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2ND
ANNIVERSARY
ISSUE



PC ZONE

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'NASCAR Racing looks set to become the most realistic racing sim ever' – **PC POWER**

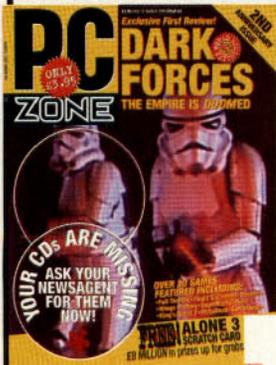


Virgin

Virgin Interactive Entertainment has created a new generation of CD-ROM leisure software which stands on a higher plane than anything else available. These new 'Sixth Day' products are a testament to Virgin's ground-breaking developments in CD ROM: the first ever 3D graphic adventure, the first ever SVGA racing game, and the first ever product which has the quality of a rendered intro throughout the entire game. **They're nothing short of a miracle.**

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dir.ectory



● This month *PC Zone* brings you the first review ever (in the whole world) of the most talked about and eagerly awaited game of the year – *Dark Forces*. As if that wasn't enough, we've also got a FREE CD demo of *OS/2 Warp* on every issue so you can see for yourself what all the fuss is about. And it's our birthday. Now we are two – and don't we look well!

PC ZONE



A DENNIS PUBLICATION

19 Bolsover St,
London W1P 7HJ.
Tel: 071 631 1433
Fax: 071 436 1321

Editor John Davison; Art Editor Jason Simmons; Deputy Editor Jeremy Wells; Production Editor Deborah Opoczynska; Features Editor Chris Anderson; Disk Editor Daniel Emery; Reader Services Miles Tudor; Contributors Jane Gollner (Design); Simon Bradley; Charlie Brooker; Mark Burgess; Warren Christmas; Paul Lakin; Amaya Lopez; Duncan MacDonald; David McCandless; Patrick McCarthy; Paul Presley; Steve Pritchard; Gareth Ramsay; James Woods; Andrew Wright; Publisher Tim Ponting; Subscriptions Hotline 0454 620070; Senior Sales Executive Saul Leese 071 631 1433; Advertising Sales Executive Andrew Hammond; Group Advertising Manager Phil Jennings; Advertising Production Mark Saysell; Group Production Manager Mike Robinson; Origination Ebony 0579 340100; Printed in England by ET Heron; Newstrade Manager James Burnay; Distribution SM Magazine Distribution 081 677 8111; Mail Order Manager Julia French; Publishing Director Bruce Sawford; Circulation Director Sean Farmer; Creative Director Jimmy Egerton; Non-Executive Director Dick Pountain; Financial Director Ian Leggett; Managing Director Alistair Ramsay; Chairman Felix Dennis

PC Zone is published monthly by Dennis Publishing Ltd. Company registered in England, number 1138891. Entire contents ©1994 Felden Productions.



REVIEWS

52 Dark Forces

THE EMPIRE IS FINALLY *Doom*-ed, but is it better than the real thing? We bring you the first review of the game everyone's itching to get their hands on in a special world exclusive, courtesy of LucasArts and Virgin.

59 Wings Of Glory

CHOCKS AWAY (again!) as Origin reach for the skies to do battle with the Hun – dastardly chaps with big 'taches and every other WWI flight sim ever created.

64 SuperKarts

THE MOST FUN you can have with your bum only an inch off the ground when wearing a crash helmet and clad in brightly-coloured leather.

68 Aladdin

HE LEAPS TALL BUILDINGS, cuts through baddies with his scimitar and wears little pointy slippers. He's Aladdin – who else?

71 Hell: A Cyberpunk Thriller

IT IS: it isn't. If it's really this bad then start praying for forgiveness immediately.

74 King's Quest VII

THE LATEST POINT 'N' CLICK extravaganza from the Roberta Williams' school of mush-wushy, cutesy-wutesyness.

78 TIE Fighter: Defender of the Empire

TWO NEW MISSIONS and a new ship. What will they think of next?



81 Kick Off 3: European Challenge

THE LAST *Kick Off* was an absolute nightmare. Have Anc finally got it together in Europe?

84 Knights of Xentar

A PLENTIFUL LACK of beat 'em up action strides onto the PC, courtesy of Megatech. Ouch!

86 Menzoberanzan

NOT A TASTY LOZENGE that promises to clear your stuffy nose and soothe your sore throat, but a rather ordinary RPG from SSI.

88 Metaltech: Earthsiege

GO STOMPING MAD in this spectacular HERC-fest from Sierra. Just one thing though, why have extravagant HERCs that walk when the terrain is perfectly flat?

92 Realms of Arkania: Star Trail

THE SEQUEL TO the keenly received *Blade of Destiny* finally makes it onto CD-ROM. Hip, hip...

94 Doom Clones: Head to Head

We put Merit's *Dr. Radiaki* up against *Virtuoso* from Elite and run for cover (well, *Doom* actually).

BLUEPRINTS

32 Heretic

THE EAGERLY AWAITED *Doom*-clone – now with wings (and cloaks and chickens) from the guys that know best and adventure maestros, Ravensoft.

36 Combat Air Patrol

WAX BACK YOUR ear flaps and get ready for take-off with the flight sim from Psygnosis.

38 Full Throttle

BAD BIKER DUDES, huge Harley's and a hero who doesn't shave every day. A recipe for adventure if ever there was one. LucasArts think so, anyway.

42 SimTower

YOU'VE PLAYED THE INSECT, created the city – now build the condo! Maxis make their latest Sim-thing ready for the PC.

44 Guilty

THE SEQUEL TO *Innocent Until Caught* is almost upon us. Bet you can't wait.

48 Flight Unlimited

THEY SAY IF YOU PLAY it long enough you'll be able to fly a real plane. But why would you want to when you can play this all day?

