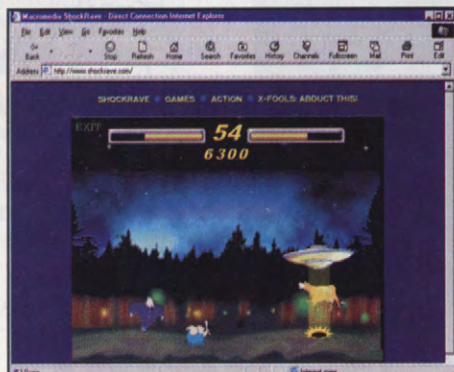


I won! I won! I'm just 5000 fabulous.



Online help is available whenever you need it.

SPESH SITE OF THE MONTH



Totally inane, totally addictive. More, please.

MACROMEDIA SHOCKRAVE

www.shockrave.com/

Shockwave and *Shockwave Flash* movies are the de facto standard for Web multimedia. Created with an elaborate scripting language, animations can be anything from buttons that glow when you push them, to full-blown arcade blasts with their own soundtrack and special effects. Macromedia created ShockRave not only to host and boast the best games, but also to dish out music, cartoons and digital greetings cards. Despite showcasing some serious software technology, the whole site maintains a cosy and ever-so-slightly frivolous feel (witness games such as *Giant Goldfish Must Die*). Most importantly, it's free.

TOP DOWNLOAD OF THE MONTH



Top design. Multiplayer options. Free download. Go now.

ROLL 'M UP

www.dommelsch.nl/flipper/pinsetup.exe

Woonplaats. Verstuur highscore flobba dob dib dob deeb! The installation and main menu may be littered with Dutch sillyspeak, but don't let that put you off. *Roll 'M Up* is a highly enjoyable pinball game available free from the Dommelsch website. In case you didn't know, Dommelsch is a brand of carbonated dog piss that passes for beer – or, rather, was passed and is now 'beer' – in the Netherlands. To promote their wares, the brewery decided to commission a slick Windows game. Download it quick before the marketing department change their minds and go back to printing baseball caps. TILT! TILT! TILT!

BETACALL

Have your say in game development – get involved in official beta test programs

Imperialism II is SSI's follow-up to their popular financial empire building game. Both Windows and Macintosh players are welcome.

Website: <http://tsunami.ssonline.com>

Email: info@ssonline.com

New from SegaSoft is an online strategy game called *10six*. Claim land, mine for wealth and defend yourself against rival players.

Website: www.10six.com/register-main.html

Email: James.Lawrence@heat.net

BATTLES BEYOND THE STARS

FreeSpace 2 definitely. Privateer 3 probably. Elite 4 maybe

Although the *Wing Commander* series is likely to continue only on the big screen, the future for space combat sims on the PC still looks bright, with sequels and new games aplenty.

Rumours about sequels to *Conflict: FreeSpace* (PCZ #66, 89%) and *Privateer 2* (PCZ #44, 94%) have been banded about for months, but we've finally heard that Origin are indeed on the case regarding *Privateer 3*. And far from being an FMV-laden *Elite*, *Privateer 3* could well turn out to be solely an online game. It will be interesting to see what Chris Roberts (creator of *Privateer 1* and 2) thinks of it all, as he's currently engaged in *Freelancer*, another online space sim.

Conflict: FreeSpace was without doubt the best space combat game of last year. A sequel was inevitable, but the surprise is that it should be out in December. Using the same graphics engine as its predecessor, *FreeSpace 2* resurrects the Shivan threat 32 years later, and includes a deep sub-plot which highlights internal struggles within the GTA.

Although rumours of another *Elite* sequel are just that, the closest in scope to the Braben/Bell classic may well turn out to be *X - Beyond The Frontier*, a German game that promises to incorporate the freedom of *Elite* with accelerated 3D graphics. Although you only have one ship to pilot, the range of upgrades and money-spinning opportunities make this a game to watch when it's released in June.

A more enticing prospect come this summer may be *Terminus* from Vicarious Visions. Although limited to our own solar system, it incorporates a whole series of game styles, from complete freedom of play to a more linear mission-based campaign. Not only that, but there's also a fully-featured multiplayer game where you can follow a career as either a mercenary, trader, pirate or an enlisted pilot for either Earth or Mars forces.

With the new *Star Wars* film coming out, this summer is going to be a sci-fi fan's dream come true. A *Phantom Menace* tie-in is inevitable, and with the likes of *Klingon Academy*, *Babylon 5 Space Combat Simulator* and *X-Wing Alliance* on the way, there's even more reason to stay at home and wait for *Star Wars: Episode 1* to appear on video - not that anyone will, of course.

LOOK OUT FOR...

So what should you be looking forward to this year? Well these three, for a start...

Freespace 2 (Volition) Release date: December



New ships but the same engine for *FreeSpace 2*.



The Shivans are back for more.

X - BEYOND THE FRONTIER (EgoSoft) Release date: June



Over 50 ships, but you can pilot only one of them.



Plenty of trading, and you can build factories later on.

TERMINUS (Vicarious Visions) Release date: TBC



Expect a Newtonian physics model.



Said by Vicarious to be the first space combat RPG.

COMING SOON...

And these four, all of which *PC ZONE* has already featured in one way or another, are worth casting an eye over too

BABYLON 5: SPACE COMBAT SIMULATOR (Sierra) Release date: Sept



Set to be the best *Babylon 5* game yet.

SINISTAR: UNLEASHED (T+HQ) Release date: June



The game formerly known as *Excession*.

STAR TREK: KLINGON ACADEMY (Interplay) Release date: June



First space combat sim in the *ST* universe.

X-WING ALLIANCE (LucasArts) Release date: April



More from *Star Wars* masters LucasArts.

PROJECT VIETNAM

Project V1 enters the strategy arena

The railgun is about to become obsolete. Thanks to the success of games like *Rainbow Six* (PCZ #69, 89%), *Delta Force* (PCZ #74, 66%) and *Spec Ops* (PCZ #65, 88%) – each of which are certain to spawn sequels – it's the humble M16 that's likely to take over as the weapon of choice for first-person action fans. Put simply, alien worlds are out, real worlds are in – big time.

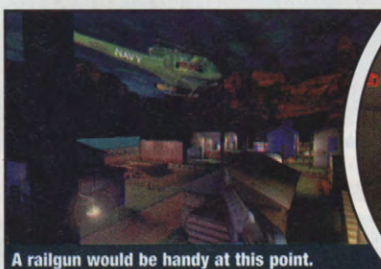
The latest game to get the contemporary treatment is *Project V1*. Based in Vietnam, it's far from being a typical first-person shooter. Boasting a heady mix of '60s weaponry, night and day jungle settings and the now obligatory use of real-time tactics, it tasks you with completing a series of missions alongside computer-controlled team-mates.

Apart from the added strategy element, the most exciting aspect of the game is the vehicles – you can take your pick from armoured troop carriers through to patrol boats and helicopters. Before each mission, however, you have to choose your team members from a pool of specialists: point men, heavy weapons experts, platoon leaders, and radio operators that enable teams to call and request artillery and air support.

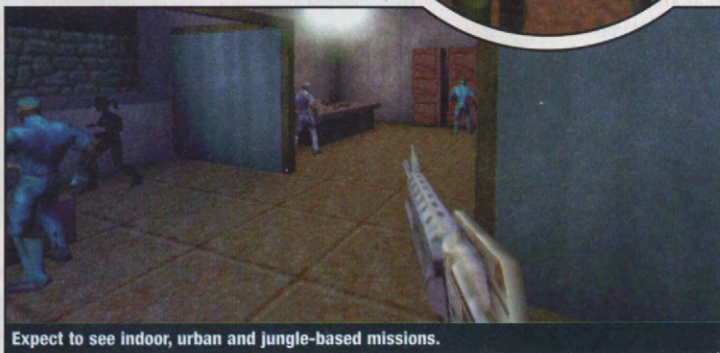
How *Project V1* will stand up against Sierra's *Unreal*-powered *Navy Seals* remains to be seen. Both offer very similar features, and both should be out early next year.

In the meantime, *Hidden & Dangerous* is the tactical action game nearest the completion finishing post. It's a WWII-based title developed in the Czech Republic and features all of the above, but with Britain's finest in place of American wannabes (turn to Hot Shots on page 35 for more info). So if you've had enough *Quake* to last you a lifetime, you only have to wait until June before you can hang up your railgun for good.

Expect an equal measure of day and night-time missions.



A railgun would be handy at this point.



Expect to see indoor, urban and jungle-based missions.

SHORTS

SIM LIFE ON MARS

Great though it is, it's certainly disappointing that *SimCity 3000* (PCZ #74, 92%) failed to be the 3D real-time strategy game we were originally promised. The next title in the series, *Sim Mars*, should be different, as it gives you the opportunity to research and colonise the red planet in full 3D and finally find out whether life actually exists there. Knowing Maxis, it probably will.

BACK TO UNREALITY

Out this month is the official *Unreal* mission pack *Return To Na Pali*. Featuring a slew of single- and multiplayer missions dropped from the original release, we can only assume developers Epic have kept the best ideas for *Unreal Tournament*. We suggest you wait for the review next issue, out on Thursday 8 April.



MORE HOKUM

Following on from *KA-50 Hokum* and *Team Apache*, developers Simis have announced details of *KA-52 Team Alligator*, which is based on the Russian helicopter gunship of the same name. A new 3D engine has been created for the game, and GT Interactive were so impressed they've decided to take up publishing rights and release it before the end of the year.

FOR THE RECORD

"I went to see a very cool movie in London – *Lock, Stock And Two Smoking Barrels*. And who's buying a ticket right beside me? Sean Connery. And he's seeing the same movie! Too cool!"

Scott Miller, President, Apogee Software

"Ten years from now I'll preside over Ion Storm as its chairman and supreme leader. I look forward to the day when Ion Storm takes its rightful place as a global superpower, directing all aspects of world commerce and social order."

Chris 'Blofeld' Klie, lead level designer, *Daikatana*

"That's what I'm really interested in, providing creative input for the game."

Prince Naseem Hamed, obviously looking to ditch boxing and take up a career in games testing. How does £8000 a year sound, Naz?

CHEAPER THAN FAGS

Gremlin, Interplay and Eidos have signed up with Sold Out to bolster the company's range of £4.99 titles. On the shelves now should be *Actua Soccer* (PCZ #34, 92%), *Atomic Bomberman* (PCZ #53, 90%), *Slipstream 5000* (PCZ #42, 90%) and *Zool 2* (PCZ #17, 82%), with *CM2* (PCZ #56, 92%), *Blood* (PCZ #53, 84%), *Toonstruck* (PCZ #64, 81%) and *Screamer* (PCZ #49, 80%) following in April.



In response, Midas Interactive have made plans to launch their own range of budget titles, each of which will set you back a mere £2.99. The first 30 titles should be available from a petrol station near you soon, and once you've had enough of *Ten Pin Bowling Fever*, *Arcade Horse Racing* and *Drilling Billy* you can expect a further 20 crap games to appear in September.



Blood: get a transfusion for £4.99.



Atomic Bomberman: going cheap.



Arcade Horse Racing, or 20 B&H?

CONSOLE ZONE

The PlayStation is showing no signs of knuckling under in the quality game stakes

★ UNDERESTIMATED Matthew Burgess

This month's big UK release is *Metal Gear Solid*, and it's a tour de force that pushes the Sony console to its limits. Essentially a retread of its nine-year-old NES forbear, the game puts you in the shape of the appropriately named monument to masculinity, Solid Snake. Solid must infiltrate a secret nuclear base and battle camp super-villains while saving the girl, etc etc.

However, this is no *Quake*-style blast-fest. Rather than going in with all guns blazing, Snake's main weapon is stealth, which means that disposing of bad guys takes ingenuity rather than brute force (most of the time).

Like *Half-Life* (PCZ #71, 95%), *MGS* is one of those rare games that deserves to be described as an interactive movie. From the criss-crossing sub-plots to the engaging cut-scenes, it's an immersive experience on a par with the mighty *Final Fantasy VII* (PCZ #66, 93%). As well as getting tortured and falling in love, Snake even gets a stern ticking off from one of his support team when he lights up a cigarette (you start the game with a packet of 20 in your inventory). "Who cares? I like it," he replies.

Get back to your prissy mansion, Lara, we've got a *real* role model here.

Hottest PSX import of the moment has got to be *Ridge Racer 4*. After having their racing crown unceremoniously nicked by *Gran Turismo*, Namco have raised the

stakes with the latest instalment in their series. Although *R4* doffs its cap to *GT* in a few areas – a ridiculous number of usable cars, for example – Namco have wisely decided to concentrate on arcade action rather than on ponderous reality. The PSX's (limited) resources are thus freed from having to cope with all that physics nonsense, and the result is a game that goes like shit off a freshly buttered shovel.

In terms of PC titles, *R4* is closer to *Ultimate Race Pro* than to *TOCA 2*, but Namco's arcade pedigree ensures that the all-important playability is right on the money. The presentation is beautiful, the intro sequence is the usual sexist claptrap, and those cheesy voices are all present and correct. What more could you want from a racing game?

Given Namco's track record and the PC's unpopularity as a games machine in Japan, it's unlikely that *R4* will find its way to your desktop without the assistance of an emulator. However, Konami have finally seen the light and recently announced that *MGS* will make it to the PC later this year. Just how much later remains to be seen, but this establishes a precedent for further conversions. Keep your fingers crossed for the stunning – and sick – *Silent Hill*.

...and it could well follow *Metal Gear Solid* to the PC.



Silent Hill: sick, stunning...



Metal Gear Solid: now on PlayStation, coming to the PC soon.



Ridge Racer 4 could just sneak past *Gran Turismo*.



nails!



Single & Multi-Player Next Generation Killer

THE BATTLE OF THE BEASTS



Totally
Addictive

AVAILABLE ON PC CD-ROM



Download the demo from:

www.wildmetalcountry.co.uk

The Man who KNOWS

ION STORM BACK

Following last month's merciless butchering of **Ion Storm**, it seems only fair that they should be allowed to answer back regarding the walk-out of the **Ion Eight**, and the disparaging **Dallas Observer** article.

Mike Breslin, Ion Storm's Vice President of Business Development and Marketing, said this: "It was a one-sided, very, very biased piece, and I think after reading it it's obvious they don't understand the industry. This industry is built upon the ebb and flow of personnel. That's eight people leaving. Why is that abnormally high for a computer game company of 100+ people?"

"I'm not going to say it didn't hurt us for those individuals to leave. It did, but at the stage they left, luckily the majority of their work was done. They left to go create their own company, which is the entrepreneurial spirit that we all support here. That's how we created this company. John left iD, Tom left iD, all of our designers left their previous companies to create this company, so we're certainly not looking down upon anybody with entrepreneurial spirit wanting to follow their dreams and create games that they all want to create.

"I think this has really been blown out of proportion because of our company and where it's at in the public eye. There honestly hasn't been a games company of this size with this calibre of designers before. It is a new thing. We are about to release three triple-A titles in nine months. That takes a company three times the size of a normal games company. And when eight people leave a normal games company of 30, which is the average, then that's a huge mass exodus. But when they leave a company of 100+ people, that's eight per cent of the entire company leaving. That's not to discredit their loss. Yes, we obviously felt that loss, but we replaced them with very capable, very, very good individuals."

Much of the reason for people revelling in Ion Storm's misfortune is the vast amount of hype that accompanied the company's formation. But as Mike says: "The irony of that is that the people who started the hype are no longer here, and are the people that we're in a lawsuit with. Nobody has sensed that irony yet, have they? You see this in Hollywood all the time. Look at *Titanic* - all they did was talk about how long it took and how much money it took to make this movie. And it came out, and then it was a great movie, and everybody forgot about all the negativity, the delays and everything else.

"We are refocusing our energies. Our games are going to speak for themselves."
If we ever see them. Oof!

LOOKING GLASS TAKE FLIGHT

Flight Unlimited III could be a propeller-head's dream come true. Virtual aviators waiting for Looking Glass' latest flight sim can soon share the skies with other computer-controlled aircraft, as well as keeping an eye out for moving ground objects. The scenery and weather effects look like being a major step up from previous versions, and you can look forward to enjoying new adventures in ten new aircraft. EA release *Flight III* this autumn. And no, there won't be any guns, obviously.

Ten new planes, some of them without engines.



Propellorheads' new album: *Diveandclimbandyawandroll*.



New tutorial missions should help pull in new punters.



A cockpit, with a fuel-pump knob. Fnrrk.

COMPETITION WINNERS

Check if your name is among these lucky winners - if you entered, that is

CHART COMPO, Issue #72

Mr S Cripps, County Durham

CHART COMPO, Issue #73

Aaron Girling, Notts

FORCED ENTRY, Issue #72

Vicki Parsons, Herts; Richard Curtis, Suffolk;

Richard Bobruk, Bristol

CLUNK CLICK, Issue #70

1st Prize: Peter Ives, Coventry. Runners-up: Nino Amoroso, London; Max Burgoyne, Wilts; Paul King, Warwicks; Jason Donnelly, Kent; Michael Fisher, Essex; Sarah Tolly, Berks;

W Anson, Edinburgh; Steven Edwards, Surrey; M Woodward, Bucks; Daniel Elton, Newcastle

I HAVE SINNED, Issue #71

1st Prize: Stuart Allan, Midlothian. Runners-up: Jim Doherty, Co Durham, Peter Evans, Swansea; David Lees, Ayrshire; Doug Kyle, Northampton; Neil Wilkinson, East Sussex; Kristin Allsop, N Ireland; Stephen Lamb, Notts; David Anderson, East Sussex; Martin Evans, Bristol; Andy Duffy, Falkirk

★ Congrats and all that to the lucky winners. Disappointed? Don't be - next time, it could be youooooou...



Eighty different units, 23 driveable tanks.



You can even ram through buildings.

TANKS ON THE RUN

German developers Wings are currently tidying up *Panzer Elite*, a WWII tank sim that's due to be released through Psygnosis in April.

Last year saw *iPanzer 44* and *Panzer Commander*, both of which were flawed. *Panzer Elite*'s 80 different units, including infantry, and 23 different driveable tanks should make it the prime choice for WWII track-heads who have previously only had MicroProse's modern-day *M1 Tank Platoon 2*.

All this of course depends on what the final version ends up like, and if it's on schedule we should be reviewing it next issue, on sale Thursday 8 April.

TICKERTAPE

STARTS++ The Bitmap Brothers have announced that they are working on *Speedball 2100*, a reworking of their old Amiga classic. The bad news is that there are no plans for a PC version as yet

++STOP++ EA have canned Rebel Boat Rocker's 3D shooter *Prax War*. No doubt some other publisher will soon pick up the tab (we hope)

++STOP++ *PC ZONE* is the UK's best-selling PC games mag – official **++STOP++** Interplay and Virgin have merged. Virgin will handle distribution of all its own and Interplay's games in Europe, while Interplay will crank out both publishers' titles in the US

++STOP++ Details of PlayStation 2's internal organs have been announced. A 128-bit CPU, along with dedicated hardware components, will supposedly handle millions of polygons per second, pissing on current PC technology from a great height. It'll sell shitloads and look dated within two years, mark our words **++STOP++** *The Sims*, a people simulator, is currently in development by *SimCity* creators Maxis. Imagine the joy of seeing virtual people getting up, going to work, eating and shagging

++STOP++ *PC ZONE* is still the UK's best-selling PC games mag

++STOP++ French developers Infogrames are set to continue the ground-breaking *Alone In The Dark* series of games with a fourth, as-yet-unnamed title **++STOP++** Lionhead's first game, *Black And White*, is rumoured to be ahead of schedule and could well be out in September. Ironically, a version for GameBoy Color is also on the cards – which won't be in black-and-white, obviously **++ENDS**

IT'S A STEAL

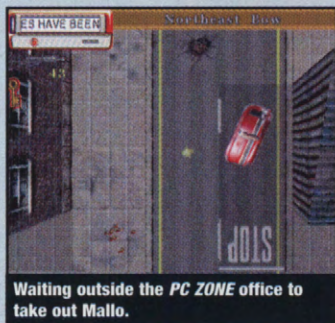
GTA goes to Laaahndon

The Canadian developers of *GTA London* have obviously been swotting up on old episodes of *The Sweeney* to find inspiration for *Grand Theft Auto*'s first mission disc.

With influences from films such as *Get Carter*, *Quadrophenia* and *The Ipcress File*, the game features all London's famous landmarks and every conceivable vehicle from the era. Populating the streets are mods, rockers, hippies and bobbies, and you can make use of public transport and even drive around the Tower Of London. Thankfully, we've only got a month to wait until *GTA London* is released. Sweet.

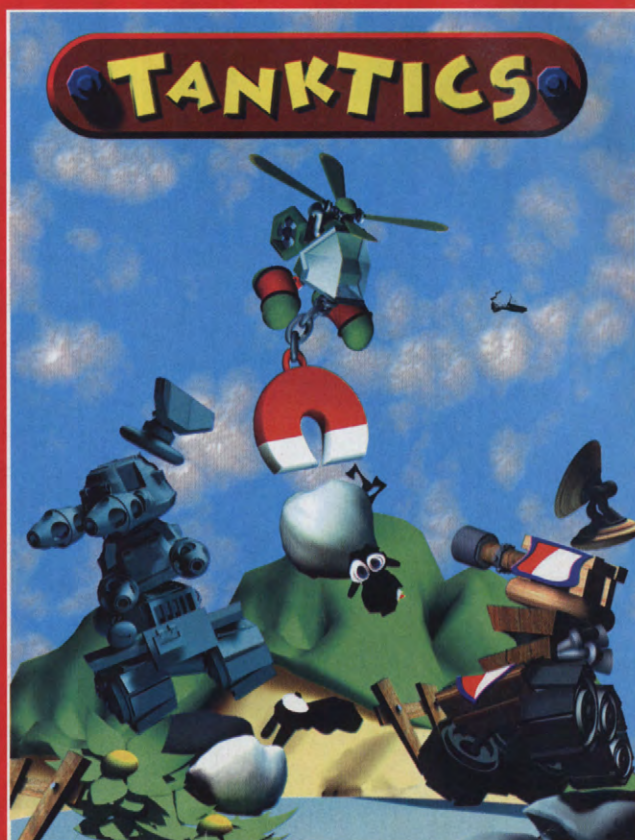


A quick dash across Tower Bridge.



Waiting outside the *PC ZONE* office to take out Mallo.

From the Designers of Lemmings



Prepare to become Billy-No-Mates



Tanktics – the fastest, most original game created by the hand of man ever...



VERY ADDICTIVE

OUT ON PC-CD ROM



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HOTSHOTS

If a picture paints a thousand words, here's the place to keep you reading well into the next millennium. In the gallery this month: *Unreal Tournament*, WWII action sim *Hidden & Dangerous* and space strategy in *Homeworld*



UNREAL TOURNAMENT

★ GT Interactive • Out end of March

Just before you flick through to our massive *Quake III Arena* preview beginning on page 38, why not stop off here and take a look at how arch rival Epic's *Unreal Tournament* is shaping up.

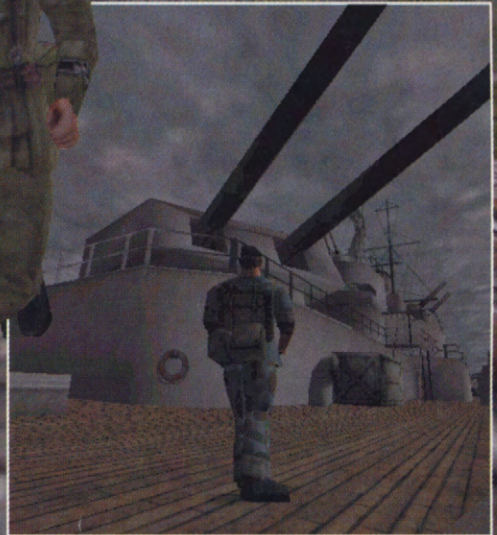
We were lucky enough to be treated to a preview at GT's offices recently, where we were talked into a quick deathmatch to show off the fancy new weapons and effects that will appear in the final version. Far from being a souped-up botmatch version of the original *Unreal* (PCZ #65, 93%), *Tournament's* enhanced AI and capture the flag deathmatches could make this a more than viable alternative to iD's latest effort. The engine also looks like it's been going through a bit of refinement, although that could be put down to running the game through two Voodoo2 cards. We'll see how far things really have come next issue, on sale Thursday 8 April.



HIDDEN & DANGEROUS

★ Take 2 Interactive • Out April

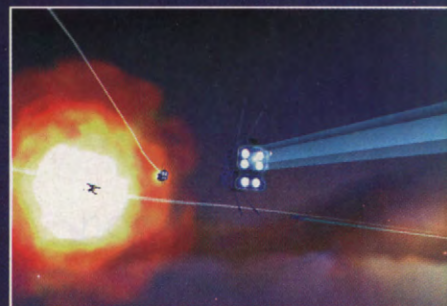
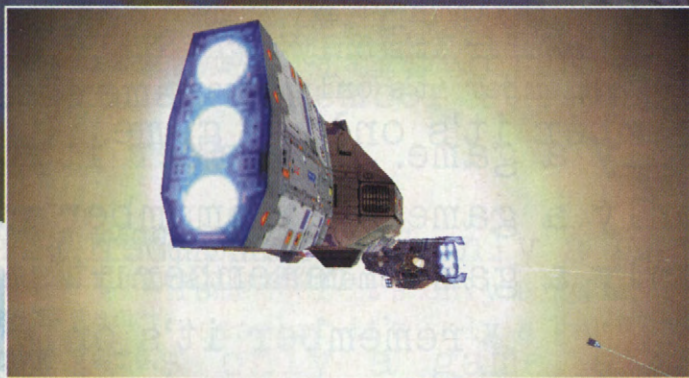
Combining the tactical action of *Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six* (PCZ #69, 89%) and the WWII-style antics of *Commandos* (PCZ #66, 87%) comes *Hidden & Dangerous* from Czech developers Illusion Softworks. Including a host of driveable vehicles and a cast of specialist characters, the game may well end up being one of the surprise hits of the year. With crackling fires, real-time lighting and fog effects, both the indoor and outdoor areas look stunning. The only problem is that we'll have to wait until April to see the finished game. Hurry up, please.



HOMEWORLD

★ Sierra • Out June

It has to be said that watching two massive fleets of ships engage in interstellar combat is far more exciting than watching a couple of tanks run over a few infantrymen. Watching *Homeworld's* ships arcing through space, it's hard to imagine going back to the confines of planet-based strategy games. And if such games were judged on the strength of their graphics, *Homeworld* would probably go off the scale. If you don't believe us, check out the rolling demo on this month's CD. Even in software mode the early version of the game we looked at managed to impress all who saw it. *Tiberian Sun*? What's that, then?



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CAPCOM

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remember it's only a game. **RESIDENT EVIL 2** now on PC

The ultimate Deathmatch...

QUAKE III: ARENA



You're gonna need a bigger machine. iD Software plan to push the envelope very far indeed with the stonking, the amazing *Quake III*. Quaking in their boots: **David McCandless** and **Charlie Brooker**

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER Activision
PUBLISHER Id Software
WEBSITE www.idsoftware.com
OUT Unfixed, but probably mid-1999

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- ★ A deathmatch fanatic's wet dream
- ★ Ultra-advanced 3D engine
- ★ New multiplayer technology
- ★ Extremely advanced AI

→ The player models can all bend at the waist. Just like our Mallo.

Even since the heady days of *Wolfenstein 3D*, iD have been at the forefront of - dare we coin it - 'cutting-edge' games development. Within their gruelling development schedule, the Texas-based developers have always been designing two games at a time - the single-player and the deathmatch side. Early last year they were sweating over two tasks: *Trinity*, the 'next-generation' follow-up to *Quake II* with a glorious new 3D engine, and an entire *QII* mission pack. It was too much. Trying to give equal

time, weight and balance to both was, to use the vernacular, 'busting' the 14-strong development team's collective 'ass'. So, they decided, since it would take too long to nurture both to fruition, why not combine the two to create a new, all-powerful lifeform?

Quake III: Arena was born - but as a multiplayer first and foremost. This is new territory for us all. When it appears later this year, *QIII* will be the first network 3D multiplayer title lacking a single-player 'story' mode.

Some are glad. If there's one aspect of iD's games which has been criticised, it's the paltry gameplay. Ever since *Commander Keen* and *Doom* (PCZ #13, 96%), iD have rarely veered from the rocket launcher/corridors/monsters formula that has served them so well. The technological ante keeps getting raised, of course. *Doom* pissed on *Wolfenstein*. *Quake* (PCZ #43, 96%) shat on *Doom*. Eighteen months

later, *Quake II* (PCZ #59, 97%) opened its bowels on *Quake*. (And then came *Half-Life* (PCZ #71, 95%), which pebble-dashed the lot. But that's another story.) Underneath all the gloss, the mip-mapping and the amazing new lighting routines, *Quake II* was basically the same: shoot; run; save; shoot; run; save...

In the meantime, we the audience grew in sophistication. And now, in this post-*Half-Life* universe, these senseless get-to-the-exit games are considered rubbish and on their way out. "Good riddance too," we say. "Have a good story, or shove it," we add. *Quake III* will be iD doing what they do best - creating 3D technology and networked deathmatching which melts our eyes and kills our social lives.

Network or not, you will be able to play *QIII* on your own, but it will be

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

WE SPEAK, iD ANSWER

Being the premier PC gaming mag in the whole wide world, *PC ZONE* managed, no problem, to gain access to iD Software's inner sanctum and ask the entire *Quake III* team a few questions about their forthcoming opus

How do you think people will react to the single-player 'bot' game?

Paul Steed: "It will make the 'sports' aspect more apparent, and perfectly complement the strength of the multiplayer game. Like *Madden '99* or *Ridge Racer*, playing the game for the endless replayability and competition will change the way first-person shooters are developed in a much-needed way."

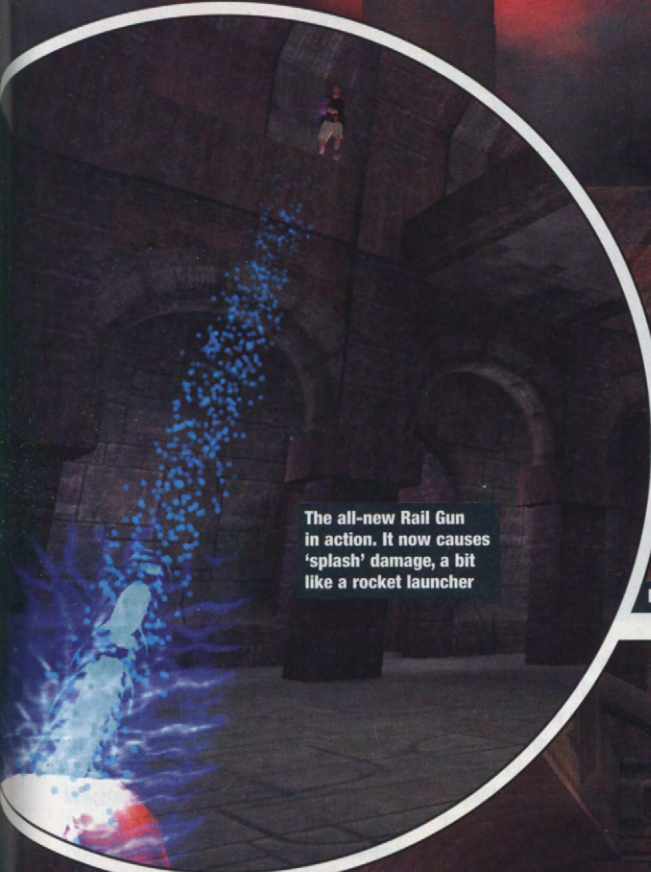
Paul Jaquays: "Until recently, connecting to games on the Internet has always seemed like arcane mumbo jumbo, available only to the illuminati of computer users. Games in the future should make connecting to online games totally transparent to even the newbie user."

What are iD hoping will happen to *Quake III: Arena* once the online community gets a hold of it?



“We’ve reinvented coolness with this product, and I think that will really pay off once the game is out there”

GRAEME DEVINE, ID SOFTWARE

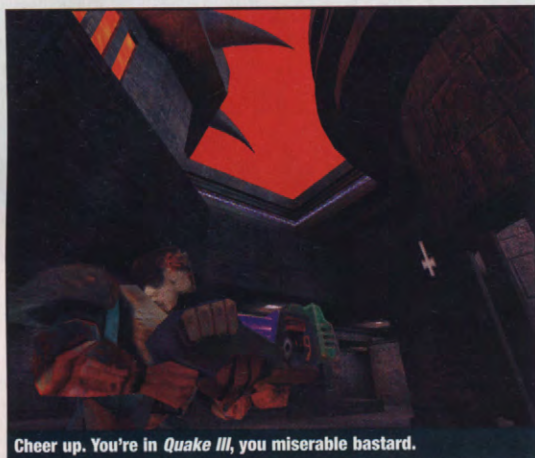


The all-new Rail Gun in action. It now causes 'splash' damage, a bit like a rocket launcher

Bet he has trouble getting his shirts fitted. At least it makes a change from Man At C&A.



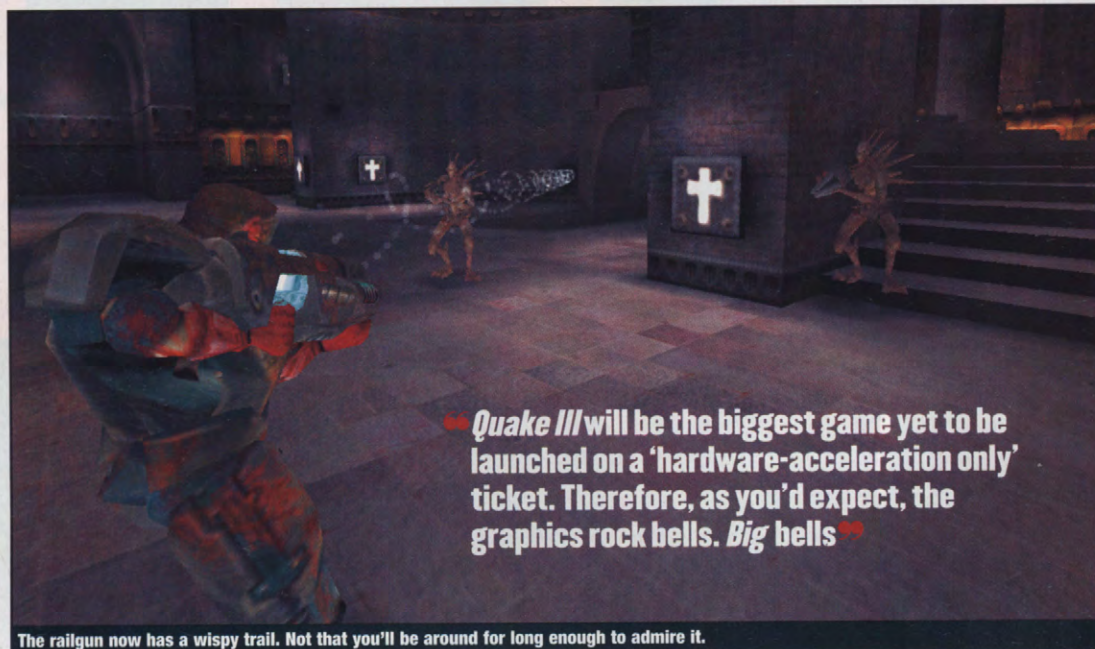
Check out that purple muzzle flare. Good enough to lick.



Cheer up. You're in *Quake III*, you miserable bastard.



What the f**k are IKEA playing at?



The railgun now has a wispy trail. Not that you'll be around for long enough to admire it.

☛ ***Quake III* will be the biggest game yet to be launched on a 'hardware-acceleration only' ticket. Therefore, as you'd expect, the graphics rock bells. Big bells** ☛

☛ more of a *Mortal Kombat*, *Tekken*-style game, with conquests and success in battle giving you progress, rather than the endless drudgery of multiple levels. It will be you versus 'bots' – computer-controlled deathmatch opponents given to unerringly ruthless and realistic behaviour. The war against the machines starts here.

BOTTY TROUBLE

Anyone who's messed with the Eraser bots for *Quake II* or the female ninja from *Half-Life* knows that computer-controlled monster

movement has moved on substantially in the last few years. Artificially intelligent muthas can now use their environment and weapons more adroitly than most arch human deathmatchers. Like natives, they rocket-jump, dodge missiles, run away, set ambushes, and are very, very, very good at aiming. "You'll have your rookies, your smartasses – all different personalities," says Paul Steed, graphics artist at iD.

One of the greatest challenges in creating a bot is making it fallible. The Y2K bug notwithstanding,

computers generally don't get confused or distracted or frightened or over-confident in the way we do. In deathmatch, therefore, they tend to be *too* good. But if you make them 'dumber' by simply reducing their virtual brainpower by a few notches, you've created another problem: you can learn to exploit their intellectual blind spots. The key lies in giving the bots personality traits such as cowardice, aggression or sneakiness – enough to render their behaviour believable, but not predictable.

The more you succeed against your cheery CPU opponents, the more you

ascend the Ladder Of Greatness (our title, not theirs), giving you something to do when you're not hooked up to the Internet, pounding small boys from Huddersfield. Aside from this new direction, the game will have classic iD written all over it.

But wait a moment... What if you're used to single-player first-person-shooters but haven't ever been plunged into the carnage-showered crucible of deathmatch? How will you cope? Stop blubbering. The game will include several 'newbie' deathmatch levels designed to ease nervous virgins into the action with all the

☛ Graeme Devine: "I hope the online community embraces its pure deathmatch style and runs with it. We've redefined deathmatch coolness with this product, and I think that will really pay off." **In light of current competition, do you think *Quake's* grip on the multiplayer community will be much reduced?** Graeme Devine: "The only competition we have is from the new *Star Wars* movie."

What have you done code-wise to improve multiplayer performance, and how do you plan to reduce lag? John Carmack: "Jerkiness is the characteristic of Net play that has been most improved. Almost all visual effects are either cued for local running, or presented in a parametric or other extrapolatable form, so that when packets fail to arrive on time, most of the world continues as expected without a

visible hitch. Of course, if your Net connection really craps out and you don't receive any new packets for several hundred milliseconds, the action will reach the reasonable limits of its predictability. Perceived lag has been decreased by allowing more actions to be handled completely on the client side, without having to make a round trip to the server. Weapon cycling, falling/stepping/walking view feedback, and

weapon muzzle flash/sound feedback are all done locally now. The actual effects of your actions on the world and other players still requires a round trip to the server, so lag isn't *gone*, but it is improved over all previous efforts." **Which weapons are you planning to include?** John Carmack: "Most new weapon ideas are bad ideas. We're sticking mostly with

established favourites. A flame-thrower is our only planned 'experimental' weapon." Christian Antkow: "Most of the weapons from *Quake II* will make a reappearance. The lightning gun from *Quake* reappears, and the BFG has been changed significantly – think instant-hit rocket launcher. The machine-gun is now your starting weapon, so you don't spawn into the world completely helpless."



ID SOFTWARE

The self-proclaimed "coolest game shop in the world", ID Software have a number of classic action titles in their back catalogue

1990 *Commander Keen: Invasion Of The Vorticons*. Not officially iD's first game, but the first game created by John Carmack, Adrian Carmack, John Romero and Tom Hall – the founding members of iD Software.

1992 *Wolfenstein 3D*. The first-person shoot 'em up that started it all. It may look primitive by today's standards, but this shareware hit made big waves when first released.

1993 *Doom*. A true gaming classic. Scary, fast, furious and fun, *Doom* was the title that really put iD on the gaming map. An estimated 15 million copies have been downloaded around the world.

1994 *Doom II*. Bigger, better, faster and harder than *Doom*. The introduction of a double-barrelled shotgun set new standards for in-game weaponry. Two million copies sold, and rising.

1996 *Quake*. A name that has become synonymous with the first-person shoot 'em up genre. *Quake's* multiplayer facilities were unrivalled at the time.

1997 *Quake II*. Hailed by some as the best first-person shoot 'em up of all time, *Quake II* is the action game purist's dream. Still a benchmark title, even two years after its release.



Ooh, where did you get those shoes? They're adorable, darling.



The Quad Damage power-up in all its 'Take On Me'-style glory.

patient encouragement of a seasoned pro leading a frightened rookie into his first major battle. Naturally, the bots on these greenhorn stages behave with authentic stupidity, the watchword being 'authentic' - it's harder to program a believably fallible bot than an out-and-out brainless or deadly one. Perhaps more significant for first-timers, however, will be the layout of the architecture itself: the earliest stages will be laid out on a single plane, so there's none of that pesky mouse-looking... until you progress to a later level. Think of it as a kind of Deathmatch Academy. It's

an education you'll need to undertake if you're going to get anywhere in the later stages or spar with experienced real-life players online.

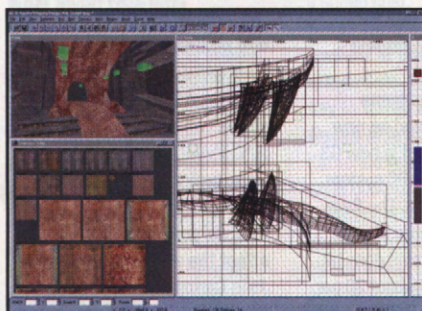
NICER NOOKS, COOLER CRANNIES

Thanks to enhanced chunks of the Trinity engine, *Quake III* will be the biggest game yet to be launched on a 'hardware-acceleration only' ticket. Therefore, as you'd expect, the graphics rock bells. Big bells.

The levels will bow to three main styles: organic, gothic and industrial. All will use the most impressive feature of the new engine - support

for Bezier curves. Which in English means you'll be seeing 'proper' curved surfaces. Previously, the *Quake* engine could only render triangles, limiting the creation of smooth, rounded shapes and forcing designers into all sorts of loops to create realistic environments. Now, there are fewer geometrical limits, and cool stuff like circular mirrors, fangs, and tongues, and weird Gigeresque architecture are possible. The engine also manages to pull off true mirrors: entire levels have been

designed with mirrored floors and ceilings, so it'll be just like running around Peter Stringfellow's bedroom. Oh, and there'll be



If you can build a tongue, you can build...



...er, something else which we won't go into here.

Half-Life has redefined the genre with its approach to AI. How do you see Quake III lining up against that - especially with Unreal Tournament and Team Fortress II almost upon us?

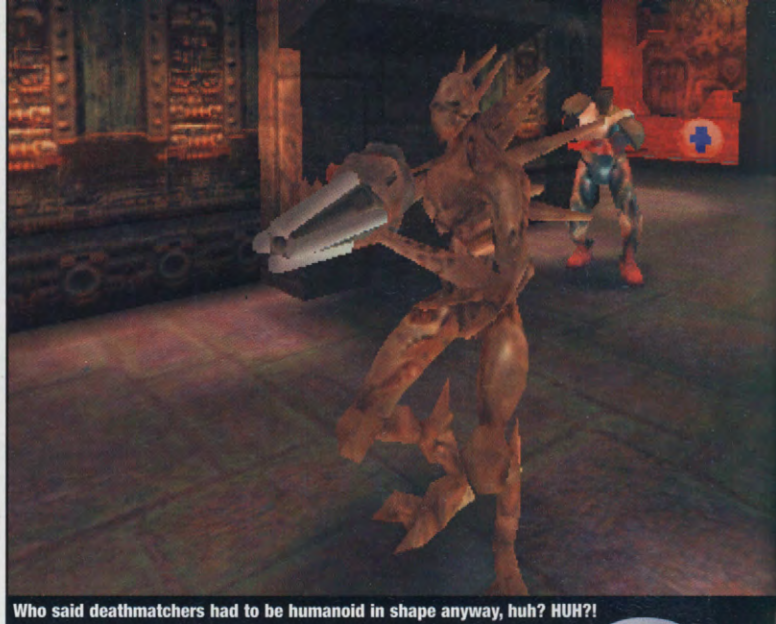
Paul Jaquays: "They are apples and oranges. From what I understand, *Half-Life's* AI depends on a lot of scripted situations. Real-time combat AIs have to be able to respond to any

situation in our maps, not just pre-scripted ones." **ID started the entire first-person shooter genre. What do you think of new elements that are creeping into the genre, such as the strategy in games like Rainbow Six or squad-based titles like X-COM Alliance?**

Paul Steed: "They're great. As more and more hybrids take advantage of the technology



Did we mention the architecture? It's a bit good, you know.



Who said deathmatchers had to be humanoid in shape anyway, huh? HUH?!

THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT. THE FUTURE IS APPLE?

Ladies and gentlemen, place your bets – it's the Pentium versus G3 Deathmatch

iD's king coder, John Carmack recently appeared at the MacWorld exhibition in the States, whereupon he made the announcement that *Quake III* would be released simultaneously on PC, Linux, and Macintosh, dropping a red hot pineapple in the laps of the listening PC *Quake* online community.

"I think Apple are doing a lot of things right," elaborates Carmack. "The Mac hasn't instantly become a 'better' platform for games than Wintel, it's just made a giant leap from the back of the

pack to near the front. From all my tests and experiments, the new Mac systems are basically as fast as the latest Pentium IIs for general CPU and memory performance. This is plenty good, but it doesn't make the Intel processors look like slugs."

Great. So we'll soon have to welcome all those goatee-bearded, combat trouser-wearing, Mac-owning vegetarians into the great global gaming community. But, for all the singing and dancing of the new G3s, they still only have *one mouse button*. Hah! Twats.



PHOTO: Hugh Threlfall

← excellent volumetric fog – that's proper fog, with weight and depth, so it can roll around your ankles like you were deathmatching in the 'Mull Of Kintyre' video.

There's only one downside to all this visual finery – creating custom levels will be much, *much* harder than before. Still, with perseverance, and thanks to the introduction of curvy bits, you could invent a sick pornographic deathmatch level in which players dash around atop a gigantic bell-end, shooting each other in the teeth.

If you're curious about weapons,

check out our iD interview on page 38. As for power-ups, Quad damage will no longer simply apply a 'Ready Brek' glow to your man, it will also surround you in a glowing, crackling, visible field of energy. Very scary. In fact disturbingly "like an electrified version of the effect in the A-HA video for 'Take On Me'," according to Blue, webmaster of the popular *Quake* site Bluesnews (www.bluesnews.com) after his recent sneak preview. Other power-ups include Invisibility (which works like the wibbly-wobbly in *Predator* – hurrah!), Haste and, possibly (eek!), Flying. There's also the possibility of a revival for *Doom*'s Berserker power-up, which turned you into a seething, super-powerful hulk capable of literally shattering bodies with a single punch. Lovely.

HEAD, THORAX, ABDOMEN

The player too has been substantially enhanced. You'll feel taller. Steps will be shorter.

The models will be split into natural sections like legs, thorax, and head to enable more realistic movement and expression. You can customise up to 30 frames of animation for yourself, enabling you to visibly give people the two-fingered salute beloved of cabbies and lager-fuelled football hooligans.

The models mark a substantial improvement over those in *Quake II*. Constructed from around 1000 polygons, and with few if any discernible corners or flat areas, they're almost *unnervingly* realistic. Deathmatch looks like *Saving Private Ryan*. Except it stars you and your friends. And since we're talking 3D cards-only here, we're also looking at 24-bit colour textures for each character skin. That means you can scan in photographs of yourself, painstakingly assemble a virtual clone, then watch as it gets its head blown off. Which probably isn't good for the psyche. Several iD employees

have already produced versions of themselves. Within weeks of the game's release, expect the Internet to be awash with skins of superheroes, presidents, pop stars, and nude fakes of Denise Van Outen. Who needs *Stars In Their Eyes* when you can have *Guns Up Their Bums*?

This is all part of a suite of touches designed to enhance the death-matching experience. The crosshair, for example, which now becomes more than a cheaty little aiming point, changes colour depending on



Just like Leatherface and Ed Gein, you can muck around with human skin for fun.



A big burly future-warrior hanging out down the docks yesterday.

← advances, a better, richer game experience will result. This approach is especially good for single-player, story-driven games. *Quake III Arena* will provide the

standard for the alternative to the story-driven complexities of future single-player games, no matter what kind of hybrid they are." **In the UK, online deathmatching isn't as popular as in the US because local calls aren't free. Do you think this will affect *Quake III*'s success over here?**

Paul Jaquays: "I think it will result in an uprising of angry games players marching on telecommunications companies to demand fairer phone and Internet connection pricing standards. Paying anything other than a flat connection fee for time online is retrogressive. Demand your rights!"

What's the score with the Mac version? Rumour has it that it's faster and better than the PC

version. How can this be? How does the Mac handle those graphics?

John Carmack: "The game plays very well indeed on new Macs. At the moment, a new G3 plays as well as any PC system and better than most. The Rage 128 in the G3 systems is only running at 75MHz, so it does hit its ultimate fill limit about 20 per cent sooner than a TNT in a wintel box, but the driver throughput is

absolutely top-notch." **Will Mac vs PC network games be possible?** Christian Antkow: "Yes. Mac clients will be able to connect to a PC server and vice versa – same protocol on either flavour of the game."

How do you think this will affect the average workplace? John Carmack: "Marketing and accounting departments can get all tribal with each other."

JOHN CARMACK



PC ZONE gets up close and personal with iD Software's 3D genius

PCZ What was the first game you ever played?

JOHN *Space Invaders*.

PCZ What's the best game you've ever played?

JOHN I often point to the original *Sonic The Hedgehog* as a great design – fast and simple, but lots of fun. I think the series went downhill with increasing complexity and gimmicks.

PCZ Have you ever been in a fight, and if so what happened?

JOHN Once, in high school, I stepped in on two guys pushing one of my friend's younger brother around. I was competing in judo around that time, and there is a pretty fair chance I dislocated one of their shoulders.

PCZ If *Unreal Tournament* and *Quake III Arena* were marooned on a desert island, would they work together to build a raft, or would they rip each other's heads off?

JOHN The game engines would probably work together, but the rest of the media might be noisy.

your health, saving you having to look down to check your status. It also reveals the names of players. The difference between enemies and team-mates are easily distinguishable, so good players are avoided and (more importantly) vendettas are more effectively pursued.

Another neat feature: when you've

“The lightning gun from *Quake* is going to be in *Quake III: Arena*, and the BFG has been changed significantly – think instant-hit rocket launcher”

JOHN CARMACK, ID SOFTWARE

stopped to enter a chat message or tinker about with the console, a little icon appears above your character's head to let everyone else know you're busy typing. They can still frag you while you're in this state, but only in the knowledge that they're being unsportsmanlike. Of course, you could *pretend* to be typing as a sneaky ambush technique, but that would be downright caddish.

In a beat 'em up, you are generally given the choice between a dull-but-good-all-round character, a fast-but-weak character, or Geoff Capes. And so it is with *Quake III: Arena*, which will sport an innovative new class system, enabling you to juggle movement speed with damage capacity. In real terms, as in real

life, smaller, faster players will be able to rocket-jump like gazelles around the level. Fatter, lumpier brethren will be confined to more traditional ground-based assaults and the occasional low-rise 'phut' of a rocket jump. To further increase tactical choices, you'll be able to drop your weapon for a 20 per cent speed increase. Or as a peace offering to a would-be executioner.

What about real-time shadowing – will there be 'proper' shadowing, as seems to be popular at the moment?

John Carmack: "Right now we are just using blob shadows underneath players, which is fast and still provides a useful positional cue for jumping. I will probably add support for stencil buffer shadows so the new high-end cards can get some use out of them, but it will definitely have

a speed cost."

For those people who are quite content to play *Quake II* with EraserBots, what would you say to tempt them into buying *Quake III Arena*?

Katherine Anna Kang: "I could be quite content with an old reliable car that got me from one place to another, but what do you think my choice would be if I was given the opportunity to have something new and better? Something

prettier, with an improved engine? Something that got me where I wanted to go faster and smoother? If I could afford it, I would have both – reminisce some good old times with the old reliable one, but zip around in the new one for some real fun."

***Quake II* was criticised for being 'too brown'. How 'brown' will *Quake III* be?**

Paul Steed: "All brown. Various monochromatic shades of feces."



"Oi you! I won't tell you again – keep your thieving hands away from my power-up."

MULTIPLE MANIACS

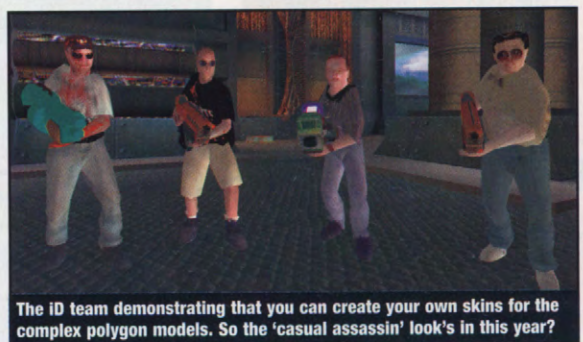
Online gaming-wise, each server will be minutely configurable, so, to quote one iD team member, "no one can bitch about anything". You'll be able to choose from a spread of different sets of rules and feels, choosing from presets like *Quake*, *Quake II* or *Classic Doom*. Other multiplayer favourites, such as Capture the Flag, will also be fully supported.

But what about that bane of every multiplayer's life (and death), the dreaded lag monster? 'Lag' is the word used to describe the delay caused by the transfer of information from client to server and back again during an online game, which can slow your reaction time and lead to an untimely fragging. It's something iD are keen to reduce and eliminate, which is why they've shifted the division of labour between the client (your computer) and the server (the computer you're connected to) to help keep things running smoothly.

WAIT FOR IT

Excited? Eager? Champing at the bit? You should be – after all, iD haven't let us down so far, have they? By focusing solely on their previous games' undeniable strength, the multiplayer experience, they're free to leave the single-player storytelling to games like *Half-Life* and *SiN*, and instead deliver a visceral, lightning-fast frag-a-thon that can be played for ten hours or ten minutes. Just like games from the good old days, in fact – except you can play it against 60 other people and the graphics make your eyes come in their pants.

The bad news is the hardware requirements. The lowest system will be a Pentium 200MMX with Voodoo1. Still, there's probably time to save enough coins for an upgrade. Get that frilly little number on and head for the docks. Those sailors may be lonely, but they've got money to burn, sunshine. [E]



The iD team demonstrating that you can create your own skins for the complex polygon models. So the 'casual assassin' look's in this year?

Live fast, die faster. Life is cheap in....

EXPENDABLE

It's a return to the old school for Britain's most technically advanced development team, Rage. Paul Presley prepares to reinforce his 3D cards



Don't know what it is, but it's mean and pissed off.



Blood! My god! Ban this game now!



RAGE SOFTWARE

A potted history of the 3D masters

1992 Formed in Liverpool by Paul Finnegan with a brief to create original, innovative and high-quality products. Starts with a team of 40.

1994 *Striker* is released on 16-bit computers and sells more than a million copies.

1995 Rage goes public and is one of the first of the software companies to be traded on the FTSE.

1996 *Darklight Conflict* (PCZ #50, 92%) surprised everyone by looking stunning without any 3D support. 3D cards are just around the corner though.

1998 *Incoming* (PCZ #63, 90%) is released to critical acclaim. 3D cards are never taken for granted again.

1999 Rage are now up to 110 staff members and have additional offices in Newcastle and Birmingham.



Where's the fire exit?



Plenty of weapons are available, all with power-ups.

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER Rage Games (Newcastle)
PUBLISHER Rage Software
WEBSITE www.rage.co.uk
OUT April

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- ★ Fast-moving, arcade classic-style gameplay
- ★ Every 3D card trick in the book
- ★ Single-screen, two-player action
- ★ Trademark: Rage explosions

Rage Software's latest assault on the nation's 3D accelerator cards, *Expendable*, is arguably one of the finest pieces of software ever seen. It might even be the perfect game, as rich in graphical detail as it is in gameplay. Although it's still early days, I might even go as far as saying that it could be the greatest game ever made, although I guess in the interests of objectivity I should try to curb my

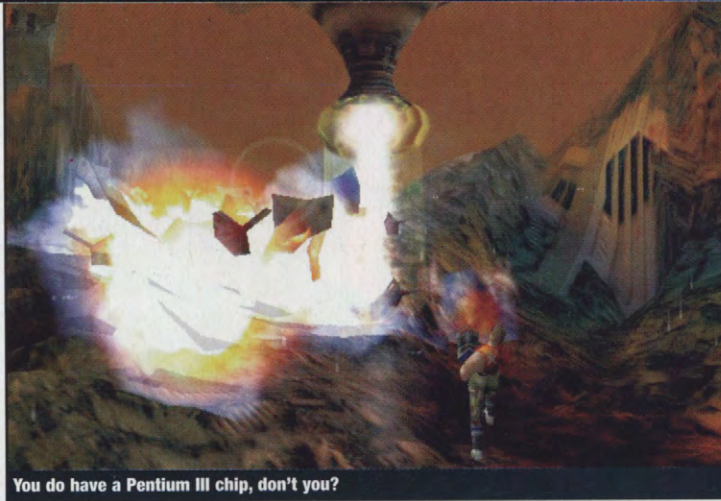
enthusiasm somewhat until I've seen the finished product. *Expendable* is an attempt to combine our love of shiny objects with our hankering after the classic gameplay values of yesteryear. "We were looking for a good 'get-in-and-play' arcade game that used all the new 3D hardware that was coming out," explains Peter Johnson, head of development at Rage's Newcastle branch. "Most of us here have been in the industry for about ten or 15 years

and we get quite nostalgic about all the old arcade games, things like *Commandos* and *Ikari Warriors*. We're very into emulators here."

While the name *Ikari Warriors* probably won't instil many of you with long-forgotten memories of hanging around beachfront arcades, begging others to "giz your last man", gameplaying lifers will no doubt be reaching for the Kleenex (in a good way) even now at the mere mention of the game. We're talking quality top-down, vertically scrolling, blast 'em up action here, the likes of which seem to have got lost somewhere down the years. Today's gamers have their *Quake II*s and *Half-Lives*, we had our *Ikari Warriors* and our *Commandos*.

Naturally, *Expendable* takes the concept and throws a '90s stylee all over it. Here we have rotating cameras, multiple player modes, particles, alpha blends, prismatics, volumetrics, mip-maps, bi-linears, tri-linears, stick-it-in-your-eye-linears and lens flares. Lots and lots of lens flares. "Actually, we don't see the lens flares any more. After a while your brain tends to edit them out. There are plenty in there though," says Johnson, laughing.

Expendable is typical of what we've now come to expect (technically and in terms of playability) from *Rage*, and in a way it's surprising that we don't see this sort of thing more often. D3D and Glide techniques enable everyone access to the same sort of effects, but



You do have a Pentium III chip, don't you?

somehow *Rage* manage to maintain a look and feel that's all their own.

"About a year ago I used to think that 3D cards were making everything look the same," says Johnson, "but I've been pleasantly surprised, as there aren't many games that look much like the stuff we're doing. We really go

been dazzled by *Incoming*. Since then there have been early versions of *Expendable* floating about the industry, but when *PC ZONE* last saw it back in October, all that was on offer was a good-looking rolling demo that showed off the basic concept.

"It's changed an awful lot since

“Expendable is arguably one of the finest pieces of software ever seen. It may even be the perfect game, as rich in graphical detail as it is in gameplay”

extreme on the lighting rather than going for realism. Our explosions are a famous *Rage* trademark." Anyone who's seen *Incoming* (PCZ #63, 90%) knows exactly what he means by that.

GEORDIE COME LATELY

Although *Expendable* was announced last May, work began almost a year and a half ago, before any of us had

then," insists Johnson. "There's been an increase in the versatility of the player's weapons, and we've added plenty of new abilities and special effects. An awful lot has gone into the technical side."

Back then we were concerned that it might turn out to be slightly repetitive. Good-looking, we thought, but likely to outstay its welcome before

long. *Rage* heard similar comments as they showed it around the industry, and Johnson has taken the criticism on board: "We've tried to put in a lot of different 'events' as you go through it. A lot of the game is discovering what's going to happen around the next corner. We're also varying the way things look the further you get. As you get further away from Earth you encounter much stranger areas."

IT'S A BUYER'S MARKET

Expendable is certainly looking stronger than it did last year. The present build shows off a lot of those 'scripted' events to good effect: cars come flying down the roads before tipping over and exploding; alien ships take large chunks out of the nearby scenery; pylons topple over right in front of your feet. When they say 'scripted events', *Rage* obviously aren't talking about lengthy FMV sequences and deep characterisation, but rather just enough little things to break up the simplistic nature of the gameplay and retain your interest.

As to whether gamers will take to *Expendable*, well, *Incoming* was built on a similar structure and seemed to do rather well. Perhaps we really do want more 'pick up and blast' games from time to time, something to compensate for all the complex real-time strategy games and lengthy RPGs out there. Hopefully *Expendable* will live up to expectations. [E]

Q&A

PETER JOHNSON



Head of development on *Expendable*, and an old hand at computer games

PCZ What's the first game you ever played?

PETER Seeing as I've been doing this for 19 years, it's a bit hard to remember, but it would have to be *Galaxians*.

PCZ What's your favourite game of all time?

PETER I find that I like different games in different moods. There isn't one overall favourite.

PCZ What are you playing at the moment?

PETER *Zelda* on the N64, and *1080 Snowboarding*. We don't get much time to actually play games these days, but we do have a couple of consoles in the rest area.

PCZ What's the last game you paid money for?

PETER Er... that would be *Zelda* again.

PCZ Have you ever been in a fight, and if so what happened?

PETER In an arcade once, when I was a kid. A big lad mumbled at me. I said I didn't understand what he was saying. He went off in a huff then came back two minutes later and whacked me one.



Traffic wardens of the future are slightly more aggressive.



The further into the game you go, the less human it all looks.

GOING TO EXTREMES

Phil Scott, one of *Expendable's* lead programmers, had a lot of interesting things to say about 3D card technology – how D3D isn't as bad as everyone first thought; how *Rage* have been

working closely with technology manufacturers to get features they want into the next releases; and so on. But the most interesting thing he said during the interview was the following (and I think it gives a pretty fair insight into what life at *Rage* is like): "When we fill the entire screen with nothing but spectacular explosions, we know we've gone too far. That's when we try to pull back a bit."

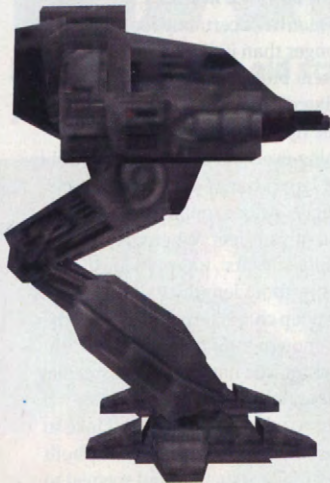
So there you have it. Remember: the next time your jaw drops when looking at a *Rage* Software game, Phil Scott is the man responsible.



Phil 'goes too far'.



Duck down inside a crater, popping up only to target an enemy Mech and give him what for. You can't do that in a tank.