Games directory

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| Aladdin | 68 |
| Combat Air Patrol | 36 |
| Dark Forces | 52 |
| Doom Clones: | |
| Head to Head | 94 |
| Full Throttle | 38 |
| Guilty | 44 |
| Flight Unlimited | 48 |
| Hell: A Cyberpunk Thriller | 71 |
| Heretic | 32 |
| Kick Off 3: European Challenge | 81 |
| King's Quest VII | 74 |
| Knights of Xentar | 84 |
| Menzoberanzan | 86 |
| Metaltech: Earthsiege | 88 |
| Realms of Arkania: Star Trail | 92 |
| Sim Tower | 42 |
| SuperKarts | 64 |
| TIE Fighter: Defender of the Empire | 78 |
| Wings of Glory | 59 |



REGULARS

- 6 News
- 14 OS/2 Warp
- 26 Cover Disk Instructions
- 110 Off The Boards
- 113 Mail Order
- 114 Troubleshooter
- 126 Buyers Guide
- 124 Subscriptions
- 126 Bits & PCs
- 128 WordProcessor
- 130 Mr Cursor



HARDWARE REVIEWS

00 CH Pro Pedals

SOME PEOPLE NEED STABILISERS on their bicycle, others need CH Pro Pedals. Both look very silly, especially when you get them mixed up.

COMPETITIONS

08 Reader Survey/Creative Labs Compo

COMPLETE OUR READER SURVEY and get the chance to win yourself a 3DOBlaster Multi-media Kit from Creative Labs. Can't be bad!

FEATURES

06 Upgrading Your PC

PART ONE OF OUR SPECIAL ON-GOING FEATURE that tells you how to turn your weary old machine into a shiney, ferocious Ninja-bast with knobs on.

03 All Together Now

PC ZONE SORT OUT THE CHOCOLATE covered Hob-Nobs from the slightly stale and mouldy Rich Tea half-eaters that occupy the compilation games biscuit barrel.



PC

100% GAMES

ZONE

March 1995 Issue Twenty Four

COVER DISK

HD Disk Version

Kick Off 3: European Challenge

Kick Off 3: European Challenge puts Anco firmly back in the Premier Division where fast and frantic football rules. Bigger sprites, more moves and even more options make this the most comprehensive football game around.

This demo includes a full two-player option so you can play head to head, or pit your efforts against a more difficult computer opponent. It's tricky at first, but once you've mastered just a couple of the many moves available, you'll be knocking 'em into the back of the net like Andy Cole should be.

CD-ROM Version

Last month we brought you the first exclusive review of the final installment of Infogrames' massive *Alone In The Dark* polygon adventure series. This month we bring you the first and exclusive demo of *Alone 3* so that you can experience the latest and greatest in the series for yourself.

We've also got a fully-playable version of the latest *Doom* clone, *Heretic*. Except that it's not really just another clone, because id themselves were involved in writing and producing it along with top RPG-ers, Ravensoft. In fact, it's already been dubbed "Doom In Tights" but don't let that put you off! As if that wasn't enough, we've also got platform fun a-plenty, courtesy of *The Lion King* from Virgin; the latest new point-and-click adventure from Core Design; a special "Behind the scenes" look at the making of *Wing Commander 3*; more sports action courtesy of *Brett Hull Hockey '95* and a weird and wonderful Stereogram demo.

OS/2 Warp

We're two years old this month, and to celebrate we've got a special double CD issue that includes a fully-running version of IBM's new *OS/2 Warp* operating system. They say it's great for setting up your system to play games, and now you can try it out before you buy - you lucky people!

Bulletin

PC ZONE IS TWO YEARS OLD!

Dear PC Zone readers

As you can see from the cover, this month is a bit special for PC Zone... it's our second birthday! Not only is the magazine the best-selling PC games magazine available, it's also the longest running (and, of course, the best... but you knew that already). To help celebrate this truly magnificent occasion, we bring you a bonus cover CD this month in the shape of OS/2 Warp, as well as the first review ANYWHERE IN THE UNIVERSE of LucasArts' stunning *Dark Forces*. This is the monster exclusive mega-game of the moment... and we've got it for you first.

We hope that you've enjoyed the first two years of the mag, but we want to make sure that things get better every month. To help us do this we need to know exactly what you want and what you need, so to help things along there's a pull-out reader survey this month. As an extra incentive we're also giving a 3DO multi-media upgrade kit away to the first survey pulled from the PC Zone post bag.

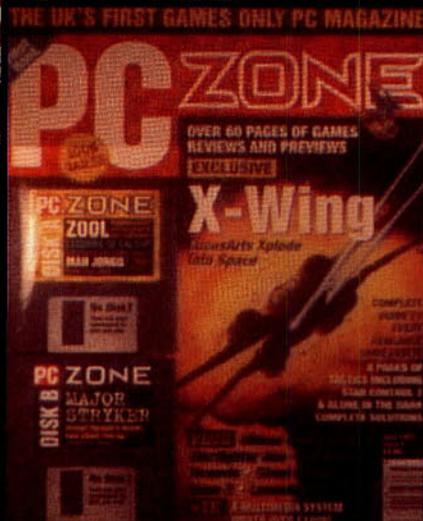
Anyway, that's enough of that. We hope you enjoy this issue.

Lots of love 'n' hugs,

John, Jeremy, Deborah, Jason, Chris and all the rest of the PC Zone bods.



(Left and below) Despite the overwhelming evidence the PC Zone team deny claims that they are obsessed with Star Wars.



the Winter CES

The Winter CES in Las Vegas has now been and gone, and the entire "interactive entertainment" industry (as it now insists on being called) was hinting at what it had in stall for the next six months. PC Zone was there... and this is what we found out...

REBEL ASSAULT 2

Although details are scarce as we go to press, it was revealed that LucasArts is working on a follow-up to its incredibly successful *Rebel Assault* CD. Currently simply titled as *Rebel Assault 2* (although we expect there to be a subtitle which is as yet unconfirmed) the game is rumoured to be considerably more impressive than the original epic.