Depending on your weapon capabilities, you can target a specific part of another Mech to render it inoperable.

vulture_04 (195.17m)



Mechs with everything in... MECHWARRIOR 3

Hasbro's official Mech game looks set to stomp all over the opposition. In the cockpit: **Jeremy Wells**

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER Zipper Interactive/FASA Interactive
PUBLISHER MicroProse/Hasbro Interactive
WEBSITE www.microprose.com
OUT May

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- ★ The Mechs are now even more detailed
- ★ The introduction of a new zoom and target device
- ★ Mechs now have the ability to duck for cover
- ★ It's the latest in the *MechWarrior* series



FASA INTERACTIVE

Chicago-based FASA Interactive may be world famous for their Mech-based BattleTech table-top games, but *MechWarrior 3* is only their second interactive release

1998 *MechCommander* (PCZ #66, 85%), the first real-time strategy game to use official Mechs from the BattleTech universe, is released and is generally well-received by Mech heads and RTS fans alike, despite it looking a little dated.

1999 *MechWarrior 3*, developed with Zipper Interactive, is due for release in the spring of this year.

There's little doubt that Mechs are sexier than tanks. Which is presumably just part of the reason why there are now more Mech games on release or planned than ever before. There's only one officially licensed BattleTech game due for release this year and endorsed by creators FASA Interactive, however, and that's Hasbro Interactive's *MechWarrior 3*.

THE STORY SO FAR

Mech heads will know that previous games in the *MechWarrior* series were published by Activision, who, since losing the BattleTech licence, have developed their own spin-off that involves Gears (essentially smaller Mechs). Mech heads will also know that it's just not the same. Additionally, they will be only too familiar with the rich sci-fi universe developed by FASA that has spawned no less than 38 novels over the past 15 years, and no doubt revel in the fact that *MechWarrior 3* represents the next step in the gargantuan story. Set in the year 3058, when the Houses of the Inner Sphere have banded together to take on the Clans with a unified force, the overall

objective in *MechWarrior 3* is to defeat all Clan warriors and totally eradicate one of the most feared of all the Clans – the Smoke Jaguars. If you haven't read any of the novels, played the table-top games or indulged in any aspect of the BattleTech universe, then you probably don't give two figs about

“MechWarrior 3 looks like being more than a match for the competition, whether you're familiar with the BattleTech universe or not”

the Smoke Jaguars and the Inner Sphere, and are just as happy stomping about the countryside firing laser-guided rockets in a state-of-the-art 3D environment. To some people, however, all this scene-setting history shit matters.

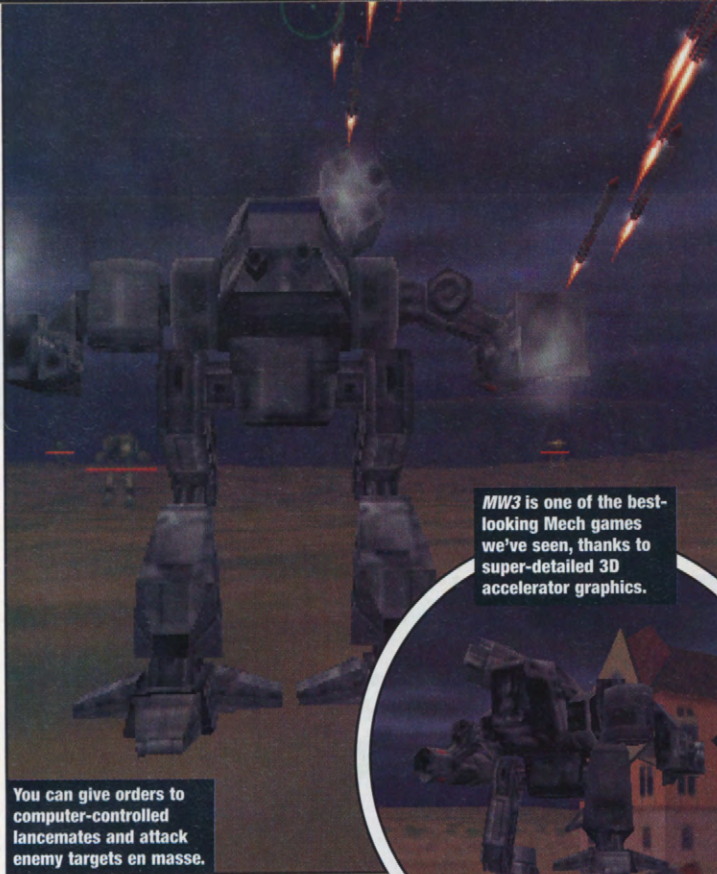
THE STORY NOW

When we last saw *MechWarrior 3* in the autumn at ECTS, it was quite fair to say that it looked surprisingly ropy. The landscapes were relatively flat and uninspired, and the couple of

Mechs on show, although pretty detailed, were lolloping about the screen at about 10fps. What the hell was going on? What a difference a few months' development makes. Having recently seen and played some more up-to-date code, we can report that things are looking rather better. The Mechs are now even more detailed, and jog along at a fair old rate, while the terrain could have been modelled on the Lake District with bits of Milton Keynes added for good measure. The introduction of a nifty new zoom and target device enables you to pick off certain bits of your foe, and the ability to duck down inside craters and behind buildings finally brings some credibility to the Mech's existence as a legitimate weapon of war.

THE STORY SOON

Despite the official licence and FASA's blessing, *MechWarrior 3* obviously faces some stiff competition from the likes of Activision's *Heavy Gear 2*, Sierra's eagerly anticipated *StarSiege*, and *Slave Zero* from Electronic Arts. From what we've seen, however, *MechWarrior 3* looks like being more than a match for the competition, whether you're familiar with the BattleTech universe or not. [PZ]



MW3 is one of the best-looking Mech games we've seen, thanks to super-detailed 3D accelerator graphics.

You can give orders to computer-controlled lancemates and attack enemy targets en masse.



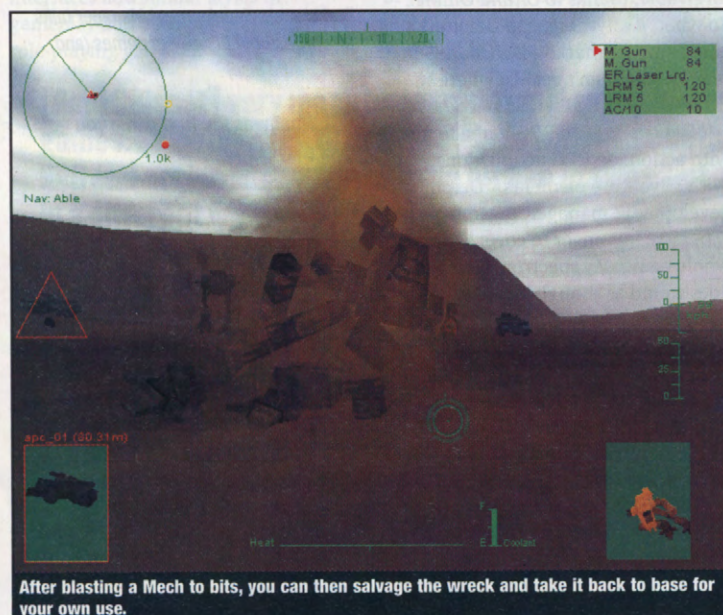
The Mechs can carry as many as ten of 33 different weapons at once, which can be fired individually or in a salvo.



A variety of different skins are available when it comes to multiplayer shenanigans.



When piloting a Mech, you must keep in mind critical factors such as heat and damage, which must be monitored and managed.



After blasting a Mech to bits, you can then salvage the wreck and take it back to base for your own use.

Q&A

MICK MANCUSO

The man at Zipper Interactive steps up to the PC ZONE dictaphone

PCZ What's the first game you completed?

MICK As a player, or as a creator? As a player, the first game that I completed was probably SSI's *Gettysburg* on my old CGA 8088. That led me to wanting to get into the game business. A few years later I completed my first game creatively as a world builder for SSI's *Curse Of The Azure Bonds*.

PCZ What are you playing at the moment?

MICK *RailRoad Tycoon 2*. It's really a great addition to the *RRT* series. I really wish they'd kept tunnels, but overall the game is a lot of fun. I've just reached the (first?) Australia level in the campaign.

PCZ What's the last game you paid money for?

MICK *RailRoad Tycoon 2*.

PCZ Have you ever been in a fight, and if so what happened?

MICK Once, when I was in high school. A buddy of mine was the target of the local bully at an outdoor party. I jumped in to defend him – oh, so noble. A friend of the bully stepped in to stop me, and the two who started the fight ended up sitting back and watching me and the other guy go at it along with the rest of the crowd.

That's my one and only fight. He chipped some of my teeth, and I put him in a neck brace. We became pretty good friends after that.

PCZ Why do you think Mechs are better than Gears?

MICK They're much bigger, more powerful, stronger and awe-inspiring. With tongue firmly in cheek, which would you be more afraid of: a 75-ton Mad Cat striding over the hill, crushing trees and blasting away with a PPC, or some guy on roller skates wearing a tin suit?

THE JOY OF MECHS

Why sit in a comfy tank when you can go stomping around the battlefield in an oversized space suit? Here are ten reasons why two legs are better than tracks

- ★ Mechs undoubtedly look the bollocks; tanks are just plain boring. It would be very hard to pull in a tank.
- ★ Mechs are well-suited to traversing extremely rough terrain. They can step over large obstructions, wade through rivers etc.
- ★ Mechs can fire and duck, and use cover more effectively (like combat helicopters).
- ★ Mechs don't get punctures/their tracks don't fall off.
- ★ Big feet and long legs mean that weight is distributed more effectively, so Mechs are less likely to get bogged down in mud and sand.
- ★ You can bolt shitloads of cool weapons on to a Mech.
- ★ Traffic wardens can't reach up to put a ticket on your windshield.
- ★ Parking is much less of a problem (you can straddle other vehicles).
- ★ You can dress your Mech in pants and vest when it gets cold in winter.
- ★ You can climb out of your bedroom window and get straight into your Mech, thereby saving precious time when in a hurry or late for work.



Some of the characters do indeed look very impressive.



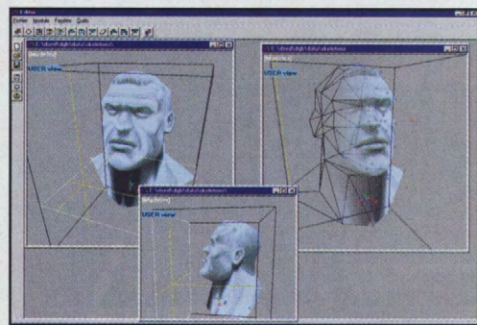
Although the sub-quests are randomised, the main storyline elements remain throughout.



The town provides sanctuary – at first.



I know the walls have ears. But eyes?



There is an astonishing amount of detail in the graphics.

Skills, stats and style – a new role for the French in...

CV Delphine Software

DELPHINE SOFTWARE INTERNATIONAL

Part of the much larger Delphine Group, the successful French development team have been adventuring since the early days of gaming

- 1988 Paul Cuisset convinces Delphine's president that games are a good idea.
- 1989 *Future Wars* is released on the Atari ST, Amiga and PC. Cuisset is proved right.
- 1990 Delphine 'do' Bond in *Operation Stealth*. It's notable for using the Amiga's built-in speech chip, which insists on calling the game "*Operation Steeealth*" throughout.
- 1991 *Cruise For A Corpse* takes players on an Agatha Christie-style whodunnit mystery. A much-overlooked game.
- 1991 *Another World* takes Delphine into the world of platform games.
- 1992 The action trend continues with *Flashback*.
- 1995 A three-year gap results in the excellent *Fade To Black* (PCZ #31, 94%). In the meantime, Delphine have spun off a console arm, Adeline Software.
- 1997 *Moto Racer* (PCZ #51, 77%) proves something of a departure. It's a motorbike game. With no adventure bits. A sequel follows.
- 1999 *Dark Stone* is previewed in *PC ZONE* magazine. (Duh! – Ed.)

DARKSTONE

Now that RPGs are back in vogue, everyone's having a go. Even the French. **Paul Presley** ventures into a hostile world (no, not Paris)

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER Delphine Software
PUBLISHER Electronic Arts
WEBSITE www.ea.com
OUT April

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- ★ Very fluid, attractive graphics
- ★ Detailed character statistics and skills
- ★ Two-character control method
- ★ Riding on an RPG popularity wave

W Now that RPGs have once again swung into the more acceptable parts of this fashion-led world we call gaming, it seems everyone is stepping up to have a go. *Baldur's Gate* (PCZ #73, 85%) entered the charts at number one last month, *Final Fantasy VII* (PCZ #66, 93%) is still hot in everyone's mind (and *Final Fantasy VIII* is eagerly awaited), *Diablo II* and *Ultima IX* are getting ever closer and, over in console land, *Zelda* has become the

fastest selling game of all time (if the pitch-side advertising hordes at football grounds are to be believed). Hell, even multiplayer orc-bashing is forgivable, thanks to *Ultima Online*. So what, if anything, can Delphine's entry into the market, *Darkstone*, offer that we can't get elsewhere? Other than being French, of course.

"*Darkstone* is an RPG game first, with action: an RPG action game. With adventure elements." Delphine's development manager, Bertrand Gibert, seems eager to cover the whole gameplay spectrum, even if he does sound as though he's reciting a *Monty Python* sketch.

Darkstone is the brainchild of gaming veteran Paul Cuisset, who started his career with the groundbreaking adventure *Future Wars* and then continued to amaze us with each new release (see CV, left, for details).

"He likes to tell stories and invent scenarios, things like that," explains Gibert, in town to show off the company's first attempt at a role-playing game to the British press. "He

Q&A

BERTRAND GIBERT

Darkstone's Development Manager talks at length about his love of games (and erm... little else)

PCZ What was the first game you ever played?

BERTRAND That would have to be *Pong*, or *Space Invaders*.

PCZ What's the best game you've ever played?

BERTRAND That's a difficult question! I can't pick just one... *F-18 Interceptor* on the Amiga, *Elite* on the C64, *Dungeon Master* on the ST, or *Civilization*.

PCZ Which was the last game you paid money for?

BERTRAND *Caesar 3*.

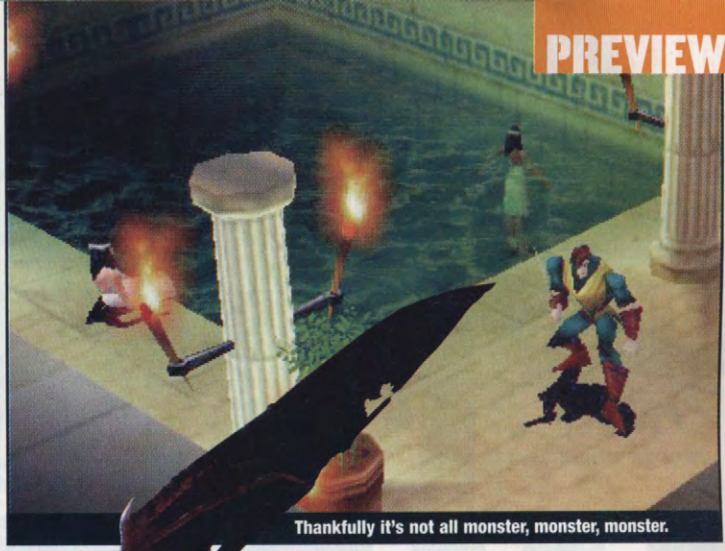
PCZ Which game are you playing right now?

BERTRAND *Caesar 3*.

PCZ Have you ever been in a fight, and if so, why?

BERTRAND ... [declines to answer]

Gladys Knight tries unsuccessfully to reunite the Pips.



Thankfully it's not all monster, monster, monster.

also very much likes traditional role-playing games, as well as games like *Diablo*, of course. So he decided to create a game which has both RPG and action elements – a little bit like *Diablo* – but in a different way, with deeper stories bringing adventure elements like characters, object management, puzzles and stories to the RPG world, but not forgetting the action. He put them into a real-time 3D engine, with the player able to control two characters at once.”

FRANÇAIS DIEU

The almost reverential tones in which Gibert talks about Cuisset give the impression of some sort of god-like figure, pacing the halls of Delphine Software, bringing game-playing ‘magic’ to everything he touches. You feel like shaking him by the lapels and telling him to calm down. It’s only a game, for heaven’s sake.

But within the awe-struck praise are some telling phrases – namely, the overt references to Blizzard’s *Diablo*. At first glance, the two games look very similar – both employ an isometric viewpoint; both contain detailed animation for the characters; both have simplistic one-click interfaces and similar styles of gameplay and both, naturally, are role-playing games in a fantasy world.

“[Paul Cuisset] very much likes traditional role-playing games. So he decided to create a game which has both RPG and action elements – a little bit like *Diablo* – but in a different way, with deeper stories”

BERTRAND GIBERT, DARKSTONE’S DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, EXPLAINS HOW THE GAME WAS BORN

Spending some time with the supplied alpha code proved to be something of a revelation, though. Obviously, there’s still a fair bit to be completed, but it’s only when you sit down with it that you begin to appreciate just how much is on offer and how different to Blizzard’s game it really is. The ability to position the camera anywhere you feel like, for instance, gives a much more three-dimensional feel to the world, and the

➔ No amount of special offers could shift the new range of oven-ready GM chickens.

fact that you can zoom in really close allows you to explore your surroundings in much greater detail.

Then there’s the two-character control system, which gives you a sense of being part of a team, rather than a lonely hero with only his sword and his donkey for company. And then of course, there are the stats.

STATS A-GO GO

The lifeblood of any good RPG is how many pointless numbers it can throw at you. At times, *Darkstone* resembles an *Excel* spreadsheet, with numbers attached to just about everything in

the game. All the fantasy staples are here – strength, dexterity, intelligence, bigotry, etc – and all are subject to the rigorous “Heroic Deeds equals Experience Points equals Better Pecs” formula that RPGs uniformly rely on.

As well as stats, characters are blessed with a progressive skill system that relates to their particular profession. Warriors become adept at such things as hunting, killing,

dodging and yelling manfully; wizards can master reading, writing and mixing potions, for instance, while monks learn about going prematurely bald. You get the idea, at any rate.

FIGHTING THE FIGHT

There’s plenty more, of course. The graphical effects associated with the magic side of the game

look particularly appealing, and some of the screenshots show some very interesting-looking scenarios which you come across later in the game.

Whether Delphine will manage to avoid the trappings of *Darkstone* ending up as just another *Diablo* clone, or whether it can turn its more original elements into something more appealing, is another question altogether. It’ll need to punch home the epic storyline in much greater detail and the characters will need to feel as though they’re more than just a collection of stats.

Role-playing games are all about adopting a character and living out a gripping tale. Will they manage it? That all depends on how much of a god Cuisset really is. [E]

ODD ‘MAN’ OUT

Here’s some of the development artwork for the main characters in *Darkstone*. However, one of these folks is not like the others. Can you tell which one it is? (Hint: Think ‘LadyBoys of Bangkok’)



➔ Could it be the mighty Warrior? Is his sword representative of something altogether Freudian?

➔ Is it the Monk? Could he be hiding something beneath those robes?

➔ Could the Witch be harbouring a hatred of society for more than just evil’s sake?

➔ Or is it perhaps that the Rogue has something entirely dodgy between her legs? (I think we’ve found it – Ed)

The pie's the limit with...



UPDATE

PREMIER MANAGER '99

Sign Shearer, build a new stand, then raise the price of hot dogs to pay for 'em. "Is this really football?" asks Warren Chrismas

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER Dynamic Multimedia
PUBLISHER Gremlin Interactive
WEBSITE www.premier-manager.co.uk
OUT March

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- It's Number One in the all-format chart (as we go to press, anyway)
- It's the big-name competitor to *CM3*
- It's got a loyal following from the Amiga days
- It's endorsed by Kevin Keegan (woo!)



DYNAMIC MULTIMEDIA

Okay, all together now: "Who the bloody hell are you?"

1992 Developed and published first version of *PC Futbol* (originally called *Professional Football Simulator*) in Spain.

1995 Developed and published first version of *PC Calcio* for Italian market.

1996 Developed *Premier Manager 97/98*, published by Gremlin, for English market.

1996 Developed and published first versions of *PC Clausura* and *PC Apertura* for Argentine market.

1994 Developed and published *PC Basket* (the world's first basketball management simulation) in Spain.

1997 Developed *Premier Manager 98/99* update, published by Gremlin.

You can change your name, your nationality, your job, your car, your friends, your religion, your daily newspaper, your partner, even your sex, but unless you're a complete and utter twat (stand up David Mellor) you never, ever change allegiance from one football team to another. It's the law.

There is, however, no law or rule to suggest that this strange, misguided loyalty (and if you've ever heard "We're by far the greatest team the world has ever seen" sung by fans of a Third Division side, you'll know all about misguided loyalty) should extend to football management games.

I mean, just because you started playing, say, *Championship Manager* round a mate's house one evening four years ago (and were still playing three days later), that doesn't mean *CM* is the only football management game you can ever play for the rest of your life.

And yet, right or wrong, something tells us that die-hard fans of the multimillion-selling *Championship Manager* series aren't going to give this, the latest version of *Premier Manager*, a second glance. "Why the hell do Gremlin even bother?" you might ask. If you're incredibly condescending, that is.

Yes, *Championship Manager* does have a huge following, but *Premier Manager* has a sizeable band of devotees itself, thank you very much.

Indeed, for a time in the early '90s *Premier Manager* (originally on the Commodore Amiga) was probably far more famous than *Championship Manager* (we say 'probably' because no one around here can remember past last week). And it's not doing so badly right now. As I write, the PlayStation version of *Premier Manager '99* (which admittedly doesn't share that much in common with the PC version) is sitting pretty at the very top of the chart. So there.

VIVA LE DIFFERENCE?

Whatever, the important thing to note is that *Premier Manager* offers a genuine alternative. You see, where *Championship Manager 3* (PCZ #73, 93%) concerns itself purely with team management (albeit with a high level of realism and complexity), *Premier Manager '99*, like EA's *FA Premier League Manager 99* (PCZ #70, 72%), enables you to effectively run an entire club (or at least any club from the top four English divisions).

Not only are you in charge of everything from team and tactics selection to player training and transfers, but, depending on the settings you choose, you can also take



responsibility for organising ground improvements, negotiating television rights, and even setting the price of tickets, merchandising and refreshments. But

it's just not cricket, you might be thinking. And, of course, you'd be perfectly correct. It's football.

"Depending on the settings you choose, you can take responsibility for ground improvements, negotiating television rights, and even setting the price of tickets, merchandising and refreshments"

With an all-new version just weeks away, PC ZONE popped over to visit developers Dinamic in Madrid to see how it's shaping up. The big question is: In what way is Premier Manager '99 better than CM3?

Somewhat predictably, lead programmer David Galeano wasn't short of answers: "The front end is

"The developers believe the new tactics system - which enables you to allocate defending and attacking positions for individual players - is the best change of all"

much better... it's more user friendly... you can choose to play the game that you want to play, at your level... the highlights mode..."

OOOH, BARRY DAVIES

Ah, yes, the highlights mode. Now there's a rather big difference between the two games. While CM3 has gone back to basics with just text-based commentary, the Premier Manager series is heading further the other way with the option to watch Actua Soccer-style highlights, now with commentary from Barry Davies. And very pretty it is too.

You can't compete in the games (this is no Player Manager clone - thank God), but there's an auto-highlights mode (which goes back to show important incidents after they have happened) or, should you wish, you can watch all the game in real time - if you're very stupid. Or very bored. In reality, we imagine that most of you will stick with the simple, top-down counter display.

Whatever, while the enhanced 3D graphics engine is one improvement over the previous version of the game, the developers believe the new tactics system - which enables you to allocate defending and attacking positions for individual players - is the best change of all.

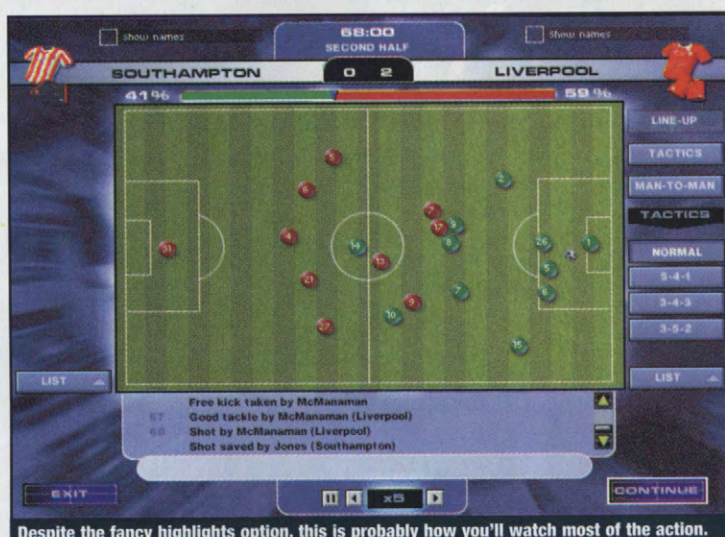
And you know what? They could be right. A smart Tactical Simulation option lets you move the ball around freely to see where players will run to in any given situation. Initially it all seemed a bit confusing to us but, hey, it might just work.

Somewhat disconcertingly, the development team cited enhancements to the catering side of the game as one of the other major improvements - not the kind of feature to convert Championship Manager players, we'd wager.

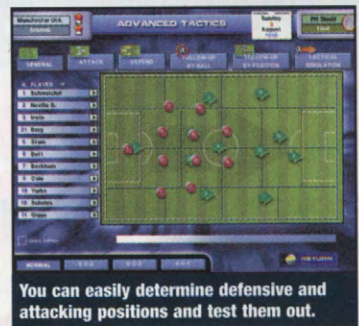
Whether there's enough here to appease Premier Manager devotees remains to be seen. We'll know when we review it next month. [KZ]



Kevin Keegan's radical Euro 2000 strategy - invisible players!



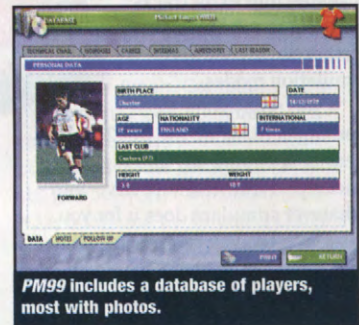
Despite the fancy highlights option, this is probably how you'll watch most of the action.



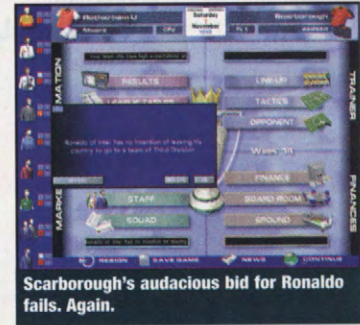
You can easily determine defensive and attacking positions and test them out.



You can set up cafes, bars and restaurants all around your ground.



PM99 includes a database of players, most with photos.



Scarborough's audacious bid for Ronaldo fails. Again.



Michael Owen refuses to budge until he's paid an extra £20,000 a week.

Q&A

DAVID GALEANO



PC ZONE takes the shots, while Premier Manager '99 lead programmer David Galeano stands between the posts

PCZ What was the first game you ever played?

DAVID Jetfighter II - many years ago.

PCZ What's the best game you've ever played?

DAVID Quake II. I like multiplayer games. [Is he any good at it?] "Yes, I think."

PCZ What was the last game you paid money for?

DAVID I don't remember. Maybe SimCity. (Dinamic is a distribution company as well as a developer, so David gets free games.)

PCZ What games are you playing at the moment?

DAVID StarCraft and Quake II.

PCZ Have you ever been in a fight, and if so what happened?

DAVID When I was young... and drunk.

PCZ How much do you know about Wigan Athletic?

DAVID Nothing.

PC FUTBOL ANYONE?

Championship Manager might be the big name in footie sims here in Blighty, but elsewhere it's a different story

A game called PC Futbol rules the roost in Spain. Developed by Madrid-based Dinamic Multimedia - the same people behind Premier Manager '99 - and endorsed by ex-Liverpool and Brighton star Michael Robinson (who is now a major football pundit in Spain), it sold a staggering 400,000 copies last year alone.

Meanwhile, an Italian version, PC Calcio, sold 140,000 copies (making it the second-biggest selling game in Italy last year according to Dinamic), and an Argentine edition, PC Apertura, shifted a further 40,000 copies. Perhaps not surprisingly, Germany and France are the company's next targets.



Christ, you wouldn't want to be sitting behind one of those posts, would you?



Le Mans' biggest fan?



Expect to see full-on collision effects.



Guess where Eutechnyx are based?



Even the trees have to be placed accurately - these Frenchies are quite picky, you know.



The fictional city of Le Garlic has been faithfully reproduced.

FIRST ENCOUNTER

LE MANS 24 HOUR

Bienvenue à la plus grande course automobile d'endurance du monde. Derrier la roue: **Richie Shoemaker**

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER Eutechnyx
PUBLISHER Infogrames
WEBSITE www.infogrames.co.uk
OUT May

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- ★ The official ACO licence
- ★ Accurate teams and cars
- ★ Transitional day and night driving including a full range of weather effects
- ★ Noel Edmonds won't be in it - we hope

There's nothing more entertaining than watching someone fail, more so when that person happens to be the most hated man in England. New Year's Day 1998 was memorable for two reasons: the first was my brain trying to pick-axe its way through my skull thanks to the obligatory drinking session the night before, and the other - during a bit of channel-surfing, you understand - was finding Noel Edmonds trying to emulate Steve McQueen in the Le Mans 24 Hour race. As I watched I fell asleep within five minutes. It was wonderful.

Fortunately, developers Eutechnyx have opted to omit Team Noel from their simulation of the world's most gruelling motor race, and have instead sought out the official licence. On their side are French publishers Infogrames, and come May, when the small town of Le Mans begins its annual population increase, the rest of us will be able to recreate the whole spectacle in the comfort of our own homes. That's how the theory goes, anyway.

However, there are two main problems with simulating such an event on the PC. One is that with only one track, *Le Mans 24 Hour* could

Eutechnyx have gone for the obvious solution: they've invented four extra tracks and split the game into traditional arcade and simulation modes.

If you really want to, you can actually do the full 24 heures, spending day and night encased in leathers, kept alive with whatever stimulant does it for you. Alternatively, you can pull into the pits and save the game, have a kip and then join the race later on. As well as this, you can also take part in a fictitious championship where points mean a lucrative contract from



permanent basis anyway.

Having played an early version of the game as well as *TOCA 2*, I have to confess to preferring *Le Mans*. This could be down to the fact that I'm not a hard-core driving nut, and that *Le Mans* is a far easier game to get into - it was easy to take the chequered flag, although that was more likely due to the AI being incomplete rather than to my flair at the wheel. There are already some impressive details in place: the weather effects are one thing, but watching the sun rise near the end of a time-compressed race, my body clock forgot that it was actually early evening in real life and I found it difficult to stifle a yawn. The developers may have been worried that I found *Le Mans* boring, but from what I've seen so far they've got nothing to worry about. [X]

“You can pull into the pits and save the game, have a kip and then join the race later on”

well turn out to be exceedingly dull. The other is that the challenge of *Le Mans* is to stay awake for a full day while in charge of a speeding car without killing yourself or the spectators who camp by the track. To overcome these problems,

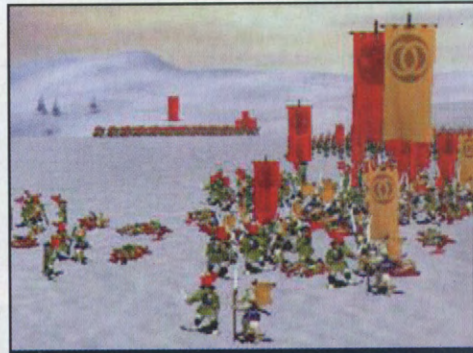
another team the following season. There was talk of including an option whereby, nearing the end of the race, you experienced the simulated effects of sleep deprivation, but it was decided that most gamers are cursed with that particular affliction on a



Various characters, each with their own unique attributes, can be utilised in a number of ways.



As well as battling with rival factions, you have to contend with natural disasters and other major events.



The CPU AI 'genetically' evolves and continues to learn and adapt to the individual player's style of play.



Sixteenth century Japan was one of the most brutal periods in human history, but also one of the most cultured and artistic. *Shogun* aims to retain maximum historical accuracy.



You can opt to either play the whole campaign, focus on the turn-based strategy game, or just concentrate wholly on 3D real-time combat.

SHOGUN: TOTAL WAR

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER Dreamtime Interactive/Creative Assembly
PUBLISHER Electronic Arts
WEBSITE www.TotalWar.com
OUT May

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- ★ It's a blend of turn-based strategic campaigning and real-time combat in 3D
- ★ Control huge 'persistent' armies of up to 5000 units at any one time
- ★ Each unit sports their own 'intelligent' genetic AI
- ★ Completely scaleable 3D technology

Set in sixteenth century Japan, *Shogun: Total War*, from Aussie-based developers Creative Assembly, looks set to bring a new slant to the already overcrowded real-time strategy genre.

In a game that draws on a tumultuous period in Japanese history that is as rich in bloodshed as it is in culture, you assume the role of a Daimyo (feudal lord) who is battling for supremacy with rival factions, with the ultimate aim of becoming Shogun, the military

No sex, no drugs, no wine, no women, no fun, no sin, no you. No wonder it's dark. Jeremy Wells is still looking forward to turning Japanese

dictator of Japan. Combining turn-based strategic campaigning with real-time tactical combat, *Shogun* could well be the game that bridges the gap between *Civilization* (PCZ #32, 80%) and *Command & Conquer* (PCZ #28, 95%), and one fans of both of those two crave to experience – hence the sub-moniker *Total War*.

As every clued-up dictator will testify, resource management is the

“The ‘genetic AI’ looks set to banish such problems as units passively ignoring nearby events, taking unnatural routes and ‘arguing’ with the player”

key to successful expansion, and you must collect taxes from your provinces, research new troop types, organise your armies and defend your territory by building forts and vast stone palaces in order to progress. As well as resource management, politics

also figure highly on the agenda, and you must send out emissaries to negotiate treaties with neighbours, and spies to infiltrate and assassinate rival factions. Once the political manoeuvring and double-dealing has come to a stalemate, however, there's little alternative but to kick some Samurai arse, and this is when the game turns into a *Myth*-style 3D real-time combat-fest. A look at the

screenshots on this page confirms that *Shogun* inevitably scores highly in the visual stakes. But it's what goes on underneath that really sets it apart from other RTS games.

Because the number of units under your control is so vast (armies of up to

FIRST ENCOUNTER

5000 troops are not uncommon), it's vitally important that the AI routines that control each unit's behaviour can be relied upon. As a result, the programmers have developed what they term 'genetic AI', which looks set to banish such problems as units passively ignoring nearby events, taking unnatural routes and 'arguing' with the player. Furthermore, each and every unit has its own 'persistent' attributes, honour and experience.

We've yet to see *Shogun* in action, but from what we've seen so far it's pretty clear that it's shaping up to be very special indeed. If the developers can keep things moving at a decent frame rate and the AI really is as capable as Creative say, we could be in for a treat come the spring. **EW**



Light sourcing gives very realistic-looking plane textures.



Terrain is mapped using satellite elevation data and imagery up to a scale of five metres.



Detailed sectional maps are used to provide an aid to navigation.



Each cockpit is faithful to the original aircraft, and numerous views are on offer.



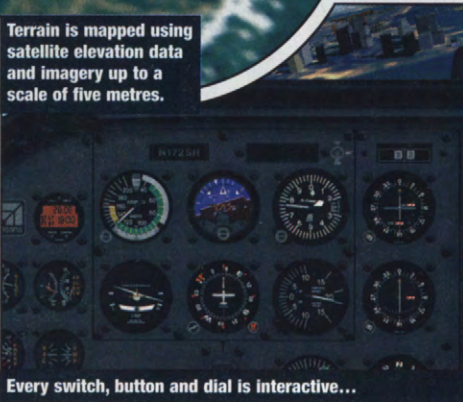
Every light, sign and taxiway is accurate thanks to real-world airport databases.



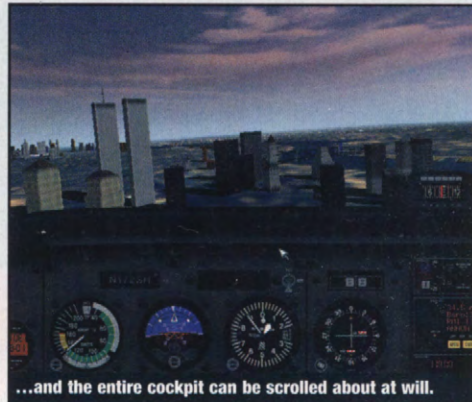
The level of ground detail in *Fly!* promises to be high. Take a look at the twin towers of the Trade Centre in New York.

FLY!

A civil aviation flight sim! That covers the world! In glorious detail!
Paul Presley takes an early look!



Every switch, button and dial is interactive...



...and the entire cockpit can be scrolled about at will.

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER Terminal Reality Inc
PUBLISHER Take 2
WEBSITE www.ifyttri.com
OUT 15 April

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- ★ Global scenery based on highly accurate satellite data
- ★ Authentic GPS navigation and radio systems
- ★ Detailed flight planning
- ★ User-friendly multiplayer options

Sitting in front of a PC, having spent the last few hours experimenting with an early 'build' of the latest assault on the tricky civil flight sim genre, one is suddenly struck by just how much a game can say about its developers.

Fly! screams freshness right from the start. With every screen, you're given the impression that Terminal Reality Inc are serious about this one. You get a mental picture of the staff arriving at work literally jumping with excitement, wide-eyed and grinning from ear to ear. (The truth may well be different; for all I know

FIRST ENCOUNTER

TRI might be the most soul-destroying company in the world. But *Fly!* doesn't give that impression.)

The best way to describe *Fly!* is to say think of the better elements of *Flight Sim 98* (PCZ #55, 94%) combined with the graphical quality of *Flight Unlimited II* (PCZ #60, 84%). *Fly!* gives you the whole world to play with, using terrain elevation data taken from US global satellite models. Different resolutions are used for different areas - 25 square metres being the most common, but increasing up to five square metres for really complex areas. In layman's terms, it looks stunning.

But where *Fly!* promises to shine most is in the attention paid to small details. The present build doesn't feature any weather effects, for instance, but the documentation

provided promises the ability to download real-world METAR weather data and load it straight into your flight. If you're permanently Net-connected, the weather in the game will constantly match that in real life.

With navigation, *Fly!* promises totally authentic GPS functionality, accurately simulating the Bendix/King KLN89 GPS radio (if that means anything to you), as well as providing a host of aeronautical charts to map your progress. There's also a very

“If you're permanently Net-connected, the weather in the game will constantly match that in real life”

smart feature that enables you to use the mouse to highlight any piece of scenery mid-flight, and call up information such as name, height, distance and any radio or navigation frequencies it contains.

There's plenty more. You can adjust aspects such as the weight and

seating position of any passengers on board (it affects the plane's centre of gravity, you see), set up multiplayer flights using TRI's online 'community centre', engage in full ATC with towers and pilots, take advantage of a suite of onboard flight-planning options, and even turn on the no smoking lights in the cabin (no, I honestly am not joking).

For nearly three solid hours I was experimenting with the supplied code, and for nearly three solid hours I found myself saying things like: "Christ! You can do that?!", "My god, they've even modelled that!" and so on. *Fly!* exists in the details, and it's here that it shows just how much thought TRI are putting into it.

Fly! has the potential to be the premier civil flight sim. Whether it can dislodge the sheer immensity that is *Microsoft Flight Sim 98* (PCZ #55, 94%) - mainly because of the wealth of add-ons that are available and the amount of time it's had to build a loyal audience - is another question. There's no doubting the potential quality that's on offer here though. Hopefully Terminal Reality Inc can pull it off. **PCZ**

1941
1942
1943
1944
1945



RED SQUARE
IS MINUS 40°C

KIEV HAS
FALLEN

SUPPLIES AREN'T
GETTING
THROUGH

ALL IS HELL ON THE RUSSIAN FRONT



Four gruelling years of war in terrifying weather conditions. There are no rules, you are the frontline Commander. Take your troops from Moscow's Red Square to the fall of Berlin.

Choose from rocket artillery, off-map artillery, flame-throwers and 780 different vehicles. With over 300 squad types and 60 different kinds of soldier. You have everything you need to succeed - are you up to the challenge?

The battlefields are true but the outcome is unwritten.

Will history repeat itself?



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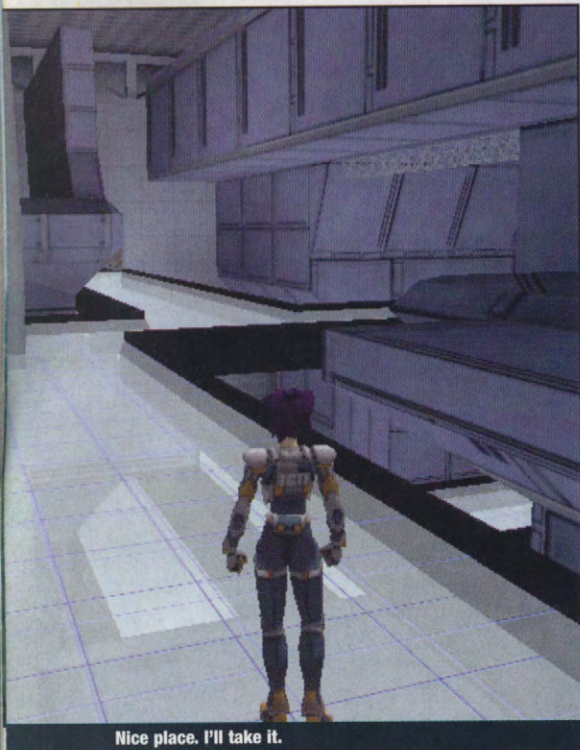
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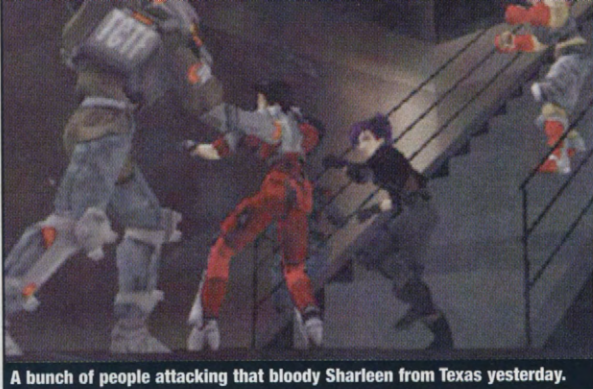
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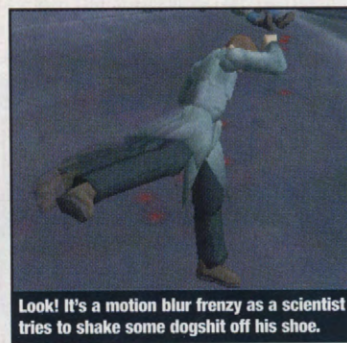
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Nice place. I'll take it.



A bunch of people attacking that bloody Sharleen from Texas yesterday.



Look! It's a motion blur frenzy as a scientist tries to shake some dogshit off his shoe.



Paaaarrrrrp!



Konoko surveys the scene: check out the reflections in that there glass.

ONI

FIRST ENCOUNTER

A third-person/first-person action game with Manga stylings and shades of Tekken? Yes please, says *Charlie Brooker*



Ha. Missed us.

THE DETAILS

DEVELOPER Bungie
PUBLISHER Bungie
WEBSITE www.bungie.com
OUT Late 1999

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

- ★ It's a sort of Manga blend of *Quake* and *Tomb Raider*. And *Tekken*
- ★ The graphics are fantastic, as is the level design
- ★ Violence! Kicks and punches *as well* as guns!
- ★ Very fast, very manoeuvrable... very promising

Let's see... *Tekken*, *Tomb Raider*, Japanese animé flicks... Hey! Those are three of our favourite things. So forgive us for getting a bit nerdy and excited about *Oni*, a game which promises to take the very best elements of all three and mix them together in a big gameplay bowl. If *Oni* lives up to our expectations, we'll want to kiss it all over when it finally arrives in the dying moments of this year. We'll even lick out the inside of the packaging. Right up to the corners. Like perverts.

As with *Tomb Raider*, you get to

play a woman, in this case an athletic slip of a thing named Konoko. She's got purple hair, just like Mrs Slocombe in *Are You Being Served*, but the similarity ends there. Instead of hanging around a dreary department store in the 1970s spouting pornographic innuendo about the state of her pussy, Konoko works for something called the TCTF - full title: the Techno Crimes Task Force. At which point we'll pause to enable you

"If *Oni* lives up to our expectations, we'll want to kiss it all over when it arrives in the dying moments of this year. We'll even lick out the inside of the packaging"

to crack lots of jokes about 2 Unlimited being rounded up and shot. Ho ho ho.

Done? Good. Since the bulk of the gameplay consists of Konoko running around, exploring the architecture and beating the piss out of people, let's examine those three points in turn, starting with the running around bit.

Movement is controlled in much

the same way as first-person shoot 'em ups like *Quake*, meaning that Konoko can strafe from side to side, duck and jump about. She can also slide along the floor, which is a bit of a new one.

Architecture: well, they've done something rather clever here - they actually went out and hired some proper architects to help with the level design. The result is a series of elegantly designed interiors,

imposing buildings and realistic layout. All you need is a Feng Shui consultant to place the furniture and you've got the ideal environment for a combat-trousered Internet consultant from Islington to rent for ten million pounds a week, eating wood-fired poached salmon pizza while homeless children suck streaks of birdshit from the outdoor metal stairwell to survive.

Beating the piss out of people: this is the best bit. In addition to all those fancy moves we mentioned earlier, Konoko has a full complement of *Tekken*-style combat moves: lightning-fast punches and kicks, and of course those 'special moves' - acrobatic displays of ludicrous violence. Not that guns don't get a look in. Machine-guns, rocket launchers, you name it - the gang's all here.

Visually the game is crisp, clear, and confidently designed. And that animé influence doesn't just extend to the look of the characters themselves. As in the movies, bedazzling effects accompany every second of combat - motion blur, slow-motion replays and great big splashes of claret are the order of the day.

And now we've gone and run out of space. Doh! There's a lot to look forward to in *Oni*. A lot. We're keeping a beady one on this. Look for a longer, more ravishing feature when there's more of a game for us to play around with. [E]

UPRISING² LEAD AND DESTROY



• 3000 lbs. payload capacity
 to 75 mi.
 • Engines
 • Radar/Compass
 • Engines
 • Magnet V2 Cold Fusion Generator
 • HUD
 • Vulture Avionics/WHUD XL012
 • T-Brass
 • 1.005 MHz with 0.28 second cycle time
 • Began World Wars, composed entirely
 of Fibron Composite, a plastic compound
 with a tensile strength similar to reinforced steel

BOMBER

Smasher Class Bomber
 • Primary Weapon
 • 2-ton HE Bomb
 • Payload
 • 8 tons
 • Secondary Weapon
 • One Chaff Coaster
 • Xenon
 • 10 mil Ferrolar plate
 • 100 kph
 • Boosted Weapon
 • Bomber Laser System
 Although the Chaff Coaster is a minimalist payload delivery system, it does provide some protection from aerial attacks. Wealth commanders are used to provide AAV and ground support for bomber missions into hostile air.

AAV

Dart Class AAV
 • Primary Weapon
 • Stinger Missile System
 • Armor
 • 10 mil Ferrolar plate
 • 150 kph
 • Boosted Weapon
 • Single Shot Goshawk Torpedo
 Like all Top Level 1 designs, the Dart fills the basic needs of the New Alliance in its class. The AAV is quick, highly maneuverable, and its missiles pack a lethal punch.

INFANTRY

Concepts
 • Primary Weapon
 • KillMaster Laser Rifle, Mk. 1
 • Demolitions
 • NitroGas satchel charge
 • Armor
 • 2 mil Ferrolar plate
 • Boosted Weapon
 • One Shot Tomahawk Missile
 Prior to being assigned to one of the regular infantry divisions, concepts are placed into battalions for training. While they are not supposed to engage the enemy, in times of crisis general has the option of calling them to the front line.

LIGHT TANK

Stinger Class LT
 • Primary Weapon
 • BC KC Laser Cannon
 • Armor
 • 10 mil Ferrolar plate
 • Speed
 • 60 kph
 • Boosted Weapon
 • One Shot Tomahawk Missile
 The Stinger is the basic light tank design with no frills. The BC KC laser cannon is good for taking out infantry, but little else.

WITH ALL THIS AT YOUR COMMAND,
CAN YOU HANDLE IT?



<http://www.ubisoft.co.uk>



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TORNADO UPON THE ENEMY, TO
CAUSE A METEOR SHOWER, EVEN
TO BRING THE DEAD BACK TO LIFE.
USE MAGIC TO COMMAND THE
FORCES OF NATURE. DIPLOMACY TO
LEAD YOUR ARMY OF MYTHOLOGICAL
BEASTS. AND STRATEGIC THINKING
TO DEFEAT YOUR FOES.
COMBINE THESE ELEMENTS AND
YOU WILL TRULY BECOME A
LEGEND IN BATTLE.

**MAGIC &
MAYHEM**

OBSSESSED

WITH

Insert coin(s). Hit 1 or 2 player start. Power up. Game over. Enter your initials. Congratulations. You are *obsessed*

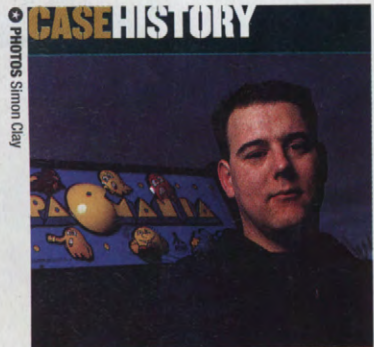
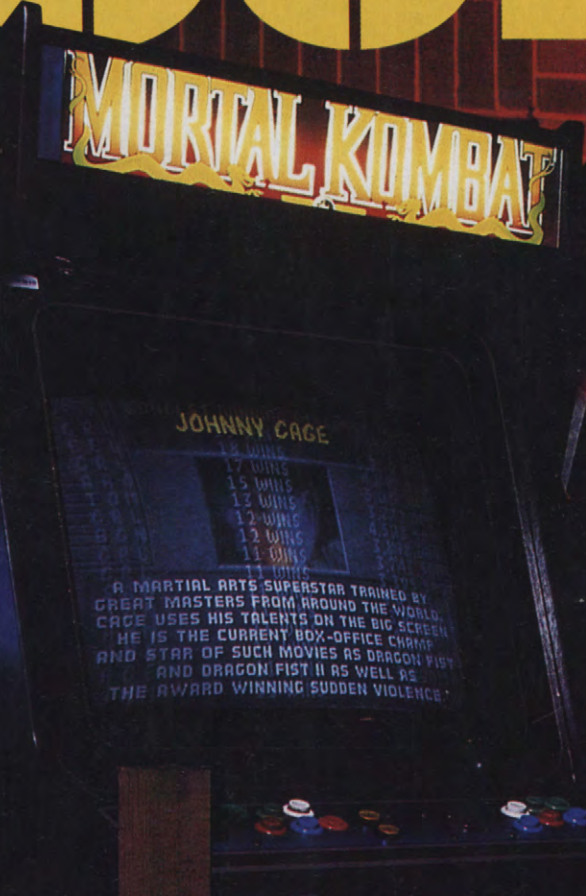
★ WORDS Charlie Brooker

COIN



“I’ve been electrocuted. I had my hair standing on end once from trying to fix an old monitor. They’re dangerous! You can seriously kill yourself if you’re not careful”

CHRIS JACKSON



PHOTOS Simon Clay

CASE HISTORY

#11 ARCADE AFICIONADO

NAME Chris Jackson

AGE 30

LOCATION Eggborough, near Pontefract

OCCUPATION Printer

OBSESSION Repairing and collecting coin-ops... then selling them at obscenely low prices

CONDITION BEGAN Late '70s, the day he saw *Space Invaders*

CONDITION HISTORY His hobby has rapidly swollen out of all proportion. Currently has about 45 machines in his collection

OUTLOOK If Chris isn't doing something related to arcade machines on a full-time basis within the next couple of years, we'll gobble our hats like gigantic felt biscuits

This is a love story. The tale of a passionate affair between man and machine. But don't worry, nobody has sex with a dishwasher or anything. Before we move on to specifics, let's set the scene a little. Let's trickle backward through the velvet orifice of time, sliding straight past the decade just gone, with its Internet and its BSE and its Denise Van Outen and all, and let's land with a *splosh* back in the early '80s, gaming's pioneer years. Here's a phrase which used to crop up all the time in adverts for games at the time: *arcade perfect*. You don't see that around much any more. But in the early '80s, it was everywhere. *Arcade perfect*. It was a lie, of course. Especially when it appeared on

adverts for Spectrum games. Spectrum games looked like animated pages from Ceefax, whereas arcade games were *unbelievably* good! Unlike today, in the '80s *no* home release could match the arcade blockbusters. They had far superior graphics. They had shuddering great speakers pumping out scattergun melodies and loop-da-loop sound effects. They had *proper* joysticks and huge, chunky buttons you could bang with your fist. There were none of the hassles of home play: you didn't have to wait for them to load; you didn't have to switch them off after two hours so your little brother could watch Timothy Claypole flirt outrageously with Harold Meaker in *Rentaghost*. Arcade games were better all round. They had a certain sophistication, an innate supremacy, all of their own.

BUT... The downside was that they guzzled coins like a starving wolf going through a sack of cat limbs. The dream of the teenage gamesplayer, as he (and it was invariably a *he*) hammered at the buttons of *Track And Field* in greasy-faced astonishment, was to have a machine all of his own: the full cabinet, at home, in his bedroom. You could wake up at midnight and play *Super Sprint!* When you ran out of coins you could open it up... and take them all out again! Or if you set the thing to 'free play' mode you – gasp – wouldn't even *need* coins! The decadence! Like most adolescent dreams, it wasn't ever going to happen, of course. Not only did those thrilling, gaudy machines cost an absolute fortune, but there was also no way you could've talked mum and dad into letting you keep one in the house. So no go.

COIN-OPS



Welcome to the machine: Chris Jackson interfaces with some of his objects of desire.

Years passed; gaming fashions came and went. Arcades cleaned out their old line-ups, replacing them with punchier successors. Out went *Defender*. Out went *Scramble*. Even the fabled Atari *Star Wars* cockpits wound up unplugged, unloved. Ageing machines were thrashed, trashed and hurled on the scrap heap. Monitors blown. Speakers mute. Coin slots empty. And there they sat – the forgotten, decaying husks of an excitable age.

The very thought of that kind of negligence makes Chris Jackson wince like a man with a harpoon in his thigh. No kidding.

CABINET MINISTER

Chris Jackson is a 30-year-old father of two with a third child on the way. His first name is actually Michael, but he doesn't use that "for obvious reasons".

He encountered his first arcade machine in the late '70s, when his family visited a pub run by a friend.

There it was, squatting before him. Something unusual, and at the time utterly mind-blowing – the table-top version of Taito's *Space Invaders*.

"And I was like, 'Oh, wow! What's this?!'"

He still gasps today when recalling the moment, as if he never truly recovered from the intoxicating thrill of it all.

"I thought it was great," he says. "From that point on I started following everything that came out."

With no local arcade to slake his thirst, Chris had to rely on infrequent family trips to Blackpool or Leeds to see the latest games. But his parents didn't really enjoy hanging around in arcades. So it wasn't until he was old enough to venture out on his own that he really got obsessed. In the meantime, he had to make do with home computers. As many of them as possible. And he started early.

"God, I had everything. The first

computer I had was a ZX81. I used to sit there for hours programming pages and pages of code in. You'd get one word wrong in about 500 pages of code and the game wouldn't work. Still, it improved my typing no end." (For the benefit of our younger readers, we'd like to point out just how different gaming used to be. In these days of cover discs and Internet demos, it's easy to forget that games magazines used to print entire games in BASIC for readers to type in, line by line, without knowing what the end result would be. Madness!)

Exciting though home games were, they couldn't match the buzz of a full-size arcade cabinet.

"The one that stands out in my mind is *Pole Position*," Chris recalls. "We had a school trip to France and stopped at a service station and they had one there. It had just come out, and at the time it was a real ground-breaking game, with 3D graphics and everything... And

when I first saw *Star Wars*... Oh my God... It was fantastic! The sound, the speech... I couldn't believe it. And I never thought that one day I'd actually own one."

BRINGING IT ALL BACK HOME

It began innocently enough. One day Chris came home with a few broken arcade cabinets – full-size, sit-down 'cocktail' models, as they're known. They were broken and destined for the scrap heap. He put them in the garage and decided to open one up to see if he could get it working again.

It was a lengthy undertaking – guesswork coupled with burning curiosity – but eventually Chris got the systems up and running again. And he learned a lot in the process – he's at pains to point out that attempting to repair a coin-op yourself can be a risky business. "Don't get into it unless you really know what you're doing," he warns. "You get a lot of people



Two feet in the past, one eye on the future.

⬅ blowing themselves up or getting electrocuted trying to fix an old arcade machine. I've been electrocuted. I had my hair standing on end once when I was trying to fix an old monitor. They're dangerous! You can seriously kill yourself if you're not careful."

It's five years since Chris bought his first machine. Now he just can't stop himself from buying defunct systems and doing them up. He's become a self-taught arcade resurrection man, addicted to raising the digital dead.

"Bringing old ones back to life - that's what gives me the biggest buzz," he concurs.

And, of course, the ones that stay dead drive him crazy. Chris can't bear the thought of a dud cabinet. When told of a recent discussion we'd held with a man from a well-known coin-op manufacturer, who, when asked what became of his company's old ➔



"Here's one I repaired earlier."

ZAPPIN' ALL OVER THE WEB

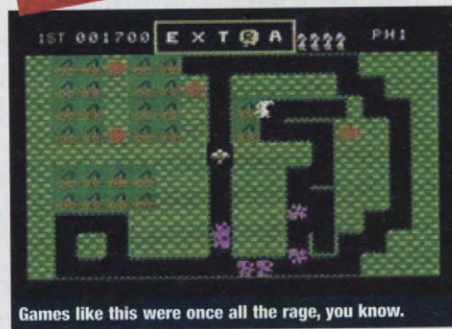
As befits a global network of all things spodderly, the Web is *heaving* with information about old arcade games. Everything from old arcade flyer art, to diagrams of dipswitch settings, to legally dubious emulator ROMs are out there online. Here are some of the finest examples...



Pole Position: one of many fondly remembered games that graced the Atari.



⌚ From the days long before terms like '3D acceleration' and 'hi-res graphics' became part of the gamer's lexicon.



Games like this were once all the rage, you know.

ARCADE WAREHOUSE

<http://homepages.which.net/~chris.jackson2/>
Chris's site. At the time of writing, many bargains lurk within, including the Grand Theft Auto-esque APB (£200), Roadblasters (£130) and Marble Madness (£175).

DCC LTD.

<http://freespace.virgin.net/~andrew.baker3/games.html>
Another UK dealer, this time offering PCB boards (the guts of the game itself) at knock-down prices. You still need a full system to play them on, mind. Current bargains include pugilistic legend Double Dragon at £40.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

www.nanonano.demon.co.uk/arcade/
Useful resource geared towards would-be collectors in the UK.

SWALLOW AMUSEMENT MACHINES

www.coin.demon.co.uk/machines.htm
UK arcade with surplus machines for sale.

DAVE'S CLASSICS

www.davesclassics.com
If you haven't visited Dave's Classics yet, where have you been? It's the finest site for emulator news on the Internet. Until recently it also held a whopping great collection of arcade game ROMs for use with emulators such as MAME. What that means in English is this: you could download old arcade games and play them, in *truly* arcade-perfect fashion, on your PC. Then the Interactive Digital Software Association stepped in to spoil the party, making Dave remove all the game code.



Dave's Classics: arcade heaven.

C.L.E.A.R. - THE CAMPAIGN TO LEAVE EMULATION ALONE

<http://dialspace.dial.pipex.com/town/estate/dh69/clear/>
Does exactly what it says on the tin: Internet arcade fans lobby the ISDA.

COINOPORG

<http://coinop.org/>
Massive database of background information on just about every arcade game you could imagine.

VIDEOTOPIA

www.videotopia.com
Information about a travelling exhibit in the US. Good capsule descriptions of classic games, with pictures.



Dragon's Lair II: taking pride of place in Chris's kitchen.

VIDEO ARCADE PRESERVATION SOCIETY

www.vaps.org/
Another retro arcade site, featuring the self-explanatory Killer List Of Videogames.



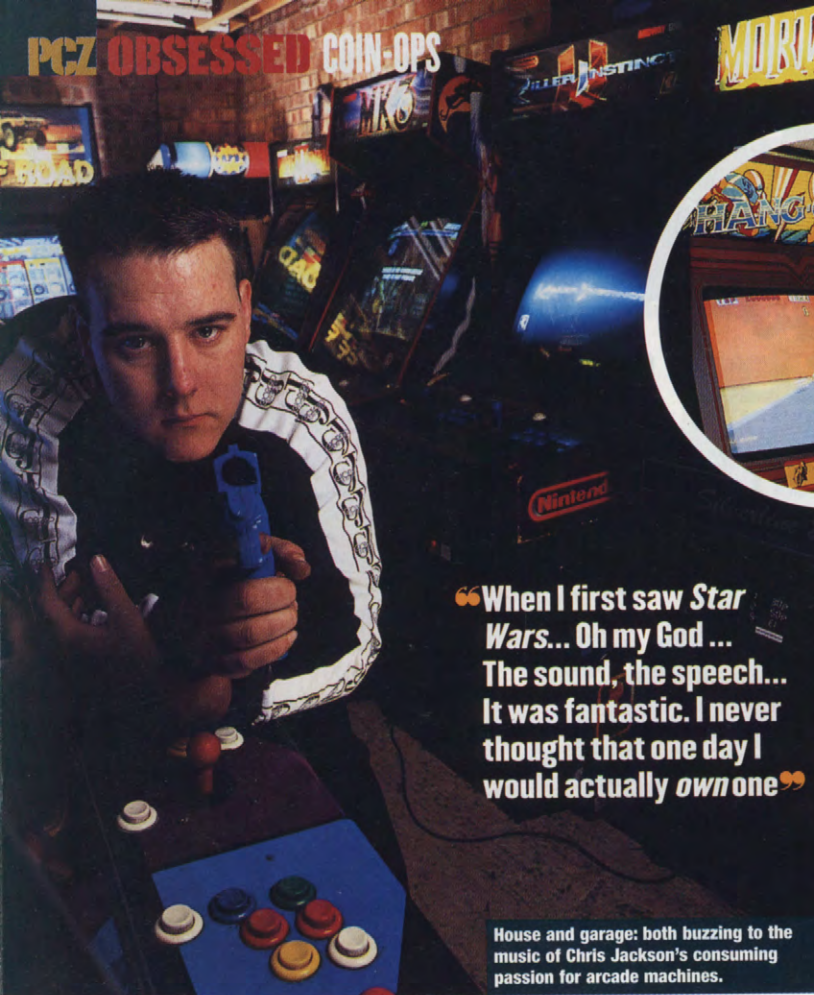
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“When I first saw Star Wars... Oh my God... The sound, the speech... It was fantastic. I never thought that one day I would actually own one”

House and garage: both buzzing to the music of Chris Jackson's consuming passion for arcade machines.

← machines, blithely replied “scrap”, Chris let out an involuntary whimper. You get the feeling that he'd do anything to keep these things alive. As if they were kittens or puppies. And the older the game, the more affectionate he becomes.

“All these *Mortal Kombats* and everything. I've bought the machines, but I don't like them as much as the older games,” he admits. “The newer ones all seem to be either fighting or driving; look at the older games and there's some fantastic ideas there.



Space Invaders: those were the days...

Like *Mr Do!*, for instance. It's so simple, just this little man going round with all these monsters chasing him, but it's a very good, very well-thought out game. These days it seems to be all about ripping people's arms off and battering them over the head with 'em.”

PLAY AWAY

Right now Chris has 15 arcade games in his own garage, and a further 20 occupying his father's. He used to have machines all over the house, but they took up too much room. “Now I've just got a *Dragon's Lair II* in the kitchen. I used to have a *Star Wars* cockpit in the dining room.”

And his machines don't just sit there. Chris advertises them for sale on a website – the response to which took him by surprise.

“I can't believe I set it up just six months ago,” he says. “I mean, I used to do this just for myself, just experimenting in the garage. I used to buy a few broken games and do them up, and now it's escalated completely out of control.”

← Hang On: operational again after receiving the Chris Jackson treatment.



Being included in a feature on coin-op collection in the January '99 issue of *Arcade* magazine didn't hurt either. In fact, he's having difficulty keeping up with some of the demands.

“I've had enquiries from all over the place,” he reveals. “From the States, from New Zealand... The head of imports in *Lithuania* wanted me to send a load of machines over there, and I had to explain to him that I'm not a company or anything.”

Chris is also getting enquiries from the games industry itself: GT Interactive want some machines for their foyer, and a member of the *Colin McRae Rally* team was a customer the day before we spoke. Interest is swelling, yet Chris only deals with coin-ops in his spare time. The rest of the week he works for a printing company, pressing glossy magazines like *Top Gear* and *Vogue*. Has he ever considered jacking that in to work with games full time?

“That would be a dream come true. I've always wanted to work with games. If I was made redundant, with the contacts I've got I could probably make enough to get by for a while.”

“Enough to get by.” Yes. This is the problem – and part of the reason for Chris' success: his prices are incredibly low. As the collector scene grows, specialist traders are beginning to ask serious money for working cabinets, some charging more than double Chris's prices.

“Yeah. I find it hard though. I'm not a very good businessman. I don't like charging people more than I think something's worth. I like to be nice to everybody. If I could give them away, I would. I know it's crazy, but that's how I am. Especially with people who don't have much money, like students. They come to me and say: ‘Oh I'd love one of these machines. Is there any chance I could pay you, like, 20 quid a month? And I think, yeah, why not? If I possibly can, I'll do it for them.’”

Profiteering is out. And something else Chris isn't interested in is

hoarding. He wants the machines out there, being played by attentive owners. He speaks with dismay of dealers who cruise around old seaside arcades buying up old machines, caching them in warehouses for as long as possible. It just bumps the prices up. On the other hand, he can't comprehend why the original manufacturers don't produce replicas of the most popular machines.

“I don't understand it. I mean, if someone went to Williams, bought the rights to *Defender* and made 1000 cabinets, they'd sell them all. *Everyone* wants *Defender*.”

Now there's a potential money-maker if ever there was one. [PZ]



“Don't worry, this won't hurt a bit.”



Chris's site: bargains lurk within.

HEY! YOU! YES, YOU!

Are you sitting on a pile?

Got an old *Star Wars* cabinet? Know someone who has? How about *Pole Position*? Or *Tron*? Or Konami's recent *GTI Club*? These are all machines Chris is crying out for. If you can get your hands on one – or if you're interested in buying a machine from him – give him a bell on 01977 662276, or visit his homepage at <http://homepages.which.net/~chris.jackson2/>.





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You see Pinky, the plan is to develop a secret hypnotic message that will make humans think I am their almighty ruler, and embed it in an action-packed video game. Naturally we will be the stars. People will play the game by themselves and become horribly addicted. Then they will want to play the game with their friends, and their friends will become addicted. Soon, they will play the game over the Internet, a silly little information infrastructure that humans use to "chat" with each other. Anyway, once we control the Internet, every human being will bow down before me, their rightful master. And by the turn of the new millennium, the world will be ours!

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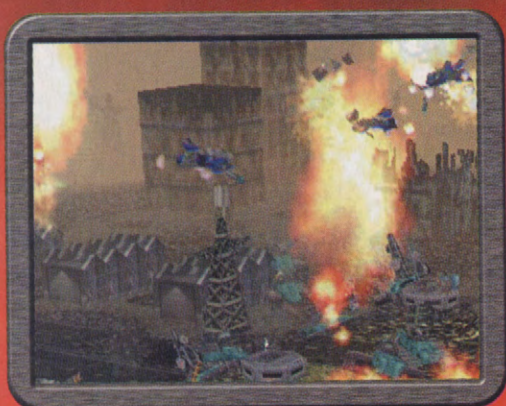


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WHAT'S ON YOUR HARD DRIVE?

In which PC ZONE collars a few gamers to find out which games are eating into their leisure time

★ WORDS/PHOTOS Craig Vaughan LOCATION Wolverhampton



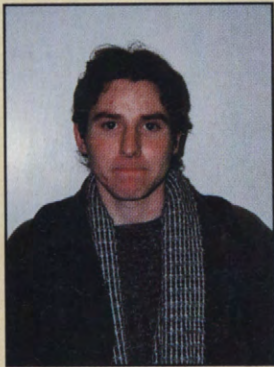
DAVID BATEMAN
28, shop assistant

What's on your hard drive?
"I'm playing *Tomb Raider III* and *Rainbow Six*. I just love creeping around and killing terrorists."
Hmm... you do look a bit sinister.
"Sorry, I can't smile because I've got missing teeth. Anyway, I'm a bit glum because I've just found what looks like a piece of a Barney jigsaw inside my PC and it's knackered my hard drive."



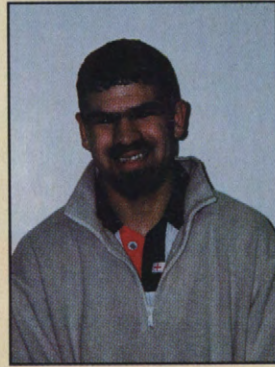
TRACEY SALSURY
29, public relations

What's on your hard drive?
"Adverts for Virgin's stable of latest games: *Viva Football*, *Silver*, *Death Karts* and *Resident Evil 2*."
So why should we buy them?
"*Viva* makes a change from *FIFA*, and *Resident Evil 2* is full of extra gory bits."
Is it true that you PR types will do anything to push a game?
"I wouldn't strip."



DAVID CLARKE
17, student

What's on your hard drive?
"Nothing. I have to use my dad's PC. I prefer my Nintendo – all the fun with none of the set-up and compatibility hassles. I've played *Blade Runner* and thought it was wonderfully engaging, but I'm just returning *Starship Creator* – it's a rancid smelly thing of no merit at all."
Have you ever damaged your dad's computer?
"Yeah, but I always blame my brother."



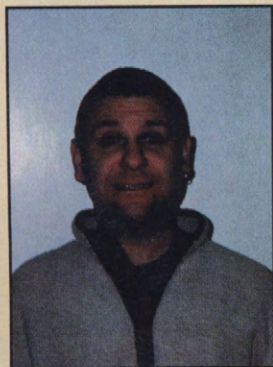
MATTHEW BENNETT
17, fitness instructor

What's on your hard drive?
"*Championship Manager 97/98*, *Command & Conquer* and *Red Alert*."
Loads of strategy. So what's on the menu today?
"I'm looking for *Aftermath*, to update *Command & Conquer*."
It's all brain food, then?
"Yeah, I guess so. They say a healthy body leads to a healthy mind. Talking of which, I couldn't interest you in a free trial at a local gym, could I?"



DANIEL PLANT
15, student

What's on your hard drive?
"*Championship Manager 97/98*, *FIFA 96* and *Grand Theft Auto*."
Blimey, you're a bit behind the times.
"Yeah. I like to be thorough with my games and finish them without cheating, which means I've always got loads of wonderful games to catch up on. It's cheap being behind too, because I get to buy great games when they go on budget."



JOHN BIRCH
44, quality controller

What's on your hard drive?
"Not the driver for this." (Points out a leading joystick he's returning)
Problems?
"Why don't they put the driver in the box? I've bought the joystick, so they might have guessed that I was gonna use it. I rang technical support – it was an answerphone directing me to the Internet, which I don't have access to. There's just no communication. Anyway, I can't stop and talk..."



STEVE PURCELL
44, HGV driver

What's on your hard drive?
"Versions of *Quake* and *Doom*, *Half-Life*, *SIN* and *Unreal*. But don't talk to me about *SIN*. If I could get hold of the idiot who programmed it I'd strangle him."
I suppose it's the speedy loading and faultless gameplay that's upset you?
"Yeah, right. Even with the patch it's still not quite right. Mind you I've got a TV card installed, which is the only excuse Windoze needs to crash."



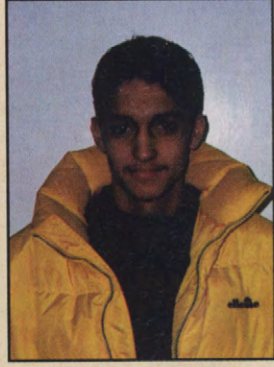
LES WEBSTER
33, driving instructor

What's on your hard drive?
"Sorry, I haven't got a computer, I'm too busy with cars and football."
A boy with different toys?
"Yeah, computers are so old hat. Why would you wanna use a PC to simulate driving a Ferrari Diablo when you can do the real thing?"
But isn't that your Mini outside?
"Nah, it's a mate's."



ANTHEA CRANE
20, student

What's on your hard drive?
"I've no idea. It's a P-something with lots of Gigs and 3D stuff. I'm not really into all the jargon."
If you hadn't mentioned it, we wouldn't have noticed. So what brings you to Wolves?
"I'm a student, from Shrewsbury. Can I recommend some 'happening' places?"
Shoot.
"The Park Lane and Yorkshire House clubs – I'll see you there."



JOHN ASHCROFT
15, student

What's on your hard drive?
"*Blade Runner*, *FIFA 99*, *Carmageddon II* and *Gangsters*."
Isn't Carmageddon II an 18 certificate?
"Oh, best not mention that, then. I think censorship is wrong anyway. It's only a harmless game; it's not as if I'm gonna go out now and run someone over."
You're too young to drive!
"Right. I knew there was a reason."

PCZONE REVIEWS

Don't spend a single penny until you've checked out the **ZONE** reviews first

WHERE TO CALL

Having trouble finding any of the games listed in the reviews section of the magazine? Here are the numbers you need to call

- Activision 01895 456 7000
- Blue Byte 01604 232200
- BMG Interactive 0171 973 0011
- Core Design 01332 297797
- Cryo 01926 315559
- Crystal Dynamics/Ubi Soft 0181 944 9000
- Eidos Interactive 0181 636 3000
- Electronic Arts 01753 549442
- Empire Interactive 0181 343 7337
- Funsoft 01322 292513
- Gremlin Interactive 0114 273 8601
- GT Interactive 0171 258 3791
- Infogrames 0161 827 8000
- Interactive Magic 01344 409399
- LiveMedia 01865 247714
- MicroProse 01454 893893
- Microsoft 0345 002000
- Mindscape 01444 246333
- Novalogic 0171 405 1777
- Ocean 0161 832 6633
- Sierra 0118 920 9100
- Sold Out 0171 721 8767
- Take 2 Interactive 01753 854444
- Telstar 01932 22232
- Virgin 0171 368 2255
- ZABLAC 01626 332233

REVIEWS YOU CAN TRUST

We at **ZONE** pride ourselves on telling you exactly what we think. Our writers are the most experienced and talented reviewers in the business. They're all experts in their chosen genre and they won't pull any punches – if a game's not worth buying, we'll tell you why. But we don't leave it there. We also want to know what you think of the games that come out, which is why we've got our Feedback section on page 100. This is where you get the opportunity to get your point of view into **PC ZONE**. If you've got a comment to make, then we want to hear it.



DON'T BELIEVE THE JARGON

The standard spec machine these days is a P166 with 32Mb of memory – but before buying any game you need to make sure it will work on your system. Because the technical specs on packaging can sometimes be a little optimistic to say the least, make sure you check out the 'We say' bit in our tech specs box at the start of reviews. This is where we report on what we think the minimum tech specs should be. If a game runs like a tortoise on the machine listed by the publishers, then we'll tell you. All the games reviewed are tested on the minimum-spec PC as quoted on the packaging.

WHAT DO OUR SCORES MEAN?

PCZONE CLASSIC 90-100% Here at **ZONE** we score every game out of 100. If a game receives a score of 90 or above, it is awarded the **PC ZONE Classic** award. These games are original, innovative, compelling and are worth buying even if you're not a fan of the genre.

PCZONE RECOMMENDED 80-89% If a game scores 80-89% it's awarded a **PC ZONE Recommended** award. Games that fall into this category are excellent examples of their type, and if you're a fan of the genre they're well worth buying.

70-79% Games that score in this region don't win any awards, but they're above average and well worth a look. If you're not a fan of the genre though, they will probably offer limited long-term appeal.

20-69% These games are below average and you should really only consider parting with your cash if you're a big fan of the series or genre or you see it at a reduced price.

PCZONE PANTS 0-19% Games that score under 20% should be avoided. They offer little in the way of long-term appeal, can be frustrating, and definitely aren't much fun. If a game is seriously bugged then it will also fall into this category. You have been warned.

REVIEWS A-Z

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Dune 2000	100
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Heretic 2	101
SIN	100
Thief: The Dark Project	100
Unreal	101



70 CIVILIZATION: CALL TO POWER



74 REDGUARD



76 SILVER



78 SUPERBIKE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP



82 TUROK 2: SEEDS OF EVIL



86 FIGHTER SQUADRON

THE HALL OF SHAME

★ These are the games that we still haven't been sent for review. This means they're either completely crap and the publishers are scared we'll pan them, or their PR machine isn't quite up to full speed. This month's offenders (some of them have been in our Hall of Shame for some time, eh Maxis?) are...

- LULA VIRTUAL BABE Take 2
- STREETS OF SIMCITY Maxis/EA
- BUST-A-MOVE 2 Acclaim
- UBIK Cryo
- REAH Black Friar

CIVILIZATION: CALL TO POWER

★ £39.99 • Activision • Out March

Turn-based strategy games are the lifeblood of Andrew Wright's existence – which is why he doesn't get out much

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P166 Memory 16Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** Any Windows-compatible sound and graphics cards **WE SAY** P200 with 32Mb RAM for smooth play

ALSO CONSIDER

CIVILIZATION II CLASSIC

(MicroProse, £19.99) The grand old original is still out there in the shops and will always be able to hold its head high. Smooth, quick and easy to use, with plenty of strategic depth.

PCZ #36, 90%

CIVILIZATION II MULTIPLAYER GOLD EDITION

(MicroProse, £29.99) *Civilization II* with some bells and whistles to improve multiplayer support. Not perfect, but the bundled scenarios and add-on packs make it a worthwhile buy. **NOT REVIEWED**

ALPHA CENTAURI

(Electronic Arts, £39.99) A shit-hot attempt at the definitive third-generation *Civ*, this one is much closer to the mark, even if it's in a sci-fi setting. Games develop quickly, building is fast and the units are spot on. **PCZ #74, 92%**



Colonising the sea and exploiting its resources is a new feature.

By mid-'99 we'll have three turn-based strategy games to choose from, each claiming to be the third-generation heir to *Civilization*. MicroProse own the trademark, but their *Civilization: Test Of Time* has yet to be seen.

The original power behind the throne was games maestro Sid Meier and his offering, *Sid Meier's Alpha Centauri*, has just arrived in the shops. Meanwhile, relative outsiders Activision have got in on the act with *Civilization: Call To Power*.

Call To Power shares the isometric viewpoint of *Civ II* (PCZ #36, 90%) and its main rival, *Alpha Centauri* (PCZ #74, 92%) – not that you'd expect any less these days. The terrain is crisp and bright, and the units and buildings are cleanly drawn, with impressive optional animations and an uncluttered screen, even when units are packed together.

Before you begin building your little empire, you have to define how many civilisations you want in the game (from three up to eight) and the map size from small (24x48 tiles) to very large (70x140 tiles). You can also alter each of six variables that determine the shape and feel of a random map, including wetness, temperature, number of extra goods squares, diversity of terrain, amount of land, and the shape of your area, which ranges from islands to large continents. A map editor lets you design your own maps and even scenarios.

FOLLOW MY LEADER

Like the original, *Call To Power* starts with you and your band of settlers on your own in the middle of nowhere. It's 4000BC and the virgin land is sitting there just

waiting to be farmed, mined, fought over, built on and polluted, probably in that order. Of course, it's neatly divided into squares, which makes it a lot easier.

Step one is to find a square – a tile – with lots of nearby resources, and then build a city. Cities take up a single tile on the map but can harvest or exploit up to 20 others around them.

Terrain varies from swamps and plains to mountains and rivers, each one capable of producing different quantities of food, gold and an abstract term called 'production' – which is basically anything that's not food or gold. Find a good spot (right-click to find the value of a particular tile) and your city will grow; place it on tundra or desert and it won't – simple as that.

You can afford to take your time because, after all, *Call To Power* is a turn-based game and you've got about 7000 years to go – unless you happen to get eradicated by another tribe that has been more successful.

In fact, the other tribe might well be controlled by another human player, as the multiplayer element is built in from the start – unlike earlier *Civ* games, where multiplayer was a give-us-more-money and hope-for-the-best extra.

OBJECT LESSON

The object of the game is to steer your civilisation through five eras – ancient, renaissance, modern, genetic and diamond, each with its own style. You can play as one of 41 'tribes', including English, Inca, Egyptian and Ethiopian, but they are all pretty much identical – unlike *Alpha Centauri*, where the seven factions have individual characteristics.

At first, you build city 'improvements', such as granaries to boost food production, city walls, and knights and archers to defend them. After diverting resources to science and research, you can then add cathedrals, libraries and universities, followed by weird and wonderful advances like nanite defusers and ESP centres.

Each tile inside a city's radius can be improved to increase its food, gold or production value. Farms, for example, help you squeeze more food from a tile, while mines give more gold and production. With advanced research, the farms and mines get better at their job and there are special hydroponic farms for your underwater and space cities. Other tile improvements include

Four triremes set off on a long-distance raid. Have them stay near land or they'll sink.



SELECT SERVER

Server	Lat	Ping
us1.alink.activision.com	0	548
us2.alink.activision.com	0	530
australia1.activision.com	0	679
uk1.activision.co.uk	0	327
germany.alink.kdt.de	0	21779
activision.cloudat.com.ar	0	722
sgp.linet.net	0	417
stockholm.alink.hq.rone.se	0	268
us3.alink.activision.com	0	735
california2.activision.com	3	309

Back Next

Built-in support for Internet play – and ping numbers – is a welcome change.

Survive into the 'Diamond' era and you'll get the chance to branch out into space.



“The terrain is crisp and bright, and the units and buildings are cleanly drawn, with impressive optional animations and an uncluttered screen.”



Everybody wants to build their very own Taj Mahal.

roads, railways and tunnels under the sea to speed up movement, and listening posts, sonar buoys and radar stations to help you spot enemy units further away.

In the original *Civ* games, your settler or engineer units built the tile improvements. In *Call To Power*, they are paid for out of a central fund called public works. You decide how many resource points you convert to public works at each turn and use the

fund to place farms, roads, mines and even fortifications.

In fact, *Call To Power* takes the same concept a step further and does the upkeep accounting centrally, too. Most improvements and buildings cost a certain amount of gold each turn, and this is calculated not on a city-by-city basis, but from the whole civilisation's coffers. This makes it possible to fine-tune your production so that some cities

produce gold, some food and others production, although all cities need to have minimum levels of each resource to keep growing and to build units or improvements. That said, it can be handy to build one or two cities in the mountains – production and gold are very high as long as you make sure basic food requirements are taken care of.

It's different to *Civ II* in that you can't send a settler from a big city



Looks like I'm shaping up rather, er, average.



Message in a battle – note the still-open city close-up screen.

THE STORY OF SID AND CIV

Both are household names in the gaming community and, seeing as Sid Meier started the whole *Civilization* ball rolling, you might be confused as to why *Call To Power* doesn't have his name on the box. Well, it's a long story...

Games designer Sid Meier co-founded MicroProse and produced games like *Railroad Tycoon*, *Gunship* and *Silent Service*. He first put his name to a game in 1991, when MicroProse released *Civilization*. Within a year it was a best-seller, with 850,000 copies sold on the PC, the Amiga, the Mac and even the Atari ST. Unfortunately, a games company called Avalon Hill already had a board game on the market with the same title...

Despite this, in 1995 MicroProse released *CivNet* – a bug-ridden stab at making *Civilization* a multiplayer game. The same year, Avalon Hill launched a computer version of their own game, *Advanced Civilization*. Both sank without trace.

The following year saw the arrival of MicroProse's excellent *Sid Meier's Civilization II*, which sold well over a million copies (160,000 in the UK alone) and is still available on budget. Shortly afterwards, our hero Sid left MicroProse to form Firaxis. One of his first projects was *Sid Meier's Alpha Centauri*, which was released last month and reviewed in *PC ZONE* #74.

In 1997, MicroProse announced a *Civ II Multiplayer Gold Edition* expansion pack and the forthcoming *Civilization II: Test Of Time*. Activision announced *Civilization: Call To Power*, and the friction over the name resurfaced. Lawyers rubbed their hands with glee until, in mid-1998, Activision and Avalon Hill settled out of court.

Activision's *Civilization: Call To Power* is published 'under licence' to MicroProse. It makes little difference to you and me but with three games claiming to be the definitive third-generation *Civ*, choosing could be a problem.

No perspective, but fantastic gameplay – the original Sid Meier's Civilization.



and add it to a small one to balance population growth. It's an oversight, but one that long-standing *Civ* enthusiasts might miss. But it does include Wonders of the World – special improvements that only the first civilisation to build it can achieve. In some cases, improvements and wonders can be made obsolete by certain advances and wonders. The nanite defuser, for instance, eliminates everybody's ability to make nukes.

Another novel idea that *Call To Power* introduces is three levels of military readiness. At peace, units cost very little to maintain but there's a price to pay in the event of sudden war in that units take five turns to change from zero readiness to the more resource-costly full combat status. If they start fighting before that, they don't fight at full effectiveness.

RESEARCH ME

To move into later eras and get all the juicy units, like aircraft carriers, bombers and submarines, you have to invest a lot of time and resources on research, but it's important to think about the direction you're heading in. Going for tool-making and then ship-building, for example, gives you tirmes to transport your settlers and invading armies across narrow stretches of water; research hull-making and you'll get Viking-style longships... and on and on, all the way to the four-legged undersea crawlers of the future.

Many of the research paths cross each other, so that to get a ship of the line – a decked sailing ship – you'll need to research not only ocean-faring from the sea research tree, but the first three mechanical discoveries: agricultural revolution, mechanical clock and machine tools. If your tribe is land-locked and needs to expand, you'll have

“The six different types of city inhabitants have to be well fed and watered to prevent them from turning on you”

to guide your research along these two distinct paths. Of course, while you're researching these, you'll have to wait until you've finished before you can research other areas, such as medicine, electricity, flight or construction or any of the other 72 improvements and 112 different discoveries.

If this was all there was to it, *Call To Power* would be easy. But there's more. The six different types of city inhabitants are another complication, and all have to be well fed and watered to prevent them from turning on you. They can be workers, scientists, entertainers, merchants, labourers or slaves, and each one contributes to the economy in a different way.



Advanced Civilization from Avalon Hill is nothing like Sid's original game.



A Windows front-end and an isometric viewpoint made Civilization II a classic in its own right.



The colourful advance screen shows what you've researched.



"Yes, of course you get to play in space, Malcolm..."

Slaves, for example, work for a lot less food and wages which, morality aside, makes them quite handy. Until an opposing tribe comes up with an abolitionist unit and incites them to riot...

NET PLAY

Call To Power supports Internet, network and play by email. You can alter most of the features, including the amount of starting gold, in addition to the same custom rules as you can select in single-player mode, such as the behaviour of barbarians, the size of the map, world climate and topography.

To connect over the Internet you need to have a dial-up or other connection already up and running. You get a list of available servers, together with their ping numbers, and are invited to create a player profile for yourself. You can also award yourself one of six experience levels, which equate to the single-player difficulty levels, but don't expect hardened Net-heads to take any notice. Purists would maintain that turn-based strategy games weren't meant to be played in multiplayer mode, but you either subscribe to that point of view or you don't.

ADDICTIVE ADDITION

Civilization: Call To Power will please a lot of Civ fans yelling for more, but it still has the mass appeal to attract a whole new generation of would-be strategy gamers. Despite the apparent complexity, it's not too daunting – the help system or library is

simple and well thought-out, and the tabbed interface works well, particularly the 'max' tab, with which cities can be set to maximise either food, production, gold, happiness or science.

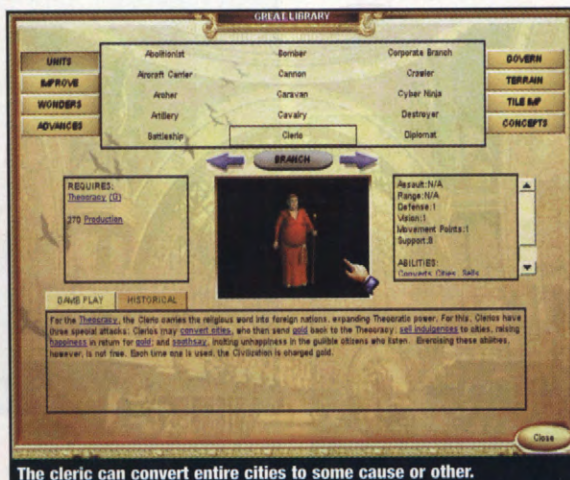
There are a few niggles, unfortunately. There's no way to insert things into the build queue, for example, and you can't save your preferred game settings. Some of the units seem rather inappropriate, too, such as the animated native American Indian warrior, which looks silly if you're playing as a Welsh tribe.

It takes a while before Call To Power gets the adrenalin pumping, but as long as you're prepared to spend the first thousand years doing very little, except clicking the end-of-turn button, there is endless variety and lots of replay value. With the possibilities opened up by its space and undersea exploitation, coupled with the fascinating creative units, Call To Power is an addictive addition to the rehabilitated turn-based genre. Perhaps not quite a bullseye, but not far off. [A-]

PCZVERDICT

- UPPERS Bucketloads of strategies
 - Unique units • Neat 16-bit graphics
- DOWNERS Slow to build up
 - Niggling interface

89 Terrific tune-up of an all-time classic



The cleric can convert entire cities to some cause or other.

WARFARE ART THOU?

Do your homework to boost your killing power

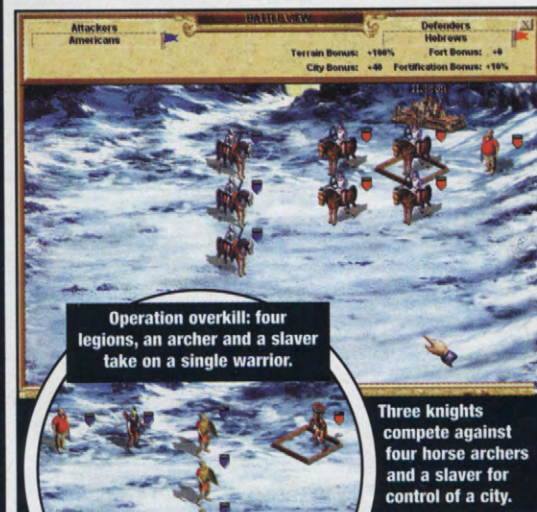
To move around, explore the map and, naturally, attack other civilisations, you need units – either military ones or specials. All you have to work with at first are horse archers and warriors, but research will reward you with far more powerful troops, such as musketeers, pikemen and cavalry. In the modern era they become tanks, marines, battleships, aircraft carriers and planes, while in the futuristic stages, genetic and diamond, you have storm marines, stealth submarines and star cruisers – just a handful of the 67 unit types available.

In the original Civ, unit combat was simply a measure of attack versus defence with a few modifiers for terrain and unit status thrown in. The basics are the same in Call To Power, but where multiple units are involved, there's a battle screen, which gives it an almost wargame-style feel.

The computer arranges the close combat units in the front rank up to a maximum of five. Up to five ranged fire units (such as archers or cannons), or those that didn't fit in the front rank, are placed in the second, and non-combatants, such as slavers and diplomats, appear in the third. This works out fairly well because the stacking limit is nine combat units.

Battles begin with a ranged phase, where the second rank fires at the enemy front rank, and follows on with a close quarters fight where the two front ranks meet. If you win and happen to have a slaver in the third rank, you can take a random number of defeated enemy units as slaves.

The combat system is reasonably effective and there's a good argument for using balanced forces in battle with, say, five archers and five infantry types, such as legions or musketeers. If you get bored with the battle screen, you can quickly dismiss it and just watch the result.



Operation overkill: four legions, an archer and a slaver take on a single warrior.

Three knights compete against four horse archers and a slaver for control of a city.

WALKTHROUGH

BUILD-UP MERCHANT

Where to begin? Round about here...



1 The first thing to do when you see your settler looking lost is to investigate surrounding tiles. Ideally, you need grassland, river, mountain and goods in the city's radius to get maximum food, gold and production resources. The elephant and jade statue here represent goods that you can turn into cash when you develop trade.



2 At the easiest level, you start with two settlers. One builds a city and the other looks around. As soon as you build your city, turn science production down to 10 or 20 per cent to boost production. Build a granary and add defensive units. Here, one settler is checking out a monolith which may hold gold, a new advance or a new unit.



3 Once you've built the essentials, it's time to think about turning your science production back to the maximum and conducting some research. There's no real need for shipbuilding on this map, so opt for iron-working so you can build a better attack unit, the legion.



4 Soon it'll be time to switch to the Civ screen and think about long-term strategy. Do you need to work on the surrounding land to improve food or production? If so, you'll need to funnel some money into the public works fund. Decisions, decisions.

REDGUARD

★ £39.99 • Virgin Interactive • Out now

Continuing his *Elder Scrolls* adventures 'down the docks' is **Paul Mallinson**

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P166 Memory 32Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** All major sound cards and 3D accelerator cards **WE SAY** You'd be better off with a 3D card, although in software playing on a minimum spec PC is bearable

ALSO CONSIDER

LANDS OF LORE III (Westwood Studios, £34.99) More of a traditional role-playing game than *Redguard*, so it should be considered the best alternative if you want something more open-ended. **PCZ #74, 90%**

KING'S QUEST VIII: MASK OF ETERNITY (Cendant, £34.99) An excellent full-3D adventure game with good puzzles and decent control. On a par with *Redguard* in certain respects, but certainly not in the visuals department. **PCZ #71, 89%**

THIEF: THE DARK PROJECT (Eidos, £39.99) A 'darker' option in the adventure/action genre. More gritty and realistic than *Redguard*, and therefore better in our opinion. **PCZ #72, 90%**



It's action adventure time again, folks, and by golly these developer-type chaps are getting the hang of it. *Redguard*, created by US-based RPG stalwarts Bethesda Softworks – the people behind the gigantic but flawed *The Elder Scrolls: Daggerfall* (PCZ #43, 65%) – is such a game, and if truth be told it's actually bloody good.

The angle in this instance is of a 'pirate' persuasion: Jolly Rogers; bandanas; swashbuckling; and copious amounts of rum spilt on bare torsos down at the docks. Those familiar with the world of Tamriel, the location of Bethesda's exclusive campaign setting, will not be au fait with this kind of thing, but you can rest assured

that it works very well and fits neatly into the *Elder Scrolls* series of games.

SEARCH FOR SISTER Cyrus, the lead character of *Redguard* and your vessel for the duration of the game, is a surly, mercenary bloke living out a self-imposed exile on the high seas. Having left the continent of Hammerfell after an unfortunate incident in which he accidentally killed his brother-in-law (oops!), hearing news of the disappearance of his sister Cyrus now sets out to return. Whatever, it sets up the story and the main quest in the game (to find your

“Redguard is worth recommending because it's an engaging and engrossing adventure game that should appeal to pretty much every kind of gamer out there”

sister, dummy), and Cyrus sets sail for the island of Stros M'Kai, which is where his sister Iszara was last seen.

In something of a departure from previous *Elder Scrolls* adventures, *Redguard's* graphics are this time generated in complete 3D. Gone are the dodgy bitmap sprites – the ones that

always faced you, regardless of where you were in the room – and in come the polygons. Characters, objects, buildings and cut-sequences are now all modelled in three dimensions. This becomes apparent from the outset (or at least after the cruddy pre-rendered intro subsides) as Cyrus's ship slips over the particularly effective texture-mapped seas in the first of countless movie-like scene-setters. It works okay – characters nodding their heads as they converse (but not moving their lips, as seen in *Half-Life*), and gesticulating in a fairly human manner – and is a far

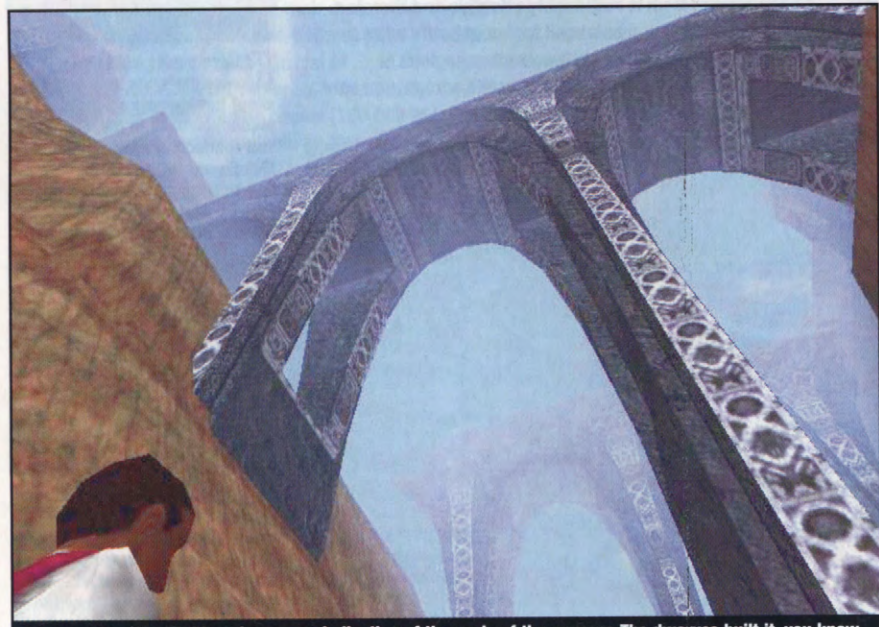
better way of telling the story than with pre-rendered alternatives, because the impact of losing control of your character is dampened.

A LOT OF CHAT The island of Stros M'Kai – or, more specifically, the docks of Hunding Bay – are Cyrus's

starting point in the adventure. Walking around, exploring and talking to people is very much in the vein of *Tomb Raider* and *Mask Of Eternity*, and is achieved using a simple combination of cursors and 'action' keys. The view is third-person. You can run, jump, walk, climb and fight, and in no time at all you're leaping from roof to roof and plundering goodies from houses you're not supposed to be in.

As you soon discover, the island of Stros M'Kai is well-populated, and there are plenty of people to talk to at the outset. Of course, approaching them with a view to gaining new information is your first priority.

Although there is a heck of a lot of chat to get through, talking to these people is fun, and the way the story unfolds as a result is commendable. The plot itself is quite linear, but the fact that you're completely free to explore the island and question its inhabitants at your leisure goes some way to mask that. At first there seems so much to talk



This towering stone bridge gives some indication of the scale of the scenery. The dwarves built it, you know.



Some of the voice characterisations are surprisingly good – like this laconic Elf salesgirl who chatters very dryly in a taut New York accent.



The town snake charmer doesn't say much of interest.



Ooh, look – it even goes dark at night.

This monk slides his hood off before talking to you. An excellent touch.

Down at the harbour: seagulls screech and swoop by, but they don't shit on your head.

around that you do feel a bit overwhelmed, but this calms down a little once you've met everyone.

EXCEPTIONAL GRAPHICS

The action elements of *Redguard* are secondary to the adventure elements, although you're unable to progress unless you master them. Combat takes the form of a simplified sword fighting system which at first seems to require more luck than judgement. Persevere, though, and you do get the results you need. Jumping, too, initially seems a bit hit and miss, but again practice makes (sort of) perfect. For the purposes of this particular adventure game, it all works well enough.

In fact the game as a whole works extremely well. The most striking feature is arguably the exceptional graphics. All the buildings are superbly modelled (inside and outside), and give a real feeling of scale when you're walking around the place. Nice little touches, such as screeching seagulls swooping past and day/night lighting effects, really add to the atmosphere, and at

times you really feel like you're down at the docks mixing with burly sailors (cough). The free-roaming camera also helps you to get the best view of the action, and on a high-end PC with a good 3D card the whole thing looks exceptional.

A FEW GLITCHES

But it doesn't end with the graphics. The fact that saving and loading is fast and problem-free helps enormously, especially before getting to grips with the combat system. The voice acting is very good, and the dialogue is witty and well-written (for example: asking an in-game prostitute about a man called Tobias garners the response, "Tobias? Yes, one of my best customers...").

Redguard is not perfect, however, and there are a couple of criticisms that prevent it from rising to Classic status: such as the graphical/AI glitches (zombies walking on top of grave headstones, for example); the crashes that occur from time to time (we were playing version 1.0, by the way); the

incompatibility of software/hardware savgames (like, duh?); and the fact that some people may find the gameplay a touch too 'light' for their liking.

At the end of the day, though, *Redguard* is worth recommending because it's an engaging and engrossing adventure game that should appeal to pretty much every kind of gamer out there. It might even be the sort of game that could interest those for whom gaming is "not really my sort of thing". Which has got to be worth something in this daft old world of ours. **PCZ**

PCZVERDICT

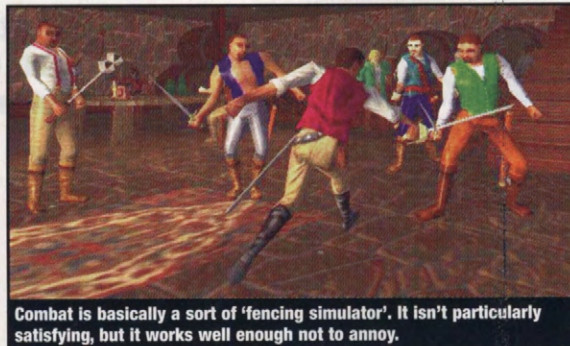
UPPERS Superb atmosphere • Great 3D environment • Very easy to play • A good game for girls

DOWNERS Combat a little bit on the wobbly side • Gameplay a touch wimpy • A bit too much RPG 'mumbo jumbo'

89 Not a classic, but well worth playing



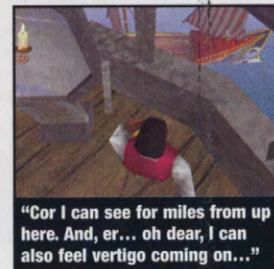
Cyrus can leap from rope to rope in a rather athletic manner. If you get the hang of it, that is.



Combat is basically a sort of 'fencing simulator'. It isn't particularly satisfying, but it works well enough not to annoy.



"Now where the hell did I bury that gold? I thought it was somewhere around here..."



"Cor I can see for miles from up here. And, er... oh dear, I can also feel vertigo coming on..."

GOING PLACES



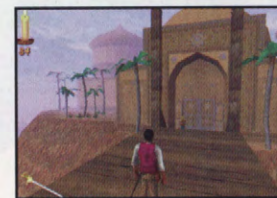
The island of Stros M'Kai is a marvellous place to spend some time on the beach catching some rays. Or at least parts of it are. Here's a look at the obvious stuff – step into uncharted territory and you may be in for a bit of a surprise...



1 N'Gasta
A horrible, nasty place full of cackling skeletons and shambling zombies. Only recommended visiting on Thursdays when the circus is in town.



2 Town square
The ideal place to shop on Stros M'Kai, and a centre for those in need of healing. Stress out the Imperial guards, though, and you're in for a beating.



3 The Palace
A grand and noble place of mystery and magic. Whoever lives in this building must surely know how the story ends.



4 Devil's Den
Just west of this place lies the way to the hideous isle of N'Gasta. Why you'd want to venture over there is anyone's guess.



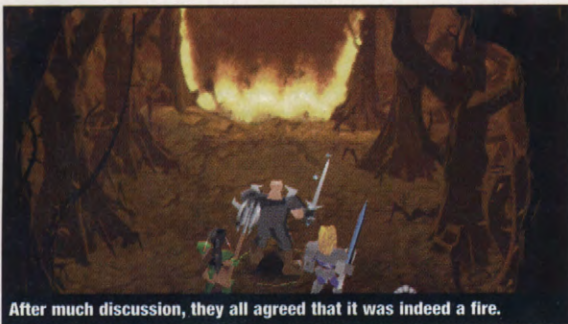
5 The docks
Gnff! Gloik! Fnarr! This quaint seaside town is home to a ragbag selection of scurvy-ridden sailors, prozzies, and seafaring creatures. It's also where you begin the game.



6 Observatory
The Stros M'Kai Observatory is open Monday to Friday from 9pm to 5pm, and from 10pm to 4pm on Sundays. Entry is £6 for adults and £2 for children and concessions.

ROLE-PLAYING ELEMENTS

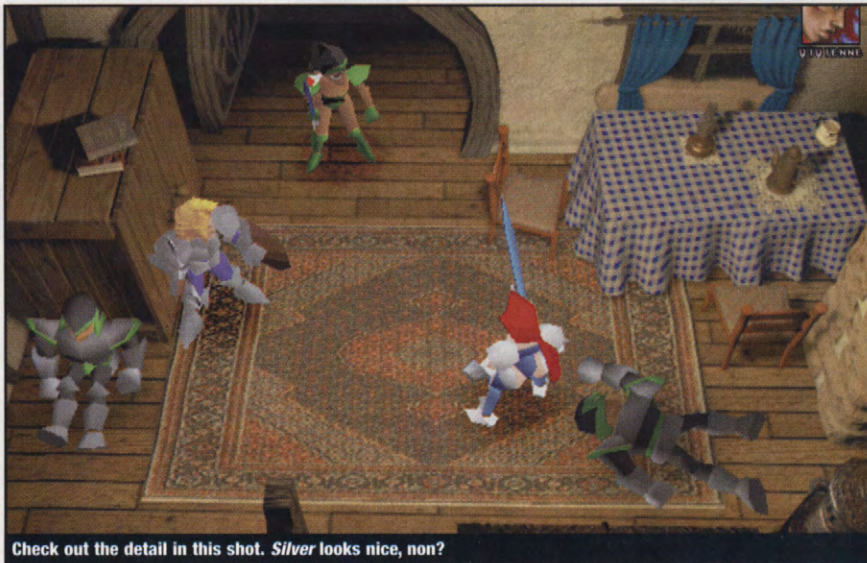
Redguard does contain a few hallmarks of the role-playing game, such as shops to buy stuff from in return for cold, hard cash, and a pirate guild which you can join later in the game. That said, the shops sell only basic stuff such as health and defence potions, and you *have* to join the guild at some point to progress. Still, it does add those extra-special elements that you need in order to improve your chances in battle, such as killing people to get gold to buy lots of health and armour. Which is nice.



After much discussion, they all agreed that it was indeed a fire.



Chests like the one in the top left corner contain valuable items.



Check out the detail in this shot. Silver looks nice, non?

SILVER

★ £34.99 • Infogrames • Out now

A newcomer to the RPG genre dares to take on the mighty *Final Fantasy VII*. Chris Anderson dives into the thick of the action

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133 Memory 32Mb RAM **ALSO REQUIRES** 8-speed CD-ROM drive **WE SAY** You're safer with a P166



ALSO CONSIDER

FINAL FANTASY VII (Eidos, £49.99) Deeply satisfying gameplay and incredible depth make this game an almost-perfect all-round gaming experience. **PCZ #66, 93%**

DIABLO (Zabloc/Blizzard, £44.99) Similar to *Silver* inasmuch as the emphasis is on action. If all you want to do in a game is hack your way through tons of stuff, then this is the one for you. **PCZ #48, 88%**

BALDUR'S GATE (Interplay, £39.99) Traditional role-playing action executed with style, and the engine underneath the gloss is pretty sound too. Makes *Silver* look almost half-hearted in comparison. **PCZ #73, 85%**

On paper at least, *Silver* seems an intriguing prospect. Three years in development, the game is a highly ambitious mix of straightforward real-time combat and traditional role-playing. Also thrown into the gameplay melting pot are story-developing cut-scenes, token puzzles which pay homage to modern adventure games which, with few exceptions, are unlikely to tax all but the most feeble of minds, and 'speaking' characters who happily waffle on for the entirety of the game, complete with real voice-overs from their human counterparts. So there is indeed a lot to take into consideration here.

Silver cannot safely be described as an RPG, and indeed the developers concede this point by dubbing it, somewhat reservedly, an 'action-adventure'. Which, let's face it, could mean

anything. There are certainly obvious comparisons to be drawn between *Silver* and 'noted' titles in the RPG genre - curiously, not PC titles in particular, but games which have made their names on consoles such as the SNES and Sony's PlayStation. Let us take you through the first 30 minutes of *Silver* and all will become clear.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Load up the game and you're greeted by a long FMV intro which explains the story of the eponymous Silver: how he rules the land of Jarrah with an iron fist, and outlines his plans to ensure that this most unsavoury state of affairs continues as long as he's got anything to do with it. During a particularly productive

brainstorming session, Silver comes up with a cunning plan (very convoluted, and explained in detail in the opening movie) which basically involves the needless extermination of 100 young virgins. To this end he sends out his son Fuge to find the maidens and bring them back to Silver's castle under the pretence

in countless Japanese RPGs on the Megadrive, the SNES and the PlayStation, and most recently on the PC in the form of *Final Fantasy VII* (PCZ #66, 93%).

And indeed elements of *FFVII* kick in as soon as *Silver's* lengthy intro ends. The opening scene in the game 'proper' takes you through the abduction of David's

“As a combat/adventure, it's an enjoyable game, with much to offer those with a casual interest in the lighter side of RPGs”

that he is looking for a bride.

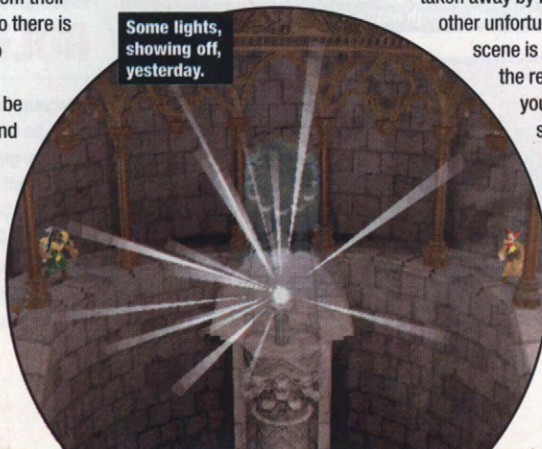
One of the maidens in question, a young lady called Jennifer, is married to David, the hero of our tale. David is of course less than pleased when his wife is taken away by Fuge to join the other unfortunates, and so the scene is set for you to take the reigns and make your way to Jarrah in search of David's recently snatched loved one.

This is the kind of scene that has been enacted many times before

wife, and then treats you to various cut-scenes which are presumably meant to set the scene for what is to follow. In between the cut-scenes, you are invited to take part in a few token battles, and are also given a brief but handy on-screen tutorial which helps you get familiarised with the combat system.

This is the first problem that you may have with this game. As is the case with *FFVII*, much of your first hour with *Silver* is spent watching cut-scenes and clicking the mouse impatiently in an attempt to get back to some real action. The in-game dialogue is passable enough, but how much

Some lights, showing off, yesterday.





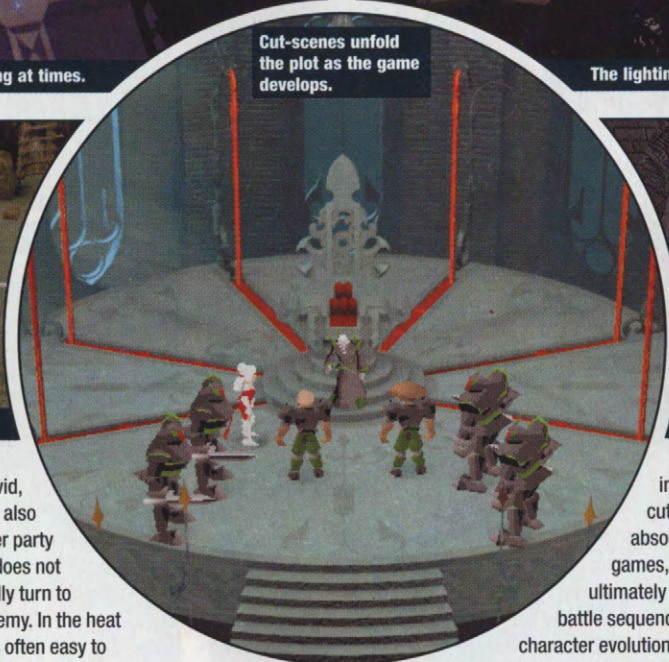
Spell-tastic. *Silver's* special effects can be dazzling at times.



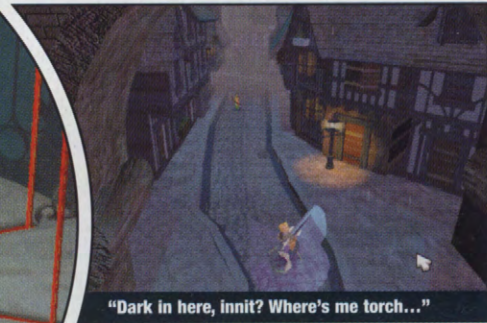
The lighting effects are impressive even without a 3D card.



"Did that tree just call us poofs?!"



Cut-scenes unfold the plot as the game develops.



"Dark in here, innit? Where's me torch..."

time do you want to spend listening to meaningless waffle before the game really starts? Infogrames no doubt argue the point that scene-setting is an important factor in getting you truly immersed in the game, but they appear to have forgotten that you're unlikely to become immersed once you've fallen asleep in front of your monitor.

So it takes a while to get going, but once it does your patience is rewarded with a pleasant surprise or two.

HMM... NICE

Silver is a fantastic-looking game. The rendered backdrops are truly awesome, and the in-game characters are brought to life through incredibly realistic animation. A lot of thought has been put into making the enemies in the game look as convincing as possible, with imps running around playfully at great speed, ducking your attacks and backing off when they've taken too much damage, and more powerful monsters lurching towards you dangerously without fear. Combat in *Silver* can be truly exhilarating, with real-time combat for once providing the 'do or die' sensation that the phrase often hints at but rarely delivers.

However, there are a few gripes. The character you control

(usually David, but you can also control other party members) does not automatically turn to face the enemy. In the heat of battle it's often easy to click the cursor on the enemy, expecting your character to attack, only to discover that he's not quite facing in the right direction, and you can but watch as your hero misses the enemy completely and gets trawled accordingly as punishment.

The interface could be better too. Right-clicking on your character brings up a menu from which you can do things like feed him if his health is low, change weapons, ready magic spells and so on, but the action doesn't stop while this is going on. This makes it difficult to execute potential life-saving actions when you're fighting a difficult character and you're almost out of health.

On the plus side, some of the magic spells are quite spectacular, and the combat visuals are mighty impressive without the aid of 3D acceleration.

Ultimately, impressive though *Silver* certainly is, it will inevitably be compared to the game it has obviously looked to for inspiration — *Final Fantasy VII*.

FINAL FANTASY SILVER

From the rendered backdrops to the cute characters and predictable storyline, *Silver* screams *Final Fantasy VII* from the rooftops. Unfortunately it doesn't have anything like the depth or peerless imagination of that game, which sports

incredible cut-scenes, absorbing sub-games, complex yet ultimately rewarding battle sequences, and a character evolution system which has yet to be rivalled. Also, with the RPG element of *Silver* almost thrown in for novelty value, RPG aficionados will find nothing of interest here.

However, as a combat/adventure, *Silver* is an enjoyable game, with much to offer those with a casual interest in the lighter side of RPGs, and as such

it should appeal to newcomers to the genre and also to experienced gamers who don't expect too much from it. **PCZ**

PCZ VERDICT

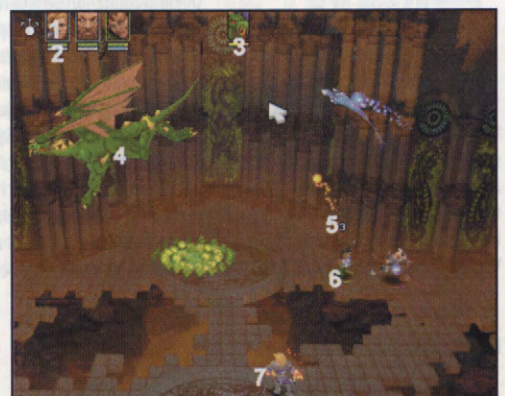
- UPPERS Fantastic presentation • Huge gameworld • Easy to get into
- DOWNERS Lacks the depth of conventional RPGs

80 Mass appeal, but hard-core RPG fans won't be impressed

FIGHTING TALK

The combat scenes in *Silver* integrate seamlessly with the rest of the game. You're not taken to a separate screen for battle, and the fights are all the more realistic as a result. In the midst of battle, this is what you see...

- 1 These are the characters currently in your team. Click on one of them to take control.
- 2 Your health bar and magic level. It's obviously a good idea to keep an eye on both.
- 3 Your enemy's health bar. The general idea is to make this disappear!
- 4 That dragon close up. The creatures look great when they're moving, but you'll have to take our word for that.
- 5 David, the hero of the hour. Right-click on him to bring up a menu displaying options to replenish health, change weapons etc.
- 6 Other members of your team. You can 'program' them to do certain things without your help, or you can control them directly.

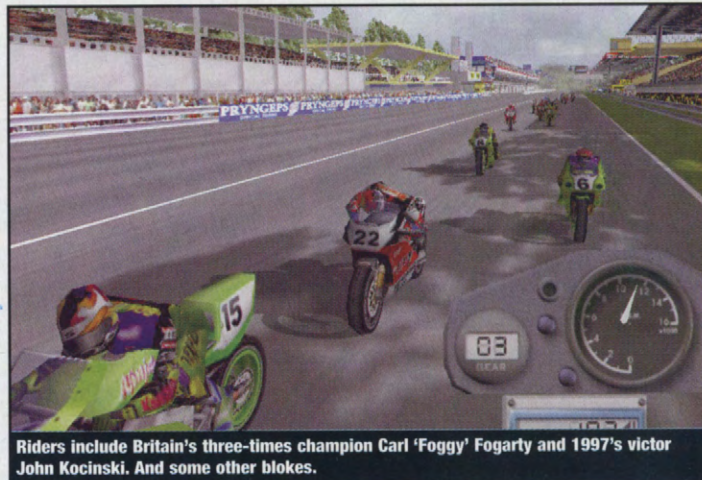


SUPERBIKE WORLD

★ £34.99 • EA Sports • Out now



The time-honoured 'wanker' gesture makes an occasional appearance following near misses.



Riders include Britain's three-times champion Carl 'Foggy' Fogarty and 1997's victor John Kocinski. And some other blokes.



The obligatory carnage is never far away.

Time for Steve Hill to get his leg over another bike. Wait, there's more jokes...

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133 Memory 16Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** 3D acceleration through Direct3D **WE SAY** More is better

**PCZONE
RECOMMENDED**

Although it could hardly be described as 'what the world is waiting for', it's fair to say that a few people have been wondering what had become of *Superbike World Championship*. Originally touted as a great white hope for the floundering Virgin Interactive, the recent

fragmentation of the publisher left the game with an uncertain future. Not to worry, the behemoth that is Electronic Arts took up the reins in the aftermath of the multi-billion dollar acquisition of Westwood Studios and other development resources. It certainly wasn't a deal clincher, but *Superbike World Championship* slots quite comfortably into the EA Sports portfolio, offering an officially endorsed product that accurately recreates a real sport, with real riders, real teams and, of course, the obligatory real licence.

Do you care? Probably not. Although you may laconically raise an eyebrow on learning that the game has been developed by Milan-based Milestone, purveyors of a trio of highly rated *Screamer* games. Having proven their worth on four wheels, the big question is whether they can replicate their success on two. Four wheels good, two wheels bad, if you like.

Obviously, the first difficulty to overcome is that car games are clearly better than bike games. As scientific proof of this fact, how many classic car games can you name? Loads. And how many classic bike games? None, although *3D Death Chase* on the Spectrum comes close. Oh yeah, and *Motocross Madness* (PCZ #67, 91%), but that's different. The fact still remains that, in general, car games poke a sharp

stick in the eyes of their two-wheeled counterparts. Why? Because you can't fall off a car. It's as simple as that, it really is. In a car you can skid, powerslide, wheelspin, perform handbrake turns, and generally clown about to your heart's content. Try any of the above on a superbike and you're violently flipped into the air and tossed around like a rag doll, skimming off the tarmac like a latter-day Barry Sheene. All of which may be very realistic, but offers little in the way of enjoyment.

PROBLEMS

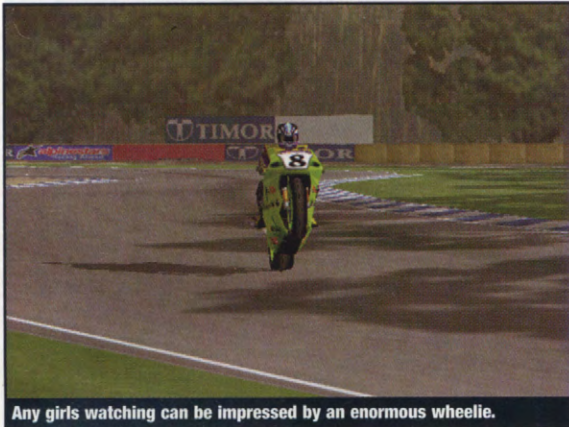
Such are the problems faced by anyone attempting to come up with a decent superbike game. However, Milestone have set their stall out, and this is a creditable attempt to redress the balance.

To counter the problem of falling off every ten seconds, getting really annoyed, and turning off the PC and doing something more interesting instead, a number of

“The authenticity is commendable, the engine is sound, and the graphics are up to scratch”

idiot-proof options have been included. Varying degrees of help are offered in terms of regulating acceleration and braking, the computer taking over while you're negotiating bends, leaving you with little more than the fairly rudimentary task of turning either left or right. With maximum help switched on, it's a fairly detached

CHAMPIONSHIP



Any girls watching can be impressed by an enormous wheelie.



Leather meets tar on one of Monza's many curves.



If you want to make it harder for yourself, the cockpit mode delivers.



The yellow flag signifies a spillage, or something.



The back of the grid is no use to man nor beast.

experience, with the game requiring scarcely any manual dexterity. For all the control you have you might as well be a chimpanzee.

However, at the other end of the scale, in full simulation mode it's a farce, the bike bucking uncontrollably and sliding off the track at every available opportunity. Make no mistake, despite its arcade possibilities, *Superbike World Championship* is 'proper', offering a bewildering array of adjustments to sprockets, gear ratios, suspension and tyres - even providing gauges of their temperature and wear. Clearly, to dive in at this level of involvement would be an act of sheer folly. Obviously the idea is to start tentatively, learn the nuances of every track, and then eventually take the stabilisers off. It's a long-

term investment, and one that may be beyond the patience of all but the most dedicated of gamers. The rewards are tangible though, and the authenticity is second to none.

HOLIDAYS IN THE SUN

The full championship mode consists of 12 race weekends, taking in such exotic locations as Monza in Italy, Phillip Island in Australia, and the USA's Laguna Seca. Britain is also represented in the shape of the classic Brands Hatch circuit, and, for those about to rock, Donington. Each event incorporates practice and qualifying sessions, and culminates in a pair of races, with points doled out in the traditional fashion. Inevitably, what this

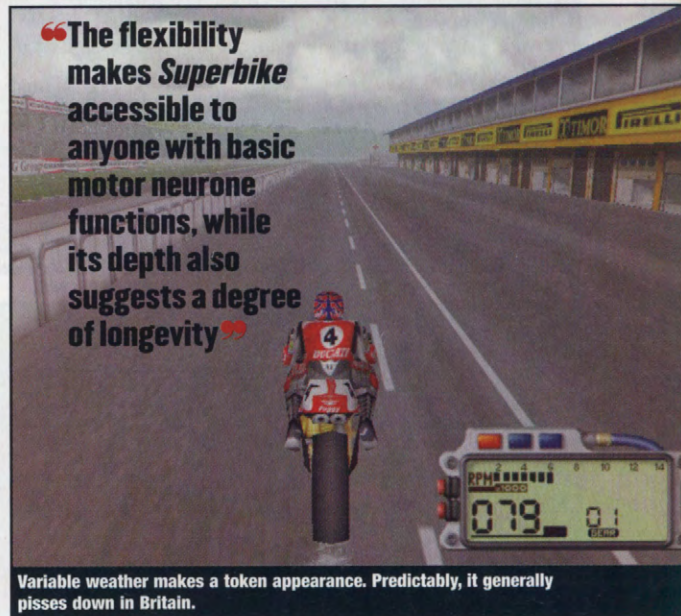
ALSO CONSIDER

CASTROL HONDA SUPERBIKE WORLD CHAMPIONS (Midas Interactive, £29.99) A reasonable debut effort originally published by the functionally named (and now defunct) Interactive Entertainment. Certainly playable, if a little frayed around the edges. **PCZ #65, 78%**

REDLINE RACER (Ubi Soft, £12.99) Shameless arcade stylings are the order of the day here, but at this price it's definitely worth a look. For an hour. **PCZ #71, 70%**

MOTO RACER 2 (Electronic Arts, £39.99) Possibly represents something of a conflict of interests for EA. Generic superbike action allied to moribund motocross. **PCZ #73, 68%**

means is that you spend half an hour securing pole position, and then proceed to leather it into the turf at the first bend. The only solution is to try harder. Without the margin for error offered by a car game, you simply *have* to get it right. Getting on the racing line is imperative, and it can be an exhilarating thing to swoop into the apex of a bend, grazing the outside of the track before



Variable weather makes a token appearance. Predictably, it generally pisses down in Britain.

“The flexibility makes *Superbike* accessible to anyone with basic motor neurone functions, while its depth also suggests a degree of longevity”

accelerating past a hapless opponent.

All well and good. However, in common with several racing games, the AI of the other riders is somewhat restricted. They largely stick to the racing line, and rarely crash by themselves, preferring to slew violently into your path, seemingly oblivious to your presence. This can be annoying, and you can make it even more so by opting for the full crash mode, whereby you have to walk back to your stricken bike, haul it from the turf, point it in the direction of the rack, and hop back on. Which, depending on your disposition, is either a very nice touch or a tooth-grinding irritation.