Sources at Lucas tell us that, although the original was monstrously successful, players had a number of complaints and these have all been taken into consideration this time around. Touted as being one of the most important priorities is the feeling of freedom within the gaming environment. *Rebel Assault* allowed you to effectively "scroll" around a larger play window in order to make you feel in control, but the sequel is expected to blend pre-rendered images with polygon-generated graphics to provide a very realistic and believable environment.

No release date has been set for the title yet, and no images have been released (not everyone knows about the existence of the project - PC Zone only found out by accident really, so I suppose it's a sort of exclusive news piece, is this), however we don't really expect to see much of the game until at least Christmas 1995, possibly much later.

THE DIG

Whilst we're dealing with LucasArts products it's probably worth mentioning *The Dig*. Lucas seem somewhat embarrassed by the fact that this has now been in development for three years. Lucas has sent out a press release which we shall now quote to you in full...*

Top 10 Reasons why The Dig isn't out yet:

1. Project Leader Sean Clark was abducted by aliens.
2. Damn Pentium bug.
3. Programmers keep snorting Tang.
4. George decided to use storyline for the next *Star Wars* trilogy.
5. NASA shut down the project because it was too close to an actual UFO incident.
6. Research taking longer than expected - Roswell documents still not released.
7. Waiting for the next vernal equinox to shoot spectacular opening sequence.
8. Astronauts Beta testing product on space shuttle haven't given us their feedback yet.
9. ILM effects went over budget.
10. After *Jurassic Park*, Spielberg decided that he did have enough money to make it into a movie after all

* All of the above are fictitious - merely the delusions of an overworked marketing department. *The Dig* is currently due for release in the second half of 1995. Delays in release are due to graphical and storyline changes, expansion of the team and a re-think on the platforms for which the game will be made available. More news soon.

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MORE MEMORY + MORE SPEED + MORE FUN

(Right) NBA Jam Tournament Edition could be the best arcade-style basketball game to be released on the PC yet. It's got to be better than Jordan In Flight, though, hasn't it?



Bulletin

JUDGE DREDD AND THE GANG AT ACCLAIM

ALTHOUGH TRADITIONALLY very quiet in the PC games arena, Acclaim is about to jump in with a host of products, including the officially-licensed game of the long-awaited *Judge Dredd* movie. Those of you keen to get your hands on a really in-depth, smart-looking *Dredd* game may be a little disappointed to learn that it's actually a console-style platform shoot 'em up, with the odd driving bit thrown in for good measure. I kid ye not. Nevertheless, the graphics look jolly nice and it's got all of the bits that you would want included in a *Dredd* game – the Lawmaster, Lawgiver, Judge Anderson's tight-fitting body stocking thingy and lots of "nice" meaty violence.

Elsewhere in the Acclaim camp we also witnessed the official-licence of *Stargate*, the recently released sci-fi movie starring Kurt "big jaw" Russell and Jaye "looks like a girl" Davidson. Funnily enough, this is also a platform-style game, but instead of driving bits, it has 3D-flying bits. Watch out for it in the shops very soon.

NBA Jam Tournament Edition (NBA) is potentially the game to watch out for in the coming months. Proving to be monstrously popular in its original guise on the Mega Drive and SNES, *NBA* is a very playable side-scrolling, multi-player basketball game with more special moves than you could shake a stick at. Watch out for it sometime in March.

One of the most eagerly-awaited games from Acclaim, though, has to be *Mortal Kombat II*. Looking as though it could well be the best beat 'em up on the PC ever, the graphics and animation on this incredibly popular arcade game are really quite stunning. Hopefully then we'll be seeing this game in the next couple of months.



A NEW GRAPHICS STANDARD?

After months of speculation about a new PC graphics standard emerging, it seems that we're finally due to see something. Giants of the industry Microsoft, Intel and Creative Labs have teamed up together to introduce a new custom graphics standard based on the Glint technology, which was announced a few months ago. Capable of producing SVGA visuals but moving around at truly incredible speed, the new standard will reaffirm the PC as THE standard for high-calibre 3D games.

For months now it has been apparent that the next great games-system battle will be won by whichever system can produce the fastest and most complicated texture-mapped, high-resolution polygons. Sony's forthcoming Playstation system has long been touted as the system to watch, but with this new upgrade the PC will once again be way ahead of the competition.

As we go to press there are no firm details as far as performance for the new card goes, but we do know that it will be manufactured by Creative Labs (responsible for establishing the SoundBlaster as THE audio standard), supported fully by Microsoft and it will be Plug-and-Play ready.

Software houses, including Virgin Interactive and Electronic Arts, have already confirmed that they will be supporting the new system in forthcoming games, and Jez San is known to have said that the code intended for his forthcoming BRender 3D system is also going to be compatible with the new card.

The next year should see some amazing 3D games appearing, and if this new card is as impressive as the hype suggests, games which support the new chipset will run extremely well, even on lower-spec PCs.

As yet, we don't know how much the card will retail at, but if the companies involved really do intend to establish this quickly the card will have to come out for around £200.

FRANKENSTEIN: THROUGH THE EYES OF THE MONSTER

Interplay is currently very excited about its first game that features a famous personality. Tim Curry (who is no stranger to video-game acting with *Gabriel Knight* and *Wing Commander 3* already under his belt) stars as the demonic Dr Frankenstein and acts as both your guide and enemy throughout the proceedings.

Beginning with you waking up on the operating table, the game deals with a very "right on" concept of self-realisation on the part of the monster. As you explore the confines of the castle and speak with the doctor, you soon learn that all is not as it seems and that your former life was riddled with crimes and strange goings on. The objective of the game is to eventually escape from your creator, and fully understand why you have been created and what you were before.

From what we saw on show at CES, this would appear to be very nearly finished and Interplay assures us that it should be available in the shops in early May.

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PC CD-ROM, MAC CD



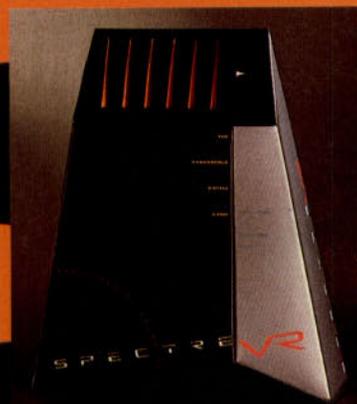
IBM PC, MAC



S P E C T R E VR

There's Just No Other Way Into Cyberspace

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VELOCITY



Bulletin

WESTWOOD STUDIOS

AFTER BEING A BIT on the quiet side for a while now, the chaps at Westwood Studios are now just about ready to unveil a number of new products during the next three months.

The first of these is the rather splendid looking *Command and Conquer*, which has now been in development for more than a year. Developed as an extension of the game system produced for the superb *Dune II*, the game blends the gaming styles of this classic strategy game and *Cannon Fodder*.

Set in the near future, the game places you in the position of being an "armchair on-line general", whereby you control all of your forces remotely with the assistance of various information sources, such as the Internet and media-watching computer systems. The emphasis throughout though, has been placed very firmly on playability and we can assure you that this is going to be one of the best games of the year.

The game features a number of unique elements, including a mixture of live-action and pre-rendered footage; some superb digital sound, which is spooled in from the CD as you play; and one of the most advanced AI engines ever developed for a computer game. Watch out for an exclusive review of this in the coming months.

The other "biggie" from Westwood is the follow-up to one of the most successful RPG's of recent years. *Land of Lore II* will be considerably larger than its predecessor and will be available on CD-ROM only (it is going to fill two CDs). Featuring Silicon Graphics and 3D Studio rendered visuals mixed with a *Doom*-style playing environment, this could well turn out to be one of the best-looking games ever. What's most incredible though, is that due to some extremely clever coding the game will run on any 32-bit PC from 386DX upwards.

(Below) *Lands of Lore II* is certainly the most impressive game that Westwood has developed so far.



BALDIES

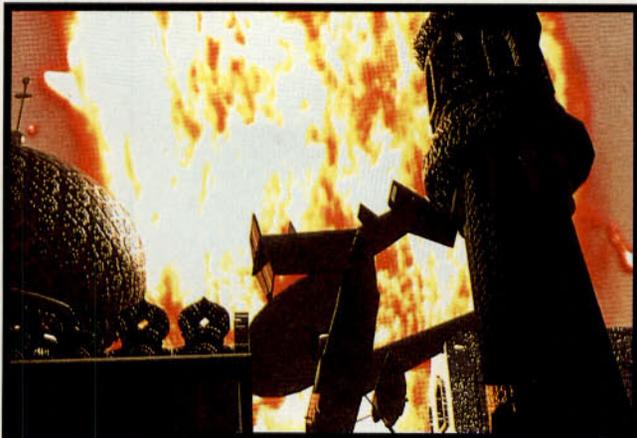
Gametek is pretty excited at the moment about its forthcoming resource management/combat game that goes by the rather unusual name of *Baldies*. Described as a sort of cross between *Mega-lo-Mania*, *Populous* and *Lemmings 3* and you can even effect the landscape (like in *Populous*). The whole thing hangs together remarkably well and we expect the finished product to be extremely playable indeed. Watch out for it sometime in March.

You can assign all manner of skills to each individual character in your tribe (like in *Lemmings 3*) and you can even effect the landscape (like in *Populous*). The whole thing hangs together remarkably well and we expect the finished product to be extremely playable indeed. Watch out for it sometime in March.

(Below) The in-game graphics of *Command and Conquer* (C&C) are reminiscent of *Dune II*



(Right) The FMV in C&C mixes Silicon Graphics images with live action footage



SUPER STREET FIGHTER II TURBO

Although US Gold has obtained the rights to *Super Street Fighter II* (previewed last month) it has now been announced that Gametek has the rights to *Super Street Fighter II Turbo*... and it's intending to release the product at roughly the same time! What's the difference between the two, though? Well, from what we can see the graphics are considerably better in *Turbo* and there a number of extra moves, including new fireballs and fancy kicks.

Gametek is very pleased with the development of the project, and when it's released at the beginning of April the company is hoping to bundle a SNES-style, six-button joystick with the game.

Contact Gametek on 0753 553445.



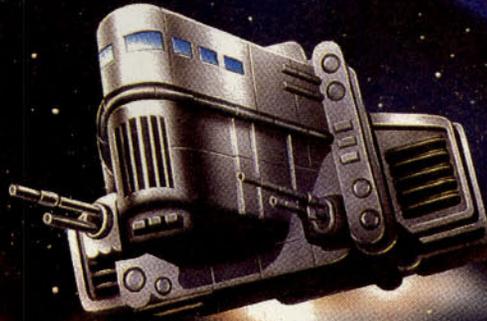
JETFIGHTER III

Ine of the most impressive project on show at CES was Miracle Technology's (formerly Velocity) *Jetfighter III*. Although very early in development (and unfortunately we have no screen shots) the product is a staggeringly realistic combat simulator which makes use of real contour maps to provide one of the most up-to-date playing environments ever.

When complete, we're informed that the game will be SVGA compatible; will fully support all major VR systems; and will be "the combat equivalent of *Flight Simulator 5*". A hefty boast indeed. We'll bring you some more news next month.



guilty



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(Below) Virtual Pool's SVGA graphics are extremely impressive... if a little bland.

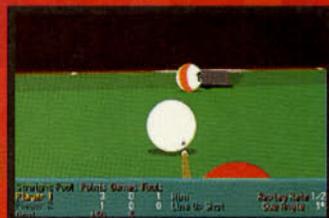
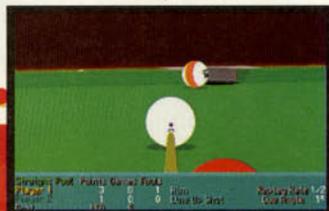


Bulletin

VIRTUAL POOL

With Archer MacLean's *3D Pool* proving to be extremely popular, we can now look forward to another similarly styled game in the form of Interplay's cunningly titled *Virtual Pool*.