Ultimately though, it has to be said that *Superbike World Championship* is a triumph. The engine is

sound, the authenticity is commendable, and, naturally, the graphics are up to scratch. The flexibility makes it accessible to pretty much anyone with basic motor neurone functions, and the depth of the game also suggests a degree of longevity. At the end of the day, it's the best superbike game available. But let's not have any more. **PCZ**

PCZ VERDICT

UPPERS Extremely authentic • Very flexible
DOWNERS Limited AI • Obligatory crap music

82 Authentic superbike spills

WARZONE 2100

★ £39.99 • Eidos Interactive • Out March

Real-time strategy clone makes the grade shock. Phil Wand investigates

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P166 Memory 16Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** TCP/IP and direct cable multiplayer **WE SAY** 3D rendered terrain, fogging and light effects beat your processor into a pulp, so Pentium II, 32Mb RAM and 3Dfx card are imperative

PCZONE CLASSIC

It's the 21st century and the world's satellite defence system is on the friz (no doubt the fault of some two-bit Microsoft operating system). Before anyone can shut the thing down and place a call to the helpdesk, the whole network goes ape and launches nukes at Washington, Moscow and Romford. Ground-based sites respond to the first two attacks, and minutes later zillions of people across the planet are busy comparing thermonuclear suntans. Hardly any survive the subsequent fallout, viral plagues

and epidemics that sweep the land. Most of those who do pull through are content to live out the rest of their irradiated lives as scavengers, chugging around the countryside on rat bikes and getting into fights with anyone who isn't sporting a crimson Mohican. Only a few think about rebuilding the world to its former glory – people like you.

WHAT IT IS

Warzone 2100 is a superb real-time strategy game with a wondrous interface, impressive 3D graphics and a number of cute features that put it on a par with *Total Annihilation* (PCZ #70, 93%). Yes, folks, that's right. What we have here is a game as involving, as appealing and as instantly accessible as the old Cavedog

yardstick. *Warzone 2100* may not be quite as swish nor as kind to your CPU, but it does manage to combine frantic action with effortlessly engaging gameplay.

Set in the desolate wasteland of North America, you must seek out fresh resources, recover artefacts and fight your way through three separate campaigns and more than 30 different maps, while at the same time managing a sprawling base and its countless armies. Your base survives through each campaign section, so you don't have to keep starting from scratch each time you start up. What this does mean is that you have to plan ahead, and not be afraid of rearranging the base layout and bulldozing old structures when new ones become available.

The game is instantly delicious, with lush rotatable/zoomable terrain and a mellow orange smog that conceals everything beyond your range of vision. As with most other modern real-time games, the landscape affects the way your units move.

interchangeable. Need to scan the battlefield for enemy squadrons? Swap the machine-gun turret for a dish and you've got yourself a mobile radar. Incoming battalion of foot soldiers? Change the dish for a flame-thrower and char-grill the buggers. Toss in different forms of propulsion, innumerable weaponry and vehicle frames and you have over 2000 different combinations to play with. You can even name the new designs and refer back to them later.

THE BEST REAL-TIMER YET?

One of the areas where *Warzone 2100* is better than *Total Annihilation* is in the AI. Sure, game developers are always going on about the 'next generation' of artificial intelligence, but British development team Pumpkin Studios have finally put their programming skills where their mouth is and created the most astute troops on a real-time battlefield. Don't believe me? Let's take an example. When you command your tanks to guard another unit, such as a

ALSO CONSIDER

TOTAL ANNIHILATION (Replay, £12.99) *Warzone 2100* may be just as good, but *TA* remains the real-time benchmark – and is now 20 notes cheaper. **PCZ #70, 93%**

STARCRAFT (Cendant, £34.99) The looks and the gameplay are now trailing the field, but *StarCraft* just keeps on selling. **PCZ #64, 88%**

DARK REIGN (Activision, £39.99) Overshadowed by *TA*, *Dark Reign* never achieved the success it deserved. Watch out for *Dark Reign II*, due soon. **PCZ #73, 86%**

returning to base for repair or patrolling an area, which makes directing your troops in the heat of battle simplicity itself.

WESTWHO?

Warzone 2100 is due for release about the same time as *C&C: Tiberian Sun*. While there's a certain reverence that accompanies any new Westwood product, *Warzone* is final proof that they've fobbed us off once too often. Last I heard, *Tiberian Sun* was supposed to be with us last Christmas – and the last time I played *Red Alert* was the Christmas before that. What's more, the new *C&C* game has been built with Voxels, an old technology that no longer makes the grade in a world full of Pentium processors and Voodoo chipsets. *Tib Sun* will probably be up to the 'usual' standard, but will it be up to the *new* standard? Until recently I'd have said yes, but now I'm not so sure. [W]

WHAT YOU NEED

The HQ of your base, which furnishes your display with a radar screen and intelligence reports. One of the first things you need to build.



A familiar site to the average Texan, the derricks extract resources from natural oil deposits deep underground. As with most real-time strategy games, control of these structures is key to your success.



The factory constructs the units you design and specify. Factories are graded depending on size, and produce increasingly powerful weapons. Two interesting features are the ability to set constant production and to send new units to anywhere on the map.



Power generators convert the oil resources into energy for your base and fleet of vehicles. Like pretty much everything else in the game, they can be upgraded.

Research facilities take artefacts recovered from the wastelands and turn them into sophisticated technologies that can be integrated into new units and then employed on the battlefield.



“*Warzone 2100* is a superb real-time strategy game with a wondrous interface, impressive 3D graphics and a number of features that put it on a par with *TA*”

Hills and muddy areas hinder tanks; roads and tracks help them. The polygonal structures that dominate the scenery are angular and reminiscent of *TA*, and when they explode they do so in a glorious carnival of light, smoke and noise.

What makes the game unique is the way you assemble your firepower. Instead of being presented with a huge range of exotic units, many of which never get to see the light of day, you research new technologies and then design the individual unit components piece by piece. Choose a body, a machine-gun and a set of wheels (tank tracks, hover engine and VTOL are also available, depending on how advanced your engineering department is), and then send the new design off to the factory for manufacture. Everything is

construction truck, they turn into a formidable team of armoured bodyguards. On the move, they don't trundle 50 yards behind and turn up 20 seconds too late, they go out front and sweep the way clean. When asked to protect a structure, they don't sit still or circle it pointlessly, they actively hunt down all enemy units that pose a threat.

Additionally, the interface includes several predefined routines and responses that have been borrowed from Activision's chunky-but-funky *Dark Reign* (PCZ #73, 86%). This means that you can control how your troops react to various combat situations – you can set one group of tanks to retreat when they sustain a medium amount of damage, and have another keep on plugging to the last. There are also several 'one-click' actions such as

PCZ VERDICT

⊕ **UPPERS** As absorbing and as instantly accessible as *Total Annihilation* • Yummy graphics • Interface a real breeze • Artificial intelligence the best yet

⊖ **DOWNERS** Forgettable plot and title • Won't detect a secondary CD-ROM drive, grrr

90 Hasta la vista, Westwood?



Kaboom! No, *you* kaboom! Kaboom back! And some more! etc...



Weather fronts are both unique and authentic.



Vehicles can be set to sit and attack from afar.



The game piles on the atmosphere with day and night scenes.

Bits of buildings fizz past your eyes.

Zoom up close for some spectacular effects.





That's a flame-thrower for you. Dangerous.



The scissors-paper-stone tournament was in full swing.

TUROK 2: SEEDS OF EVIL

★ £39.99 • Acclaim • Out now

Open the door, get on the floor, everybody walk the dinosaur. Then shoot it in the face. Bothering reptiles: **Charlie Brooker**

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P166/P200 Memory 32Mb RAM **ALSO REQUIRES** P166 Voodoo2-compatible 3D card or P200 Voodoo1-compatible card **WE SAY** A P266 or above for a decent frame rate



For Nintendo 64 owners, December '98 must have seemed like Christmas. In fact, come to think of it, it was Christmas, but even if the Yuletide season had been cancelled they'd still have had two good reasons to celebrate.

Following a lengthy gaming drought, *Zelda: Ocarina Of Time* and *Turok 2: Seeds of Evil*, two of the best console games in the history of everything, arrived on the shelves just in time for Christ's birthday. Us PC owners were too busy playing *Half-Life*

to notice, of course, but more on that later.

Anyway, following a brief interlude, publishers Acclaim have brought *Turok 2* to the PC, where it can flourish in all its high-resolution glory. And it's still a very, very good game. But...

FIRST THINGS FIRST

If you have even the remotest whiff of interest in the storyline behind *Turok 2*, there's something a bit wrong with you. This is an action game, pure and simple. Still, for those of you anal enough to care, the basic premise is that you (yes, you) are Joshua Fireseed, aka Turok the Dinosaur Hunter, a Native American who's as hard as nails, and you've been sent into some place called the Lost Land to wipe out the evil forces of the Primagen.

That's the dull bit. The interesting bit is this: you get to kill loads and loads of vaguely humanoid dinosaur creatures by using a bewildering array of fancy weaponry. Some of the guns on offer are weird and futuristic, some are hideously violent (see panel on the opposite page), and

the majority of them cause all manner of intensely pretty lighting and smoke effects to dance about the screen in a beguiling fashion. It's like *One Million Years BC* spliced together with *Saving Private Ryan* and fed through a mid-seventies *Top Of The Pops* effects desk. Kind of.

For the most part, *Turok 2* is a compelling mix of action and exploration. But there are some glaring problems. Which we'll examine at length, starting now.

DINO DRAWBACKS

One word: fog. Fog, fog, fog, fog, fog. It sounds like a swear word, and as far as 3D games go it should be. You've played *Half-Life*, right? You know how you can see waaaay into the distance? And *Quake II*: not much pop-up there, is there? Anyone who's played multiplayer *QII* could write an essay on the joy of long-distance railgun fragging. It's called depth of field. And it's something sorely lacking from *Turok 2*.

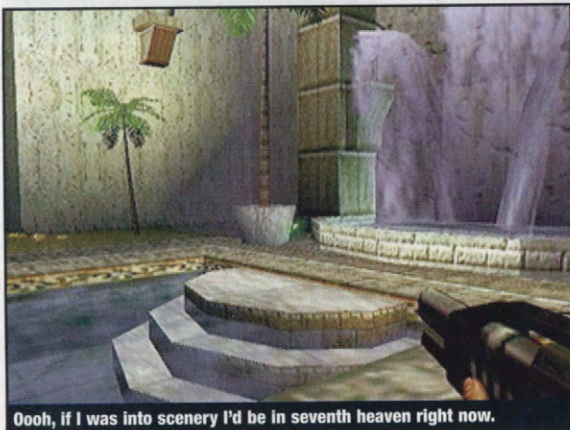
The problem is this: the game was designed for the Nintendo 64, which, powerful though it is, can't really cope with huge 3D



Dear oh dear oh dear. You really should get those teeth looked at.



"I said no pictures!"

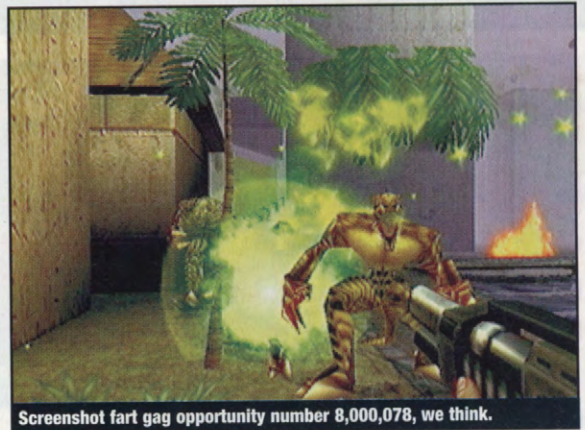


Oooh, if I was into scenery I'd be in seventh heaven right now.

ALSO CONSIDER

HALF-LIFE (Sierra, £34.99) Looke here. Don't just consider *Half-Life*, go out and buy the damn thing right now. And if your machine can't handle it, save up and upgrade. It's one of the best games ever, period. **PCZ #71, 95%**

QUAKE II (Activision, £19.99) Until *Quake Arena* comes along, this ranks second to *Half-Life* as the violentest, funnest thing you can do with a mouse and a PC. **PCZ #59, 97%**



Screenshot fart gag opportunity number 8,000,078, we think.

environments. To solve this problem, the programmers have split each level into bite-size chunks (linked together with 'portals') and introduced heavy fogging – which means you can't see structures or enemies until they're relatively close. To be fair, you soon get used to the fogging, but many seasoned PC gamers will find it unforgivable, not to mention laughable.

The other problem concerns the gameplay itself. Rather like that other classic N64 shooter *GoldenEye*, *Turok 2* requires you to complete a set of mission objectives before exiting each level. Nothing wrong in that – except when you find yourself reaching the final portal, only to be told that you must go back and scour the entire stage again, looking for the objects you failed to discover first time around. That isn't a challenge, that's a chore. It's boring. It's dull. It should never have been allowed to happen.

good game. We do feel that Iguana could have spent more time utilising the PC's strong points (by joining the levels together à la *Half-Life* and removing the fogging, for example), but despite this they've still come up with an engrossing, exciting game packed with plenty of surprises. It's also pretty damn huge, and will keep you rivetted from beginning to end. It may be more console-oriented than the likes of *Half-Life*, but in the occasionally musty world of PC games a little arcade immediacy is no bad thing. Anyone should lap up *Turok 2*. Except perhaps dinosaurs. [C]

PCZ VERDICT

- UPPERS Sickenning violence • Endless mindless action • Superb creature design
- DOWNERS Frigging fogging • A port of a high-falutin' console game

85 Almost a classic. Almost

AT THE END OF THE DAY...

Look, we don't want to sound too negative. Check out the score: like we said, *Turok 2* is a very, very



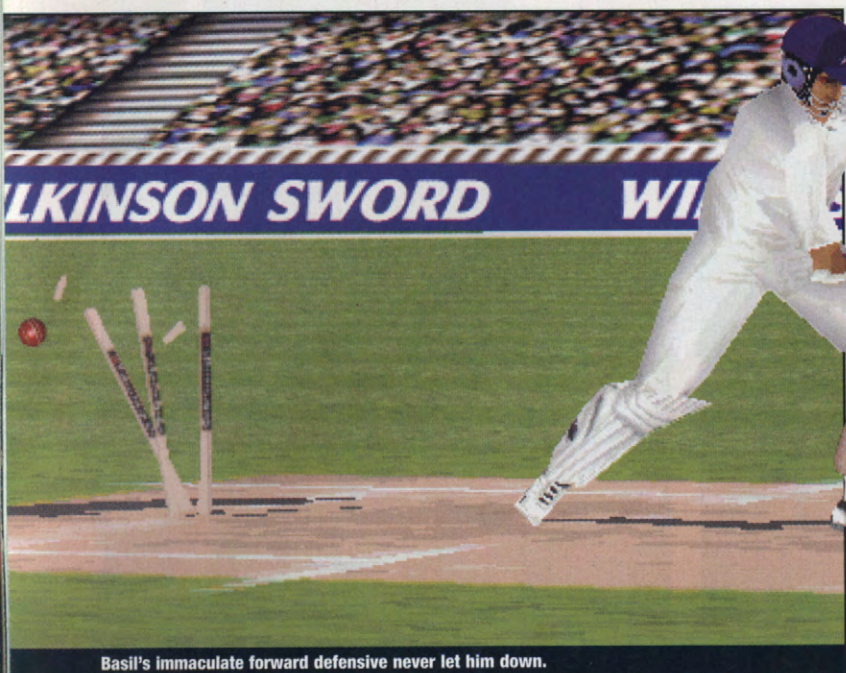
Eat that. Whatever 'that' is.

A NIGHTMARE OF GHOULISH OBSCENITY

Turok 2 has blood, guts, and serious killing hardware that includes the most violent weapon in videogaming history

Incredibly, for a game developed with Nintendo's family-oriented console in mind, *Turok 2* contains swathes of disturbing and bloodthirsty imagery. Fire an arrow at an oncoming dinosaur, for instance, and it sticks in him and stays there until you finish him off. Some of the tougher creatures end up running around looking like angry pincushions, skewered with more arrows than a marketing director's end-of-year flowchart. Get one in a victim's mouth and he flops to the floor, vomiting blood as he goes down.

And that's just the bow and arrow; with a shotgun you can shear off heads. There's also a flamethrower, a missile launcher, and a selection of deeply unpleasant rapid-fire machine-gun thingies. Most disconcerting of all, however, is the Cerebral Bore. The name *sounds* like a phrase you might use to describe a festival of contemporary dance, but it isn't. It's the most violent weapon in videogaming history. Here's what it does: it homes in on a dino's head, drills through his skull, and spurts out an arc of blood and grey matter like a whale spouting water through its blowhole. Then, just to really rub it in, it explodes. It's particularly good fun in multiplayer, and we've been fantasising about firing one at Garry Bushell for over a week now. We keep coming round to find ourselves standing still, clenching our fists, dribbling, smiling. Could somebody out there invent one, please?



Basil's immaculate forward defensive never let him down.

As ever, the England batsman knew exactly which deliveries to leave.

BRIAN LARA CRICKET

★ £34.99 • Codemasters • Out 19 March

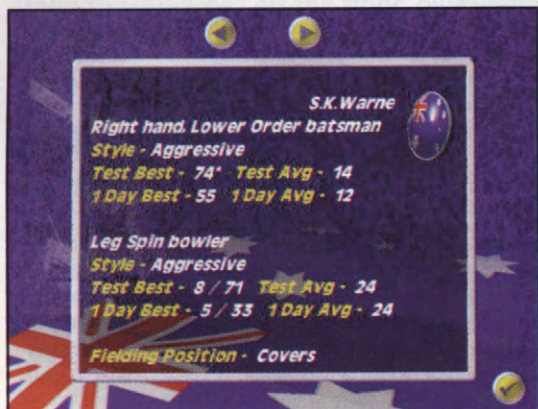
Cricket games: less popular than Geoffrey Boycott at a women's refuge (except with Patrick McCarthy, who's always liked rubbing balls against his thighs)

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P166 Memory 32Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** 3Dfx, Direct 3D **WE SAY** P200 and 3D card advisable; plays with keyboard, but daisy-chainable gamepads advised for multiplayer

LIES, DAMNED LIES AND...

All the cricketers in the game have stats provided by CricInfo. They also have a rough description of their batting and/or bowling ("aggressive, leg spin" for Shane Warne; "criminally dangerous psychotic" for Glenn McGrath, or whatever). And they have a recommended fielding position. Amazingly, even Phil Tufnell has one (and no, it isn't "lying down").



PCZONE RECOMMENDED

Let's face it, for most people a cricket game on the PC is a prospect about as appealing as witnessing a three-way sex session between Robin Cook, Vanessa Feltz and Jimmy Saville. In a jacuzzi full of ravioli. And fish heads. With the eyes staring up at you and everything.

This attitude is understandable given: a) the less than fast-paced action of the average cricket match, and b) the less than stunning array of cricket games available up to now. Basically, there's been *EA Cricket* (PCZ #49, 80%) and *International Cricket Captain* (PCZ #66, 68%). And that's it (unless you count *Robin Smith's Cricket*, which appeared on our desks one God-forsaken morning about six years ago and was so primitive in appearance we thought it was the potential basis of an antibiotic. But let's not.)

So, anyway, this should mean that if you wanted to make a cricket game, you wouldn't think you'd have to try very hard to impress people. Which makes it quite a surprise to see how hard Codemasters have tried with

Brian Lara Cricket. And even more of a surprise to see that it's been worth the effort. It's good. Honest.

THE SPICE OF LIFE

For a start there's just about every variety of cricket imaginable. You can have pyjama-based fun in one-day (or night) games; there's a World Cup and a World Series (unfortunately you have to have Australia in that because it's theirs); and there are Tests, Test Series and even an entire Test year. Up to seven years, in fact – in a row, with all your schedules worked out for you. Obviously this would take seven real years to complete, but it's there if you want it. And, Codemasters being Codemasters, there's a password-based Classic Match option (one of those 'win one and you get the next match' efforts). You can go pinch-hitting crazy playing as Sri Lanka versus the Aussies in the World Cup Final at Lahore; thrash the arse off the Aussies in Botham's match at Headingley 1981; and so on.

OH, WHAT AN ATMOSPHERE (TRAD. ARR)

And then there's the atmosphere, when the game oozes like a fast-bowler's jockstrap after a long spell up the slope in Karachi. *Brian Lara Cricket* is really nicely put together, right from when you get Jonathan Agnew and 'Battling'

ALSO CONSIDER

EA CRICKET 97 (EA Sports, £34.99) Actually, there's not much around in the way of cricket games. There's a new version on its way any day now, with the World Cup licence.

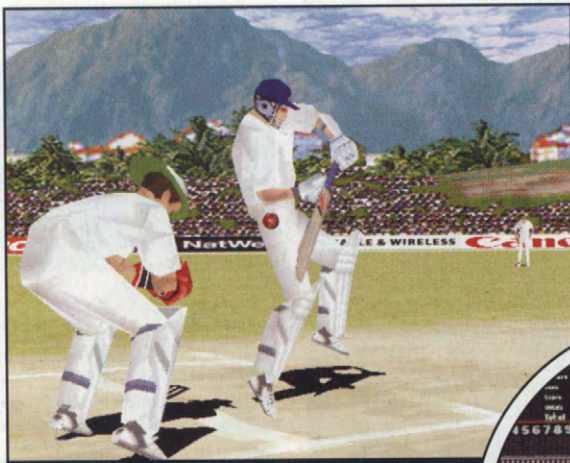
PCZ #49, 80%

INTERNATIONAL CRICKET CAPTAIN (Empire Interactive, £34.99) It's cricket, Jim... but you don't play it, you manage it. We had an interesting time reviewing this.

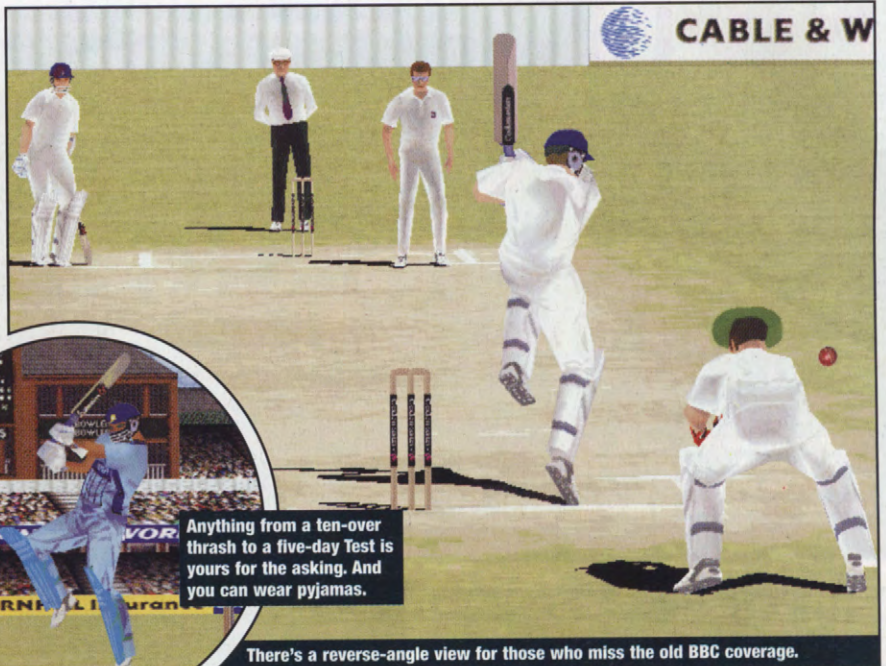
PCZ #66, 68%

Boycott discussing the pitch. They exchange jolly remarks about Agnew's lack of bowling ability. They avoid jokes about hook shots. And so on. It's slick, just like on the telly/radio (delete as appropriate).

The grounds (garnered from all the Test-playing countries) look like the real thing, with a real sense of distance when the ball's whacked skywards. They have different weather conditions – and different pitches – as a result. (Bowling is affected by the pitches too. Don't worry, you get a handy chart to help.) Shadows lengthen as the day wears on. Even the crowds react appropriately: the English get pissed and start singing boorishly; New Zealanders get pissed and start reappraising their relationships with lanolin-rich

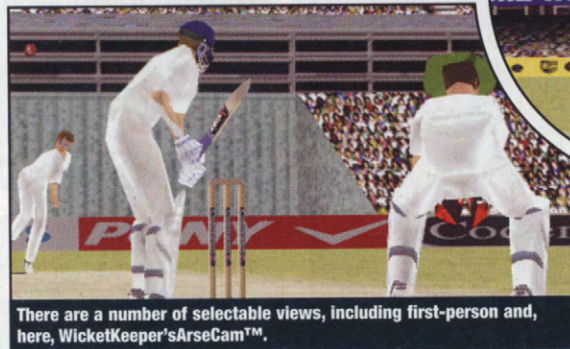


The grounds are garnered from all the Test-playing countries and look like the real thing.



Anything from a ten-over thrash to a five-day Test is yours for the asking. And you can wear pyjamas.

There's a reverse-angle view for those who miss the old BBC coverage.



There are a number of selectable views, including first-person and, here, WicketKeeper'sArseCam™.

farmyard animals; Sri Lankan Tamil Tigers attack the ground in a bus-bomb... Well, sort of.

SO HOW DOES IT PLAY?

Pretty well. The players are well-animated and move fluidly to play shots and field (more on that in a minute). Batting is good, with a wide range of shots, and it works logically – play a cut against a ball going down the leg side and you look a right tit. Which is how it should be.

Bowling is more or less enjoyable according to who you're bowling with: leg spinners can vary things with googlies and flippers; off-spinners have arm balls, and swing bowlers move it either way; the fast bowlers are the least rewarding to use, with just a slower ball in their repertoire. However, all bowlers can be given pace by a bit of button bashing.

But back to that animation. There are loads of little touches of in-game animation (like fielders running in and faking throws before returning the ball to the bowler) which are great during a two-player game, but when you're playing on your own it can get a little tiresome. The problem is that the only button that skips all this is the same button that tells your batsmen to run – pressing it absent-mindedly is a recipe for disaster.

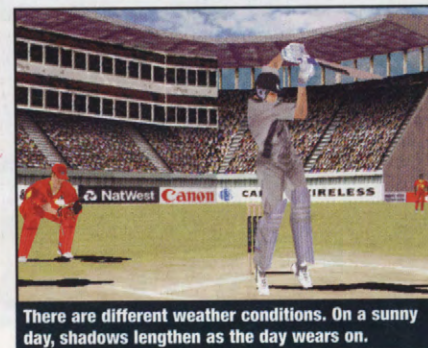
The manual fielding option is too difficult to be enjoyable, but then it's only an option. The only other thing is a problem inherent in any cricket game: if you play it properly, you're going to take bloody ages to do anything. No matter how determined you are to nurse your way to a century (and it's a mark of the quality of this game that you get quite tense as you near any milestone), eventually your mate will goad you, or you feel guilty about blocking everything and boring him; or if you're on your own you'll simply go stir-crazy. Whatever the reason, it won't be long before you go so over the top you'll make a Sri Lankan one-day opener's assault look like Chris Tavare at his most torpid. Unrealistic. But that's your fault, not the game's. [X]



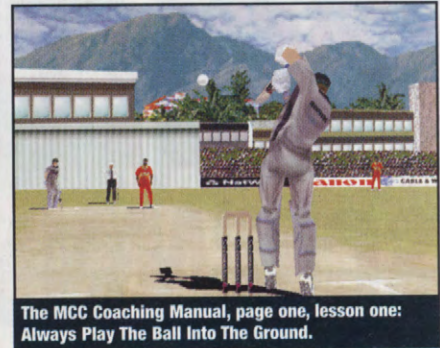
The teams are fairly current – although the Aussies don't have McGill (thank God).



Horace was later banned for life for interfering with an opponent during play.



There are different weather conditions. On a sunny day, shadows lengthen as the day wears on.



The MCC Coaching Manual, page one, lesson one: Always Play The Ball Into The Ground.

BEEN AROUND THE WORLD AND I, I, I...

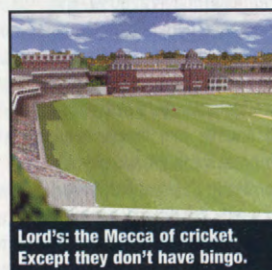
...I've been caught out everywhere. Going for a big one over fine leg. (I'm still talking about cricket, by the way)

There are 46 different, accurately modelled cricket grounds from all over the known cricketing universe (and Headingley) to shuffle about in with your hands in your pockets, rubbing dirt on to balls and dodging hurled beer bottles and used condoms. For example...

PCZ VERDICT

- UPPERS Great atmosphere • Good shot selection • Huge range of matches and locations • Good long-term appeal
- DOWNERS Manual fielding too hard (but optional) • Too much superfluous animation for the impatient

85 Flannel-clad cricketing fun



Lord's: the Mecca of cricket. Except they don't have bingo.



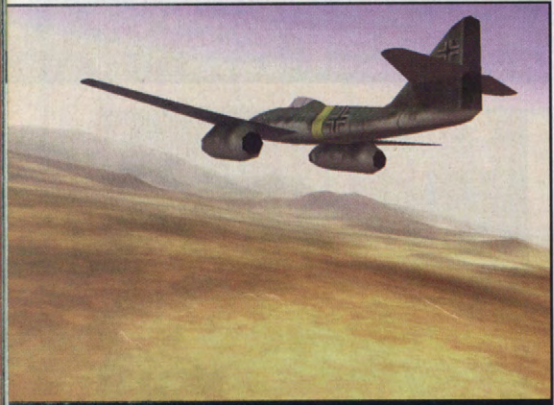
The Melbourne of cricket: it's quite posh (patent leather flip-flops).



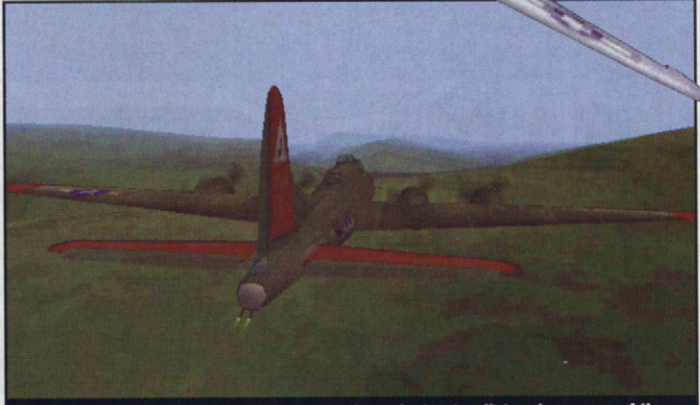
Lahore: you can probably make up your own joke for that one.



Parsoft are releasing their aircraft file format, OpenPlane, so that third-party developers can create new planes or even aircraft construction kit programs.



Each aircraft's flight model is substantially different, so use the training missions before heading of into the fray.



Not only can you fly bombers, but you can also select auto-pilot and man any of the available gun turrets.



If you're itching for a quick fight, the Scramble mode puts you in the thick of things.

ALSO CONSIDER

COMBAT FLIGHT SIMULATOR (Microsoft, £39.99) It uses a revamped *Flight Sim 98* (PCZ #55, 94%) engine, but it's graphically inferior and you get to fly less aircraft. You can however, modify and create your own aircraft. **PCZ #71, 79%**

WORLD WAR II FIGHTERS (Jane's/Electronic Arts, £39.99) Arguably the best-looking WWII flight sim available as long as your hardware is up to it. If you buy only one WWII flight sim it should be this. **PCZ #72, 90%**

EUROPEAN AIR WAR (MicroProse/Hasbro Interactive, £39.99) Unlike the other sims mentioned here this manages to convey the sense of being part of the war effort. Potentially dozens of aircraft in the air at one time, a wide range of missions - enough to keep you busy for weeks. **PCZ #71, 87%**

FIGHTER SQUADRON: SCREAMIN' DEMONS OVER EUROPE

★ £39.99 • Activision • Out now

Our resident Douglas Bader (ie the usually legless) **Jeremy Wells** takes Activision's new WWII combat sim for a spin

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P266 **Memory** 32Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** D3D, Glide and OpenGL, force feedback **WE SAY** If you want to keep the detail settings and frame rate high, then you need a beefy Pentium with 64Mb RAM and a 3D card



There are certainly plenty of World War II combat flight sims to choose from at the moment, but that hasn't prevented Activision from entering the fray with *Fighter Squadron: Screamin' Demons Over Europe*. This sim marks a significant improvement over Parsoft's last

release, *A-10 Cuba!* (PCZ # 59, 90%), which despite using primitive shaded polygon graphics and suffering from a distinct lack of missions was well received by serious sim heads, thanks to the excellent physics and flight models.

While *Fighter Squadron* lacks the Hollywood pizzazz of *WWII Fighters* (PCZ #72, 90%), and there's no dynamic campaign structure as found in *European Air War* (PCZ #71, 87%), like its predecessor *A-10 Cuba!* it's got a distinctive 'feel' thanks to a very impressive flight and physics model. In this respect, taking off in windy conditions, controlling a battle-damaged aircraft and landing safely are as much a

challenge and a part of the game as notching up kills. Consequently *Fighter Squadron* won't appeal to everybody.

IN THE HANGAR

There are ten planes altogether that you can fly: the P-51D Mustang, P-38 Lightning and B-17G Flying Fortress for the US;

“Overall, quite an achievement in terms of programming, and arguably one of the more realistic flight sims available”

the Focke-Wulf 190, the Me-262 jet and Ju-88 bomber for the German Luftwaffe; and the Spitfire, Typhoon, Mosquito and Lancaster bomber for the British

RAF. As you'd expect, the flight models differ quite substantially, so it makes sense to use the training missions and flying aids to practice flying a new aircraft before heading off into the fray.

The fact that there are dozens of damageable structures on each plane means that once you've taken a few hits, flying becomes

a real challenge. The detail of the physics model works well with the sim's flight modelling, and you quickly learn a lot about your chosen aircraft's characteristics



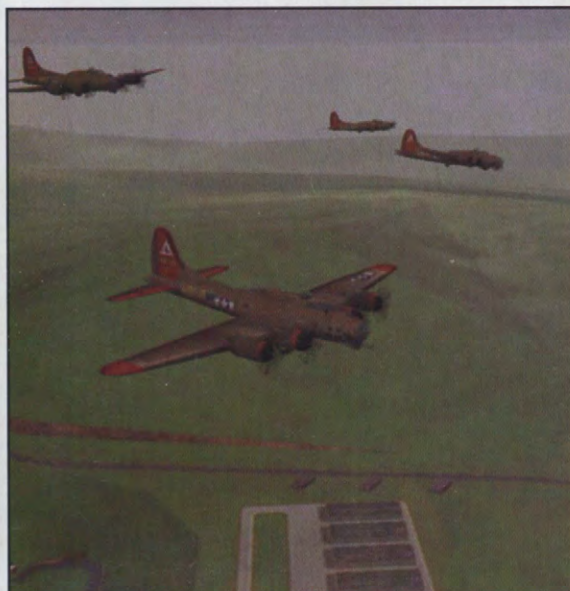
The cockpits are rendered in full 3D, but they aren't quite as nice as those found in *WWII Fighters*. You can zoom in on different parts of the panel with a single keystroke to get a quick read of the instruments.



The attention to detail is quite astounding.



You can fly bombers and man their turrets in multiplayer mode.



Ground objects are very detailed, and there are plenty of hills and valleys to fly over and use to your advantage in a combat situation.

and limitations once you've spent a few minutes struggling to keep it in the air while under fire. Wind is also a major factor, and can make a real difference when you're setting up ground attacks or attempting to land. Along with the damage effects on plane handling (see panel above), you may also encounter explosion shock waves, accelerated stall effects, and spins. It doesn't really get much tougher than this.

MISSION CRITICAL

Unfortunately there isn't a campaign mode to speak of, more a series of unrelated missions set in three theatres: the English Channel, the Rhineland and North Africa. Interestingly, the mission

objectives are more or less the same no matter who you fly for. If, for example, the mission goal is to destroy a V2 rocket launch site and you're a British pilot, you perform a sweep in a Spitfire; if you're an American you get the option to fly as escort in a P-51 or pilot one of the B-17 bombers tasked with taking out the target; while as a German Luftwaffe pilot you have the choice of defending the Reich in either an Me-262 or an FW-190.

As the three theatres themselves are pretty small (around 40x40 miles), you never spend more than a few minutes flying to the target. Although this may sound restrictive, there are advantages: a smaller terrain area

ANALLY RETENTIVE, OR TOTALLY REALISTIC?

There are three things that propeller-heads demand in a flight sim: lush graphics, a realistic flight model and authenticity

While *Fighter Squadron* isn't the prettiest flight sim ever to grace the PC, the flight model certainly feels like you'd expect it to and there's a lot of attention to detail. Unless you're a total boffin, you probably won't understand that this is partly down to the fact that developers Parsoft have based their calculations on a floating point mathematical model which calculates equations of motion to a much more accurate degree than plain old integer mathematics (or so they say). For example, if you forget to release your wheel brakes and start to crank up the throttle before taking off, you end up flipping the aircraft onto its prop and causing no end of damage. Similarly, attempt to manoeuvre certain aircraft too tightly at high speed and your wings may well tear off - which leaves you with a bit of a problem at 15,000 feet.

In the name of authenticity, Parsoft have also developed and implemented a rather cool 'Per-polygon Collision Detection' system. In real terms this means that instead of aircraft simply bursting into flames when they're hit, they take damage on a per-polygon basis, which realistically and adversely affects handling incrementally. The result is altogether more realistic and challenging - especially when you're attempting to limp home after a particularly intense dogfight, dodging debris, losing power and nursing an aircraft riddled with bullet holes.



There are ten planes to pilot, and you can choose to fly as either the British RAF, the US Air Force or the German Luftwaffe.

means that there's plenty of detail in terms of ground objects, buildings, air bases and so on, and a surprising number of hills and valleys make great arenas for low-level dogfights.

The limited number of missions shouldn't be too much of a problem, as there's also an easy to use mission editor that enables you to create your own combat scenarios. Some may balk at that, but there will no doubt be hundreds available on the Net in just a few weeks after the game is released.

Overall, *Fighter Squadron* is quite an achievement in terms of programming, and arguably one of the most realistic WWII flight sims available. A lack of missions,

no dynamic campaign mode, relatively small theatres and a distinct lack of frills, however, mean that it won't be everyone's cup of tea. [22]

PCZVERDICT

UPPERS Excellent flight and physics model • Great attention to detail • Easy to use mission editor • Detailed planes and terrain

DOWNERS No dynamic campaign • Limited missions • Relatively small theatres

86 Realistic and absorbing, but not for everyone

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RESIDENT EVIL 2

★ £39.99 • Capcom • Out now

This game contain scenes of violence and gore, it says on the box. "Ooh, goodie!" chortles **Paul Mallinson**

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P166 Memory 24Mb RAM **REQUIRES** 100Mb hard drive space (minimum), 550Mb (recommended); 3D card **SUPPORTS** All major sound cards **WE SAY** Free up that hard drive space to speed up loading times

PCZONE CLASSIC

Although *Resident Evil 2* – the sequel to Capcom's overrated *Resident Evil* (PCZ #67, 82%) horror adventure – has been out for some time on Sony's ubiquitous PlayStation, there's still a lot of people out there who have yet to play it. For those of a squeamish disposition, it may have been something of a conscious decision – after all, *Resident Evil 2* is one of the goriest games of all time. And one of the best, for that matter.

HORRIBLE

What made *Resident Evil 2* so appealing almost a year ago still applies to the PC version we're presented with today: it's a bloody scary game.

The far-fetched plot, about a guy called Leon who bumps into a girl called Claire, who together discover a town full of zombies, is kept down to earth by clever scripting and gritty storytelling. It starts off horribly enough, with your character surrounded by zombies – and all you've got to defend yourself with is a gun and a few bullets. After that... well, the story twists and turns, the monsters get meaner and more gruesome, and the amazing movie-like atmosphere digs in deeper and deeper.

DISGUSTING

You can play *Resident Evil 2* as either Leon (the cop) or Claire (the sister of the lead guy from the first game), and then, when you've completed it, you can play through it again as the other character. Amazingly, the second time around the game introduces new situations, monsters and story elements to the plot, as if rewarding you for your previous

hard work. Finish the game again and there are more secret characters (apparently, one more than the PlayStation version), and harder challenges to discover. And finish it twice you will *strive* to do, mark my words.

OBSCENE

In terms of graphics, it has to be said that we've experienced better recently. *Resident Evil 2* is not 'full' 3D, with a roving camera and all that. But that shouldn't put you off, as the overall presentation is stunning, particularly the fire effects and the brilliantly rendered (but sometimes blocky) backdrops. Special note must also be made of the eerie music and subtle sound effects, both of which add much to the *mis en scene*.

BRILLIANT!

But at the end of the day there are two things you should ask yourself before rushing out to buy this wickedly essential game. Firstly: have you played the PlayStation version through already? Secondly: are you a poof when it comes to a bit of blood and guts? If the answer to either is 'yes', you should give *Resident Evil 2* a miss. If, on the other hand, you appreciate quality adventure games, like a good scare and don't mind spilling a bit of claret along the way, this is the game for you. Buy it and scream. **PCZ**

PCZ VERDICT

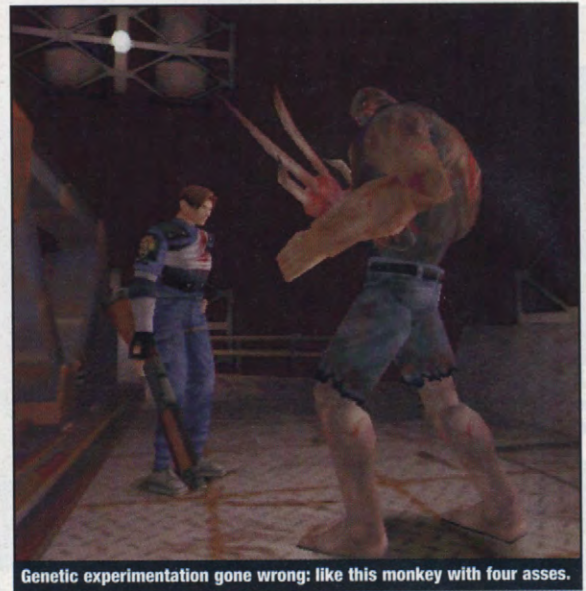
UPPERS Fantastically atmospheric • Gripping storyline • Film-like presentation • Extreme gore

DOWNERS Constant loading a is pain • 'Arrange' mode too easy • Backgrounds pixelated • You've got to be 15 or over to play it

90 An outstanding, blood-soaked adventure



It's not full 3D, but the graphics are immensely atmospheric.



Genetic experimentation gone wrong: like this monkey with four asses.

"The story twists and turns, the monsters get more gruesome, and the movie-like atmosphere digs in deeper and deeper"

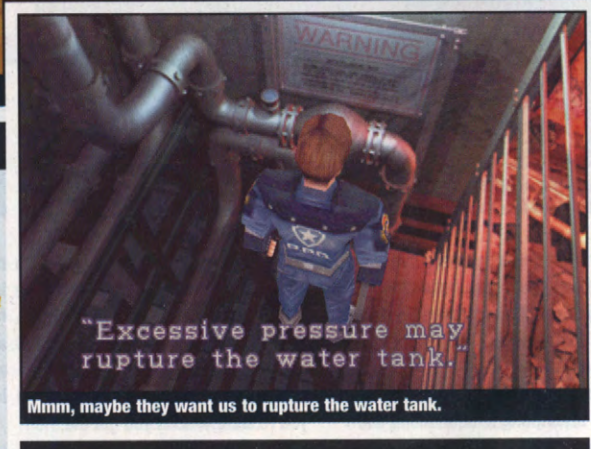
And stay down!

ALSO CONSIDER

REDGUARD (Virgin, £39.99) Wonderful 3D adventure gaming fun for all the family. It's got pirates, magic, dragons and everything.

REVIEWED ON PAGE 74

GRIM FANDANGO (LucasArts, £34.99) Comedy 'horror' is the order of the day in this classic take on the film noir movie. Funny, clever and beautifully put together. **PCZ #71, 90%**



"Excessive pressure may rupture the water tank."

Mmm, maybe they want us to rupture the water tank.

ARRANGE MODE

A new difficulty level has been introduced to make things easier for first-time players. Selecting 'Arrange Mode' starts you off with a machine-gun and infinite bullets, and gives you all the major weapons when you get to the first storage chest. It's a very risky option to include from the off, and some players may be tempted to blast their way lazily through the game without playing it properly. Be advised: you're better off leaving this well alone until after you've played through on Normal – the tense atmosphere created by this game is partly down to the scarcity of weapons and ammo.



Thankfully you can now skip past these 'opening door' sequences by hitting the space bar.

Tom Clancy's **RAINBOW SIX**

Around the World, terrorist threats are on the rise - and this time they're attacking the world's most famous landmarks!

It's up to you: organize, plan and execute your attack! Choose to observe your hostage rescue team takedown the terrorists. Or play your friends with new multi-player modes and levels!

With five new, challenging missions, two new in-depth training levels, four new operatives, three new weapons, and true-to-life special forces action pulled directly from Tom Clancy's best-selling novel!

MISSION PACK:

NEW MISSIONS!
REAL-WORLD LOCATIONS!
in



EAGLE WATCH

TAKE 2
INTERACTIVE SOFTWARE



Original Registered Version of Rainbow Six Required.

ROLLERCOASTER TYCOON

★ £34.99 • Hasbro • Out now

Having always enjoyed scaring little kids until they're physically sick, **Charlie Brooker** can now do it legally

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P90 Memory 16Mb RAM **WE SAY** P200 and 32Mb RAM recommended. The more RAM you have, the less slowdown you suffer

ALSO CONSIDER

THEME PARK (EA Classics, £14.99)

The original, but no longer the best. Bullfrog are currently working on a sequel which should, if there's any justice, rock bells. **PCZ #17, 93%**

SIMCITY 3000 (Electronic Arts, £39.99)

Not as 'fun' oriented as *Rollercoaster Tycoon*, but an absorbing classic nonetheless. **PCZ #74, 92%**



And you thought chocolate Hobnobs were addictive. Say hello to *Rollercoaster Tycoon*, one of those games that appeals to the same part of your brain that makes you want to pop bubble-wrap, chew gum or smoke cigarettes. Play it for ten minutes and it becomes so ludicrously moreish you find yourself unable to leave it alone. We're beating people's hands with broomsticks here in the ZONE office – it's the only way to stop them from playing. No, really.

The concept is simple: you, yes you, are a theme park owner who wants to drum up some trade and rake in a fortune. In

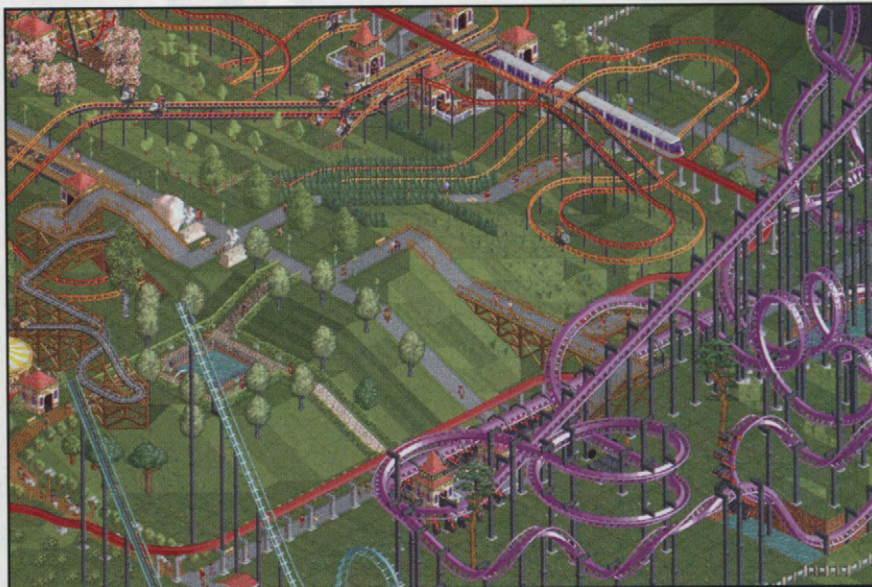
order to do so you have to build a series of rides, manage your finances, keep your staff in check, research new types of coaster, and so on. Sound familiar? Of course it does – it's like *Theme Park* (PCZ #17, 93%). Isn't it?

Well, yes. It's even got the puddles of sick on the pavements. In fact, *Rollercoaster Tycoon* is so similar to *Theme Park* that at times it feels almost like a cover version produced using more up-to-date technology. There's a lot more going on, of course (a whole lot more), but to all intents and purposes you could bung a sticker on the box saying *Theme Park 2* and no one would raise an eyebrow. Except perhaps Bullfrog, creators of *Theme Park*, who are currently hard at work on *Theme Park 2* (see Top Story on page 16) and will doubtless be keeping a beady eye on *Rollercoaster Tycoon*. On the face of it, Bullfrog have some tough competition.

COAST TO COAST

Sorry to keep banging on about it, but both games are so similar in concept and execution that writing a review about *Rollercoaster Tycoon* without comparing it to *Theme Park* would be like explaining evolution without mentioning monkeys. So we won't even try to avoid it.

Rollercoaster Tycoon is far more 'hands on' than *Theme Park*. It's not good enough to simply bung down a pre-designed



Entrance fee: £150. Ice cream: £37.50. Popcorn: £489. Give us your money. Now piss off.

rollercoaster; painstakingly constructing your own is one of the most important features in the game. There are loads of different types, from old-fashioned rickety-rackety wooden ones, to ultra-modern 'suspension' coasters in which the cars hang and dangle beneath the track (just

you have to make sure there are enough dips and turns for it to all run smoothly. Then there's the matter of getting the whole thing to join up in a continuous loop, which can prove a total nightmare. And finally there's the reactions of the punters themselves: make the ride too

“By reading visitors' minds you can tell which rides they're too scared to go on, how sick they're feeling, and so on”

like the Nemesis at Alton Towers), and you get to build them all one section of rail at a time.

It's deceptively tricky, and you have to bear a bewildering number of factors in mind. First there are space considerations. Then there's them pesky laws of physics: if the cars don't have enough momentum to make a loop they roll back down the track, and your ride's shagged;

gentle and they complain that it's wussy; make it too intense and they're either too scared to ride or they spill the contents of their stomachs across the pavement on their way out.

TWEAK FOR YOURSELF

Rollercoaster construction aside, there's an almost unbearable amount of detail on offer everywhere else. You can read

the minds of each visitor (you can tell, for instance, which rides they're too scared to go on), see how much money they've spent, how sick they're feeling, and so on. You can change the cost of each ride, give it a new colour scheme, change its name (to something rude, inevitably) and, if people *still* don't want to go on it, mount an advertising campaign to make it look cool. Then there's staff, research and development, expansion plans, food and drink stalls, toilets, security, landscaping, and the ever ticking clock to consider. Basically, there's so much to do you may as well go out and start a real sodding theme park – if you weren't too busy playing this to bother, that is.

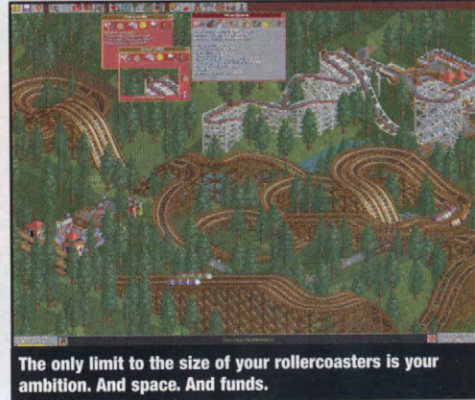
So, it's addictive, in a perpetual *SimCity* kind of a way. Anything else? Well, the graphics are crisp, attractive and functional (even if they are a bit on the



Here's one I made earlier. But is it a rollercoaster, or a map of the lower intestine?



It's not all lush pastures; if you're a bit mad you can build your park in the desert.



The only limit to the size of your rollercoasters is your ambition. And space. And funds.

Amiga side), the sound effects are authentic and atmospheric, and the user interface is second nature to anyone who's used Windows.

In fact there are only three drawbacks, and they're all inter-related: 1) As we keep saying, it's incredibly similar to *Theme Park*. 2) Bullfrog are currently working on *Theme Park 2*, which may well crap all over this. 3) Just like the game it borrows heavily from, *Rollercoaster Tycoon's* longevity isn't assured – once you've seen most of the surprises and fiddled yourself sick, there's probably little to come back for. Still, that takes a long time, and while it's got you it's *really* got you. **PCZ**



You can monitor the thoughts of every visitor, even when they're mid-ride.



As well as knuckle-whitening rides, you can cater for girls.

PCZVERDICT

UPPERS Horrifyingly compelling

- Inherently pleasing graphics • Atmospheric sound • Masses of nested detail

DOWNERS Very, very similar to

- Theme Park* • Questionable staying power

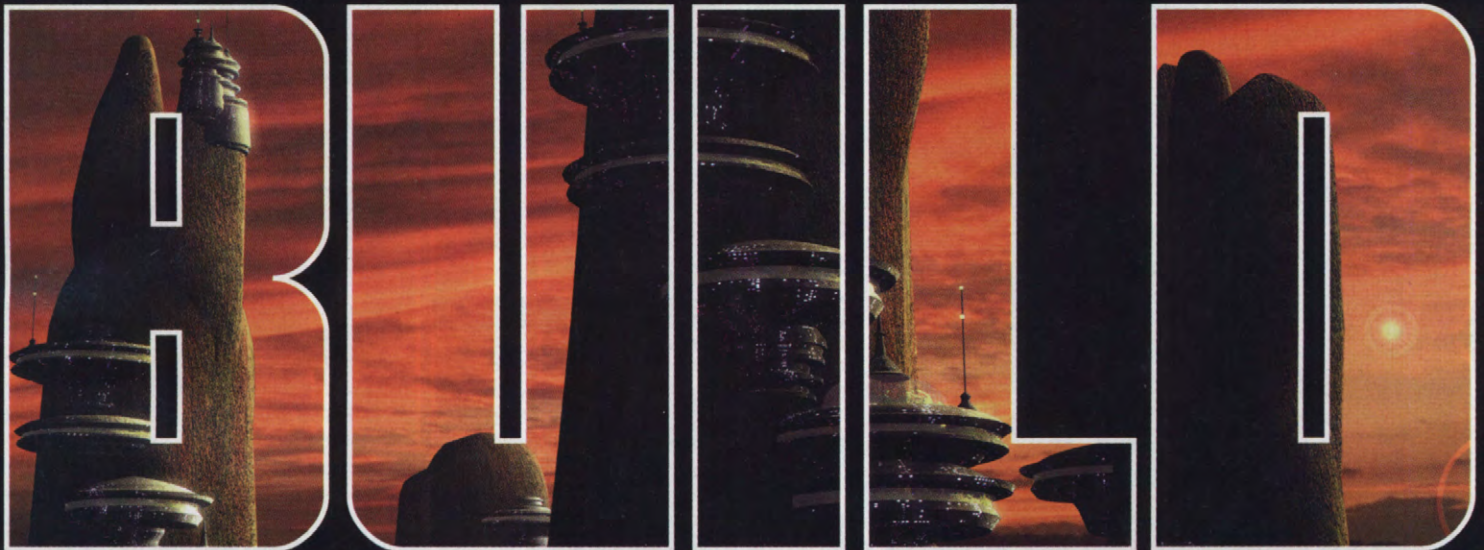
87 Insanely addictive – like *Theme Park* on steroids



Dare you to shove a stick in the spokes.



That's a maze. That is a maze. That is a bloody maze, you twat.



...a new way of life and shape the human race's future.

SID MEIER'S
ALPHA CENTAURI

PCZONE CLASSIC

92%



ELECTRONIC ARTS

ROLLCAGE

★ £39.99 • Psygnosis • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P166 Memory 32Mb RAM
ALSO REQUIRES 3D accelerator card **SUPPORTS** All major sound cards and force feedback joysticks **WE SAY** Pentium II 233MHz recommended

PCZONE RECOMMENDED

Super-fast, no-brainer, techno-driven futuristic racing games are what Psygnosis do best, so it's no surprise that *Rollcage* is a blistering new addition to their critically acclaimed software catalogue.

Taking up from where *WipEout* (PCZ #34, 78%) left off, *Rollcage* features dizzying 360-degree courses that roll and spin before your very eyes, at speeds and frame rates so far unseen in a game of its type. At first the highly responsive four-wheeled buggies do cartwheels galore as you try your best to find which way is up. Practice a few times and it all clicks into place: super-fast, precise motoring with

a few unobtrusive power-ups thrown in to spice things up a bit is the order of the day.

Racing is exhilarating, and crashes are spectacular. Winning a league is very satisfying too, for a change. In fact the whole thing feels good to play, as well as looking and sounding like an absolute peach.

If anything lets *Rollcage* down, it's the fact that the single-player side of the game is too easy. There are ten league tracks in all – every one of them beautifully drawn and rendered – but they're not difficult to crack, revealing additional hidden tracks and a few other extras on the way. The multiplayer gamer is catered for heavily, whether you're one of up to four surly men huddling around the same keyboard (remember: no touching), or part of an impromptu office LAN party. The bonus 'deathmatch' arenas, where you attempt to knock each other off a cliff for points, is the icing on the cake.

Overall, *Rollcage* is a stunning racing game – it's fast, furious and fun. It's just a pity the buzz doesn't last forever.

Paul Mallinson

PCZVERDICT

88%



Rollcage looks stunning in super-duper hi-res.



You see a lot of this when you start out.

Rollcage: explosive racing action par excellence.

Freespace: Silent Threat

★ £19.99 • Interplay • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133 Memory 32Mb RAM
SUPPORTS All major 3D cards through Direct3D **WE SAY** With a 3D card a P133 is fine, but you need more memory without one

PCZONE RECOMMENDED

The recipe for a mission pack is a simple one: Take a successful game – in this case the best space combat sim of recent years – and add more of the same ingredients that made it what it is. Consequently, *Silent Threat* adds a 12-mission campaign, a number of third-party single missions, three new ships and four new weapons. For many that might not sound quite enough, but considering the original game had a flawless interface, superlative AI and stunning graphical effects, it comes as no surprise that few of these elements have been changed. In other words, because little was broken, hardly anything was fixed.

Unsurprisingly the storyline in *Silent Threat* picks up from where *FreeSpace: The Great War* (PCZ #66, 89%) left off. With the Vasudans vanquished, the Shivans are back to their mischievous ways. The battle group that destroyed the Lucifer have

been lost, and mankind is under threat once more. Your mission, should you choose to part with 20 quid, is to slip behind enemy lines and have a good nose around. And indulge in a bit of killing.

One small gripe we had with *The Great War* was that the missions were too easy, and the entire game could be completed in a weekend. Thankfully *Silent Threat* is a little more taxing, and may keep you going for a day or two more. Although you won't find any cut-scenes in between the missions, the story is as tightly woven as before, with the high point being the introduction of a new Capital ship.

While it's obvious that developers Volition are holding back all their best ideas for *FreeSpace 2*, *Silent Threat* has more than enough to satiate fans of the first game. For sure, it's about as original as a Celine Dion record, but it's polished to a shine. As with most mission packs, it's quite simple, really: if you loved *FreeSpace*, you'll love this. As they say, it ain't broke...

Richie Shoemaker

PCZVERDICT

83%



Nothing wildly different from the original game, but *Silent Threat's* 'more of the same' is more than enough.



The Vasudans are on the warpath once again.

BIOSYS

★ £34.99 • Take 2 Interactive • Out now

TECH SPECS**MINIMUM SYSTEM** Processor P100 Memory 16Mb **WE SAY** Runs fine on this spec

Biosys must be one of the only games set in a rainforest. It's an ecological adventure which takes place in a biosphere, a biosphere in which you're unfortunately trapped. The biosphere lives and breathes in real time; plants grow while day and night passes, and you have to learn the rhythm of the forest in order to stay alive.

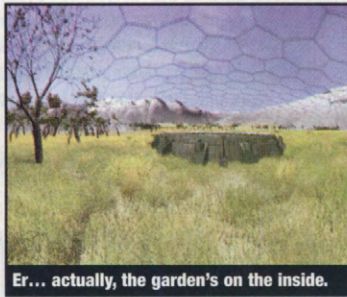
However, the whole thing quickly becomes very tedious. Interacting with a dynamically changing realistic world is attractive in theory, but in practice it's dull because you spend a lot of time plodding around with nothing going on. It's not entirely dissimilar to *Robinson's Requiem* (PCZ #16, 85%), except of course that *RR* wasn't completely crap.

Visually, *Biosys* palls against the likes of similar titles such as *Starship Titanic* (PCZ #63, 91%), and unless you study ecology as a hobby there's not much here that will excite you, unless doing nothing at all excites you, in which case go ahead and buy it.

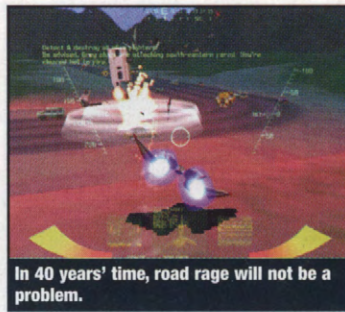
Benny Har-Even

PCZVERDICT**45%**

Tunnels link the different environments.



Er... actually, the garden's on the inside.



In 40 years' time, road rage will not be a problem.



The landscapes could have used a little more detail.

TELLURIAN DEFENCE

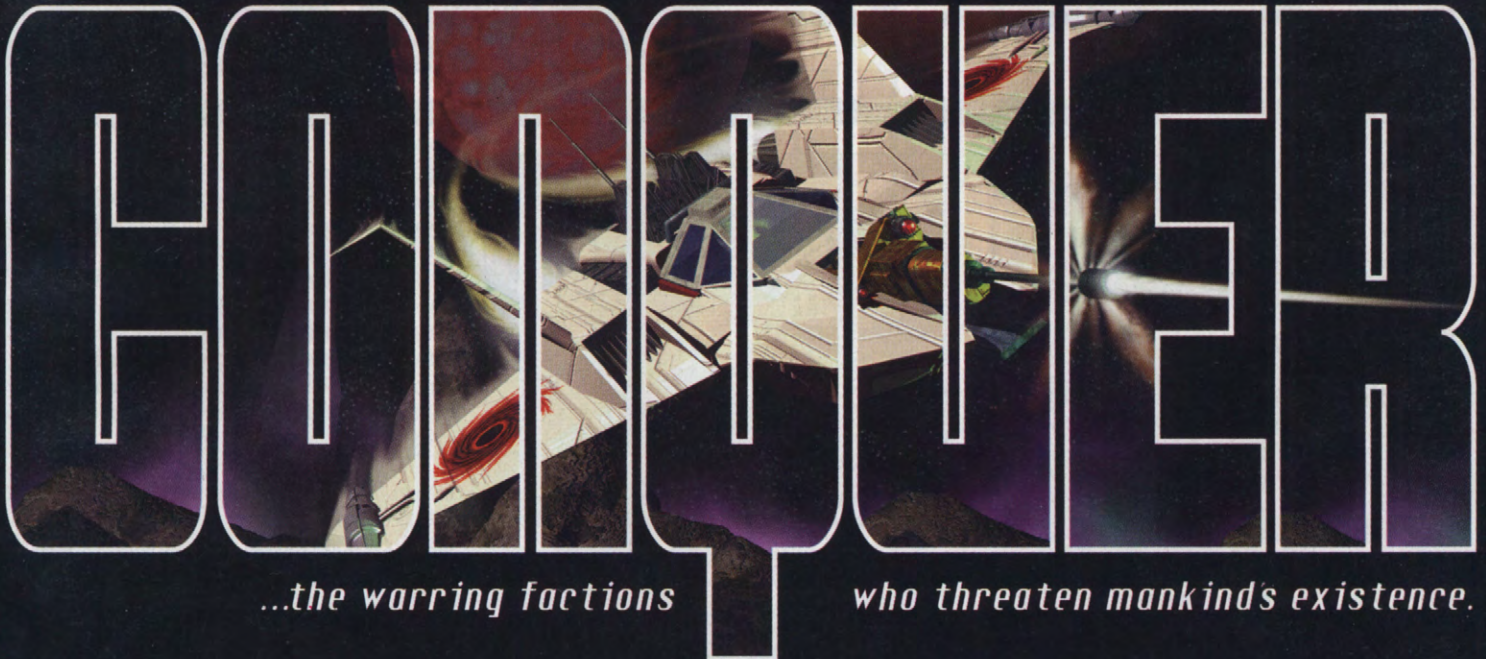
★ £39.99 • Psygnosis • Out now

TECH SPECS**MINIMUM SYSTEM** Processor P166 Memory 32Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** All major sound cards, 3D accelerator cards and force feedback joysticks **WE SAY** A 3D card is essential

Take the varied missions and the wingmen from *TIE Fighter*, add some landmark-littered scenery, an element of research and strategy, and voilà: *Tellurian Defence*. Unfortunately, er, it's not as exciting as all that.

To start with, the gameplay and graphics are tedious, your ship looks like origami crushed by a child, while the control system feels like it's been designed by one. There are 30 missions, ranging from pure combat to undercover reconnaissance, but it's incredibly difficult to control your craft – you always seem to be going either too fast or too slow, spinning frantically in the hope of catching sight of an enemy ship. *Tellurian Defence* tries to cater for both flight sim fans and straightforward arcaders and falls somewhere in the middle, leaving a terrible mess on your carpet.

Mark Hill

PCZVERDICT**56%****PC GAMER****91%**

SID MEIER'S
ALPHA
CENTAURI



ELECTRONIC ARTS



Where's the parachute?



"Shoot!" the HUD display screams. Well, go on then...



Top Gun 2 will appeal to less discerning flight combat fans.

TOP GUN: HORNET'S NEST

★ £34.99 • MicroProse • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P166 Memory 32Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** 3Dfx, Direct3D **WE SAY** P200 with 64Mb RAM, Voodoo 3D card and ThrustMaster joystick recommended

Huge manuals put many people off buying *Falcon 4.0* (PCZ #72, 95%) and *F-22: TAW* (PCZ #68, 95%). This, presumably, is where *Top Gun 2* comes in. The thing is, just about every recent jet fighter flight sim features numerous toggleable flying aids to make the game accessible to the first-time flyer, while at the same time holding plenty of appeal for the seasoned ace.

The trouble with *Top Gun: Hornet's Nest* is it's a bit too simplistic. It takes about five minutes to learn to fly the F/A-18 in *Top Gun*, and just a few days to work your way through the three campaigns. The fact that it's linear means that there's little in the way of replay value, and you can't exactly go back and play the missions again with the flying aids turned off because there really aren't any to speak of.

If you *still* don't think you can handle *Falcon 4.0*, and want an extremely simple flight sim instead, then you probably won't be *majorly* disappointed with *Hornet's Nest*. But take heed: there are better-looking and just as accessible flight sims out there already. We advise you to check these out before parting with your hard-earned cash for this one.

Jeremy Wells

PCZVERDICT

65%

SCARS

★ £29.99 • Ubi Soft • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P166 Memory 16Mb RAM **ALSO REQUIRES** 3D accelerator card **SUPPORTS** All major sound cards and force feedback joysticks **WE SAY** Don't bother if you've got a PowerVR, S3 Virge, Rendition or Number 9 3D card, because *SCARS* doesn't support 'em

The evolution of the PC racing genre rolls ever onward with the likes of *Carmageddon II*, *Need For Speed III* and *Rollcage* (see review on page 92) scooping accolades left right and centre. Then along comes something like this – *Super Controlled Animal Racing System*, or *SCARS* to you and me – a veritable retro racing experience gone wrong.

SCARS, from Ubi Soft and developers Vivid Image, is a console-like racing/combat game that falls flat on its face for a number of different reasons. Firstly, and most importantly, the weapons and power-ups are rubbish. Rockets, magnets, barriers and mines – all the usual kiddie stuff. Yes they are unoriginal, and yes they are bloody annoying when used against you in the middle of a race. Playing from scratch, you soon find that a typical



All-time racing classic? Er, probably not.



SCARS: the latest 'no-brainer' racing game to hit the PC.

race degenerates into something of a war of attrition as you end up recovering from constant knock-backs shot at you from the opposition at what seems like every corner of the race.

Nintendo got this sort of thing right in their racing games, but in *SCARS* the weapons side of things just gets in the way. Having said that, if you turn the weapons off and concentrate on the racing, you soon notice that the car handling is pretty sweet and the view is pretty cool. But... then you get bored, because four laps a race is the minimum, and therefore too long.

The courses look nice enough, are well-textured and colourfully lit, but sometimes prove impossible to navigate at high speeds. The fact that the invisible wall surrounding the track acts like flypaper when you brush it also adds to the latent claustrophobia.

Okay, so you pretty much get everything you'd expect to find in an arcade racing game – two-player split-screen (plus network stuff); Grand Prix, Challenge and Time Trial modes; five cars to start with, four more to unlock; slick, rocking/pumping soundtrack; wonderfully 'wacky', themed courses; and all the usual gubbins – but the overriding factor here is that *SCARS* is not worth recommending because there are far better driving games around so hey, why not play one of those instead...

Paul Mallinson

PCZVERDICT

49%

WARHAMMER 40,000: CHAOS GATE

★ £39.99 • Mindscape • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P166 Memory 32Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** Four-player multiplayer games via LAN or Internet **WE SAY** Those minimum requirements are fine if you've got 170Mb of free hard drive space

PCZONE RECOMMENDED

Unlike the previous 40K offering, *Final Liberation* (PCZ #60, 65%), *Chaos Gate* is a very accessible and user-friendly game. The manual is what it should be (a handy reference tool), and within minutes you're blasting Chaos Marines back to the Void from which they came.

Unfortunately though, you only get to play on the side of good versus evil – the Ultramarines against Khorne and Tzeench. Mind you, later on in the 18-mission campaign you get your hands on some decent-looking kit, from Predator tanks through to Dreadnoughts and Land Speeders. It would be handy to be able to customise the units more – after all, it's the paint jobs that make *Warhammer* what it is, and no game has ever included such a facility. One day, perhaps, but not yet.

Graphically, *Chaos Gate* is both attractive and functional. It's hardly state of the art, but with a game such as this it's as much about keeping the feel of the tabletop version as it is about creating something new for a PC gaming audience. It's not the greatest game ever – not by a long chalk. But for those who decide to take the plunge, it's one that slowly grabs hold of you and keeps you entertained throughout its duration; something you'll look back on with fond memories rather than foul – which makes it a winner in my book.

Richie Shoemaker

PCZVERDICT

80%



Chaos Gate has a wealth of units.



The mission builder will keep you busy.

SAGA: RAGE OF THE VIKINGS

★ £34.99 • Cryo Interactive Entertainment • Out now

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P166 Memory 32Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** DirectX 5-compatible sound cards **WE SAY** That'll do nicely

Set in the days when men wore skirts, grew lengthy beards and were judged by the size of their horns (on their helmets), *SAGA: Rage Of The Vikings* is a moderately entertaining if somewhat uninspired real-time strategy game that should appeal to fans of *Age Of Empires*, *Warcraft II* and *Civilization*.

Graphically it's not up to the standard of Microsoft's classic, and at times the 'modern' Celtic music is just plain comical. That said, there are heaps of characters to play with, including Vikings, dwarves, elves and trolls, and an abundance of detailed buildings to construct. The facility to zoom in on the action is a nice feature, as are the changing seasons, the implication of the Viking code of honour, and use of magic; although some may find the interface a little complicated compared to that employed in *AOE*, which is simplicity itself.

With 60 different clans to fight and conquer, numerous alliances to forge and an expansive game world, there's plenty in the way of game play. And if you get bored of the campaign mode then you can always design your own levels using the easy-to-use map creator, or indulge in a little multiplayer action via a LAN.

If you can overlook the rather uninspiring terrain and forgive the occasionally quirky artificial intelligence, there's plenty here to hold your interest – at least until *AOE 2* arrives later this year.

Jeremy Wells

PCZVERDICT

65%



Expect a few friendly faces to pop in for a nice cup of tea from time to time.



Naval strength is a prerequisite for successful expansion.



...a virgin planet for man's descendants to populate.

SID MEIER'S
ALPHA
CENTAURI



92%



ELECTRONIC ARTS



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SWING

★ £29.99 • Software 2000 • Out April

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor 486/66DX2 Memory 8Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** Crappy old PCs **WE SAY** Unused for months, our office P90 was glad of the attention

Swing is a puzzle game where the balls don't so much arc about as simply fall from the sky. Maybe they should've called it *My Balls Have Dropped* – at least it would have set itself up for some free publicity. Who knows, maybe the BBFC would've banned it. And we all know what controversy can do for sales.

Anyway, the point of *Swing* is to line up three like-coloured balls horizontally. Once done, they explode to make room for more. Just to add a unique twist, each ball has a different weight. Once they hit the scales at the bottom of each 'lane', the combined weight of each column could tip the scales and throw everything out of alignment. Easy to learn and hard to master, *Swing* sits comfortably between *Tetris* and *Puzzle Bobble*, but without the pace of either. You may be disappointed if you were given it as a present from a relative concerned about gaming violence, but you'll probably grow to like it eventually. However, 30 quid is a bit steep for this sort of thing.



The balls don't swing, but they sure do drop.

Richie Shoemaker

PCZVERDICT

64%



The awkward control system, unintelligent camera and repetitive hack-and-slay gameplay, however makes it a distinctly average affair.



Asghan doesn't disappoint when it comes to graphics, characters and locations.

ASGHAN: THE DRAGON SLAYER

★ £29.99 • Silmarils/Grolier Interactive • Out now

TECH SPECS

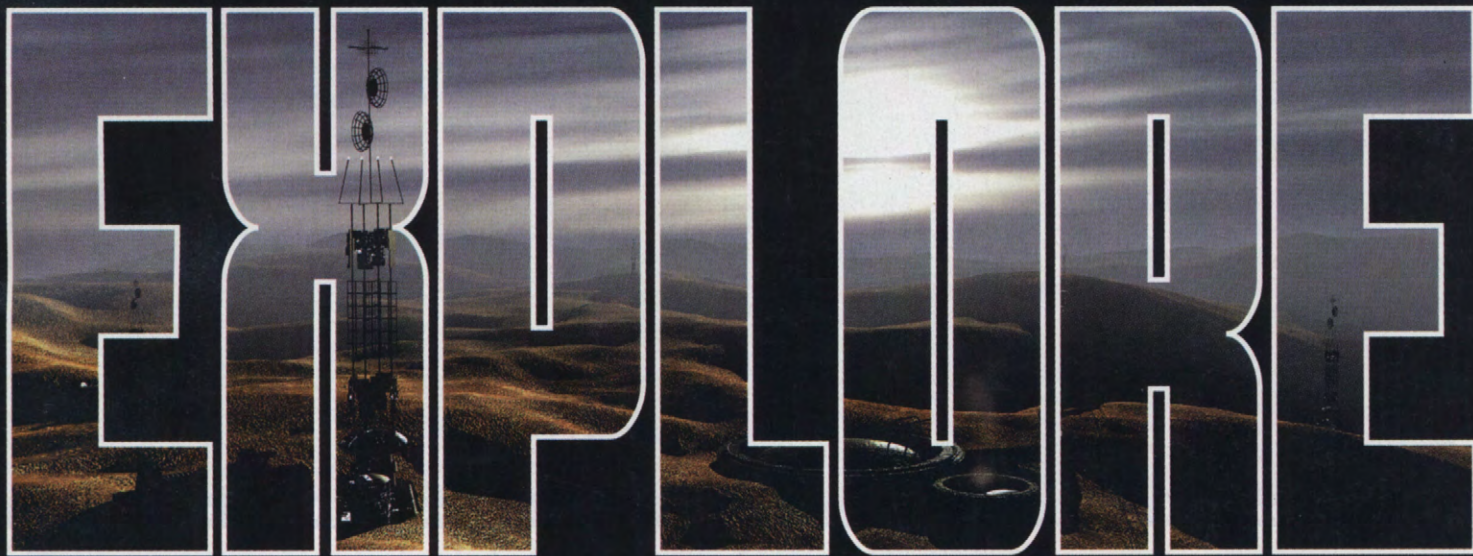
MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P120 Memory 16Mb RAM **SUPPORTS** DirectX 5-compatible sound cards and Direct3D/3Dfx **WE SAY** P200 with 32Mb RAM and a 3D card please

Despite the current fascination with RPGs, *Asghan: The Dragon Slayer* is very much a hack-and-slay affair more akin to the likes of *Tomb Raider* (PCZ #45, 95%) and *Deathtrap Dungeon* (PCZ #65, 70%). The lead character may be able to use magic, and have a penchant for pointy shoes and hats, but much of the action centres around what you do with your sword and crossbow. Like the aforementioned heavyweights from Eidos, *Asghan* is very easy on the eye when running with hardware support, and the 60 different personnel and 30 locations are well-realised and expansive. That said, the awkward control system, lack of real character development and dialogue, and the at times obtrusive floating camera make *Asghan* an altogether frustrating and uninspiring affair. Which is a bit of a shame, because it certainly has potential.

Jeremy Wells

PCZVERDICT

50%



...a brave new world and lead mankind into tomorrow.

SID MEIER'S
ALPHA
CENTAURI



93%



ELECTRONIC ARTS™

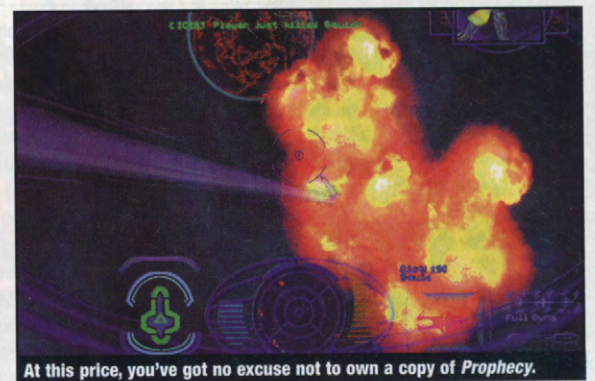
BUDGET ZONE

While we wait (and wait) for *Tiberian Sun*, there are some splendid strategy/sim releases on offer this month if you've got fifteen quid to spare

★ MAN WITH LOOSE CHANGE IN HIS POCKET Jeremy Wells

M1 TANK PLATOON II

★ £12.99 • MicroProse/PowerPlus • Out now



At this price, you've got no excuse not to own a copy of *Prophecy*.

WING COMMANDER: PROPHECY

★ £14.99 • EA Classics • Out now

TECH SPECS:

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P100 Memory 16Mb RAM **WE SAY** 3Dfx card recommended



The fact that there have been at least half a dozen games in the *Wing Commander* space combat series, plus a movie on the way, says as much about its lasting appeal as it does about the taste of your average PC gamer.

Although it's starting to look a little long in the tooth, *Prophecy* mixes the same blend of space combat and twisty-turny plot development that made the original games so endearing. It's got everything you want from a space combat game – apart from X-Wings, TIE-Fighters and a bloke in a mask with asthma and a lightsaber.

PCZVERDICT

80%



Hardened wargame fans will lap up Sid's faithful table-top sim.

SID MEIER'S GETTYSBURG

★ £14.99 • EA Classics • Out now

TECH SPECS:

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P90 Memory 16Mb RAM

Sid Meier is a genius at devising strategy games, but his wargames have always been too deep to appeal to all but the most hardened table-top melée fans. *C&C* aficionados will balk at the complex methods required to crush an opposing army, but fans of the genre will revel in all it has to offer. While it's not for everyone, *Sid Meier's Gettysburg* is absorbing and fulfilling once you've done your time and learnt the ropes.

PCZVERDICT

77%



Tank Platoon II offers superbly detailed visuals with a 'full-on' sim experience.

TECH SPECS

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P90 Memory 16Mb RAM **WE SAY** P166 essential; 3D accelerator card recommended



Sitting in a megaton piece of metal, dodging shell fire, A-10s and mines might not sound like everyone's idea of a good time. Until, that is, you come across a dozen or so infantry armed with only assault rifles and the odd hand grenade – then the fun really starts.

To describe *M1 Tank Platoon II* merely as a tank simulator would be a gross injustice. To all intents and purposes, it's a modern warfare simulator, and a superbly detailed one at that. Whether you play from inside a tank or opt to sit back barking orders, it's thoroughly absorbing. But it's a heavy-duty war simulation and won't appeal if you like your wargames a little more light-hearted.

PCZVERDICT

81%



Lands Of Lore: Guardians Of Destiny looks dated, but still plays well.

LANDS OF LORE: GUARDIANS OF DESTINY

£14.99 • EA Classics • Out now

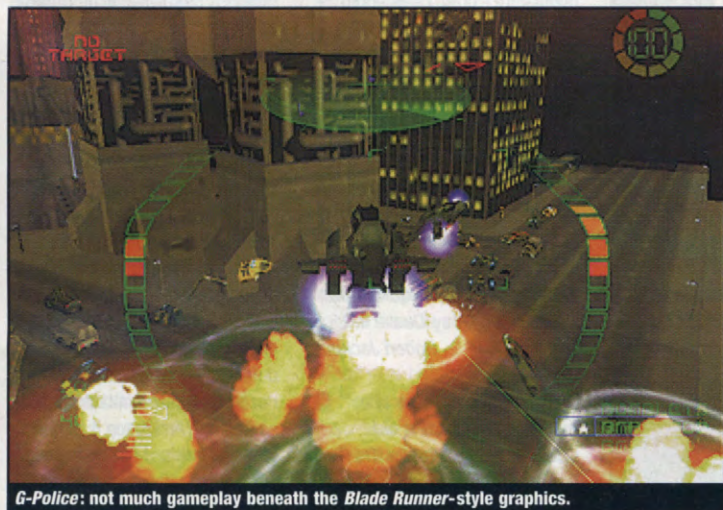
TECH SPECS:

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P90 Memory 16Mb RAM

PCZONE RECOMMENDED Once strictly the realm of long-haired, yellow-fingernailed, Pratchett-reading heavy metal fans, role-playing games are becoming a lot more popular as advances in 3D technology and more accessible formats are developed in an effort to broaden their appeal. That said, *Lands Of Lore II* is distinctly old-school in appearance, although it makes up for this with engrossing gameplay. Hardened RPG fans may leap up and down at the thought of yet another big fantasy world to explore, but the rest of us may be better off playing *Final Fantasy VII* (PCZ #66, 93%) or the fantastic *Zelda: Ocarina Of Time* on the N64 while we wait for the likes of Infogrames' innovative *Silver*, EA's keenly awaited *Ultima: Ascension* and Gremlin's highly anticipated *Soulbringer*.

PCZVERDICT

80%



G-Police: not much gameplay beneath the Blade Runner-style graphics.

G-POLICE

£12.99 • Argentum/Psygnosis • Out now

TECH SPECS:

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133 Memory 16Mb RAM **ALSO REQUIRES** 3D accelerator card

G-Police was originally a joint PlayStation/PC release and was one of the first games to take advantage of 3D hardware acceleration. But its amazingly stylish good looks concealed the fact that it lacked content.

The futuristic, *Blade Runner*-esque visuals, coloured lighting and smoke effects and thumping soundtrack may have successfully wooed console owners by the thousand, but they didn't – and still don't – justify buying a PC costing six or seven times as much as a console to play it. The control system is quite clearly designed with the PlayStation's controller in mind and the missions are largely unimaginative and repetitive.

PCZVERDICT

65%



F1 '97 boasts tasty visuals and a user-friendly arcade mode, but lacks detail.

FORMULA 1 '97

£12.99 • Argentum/Psygnosis • Out now

TECH SPECS:

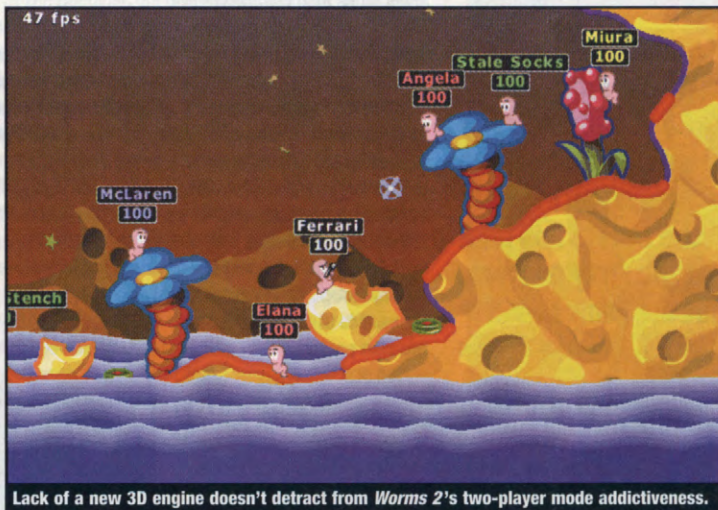
MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P100 Memory 16Mb RAM **WE SAY** 3D card recommended

PCZONE RECOMMENDED Seemingly a million miles from the much revered *F1GP2*, *Formula 1 '97* was a slick blend of sexy, detailed visuals coupled with an accessible and user-friendly arcade mode that allowed mere mortals to career around official F1 circuits at 200mph.

Although there is a simulation mode available for those who like a real challenge, there's little scope for developing a pit stop strategy, and fanatical F1 racing fans may find that *F1 '97* lacks the attention to detail and 'grease monkey' ethic of Geoff Crammond's now aged classic. That said, if you can forgive the at times 'quirky' AI and out-of-date drivers, teams and livery, there's enough to keep you at it for hours.

PCZVERDICT

80%



Lack of a new 3D engine doesn't detract from Worms 2's two-player mode addictiveness.

WORMS 2

£12.99 • MicroProse/PowerPlus • Out now

TECH SPECS:

MINIMUM SYSTEM Processor P133 Memory 16Mb RAM

PCZONE RECOMMENDED The original *Worms* (PCZ #33, 84%) was in many ways a triumph of gameplay over graphics and proved to be one of the most addictive games ever conceived when played against a chum.

Worms 2, the much-lauded sequel, offered slightly tidier graphics, 60 new weapons and even more fun-filled surprises that enhanced the still addictive gameplay, though it was essentially the same game with relatively few new tweaks. On budget, at least, this doesn't seem to matter as much as it did, and if you've yet to discover the charm of *Worms*, this is the version to buy.

PCZVERDICT

80%

FEEDBACK

Instead of just letting you run riot and slag off our reviews, *Richie Shoemaker* has decided to fight back

IT'S YOUR SHOUT!

Feedback is here to offer you, the player, a platform to voice your opinions on any of the games reviewed in *PC ZONE* over the last three months. Whether you want to sing a game's praises or simply give it a verbal beating, we want to hear from you. Remember to keep your comments between 50 and 150 words and include your name, address and age.

WRITE TO Feedback, *PC ZONE*, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ

E-MAIL Alternatively, e-mail them to us at letters.pczzone@dennis.co.uk with 'Feedback' in the subject line.

“Why is Duke Nukem 3D so popular? It's crap! It may be fun when you explode the toilets and look at the dirty posters, but the game is dull”

ROBERT JACKMAN

SIN

REVIEWED Issue 70, December
SCORE 91%

What we thought

PCZONE CLASSIC “There's always something going on, and the plot constantly encourages you to make further progress. And you get to shoot people in the head.”

What you think

“After *Half-Life*, I thought I'd had enough of 3D shooters – but then came *SIN*. I had my doubts because other magazines slated it, but to my surprise it's a top-notch shooter – with the patch, that is. The single-player is far better than I expected – not quite on a par with *Half-Life*, but it's in multiplayer that it really shines. The levels are all well thought-out, each with its own theme. The Net play is also fluid: I get lower pings than with *Quake II* or *Half-Life*, but be prepared – the textures need a lot of memory.”

Computer Boy

Comment

As was obvious in last month's *Supertest*, *SIN* is a game you either love or hate. I hated it, but Chris loved it, and as he's the editor that means it's 'officially great'. I have to admit, though, that I'm looking forward to the *Wages Of Sin* mission pack.

THIEF: THE DARK PROJECT

REVIEWED Issue 72, January
SCORE 90%

What we thought

PCZONE CLASSIC “Because of the slower pace and less combat-oriented nature of the game, it almost crosses boundaries at times, becoming more adventure game than action.”

What you think

“Now, this is what I call a game! No more hopelessly walking into rooms, pumping people with bullets 40 times and hoping they're dead. At last, a first-perspective game that allows you to use your brains! I was at the edge of my seat all the way through. There's so much attention to detail and the levels are incredibly varied.”

Kirk Wagstaff

Comment

Unlike Keith Pullin, you clearly emerged relatively unscathed. His verdict was: “Great game, but bloody difficult.”

DUKE NUKEM 3D

REVIEW Issue 63, May 98 (budget)
SCORE 83%

What we thought

PCZONE RECOMMENDED “Duke is a brilliant game that beats



Duke 3D: shootin' and swearin' a speciality. Bang! Oh, bother!

Quake in many areas. But why, oh why, couldn't we have the Atomic Edition, which includes the excellent *Plutonium Pak* mission disc?”

What you think

“Why is *Duke Nukem 3D* so popular? It's crap! I was bored after two minutes. To any *PC ZONE* readers out there who are thinking about buying it, I have one word: DON'T! You just go around shooting people and swearing. There's no adventure in it. It may be fun when you explode the toilets and look at the dirty posters, but the game is dull. I can't see *Duke Nukem 4Ever* being any better. If you want a shoot 'em up, buy *Quake II*.”

Robert Jackman

Comment

Clearly the ramblings of a madman. *Duke 3D* is old. Comparing it to *Quake II* is like comparing a 65-year-old Brigitte Bardot to Cameron Diaz. And there are still people with PCs barely able to run the original *Quake*, let alone the 3D-accelerated sequel.

DUNE 2000

REVIEWED Issue 70, December
SCORE 62%

What we thought

“*Dune 2000* is substandard. As an updated *Dune 2* it's fine. If that was Westwood's aim in developing the game, they have succeeded. But maybe they should have set their sights higher and created a sequel. They've had long enough...”

What you think

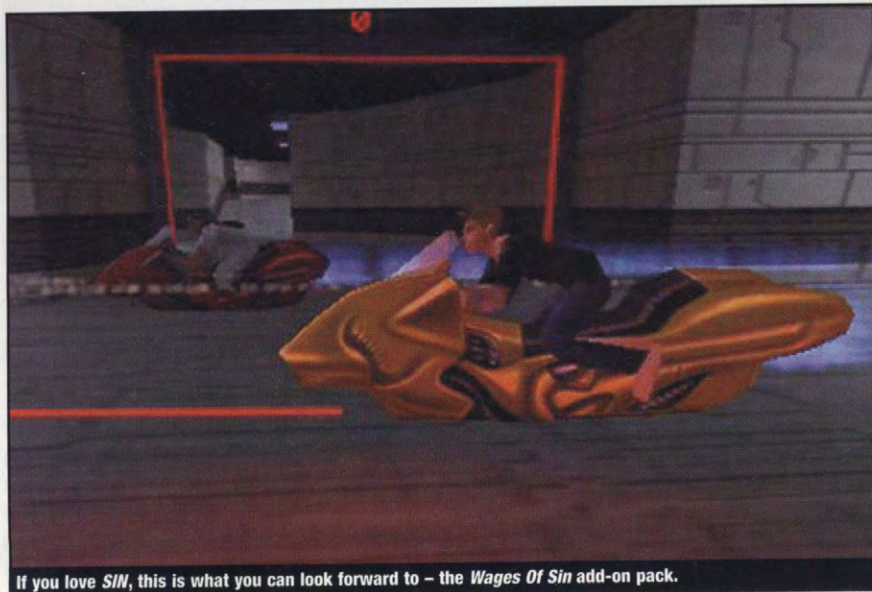
“I'm fed up with people slating this game – it's nothing like *Red Alert* for a start! In *Red Alert*, you can make your base as big as you want and have as many power stations, turrets, air strips and factories as you see fit. In *Dune 2000*, you're given a minimum of space to build your base – it's up to you to configure the base to its maximum production level.”

“You also said that all Westwood had done was “meddle with the missions a bit”. Rubbish! I found myself adopting strategies I'd never dreamt of before. In the Harkonnen seventh mission I was fighting for survival, having to watch where every Solaris went on repairing vehicles, structures, defences – and fending off dozens of Atreides attacks at the same time! And to top it all, there was an Atreides base opposite my camp where they pumped out tanks. I had to defend myself against Ornithopters with turrets, build walls to shut out the Sardaukar and all the while think about an attack... in short, it's amazing.”

Simon Gould

Comment

You are obviously easily pleased. The simple fact is that next to *Total Annihilation* and *Dark Reign*, *Dune 2000* is ugly, unsophisticated and twice as expensive. The AI may be better than *Dune 2* and *Red Alert* but those are no longer benchmark titles. The best thing about *Dune 2000* is its



If you love *SIN*, this is what you can look forward to – the *Wages Of Sin* add-on pack.

ease of use and the well-balanced units – which there aren't enough of. Still, if you like it, that's fine by us.

UNREAL
REVIEWED Issue 65, July
SCORE 93%

What we thought

PCZONE CLASSIC "Okay, we'll say it again: no, it isn't better than *Quake II*. *Deathmatch* lets it down. In single-player mode, however, it's perhaps the slickest, most engrossing piece of entertainment you'll encounter this year."

What you think

★ "I bought *Unreal* after a friend said it was better than *Quake II*. Bollocks! *Quake II* pisses all over *Unreal*. However, it is strange that I find myself going back to *Duke 3D* time and time again."

Moby

Comment
Unlike some people...

HERETIC II
REVIEW Issue 72, January
SCORE 83%

What we thought

PCZONE RECOMMENDED "*Heretic II* is a welcome departure from the glut of first-person shooters flooding the market and introduces us to a character who might just go on to be a star in his own right. But, ultimately, it stands out as a missed opportunity and a flawed masterpiece."

What you think

★ "How could you only give *Heretic II* 83%? It is, without doubt, one of the greatest games ever and definitely the greatest action game. How can you rate *Tomb Raider III* higher? *Heretic II* is better in all departments (accept that Corvus isn't Lara). In fairness, you were right about the delay with the controls, but it's not too much of a problem, and I think your complaint about the lack of different enemies was unfounded – it helped to keep a strong storyline focused, instead of destroying it with too many different things. Maybe we'll see more enemies in an add-on (hint, hint). Get this game, people, it ROCKS."

Karl Daly (aka DeLad)

Comment
What the hell's wrong with 83%? It's a damn good score, and for fans of the *Tomb Raider* series, *Heretic II* is a fine investment. If you read our Reviews intro (on page 69), it says games that

score between 80 and 89% are 'excellent games of their type, and if you're a fan of the genre they're well worth buying'. In *Heretic II*'s case, it's the perspective and control system that make it one for fans only, even though it may be deeper and more rewarding in the long run.

HALF-LIFE
REVIEWED Issue 71, Xmas
SCORE 95%

What we thought

PCZONE CLASSIC "The *Quake* engine has been stretched to its limit and *Half-Life* has something for everyone. It stays resident in the brain for some time, with rapid eye movement remaining a problem for a good couple of hours after playing, and sinister tentacles invading your consciousness. *Half-Life* is a virtual world of horror and pain and it toys with your mind."

What you think

★ "*Half-Life* is one of the best games I have ever played – for the first two-thirds. The real-world setting and human opposition set it apart from every other shoot 'em up. However, once I entered the border world, Xen, I immediately lost interest.

"Why, after making 70 per cent of the best game ever, did Valve find it necessary to fall into the 'alien world' setting – used by nearly every other FPS? It was incredibly disappointing after shooting it out with tanks."

Hulme

Comment
We agree. But there was more in that 70 per cent than most games have in 100 per cent.

What you think

★ "Is it possible for me to describe my feelings about *Half-Life* in under 150 words? To do so, I'd have to attach a supersonic speaker to all the tallest buildings on Earth and scream loudly through a



Half-Life: it's "ethnologically brilliant", apparently.



Baldur's Gate doesn't have the depth of *Ultima Online*.

BALDUR'S GATE

REVIEWED Issue 73, February
SCORE 85%

What we thought

PCZONE RECOMMENDED "*Baldur's Gate* is a very competent game which has weeks of addictive gameplay in store for those willing to spend enough time with it to appreciate its hidden depths."

What you think

★ "*Baldur's Gate* – only 85%? It is the best RPG for many a moon and a definite classic. I suspect the reviewer was either put off by the AD&D engine or the 2D graphics, but to give it a lower score than *Diablo* (PCZ #48, 88%) or *Fallout 2* (PCZ #71, 86%), both of which are fine games, is laughable. Despite being the most ground-breaking RPG for a long time, it was given a measly two-page review, while any 3D action clone usually warrants four pages or more.

"I am slightly biased because I enjoyed the old D&D games, such as *Eye Of The Beholder*, but consulting the charts for Jan/Feb, it seems a lot of other people agree with me."

Steve Mounce

Over to you, Chris:

Baldur's Gate is not a classic RPG, in my opinion, because it doesn't do anything I haven't seen before. But it is, of course, an immensely enjoyable game – hence the score of 85%.

The use of AD&D rules didn't put me off in the slightest, as the 'guts' of the AD&D engine are completely transparent to those who don't wish to get involved in such intricacies – a point I made clear in my review. First-person shoot 'em ups tend to get more coverage in *ZONE* because they are always at the top of our readers' Most Wanted lists, and so our editorial coverage reflects that.

On a related note, I will admit that *Ultima Online* has set such ridiculously high standards for role-playing games that any new RPG will struggle to compete. If you haven't played it, do so now and then refer back to my comments here.

Chris Anderson

microphone: "Absolutely brilliant!" The game sucks you in and will not let you go until you have seen every alien, every texture, every weapon and every area of the Black Mesa Research Facility. It has an involving, relevant plot and brilliant graphics, even on my P200 MMX with no hardware acceleration. And the AI! God! The military people throw grenades, work in groups, hide, run away, everything! It has brilliant sound, graphics, music,

atmosphere, AI, gameplay, gameplay and, of course, gameplay. If you don't own this game already, you are missing out on one of the most ethnologically brilliant pieces of software this century."

Phillip Whitehouse

Comment
"Ethnologically brilliant"? You've obviously moved on from looking up words like 'parp' and 'plums' in the dictionary. Still, you're right, I think. [X2]

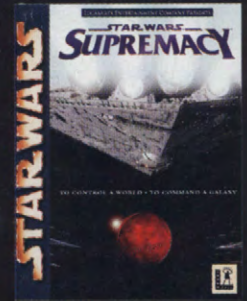
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
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Pity poor students. First they had their grants snatched away from them by the iron-clawed Thatcher and replaced with Student Debt Scams... ahem, loans, only to have the supposedly 'education-friendly' New Labour dump them with tuition fees as well.

With further education costing more than an arm and leg these days, it's a surprise anyone bothers anymore. Fortunately, though, it's not all doom and gloom once you're through the doors and 

GAMES

Cheap beer? Teen totty on tap? Twenty working

Students' work form the game design course at Bournemouth University.



Bournemouth University's campus. Its most important facility – the student bar – is on the right, just past the blonde.

“With further education costing more than an arm and leg these days, it’s a surprise anyone bothers anymore. Fortunately, though, it’s not all doom and gloom once you’re through the doors and on campus”



ACADEMY

hours a week? And learning how to design games? It can only happen at university, as *Adam Phillips* discovers

THEY SAY THE DEAD
KNOW NO PAIN...

"Soul Reaver looks like being one of the best designed games of '99. The art is out of this world!"

C&VG

"Best of all, the transition between planes involves the scenery morphing from one guise to the next before your very eyes...Astounding!"

OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION

"If its a cool game overflowing with great new ideas you're after, our money's on Soul Reaver"

PLAYSTATION PLUS



THINGS ARE
ABOUT TO
CHANGE



LEGACY of KAIN
SOUL REAVER



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QUAKER NOTES

Universities aren't the only places offering expert advice on game design. If you want to create your own *Quake* levels, check out Bilston College



While the likes of Dundee and Derby offer all-singing, all-dancing examples of comprehensive game design-related qualifications, there are also signs of smaller, more focused courses springing up round the country.

While some may argue that they don't have much to offer ambitious students who want to make serious headway in the software industry, these courses do seem to be making genuine progress.

Bilston College in the West Midlands is currently running an experimental course that offers tuition in designing *Quake* levels.

Using *Qool*, the course's lecturer, Darren Pearce – a man so dedicated to level design that we're tempted to slap him in our 'Obsessed' pages – hopes to see his experiment turn into a fully-



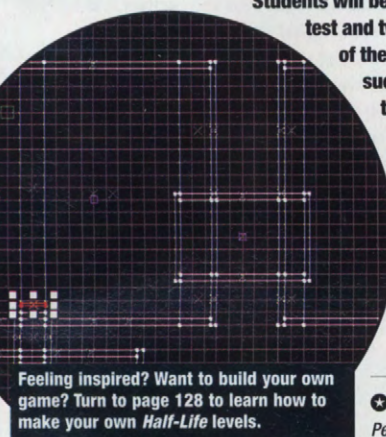
Lecturer Darren Pearce plans to develop his current classes in building *Quake* levels into a course on 3D level design and construction techniques.

fledged course. He enthuses: "The course I'm going to offer is called 3D level design and construction techniques. To begin with, it will teach the basics of level design.

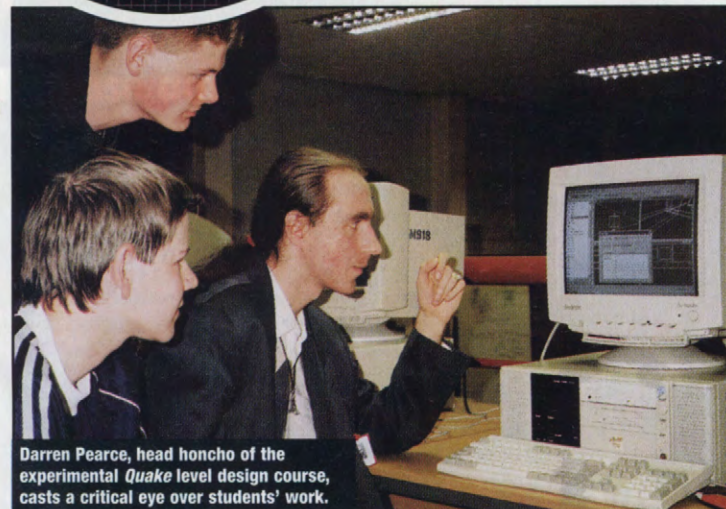
Students will be able to design their own levels, and test and tweak them while learning about some of the problems inherent in level design, such as leaks. The course will explain all the jargon, as well as covering the technical terms."

There may be sniggers from the back, but the experimental version of the course has already attracted more than 30 people and the likes of *Elite* and *Particle Systems* have been in to give lectures. Oh, and one of Pearce's students ended up working as game designer on *I-War*.

✪ For more details on the course, contact Darren Pearce on 01902 821000.



Feeling inspired? Want to build your own game? Turn to page 128 to learn how to make your own *Half-Life* levels.



Darren Pearce, head honcho of the experimental *Quake* level design course, casts a critical eye over students' work.

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- [Alumni](#)

- [Student Services](#)
- [Student Association](#)
- [News](#)
- [Events Diary & Calendar](#)
- [University Intranet](#)

The Intranet is presently only available via University campus machines.

University of Abertay Dundee, Bell Street, DUNDEE, DD1 1ERF
Tel: +44(0)1392 308000 Fax: +44(0)1392 308077

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You can look up Dundee's website at www.tay.ac.uk.

← on campus. Discount beer, short working hours (until you start cramming in panic in the final year), and fantastically huge holidays to go on work experience at McDonalds (remember that student loan, folks) or to go backpacking round Europe (for those with well-off parents).

For the gamesheads among you with a burning desire to rub shoulders

chuckle smugly about porn courses (there's one in America, incidentally), and degrees in soap opera studies.

But cynics should take a long, hard look at the success story of film schools if they need any evidence of what a qualification can do for you in a volatile and fiercely competitive arena – you'll soon see those smug grins wiped off their faces.

“Cynics should look at the success of film schools if they need evidence of what a qualification can do for you in a volatile and fiercely competitive arena”

with coding gods and land a job at a top games company at some point in the future, you can now indulge in all of the above and learn how to slap together games in the process. Not bad, eh?

Most of us are already aware of the game design-related courses emerging in the education sector and people still snigger at the thought of a 'games degree' in the same way they

When film schools first surfaced, they faced a similar queue of Doubting Thomases, but they have become a breeding ground for new talent and are now regarded as a valid starting point for anyone wanting to be the next Martin Scorsese. Or Russ Meyer.

From Dundee to Derby, game design-related courses are starting to establish themselves in much the

← same way as film schools once did. And, according to the people who run the courses, the games industry needs them.

"Many games companies have been founded by hard-working entrepreneurs working in isolation because of a lack of formal education opportunities in these areas," explains Dave Cook, senior lecturer at Derby University, which offers a course

focusing on digital entertainment. "If a company required a computer graphics programmer, they had to employ postgraduates from a limited number of institutions, which in turn drove up the cost.

"These graduates typically lacked the cross-disciplinary skills required, so the search was on for suitable talented individuals. At the same time, there was growing student

demand for such courses at a lower level. We can now offer longer periods of study at undergraduate level, which allows students to develop a broad range of skills."

A BIT OF EVERYTHING

It's a wholly logical step to give students a wide set of skills in a rapidly evolving arena. The syllabus for Dundee University's computer

games technology course reflects this approach, with subjects such as web authoring, object-oriented programming and computer graphics spread over four years. You can even learn Japanese if you fancy hopping on a plane to the land of Nintendo at the end of your education.

Perhaps more important to game design-related courses is the software industry's desire for potential

ON COURSE

Your guide to some of the courses vying for the attention of budding game designers

All courses generally require the following qualifications: Higher or A Level passes in mathematics or physics. For art-based courses you'll need Higher or A Level passes in art, design or music. Phone your university of choice for full details.



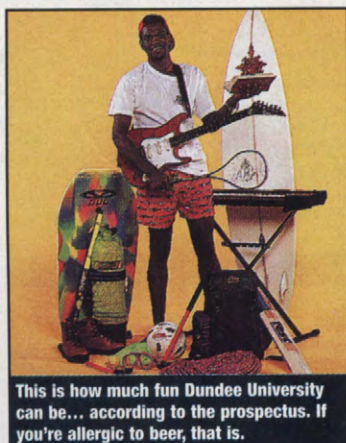
Designer at work.



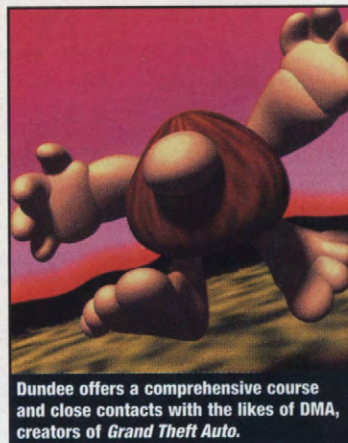
Programmer at lunch.



Software elements such as game characters and animated sequences feature in Bournemouth University's selection of animation courses.



This is how much fun Dundee University can be... according to the prospectus. If you're allergic to beer, that is.



Dundee offers a comprehensive course and close contacts with the likes of DMA, creators of Grand Theft Auto.

BOURNEMOUTH UNIVERSITY

Courses Three-year BA (Hons) course in computer visualisation and animation, and one-year MA and MSc courses in digital entertainment systems (games and entertainment rides), computer animation and digital special effects.

Syllabus sample BA (Hons) course in computer visualisation and animation. Modelling, animation and rendering techniques, programming with an animation scripting language, algorithm design and C programming, motion studies, digital media applications and more.

Contact Tel 01202 595553

UNIVERSITY OF ABERTAY, DUNDEE

Courses BSc (Hons) computer games technology, BA computer arts, BSc (Hons) computer games technology with Japanese and BA computer arts with Japanese.

Syllabus sample BSc (Hons) games technology. For the first three years you'll study a mass of subjects, including computer games, virtual environments, creativity, programming, software engineering and mathematical modelling. The fourth year is spent on a games development project, personal study and a thesis, plus a set of personally chosen studies in, for example, entrepreneurship.

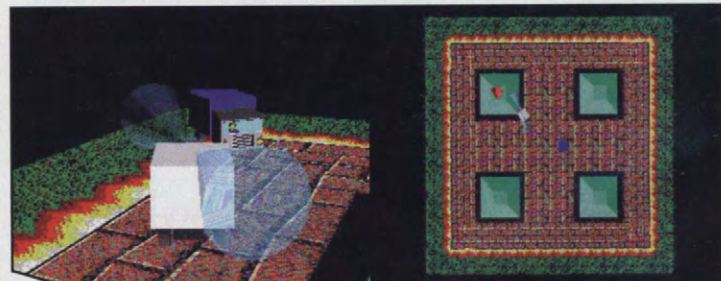
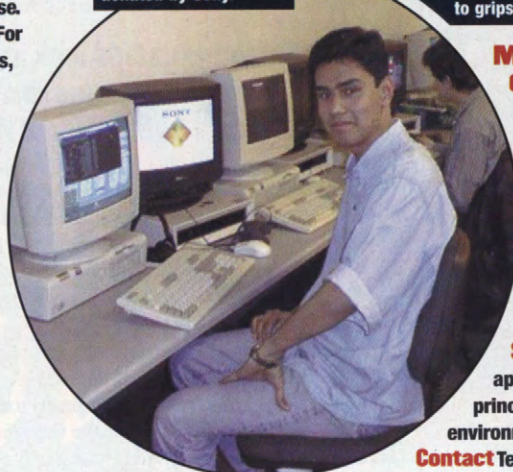
Contact Tel 01382 308000

UNIVERSITY OF DERBY

Courses BSc (Hons) digital entertainment (from September 1999), MSc computing (vision and visualisation) and BSc (Hons) computer studies (visualisation).

Contact Tel 01332 622221

Middlesex University's PlayStation-based Net Yaroze lab was kindly donated by Sony.



As part of their programming interactive graphical systems option, students get to grips with the basics of game design. This is Car Tag by Matthew Follett.

MIDDLESEX UNIVERSITY

Courses BSc (Hons) applied computing, which includes an optional five-module graphics strand, one of which focuses on games programming.

Contact Tel 0181 362 5000

UNIVERSITY OF TEESIDE

Courses MSc computer aided graphical technology applications, BSc in interactive computer entertainment, BA and MA in computer animation and BSc and MSc in virtual reality.

Syllabus sample Computer aided graphical technology applications. Creative design and animation techniques, design principles, high-level language programming, graphical computing environments, digital visual effects, graphical mathematics and more.

Contact Tel 01642 342671

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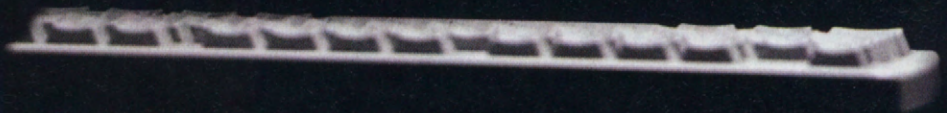
Release date: March 1999



EIDOS
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Championship Manager™3. Developed by Sports Interactive Limited. © and Published by Eidos Interactive 1999. All Rights Reserved.



Course

How to Apply...

M

Academic Admissions

Diploma in Business Administration

MIDDLESEX UNIVERSITY

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Academic **What's New:**

Business

Middlesex's role in the business community, services for commerce and industry, business and commercial activities.

Community

Partnerships, links and services for the local community in north London, the university's communities of staff, students and alumni.

Middlesex helps to meet the shortage of nurses

Full bursaries offered to many candidates

New Performing Arts Research Centre established at Middlesex

New Research Centre to be launched

"Pooping Out Pollution"

Brian Shutes gives his Inaugural Professional Lecture

Cooperation with Coca-Cola

Business School signs Memorandum of Cooperation with Coca-Cola

Student wins first prize in national competition

Tawza Ioannou wins prestigious Simon Jersey tapestry award

Students focus on international business

Employers to meet potential high-fliers at next International Business Weekend

Round the world charity yacht race

Professor completes BT Global Challenge

Tying the knot with the College of North West London

Middlesex signs Associate College Agreement

Millennium Award for Enfield and Haringey

£620,000 to benefit individuals in Enfield and Haringey

Last updated 6 February 1999 - © Middlesex University

If Middlesex tickles your fancy, point your web browser at: <http://vaxb.mdx.ac.uk>.

Academic

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Academic : Courses : Undergrad : Computing, IT, Mathematics and Statistics

Undergraduate

Applied Computing (COM)

Study of the use of the computer as a tool in a variety of application areas leads to specialisation in computer graphics, human-computer interaction, or multimedia and Internet Technologies.

- BSc Honours Applied Computing (with one other subject)
- BSc Honours Applied Computing
- BSc Honours Applied Computing
- BSc Honours Applied Computing

A single honours degree programme follows the wide ranging aim of successfully fitting software to a specified application. The three themes provide choice for specialist students but are also relevant to students on joint honours degree programmes with interests in multimedia or image processing.

Entry level computer programming and systems development modules are either foundations for further study, or equally valid if taken on their own.

Modules

Introduction to Computing . Introduction to Computer Programming . Conceptual Mathematics for Computing . Computer Architecture and Operating Systems . Applied Programming . Multimedia Technologies . Building Object Oriented Interfaces with C++ . Human-Computer Interaction: Users, Tasks and Design . Fundamentals of Computer Graphics . Multimedia Programming . Multimedia . HCI: Understanding the Human Element . HCI Task Analysis and Interface Building . HCI and Graphic Design . HCI Evaluation Methodologies . Computer Graphic Rendering . Raster Graphic Systems . Computer Graphic Animation and Simulation . Distributed Multimedia Programming . Programming Interactive Graphical Systems.

Modules a go-go: Middlesex's applied computing courses.

employees who can boast cast-iron qualifications. These days, bashing out code in the confines of your bedroom isn't necessarily going to get you a foot in the door - or even an interview.

"All qualifications do - and it's a terrible thing to say if someone is working really hard - is make sure you get put to the top of the interview pile," admits Peter Molyneux, the resident game design guru at Lionhead. "Then it's up to you in the interview. I receive 50-60 CVs a day and I just don't have time to read them through to the end. I end up looking at the qualifications and saying: 'Oh, there's a First here - it's worth reading the rest of the CV'."

Having said that, Molyneux still has reservations about game design-related courses in general. "The worrying thing about these specific courses is that the industry is changing so rapidly. Three years ago, you'd have 3D, 2D and some kind of platform game module in the courses, but now you wouldn't even touch on that for a second."

Molyneux wonders if a degree in maths, or maths combined with philosophy ("because you have to do a lot centred round logic, which is an interesting combination for game design"), would provide budding games programmers with a more valuable education.

Others are less sceptical. Dave Jones, head honcho at DMA Design in Scotland and a graduate of Dundee University, doesn't see the rapidly changing nature of the games industry as a big issue.

"Techniques and formal methods are the main items to learn," he says. "Specialising in an area such as advanced 3D techniques comes from the experience of working in a company for many years."

GAMEBOY ON

Jones has a surprising suggestion for universities: "I'm pushing for Gameboys to be used as much as possible in these courses. It has been a huge success for years - it lets you try out a small project, focus more on design, and gets you up and running

very quickly. The essence of gaming can be captured on a Gameboy just as well as on the next super-3D high-tech console thing."

The ideal solution to some of the industry's mixed feelings about the structure of game design courses is surely to offer their support to the education sector. While the games

"The universities' approach is working - Codemasters, VIS Interactive, Bizarre Creations, Sony and other high-flying firms boast graduates from this new breed of course"

lecturer at the National Centre for Computer Animation at Bournemouth University, has very clear ideas about what is needed: "More donations in kind would be welcome, but there seem to be few, if any, tax concessions to encourage firms to offer support.

"A very useful way in which companies can help is to donate copies of their games to us so that we can use them in teaching and research. Placements and student sponsorships would be very welcome, as would prizes to be awarded for exceptional student work."

INDUSTRY ADVICE

Bell also has plans to set up an Industrial Advisory Board to create a formal route for the industry to advise universities on course development.

Molyneux agrees that this is a vital step: "More universities should seek the advice of people in the industry for help with the syllabus, and that should not be something that's done once every three years - it should be done annually. They should be constantly updated, even for courses that are ongoing, rather than setting a syllabus for the whole three years.

"Some of the things being taught are wrong and education should address that. The industry should make itself more available, as well."

While the way forward for the education sector is clear enough, how useful have game design-related courses been to those who have already completed them? Judging from universities' lists of successful graduates, their approach is working - Codemasters, VIS Interactive, Bizarre Creations, Sony and other high-flying firms boast graduates from this new breed of course.

PC ZONE can't help but feel that in five years' time, such 'game schools' will be considered as important in the games industry as film schools are in the world of cinema. **[EW]**

industry may have opinions aplenty, do any companies actually put their money where their mouth is and actively help the education sector?

"While we don't have an appropriate placement scheme at the moment, companies seem fairly supportive," offers Peter Passmore, senior lecturer at Middlesex University, which offers a BSc in applied computing with a game programming module. "Sony donated a lab's worth of Net Yaroze machines, which was good news for us."

Other forms of direct support include lectures by industry speakers and recruiting visits, but do the universities think the industry could be doing more to help them create the next generation of gaming heroes? "Yes" was the answer from everyone we spoke to.

Dr Stephen Bell, senior

Netscape: Bournemouth University Prospectus

Location: <http://www.bournemouth.ac.uk/acad-depts/mao/prospectus/cva/index.html>

BA (Hons) Computer Visualisation and Animation

Computer Graphics is one of the most rapidly expanding areas of creative endeavour and technical design. suitably qualified professionals in this field remain in high demand both in the UK and abroad.

Bournemouth University is proud to be home to the National Centre for Computer Animation. With its extensive Centre's aim is to foster and encourage research and innovation in the application of computer animation and offers a programme of study which recognises the requirement for a synthesis of aesthetic practice with technical enabling students to become well rounded professionals.

Applicants will be required to demonstrate evidence of mathematical competency and visual awareness required to produce a portfolio of creative work at their interview.

Career Opportunities

Graduates of this course have been able to pursue careers in the field of graphics software development, multi-media, scientific visualisation, computer game design and many other related areas.

Course Content

Level 1

Principles of Computer Systems


Intro to Computer Graphic Systems

Mathematics for Computer Graphics

Visual Research 1

Computer Programming 1

Career prospects: Bournemouth's BA (Hons) course in computer visualisation and animation.



Stephen Bell: "Companies can help by donating copies of games for research."



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Official PlayStation
Magazine

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be watching it on the telly."

PlayStation
Pro

9/10

Time
Out

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A masterpiece."

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F-16
AGGRESSOR

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CHEATMASTER

Stuck on a game? Black clouds hovering gloomily over your head as you try to make some progress? Well lighten up! Here comes the **PC ZONE** team, beaming down like an intense ray of sunshine to blast away those cumulonimbus and nimbostratus and bring a golden glow to your gaming life...

IN TRUBS THIS MONTH...

- 114 CHEATMASTER**
If at first you don't succeed... cheat. Allow us to show you how it's done.
- 115 DEAR KEITH**
We know how frustrating it is to get stuck on a game. Which is why Keith Pullin's here to provide the answers.
- 116 ALPHA CENTAURI**
Hints, tips, advice, clues, whispers, allusions, prompts, pointers and pearls of wisdom to help you through the game.
- 118 BALDUR'S GATE**
Hacking, slashing and cheating his way through this year's epic RPG, everything Andrew Wright does, he does it for you.
- 124 THIEF**
If you aim to get through it, you could do a lot worse than to read what we wrote about it before you set off.
- 128 HOW TO...**
Part 2 of our guide to making your very own *Half-Life* levels.
- 135 DEAR WAZZA**
Need a hand with a technical query that's bugging you? Our tech-head Wazza is here to help.
- 138 WATCHDOG**
Not satisfied with the service you've received? Pissed off with being fobbed off? Allow **PC ZONE** to take up your case.

YOUR HOSTS



Warren Christmas



Keith Pullin



Adam Phillips



Andrew Wright



Phil Wand

CHEAT MASTER

Get rich quick; be like Beckham (or maybe not); improve your boy racing skills... It's all here

★ CHEATMEISTER Keith Pullin

ON THE CD



We've got over 1200 games tips and solutions squeezed on to this month's CD. Check out the Editorial section of your CD-ROM browser to track them down

NEED HELP?

If your problem's game-related, get organised and...

WRITE TO Dear Keith/CheatMaster, PC ZONE, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ

EMAIL letters.pczone@dennis.co.uk with 'Dear Keith' or 'CheatMaster' in the subject line.

WAR OF THE WORLDS GT Interactive

To activate the following codes, type them in on the 'battle' or 'war' map.

- ICOMEBACK** Show all research
- ATCH000** Destroy all Martians (battle map only)
- PUNYHUMANS** Destroy all humans (battle map only)
- YOULIKEIT** Boost efficiency to 100 per cent

KING'S QUEST: MASK OF ETERNITY Sierra

Access the game console by holding Shift, Ctrl and 7 at the same time. Don't worry about the password prompt, just hit Enter. You can now enter the following pearls of wisdom in lower case. When you're done, press Shift, Ctrl and 7 again to return to the game.

- noconcollide** Clipping mode (walk through walls etc)
- concollide** Toggle clipping mode off
- god** Take a wild guess!
- ungod** Return to normal

- teleport** Teleport to any point on the map
- bump** Edge forward through walls
- give[item]** Eg 'Give Dagger' - type in an item from the list below to add it to your inventory. NB: these are case sensitive
- Dagger** SmallAx
- BroadSword** Mace
- LakeSword** SkelKingSword
- BattleAx** WarHammer
- Pike** LongSword
- FlameSword** TempleSword
- SmCrossbow** AzrielHammer
- SmCpndCBow** ShortBow
- LongBow** CrossBow
- CpndCrossbow** FlameBow
- IceCrossbow** WeeperEyes
- DemonRocks** SkelBow
- SlmSlime** WitchBolt
- Lava** Fists
- Icicle Armour** LeatherGloves
- LeatherArmor** LeatherBoots
- ChainMailShirt** ChainMailGloves
- ChainMailSuit** PlateMail
- BronzePlate** FullArmor
- Helmet** TempleArmor
- GodArmor** (health and magic items) Mushroom
- SacredWater** Crystal
- ElixirOfLife** Clarity
- Invisible** Invulnerable
- Strength** RingOfDeadHero
- Ashes** Candle
- SilverCoins** MagicMap
- RopeAndHook** RingOfLight
- KeyToDeathMaze** IceShard
- Mold** BrokenShield
- HearingHorn** BirthdaySuit
- AntiPoisonFlower**
- GreenMushroomPiece**
- Rock** IronLock
- OakRoot** LodeStone
- CrystalPyramid** BlackDiamond
- AmberGlow** BasiliskTongue
- FireGem** PipeCap1
- PipeCap2** DragonKey
- RockKey** BlueAdamant
- Paddle** Feather
- GoodSkull** BadSkull
- RoundKey** SquareKey
- Ladle** hmhand
- Mask1** Mask2
- Mask3** Mask4
- Mask5** Piece1
- Piece2** Piece3
- Piece4** Scroll
- LadyBell** RustedLock
- KeepKey** StoneOrder
- MetalShaft** TruthKey
- LightKey** OrderKey
- MarbleTablet0** MaskMedalian
- Grail** Mask3B
- Piece5** UniHorn
- SpellPage** Mask1A
- Piece1A** DarkPyramid
- ShardFuse** MarbleTablet1
- MarbleTablet2** MarbleTablet3
- GriffRoomKey** GriffCageKey
- ClockShaft** HookDown
- HookUp** SpinningMask
- Orcbow** Spear
- IceLever** - Lucreto's sceptre
- LucretoFire** - Connor starts with no weapon or armour
- NoRanged** NoArmor

BLADERUNNER Virgin

An oldie, but still popular. For unlimited money, start a new game on the easy setting, and when McCoy stops in front of the animal store (Runciter's Animals) restart the game, again on easy. You should now have unlimited money - you can check by accessing the menu and looking at the money screen. If it shows infinity, you're laughing.

POWERSLIDE GT Interactive

We printed some cheats for this one a couple of months back, and damn good they were too. However, here's something extra we've found, enabling access to all levels. Just type in these names while on the 'sign in' screen:

- Jeff** Access advanced levels
- AaronFoo** Access expert levels
- Megasaxon** Access all levels and AI editor

MECHWARRIOR 2: GHOST BEAR'S LEGACY

Activision
Somehow we never got round to printing these cheats. Hold Alt, Ctrl and Shift, then type:

- Thundros** Infinite ammo
- Palex** Destroy targeted Mech
- Kent** Invincibility
- Clark** X-ray vision
- Kaboom** Blow up your enemies – and yourself, without the invulnerability code on

QUAKE II: GROUND ZERO

GT Interactive
Access the console using the ~ key and type in the following items with the 'give' command:

- ChainFist
- ETF Rifle
- Plasma Beam
- Prox Launcher
- Tesla
- Double Damage
- Hunter Sphere
- Defender Sphere
- Vengeance Sphere
- A-M Bomb
- IR Goggles
- Doppleganger
- Flechettes [ammo for ETF Rifle]
- Prox [ammo for Prox Launcher]

VIPER RACING

Sierra
As far as racers go, this one's pretty tough. Here are a few tips to give you that razor sharp driving edge...

- ➔ When starting a career concentrate on chassis and handling upgrades as opposed to speed and acceleration.
- ➔ Don't slam down the accelerator when the lights go green; take it easy and wait until the tyres take grip.
- ➔ In career mode, save the game after your last good result. This way, you can reload and buy different upgrades if the ones you've bought aren't up to scratch.
- ➔ If you don't win the league, you get to keep whatever money you've accumulated over the season. Stay in any division for a few seasons, winning a few races here and there, and you can stockpile loads of cash and buy better upgrades.

STAR WARS: SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE

Activision
'The Force' not helping? Try these:

- In-game Map** When on foot, hold crouch for 15 seconds
- Shield** When on foot, hold 'C' for five seconds
- Fly X-Wing** In the Skyhook battle level, hold 'C' for five seconds when you're flying the Outrider

Fly TIE Fighter Hold 'C' for five seconds when flying the X-Wing Fighter
Fly Outrider again Hold 'C' for five seconds when flying the TIE Fighter
R Testers ROCK Type this as your name at the start of the game for a level select
Use the name 'Credits' to watch the end sequence

STAR WARS: ROGUE SQUADRON 3D
Activision
Choose 'Settings' from the console, and then click on 'General'. Type the cheats where it says: "Enter Passcode Here." To cancel a passcode, simply click on it and press Shift and Del.