Making use of a similar graphical style, the game looks extremely impressive due to its use of hi-res Super VGA graphics. The animation is all silky smooth and the physics of the ball movements look extremely convincing. Hopefully we'll be able to bring you a Blueprint on the game in next month's mag



TOP GUN

THE NEXT BIG combat flight sim from MicroProse is... wait for it... the officially-licensed game of the now ancient movie *Top Gun*. Now, now, c'mon... stop giggling at the back, this actually looks like it could be quite an impressive game.

Aimed very much at "beginner" flight sim players, the entire project has been designed to entice people towards the genre. By making use of recognisable scenarios and extremely easy-to-use controls, the whole

thing is supposed to be as user friendly as a flight sim can get. Could this be the first non-propeller head simulator? Surely not.

Aside from the ease of use factor, this is also by far the most exciting-looking product from MicroProse to date. The texture-mapped polygons used throughout are all truly stunning and the level of detail in both the aircraft and the scenery is quite remarkable.

Contact MicroProse on 0454 326532.



DAEDALUS ENCOUNTER

Fans of the babe from Wayne's World – the delectable Tia Carrere – will be pleased to know that she is about to star in a new "interactive movie" style game from Virgin. Originally touted as being the follow up to Media Vision's *Critical Path*, the game incorporates both combat and puzzle elements... and, of course, dearest Tia in a low-cut leather T-shirt thing. Lovely. Using a mix of hi-res rendered visuals and FMV footage, this is possibly the most ambitious game of this style to date.

No UK date is confirmed for the game as yet, but it's expected to launch in the US in the next couple of months.

Contact Virgin on 081 960 2255.



TERRA NOVA

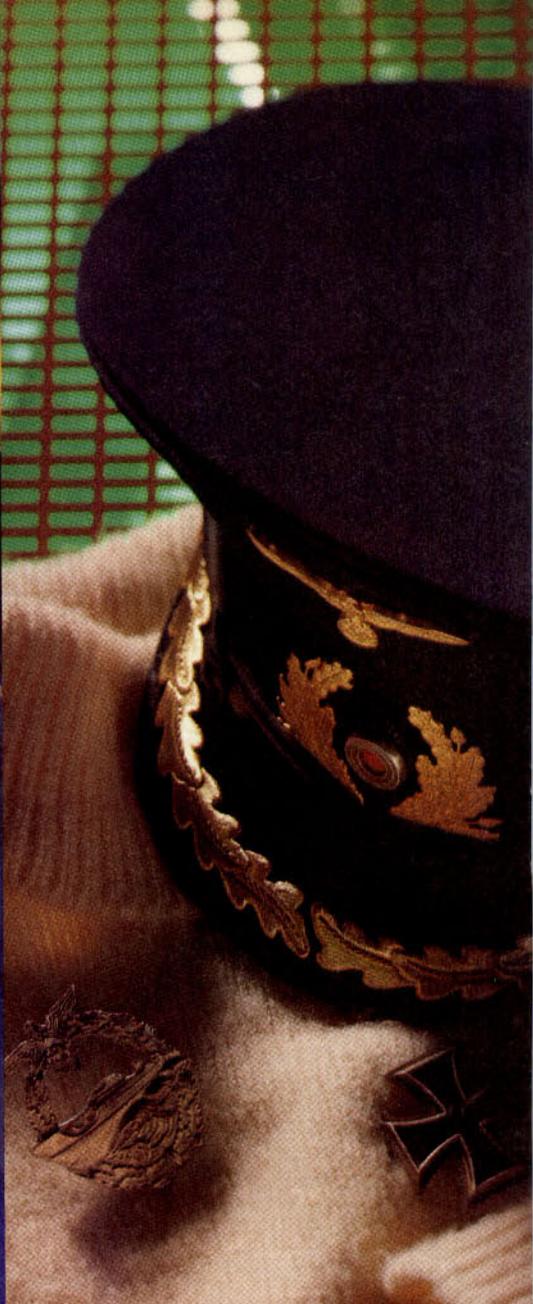
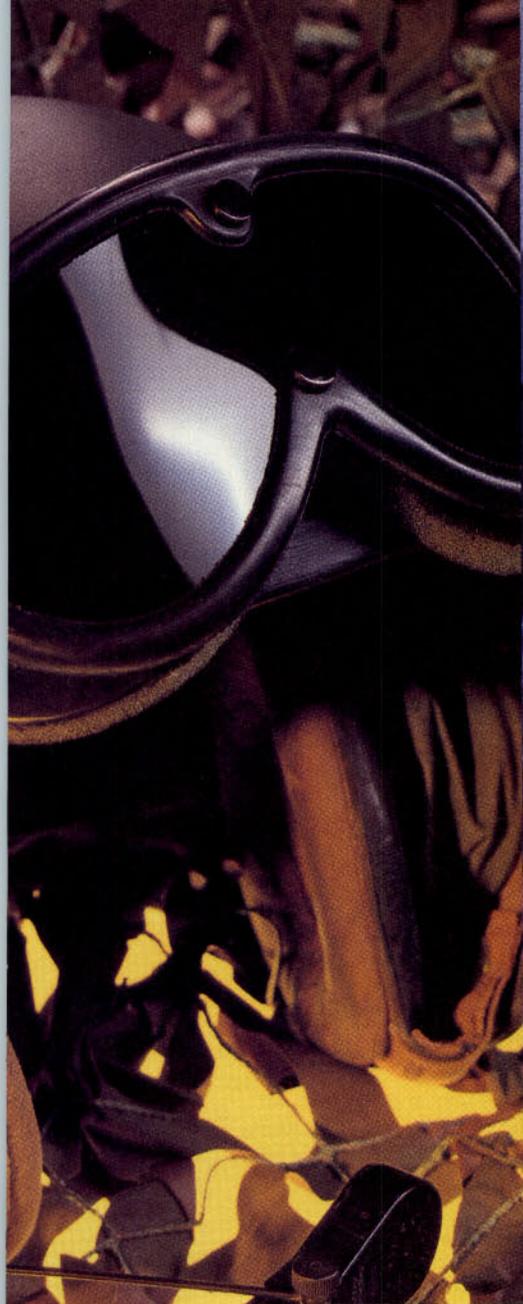
The first fruits of Virgin's acquisition of Looking Glass Technologies is the incredible *Flight Unlimited*, which is previewed in this issue.

The next game from the team is an incredible 3D-robot combat game called *Terra Nova: Strike Force Centauri*, which makes use of a brand-new graphics engine called Terra Scaping.

Looking like a cross between *System Shock* and *Flight Unlimited*, the Terra Scaping system allows you to walk around (and shoot things) in a truly amazing-looking three-dimensional environment, which puts even the likes of *Comanche* to shame in terms of detail and animation. Boasting a full digital sound track throughout and a fair smattering of pre-rendered FMV sequences, the whole package looks set to be a presentation *tour de force*.

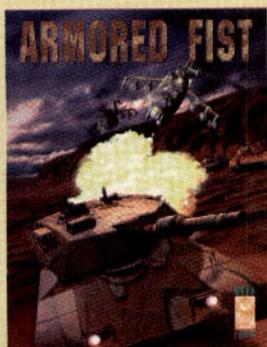
Virgin is keen to have the project completed by the summer, and you can contact them on 081 960 2255.





THE REALISM

WILL GO TO YOUR HEAD

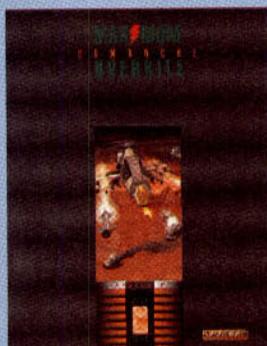


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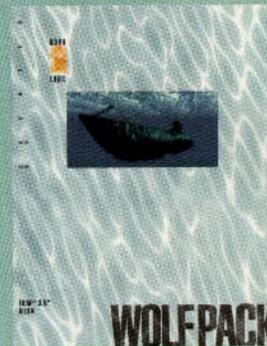
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Bulletin

DISPATCHES

+++ TWO FOR ONE

Telstar Fun and are releasing a series of two-game compilations on CD this year. After the success of their 7th *Guest/Dune* pack last year, a new compilation featuring *Cannon Fodder* and *Beneath a Steel Sky* should be in the shops this month at £49.99. The next planned double pack is *Alone in the Dark/Shadow of the Comet*, due out at the end of this month retailing at £39.99.

For more details contact Telstar on 0462 456780.

+++ IT'S NOT A BOARD GAME

Does anyone remember the *Battle Ships* board game that nearly caused a stir about a thousand years ago? Well, if you played it and liked it, your luck is in.

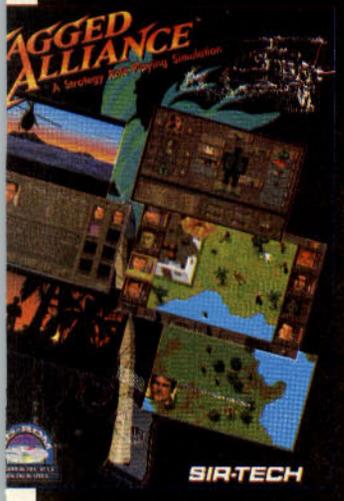
Mindscape are releasing *Metal Marines*, a *Windows* strategy game that feels spookily like the original board game.

Metal Marines is out in March at £34.99.

+++ THIS HAS EVERYTHING

Sir-tech are releasing *Jagged Alliance*, a new action-strategy game for CD, featuring full digital speech, an allegedly unique combination of real-time and phased combat, "spectacular" sound effects, tons of cinematic sequences and probably a lot more besides. The game should be out by the time you read this.

For more details, set yourself up for an outrageous telephone bill by ringing Sir-tech in the States on 0101 800 447 1230.



DOMARK TRIO ON THE WAY

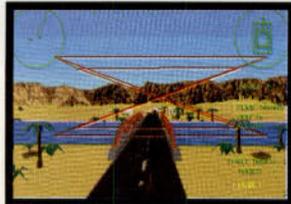
ALL HAS BEEN QUIET on the Domark front the last few months, but that's all about to change with the release of three new games. *The Orion Conspiracy* is an SVGA adventure game programmed by Divide by Zero.

The Orion Conspiracy is set in a futuristic world ruled by mega-corporations who buy and sell and manipulate governments for profit. All the action takes place on Cerberus, a small research station near a Black Hole deep in space. It is on this station that you, as Devlin Marshall, set out to discover the truth behind the death of your only son Danny. As you start to unravel the truth, you find yourself stumbling into a web of lies and deceit.

The game will have full speech for all the characters throughout, rendered movie scenes and hand-painted back-drops, all of which are displayed in SVGA. Domark promise the game will have a non-linear plot with several unexpected turns and twists along the way. *The Orion Conspiracy* is out in March on CD-ROM only.

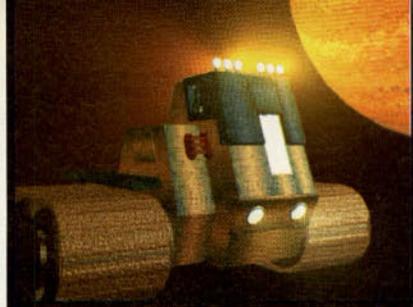
Also imminent is *Absolute Zero*, a "space sim" set in the 23rd century where mankind's colonisation has stretched to the inner moons of Jupiter. The moons are rich in natural resources and mankind is taking advantage of this to feed Earth's 22 billion inhabitants. Mining colonists, while looking for more resources, bump into a bunch of long-sleeping aliens who are none too happy about being awakened from their beauty sleep. A massive war ensues, in which the player controls different characters as he/she goes through various missions. Each side has many weapons, defences and vehicles and the further you go into the game, the more you learn about the aliens and the more complex the game becomes. The battles take place on Jupiter's frozen moon Europa.

It sounds like a cross between the strategy classic *Midwinter* and the awesome strategy game from MicroProse, *UFO*. If *Absolute Zero* can match either of these games in the gameplay department Domark are on to a winner. *Absolute Zero* is out in March on CD-ROM only.