- IAMDOLLY** Unlimited lives
- TOUGHGUY** All power-ups (advanced blasters/seeker missiles etc)
- USEDAFORCE** More accurate shots

NUMBERTWO Infinite secondary weapons (missiles and bombs)
HIKEN Hidden secondary weapons
CREDITS Stylish credits appear, as in Star Wars movies

- LEIAWRKOUT** Activates force feedback for PC joysticks
- GUNDARK** Modifies force feedback control for PC joysticks
- CHICKEN** Play as an AT-ST
- DIRECTOR** View all the cut-scenes; select 'At the Movies' from the High Scores menu to activate
- MAESTRO** Listen to all the sound themes; select 'Concert Hall' from the High Scores menu to activate
- NEUC** Destroy all Imperial ships on the radar
- LOKJOT** Land and do repairs

FIFA 99

EA Sports
No cheats yet, but these hints should get you scoring goals.
➔ Confuse the opposition by altering team strategies constantly throughout a match.
➔ The F8 overhead view gives you the best angle, and is essential for intelligent, incisive play.
➔ Getting crosses in deep from the by-line is a great way to create chances, especially if you have a very attacking formation.
➔ Corner kicks should be taken low and very hard towards the near post. Stick a man in there and you should score maybe 50 per cent of the time. If you don't score straightaway, stay alert for rebounds.
➔ Master the flick-over and step-over nutmeg moves to win the Professional and World Class modes.
➔ Keep the ball in your opponent's half of the field and you'll get more than your share of goal-scoring chances.

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DEAR KEITH

Angry? Frustrated? Feel like you're about to blub? Don't worry, Keith Pullin's got the answers

GUNNING FOR YOU

Q Future Cop LAPD is driving me mad! Whatever I try, I wind up dying and back at the start. I once reached a huge monster at the end of the first stage, but my joystick freaked out and yet again I ended up a twisted wreck on the floor.

Paul Buckland, Worthing

A Couldn't agree with you more – it's an absolute pain in the backside getting through that first level. Take it slowly. Sometimes you can destroy enemies when they are just off the screen. As for the end-of-level monster, the idea is to sidestep behind the pillars to avoid incoming missiles, and then leap out and fire back when you get the chance. Keep doing that and eventually you'll reach the next stage.

PRECISION TIPPING

Q I'm trying to win a few races on CART Precision Racing but it seems my car just isn't up to the job (it's nothing to do with me, you know). Is there any set-up advice that can help me in my quest to become champion?

Alan Bray, Uttoxeter

A Oh, come on, you do have to take some responsibility – you are the driver, after all. My advice is to go for linear steering on road circuits with tight corners, and non-linear on ovals and road courses with big sweeping turns. Apart from that, always keep your eyes on the road.

GANGSTA TRIPPIN'

Q I've recently purchased Gangsters: Organised Crime and I'm having trouble getting to grips with the damn

thing. Have you got any tips or hints?

Paul Fannon, Ashford

A It's crucial that you get the right people in the right teams. The correct use of gangsters and their skills leads to a higher success rate. Good lieutenants can organise the team more effectively, enabling more orders to be performed and better people on each job. Hope that helps you.

PLAN OF ATTACK

Q Please help me. On the seventh disc of The X-Files, I've shot the cook, run away from Mulder, and now I can't lure him into that glass containment thingy. What shall I do?

Teresa Greer, Rochester

A As always, the solution is simple when you know how. Just throw the plan to Scully. She won't shoot you, and you win the game. Easy, eh?

CHICAGO BLUES

Q I was given Carmageddon II for Christmas and I'm stuck in Group 10 on The Bruise Brothers stage. What's the best vehicle to kill the police cars with? And how do you do it in less than five minutes? I hope you can help, because I'm so close to the end.

Colin Bertram, Bristol

A Vehicles aren't important on this stage. The best solution is to embark upon some high-speed car chases, and force the police into walls and other deadly traps. If you pick up the right power-ups and get down to some nifty driving, you can usually get them to trash themselves within four or five minutes.

MANUAL DEXTERITY?

Q I bought a game called Rival Realms which is pretty cool, but I don't know how to repair my ships. I have a harbour and everything, but they just don't want to be fixed. What I'm doing wrong?

Ben Howe, Suffolk

A I'd say you're suffering from cantreadmanualitis. If you click on the ship's power bar, it returns to the harbour and repairs itself.

WING PIECE

Q I'm having a few teething problems with Wing Commander: Prophecy. Firstly, I can't shoot any ships. Secondly, my wingmen are unwilling to assist me. I could certainly do with a hint or two.

Charles Alcock, Burnham-on-Sea

A You've got to remember that the enemy ships recharge their shields like you do, so unless you pump a few good shots in succession into them when their shields are down, you barely hurt them. Try targeting their engines too. This is the weakest area of the ship and is highly susceptible to missile strikes. As for your wingmen... My guess is dead men can't respond. Know what I mean?

LARA CHEATS

Q Is there a cheat for Tomb Raider III yet?

Amy Brown, York

A There sure is. Move your joypad (or keys – whatever) in the following directions (L=left, R=right) very quickly: L2, R2, L2, L2, R2, L2, R2, L2, R2, L2, L2, L2, R2, L2, R2, R2, R2, L2. Do it correctly and you can access any level in the game.

ALPHA CENTAURI

STRATEGY GUIDE

Britain once had an empire. And then she lost it. *Andrew Wright* shows you how to avoid the same fate

REVIEWED PCZ #74 SCORE 92%

For years, the uncrowned king of turn-based strategy games has been *Civilization*, but there's little doubt about the line of succession. *Alpha Centauri* has scores more units to build, dozens more winning strategies, and a wicked AI that gives even the most experienced solo player a bloody hard time.

What makes *Alpha Centauri* so fascinating is the added depth and the sheer range of strategic options on offer, none of which bog the game down or stop you getting to grips with the interface. As well as the usual path to victory by way of battering the opposition senseless with a huge array of weaponry, you can also win by building your way to complete domination of the planet, or by forging solid pacts and diplomatic alliances. You can even win by researching your way to transcendence, man's ultimate goal. But before you get even close, you have to get that first base up and running.

ESSENTIAL TACTICS

Some tactics are underused even by experienced players. Here are the most crucial ones

FLOODS OF TEARS

Lateral thinking works wonders: two or three sea formers can lower enemy bases into the sea by terraforming. You can also dig 'canals' for protection.



Handy if you run out of room. The formers on the left expand the faction's own island by terraforming, while those on the right lower the enemy's landscape.

WAYPOINTS

Set up waypoints for moving units. When the movement arrow is over a planned waypoint, just hit the spacebar.



Waypoints in action. Good for setting up patrol lines.

WAIT

Use cheap speeders in a stack to recce enemy territory one square at a time, then press 'W' for 'Wait' while you bring up the others.

FOREST FOR EVER!

Plant forests (Shift+F) in awkward squares. They produce balanced resources, and often expand by themselves, eliminating fungus. In other words, it's a cheap way of terraforming.



Forests provide good, balanced production.

PRIMARY DEFENDER

Stacking isn't particularly advantageous (defence points aren't combined), but if you have a unit with high defence in among them, use Ctrl+D to make that unit the primary defender.

TOUCHING BASE #1



Take time out to study the lie of the land – and get those pods and scouts moving.

TOUCHING BASE

The planet looks quiet enough, but you've got to defend yourself from random mindworm attacks as well as from the possibility of an aggressive faction landing close by. Build one unit to protect your base, and another to explore the map for your next base site.

To start with, your number one priority is population growth, because you need people to bring in resources, carry out research and build more bases. After all,

there's no use having mines if there's no one on hand to dig out the resources.

A word here about the blind research rule. The default is on, but if you want some say in how your faction develops, switch it off. One of your first tasks is to research Centauri Ecology (E1) so you can produce terraforming units and bump up nutrient production.

Look at the land around your home base and note which

squares are producing. Now exit the base screen and use Shift+R to look at each base square in turn and decide which ones you can improve with forests, farms, mines and solar energy collectors.

Aim for Recycling Tanks pretty quickly (you need D1 Biogenetics) as this adds an extra resource of each type to your base square production. If you're being left alone, the Weather Paradigm secret project speeds up terraforming and lets you build condensers. Each one gives you +1 nutrients and ups rainfall in the eight adjacent squares.

Never underestimate the value of nutrient production, even later in the game when you've got bases of even 20 population. Half your base squares should always be gathering nutrients, with the rest split evenly between minerals and energy.

Put up more bases as fast as you can. Start building colony pods double quick and don't worry about them overlapping. Each base has 21 squares to

TOUCHING BASE #2



Note that if an enemy unit – or even a friendly one – lands in a square, you won't be able to harvest what's there.



The Spartans invade the Gaians.

BUILDING BLOCKS

Apparently there are more than 32,000 different weapon, chassis, armour and special ability combinations, so there's no excuse not to have the right units in the right place. The workshop automatically produces the most useful units (unless you switch it off, of course), but it can't cover every eventuality.



Armoured sea formers are handy if worms or enemy ships are being a nuisance.



Need to expand quickly? Needlejets with colony modules are great for building bases quickly in far-flung spots.



One invaluable unit is the supply crawler, which can exploit distant resource-rich squares outside your base areas.

harvest and can survive on a third of that until much later on. Build smaller 'satellite' bases of two or three population to help support your military units. Clustered bases enable a rapid response if you're attacked.

There's always some blighter who wants to spoil the show, and it's likely to be the Spartans, Hive or Believers. Watch your back if one of them is next to you – they'll find any excuse to attack you, but if you can damage them enough they usually settle for a pact.

Useful techs to go for are B1 Industrial Base, which gives you synthmetal armour. On a big map, Doctrine: Mobility (E1) gives you two squares a turn movement. If you spot the chance to squash another faction early on, Applied Physics (C1) gives you lasers (Firepower 2). Social Psych (B1) isn't too appealing initially but it gives you a crack at some good stuff later. Whichever way you go, put some thought into it and stick to your plan as far as possible – dead end research is a waste of time and resources.

If you want to get ahead, it's better to stick to one path and go further along than to spread your research too broadly. If you're determined on a military campaign – or you've got nasty neighbours – don't just stop at lasers. By the time your units mass for the attack, your opponents will have the same. Go for Information Networks (D1) and

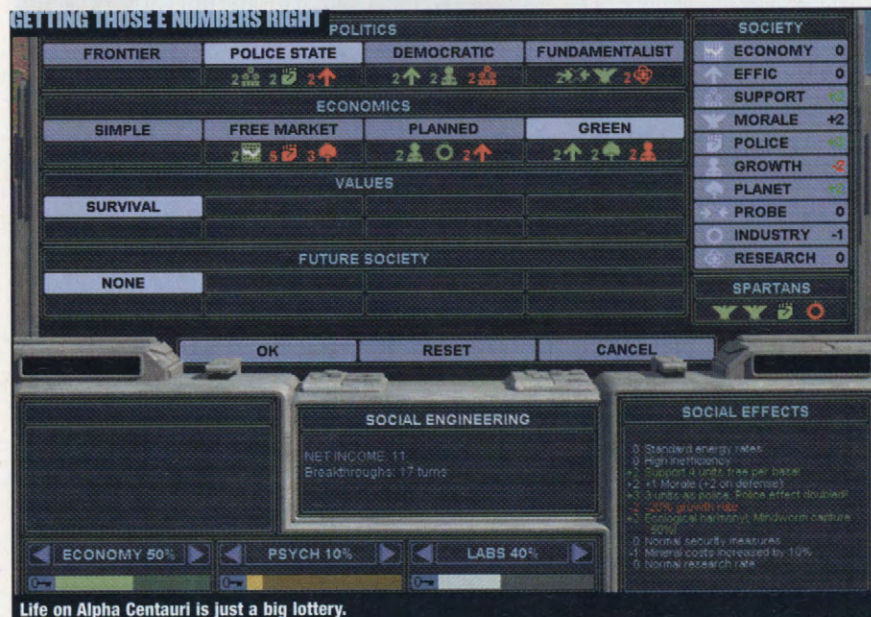
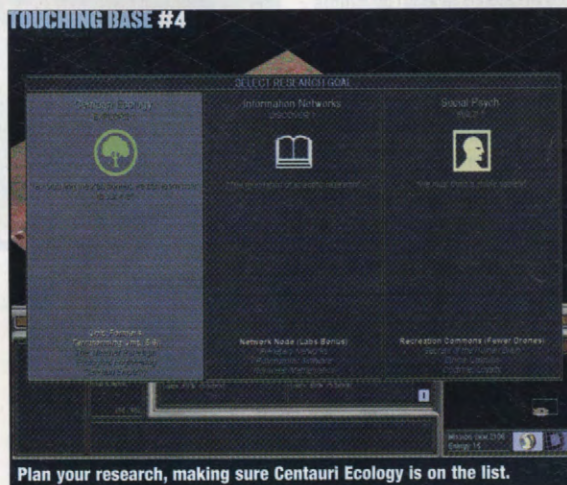
Non-linear Mathematics (C2) which give you particle impactors (Firepower 4).

GET THOSE E NUMBERS RIGHT

Hitting the 'E' key is guaranteed to cause confusion. Most players are probably happy to find a combination that leaves no blindingly obvious weaknesses, and with most factions getting between 40 and 60 different combinations by the middle of the game it's often something of a click-and-play lottery.

The words are irrelevant; what you're looking for is the combination of numbers that gives you good growth and research and still enables you to keep a few attacking units scattered about. The University, Gaians and Believers always have a negative modifier somewhere, but the Spartans, Morganites and Hive come out on top.

The UN Peacekeepers can choose fundamentalist politics and simple economics in the early stages to get positive numbers across the board, but the Spartans get the thick end of the wedge. The democratic, planned, power and eudaimonic option gives them the best all-round combination (a total of +11,) but there's an awful lot of research behind it. The Hive, it appears, can support the most military units without penalty (police/green/power/eudaimonic). [E]



Life on Alpha Centauri is just a big lottery.

BALDUR'S GATE

Hacking, slashing and cheating his way through this year's epic RPG release is **Andrew Wright**

★ REVIEWED PCZ #73 SCORE 85%

To complete *Baldur's Gate* you're pushed along the distinctly linear plot, but you should take plenty of time out to explore the Sword Coast and gain as much experience as you can. You also need decent weapons, armour spells and potions for the climax. The first few locations can be taken on at first level, but after that you need to move up fast. Don't go underground until at least the third level, preferably fourth, and don't dally north of the Friendly Arm Inn until at least the fifth level.

Despite the fact that you

have to complete major quests in a particular order, chapters one to six offer lots of leeway and no time limit, so cover every nook and cranny, fighting, searching and resting all the way.

PROLOGUE

Your mission is to team up with Gorion, but not before you've explored Candlekeep, earned as much experience as possible and lined your pockets. Get Firebead Elvenhair's scroll from Tethtoril (in the central gardens), and retrieve Phylidia's book, Hull's sword and Fuller's bolts. Visit the infirmary for your free NHS potion. Thieves



Do all those silly little quests – you'll be glad of the experience one day.

CHOOSING A CHARACTER

There are plenty of options when you first start out, so what should you take into consideration when deciding who to play as?

The obvious choice is a human fighter for real weapon power, a good helping of gold and 10+ hit points. Next is the cleric, a second-rate fighter but handy with cure spells. Tempting as it is to start too long, as they get only four hit points per level before constitution bonuses.

On the plus side, you meet a fighter/druid and fighter in the Friendly Arm Inn, so you get some reasonable foot soldiers. You can't recruit a good mage until well into the game, but keep those scrolls anyway.

The best option is an elfin mage combined with something else such as thief, as this gives you the best of all worlds – sneaking and pilfering, casting spells, and the elf's extra abilities with bow and long sword.

Thieving plays a big role in *Baldur's Gate* – there are hundreds of locks just begging to be picked – but your first recruit will undoubtedly be Imoen.

If you play safe with a fighter, as a human you can always dual class later: for example, when you get to be a third level fighter you can switch to being a mage, cleric or thief. Just make sure your relevant ability is 17 or more at the outset. Once you get to fourth level in your new class, you have both sets of skills.

ABILITIES

STRENGTH	18/62	+	-
DEXTERITY	18	+	-
CONSTITUTION	11	+	-
INTELLIGENCE	15	+	-
WISDOM	10	+	-
CHARISMA	12	+	-

STORE RECALL REROLL

STRENGTH: Strength measures a character's muscle, endurance, and stamina. It is the prime requisite of fighters.
Minimum: 9
Maximum: 18

DONE CANCEL

Keep clicking until you get a good set of dice rolls.



Team up with these two: they're not all bad and have some neat potions.



Know your way round – it's your main base for a while.

BALDUR'S GATE

CHEATING

If you just can't make it, give yourself an edge

If you want to get ahead play multiplayer with yourself and start off with four good first-level characters. That way you get a good head start.

The second way is to use the import/export feature. Create a character you like, and fight your way around the first few maps. Be thoroughly evil and don't worry about your reputation. Kill bartenders, good guys... anything that moves and is an easy target. When you're doing well, export the character, import it into a new game and repeat the process. When you're third or fourth level, export and import again and play as Mr Nice Guy with a new unblemished reputation.



Hunt down the ogre and remove his girdle. If that turns you on.



WALKTHROUGH

with good skills should try the locked chests, but make very sure nobody sees you. In some locations, nobody seems to give a monkey's, and in others the town guard arrives in seconds.

Two assassins will try to kill you, but you should come through unscathed as it's pretty well-fixed. After a walkabout, visit the inn and equip yourself as best you can. Choose a good weapon you're proficient with, and get a ranged weapon too – bows and throwing daggers are an excellent choice. Then speak to Gorion and watch the show...



Listen to the town crier – he has news of how to win 5000gp.

Visit the upstairs rooms to get two more sub-quests, and see a lady in the house near the gate for a third. The hobgoblins who stole her ring are found on this map, outside and north-west of the inn. Return the ring, rest up, and hunt down the ogre in the extreme east of the map south of the inn (where you've already been). Give the dwarf his girdle back, but sell the other as it's no good. Visit the temple and, if you can afford it, buy the stone-to-flesh scroll because it gets you half-price access to a cleric later.

Now head two maps south to Beregost. Be prepared, because if you get 'waylaid by the enemy', you'll have to fight. Use Jaheira and Khalid (and the evil halfling) for mêlée combat, and the rest for missile attacks. Collect all the enemies' weapons and armour to sell later.

Beregost is probably going to be your base of operations for some time, so it's well worth getting to know it. One of the Friendly Arm Inn quests is to clear out some spiders. They're in the house just west of the Jovial Juggler – but be sure to have your antidotes in your quick-item slots. Grab the spider body so you can complete the sub-quest on your next visit to the Friendly Arm Inn.

Visit Feldepost's Inn and deal with Mar and Dunkin as tactfully as you can (options 1,1,3,3,1 in

each of the dialogues) for an easy 900xp. If Xar and Montaron are whining, remove them from your party – but not until you've taken all their useful possessions.

In a building just north of the Feldepost Inn you find a dwarf fighter called Kaigan. Accept his quest, go one map north, and when he gives up, whizz straight back to Beregost. He joins up permanently and is handy to have around.

In the town square, listen to the town crier and then continue your pub-crawl east to the Burning Wizard. Outside, accept

Garrick's quest, but kill his girlfriend as soon as she attacks. She's bad news and can cast lightning bolt which is almost sure to be fatal. You need to strike fast to stop her spell-casting. The bard joins up afterwards and you get 900xp.

On the east side of Beregost there's a smithy with some interesting stuff for sale. Visit his place in the dead of night, and if you unlock one of the chests there's a +1 bastard sword.

Another house on the east side contains a lady called Mirianne. Later you find a letter which

CHAPTER 1

After Gorion's death, team up with Imoen and get the goodies from Gorion's body. Follow the road east and join Xar and Montaron. They're both evil, but they help to start with.

On the next map east, follow the road north, and before you enter the inn head along the south side of the map for the Ring of Wizardry (see the Magic Items panel on page 128).

Inside the walls, a bounty-hunting spellcaster is waiting for you at the foot of the stairs to the inn. Hit him with long-range fire and let the guards take care of him. Inside, add Khalid and Jaheira to your party – they're essential.



Get her ring back and she'll be very grateful. Well, she'll give you some experience, anyway.

CHAPTER 1



Knock off the bounty hunter from a distance – and let the guards take the pain.

← proves her husband is still alive. When you take it back to her you get a +1 ring of protection.

Up in the north-east is a large nobleman's house. A skilful bit of burglary here should reveal a useful wand of lightning which gets you out of one or two scrapes. There's often something that's worth taking from the mage's house, such as a wand of lightning.

CHAPTER 2

Now go to Nashkel but be prepared for another mage bounty hunter. Find Berrun Ghastkel, who asks you to solve the problem in the iron ore mine. You also come across Minsc, an excellent ranger, who joins your party. Dump the bard. At the carnival, on the next map east, you can use a stone-to-flesh spell or scroll to get a good cleric called Branwen. Consider dumping the

dwarf – he hangs about, so you can get him back later.

Your main task is to find out what's happening in the mines. There are five levels filled with kobolds and spiders, plus a few traps (a job for the priest and the thief). On the deepest level is Mulahey, an evil mage who 'summons' skeletons and kobolds. Kill him whatever happens, and collect his letters as evidence for Berrun Ghastkel.



Ⓜ I've just turned Branwen from stone to flesh – and I think I can see some peeping out too.

KNOW YOUR D&D

Drunk & Disorderly? No, Dungeons & Dragons, TSR's famous paper-and-pencil RPG. Knowing a few rules helps, as Baldur's Gate follows the system reasonably accurately

Weapons aren't fully explained in the manual, for a start. A short sword does only 1-6 damage, but it strikes very quickly, as do throwing daggers and darts. If your priority is to disrupt spell-casters, they make plenty of sense.

Darts, daggers, arrows, spears and short swords get +2 against NPCs in leather armour – including bandits and hobgoblins. Against NPCs in plate mail, use bludgeoning weapons like a mace or flail (slashing weapons like longswords are -3 vs plate mail). Give your warriors a choice of either blunt weapon or sword in the quick slots.

Remember:

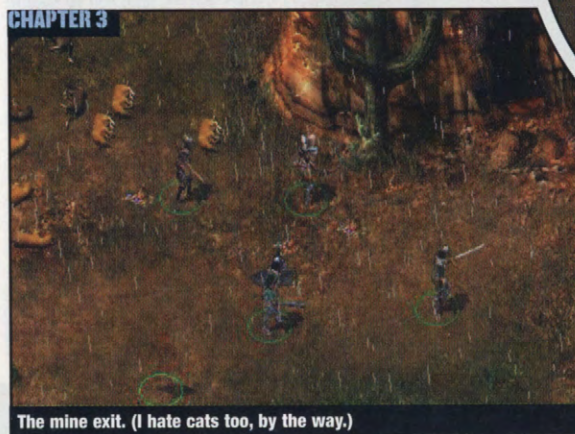
- ★ Skeletons take half damage from edged weapons.
- ★ Sleep and cloudkill spells affect only low-level monsters, which include most kobolds, dogs, wolves, black bears, hobgoblins, carrion crawlers and xvarts. Doppelgangers and elves are immune to sleep and charm.
- ★ Don't lightning bolt a flesh golem – it regenerates!
- ★ You can only hit vampires and flesh golems with magical weapons.



"And after I smoked more I started seeing these little blue men..."



That guy Mulahey is the one you want. He's got a chest full of stuff.



The mine exit. (I hate cats too, by the way.)

CHAPTER 3

Leave the mine by a back exit one floor back, but you can't turn back because the entrance caves in. Explore this map well – there are at least three caves full of undead monsters and treasure. Rest in Nashkel if you need to, but beware of the bounty hunter waiting for you there. Back in Nashkel, talk to Berrun and get your reward. Go to Beregost and force Tranzig (in a room above the Feldepost Inn) to tell you the location of the bandit camp. Execute him afterwards and take his possessions.



Ⓜ Kill Tranzig and find the location of the bandit's lair.

Head north-east and find the bandits. Either kill them all or pretend to join up. Whatever happens, you have to dispose of Tazok, the leader, explore the camp and win a final bundle in Tazok's tent. Some documents in their chest explain their plans – they are being controlled by the Iron Throne from a base deep inside Cloakwood Forest.

CHAPTER 4

Grab the goodies and leave for Cloakwood Forest, which consists of five maps, the last of which includes the dwarven mines. One important – if not essential – sub-quest is the search for the Spider's Bane, a powerful two-handed sword, and a lost brother. Have plenty of antidote to hand, because the spiders' poison kills you quicker than the physical damage.

The woods are full of phase spiders and irritating traps, not to mention wolves and



The entrance to the spiders' lair in Cloakwood Forest. Don't use web on 'em, okay?

MAGIC ITEMS

Pressing 'L' at any time gives you your current mouse co-ordinates. Here are a few places to visit...

Ring of Wizardry: at the base of a tree just south of Friendly Arm Inn (x=2553, y=3761).

Ring of Protection: map south of Friendly Arm Inn (x=1004, y=1114).

Wand of Ice: in a stump on the north-west corner of Nashkel mines screen (x=165, y=177).

Wand of Monster Summoning: plus a +2 dagger, in a crypt, south-east corner of the mine exit map. **Ankheg Armour and pearl:** in a ploughed field just west of Naskel village (x=186, y=2744).



Ⓜ If you know where to look, the map is stuffed with unprotected treasure.

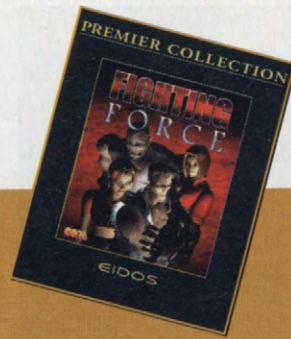
PREMIER COLLECTION

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← various other things. Outside the mines you have to defeat another NPC party to gain access.

Inside the four mine levels you find another possible party member (a dwarf) and more loot. Defeat the evil wizard by having anti-magic spells ready, such as blindness, dispel magic and silence. Don't try to kill all the monsters, as they wear you down for little gain. Just find the shortest path downwards and then out. Free the prisoners and flood the mine – preferably in that order.

CHAPTER 5

At last (and it will already seem like a lifetime) you can get to Baldur's Gate itself. And you're barely a third of the way through this monster of a game.

The city itself is a huge place to explore, with loads of sub-quests. The main one involves Scar of the Flaming Fist who asks you to investigate the Seven Suns, a trading organisation. It has actually been infested with doppelgangers, weird creatures that eat humans and replicate their bodies.



⊕ It's a long way to Baldur's Gate – and this is only a bit of the whole map.

Go to Iron Throne Mansion, north-west of the docks, kill the inhabitants of the top level and nick the scrolls in which they've conveniently listed their plans (again). Investigate the Seven Suns' place and repeat. Finish by returning to see Scar at the



Baldur's Gate: it even pisses down here. Where's my +1 umbrella...

Flaming Fist headquarters, plead lack of time when he asks you to do more and let him take you to Duke Eltan, who gives you a book.

CHAPTER 6

In a cunning plot device, you're transported to Candlekeep. Hand the book to the guard. Inside, stock up on potions and items. Many Candlekeep inhabitants have been eaten by doppelgangers. To find out which ones, keep questioning people who don't recognise you until they get mad and change form. Then kill them.

When you get thrown in jail – something you can't avoid as the plot gets distinctly more linear from here on in – Tethoril appears and transports you to the levels under Candlekeep. Find your way out through the tombs, taking what you can along the way.

CHAPTER 7

Get back to Baldur's Gate – avoiding the guards and Flaming Fist – and defeat yet more bad guys in the Iron Throne headquarters. Your target is Sarevok's diary, and a scroll that mentions the undercity, which you can reach via the basement and sewers.

When you get an invitation to the coronation of the new Grand Duke, Sarevok, head to the palace and show your invitation. Inside, protect Belt and his girl while despatching the attacking doppelgangers. In the coronation room, Sarevok denounces you until you show Belt the diary. Don't bother attacking him, because you can't kill him at this point and he mysteriously escapes. Belt then teleports you to the Thieves Guild; rest and get ready to enter the undercity again after a hectic battle with a tough skeleton horde. All that remains now is to track down Sarevok and take him out. You can do it this time. Sorted. ☑



CHAPTER 4 In the bandits' lair. Nice decor, loadsa money.

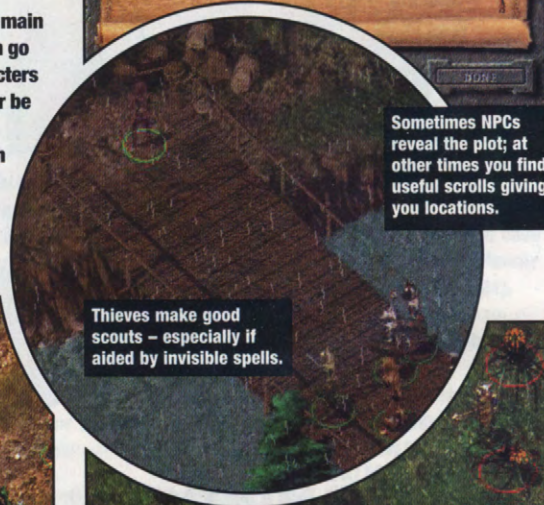
TOP TIPS

Handy hints to help you along your way through to the end of the game

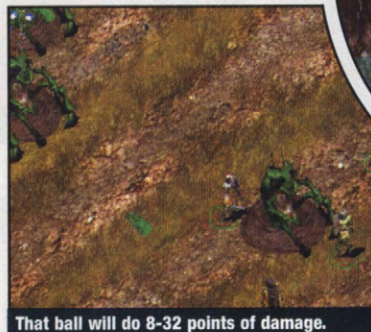
- ⊕ Disband the entire party before you finish quests. That way your character grabs all the experience.
- ⊕ Thieves are vital, but if you have two make them specialise in different abilities.
- ⊕ If you get too much gear, store it safely in a chest in a building.
- ⊕ When moving about the map, use a high-stealth character to scout ahead.
- ⊕ Turn off the AI to prevent them attacking.
- ⊕ Break down powerful groups of NPCs one at a time. Scout ahead, draw one or two away, and then ambush them.
- ⊕ Note that NPCs join at roughly the main character's level. This means you can go back and rejoin possible party characters you've bypassed and they'll no longer be first-level weaklings.
- ⊕ Hunt ankhegs for experience. Each one is worth 975xp and 500gp. You can also persuade the smithy in Beregost to make you some special ankheg plate mail for 4000gp.



Sometimes NPCs reveal the plot; at other times you find useful scrolls giving you locations.

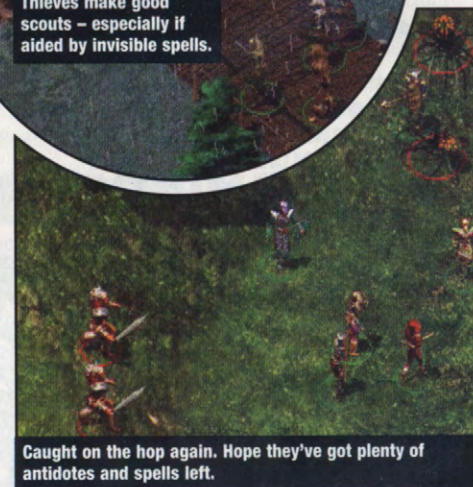


Thieves make good scouts – especially if aided by invisible spells.



That ball will do 8-32 points of damage.

- ⊕ Talk to everyone – even 'commoners' can add sections to the map you can't otherwise get to.
- ⊕ Make a habit of opening everything which has a lid as you can pick up a lot of items and money.



Caught on the hop again. Hope they've got plenty of antidotes and spells left.



Put a range of formations in the quick slots. They're invaluable.

throttle it



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MEGASTORES

THIEF

THE DARK PROJECT

You've got to be light-fingered and cunning to get through *Thief*. Doing what comes naturally: **Keith Pullin**

★ REVIEWED PCZ #72 SCORE 90%

Due to the sheer size of *Thief*, and the open nature of some of the levels, it's impossible to specify a particular route; there are many avenues to take, so choose the one you prefer. What this walkthrough can provide is a guide to collecting the important items in the game – whether you're playing on the normal, hard or expert setting. We're going to start off at Cragcleft Prison, as the training and Lord Bafford's Mansion are basically warm-up missions and you really shouldn't have any difficulty with them. Right, let's get thieving...

CRAGCLEFT PRISON

Swim in, hang a right at the corpse, and take the lift to the top tunnels. Stumble through these and make your way up to the factory via another lift. Sneak along the balcony that goes around the edge of the machine rooms, go down the stairway at the end, and take the stairs opposite to reach the prison. Go to cell block 4 where Cutty is being held. Listen to his woeful tale... your objectives have now changed.

Go over to cell block 1. Locate Issyt's remains. One of his hands is the Hand of Glory, which you need to take. Head up the stairs to the barracks; at the top is a large open room with a patrolling

guard. Wait for him to amble past, take the corridor to the right and climb the stairs to the officers' quarters. Sneak through until you see a guard with a key on his belt. Grab it, go back to the office, and find Felix's notes.

To escape, return to the third level of the mines. A switch opens a metal grate, which is your exit.

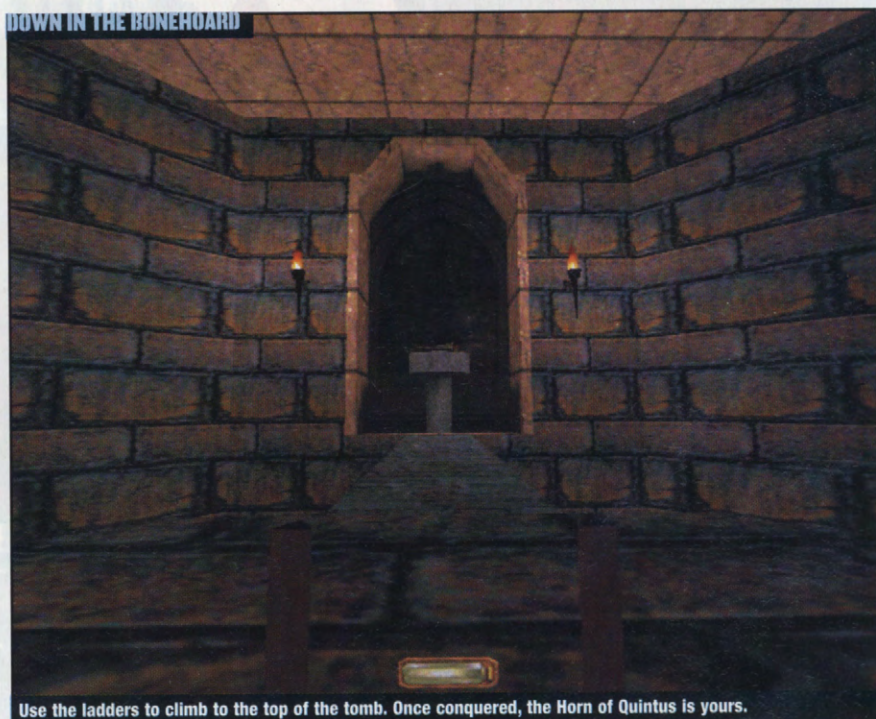


➔ Shoot the jailer with broadhead arrows then jump onto the balcony to open the cell doors.

DOWN IN THE BONEBOARD

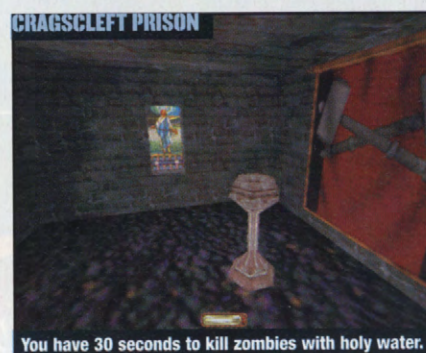
Traipse through the upper vaults for a while; eventually a ladder leads down into some Burrick caves. Arrows have been scraped onto the walls here – head in the opposite direction to which they point. Don't shoot any of the zombies (you need your water arrows later), and keep exploring until you find a room with magic balls shooting around the perimeter. Dodge these and head into some more Burrick caves. Venture north into the Quintus family vault. Climb to the top of this vast tomb to find the Horn of Quintus.

WALKTHROUGH



DOWN IN THE BONEBOARD

Use the ladders to climb to the top of the tomb. Once conquered, the Horn of Quintus is yours.



CRAGCLEFT PRISON

You have 30 seconds to kill zombies with holy water.



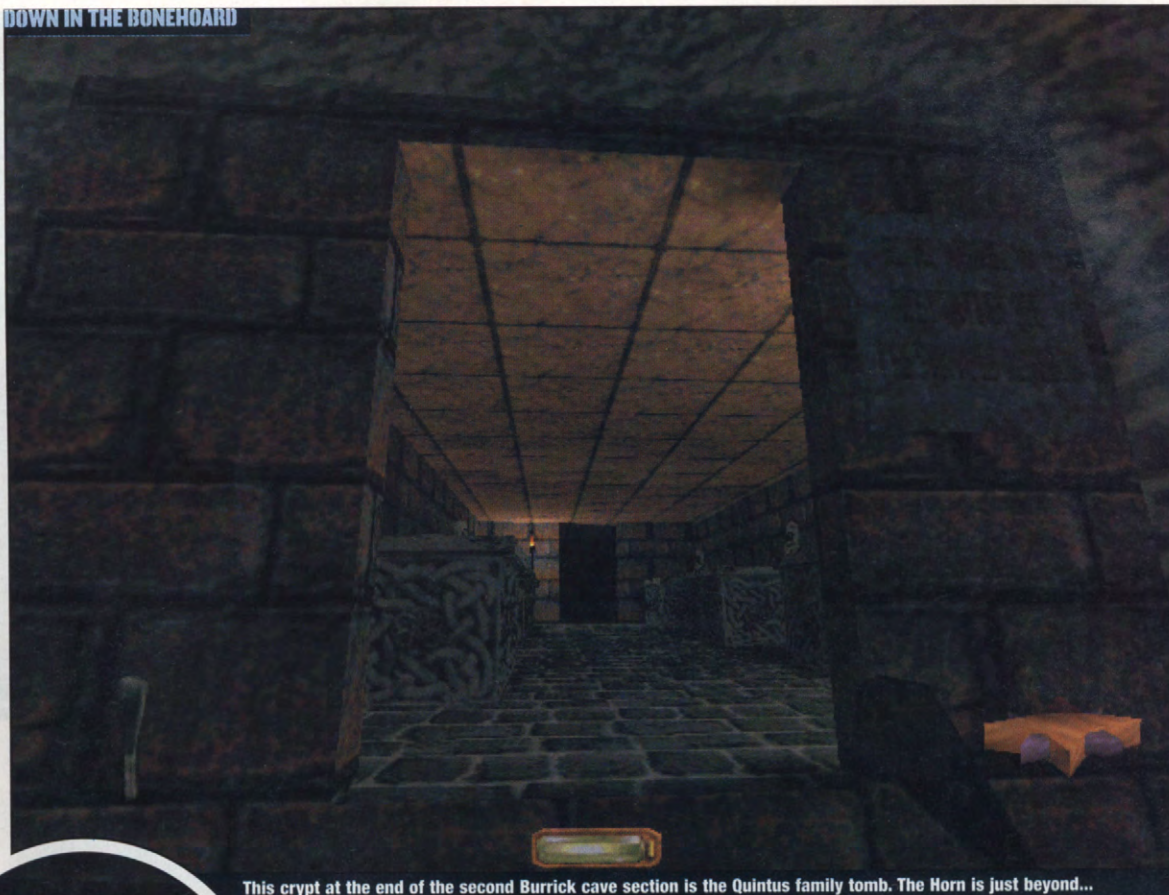
CRAGCLEFT PRISON

Sneak past the factory workers by crouching down.

Go back to the main vault area and into a large room with magic balls shooting from one wall to the other. Jump from ledge to ledge, dodging magic as you head down to the bottom. Use water arrows to snuff out the torches in the guardians' room, then sneak through into the next room. Go slowly, hug the wall, and the skeleton won't find you. Open the blue chest to find the Mystic's Heart. Now for the Mystic's Soul.

Find the dark area back in the vaults, and light the torches with fire arrows. A well, and some zombies appear; quickly jump down the well and swim until you surface. If you can get past the various traps in this area, you are rewarded with the Mystic's Soul. You can now head back to the surface.

DOWN IN THE BONEHOARD



This crypt at the end of the second Burrick cave section is the Quintus family tomb. The Horn is just beyond...



Go in the opposite direction the arrows are pointing to find the main catacomb area.

ASSASSINS

ASSASSINS

Follow the assassins through the streets. Ignore everybody else – they're not interested in you. When you reach Ramirez' mansion (which takes approximately five minutes) go back to the shop where you first started and take everything. Go back to the mansion, and sneak past the entrance guards when they saunter off. Take the right passage into the outer courtyard, and go through the first door you reach. Work your way across the ramparts onto a small roof. Move onto the balcony and pick the lock to enter the library. From now on quicksave before you unlock any



Jump onto this roof to reach the balcony.

door, so that if you set off the alarms you can reload. Search the mansion for loot (there's plenty around) and head down into the basement. When you find Ramirez, sneak up behind him and steal the pouch from his belt. Go back the way you came and jump off the balcony into the moat below. Let the current carry you out. Return to 'Home Turf', which is just past the shop.



The balcony door swings open, revealing a library. Look for the false book in the bookcase to find a hidden panel next to the fireplace.

THE SWORD

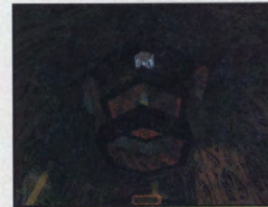
Use a rope arrow to reach the balcony and break in. Head through the doorway to your right and shimmy down the ladder. Open the door into the main hallway, turn left, left again, and climb the stairs. Jump over the gap to the right corridor. Be wary

of patrols, and stay crouched (you're less likely to trigger traps). Open all doors with caution – many of them are booby-trapped. When you come to the first set of double doors on the right, open them and head down. A guard wanders by carrying a key you need – nick it. Go back up the stairs, unlock the next door on the right with your new key, and move up to the top floor.

Jump through the weird 'space' room, blackjack a few guards and, finally, floating in mid-air is Constantine's sword. Fire a rope into the ceiling, jump onto it, and slide down *Mission Impossible*-style to grab it. Search his bedroom for incriminating evidence. Leave the same way you entered.

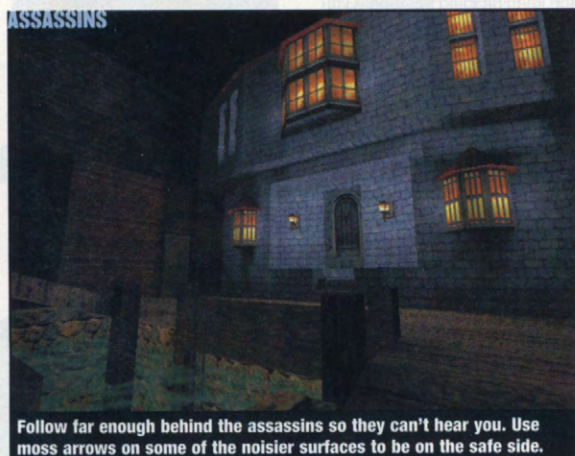


The only way into Constantine's home is to scale the wall with the help of a rope arrow.



Constantine's sword hovers in the centre of this strange room. Fire a rope into the ceiling and shimmy down to acquire it.

ASSASSINS



Follow far enough behind the assassins so they can't hear you. Use moss arrows on some of the noisier surfaces to be on the safe side.

THE SWORD



Avoid the many traps by crouching as much as possible. Sometimes the guards actually get caught in the traps if you're clever...

THE HAUNTED CATHEDRAL

You begin in the south-west corner of the map. Generally speaking you just explore the area looking for valuables while avoiding the zombies and Burricks. One of the buildings has a hole in the floor, where there's a freaky looking monster with pincers. Jump down, avoid the monster, and keep going through the Burrick caves in an easterly direction. After emerging, sneak east to the cathedral. Climb the ledge at the rear to receive some new objectives from 'The Eye'.



Turn off the lights using these machines to give yourself more cover.

Return in the direction you came until you reach the spider. Cross the bridge to the left – welcome to the keeper's grotto. Jump across the water onto the pedestal. Relight the torches around the statue to open a panel in the wall and go through it. After a while there's a door: load nearby rubble onto the right pedestal to open it. Stand on the left pedestal, and rush through the gap when the grate opens. Watch out for the crushing wall at the end of the next corridor. On to the next mission...



Try and avoid the zombies if you can – running away is the easiest way to do it.



No time to pray – there's a world to be saved.

THE LOST CITY

Use the key on the underwater plaque. Swim down the tunnel using breath potions. When you reach the caves, walk down the path, avoiding any spiders. Jump over the waterfall to the other side. Follow the tunnels until they open up onto the roof of a large building. Drop down the hole, go out through a window, and follow this route until you reach the city. Avoid patrolling Burricks by jumping from one roof to another until you find a balcony with an opening. Go in here to reach the town square, and be ready to use water arrows on the fire elementals. Keep going until you reach a large obelisk with what looks like scales of justice carved into the stone. Enter the building here. Follow this path until you come to another obelisk. Walk past the mausoleums, jumping

over lava until you get to a ruined encampment. Take the medallion near the decapitated skeleton. Now enter the nearby crypt.

Walk down the stairs, swing across the gap at the bottom using a rope arrow, and then advance in a crouch to avoid traps. Enter the last door on the left before the stairs. Take the lever. Head back to the main chamber and down the stairs: the Talisman of Water is here. Exit the building.

Now head west to find the Talisman of Fire. En route there is a machine. Insert the lever into a nearby slot to extend a bridge over some lava. Keep going to find the elemental tower. Walk up as far



Show the guard your papers and the 'Taffer' lets you in.

as you can, climb out of the window, and edge around the ledge of the building. Fire a rope up to an overhang. Climb through the window and lo and behold: the Talisman of Fire. Make your way back to the waterfall to finish the level. Phew.

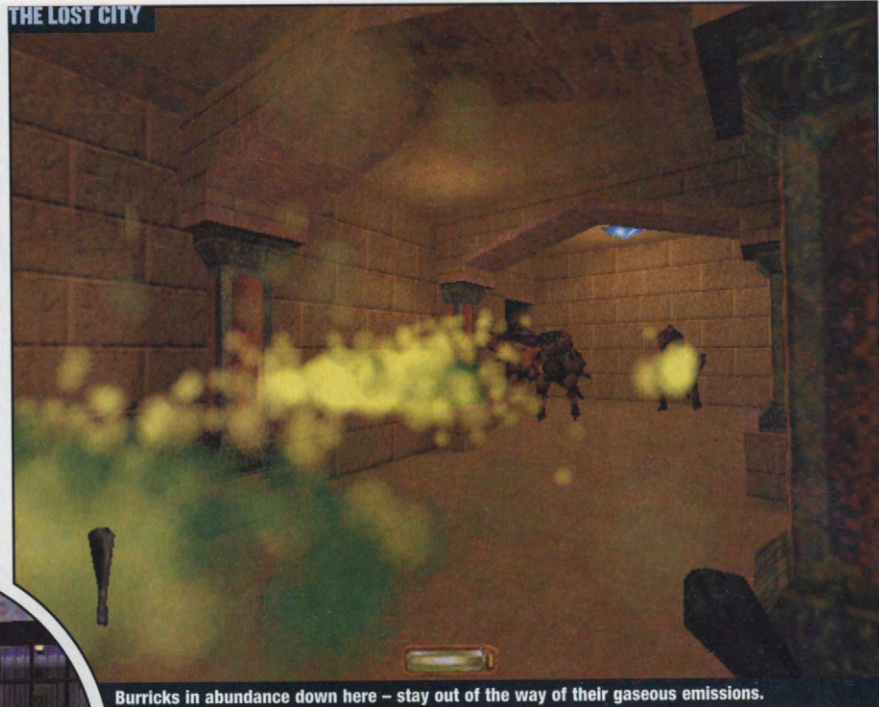


Use the key you found in the keeper's grotto on this plaque to enter the city.

UNDERCOVER

Show your credentials, go into the entrance hall and take the door opposite. Hang a right where the guards are talking about torture, and get the wallbuilder's scroll from the table. Go down the stairs. Turn right, right again, and go to the first door on the right. Quickly gas the guard and steal the Hammer and his key. This is the master key for every lock in the temple. Result!

You must now flip five hidden switches hidden around the temple. One is in the old kitchen, another in the inquisitor's torture chamber, the third in the garden,



Burricks in abundance down here – stay out of the way of their gaseous emissions.

the fourth in the graveyard, and the fifth in the reliquary. When you flip the final switch a sound chimes to say you've done it. Go back down the main staircase and to the stairs that lead down to the basement, take the passage to the side and follow it around to the talisman chamber.

Walk across the bridge and enter the cell on the left. Flip the switch here to open the grate leading to the talismans. Use the wallbuilder's scroll, grab the talismans, and run for it. Turn right when you get to the entrance hall. Go onto the balcony and jump over the wall onto the

low roof below. Drop down to the streets, and the mission ends.



It's a long hard climb but you'll be rewarded – this is where you get your hands on the Talisman of Fire.



If you see an inverted Hammer sign next to a door, beware: as a novice you're not allowed in.



This is the 'First Hammer' which you can steal. You can also see a talisman switch at the back of the skull pedestal.

RETURN TO THE CATHEDRAL

Use the four talismans on the busts to enter. Take the left door, and keep heading left where you can. In the room with the fountain, open the door on the opposite side you came in from. Sprint past the ghost, through the door, and up the stairs to the very top. Open the right-hand door, and walk out across the beam. Follow the beams until you reach a locked door. You can go in here to get some new fire arrows, or drop straight down onto the platform below. Pick the door's lock, enter the room, and walk out onto the balcony to see The Eye. Spring across to the Hammer pedestal and pilfer The Eye. Now drop to the bottom floor.

Check out the map, and go to the garden to meet Casp... Sorry, Murus the friendly ghost. He's got some tasks for you. Take the first door on the right to hear more. Your first job is to go to St Yora's for his rosary. When you have it, go back to Murus, who now wants a holy symbol. Go to St Tenner's and use the machinery to make one, but don't forget to bless it in the lunar pool in St Jenel's. Return to the broken staircase outside St Yora's and speak with Murus.



Open the front doors with the four talismans.



Bless the holy symbol here, or you won't be able to free Murus's spirit.



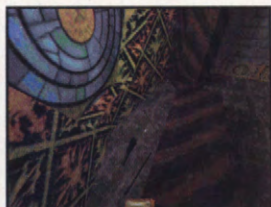
Avoid the zombie, grab the cemetery key from the chest, and other goodies from the table.

Finally, take the cemetery key from the blue chest in the room where there's a single zombie wandering around. Go to Murus's grave in the cemetery. After putting his soul to rest he gives you the key to the armoury in the cathedral. With the explosive device from there, you can blow open the main entrance doors, and slip into the night...

ESCAPE

Grab your stuff from behind the altar. Sneak through this green section grabbing gas arrows where you can. You need to find a large open area dominated by a tree. Use a rope arrow to get up to the platform and go through the opening into the tree itself to find Constantine's journal. This suggests, among other things, that he could actually be the Trickster... Better get the hell out then!

Carefully head upwards, extinguishing torches as you go – you never know when you might need some shadow. You'll have to walk across a metal floor, but providing you've wiped out the roaming Ratmen, you should be okay. Watch out for the exploding frog by the front door. The mission ends when you can breathe fresh air.



ⓘ Your stuff can be found behind the altar in the starting room.



ⓘ You must search hard for arrows on this mission. Use the rope to get across to this alcove.

STRANGE BEDFELLOWS

Tiptoe through the temple avoiding the spiders, etc. Enter the chapel and descend the ladder at the rear of the altar. Keep heading left until you find the dead Hammer with flies around him. Take the next passage on the right. Dash forward until you see a flame and go down the stairs. At the bottom of the stairs you emerge into a large circular area. Go through the opposite exit, which leads to a ramp heading down to a couple of arrow shrines. Cross the walkway into another couple of abstract arrow shrines. Now go down a long spiral staircase to find a quaking Hammer guard who offers you a key and a map.



ⓘ There are many arrow shrines in this area – make the most of them.

To find the priest, return to the top of the circular room. Retrace your steps all the way up to the locked door at the top and use your new key to open it. Walk through the opening and turn left. Move stealthily to avoid the Ratmen and Bugbeasts. Glide to the end of this corridor, extinguishing torches as you go. After the ramp down, take the exit on the left. Traverse a few rooms containing Ratmen until you reach the priest. Sneak up close to him and gas the 'rats'. Pick him up and exit through the other door. Go left up the ramp to arrive at the docks.

Dump the priest on the boat, hit the switch, and float to safety.

INTO THE MAW OF CHAOS

On the first section simply run like the clappers past all the

monsters – eventually you end up in a relatively normal room. Take the first left, then drop down onto a small ledge, which is also on your left. Follow this around until you reach some deadly blue crystals and some highly slippery ice. Slide down the slope, dodging the crystals while picking up any water arrows you can.



ⓘ Use the reverse key to slow your descent down this nightmare toboggan run.



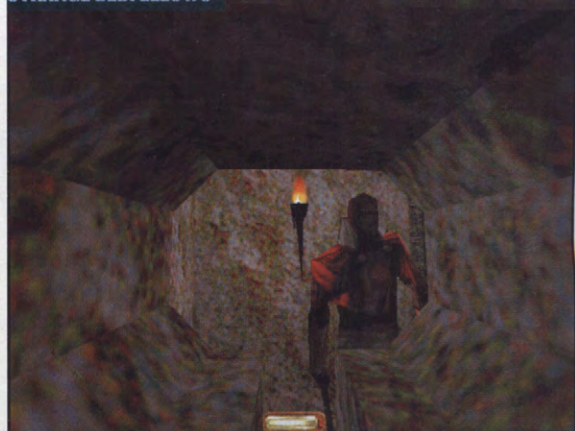
ⓘ Put the guards to sleep with gas, and then disable the portal with arrows.

Douse the fire elementals in the next room. Keep going to enter a room with a blue pedestal and a waterfall. Jump into the waterfall and it carries you up instead of down. This is an odd little section. Follow the underwater tunnels until you see a little gap on the left. Edge into this to regain your breath. Once done, continue down the underwater tunnel until you see the blue pedestal beneath you. Drop directly into it.

This takes you to a huge tree. Climb up the inside, walk across the sparkling bridge and traverse the lava caves. When you see the portal, eliminate the guards with gas, and shoot arrows at each of the glowing pillars. Look at the papyrus in your inventory for exact instructions. This closes the portal.

Climb the vines to reach Constantine (or the Trickster, if you prefer). When he starts walking to a pedestal that is turned away from you, swap The Eye for the fake. Use moss to cover your footfalls if necessary. And that's it – now sit back and watch... [REDACTED]

STRANGE BEDFELLOWS



Find the Hammer to receive a map and a key to reach the priest.

STRANGE BEDFELLOWS



Avoid these annoying beasts – they fire disabling webs at you.

INTO THE MAW OF CHAOS



Wait until the Trickster incants at one of the distant crystals, then move in for The Eye.

INTO THE MAW OF CHAOS



If the goat-legged fellow spots you it's game over.

ESCAPE

⊖ More arrow joy – only trouble is you've been spotted. If that happens you're a dead man.

HOW TO...

MAKE YOUR OWN HALF-LIFE LEVELS

PART TWO

Last month we got the ball rolling by showing you how to build two interconnected rooms – delightful but dreary. This month we look at the finer points of deathmatch design, and what makes some levels better than others

★ HALF-LIFE HOT DOG Phil Wand

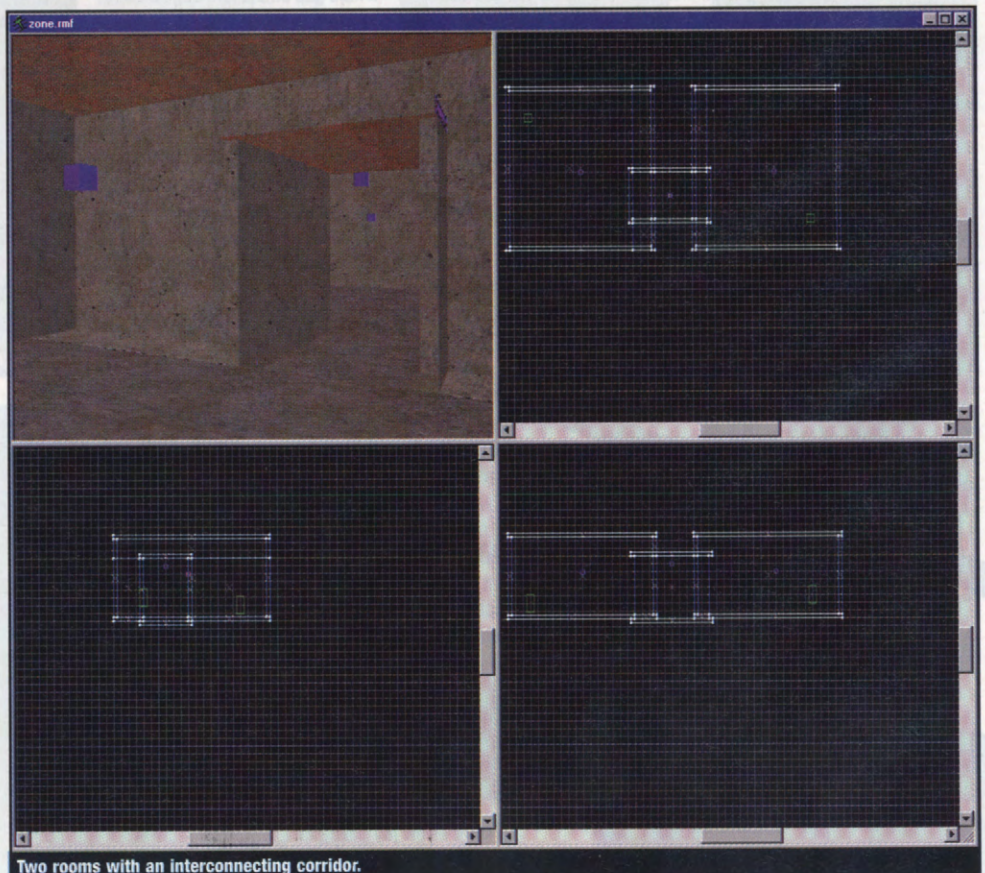
Want to be a *Half-Life* level guru, create the best deathmatch arenas, be snapped up by some monumentally wealthy software publisher and spend the rest of your life sipping cocktails on a sun deck in Palm Springs? In just three more steps, your dream could come true – you'll have most of what you need to know, and the rest you can pick up through practice. Use it in combination with a wild imagination and there's no reason you couldn't become the next Dario Casali.

Always start off by jotting your ideas down on paper, and pay particular attention to the actual design of the map and how the rooms join up. Don't get bogged down with aligning textures and getting the lighting and sounds right; you should do these last of all. The most important things to consider are a good, consistent layout, easy navigation, fun features and, of course, the way it plays.

DOORS

Start off with a simple layout of two small rooms joined by a short corridor – if you were paying attention during the tutorial last month, you'll know how to use *WorldCraft's* **Carve** function to achieve this in a jiffy. Next, we're going to create another room underneath and connect it with a sliding doorway.

Select the **Brush** tool, and draw the new room to roughly the same dimensions of the other two. Press **Enter** to create it, then **Ctrl + H** to hollow it out. To make the doorway, it's exactly the same process as the one used to create the corridor. There's nothing daunting about it; look upon doors as a brush blocking the end of a corridor and with a special function that causes it to slide out of the way when a player walks up to it.



Two rooms with an interconnecting corridor.



“There’s nothing more frustrating than downloading and playing a map, only to find that it turns your demon hardware into a Nintendo Gameboy”

The new room, complete with connecting corridor.

Draw a brush 64x96 tall that intersects the new room and the old room, and press **Ctrl + Alt + C** to carve a shape out of the walls. A neat trick here is to select the carving block and then press **Ctrl + H** to hollow it out. Press **Ctrl + U** to ungroup its four walls, and delete the end two. Hey presto – an instant corridor!

Now choose some different textures for your new areas. We’ve chosen metal surrounds for the door lintel and walls; the far room is rendered in stone. Feel free to experiment.

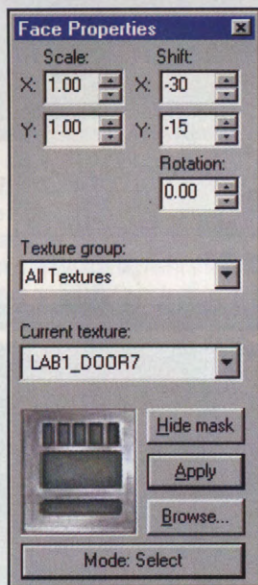


This is what you should see when your room and corridor are ready.

Next, simply draw a brush on the end of the corridor and assign it the texture of **lab1_door7**, which is a standard metal door. You’ll notice that the textures won’t be aligned – in fact it’ll look rather odd.



The new door without proper texture alignment...



ⓘ We used an X offset of -30 and a Y offset of -15.

What we need to do is shift the image of the door around so that it lines up with the door brush: toggle **Texture Application** mode on, select the door and then use the **Offset** boxes to move the picture around. To deal with the other side of the door, move the camera round into the new room and point it down the corridor to the opposite edge. Check that **Texture Application** mode is still active and apply a texture of **out_w8dr1**. Use the same procedure as before to align the new texture within the bounds of the doorway.



...and with proper texture alignment.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD DEATHMATCH LEVEL?

Some maps are tops, many are pants. Here are the six most important points to consider when making a new map

DIVERSE LAYOUT

Any level consisting of rooms with identical dimensions, textures and lighting is going to end up fundamentally uninteresting. Players need to get their bearings by taking a quick glance at their surroundings, as they do in any of Valve’s maps. If nothing changes from one room to the next, your level is going to be confusing, difficult to navigate and no fun to play. Use different lights and light intensities; distinct room shapes; straight stairs and spiral stairs; corridors; doors with different shapes, sounds and speeds. Most importantly, use your imagination.

FOCUS AREAS

People need to know that, once they’ve tooled themselves up, there are one or two central areas where they can find some targets and let rip. Wandering endlessly around a labyrinth of alleyways, mezzanine floors and narrow passages is intensely boring. There needs to be at least one room where players can move around freely and fire rockets without fear of blowing their own heads off.

OPEN ENDS

Corridors leading nowhere and rooms with only one exit make for frustrating play. It’s all very well having a few confined areas to balance the large arenas, but all too often it encourages people to grab a big gun and spend all their time chasing newbies into dead ends. Make sure that in any situation there’s at least one way out – even if it’s a little tricky, like a window to jump through or a small crawlspace in the back wall.