Also due for release next month is *Tank Commander*, developed by Big Red software. The game will have 40 missions to play through across desert, village, icy tundra, city and grassland landscapes. There'll also be network support for up to 16 players.

For more information on any of these games contact Domark on 081 780 2222.



(Above) Pretty graphics ahoy in Domark's new line-up of CD-ROM games. Hopefully the gameplay of the new games will match the stunning visuals.

(Below left) It would be fair comment to say that most tank sims released so far have been naff... let's hope that Tank Commander redresses the balance.



SIM CITY URBAN RENEWAL KIT

If you're just a bit fed up of creating cities that look like Milton Keynes when playing *Sim City*, then Maxis have come up with the perfect add-on. The new *Urban Renewal Kit* allows you to completely redesign any object in the game and completely change the look and feel of your cities by loading new graphic sets.

As well as editing, altering and creating your very own monstrous carbuncles, you can zoom in and out to see your creations in glorious detail, whilst the City Painter tool allows you to place *SC2000* buildings and features anywhere you want and create your dream city without having to grow it.

Seeing as most *Sim City* players prefer building their own cities than actually running them, the *URK* will no doubt be regarded as a "must have" add-on - and hey, if it makes their little worlds a better place to live, then who can knock it?

Contact Maxis on 071 490 2333.

SimCity Urban Renewal Kit available soon from Maxis. But where are the concrete cows?





(Left) As if the original wasn't bloody hard enough, Bullfrog are now releasing even more levels for Magic Carpet.

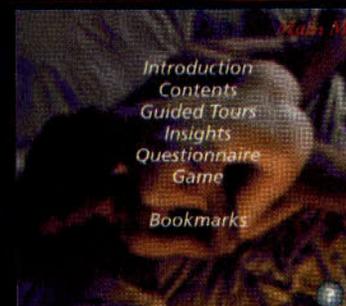
BUT WHERE'S THE BLOKE WITH THE BEARD?

Finally, a CD-ROM product worthy of its "18" rating comes onto the PC. *The Joy of Sex* from Philips is a highly-visual and entertaining multimedia romp based on Alex Comfort's now infamous book of the same name, first published in 1972.

Split into five lavish sections, it invites the user to explore the sensual world of sex and lurve via a sparkling array of video, illustrations, commentary and music (no Barry White, though). Sexual techniques and positions, as well as ideas about love and relationships, are all explored through intimate video sequences, hundreds of candid and tender drawings and over three hours of commentary. There's even a questionnaire and a game to click your way through.

Unfortunately, the bloke with the beard is conspicuous by his absence, having been replaced by some chiselled-looking chap with a quiff. Is nothing sacred? The biggest downer, however, is the spec of the machine required to comfortably run this undiluted sex-fest. At least a 486DX/50 with 8Mb of RAM is required to give "improved performance", and the publishers recommend an even higher spec. However, the lady "expert" on the CD maintains that size isn't necessarily an important factor when it comes to performance. But what does she know!

Contact Philips on 081 689 4444.



(Above) "Hold on Luv - I think I've got my caddy stuck!"

MORE MAGIC

BULLFROG ARE RELEASING a data disk for their superb strategic shoot 'em up *Magic Carpet*. *Hidden Worlds* will give you 25 new levels for the game and it will have harder computer opponents, a higher difficulty level for the network settings and the players will have more powerful magic. All the landscapes will have brand-new graphics, which Bullfrog say will be just as impressive as those in *Magic Carpet*.



Hidden Worlds is set in an icy and barren hinterland so the scenery graphics will be made up of snow, glaciers and ice. Even the castles and buildings have been redrawn to fit in with the Arctic environment. All the spells available in *Magic Carpet* will be included in *Hidden World*. In addition, there will also be a new spell...the Homing Meteor. With the aid of this you might just have half a chance against the considerably tougher opponents and monsters. The data disk will initially be available on CD only and will need the original program to run.

Hidden Worlds is out in February at £19.99. For further information contact Bullfrog on 0483 579399.

VIRTUAL GOLF

If you simply can't be bothered with complicated golf games which require an in-depth knowledge of real golfing techniques and at least a decent working knowledge of physics, but you still want a game that looks impressive and plays well, then *Scottish Open: Virtual Golf* from Core Design will be right up your alley.

Based on the world-famous Carnoustie course (home of the 1995 Scottish Open Championship), *Virtual Golf* includes three other courses designed by a golf professional, and is the first golf game to feature a real-time 3D environment, rendered and texture-mapped on Silicon Graphics workstations. The game also makes use of 256 colour graphics and a choice of "virtual" camera angles, whilst player sprites are modelled and rendered in scaling 3D.

Unlike any other golf game, *Virtual Golf* will be split into two parts: Amateur and Professional (two courses for each), and players can opt to play a tournament, a skins challenge, a shoot out or a match. The game has been designed to be very user-friendly and to appeal to people who would otherwise be put off by golf games. Consequently, the game is very simple and easy to use and players will be able to get straight in and play without having to plough through a manual. That's not to say it's easy, though - the courses get progressively difficult and there will be more on the way once the game is released later this month. At the moment at least, it's fair to say that there's no other golf game like it.

Contact Core Design on 0332 297797.

DISPATCHES

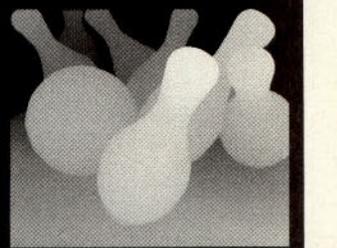
+++ OH NO! A 3D PIC!

Stereogram products are creeping on to the PC at an alarming rate. The idea is that, you stare intently at a collection of images and a 3D-picture appears before your very eyes. The main problem with them appears to be the fact that some people can't see them, no matter how close to the screen they get or how much they squint. SS & M claim their new product *Stereoworld* is the most complete Stereogram product around at the moment. It has 25 static stereograms, ten animated ones, three stereographic games, and you can even make your own with the help of the Stereogram Creator (CD-ROM version). *Stereoworld* is out now at £29.99 on floppy and CD and is available by mail order from Impact Software on 0742 780370. Before buying it though, you might just want to check that the images will work for you or you could end up staring at a computer screen for hours with a confused look on your face!