BALANCED WEAPONRY

Don’t overload your levels with weapons and ammo. Think of *Stalkyard* and *Datacore* that omit the Egon (and keep the rest out of easy reach). That’s because most people make an instinctive dive for the top toys, and play suffers if a small number of gamers hog a large amount of the action. So don’t just drop weapons in the middle of floors – put them above head height, on a shelf, on a box, or just out of the way in an adjacent room.

BE DIFFERENT

The best maps feature neat ideas that form the ‘nucleus’ of the whole level (such as the flood room in *Undertow*, or the nuclear strike in *Crossfire*), and include distractions to keep players entertained (such as the train in *Subtransit*, or the gun turrets in *Stalkyard*). For special tricks and tips to help your level stand out from the crowd, keep an eye on the URLs we’ve listed (see Editing Sites panel on page 139).

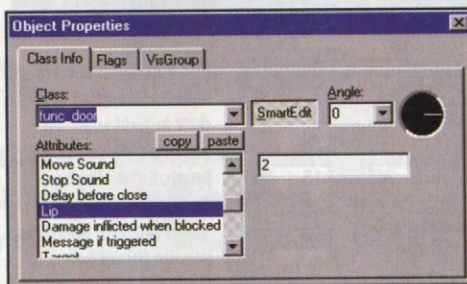
PLAYTEST

You should always play your level over a LAN with at least two other people. Ask them to give you feedback about any aspect of the layout – see if some rooms cause people to hog all the toys, or gain the upper hand too quickly and have it too long. Brighten up any unlit areas. Find out if your sniper points are in too strong a position, or if teams are able to seal off and hold an entire section of the map for the whole game. If so, add more entrances and exits.



The doorway, now complete.

← Lastly, we need to tell *Half-Life* that this is a doorway and not an ordinary wall. To do this we need to tie an entity to it, which you do by pressing **Ctrl + T** when the door is selected. In the box that pops up, make sure the **Class** of the entity is **func_door**.
 Look at the various attributes in the list box, together with their associate values. Click on the **Speed** attribute and enter a value that corresponds to how fast the door is to open. The default value is 100; a higher number means the door opens more quickly. Find **Lip**, and enter a value that corresponds to how much of the brush will be left covering the doorway when opened. Find the two attributes



➔ Turning your wall into a real door.

relating to the door's sound and change them to whatever you want – we used **Pneumatic (Rolling)** for the **Move Sound**, and **Clang with brake** for the **Stop Sound**. Lastly, find the **Angle** and change it to **0**. This propels the door to the left; other values enable you to change which way the brush moves when opened.

Make sure you include a player start position and then run your level to test it. If you want your door to be opened only when someone presses the **Use** button, click on the **Flags** tab in the **Object Properties** dialog, then check the **Use Only** box. Simple.

BUTTONS AND FUNCTIONS

Walking up to a door and having it do its stuff automatically is a bit dull, so what we'll do now is create a button which triggers the door to slide open.

Create a small cube that measures 32x32x16 and place it next to the doorway. Now assign a relevant button image to the face of the new block (press the **Browse** button in the **Face Properties** box and go to **+abutton2**) and then match up the textures round the edges.

“Players are desperate for cool deathmatch levels, and if yours fits the bill it will multiply like a particularly virulent virus”

Now select the face of the button – press **Ctrl + T** and choose **func_button** from the drop-down list. Make the **Angle** 270 – anything else causes the button to move along the wall after you press it, which looks a bit silly. Next, find the attribute named **Targeted Object** and type **door01** in the box provided. This causes the button to trigger the object called **door01** (we don't have one yet, but we soon will). Lastly, select the **Lip** attribute and type **14**. Since our button object is 16 deep, a lip of 14 effectively means it travels 2 before stopping.

KEEPING IT QUICK

The need for speed – how to make your maps play faster

There's nothing more frustrating than downloading and playing a map, only to find that it turns your demon hardware into a Nintendo Gameboy. Yes, I'm talking about lumpy levels – poorly crafted arenas that run at a snail's pace and would make a Cray Supercomputer fall to its knees and sob. Often there's no obvious reason for the way they cause you to lurch and judder as though stuck in a bad dream, but as a designer you need to know how to prevent it.

One of the easiest ways of making your maps play faster is to make sure that **VIS** (the program that looks at your level from every possible angle and calculates which surfaces are visible) is running in full mode before you distribute your map to the public. Normally this takes a number of hours to complete but could take several days, depending on the complexity of your design. Full mode ensures the level is properly optimised, and that the game doesn't need to waste time dealing with information that's beyond your field of view.

The most frequently quoted speed indicator is something called **r_speeds**, which refer to the number of polygons the *Half-Life* engine is having to deal with at any given moment. Anything more than 450 is likely to slow your level down, and anything over 750 is likely to cause serious problems – surfaces and textures start to drop out of view and

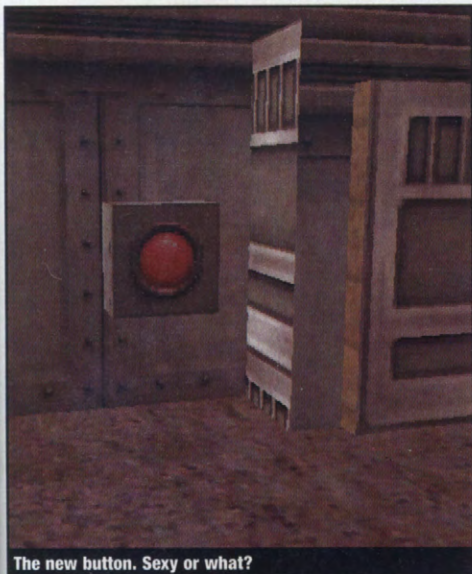
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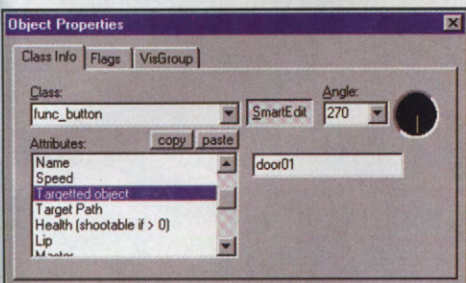
If you've ever wondered why certain areas of the *Crossfire* level are so slow, check out how many polygons are pounding your CPU.

make your level look extremely amateurish. To see how your creations perform, pull down the console and type **r_speeds 1** followed by **Enter**.
 Keeping **r_speeds** low isn't that difficult once you know the tricks. In general, large areas cause the most grief because they encompass more detail than

small ones. Intricate ceilings, buttresses and the like can also cause headaches, so try substituting a sky texture wherever possible. Skies are simple flat images and do not add to the polygon count.
 Check out this website for more information:
www.planetquake.com/worldcraft/wcu/wcu.shtml.



The new button. Sexy or what?



Setting up how the button works.

Next, select the door object we created in the last step, press **Alt + Enter** (ie view its property sheet), and then in the **Name** attribute type **door01**. This uniquely identifies the door so we can refer to it from any other objects we may create. It also means our button and door should now work together. Run the level and test it.

You employ a similar technique by using the **func_recharge** and **func_healthcharge** entities to create the wall-mounted health and battery dispensers.

GOING PUBLIC

You've built what you reckon is a cool level. Now what do you do with it?

Once you're satisfied you have a killer level, pay a visit to the following websites. Some have very specific instructions on how to upload your creation, so follow them carefully. If your level is due to be reviewed and scored, pissing the guy off before he's even started playing is not a good move. Remember that if your level is truly awesome, you won't need to be particularly active in promoting it – instead you'll find it popping up all over the place. Players are desperate for cool deathmatch levels, and if yours fits the bill it'll multiply like a particularly virulent virus.

Radium Half-Life Map Centre
www.planethalflife.com/radium/

Silo X Map Archive
<http://halflife.net/sxmaps/>

Half-Life, Inc.
<http://halflife.gameplex.net/hlinc/>

Decyber Maps
<http://decyber.solgames.com/halflife/halflife.htm>



The end is now filled with the elevator platform.

ELEVATORS

The last thing you need to know before we sign off is how to build lifts and moving platforms. First, drag the camera back into the first big room – the one without the door in it. Build a raised walkway halfway up the back wall and give it a texture to make it stand out from the stone.

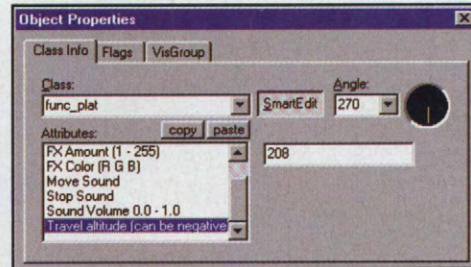


Make sure you take note of the walkway's height.

Leave a space at the end for the elevator platform to rise and fall. When you play the game, the platform starts in the lowered position; at design time, you need to create it in the raised position. So let's do it. Create a much smaller brush to plug the gap at the end – this is the platform that raises players from ground level up to the walkway.

With the platform selected, hit **Ctrl + T** (you've probably worked out what we're about to do). This time, make sure **func_plat** is chosen as the entity class. Choose sounds as you would for a door, and then select the attribute called **Travel Altitude**. What you need to enter here is the

distance between the floor and the walkway. To calculate this, select the elevator platform with the **Selection Tool** and note the height at which it sits. Then simply drag it down level with the floor and note the new height. Subtract the difference and you have the distance it should travel. Enter this in the box and you're done. [KZ]



Choosing how our platform should behave.

EDITING SITES

Map making is an art – which these days means anyone can do it. Bookmark the following sites for the latest tips, tricks and prefabs

Half-Life Editing FAQ
www.planetquake.com/lake/faq.html

Gamedesign's Resource Centre
<http://halflife.gamedesign.net/>

Half-Life Editing Centre
www.halflife.net/hec/

Half Done
www.valveworld.com/halfdone/

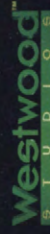


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x35f
'non programmable
flight stick'



x36 combo
'programmable
flight stick'



saitek 'peripherals'

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*offer available for a limited period only while stocks last



MEGASTORES

DEAR WAZZA

Your techie problems and upgrade questions solved in a flash. A bit like a floor cleaner. Sort of

MR CLEAN Warren Christmas

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WRITE TO Dear Wazza, PC ZONE, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ.

EMAIL Address your letters to us at letters.pczone@dennis.co.uk with the subject heading 'Dear Wazza'.

Please note: while we can assure you that we read every techie query sent to us, we are unable to offer personal replies. Also, please do not phone, as you're unlikely to reach someone who can help. Thanks.

LARA HELP

Q I can run *Tomb Raider III* from the CD but I can't install it. It gets to 93 per cent and then generates an error message. I've tried emailing Eidos (techsupp@techsupport.eidosinteractive.co.uk) but the message got bounced. According to Easynet the address doesn't exist. Anyway, do you know of any other Win98 users with this problem?

Wayne Hammond

A We haven't experienced any problems with *Tomb Raider III*. Although we can't be sure, your problem could be caused by a faulty/scratched disc. Have you tried taking it back to the shop for a replacement? If you have and still have had no luck, we suggest you call Eidos' helpline on 0121 356 0831 or email them at techsupport@eidosnet.co.uk (we're not sure where you got that other address from). Oh, and can you do us a favour and find out about that nude Lara cheat for us while you're there please?

STUCK ON THE GRID

Q In the *Grand Prix Legends* manual it states that you should try to run the game at 30 frames per second. I have a 233MHz Pentium II, and when I turned on the frame rate indicator I was running at 10fps. The only way to get 30fps was by making it look like something off my old Spectrum.

A frame rate of 30fps sounds a bit over the top, so could you fill me in on that? Also, I have an unsupported Matrox G200 4Mb. Would upgrading to a 12Mb Voodoo2 help?

Alex Hall

A In a word, yes. Do remember, however, that 30fps is just Sierra's guideline. Most PC gamers have to trade off between frame rates, detail levels and screen resolution at some time or another.

CREATIVE LIMITS?

Q I purchased a Creative Labs Voodoo 3Dfx card a few months ago. I'm planning to

upgrade my Intel P200MMX processor in the near future, and was looking to get an AMD. On reading the manual, however, it states that the 3D card is compatible only with genuine Intel processors. Is this true, and if so why? My only alternative would be a Pentium II processor, which is beyond my budget. Other Voodoo cards claim to run using processors other than Intel ones. I looked through Creative Labs' website but couldn't find any relevant information.

Mike Hughes

A This is the first we've heard of this. Someone out there may know different (if so, please write in), but we'd imagine that it's just Creative Labs covering themselves in case of potential compatibility problems. In which case, given that there are thousands of AMD owners using Creative cards, we wouldn't worry about it.

On a related note, there were compatibility problems with Cyrix processors and Creative's SoundBlaster Live! audio board, but new drivers for the latter which fix the problem are now available online – you can find them at www.sblive.com.

CACHE FLOW

Q I've noticed that whenever I go on the Web for anything, it seems to store JPEG files and some other file types in a temporary Internet directory. This can take a lot of space if you use the Web quite a lot, and since I've only got 1Gb of hard disk, space is essential for me. Please tell me if there is a magic switch somewhere in my PC which I can turn off so that it stops saving these files!

D Periro

A Indeed there is, but where this 'magic switch' is depends on what software you're using. If you're running, say, *Netscape Navigator 4*, select Preferences from the Edit menu. You should see three main menu trees, one of which is named Advanced.

Double-click on this and you should get to the Cache menu. With *Microsoft Explorer 4*, you should select Internet Options from the View menu, then select Settings under the Temporary Internet Files heading. In both instances, once you get the right screen it's easy to make changes. Do be aware, however, that having a decent-sized cache to temporarily store downloaded files can dramatically improve performance on the Web. Reduce the size if you're really short of disk space, but don't make it too small.

DRIVING ME CRAZY

Q I did a sensible thing and upgraded my PC 266MHz Pentium II with 160Mb (What, RAM?! – Ed) and a Voodoo2 card. It makes for excellent gaming, but there's one problem – every two hours my hard drive goes crazy,

making games slow and unplayable. It lasts about five to ten minutes. Are there any solutions to this problem?

Robert Armstrong

A Your hard drive goes 'crazy' every two hours, does it? Well, you need to be a bit more specific, because we haven't got a clue what you're on about by 'crazy'.

Any readers want to help here? And please remember, folks: if you write in with a problem, we need a full and detailed description of your problem.

486 ALL OUT

Q I have a 120MHz 486DX4 with a 12x CD-ROM drive and a 4Mb S3 ViRGE card. I recently upgraded both the CD-ROM (from a double-speed) and the graphics card (from a Cirrus 1Mb), but my computer still can't handle



DriverGuide.com
Your guide to finding device drivers

Warning
Your Internet Connection is Not Optimized. Downloaded items may be slow.

Welcome to The Driver Guide!

To use this service, please follow these steps:

1. Click on the link to the Download Drivers page.
2. When you receive your membership key, click on the membership key.
3. Once you are logged in, follow the instructions for finding drivers.

About The Driver Guide

Let's face it, finding the right device driver can be a tedious and frustrating task. The Driver Guide has created a one-stop online service which will assist you in the task of finding the right device driver for your hardware. We have compiled a database of drivers connected to by the most experienced users with a view to helping you find the right driver for your hardware.

- Provides an easy step-by-step process for finding and installing drivers.
- Offers a free technical database of manufacturer and driver information.
- Provides discussion boards that give members the opportunity to discuss with other owners of their hardware type, and describe their experiences (overseas!)
- Offers bulletin boards where members can post their own hardware related information.
- Provides resources for Windows, Mac, Unix/Linux, and other operating systems.
- Includes links to helpfiles, manuals, website updates, and other resources.
- Membership is available at FREE! Members are given 60 days access to the site.

Our members have given this site a 4.5/5 rating. Because this website often contains user generated information, it is important that you take any PRECISE to do that you are required to read before you use the site. We are not responsible for any damage to your hardware or data that may occur as a result of using this site.

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Are You On The List?

UPGRADING REPAIRING PC

IF IT'S DRIVERS YOU'RE AFTER, THIS IS THE SITE TO VISIT.

DRIVER

Q I thought other ZONE readers might be interested in hearing of a very useful site I found while trawling the Web. The site is at www.driverguide.com and is an excellent resource for finding drivers on the Internet for almost any piece of hardware. You have to register with the site (for free) but it's worth it. The site enabled me to track down drivers for an old 4x CD-ROM drive I have very quickly. And no, I am not in any way affiliated with this site.

Chris Copperwheat

A What can we say? Top tip, Chris. £50 is on its way.

“Every two hours my hard drive goes crazy, making games slow and unplayable. It lasts about five to ten minutes. Are there any solutions to this problem?”

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

the up-to-date graphics of new computer games (or older ones!). Bearing in mind that I'm trying to save money, I was wondering

“I've upgraded my CD-ROM drive and graphics card but my 486DX4 still can't handle the graphics of new games. Should I buy a new PC?”

GRAHAM ORMISTON

whether I should upgrade the CPU, motherboard and RAM, or should I just buy a new computer? Also, which would last me the longest?

Graham Ormiston, Bolton

A We thought this email had been stuck in the ether for a couple of years but, no, it looks like there's actually someone out there – right now – trying to run recent games on a 486. Blimey.

Seriously, Graham, you're at least two generations of PCs behind. There may be a few bits from your PC that are possibly worth saving (monitor, keyboard, mouse and so on), but in order to bring your system anything close to being up to date you need to replace

all the major components, including the motherboard, processor, memory and hard drive. Upgrading really won't make any sense.

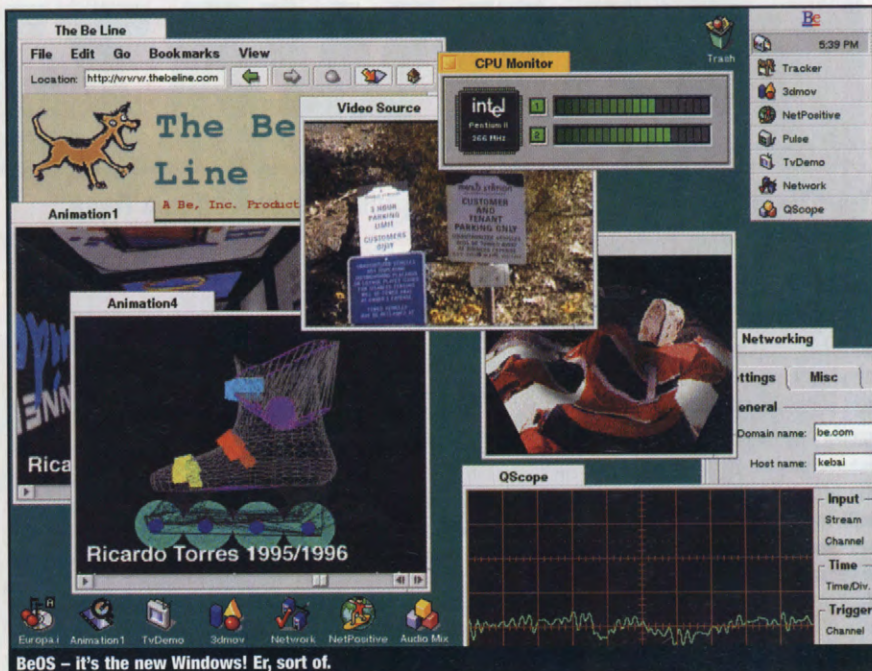
If you want something which will take you into the new millennium (that is, something which will last you for a few months at least!), we suggest you go for a brand new Pentium II-based PC (or AMD K6-2) with an ATX-form case and motherboard. Go for the fastest processor that your budget allows for, but don't worry too much about the exact specification of the other components. The important bit is to get a decent base system. Once you've got that, you can easily upgrade components as and when you can afford them.

Check out the ads in mags such as *Computer Shopper* and *PC Pro* – you may be surprised at how little a basic Pentium II PC costs these days.

NEW WINDOWS?

A I've heard that there's an operating system – called BeOS or something – which is a good alternative to Windows for playing games and surfing the Net. What do you know about this? Is it any good? I quite like the sound of it because, er, I don't like Microsoft.

Dan Sloan, London



A Yep Dan, you're right – there is an operating system called BeOS. It's actually been around since 1997, but Release 4, the first serious version for PCs, was launched at the end of last year.

Designed primarily for the manipulation of digital media such as audio, video and 3D graphics, in essence it's like an ultra-fast, super-lean version of Windows 95. We've seen it in

action and can tell you that it's very, very impressive. However, with relatively limited hardware and software support at present, you can't look at it as an alternative to Windows. Indeed, it's been designed to co-exist on a hard disk alongside one of Microsoft's babies. Moreover, while there are an ever growing number of BeOS applications becoming available, there's precious

little in the way of games. We're certainly not aware of any major game developer supporting it. As such, unless you're into high-end multimedia work, it's probably of little interest to the typical PC ZONE reader. If you want more information, check out the website at www.be.com. The product itself is available from Computer Warehouse (tel 0181 400 1298) for around £50.

READER REPLIES

Your responses to reader's questions printed recently, and, indeed, your thoughts on our answers

DISCUSSION

Q In your October issue (PCZ #68) you had an article called 'How to clean up your PC'. You suggested that as a very last resort you could format your hard drive then re-install Windows. You went on to say that you need a full Windows 98 CD, and not the upgrade.

Well, I discovered that you can install Windows 98 on a formatted hard drive from an upgrade disc. When the set-up program says that it cannot find a previous version of Windows, it gives you an option of specifying the previous Windows directory. You just slot in your Windows 95 CD, type X:\Win95 (where X is your CD-ROM drive letter).

Michael Delehanty

A True, although readers should bear in mind that if you're attempting a clean install using a Windows 98 upgrade disc, you still need to have a full

(as in not an upgrade) copy of Windows 95. I think that's what the author probably meant.

PATCH MATCH

Q With reference to the letter 'Patch The Dog' in your February issue (PCZ#73), the latest 3Dfx miniport driver automatically scans for OpenGL games like *SiN*, *Half-Life* etc. But you need to re-install the driver every time you add a new game. The readme file gives an insight into what this driver does.

John Rigby

A We assumed that Aiden Joyce was talking about updates to games in general, not the 3Dfx MiniGL driver (the latest version of which you can find at www.3dfx.com, and also on our cover CD every month). However, it's a very valid point, and one we're happy to pass on.

MEMORY ERROR

Q In your January issue (PCZ #72) there's a letter tagged 'We've Forgotten' in which a reader asks about increasing RAM in his machine. Normally your answers are very good, but in this instance you've made a mistake.

You told the reader that he can "probably add a single 16Mb SIMM". This is wrong: SIMMs (Single Inline Memory Modules) can only be fitted in pairs. If a single SIMM is fitted the machine will not boot. DIMMs (Dual Inline Memory Modules), on the other hand, can be fitted individually.

Gavin Cox

A Oops, yes Gavin, you're right (in the case of Pentiums), although from what we can remember, you could add single SIMMs in 486-based motherboards. Hey, our memory's not what it was, okay?

BLACK IS BACK

Q Regarding the 'Black Boxes' query in your February issue (PCZ#73). I've got the same video card in my machine running under Windows 95. Although I haven't experienced the same problem, I couldn't get *Carmageddon II* to run in Direct3D mode (black screen when game started). To get around this I downloaded the latest drivers from the ATI website http://support.atitech.ca/driver_s/3dtrage_pro.html (file: W82440EN, Version 5.24, build 4.10.2440). I then reinstalled DirectX 6, and this corrected my problem.

Nigel Skeet

A We're not sure whether this will fix James Barwell's problem (black boxes appearing on screen), although, as we originally said, it probably is something to do with the ATI Rage card, and trying

new drivers is obviously a good start.

AUTO EXCESS

Q In the January issue (PCZ #72), Mark Pickett asked how to put extra cars into *Grand Theft Auto*. As you rightly said, he needs to unzip the files. But if the files are in bitmap format he also needs to download a special program called GTA Cars (you can find an evaluation copy at www.fifengr.com/gtacars/).

Using GTA Cars, you can import the car into any of the cities. You can also do a load of other things, but I guess you wouldn't want me to write reams on it. Oh yes, and excellent new cars for GTA can be found at <http://come.to/azz>, www.valdez.clara.net/ and www.grandtheftauto.com/files.htm.

Tim Hoult

A Not much we can add to that. Thanks, Tim.

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WATCHDOG

Complained? Argued? Shouted? And still feel ignored by the industry you support? Let PC ZONE take care of your consumer woes

ANSWERED BY Adam Phillips

DOH!

We're here to help. If you've got a consumer issue that needs addressing then drop us a line. But please remember that technical issues are not covered by Watchdog - if you've got a techie problem, write to Dear Wazza (page 135).

WRITE TO Watchdog, PC ZONE, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ.

EMAIL us at letters.pczone@dennis.co.uk with the subject heading 'Watchdog'.

OVER-PROTECTIVE

Q I have just been reading about the problems people have been having with *Colin McRae*. I, too, have experienced the same problem, not only with *Colin McRae Rally*, but also with *Carmageddon II*. I took my copy back to the shop and had it replaced, but the game still wouldn't work.

So I rang the helpline and waited about 30 minutes before I got through. I was then told to buy a new CD-ROM drive because my PC was six months old and did not support the new protection codes, which are now on their CD games. I told the guy on the phone where he could stick his game and

promised never to buy an SCI title again. By the way, my CD-ROM drive is a Pioneer dr24x.

'Gaz'

A While we reported last month that a suitable patch had been created to overcome this problem, the fact that tech support didn't appear to know of its existence is worrying. We contacted SCI, who told us that there must have been "a big misunderstanding", and that the patch should rectify your CD-ROM problem.

SCI also said they find it hard to believe that you would have been put on hold for 30 minutes. But if you "felt you were waiting for a more than acceptable time", a spokesperson for the company offered, "we can only apologise. We value our customers more than anything, and go to great lengths to make sure each query is dealt with quickly and efficiently."

The only real bone of contention, though, is that SCI insist they would never have told you to simply buy a replacement CD-ROM drive: "If he did phone, he would have been offered different options to resolve his problem. Our technical support department would not have just told him to buy a new CD drive to get the game working. That is plainly ridiculous."

While Watchdog wonders if an uninformed tech support employee may have been caught off-guard by your enquiry, Gaz, you can email SCI on marketing@sci.co.uk to offer your take on your allegations being "plainly ridiculous". Let us know how you get on.

FIFA FAKE

Q Just wondering whether anybody else has mailed you about the stadiums (or rather, the lack of them) in *FIFA '99*. After buying the game, I was looking forward to playing the Scottish league in a Scottish stadium (okay, I admit I'm a bit sad). I got even more excited when I

found out that they'd chosen the Ibrox stadium in Glasgow, which is where I make the trek to watch Rangers.

In the game, there's a great intro of the stadium, but then what? You're then given some stadium which looks nothing like it on the inside, and which has

differences between all the stadiums in the game, except for the two Milan teams, who have the same one (they also share it in real life).

EA admit that the in-game stadiums are not perfectly accurate. "To have the detail levels as they are in the intro

“After buying FIFA '99, I was looking forward to playing the Scottish league in a Scottish stadium... There's a great intro of the stadium, but then what?”

MIKE

just been plucked from their *World Cup '98* game! What's the point of having flashy intros of grounds and then not actually being able to play in them? Ibrox is not the only one to suffer from this. I've also seen a few people mentioning this in the newsgroups, but without anyone actually getting any answers from EA - there has been no reply to my email as of yet.

Anyway, to get to the point (at last), what is going on? It obviously isn't licensing/cash, as the missing stadiums are accurate in the intros. And it can't be resource-related, as some of the grounds in the game are a lot bigger than some of those missing.

Am I being twisted and cynical when I notice that this game came out in time for Christmas? Nah, a games publisher wouldn't rush a game out for the Christmas period, would they?

The box says "Europe's Top 20 Teams & Stadiums". Hmm...

I think the game is great, which makes all this even more annoying.

Mike

A EA claim that the stadiums are a totally new addition to the game. "There is no point of similarity between the stadiums in this and *World Cup '98*," they state. The EA bods went on to explain that they did use elements from other stadiums already modelled (for *FIFA '99*) in order to accurately depict the ones you're referring to. Apparently, there are

would slow the game down hugely," they explain.

"The bottom line is that the stadiums are all different from each other in the game, and should have the correct number of tiers and corner sections, for example, and are a totally new feature for this game."

EA INFECTION?

Q I just thought I'd write to you about something worrying happening at EA's Bullfrog. I read a couple of issues back that someone picked up a CIH virus from an EA game. The same thing happened to me a couple of weeks ago.

I bought *Populous: The Beginning* after reading your review. I installed it and tried to play it, but it gave me a blue screen error message. It took me about an hour to discover a small slip of paper in the box stating that if I had a blue screen crash I could have a CIH virus. And I did. I couldn't fix it myself so I had to get a flipping engineer in to fix it - which cost me 150 quid!

I trust Bullfrog to give the public quality, but the only thing they gave me was a virus - and left me with £150 bill!

Alex

A A serious allegation indeed, and one we took straight to Electronic Arts to see if their software is truly giving punters viral nightmares. Their response was swift and adamant: "All of our software is checked



Myth II plays just fine, but don't run the uninstall routine.

MYTH II PRODUCT RECALL

Bungie jump to point out nasty uninstaller bug

Here's something you don't see every day: a software company recalling a product instead of releasing yet another patch for it. Publishers GT Interactive are asking punters to return copies of *Myth II* because developers Bungie (and irate stores) have discovered a problem with the uninstaller. Apparently, there's a bug in the uninstall routine which erases the entire hard drive partition if the game is installed to a directory other than the default one. To the non-techies among you, that's serious stuff, and should be avoided like the plague.

If you have already installed the game, drag the *Myth II* folder into the recycle bin and delete it instead. If you've only just bought the game, GT recommend that you don't install it, and instead wait for the new version of the installer.

If you've already installed it, Bungie say there is no harm in playing the game, but just remember not to run that pesky uninstall programme. Oh, and the same problem is present in the demo, so avoid that as well. The bug is apparently only present on version 1.0 and the 'revised' version 1.1 should be in stores by the time you read this.



Electronic Arts stress that all their software is checked and none is infected with the CIH virus.

during several stages of development, mastering and production for any signs of virus infection, and none of our software is infected with the CIH virus. We always use the latest versions of virus checkers on the market and receive regular updates from the developers of the virus-checking software – which we always introduce into our systems immediately.”

As for the seemingly incriminating addendum included in the box, EA say that they are doing this out of the goodness of their own hearts: “The addendum, written by ourselves, highlights that we have found that a number of customers’ machines are infected with the CIH virus. Our software is not the source of the problem, but it does alert the customer to this fact before this virus can cause any further infection or damage to the customer’s machine. It says in the second paragraph of the addendum: ‘Any program can crash if your computer is infected. Should you encounter any crash where the screen turns blue, involving either a Fatal Exception or VXD error, your system may be infected with the CIH virus.’

“In the addendum it clearly states the following: 1. What the blue screen crash signifies. 2. How the customer can resolve the problem themselves with the minimum of cost. 3. Once you have cleared your

machine, what you should do to find the source. 4. The Electronic Arts CD is not the source of the virus.”

Finally, EA state: “We are really sorry that this customer has had this problem, but the fact remains that we are not the villain here. In fact, we have done a great deal to make our customers aware that this problem exists and how to

effectively resolve it.

“Our advice to all PC owners is to always make sure that you virus-check any source of software, and to always have a good, up-to-date virus checker running on your machine at all times.”

If any other readers have had similar problems, we’d like to hear from you. Send your details to the usual address.

BUGGED

Half-Life hardware help and *Privateer 2* pitfalls

HALF-LIFE

David Triska wrote to us last month, upset that Sierra’s *Half-Life* didn’t work with his 3D and video cards. He subsequently discovered that the game required Glide v2.54, but was unable to obtain it from anywhere – not even from the official 3Dfx site. Fortunately, the Internet eventually came to the rescue in the shape of an unofficial *Half-Life* site, which told him to start the game using HL.exe -noip. So any readers experiencing similar problems should give it a whirl. Cheers for the tip, David.

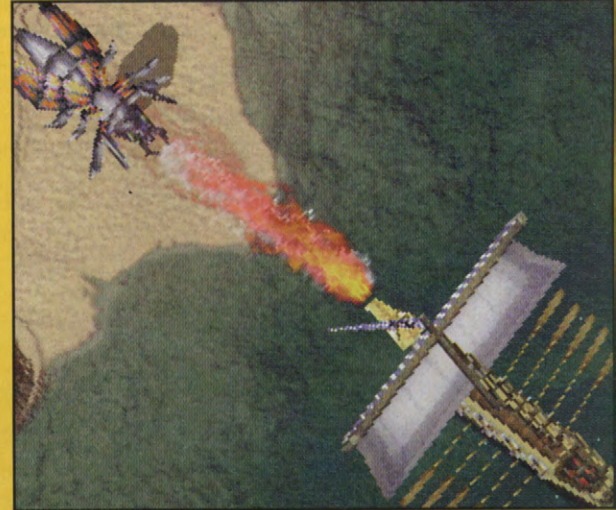
PRIVATEER 2

The otherwise perfect *Privateer 2* has been hacking off some of our readers recently. According to one punter, Charles Collicutt, there’s a point in the game where you’re supposed to go to Interplanetary Aid, but you’re not given the necessary option on the Exit To Transit screen. While he knows of people who have got past this stage, he believes that it’s really a bug in the title’s coding. Origin tech support insist that it’s his lack of gameplaying ability, not the software itself.

Enter reader Jeff Jones from Belgium, who reckons Origin are wrong, and that the bug is known as the Plotstopper. He offers the following advice to overcome it: “When ‘visiting’ Hal Taffin, you have to be very nasty to him and almost blow his head off. When he pulls his gun on you, you must return the favour and he’ll reveal the coward inside. He will then tell you about the pod, and the game will proceed normally. If you back down you get the information the other way, and this triggers the bug.”

PCZONE

COMING NEXT ISSUE TA KINGDOMS



Everyone’s talking about *Tiberian Sun* at the moment. Opinions seem to vary from cautious optimism to outright cynicism at Westwood’s decision to use Voxel graphics in the light of the 3D revolution. Meanwhile, everyone seems to be forgetting that *Total Annihilation* currently holds the real-time strategy crown, and its successor *TA Kingdoms* will be with us next month. To say Westwood have their work cut out shaping up against such esteemed competition is something of an understatement. Tune in next issue for Round One of the battle for real-time supremacy.

THE FINEST COVER CD DEMOS

If all goes according to plan, we’ll be bringing you exclusive demos of *Expendable*, *Championship Manager 3* (come on Eidos, we’re all waiting for this) and as usual there will be lots of other top demos on the CD for your gaming pleasure.

HONEST REVIEWS

Allens Vs Predator and *Requiem* head the review section next month, and we’ll have full reviews of *MechWarrior III* and *Expendable*. The rest of the month’s releases will of course be reviewed and rated too.

TIPS, CHEATS AND WALKTHROUGHS

We have a full guide to *SimCity 3000* next month, and we’ll also reveal everything you wanted to know about *Half-Life* but were too busy playing it to ask. We’ll also have more tips and cheats on the latest games than you can shake a very large stick at.

INSIGHTFUL PREVIEWS

An exclusive report from the US on how Ion Storm’s action adventure *Anachronox* is shaping up, and the very latest on *Age Of Empires 2* from Microsoft. See you next month.

ON SALE THURSDAY 8 APRIL

* Note: this is a guide only, content may change due to circumstances beyond our control

THE PASSION. THE GLORY. THE FOOTBALL.

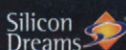
THE UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE. The very name conjures up the passion, the flair and the fervour of European football at its most scintillating. And now, UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE Season 1998/99 on PlayStation and PC gives you the opportunity to live and breathe every second of this heart-stopping competition.

Taking control of one of Europe's most celebrated clubs, you'll do battle in some of the most daunting stadiums across the continent in your epic journey to ultimate glory.

Packed with explosive action and incredibly authentic gameplay, the stunning graphics do full justice to the true splendour of one of the world's greatest soccer spectacles.

- The official product of the UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE for the 1998/99 season. Includes the real teams, player names, strips, logos and sponsors for the season.
- Includes all past winners of the competition from its European Cup roots to the present day Tournament.
- Multiple Game Modes including the UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE, Exhibition Matches, Custom Tournaments and a unique Scenario Challenge Mode.
- Features accurate models of the most famous European stadiums.
- Real-time commentary from Europe's most recognised TV commentators.
- Fully skinned motion-capture models with advanced player AI.
- A wealth of up-to-date statistics for the 1998/99 season displayed in awesome hi-res UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE style graphics.

THE GAME.





UEFA

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE[®]

SEASON 1998/99



OFFICIAL VIDEO GAME OF THE UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE



TOP 100

Welcome to the **PC ZONE** Top 100. Here you'll find the games that in our expert opinion are the current top PC games in their field, as well as a few extras you might like to consider if you're a big fan of the genre

ACTION GAMES



QUAKE II

PCZ #59 • 97%

🔥 The sequel to 'the most important PC game ever' turns out to be more than worth the wait. Despite the odd bit of slowdown, single-player and deathmatch games are in a league of their own. As Macca concluded in his review: "Quake II is pretty much perfect." Buy it now.
PUBLISHER Activision • 01895 456700



HALF-LIFE

PCZ #71 • 95%

🔥 Arriving a whole year late but definitely worth the wait, this has to be the 3D shooter of the year thanks to a superb single-player game. We'll have to wait and see whether it will beat Quake II in the deathmatch arena.
PUBLISHER Sierra • 0118 9209100



BUDGET

FADE TO BLACK

PCZ #31 • 94%

🔥 The unofficial sequel to the excellent Flashback, this is a near-perfect blend of third-person exploration and combat action. The technical precursor to the fantastic Tomb Raider, it's a classic in its own right.
PUBLISHER Electronic Arts • 01753 549442



BUDGET

PRIVATEER 2: THE DARKENING

PCZ #44 • 94%

🔥 The ultimate mix of space combat, Elite-style trading and FMV action, Privateer 2 was the first big budget release from Origin which used live action in a positive way. Absolutely packed with stars, this is pukka stuff.
PUBLISHER Origin/EA • 01753 549442



FORSAKEN

PCZ #63 • 94%

🔥 Descent is dead and Forsaken is now king of the tunnel-based shoot 'em ups. With huge, varied levels, heaps of graphical effects, weapons and a fantastic multiplayer LAN-based game, it's up there with the best of 'em.
PUBLISHER Acclaim • 0171 344 5000



WARGASM

PCZ #71 • 93%

🔥 Famed for their flight sims, DID finally deliver an action game only they could produce. With helicopters, APCs, and hapless infantry running about, this is as fast-paced as a tank game could be – and it's even better to share.
PUBLISHER Infogrames • 0181 738 8199



SHOGO: MOBILE ARMOUR DIVISION

PCZ #71 • 92%

🔥 Half Quake, half MechWarrior, this 3D action game breathes fresh air into a stale genre. With great graphical effects and an involving storyline, it's perhaps just a bit too easy for the Quake hard-core.
PUBLISHER Microids • 00331 4601 5401



SIN

PCZ #70 • 91%

🔥 Until Duke 4Ever appears, Sin is the closest in feel to its ageing classic predecessor. Based on the Quake II engine, Sin offers a superb single-player game thanks to some ingenious level design. Highly recommended.
PUBLISHER Eidos Interactive • 0181 636 3000



TOMB RAIDER III

PCZ #72 • 91%

🔥 There's a good chance that in 20 years' time the Tomb Raider 'thingy' will be looked upon with as much fondness as Star Wars is today. This third outing may not be as ground-breaking as its predecessor, but it's the best so far.
PUBLISHER Eidos Interactive • 0181 636 3000



JEDI KNIGHT/ MYSTERIES OF THE SITH

PCZ #74 • 90%

NEWENTRY As a double pack, this is outstanding value for money. Dated graphics, but the level design is superb and the missions are some of the best ever made.
PUBLISHER LucasArts/Activision • 01895 456700

ALSO CONSIDER

THIEF: THE DARK PROJECT Eidos Interactive • PCZ #72 • 90%

TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX Take 2 • PCZ #69 • 89%

UNREAL GT Interactive • PCZ #65 • 93%

QUAKE Activision • PCZ #43 • 96% **BUDGET**

SPEC OPS: RANGERS ASSAULT Take 2 • PCZ #65 • 88%

MDK Interplay • PCZ #50 • 90%

LAST BRONX Sega • PCZ #62 • 87%

RACING GAMES

**CARMAGEDDON II** PCZ #69 • 95%

★ It's *that* game again, this time with full 3D pedestrians. More blood, more cars, more tracks – and now with added missions. If you liked the first one, you'll love this one. If you don't, you can just bog off.

PUBLISHER SCI • 0171 585 3308

**FORMULA 1 GRAND PRIX 2** PCZ #36 • 95%

★ The amazing sequel to the greatest F1 driving sim ever. Updated brilliantly for the 94/95 season with all-new detailed circuits, cars and teams. The game will run on a 486DX2 but you'll need a Pentium to run the hi-res mode.

PUBLISHER MicroProse • 01454 893893

**COLIN MCRAE RALLY** PCZ #68 • 93%

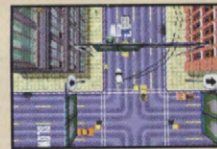
★ Sporting an updated *TOCA* engine, *Colin McRae* has become the new benchmark in rally simulations. With car customisability and a heap of multiplayer accessibility, this game should be top of everyone's rally games heap.

PUBLISHER Codemasters • 01926 814132

**MONACO GRAND PRIX** PCZ #69 • 92%

★ Essentially this is *F1 Racing Simulation 2*, and an F1 fan's wet dream come true. It looks beautiful, plays even better, and the AI is second to none. You need a hefty machine to have it looking its best though.

PUBLISHER Ubi Soft • 081 944 9000

**GRAND THEFT AUTO** PCZ #58 • 92%

★ This is the game that took over from *Carmageddon* as the media's favourite pet hate. Steal cars, dodge police, mow down pedestrians and cause mayhem in city streets in one of the most addictive driving games ever. *Micro Machines* on acid.

PUBLISHER BMG • 0171 973 0011

**NEED FOR SPEED III** PCZ #69 • 91%

★ Some arcade racing games are fun, but if you like a bit more than just just racing around a few tracks then you should seriously consider *Need For Speed III*. Why? Because if avoiding the law isn't fun, what is?

PUBLISHER Electronic Arts • 01753 549442

**MOTOCROSS MADNESS** PCZ #67 • 91%

★ An astoundingly addictive game. Loads of game and race options and tremendous fun, especially when played with a Microsoft Freestyle Pro pad over a network. Soon available with the pad for around 50 quid. A must-buy.

PUBLISHER Microsoft • 0345 002000

**MICRO MACHINES 3** PCZ #64 • 90%

★ The manic miniature racing game gets the 3D treatment and loses nothing along the way. The new power-ups might not please the purist, but *Micro Machines 3* is still one of the finest two-player games around.

PUBLISHER Codemasters • 01926 814132

**MOTORHEAD** PCZ #63 • 90%

★ With drop-dead graphics and a blistering frame rate, this is a ridiculously fast, fab-looking, intense racing experience. Add a great LAN-based option (Local Area Network) and *Motorhead* is the ace of arcade racers.

PUBLISHER Gremlin Interactive • 0114 273 8601

**GRAND PRIX LEGENDS** PCZ #69 • 90%

★ Papyrus, the makers of *NASCAR* and *IndyCar*, have put the danger back into Formula 1. If you fancy a challenge and the chance to go back to the teams and drivers of 1967, then buy this. You'll need a steering wheel though.

PUBLISHER Sierra • 0118 920 9100

ALSO
CONSIDER

INDYCAR 2 Cendant • PCZ #34 • 90% **BUDGET**

SCREAMER 2 Virgin • PCZ #45 • 93% **BUDGET**

DESTRUCTION DERBY 2 Psygnosis • PCZ #46 • 86% **BUDGET**

INTERSTATE 76: NITRO RIDERS Activision • PCZ #63 • 87%

TOCA: TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

Europress • PCZ #59 • 86% **BUDGET**

ULTIMATE RACE PRO MicroProse • PCZ #62 • 88% **BUDGET**

SPORTS GAMES

**LINKS LS** PCZ #43 • 94%

★ The classic golf sim gets an update, and unsurprisingly it's fab. There's more options, luscious graphics, a redesigned menu and a view selection system. There's even a built-in upgrader for all the old data disk courses you splashed out on.

PUBLISHER Eidos Interactive • 0181 636 3000

**TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR GOLF** PCZ #69 • 93%

★ Beautifully presented, as always, and sporting a speedy enhanced graphics engine, this latest in the *PGA* series also gets star endorsement by young Tiger Woods. Without question, this is the best golf game yet.

PUBLISHER EA Sports • 01753 549442

**NHL 99** PCZ #70 • 92%

★ The problem with all ice hockey games is the confusion that ensues after each ruck. *NHL 99* is no different in that respect, but updated graphics, enhanced AI and spiffy presentation make this game a must for fans of the sport.

PUBLISHER EA Sports • 01753 549442

**PETE SAMPRAS TENNIS 97** PCZ #53 • 92%

★ This game doesn't quite better *Super Tennis* on the SNES, but it's as close as you'll get on the PC. The simple control system means it's instantly playable, but we may as well tell you now that the women's skirts still don't fly up when they serve.

PUBLISHER Codemasters • 01926 814132

**FIFA 99** PCZ #71 • 92%

★ Another biannual release from EA Sports that, as per usual, is better than the last. You'll have to think long and hard before shelling out another £40, but if you love footie it's well worth it for the best football game available for the PC.

PUBLISHER EA Sports • 01753 549442

**SENSIBLE SOCCER EUROPEAN CLUB EDITION** PCZ #69 • 90%

★ It's still top-down, and it's still simple, fast and fun. *World Cup '98* may be prettier, but it can only dream of being as instantly playable as *Sensible Soccer European Club Edition*.

PUBLISHER GT Interactive • 0171 258 3791

**VIRTUAL POOL 2** PCZ #58 • 90%

★ Okay, so *Virtual Pool 2* scored one per cent less than its predecessor, but this follow-up beats it hands down. 3Dfx support goes some way to pushing the series further, and the inclusion of English Pub rules make it a more essential purchase than before.

PUBLISHER Interplay • 01628 423666

**THE GOLF PRO** PCZ #62 • 90%

★ If you're bored with either *PGA* or *Links*, then this is the best of the 'mouse-swing' bunch. Good course design and some excellent tuition means there's loads of gameplay, though the putting lets it down a tad.

PUBLISHER Empire Interactive • 0181 343 7337

**ACTUA SOCCER 3** PCZ #72 • 89%

★ Although better than last year's effort, *Actua 3* fails to snatch the title from EA this time around. Mind you, with a good range of options and a huge range of teams to play against, this certainly has a longer shelf life than *FIFA*.

PUBLISHER Gremlin Interactive • 0114 273 8601

**NBA LIVE 99** PCZ #73 • 87%

★ Being an EA Sports title, *NBA Live 99* is, unsurprisingly, the best game in its field. If you're a Sprite-drinking hoop fan, there's plenty here to justify shelling out for the annual upgrade. If you're not, you'll neither know nor care.

PUBLISHER EA Sports • 01753 549442

ALSO
CONSIDER

★ There's always a swell of different sports game types depending on the current sporting season. These are worth having a look at...

JIMMY WHITE'S 2: CUEBALL Virgin Interactive • PCZ #68 • 88%

MADDEN NFL 99 EA Sports • PCZ #71 • 87%

TRIPLE PLAY 99 Electronic Arts • PCZ #64 • 90%

TROPHY BASS 2 Cendant • PCZ #50 • 84%

ADVENTURE GAMES



BUDGET **ALONE IN THE DARK 3** **PCZ #21 • 95%**
 ✦ Better than the previous *AID* instalments, *Alone 3* is a tense, ambient tale of Navajo Indian magic and reincarnation that unfolds in the usual *AID* manner. This is now available as part of a compilation budget pack.
PUBLISHER Infogrames • 0181 738 8199



BUDGET **BIOFORGE** **PCZ #25 • 95%**
 ✦ Futuristic *Alone In The Dark*-style game with impressive graphics, puzzles and soundtrack. Often preferred over *AID* games as its unique blend of arcade combat is explosive. The only drag is EA's refusal to make a sequel for it.
PUBLISHER Electronic Arts • 01753 549442



BUDGET **SYSTEM SHOCK** **PCZ #20 • 95%**
 ✦ This futuristic first-person cyberpunk adventure from the makers of *Ultima* was initially overlooked by many people. Now available on budget, this is a must-buy for those new to the genre. The graphics might be a little dated, but the atmosphere is still invigorating.
PUBLISHER Electronic Arts • 01753 549442



BUDGET **DISC WORLD II** **PCZ #44 • 93%**
 ✦ Perfect Entertainment's immaculate sequel to *Discworld* follows would-be wizard Rincewind in his search for the Grim Reaper. Not as hard as the first game, but bigger and better looking. *Discworld II* is a universally appealing adventure game.
PUBLISHER Psygnosis • 0151 282 3000



BUDGET **INDIANA JONES AND THE FATE OF ATLANTIS** **PCZ #37 • 93%**
 ✦ Follow a post-*Raiders* Indy in his search for the submerged metropolis. Three ways to play make for a high replayability factor, and the inter-character banter is brilliant.
PUBLISHER LucasArts/VE • 0171 368 2255



BUDGET **LBA 2: TWINSEN'S ODYSSEY** **PCZ #54 • 93%**
 ✦ Twinsen is back – this time to thwart those pesky Esmers in this sumptuous sequel. The huge play area in *LBA 2*, coupled with seamlessly linked puzzles, creates a great-looking and hugely atmospheric adventure. A must for adventure fans.
PUBLISHER Electronic Arts • 01753 549442



BUDGET **SAM & MAX** **PCZ #11 • 93%**
 ✦ The hilarious dog/rabbit duo's first and only PC outing, in which they need to solve a host of bizarre puzzles. An all-talkie adventure with a gag-laden script, this is an essential budget-priced purchase even if you're not a point-and-click fan.
PUBLISHER LucasArts/VE • 0171 368 2255



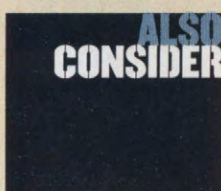
BUDGET **MONKEY ISLAND ADVENTURE PACK** **PCZ #74 • 90%**
NEWENTRY *Monkey Island 1* and *2* are perhaps the finest point-and-clickers ever to grace the PC, although the third was disappointing. This triple pack is excellent.
PUBLISHER LucasArts/Activision • 01985 4567000



GRIM FANDANGO **PCZ #71 • 90%**
 ✦ LucasArts not only do the best adventure games, but have also recently been doing the only adventure games worth buying. This latest has style written all over it, and hopefully signals a rosy future for fans of the genre.
PUBLISHER LucasArts • 0171 368 2255



KING'S QUEST VIII: MASK OF ETERNITY **PCZ #71 • 89%**
 ✦ To mark the genre's transition from point-and-click to a full 3D interface, Sierra's eighth *King's Quest* adventure proves an engaging stopgap, even if it is a little too Americanised. Good but not great.
PUBLISHER Sierra • 0118 920 9100



FULL THROTTLE Virgin • PCZ #27 • 92% **BUDGET**
THE PANDORA DIRECTIVE Virgin • PCZ #43 • 92%
TOONSTRUCK Virgin • PCZ #45 • 93% **BUDGET**
GABRIEL KNIGHT 2: THE BEAST WITHIN Cendant • PCZ #36 • 88%
LITTLE BIG ADVENTURE Electronic Arts • PCZ #21 • 93% **BUDGET**

ROLE-PLAYING GAMES



BUDGET **ULTIMA UNDERWORLD 2: LABYRINTH OF WORLDS** **PCZ #1 • 94%**
 ✦ This improves on almost every aspect of its prequel, *The Stygian Abyss*. You explore a complex, ever-evolving dungeon; it has unsurpassed atmosphere and interaction.
PUBLISHER Origin/EA • 01753 549442



FINAL FANTASY VII **PCZ #66 • 93%**
 ✦ Fearsomely addictive gem of a game of truly epic proportions. Great graphics, plenty of hidden surprises and massive levels will keep you totally absorbed if you forgive the risible dialogue and turn-based combat.
PUBLISHER Eidos Interactive • 0181 636 3000



REALMS OF THE HAUNTING **PCZ #47 • 93%**
 ✦ Although overlooked by many fans of the genre, our Mallo gave it a whopping 93 per cent when he reviewed it back in issue 47. Still well worth a look if you happen to see it going cheap, *ROTH* is a well cool mix of adventure and RPG.
PUBLISHER Gremlin Interactive • 0114 273 8601



LANDS OF LORE III **PCZ #74 • 90%**
NEWENTRY Westwood know how to tell a good story, and this latest in the series is the best of the lot. Combine that with ease of use and some highly polished artwork, and you'll find *LOLIII* a great alternative to more traditional RPG efforts.
PUBLISHER Westwood/EA • 01753 549442



ULTIMA VII **PCZ #3 • 89%**
 ✦ Arguably the best of all the *Ultima* games, *Ultima VII* blends character interaction and the exploration of the world of Britannia. The last *Ultima* series to give complete party control. Check out the *Ultima Collection* for a real treat.
PUBLISHER Origin/EA • 01753 549442



DIABLO **PCZ #48 • 88%**
 ✦ Standard hack 'n' slash fare, but pulled off with such style that it's addictive. A great storyline compensates for repetitive arcade combat and supremely detailed animation makes it a superb coffee-table game.
PUBLISHER Zblac/Blizzard • 01626 332233



TERRIS **PCZ #44 • 88%**
 ✦ A MUD in the old-school style of text-based RPGs, but it's so addictive that we're still playing it. The various quests, puzzles and monsters will keep you going for days. The gameplay is excellent, if you can handle the 'texty-ness'.
PUBLISHER AOL • 0800 279 7444



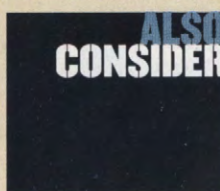
FALLOUT 2 **PCZ #71 • 86%**
 ✦ Does exactly what it says on the tin. Twice as big as the original, but utilising the exact same engine. If you like the first game, you'll love this – not twice as much, but certainly for twice as long. A real life-sapper.
PUBLISHER Interplay • 01628 423666



BALDUR'S GATE **PCZ #73 • 85%**
 ✦ With every developer 'going 3D' these days, it's refreshing to find an old-school RPG that combines traditional D&D role-playing with sumptuous 2D graphics. *Baldur's Gate* is intelligent and involving in equal measures.
PUBLISHER Interplay • 01628 423666

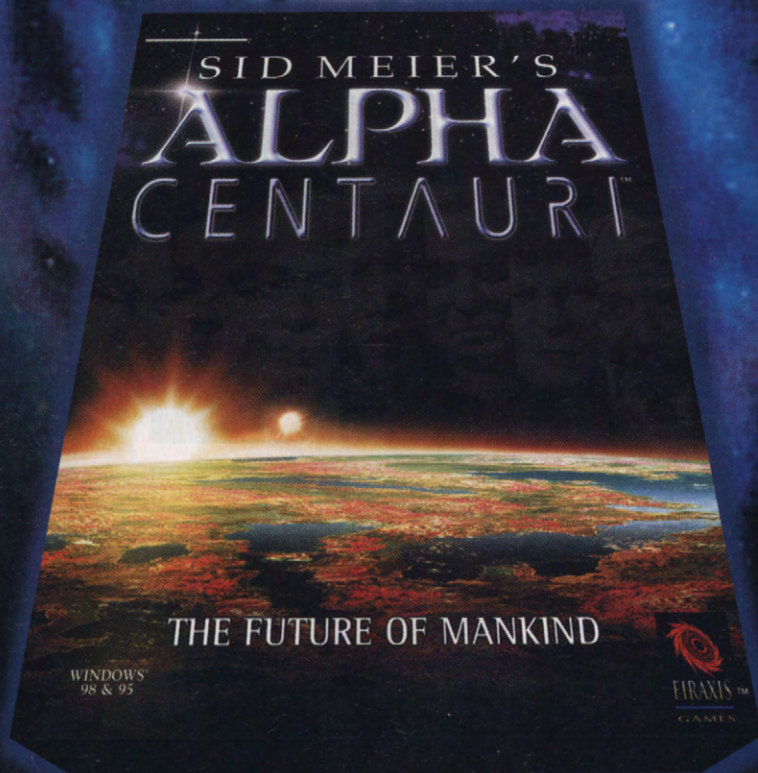


ULTIMA UNDERWORLD: THE STYGIAN ABYSS **PRE-PC ZONE**
 ✦ This took role-playing games away from first-person tile-based RPGs. Amazing architecture, witty characterisations, layers of storyline and the best ending of any game in history.
PUBLISHER Origin/EA • 01753 549442



✦ These are the cream of the crop, largely because RPGs have taken a back seat to other game types over the last couple of years. However, also bear in mind...
DIABLO: HELLFIRE Cendant • PCZ #59 • 82%
ULTIMA COLLECTION Electronic Arts • PCZ #62 • 90%
RAVENLOFT: STONE PROPHET Mindscape • PCZ #25 • 78%

out of this world



alpha centauri

Sid Meier's 'Alpha Centauri' transports you onto an alien planet with truly mesmerising game play. Faced with host of challenges your aim is to create a community strong enough to conquer the planet or to achieve the 'Ascent to Transcendence'.



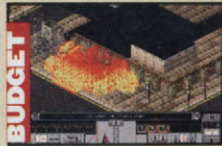
MEGASTORES

STRATEGY GAMES



BUDGET

SYNDICATE WARS PCZ #43 • 95%
 One of the best strategy games of all time gets a sequel, and what a fabulous sequel it is too. *Syndicate Wars* houses a wealth of intricate levels, gorgeous graphics and enough gratuitous violence to keep anyone happy.
PUBLISHER EA/Bullfrog • 01753 549442



BUDGET

X-COM 3: APOCALYPSE PCZ #52 • 95%
 A revamped engine and a healthy helping of real-time combat have brought the fantastically addictive *X-COM* series bang up to date. If you like your strategy games deep and meaningful, you should buy *X-COM 3* immediately. It'll keep you busy for weeks.
PUBLISHER MicroProse • 01454 893893



AGE OF EMPIRES PCZ #54 • 94%
 Imagine *Civilization II*'s great empire-building gameplay improved with some excellent graphical touches and comprehensive multi and single-player options (all in real time). That's *Age Of Empires* in a nutshell.
PUBLISHER Microsoft • 0345 002000



CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 3 PCZ #73 • 93%
 No fancy graphics, no sound and no online multiplayer options do nothing to hide the fact that *Champ Manager 3* is one of the most addictive games you'll ever play. Forty quid for a season ticket to nirvana? Bloody bargain, mate.
PUBLISHER Eidos Interactive • 0181 636 3000



POPULOUS: THE BEGINNING PCZ #70 • 92%
 The original *Populous* was the game that put Bullfrog into orbit and made Peter Molyneux one of the biggest names in the industry. Now Peterless, the new Bullfrog team show that they can do just as well without him.
PUBLISHER Electronic Arts • 01753 549442



MAGIC & MAYHEM PCZ #70 • 92%
 Based on the old Spectrum game *Chaos*, *X-COM* creators Mythos deliver a diverse and original fantasy strategy game. A strong single-player element and a manic multiplayer game make this a well-deserving classic.
PUBLISHER Virgin • 0171 368 2255



BUDGET

TOTAL ANNIHILATION PCZ #56 • 92%
 With a ridiculous number of units and its fast-paced action, *Total Annihilation* is without doubt one of the best real-time strategy games ever. The polygon units are smooth, and multiplayer games are awesome. Pisses on *Red Alert*.
PUBLISHER GT Interactive • 0171 258 3791



SIMCITY 3000 PCZ #74 • 92%
NEWENTRY Ten years on, *SimCity* remains as addictive as it ever was. Little was broken, and little was fixed. With new buildings to try out and an enhanced transport system, *SimCity 3000* is a must for old-timers and newbies alike.
PUBLISHER Maxis/EA • 01753 549442

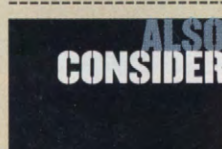


SID MEIER'S ALPHA CENTAURI PCZ #74 • 92%
NEWENTRY *Civ II* was, and still is, one of the greatest strategy games ever made. And *Alpha Centauri* is everything a true sequel should be. Rather than another remake, this is the game *Civ* fans have been crying out for for years.
PUBLISHER Firaxis/EA • 01753 549442



BUDGET

CIVILIZATION II PCZ #36 • 90%
 Explore the world, conquer territories and research new technologies in one of the most successful strategy games ever. It's not that different to the first one, but it merits a '90s update and a place here.
PUBLISHER MicroProse • 01454 893893



BUDGET

WARLORDS III: DARKLORDS RISING Broderbund • PCZ #67 • 90%
OPERATIONAL ART OF WAR VOL 1 Empire • PCZ #68 • 92%
COMMANDOS Eidos Interactive • PCZ #66 • 87%
DUNGEON KEEPER Electronic Arts • PCZ #53 • 96% **BUDGET**
MASTER OF ORION 2 MicroProse • PCZ #45 • 92% **BUDGET**
COMMAND & CONQUER: RED ALERT VIE • PCZ #47 • 94%
CAESAR III Sierra • PCZ #70 • 92%
M1 TANK PLATOON II MicroProse • PCZ #63 • 90% **BUDGET**

ALSO CONSIDER

FLIGHT SIMULATION GAMES



FALCON 4.0 PCZ #72 • 95%
 After waiting literally years for this, the wait was worth it. With 3D-accelerated graphics and a dynamic campaign structure, *Falcon 4.0* can fly against the best of them – and win. One of the best flight sims ever seen.
PUBLISHER MicroProse • 01454 893893



F-22 TOTAL AIR WAR PCZ #68 • 95%
 This full-price new version of DID's masterpiece is perhaps a bit of a rip-off for anyone who already owns *F-22 ADF*, but those of you looking to buy one of the greatest combat sims of recent years should seriously consider this one.
PUBLISHER Ocean/DID • 0161 832 6633



FLIGHT SIM 98 PCZ #55 • 94%
 Another year, and yet another flight sim to come from the mighty Microsoft. However, this time, with two new aircraft, a helicopter, hundreds of new airports and hugely impressive 3D acceleration, it's really worth having.
PUBLISHER Microsoft • 0345 002000



APACHE HAVOC PCZ #73 • 94%
 Of the three main chopper sims available, *Longbow 2* is the one if you're a hard-core sim head, *Team Apache* is the choice for fans whose preference swings the other way, and *Apache Havoc* straddles the gap. And the graphics are to die for.
PUBLISHER Empire Interactive • 0181 343 7337



LONGBOW 2 PCZ #59 • 92%
 "Longbow 2 is challenging, beautiful, exciting and fun – if you're 3Dfx'd up," we said in our review. If you don't have any extra graphics hardware, there's only one thing to do – think 'upgrade', 'upgrade' and 'upgrade'. It'll be worth the investment.
PUBLISHER Electronic Arts • 01753 549442



JANE'S F-15 PCZ #64 • 92%
 A hard-core propeller-head's sim that can stand alongside the awesome *Longbow 2* as one of the most realistic flight sims available. Newbies to the genre might find it a bit overwhelming, but it's worth persevering with.
PUBLISHER Electronic Arts • 01753 549442



FLYING CORPS GOLD PCZ #59 • 92%
 Action-packed WWI flight simulation with neat graphics. Some of you may recall *Red Baron* as one of the greatest WWI flight sims ever – this improves on the old classic to become the best PC WWI sim currently available.
PUBLISHER Empire Interactive • 0181 343 7337



BUDGET

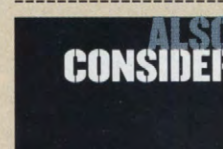
A-10 CUBA! PCZ #59 • 90%
 Functional graphics for a game that really does capture the imagination, mainly because the plane is an absolute joy to fly. Although it's slightly limited due to a lack of a fully-fledged campaign, it's still great fun, as well as being pretty speedy on a modest Pentium.
PUBLISHER Activision • 01895 456700



JANE'S WORLD WAR II FIGHTERS PCZ #72 • 90%
 It's been a fierce dogfight to see who rules the WWI flight sim skies. *Jane's* combines realism with accessibility and ease, and although the game doesn't have a dynamic campaign feature its graphics make it a clear winner.
PUBLISHER Electronic Arts • 01753 549442



FLIGHT UNLIMITED II PCZ #60 • 84%
 It can't really compete with the behemoth that is *Flight Sim 98*, and as a result is somewhat limited and claustrophobic. However, it does score highly for being more detailed in its smaller area, and much more fun.
PUBLISHER Eidos Interactive • 0181 636 3000



BUDGET

If a flight sim is good, you can bet it'll stay on the shelves for a long time – hence our recommendation for *Jetfighter III*. Some of the more recent releases worth considering include...
AIR WARRIOR III Interactive Magic • PCZ #62 • 80%
F-16 AGGRESSOR Virgin • PCZ #70 • 92%
COMANCHE GOLD NovaLogic • PCZ #65 • 87%
F/A-18 KOREA Empire Interactive • PCZ #61 • 90%

ALSO CONSIDER

GRUNTZ

LOOK OUT! THEY ARE COMING!



PLAY ALONE OR IN MULTI-
PLAYER MODE ON MORE THAN
40 LEVELS FILLED WITH TRICKS,
TRAPS, AND PUZZLES

TONS OF COOL TOOLZ,
TOYZ, POWERUPZ, AND
PLENTY OF ZAP COLA!

"I love Gruntz because it's so cute...
An interesting mixture of puzzles, strategy, and action.
There is a heck of long playing time here!"

PC GAMING WORLD



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PC
CD
ROM

YOU'RE GOING TO LOVE THEM!

MEDIA
COLLECTION

ON THE CD

Half-Life, *Turok 2* and *Rollercoaster Tycoon* are just some of the great up-to-the-minute demos featured on our CD

★ WORDS Keith Pullin DISKMEISTER Daniel Emery

HELP!

CD trouble? Don't worry – phone our helpline and sort yourself out pronto!

CD-ROM HELP Phone ABT on 01708 250250 any weekday between 9.30am and 5pm, and Saturday from 10am to 2pm, or email pczone@abt-net.demon.co.uk. Please do NOT phone the PC ZONE office. Thanks.

BEFORE YOU DIAL... If you are calling the helpline, please take note of the following points:

- ★ If possible, have your PC operating and near to the phone when you call.
- ★ If this is not possible, note down all relevant information – ie system type, sound card, RAM etc – plus the nature of the fault.
- ★ Make sure you have a pen and paper to hand when you call so you can jot down the relevant info.

MINIMUM SPECIFICATION

- ★ You need at least a Pentium 133 with 16Mb RAM to run the software on this month's CD-ROM.
- ★ Many of the programs on our cover CD-ROM are designed to run under Windows 95 and, as a result, some of them may require a Pentium 166 with 32Mb RAM to run satisfactorily. Please note that some games also require a 3D accelerator card to run.
- ★ Use the browser and menu system to see which demos are Windows 95, DOS and 3D accelerator only.



DEMOS + SHAREWARE

TANKTICS

Gremlin Interactive

This exclusive preview version of DMA's comical puzzler gives you five levels of explosive weirdness. Prepare yourself for warfare like you've never seen before. Can you defeat the Evil Black tanks and stop them from achieving universal tank domination?

The exemplary DMA Design are back, and are about to offer a whole new slant on the real-time strategy genre. Our exclusive PC ZONE demo features the first four training levels, complete with an on-screen tutorial, so you don't get your mouse in a twist.

Once you've mastered the basics, you can test your metal on a stage from the game's Stone Age campaign.

DMA claim *Tanktics* is: "The fastest, most original strategy game in the world. Ever!" And considering the fact that their devious minds were responsible for *Grand Theft Auto*, it's a statement that shouldn't be taken lightly. Anyway, enough of the chat, experience the madness for yourself right now.

Controls: Mouse



Tanktics offers tank warfare with a surreal, comic twist. And Tubby custard, quite possibly.





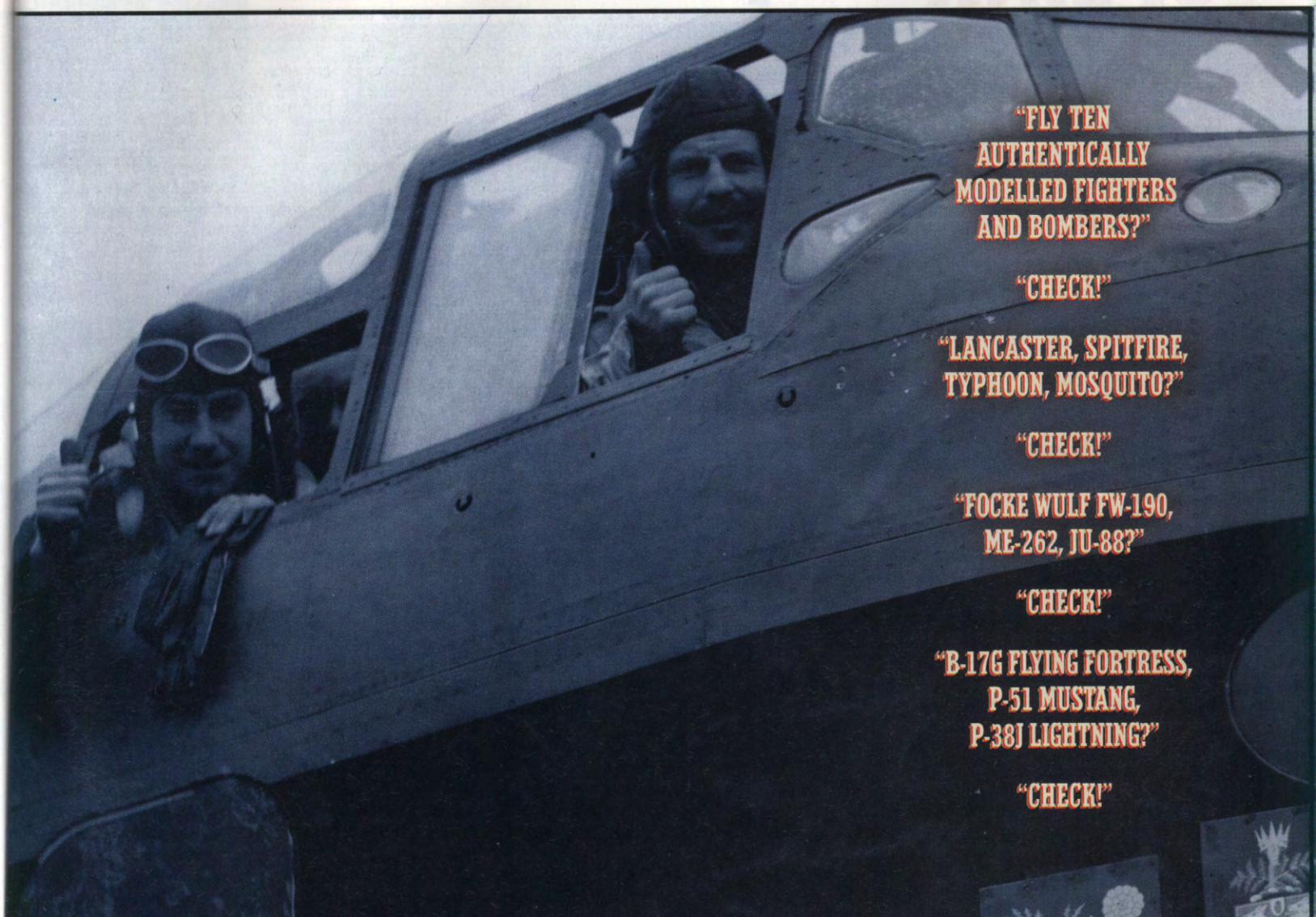
Turok 2: change of grundies compulsory.

TUROK 2: SEEDS OF EVIL

Acclaim

Back with a bang, as they say, and as soon as you get into this single-level demo you'll see why. A 3Dfx card is compulsory, as is a spare pair of trousers. Oh, and make sure you install DirectX 6.1, too. Thankfully, we've provided it on this very CD. Aren't we kind?

- Controls:** Keyboard/mouse/joypad
- CURSORS** Forward/back/left/right
- CTRL** Fire
- SPACE** Jump
- B** Crouch
- A** Next weapon
- Z** Last weapon
- J** Play dead
- KEYPAD 4** Strafe left
- KEYPAD 6** Strafe right
- CAPS** Map



"FLY TEN AUTHENTICALLY MODELLED FIGHTERS AND BOMBERS?"

"CHECK!"

"LANCASTER, SPITFIRE, TYPHOON, MOSQUITO?"

"CHECK!"

"FOCKE WULF FW-190, ME-262, JU-88?"

"CHECK!"

"B-17G FLYING FORTRESS, P-51 MUSTANG, P-38J LIGHTNING?"

"CHECK!"



Half-Life: prepare to have your little socks knocked off.

HALF-LIFE: UPLINK

Sierra

Almost as impressive running in software, this superb demo features a massive single-player level, plus the training zone as seen in the full game. If you don't know what all the fuss has been about, prepare to be dazzled.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Controls Keyboard/mouse | MOUSE 1 Primary attack |
| W Forward | MOUSE 2 Secondary attack |
| S Back | R Reload weapon |
| A Left | E Use item |
| D Right | SHIFT Walk |
| , Move left | F Flashlight |
| . Move right | T Spray logo |
| SPACE Jump | [Previous weapon |
| CTRL Duck |] Next weapon |



CLOSE COMBAT III: THE RUSSIAN FRONT

Microsoft

Closest communist? Well, now is the time to come out. This single-level demo places you in control of a pack of slaving Russians as they confront those dastardly Nazis in the summer of 1943.

The full game was reviewed last issue, and we liked it. Now you can see why.

Controls: Mouse/keyboard

- Z** Move
- X** Move fast
- C** Sneak
- V** Fire
- B** Smoke
- N** Defend
- M** Ambush
- Space** Show each command radius

CTRL+NUMBER KEY

Save group to a number key

RIGHT MOUSE

Cancel an order line without placing order dot

- F3** Pause
- F5** Toggle Team Monitor on/off (not applicable in Overview map mode)
- F6** Toggle Inset Map on/off
- F7** Toggle Soldier Monitor on/off
- F8** Open options dialog box
- ESC** Exit current battle without saving

- CTRL+T** Turn trees on/off
- CTRL+K** Turn on/off killed/incapacitated soldiers
- CTRL+S** Sound on/off



COMMANDOS: BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY

Eidos Interactive

Take a look at how the latest Commandos add-on is shaping up. The new, streamlined interface and other various surprises will put a smile on your face as wide as the River Kwai.

Controls: Mouse/keyboard

- 1-7** Select commando
- 2-F7** Change mode
- P** Pause
- +** Zoom in
- Zoom out, normal view
- TAB** Change position of knapsack on screen (left/right)
- ESC** Go to main menu
- CTRL+B** Summary of mission briefing
- CTRL+S** Quick save
- CTRL+L** Load last Quick Save
- ALT+CLICK** Camera tracks designated target
- CTRL+CLICK** Shoot from armed vehicle
- SHIFT+CLICK** See field of view of selected enemy soldier
- Z** Multiplayer chat window
- CTRL+C** Close chat window



PRO PILOT '99

Cendant
If you can get through the detailed pre-flight checklists, you get to swoop around the clear blue sky of California in a nippy Cessna 172 Skyhawk. If you wanna get real high, this should do nicely.

Controls: Keyboard/Joystick

- ALT P** Parking brake
- Z** Battery on
- F** Fuel selector valve
- 8** Fuel boost pump
- 3** Flashing beacon
- S** Ignition switch
- BACKSPACE** Full throttle
- +** Increase throttle
- Decrease throttle
- CTRL B** Toggle brakes on/off
- KEYPAD +** Flaps up
- KEYPAD -** Flaps down
- SHIFT C** Autopilot



THE QUEST FOR GLORY V: DRAGON FIRE

Cendant
Wizards everywhere will feel as though they've won the jackpot with this demo of the continuing Glory RPG saga. Go stick a lightning bolt up that dragon's arse, why don'tcha?

Controls: Mouse



ADDED EXTRAS

Once again, the PC ZONE CD provides the tools and utilities to make your PC purr, rather than growl!

Cheat O Matic

Automatic cheat program for the majority of DOS and Windows-based programs.

DirectX 6.1

Microsoft's latest drivers for most Windows 95/98 games.

EZDesk 1.8

Saves the position of your Windows 95/98 desktop shortcuts and folders.

FileView c2.1

Hex/ASCII viewer for binary files.

Game Wizard 32

A general help utility for games,

enabling better features and a bit more oomph.

Gamehack

Mess around with the properties of some of your favourite games.

HyperSnap-DX 3.20.00

Screen-capture utility that copes with DirectX/Direct3D and 3Dfx Glide modes.

Scitech Display Doctor v6.53

The latest release of the universal graphics card utility.

UHS Reader for Windows 95

The beginners' guide to hacking games.

Universal Game Editor

Designed to edit saved game files.

Winzip 7.0

The ultimate zip utility for Windows 9x and Windows NT.

Ameol v2.50

Brand new software for the excellent online service that is CIX.

Kali95 1.61

Latest version of the client software for playing games over the Internet.

Compuserve 2.6a

Try Compuserve free for a month and get flying on the Internet.

TimeOnline v1.10e

Simple and effective way to track your Net time.

GetRight 3.2

Salvage broken downloads, and much, much more.

mIRC 5.4

Latest version of the Internet Relay Chat software.

GameSpy 2.05

Finds all the latest servers playing your favourite games.

ClaraNET

Sign up files for ClaraNET. Requires IE4.



Warzone: real-time strategy with sophisticated AI. Give it a spin.

WARZONE 2100

Eidos Interactive

Pumpkin Studios' futuristic real-time strategy game boasts sophisticated AI as well as style. Browse through this playable training session to decide whether your future lies at the counter of your local games retailer. (See game review on page 80.)

Controls: Mouse/keyboard	8 Tilt view up
ENTER Multiplayer options	+ Zoom in
2 Tilt view down	- Zoom out
4 Rotate left	* Cycle through oil derricks
5 Restore default pitch	/ Cycle through repair units
6 Rotate right	



TOCA 2: looking like one of the best racers around. Vroooooom!

TOCA 2: TOURING CARS

Codemasters

There's no shortage of racers around on the PC at the moment, and *TOCA 2* looks set to become one of the best. This single-car and track demo features realistic car damage and 16 other nutters to race against. Rubbertastic.

Controls: Keyboard/joystick
CURSORS Accelerate/decelerate/left/right



"UNPRECEDENTED PHYSICS AND FLIGHT MODELLING?"

"CHECK!"

"UP TO 40 BREAK-OFF POINTS PER PLANE?"

"CHECK!"

"BREATHTAKING 3-D ENHANCED GRAPHICS?"

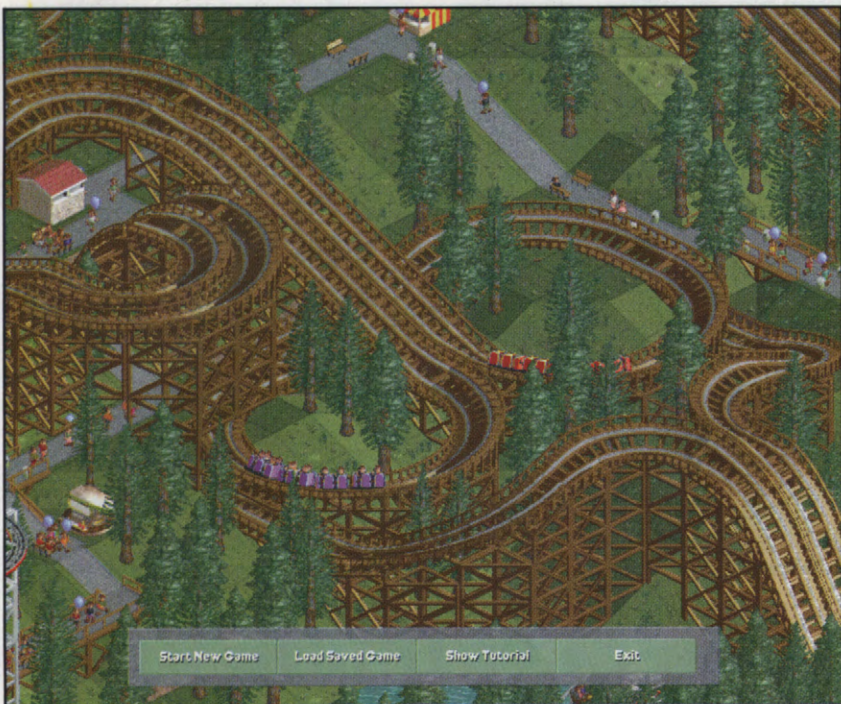
"CHECK!"

"90 SEPARATE MISSIONS IN 30 SCENARIOS WITH ADVANCED SQUADRON A.I.?"

"CHECK!"

"CUSTOMIZABLE AND MULTIPLAYER DOGFIGHTS?"

"CHECK!"



Rollercoaster Tycoon: If you thrilled to Theme Park, check this out.

ROLLERCOASTER TYCOON

Hasbro Interactive

If Theme Park is your idea of a leisurely Sunday afternoon, check out this playable demo version of Rollercoaster Tycoon. This preview times out after 15 minutes, and you can't save either. It's just not fair. (See game review on page 90.)

Controls: Mouse

ON THE CD EDITORIAL

Other stuff that we couldn't fit anywhere else

Tips & Solutions

Our team of dedicated gaming professionals bring you all the latest hints, tips, solutions, guides... basically, anything and everything you could ever want to know about the PC's best games.

CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 2 UPDATE (unofficial)

If you can't afford to buy CM3 yet, stay up to date with the latest wheeling and dealing in the crazy world of football with this handy data file. But beware: copying this

into your CM2 directory destroys your existing savegames. Doh!

HOTSHOTS

Take a look at *Homeworld*. Requires MPEG movie player. (Also, see page 35.)

ON THE CD EXTENDED PLAY

Get more out of the games you already own. (Also see Extended Play on page 156)

MOTOCROSS MADNESS

Motocross Madness has finally come to the end of its life, has it? Wrong! We've got the latest official track pack from Microsoft, as well as five other new circuits besides. On yer bike, we say.

NEED FOR SPEED

Have you ever bored out the carburettor on a 900cc Mini Cooper? No? Never mind, you can do a similar thing with these four editors in *Need For Speed* - and it's almost as much fun.

WARLORDS III

We've got two new campaigns for the ever-popular turn-based enigma for you. So why don't you get off your arse and give them a bash. Don't be a couch potato, be a warlord instead.

UNREAL

If you thought you'd never go back to *Unreal*, think again. We've got seven new Bot maps, 11 new deathmatch levels, three *Quake* tribute maps, and some skins too.



AUSTRALIAN CRICKET CAPTAIN

Another willow wonder? Is it summer already? Anyway, if anyone's going to produce the cricket equivalent of CM3 it's going to be an Australian development team. If you're seriously into cricket, take a look at what Empire have got in store for you.

Controls: Mouse

inclusion in the final version of this turn-based strategy game. As this is the same airborne division that featured in Spielberg's *Saving Private Ryan*, will the game be as popular as the film? You can start making your mind up right now.

Controls: Mouse



IMPERIALISM 2: AGE OF EXPLORATION

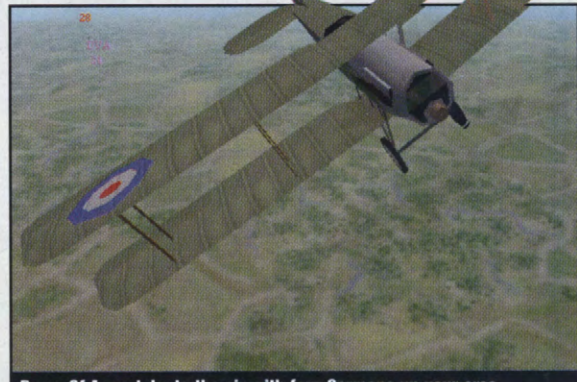
Play through the tutorial levels and see how far you can get in 75 years. If you like turn-based strategy and loved the original *Imperialism*, you won't be able to put this down.

Controls: Mouse



101: THE 101ST AIRBORNE IN NORMANDY

Play the first scenario out of a possible 238 due for



Dawn Of Aces: take to the air with four Germans up your arse.

DAWN OF ACES

Interactive Magic

Let the wind flutter through your hair as you jump into the cockpit of a Spad VII WWI fighter. This brief demo throws you straight in at the deep end with four Germans rapidly bearing down on you and your faithful wingman.

Controls: Keyboard/joystick

- E Engine start/stop
- = Throttle up
- Throttle down
- O Full throttle
- L Engine idle

- A Left rudder
- D Right rudder
- S Centre rudder
- F12 Centre stick
- X Autotrim level
- SHIFT X Autotrim speed
- CTRL X Autotrim angle



Brian Lara Cricket: bat as England against the Aussies – see if you can do better than the real shower.

BRIAN LARA CRICKET

Codemasters

This taster puts you in to bat as England, with two overs remaining, three wickets left, and 22 runs needed to beat the Aussies. Good fun provided you have a 3Dfx card installed.

Controls: Numeric keypad/joystick	back foot defensive
1 Cover drive	9 Sweep/pull/hook
2 Straight drive	ENTER Normal shot/start run
3 On drive: front foot/back foot	R CTRL Six-hit shot/turn around mid-run
4 Square drive	R SHIFT Defensive short cut (no need to hold directional key)
6 Leg glance	O INS Leave ball/duck defensive/
7 Square cut/late cut	SPACE Menu
8 Defensive: forward defensive/	



ON THE CD

PATCHES

Don't miss out on all the new patches that have been released. Check our CD browser for explanations of what the patches do

AD&D Core Rules 2.0 v2.11pr

AFL 99 1.1

AIDE DE CAMP II 2.07b

AMERICAN CIVIL WAR 2.3

ATF GOLD v2

BALDUR'S GATE v1.1 4315 patch

BATTLECRUISER 300AD 2.02 to 2.03

CAESAR III 1.0.1.0

DEER HUNTER II 1.2 (full installation)

DEER HUNTER II 1.2 (minimum installation)

DESCENT 3 v1.1.1 demo patch

DESCENT FREESPACE: TGW 1.06 (rest of the world)

DUNE 2000 1.06

EAST FRONT 1.08 (only with campaign add-on CD 1)

EAST FRONT 1.08a (with campaign CD 1)

EAST FRONT 1.08a (UK release)

EAST FRONT 1.08a (UK release with pack 1)

ENEMY INFESTATION 1.95

FALLOUT II 1.02d (UK release)

FORSAKEN 1.01

GRAND TOURING

GRIM FANDANGO

INTERNATIONAL CRICKET Captain 1.41

ISRAELI AIR FORCE 1.1

KLINGON: HONOUR GUARD 1.1

KNIGHTS & MERCHANTS 1.32

LINKS LS 99 1.10 to 1.10a

Luftwaffe Commander 1.1

MADDEN NFL 99 2.07

MONACO GRAND PRIX RACING SIMULATION II

1.04 (for Direct3D)

MOTORACER II 1.34

NEED FOR SPEED III 1.02

NIGHTMARE CREATURES 1.2

PLAYER MANAGER 98/99 1.3

POWERSLIDE 1.01

PRO PILOT 99 1.01

QUAKE II (3Dnow! Drivers for v3.20)

RAILROAD TYCOON II 1.05

RING (patch 1.0)

SPEEDBOAT ATTACK (Voodoo2 fix, multi-language)

THIRD MILLENNIUM 1.07 (UK release)

TOP GUN HORNET'S NEST 1.1

TOTAL AIR WAR 1.1 (for Direct3D)

TOTAL AIR WAR 1.1 (for Voodoo)

UBIK fix

UNREAL

WARGASM patch #1 (European release)

WARLORDS III 1.02

WCW Nitro fix #1

WORLD WAR II FIGHTERS 1.05

Master Realistic Flight and Damage Models

Up to 40 break-off points per plane offer realistic collision detection. Engines get knocked out, parts are shot off and torn fuselage flutters in the wind, realistically affecting flight dynamics.

Survive Brutal WWII Scenarios

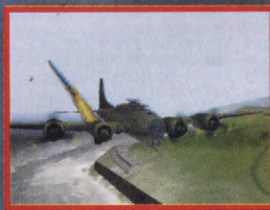
Take on 90 separate missions in 30 scenarios with advanced squadron A.I.: aggression, loyalty, morale, skill and sanity—even individual gunner positions react independently.

Continue the Unrelenting Battle

Hot-switching lets you change positions in a plane or switch planes in a squadron mid-dogfight. Use the drag-and-drop Mission Editor to easily create single-player scenarios with waypoints, targets, plane A.I. and win conditions.

Challenge Foes in Multiplayer Dogfights

Fly solo or go up against friends in multiplayer dogfights via LAN or Internet.



Actual in-game screen shots.

"ULTRA-REALISTIC
WORLD WAR II FLIGHT SIMULATOR?"

"CHECK!"

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THE SCREAMIN' DEMONS OVER EUROPE™

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- Tomb Raider 2 Official...£10.99
- Tomb Raider 3 Official...£10.99
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PCY(4)

EXTENDED PLAY



New levels for *Unreal*, and stunning new tracks for *Motocross Madness*. And they're all on the cover CD.

So stop using it as a drinks mat

WORDS Phil Wand

TRY IT YOURSELF



On this month's cover CD we've got all the official patches, bug fixes, utilities and map editors we could find, including all the ones mentioned in these pages. To track them down, use the CD browser to go to the Patches section. All the patches are listed with a brief description and any relevant documentation. Make sure you read any associated README files for information on how to install individual patches. For further help, turn to our CD pages, starting on page 148.

UNREAL

★ New levels for this colourful first-person shooter



Nice. Pretty. Très vivid. Very, er... Where's my copy of *Half-Life*? The trouble with *Unreal* (PCZ #65, 93%) is that it's been outclassed. Totally. The graphics engine is magnificent, but other, more recent titles can't help but make *Unreal*'s plot seem rather lacking. Not only that, but it will also soon have to contend with the likes of *Team Fortress II*, followed soon after by the large and sinister figure of *Quake III*.

The thing is, as we were somewhat bowled over by Epic's handsome first-person shooter when it first appeared, we feel we owe it a little back-up – a sort of final boost of steroids before it gets mashed into a greasy pulp and forgotten. And here it is: a whole load of our favourite bits and bobs that we've been busy collecting and filtering over the past few months. So blow the dust off the box and give *Unreal* one last whirl before you chuck it in the loft.

BOTMATCH MAPS

★ The following maps have been designed specifically for Botmatch. Despite the silly name, native Bot support is something that rival titles can't offer. Place all .unr files in

unreal\maps, and .utx files in unreal\textures.

★ **DUSK II** (DM_DUSK2.ZIP) The sequel to popular deathmatching arena *Dusk*. In this latest version, the author has removed lighting effects to speed up play. The larger, open areas now play quickly on any Pentium II machine.

★ **AGROOF** and **AGROOF DELUXE** (DMAGROOFDLX.ZIP) Following on from a *Quake* level called *Gotcha!*, *Agroof* is a bit slow on anything less than a Pentium II with 3Dfx. Those of you with ninja PCs should have a lot of fun – *Agroof Deluxe* enables up to 20 deathmatch starts and gets impossibly frantic.

★ **JOSHUA'S FORTRESS** (DMEZKEEL01.ZIP) With two focus areas for combat and at least one secret area, this is an old-school deathmatch arena. This is the second, updated version of the map, and does away with some of the scenery in order to speed things up on low-end machines.

★ **KWAKE** (DMKWAKE.ZIP) A name like *Kwake* signifies only one thing: that this is a 'tribute' map. The author says he hasn't played *Quake* for some time, and that he built this from slightly foggy memories of an old deathmatch level. It's not that bad, mind, and goes to show once again that iD really know how to leave a lasting impression with their level design.

★ **MIDWINTER** (DMMIDWINTER.ZIP) Mick Beard, The author of this map, is well known throughout the *Quake* community for his award-winning *Claustraphobol-ish* and also for other maps that we've featured here. Basically, the guy knows his stuff, and *Midwinter* is another fine example. Recommended.

★ **RAVINE** (DMRAVINE.ZIP) It's that Mick Beard bloke again, with another fine deathmatch level. These maps take him an average of five days to make. Does the guy ever sleep?

★ **THE ANCIENT PIT** (DMRDC1.ZIP) Purposely designed for Bot deathmatch, this level is

LINKS TO COOL STUFF ON THE NET

UNREAL www.planetunreal.com/

OFFICIAL UNREAL SITE www.unreal.com/

UNREAL NATION www.unrealnation.com/

NEED FOR SPEED III www.nfscheats.com/

HACKED SPEED 3 <http://camelot.warzone.com/hs3/hacks.html>

MOTOCROSS MADNESS <http://3dracing.allgames.com/>

reasonably quick and doesn't seem to have any of those annoying 'features' that caused or trap the Bots.

VANILLA DEATHMATCH

★ The following maps have been designed specifically for Deathmatch play. Place all .unr files in unreal\maps, and .utx files in unreal\textures.

★ **BOX CANYON** (DMBOXCANYON.ZIP) Designed for two to eight players (Deathmatch) and up to seven bots (Botmatch), *Box Canyon* is set in a canyon area with high surrounding walls.

★ **CHURCH** (DMCHURCH251.ZIP) A large arena with numerous cool Deathmatch and Botmatch features. Some of the doors cause the Bots confusion, but otherwise it's plain sailing.

★ **THE COLISEUM** (DMCOLISEUM.ZIP) This level is a monster deathmatch stadium (the author claims it's around *Half-Life* size), complete with stage, grandstands and elevators.

★ **DEATHDOME** (DMDEATHDOME.ZIP) Small and simple, this has a limited number of weapons and power-ups, but has three tiers and subsequently is great for sniping.

★ **DECYBERDOME** (DMDECYBERDOME.ZIP) Those of you who spend all your deathmatching life firing rockets will go a bundle on this map – it's been designed specifically with that in mind.

★ **FOX SPORTS ARENA** (DMFOXARENA.ZIP) A traditional Deathmatch arena with most weapons, plenty of ammunition and co-op features.

★ **IRON FORTRESS** (DMIRONFORT.ZIP) Borrowing the

theme of a rundown old fort out in the middle of nowhere, *Iron Fortress* is another large map. It's been designed for a minimum of six players (four of us ran around in solitude for much of the game), and there are several little places to sit and snipe.

★ **UNREAL LEDGES** (DMLLEDGES.ZIP) Based on a famous *Doom* level called *Ledges*, this map borrows the theme of the original map. The author originally updated it for *Quake*, but found the iD engine unable to handle the large main hall (nyah, nyah). So here it is for *Unreal*. And mighty fun it is too.

★ **MEDAZZALAND** (DMMEGATHERION.ZIP) Monster! Get yourself a 200MHz chip, 3Dfx and a 10Mb LAN. This little kiddie won't play over the Internet (we didn't attempt it, as the author warned us to not even bother) simply because of its size. Best played with seven players minimum; our four-player sesh turned out to be a bit dull.

★ **THE MINES OF MORIA** (DMMORIA.ZIP) Although the introductory text sounds a bit geeky ("...a recreation of the Mines Of Moria from Tolkien's *The Lord Of The Rings*..."), this makes for great deathmatching. You need a minimum of six players though.

★ **THE OBSERVATORY** (DMOBSERVATORY.ZIP) Snipe City – and we loved it. Check out the tower with the rifle in it, and then spend the rest of the game blowing people's heads off.

★ **PUMP STATION SPARTA** (DMSPARTA_SERPENTINE.ZIP) A nice, compact map suited to four-player action. *Pump Action Sparta* also contains the fab Serpentine weapon patch.

“We feel we owe *Unreal* a final boost of steroids before it gets forgotten. So blow the dust off the box and give it one last whirl before you chuck it in the loft”



Unreal: amazing how everyday objects can spoil the atmosphere.

QUAKE TRIBUTES

★ The following maps are based on existing *Quake* DM maps and are for deathmatching only. Place all .unr files in unreal/maps, and .utx files in unreal/textures.

★ **DM3 FOR UNREAL** (DM3B.ZIP)

The author describes iD's *The Abandoned Base* as the greatest DM level in history. So here it is for *Unreal* - textures and all.

★ **DM6 FOR UNREAL** (DM6B.ZIP)

A rough but playable interpretation of one of our old *Quake* deathmatch favourites, *DM6*.

★ **E1M7 QUAKE CONVERSION** (DME1M7.ZIP)

Sod the rest, this is best. I remember being glued to my PC playing this level for so long that my dog died of malnutrition and the neighbours called the RSPCA. Actually, that's a complete lie.

★ **OBI-WAN** (DMOBIW03.ZIP)

A *DM4* update. Does its own thing and isn't entirely like the iD original, but a passable map at the very least.

NEW SKINS

★ To install, follow the instructions listed in the individual skin archives. This normally involves opening the PCX textures in UnrealED, but on some skins you can just unzip the textures straight into your main game directory.

★ **MAGMA** (MAGMA.ZIP) *Magma* is based on the existing *Male3* model.

★ **ORC SKIN** (ORC_SKIN.ZIP)

A rather fine Orc skin.

★ **SANTA** (SANTA.ZIP) Ho ho ho, it's a big, fat, bearded bloke in a red jumpsuit.

★ **DOLOCHIMP** (DOLOCHIMP.ZIP)

Er, yes. A cross between a dolphin, a chimpanzee, a locust and Gelf. Install... then mail the author and ask him if he has any of his stash left.

NEED FOR SPEED

★ Got a need for Editors and Tools? try these

★ **CAR CAD** (CARCAD.ZIP)

Previously called *Need For Speed III Car Editor*, *Car CAD* is now in its third incarnation. Check the Comdlg32.zip file in case you need to replace some DLLs missing on your system. The program is relatively straightforward, although some of its operation (particularly when moving car parts around the screen) is a little clumsy. Nevertheless, Chris Barnard, the British author, does promise constant updates.

★ **QFS EDITING SUITE** (QFSSUITE.ZIP)

A collection of graphics tools, this enables you to mix and match the various different internal image formats from *Need For Speed*. This means exporting the .qfs and .fsh files to *Windows* bitmaps (.bmp), mucking about with them in any old paint package, and then importing them back into the game.

★ **T3ED** (T3ED2.ZIP)

The first and only *Need For Speed* Track Editor is currently a very early version, but it still manages to strut its stuff. Unlike many unofficial, unsupported hacks and tools, *T3ED* has been put together by someone who clearly knows what he's doing. In fact, if you visit the guy's homepage he says he's a

student preparing a PhD thesis on the study of topological properties of symplectic manifolds. Which is, er, nice.

★ **PERFORMANCE EDITOR** (NFS3-PERF.ZIP)

Change many of the car performance settings: top speed, number of gears, maximum engine revs, braking, grip... you name it. The editor is extremely straightforward, totally effective and shouldn't need much explaining.

WARLORDS III: DARKLORDS RISING

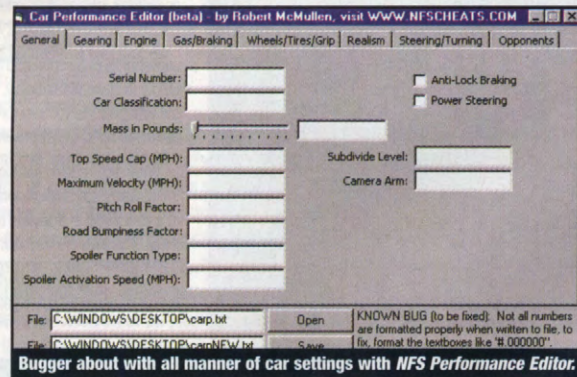
★ Two full campaigns for Red Orb's fantasy turn-based classic

THE ELVES RETURN (ELVES.ZIP)

Unzip the file to extract the elves.w3c file to your *Warlords III* directory, then run the Campaign Editor to unpack the campaign. Next time you run *Warlords III* the new campaign should be available to you. Note that you need the v1.02 patch installed, which you can find in the patches tab of the CD browser.

THE HUGE WARS (HUGE.EXE)

Make sure you place the file in your *Warlords III* directory and run it, and it self-extracts the file giants.w3c so you can unpack the file through the Campaign Editor as above.



NEED FOR SPEED III

★ Top mods for the cop chase game

Unfortunately we couldn't get permission to include any of these cars on the CD this month (something to do with copyright). Anyway, you can download these and more from <http://nfs3zone.tsx.org/> and www.clarkson.edu/~andrewjc/nfs3_race_cars.html.

The sites have around 50 cars between them, each of which weighs in at about 1Mb. Download times are surprisingly quick so if you've got a decent modem you've got no excuse.

NEW CARS

To install, make a new subdirectory from *NFS3/GameData/CarModel/* and then extract the individual .viv files to that directory. The car is then available from the game menus.



PORSCHE 911 CARRERA (911CARRERA.ZIP) Overpriced, overrated, and with all the style of a Nazi staff car. No thanks.



BMW M5 (BMW5.ZIP) An engineering masterpiece. If only it wasn't: a) German, and b) named after a motorway.



LAMBORGHINI L147 CANTO (CANTO.ZIP) Sleek. Unreliable. People will think you've got a small willy. (Want a Canto? Me too.)



LAMBORGHINI L149 CALA (CALA.ZIP) Fast. Italian. Makes you look crap in bed. And you'll never get let out at junctions.



McCLAREN MP4/13 (MCLAREN.ZIP) There's nothing like a Formula 1 car to put some space between you and the fuzz.



LANCER EVOLUTION V WRC (EVOWRC10.ZIP) Looks cheap, but costs over 40 grand and is faster than a Polaris missile.



SUBARU 555 SPECIAL GT TURBO (S55532.ZIP) Oh, yuss. Rather one of these than some M-power, go-faster Beemerscheisse.



FORD GRAN TORINO (TORINO.ZIP) As seen in *Starsky and Hutch*. And not a lot else. Would you want to be seen in this? Thought not.

MOTOCROSS MADNESS

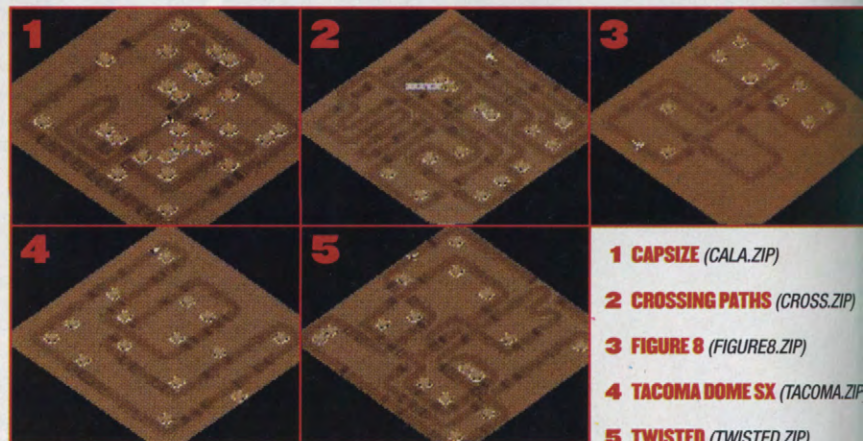
★ New maps for one of our favourite dirt bike games



Oooh! What a load of madness, eh?!



We liked Microsoft's *Motocross Madness* (PCZ #67, 91%) a lot. And since *PC ZONE* is as good as scripture when it comes to games, you will of course have bowled along to your nearest software store and bought yourself a copy. Which means you'll be ecstatic to learn that we've got bundles of new maps on the CD-ROM, including a 38Mb official Microsoft track pack.



- 1 CAPSIZE (CALA.ZIP)
- 2 CROSSING PATHS (CROSS.ZIP)
- 3 FIGURE 8 (FIGURE8.ZIP)
- 4 TACOMA DOME SX (TACOMA.ZIP)
- 5 TWISTED (TWISTED.ZIP)



Wireplay

The games network from BT

NEWSWIRE

This month's hottest news on Wireplay, the UK's number one online gaming network

★ SPACED OUT Warren Christmas

IN THE CLUB:

COLIN McRAE RALLY

This month the spotlight falls on one of Wireplay's new clubs, dedicated to players of Codemasters' popular driving sim

CLUB CAPTAIN Chas (Real name: Chas Rust)

CAPTAIN'S EMAIL chas@talk21.com

CLUB WEBSITE www.cmallyclub.freemove.co.uk

CLUB HISTORY Chas started the club in November last year when he found that the game was going to be supported. Wireplay had previously lacked a decent racing game.

TOURNAMENT STRUCTURE A group-based knockout system with races held on a randomly selected course. There are usually at least two competitions during the night, the second of which is typically a special competition such as MKII Escorts only, two-wheel drive cars only, or using the secret tracks. £50 worth of PC World

vouchers up for grabs once a month.

GAME TIMES Tournaments are held every Wednesday, starting at 8pm. The club alternates between a newbie night (for anyone new to Wireplay or the game) and a general meeting each Thursday at 9pm.

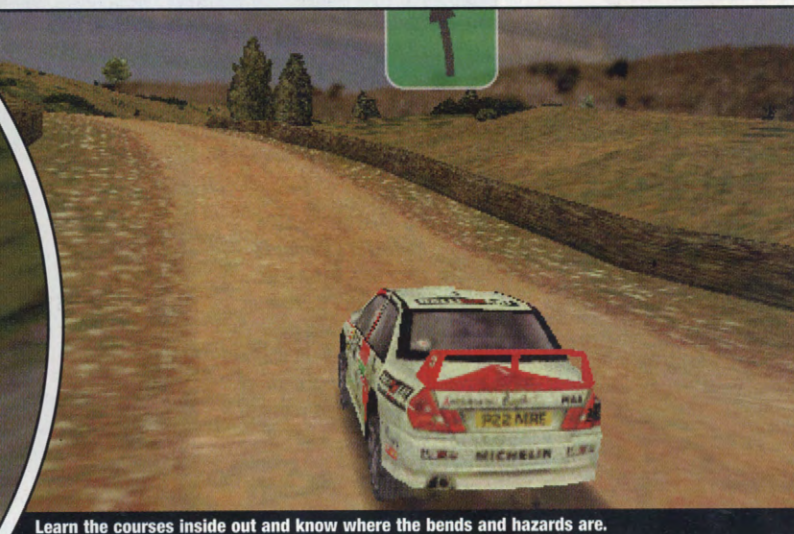
CLUB RULES No foul or abusive comments. Use of cheat codes is strictly forbidden unless instructed otherwise. Players may choose any standard car from the normal or intermediate levels. Bonus cars are allowed in some of the special competitions.

BEST CMR PLAYERS Subaru, Scav98, Tyrant, Craig M and Sergeant Bilko (Chas says he's too busy organising the club to practice).



Log on to Wireplay and take on Colin or Dave or Pete.

All the cars handle differently, so choose one that suits your style of driving.



Learn the courses inside out and know where the bends and hazards are.

TOP McRAE TIPS COURTESY OF TYRANT

- 1 Make use of the game's rally school – it teaches you the basic techniques for controlling the car.
- 2 All the cars handle differently, so find a car that suits your style of driving. To do well in tournaments, however, you need a four-wheel drive. The Subaru seems the best overall; the Mitsubishi can beat it for acceleration but has livelier handling.
- 3 Use the bumper or bonnet cams, as they give you the most unobstructed views of the road.
- 4 Learn the courses inside and out (know where the bends and hazards are), listen to the co-driver, and get used to the different driving conditions (snow, rain and night stages all make a big difference).
- 5 Use the brakes! No, really. Don't use the handbrake (except for tight hairpins) as it slows you down too much.
- 6 Try to develop a good cornering technique. Don't go hammering into bends at full whack and slam the anchors on at the last minute; drive smoothly, get your approach speed into the bend correct, and power out of it.
- 7 Tyre choice is critical: dry grooves on anywhere dry; wet slicks when it's raining or light snow; slicks only in Corsica on the tarmac; and spikes only on the ice and deep snow of Sweden.
- 8 Learn about the surfaces and obstacles on the courses. The deep snow banks of Sweden and the swamps that line Australia, for example, slow you down dramatically. You're obviously supposed to avoid ditches, but with practice you can run the inside front tyre over them and still get round the bend without too much loss of speed.
- 9 When you're fairly competent with your basic rallying skills and know the courses, start experimenting with tweaking the car. Adjust one thing at a time and test it several times on the stage to see if it improves your times. There are no 'best set-ups' as such, it depends on your racing style.
- 10 When competing in multiplayer games, concentrate on *your* driving and the road ahead. Try not to get distracted by what your opponents are doing.

WIREPLAY CHARTS

LATE JANUARY 1999



Half-Life: The Great Contender?

Wireplay have ditched the separate Game Worlds, Rapid Play and Mind Games charts to produce a single, combined top ten list each month.

And this is it. *Quake II* – surprise, surprise – still leads the pack, but with *Half-Life* straight in at number four will it stay there for much longer? Tune in next month to find out, game-pickers.

GAME WORLDS CHANNEL

- 1 Quake II
- 2 Air Attack
- 3 Quake
- 4 Half-Life
- 5 MUD II
- 6 AOE: Rise Of Rome
- 7 Duke Nukem 3D
- 8 Total Annihilation
- 9 Red Alert
- 10 Bridge

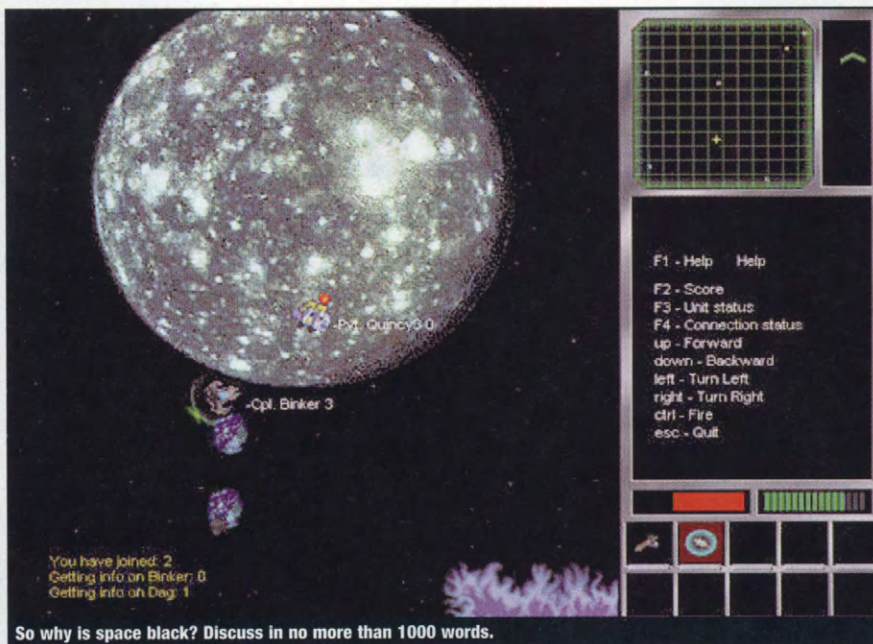
WHAT IS WIREPLAY?

IT'S A GAMES NETWORK

Wireplay is a multiplayer games network from BT which enables you to meet and compete with other gamers from all over the UK. All the software you need to start up is on PC ZONE's free cover CD each month, and also on Wireplay's website at www.wireplay.co.uk. Alternatively, call freephone 0800 800918 and Wireplay will send you a CD-ROM with the client software, free online games, demos and more besides.

2 WAYS 2 PAY

There are two ways of paying for your time using the Wireplay service. The Pay-As-You-Play option costs 2.5p a minute off-peak and 6p a minute during peak hours. Frequent users can use the Subscription service. This costs £9.95 a month or £99.50 a year, but local call rate charges apply at all times.



So why is space black? Discuss in no more than 1000 words.

ZONE ON WIREPLAY RUMBLE IN THE VOID, 26 JANUARY 1999

It's a multiplayer-only space combat game. It's brand new. And it's free. *Warren Christmas* enters the void. Literally

This month, continuing our quest to try something different on Wireplay (because you can't play *Half-Life* all the time, right?), we thought we'd challenge a few gamers at *Rumble In The Void*, a brand new multiplayer-only space combat game from the VR1, the people behind the hugely popular *Air Attack*.

Free to download from Wireplay, at the time of writing it's in beta stage, and not yet officially supported or promoted. Perhaps not surprisingly, we only found a couple of people to play against (our fault, apparently, for logging on at the same time as a big Poker night). As Wireplay were keen to point out, free online-only games often take a little time to catch on simply because they don't benefit from the same kind of publicity as big, full-price releases.

Well here is some publicity. And we're happy to report that *Rumble In The Void* is shaping up very nicely. Similar to the fun m el e bits from the *Star Control* series and, in particular, Virgin's ultra-popular *SubSpace*, this is another of those 'Asteroids on steroids' games – a scrolling, top-down 2D shoot 'em up packed with weapons and power-ups.

There are three game types, including a bizarre space football match and a capture the flag option,



Rumble In The Void: simple, fun and free.

but the main offering is Team Death Match. Here you work in coloured teams to shoot down opponents (while carefully avoiding hitting allies, of course) to gain points and rise in the rankings (the finished game automatically saves player stats and has league tables).

Although fundamentally a shoot 'em up, tactics definitely come into play. Not only because ship and weapon selection is vital, but also because littered around the space arenas are team bases where you

can recharge energy supplies and hide from the radar. Fly over an opponent's base for three seconds and the base becomes yours, offering your team an extra refuelling depot and a safe haven of sorts. We wouldn't know, but apparently in a full game that's not as easy as it sounds (up to 16 players can compete in each arena).

Rumble In The Void, then: it's not rocket science, but it's simple, fun and, don't forget, completely free. Expect it to be very popular once word gets around.

★ *The Rumble In The Void beta is freely available from the downloads section at www.wireplay.co.uk. You need the Game Launcher (126Kb) and Rumble Client (2.4Mb) software. Additional information is available on the RITV club site at www.witty.demon.co.uk/rumble.htm.*

FROM THE WIRES

★ Residents of Bicester beware! As many as 300 Wireplay users and staff are set to descend on the Oxfordshire town on the weekend of March 26-28 for three days of "non-stop" (it says here) gaming. *Insomnia '99* is the largest 'LAN party' Wireplay have ever organised and, they reckon, probably the largest event of its type ever held in the UK. Interested in going? Well, there may still be places left, although the first 90 spots went after just six hours of booking. Visit www.multiplay.co.uk/events/ for details.

★ Tired of the lag when playing *Unreal*? Well, according to Wireplay it should now be "extremely playable" online thanks to the version 2.20 update (in beta as we write, but expected to go final soon). Still on an *Unreal* tip, Wireplay have added a couple of servers dedicated to running Fusion, the *Unreal* map pack recently released by Epic. Both the patch and the map pack are available free from the downloads section at www.wireplay.co.uk, so get down there and grab it.

WIREPLAY GAMES

Wireplay now supports more than 100 games, the best of which are listed below, and includes several top-rated titles which received 80%+ in PC ZONE.

The big news this month is the introduction of two more classy first-person shooters – *SIN* (PCZ #70, 91%) and *Shogo: Mobile Armour Division* (PCZ #71, 92%). Nice.

- ★ Actua Golf 2
- ★ Actua Soccer 3
- ★ Age Of Empires (inc trial version)
- ★ Age Of Empires: Rise Of Rome (inc demo)
- ★ Air Attack
- ★ Armored Fist 2
- ★ Big Red Racing (inc Wireplay Edition)
- ★ Colin McRae Rally
- ★ Comanche 3
- ★ Command & Conquer
- ★ Descent 2
- ★ Duke Nukem 3D
- ★ EF2000: Wireplay Edition
- ★ Extreme Assault
- ★ F-22: ADF
- ★ F-22: Total Air War
- ★ F/A-18 Korea
- ★ Final Liberation
- ★ Flight Sim 98
- ★ Formula Karts
- ★ Forsaken (inc demo)
- ★ Fragile Allegiance
- ★ Half-Life
- ★ Incubation
- ★ Jedi Knight (inc MOTS)
- ★ Legal Crime
- ★ Monster Truck Madness 2
- ★ Motocross Madness (inc trial)
- ★ MUD II
- ★ NASCAR Racing 2
- ★ Netmech (MechWarrior II)
- ★ Plane Crazy
- ★ Populous: The Beginning (inc demo)
- ★ Quake/Quake II
- ★ Red Alert (inc Counterstrike/Aftermath)
- ★ Rumble in the Void
- ★ Settlers III (inc demo)
- ★ Shadow Warrior (inc shareware)
- ★ Shogo – NEW!!!
- ★ Sid Meier's Gettysburg
- ★ SIN – NEW!!!
- ★ Star Wars Supremacy
- ★ Terminal Velocity
- ★ Total Annihilation
- ★ Unreal
- ★ Uprising
- ★ Various card and board games
- ★ Virtual Pool 2
- ★ Virtual Snooker
- ★ WarCraft 2 (inc demo)
- ★ Wargasm (inc demo)
- ★ Warhammer: Dark Omen



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Wireplay

DEATHMATCH



So what's it gonna be – a game where bad things can happen but you can turn it off at any time, or an experience where *really* bad things can happen and there's bugger all you can do about it?

★ **LOW LIFE** Charlie Brooker

HALF-LIFE VERSUS REAL LIFE

WHAT IS IT?

Shockingly involving three-dimensional first-person perspective computer game in which you play an unwilling hero overcoming incredible odds.

Shockingly involving three-dimensional first-person perspective experience in which you play a cog in a global machine of bewildering proportions.

HOW LONG DOES IT LAST?

About 40 hours if you're fairly proficient at this sort of thing.

Not long enough, unless you grow to be old and senile.

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO GET THE MOST OUT OF IT?

An expensive computer with all the trappings, plenty of free time, and consummate hand-eye co-ordination skills.

Rich parents, and luck. That's all.

WHAT'S THE WORST THING THAT CAN HAPPEN?

You get lost, run out of ammunition, plummet into a gigantic pit, and are torn asunder by a terrifying bug-eyed creature that makes Marty Feldman look like an Adonis. Or you're cornered by a gang of marines who machine-gun you until your body resembles some kind of surreal meat sculpture.

You lose your job and your partner, develop ill health, live on the wrong side of town, and end up having to eke out a living in a docklands backstreet manipulating your genitals for coins before an audience of cock-eyed, heckling sailors.

WHO CAN YOU MEET?

Nothing but dweeby scientists, and well-meaning yet backward security guards who dash about in a stilted manner, obey your every command and get their heads blown off just as you're starting to warm to them.

Almost anyone. Mostly, however, you'll just find braggarts, dullards, opinionated arseholes, and the occasional attractive person to whom you mean absolutely nothing. Oh, and the Welsh.

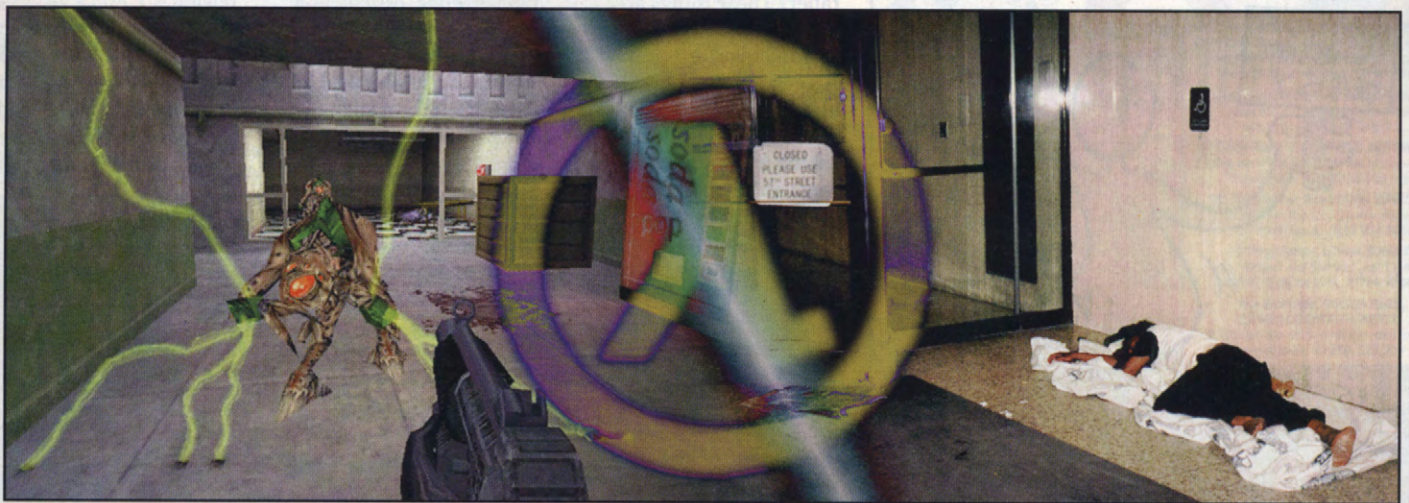
HOW DOES IT END?

You journey to an alien dimension and battle a demon that looks a bit like a baby except it's far bigger and approximately ten billion times less endearing. And able to levitate and shoot balls of energy. So not much like a baby at all, actually – unless you're on very strong hallucinogens.

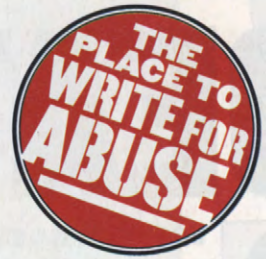
You spend the rest of eternity unwinding in a celestial paradise filled with unimaginable pleasures, conversing with radiant seraphs, and occasionally sitting on God's knee while he sings you a song. That or you get thrown in a small wooden box, lowered into a hole in the ground and left to rot.

WINNER

Half-Life – by a very wide margin. If you didn't need to take part in real life in order to experience *Half-Life* in the first place, we'd recommend suicide.



SICKNOTES



In which another smattering of your rubbish letters get snarled at by everybody's favourite pin-up. This month: *EastEnders*, psycho-sexual deviancy, rival magazines, and ten minutes of shallow fun

★ MISERABLE AS SIN Charlie Brooker

SICK NOTES WANTS YOUR LETTERS

Sick Notes wants your letters! We want more of your suggestions for the world's worst bands (see Worst Band Of All Time Update). And we still want to know what you reckon are the biggest shitholes in the country.

WRITE TO Sick Notes, PC ZONE, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ

EMAIL letters.pczone@dennis.co.uk With the subject heading 'Sick Notes'

PC LAMER

The other day I came across an editorial in PC <bleep>r, and I have to say it was the most self-righteous piece of shit I've ever read in my life. I think the 'editor' has his head stuck up his arse, and you should make him the prime target of the Anti-Stupid campaign.

Tom Richardson

★ Get some scissors, cut out their editor's portrait and stick his head on the comedy cartoon body we've printed below. See? Easy. And feel free to use it with pictures of anyone else you hate.

ONCE, TWICE, THREE TIMES A LADY...

I see pathetic excuses for game designs each month in Sick Notes. These people are not funny. Here's my idea.

The game would be called *Life*, and you control a female character called Sarah who has lots of sex appeal. At the start, Sarah has to get up, wash and do everything people do in the morning. Then she walks down the street, interacting with all kinds of people, and finally gets to work.

When night falls, Sarah could go clubbing. At this point you pick a male character and use the knowledge you've gained of her daily chores to chat her

at the impressive visuals - maybe even you Brooker.

The next morning you regain control of Sarah, go back to work... then go round to her best friend's house... and maybe things could get a bit spicy there too?

The overall aim is to climb the career ladder and eventually become manager of your company, but this only happens if she has a healthy lifestyle and the right frame of mind.

What do you think?

'Andrew'

★ Well, Andrew, I think that all things considered, it's eerie and offensive. Actually, scratch 'eerie' - there are a few things here which are downright scary. Let's run through that game

"A tenner says you've got dirty fingernails, a slimy forehead, silvery stains down your trouser legs and a haunted look in your eyes"

up. Now the computer controls her while you control the male. The aim is to do the impossible - have Sarah! All the nerds who have websites dedicated to Lara Croft would be gawping

plan again, shall we?

It starts with Sarah doing "everything people do in the morning". Does that include eating Weetabix and having a great big poo? Do you get extra points when you curl off a perfect taper? These things are important.

You know, the entire suggestion speaks volumes about your psyche, and it isn't comfortable reading. I think it's safe to assume that you're either mesmerised by the notion of transvestitism, or you've got a 'thing' for a lady friend named Sarah, but the feeling isn't mutual and you're starting to unravel.

A tenner says you've got dirty fingernails, a slimy forehead, silvery stains down your trouser legs and a haunted look in your eyes. Ugh. Go away, you're horrid.

LOSER OF THE MONTH

You can be a loser and also a winner - of £50

ANYONE CAN FALL IN LOVE

Which *EastEnder* would you least like to sleep with and why?
CheekyMonkey

★ Good question. I vote for Phil. Why? Because at some point, having spent the evening tumbling beneath the sheets, your bodies slapping together with urgent, artless intimacy, you'd wake up in the middle of the night and catch a glimpse of him sleeping - his bloated, stubbled face looming at you through the dim glow of moonlight. And the full enormity of your actions would come crashing into your head.

Next thing you know, you've put your dick in a saucepan in a confused and desperate attempt to boil away the memories.

That's my answer. Now let's throw it open to the floor. Readers: which *EastEnder* would you least like to indulge? Well?

LECTOR GETTO KNOW YOU WELL

Regarding your Kill The Stupid campaign: don't kill stupid people, otherwise how are the rest of us going to look intelligent?

H Lector

★ By wearing glasses, you prick.

KILL THE STUPID

I have an excellent way to weed out and kill the stupid [outlines deeply uninteresting, extremely violent plan]... then we could spend the rest of our lives thinking up new and inventive ways of killing them. Plain shooting would be boringly stupid, and we'd

have to kill anyone who suggested that.

S Stevens

★ Jesus, some of you have taken this Kill The Stupid campaign rather seriously, haven't you? What is this, *Lord Of The Flies*?

WORST BAND OF ALL TIME - UPDATE

My nomination for the crappiest band ever? B*Witched. Their worst release is 'C'est La Vie', and I would like to fill them so full of helium that their squeaky voices can't be heard, then rip their legs and arms off and force them to eat them.

DogsDinner

B*Witched: boiled, burnt or dismembered. How do you take yours?



ILLUSTRATION Charlie Brooker

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