STEREOWORLD



Impact Software (0742) 7523



Bulletin

DISPATCHES

+++ THE ULTIMATE STICK
Gravis have a new flight-stick on the way to add to their already impressive range of products for flight-sim fans. The F-16 FLCS will allegedly provide the ultimate edge for any flight simulator. Soon to follow is the F-16 TQS, a fully programmable throttle with thumb trackball. This is an add-on product for the F-16 FLCS.

For more information contact Zye Technology on 0293 531331.



+++ BUT IT'S NOT INTERACTIVE, I TELL YOU!

Activision have released a multimedia comic book based on an animated movie. *The Mask* is an "interactive comic" (so Activision say, although we couldn't find much, if any, evidence of interactivity), which you can view on your PC with digital voice-overs reading out the captions for you. It's out now at £24.99.

For more information ring Activision on 081 742 9400.

GREMLIN GO FOR GOLD

GREMLIN HAVE ALMOST FINISHED work on the third version of their football management sim, *Premier Manager 3*. The Amiga version of the game was extremely well received, and from what we've seen, the PC version is going to be even better. Perhaps the most welcome new feature is the introduction of an assistant manager who will help you with the day-to-day running of the club. Thankfully, this means that you will no longer have to click your way through countless advertising boards surrounding the pitch, trying to decide which companies are offering the best financial deal. This was one of the biggest game design faults in the previous two games and will definitely not be missed by *Premier Manager* addicts. There's a new transfer system that gives you the opportunity to guzzle competitors at the last minute, but this doesn't mean you will be able to throw your cash around any way you like. You will have to apply to the directors for funds before you can make any bids for new players. The match representation has been greatly improved, enabling you to better assess the strengths and weaknesses of your tactics and players.

Player Manager 3 is out on March on floppy and CD at £34.99.

Gremlin have also held back the release date of *Jungle Strike* so that they could work on major enhancements for the CD version. The revised version sports 15 minutes of high-quality, full-motion video footage, which features in cut-scenes and reward sequences and a brand-new campaign, which is not available on the floppy version. Gremlin have taken the original Megadrive *Jungle Strike* engine and completely overhauled all the graphics to take advantage of the considerably more powerful PC processor. The upshot of all this is that, while the game still plays as well as it ever did, it now looks and sounds better than ever. To top it all off, those nice people at Gremlin are putting out the CD version for the same price as the floppy version. *Jungle Strike* will be out next month at £34.99. For information on both of these games, contact Gremlin on 0742 753423.



RISE OF THE TRIAD

The latest (and arguably the best) *Doom* clone to surface so far is now finally available from PD Selections - in three different versions.

An eight-level shareware version subtitled *The Hunt Begins*, priced at just £6.95; a commercial-boxed version with 32 levels and 30 Comm-bat (multi-player) levels at £30; and an enhanced CD-ROM version which contains everything in the shareware and registered version; plus five additional enemies and a random level generator that makes a further million levels, retailing at £38 will go on sale from mid-February.

Both full versions include network play for up to 11 players; optional modem play with real cross-modem speech and play by serial link.

Interested? Then contact PD Selections on 01474 325802 for further details.



ACTING SENSIBLE

Kompart are releasing a potential rival for *Sensible Soccer*. *Football Glory* has had rave reviews for the Amiga Version and an enhanced PC version is on the way. Kompart claim *Football Glory* for the PC will not be a direct port from the Amiga but a completely new version optimised to take advantage of the PC's extra capabilities. The CD version in particular will have a host of new features, including digitised graphics, video footage, extra tactics and speech. Players will be able to compete in English and Italian leagues or European and World competitions. *Football Glory* will be out next month. We should have a full review in the next issue.

Kompart are also releasing *Old Timer*, which they describe as a simulation of automobile history from 1886 to 1929. Your objective in the game is to design and build a car in the early 20th century and then race it yourself against great drivers from the era. There's also quite a complex sim hidden in here. You'll have to keep an eye on technical improvements, inventions and legal and social changes to make sure you keep ahead of the competition. *Old Timer* is due out in March. For more details contact Kompart on 0438 840004.



(Right) *Premier Manager 3* is just about ready, and will be out in March (at last! Hoorah!)

(Below left) *Jungle Strike* has been delayed for a while due to it being "spruced up" with FMV sequences.



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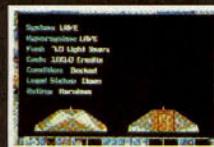
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PC Screen shots



PC Screen shots



PC Screen shots

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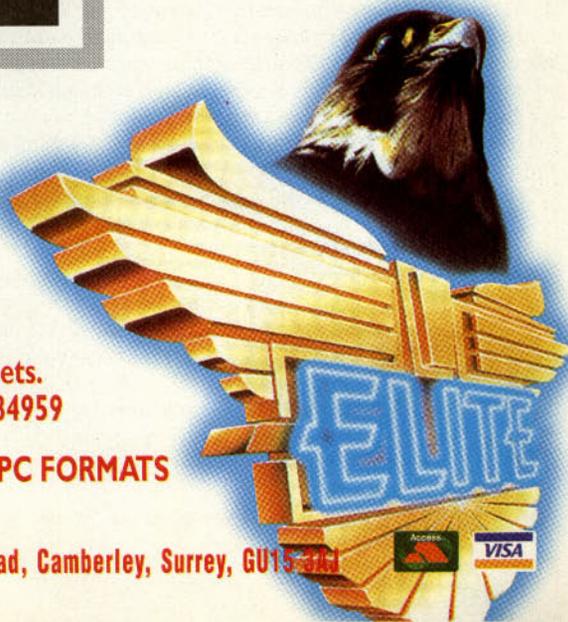
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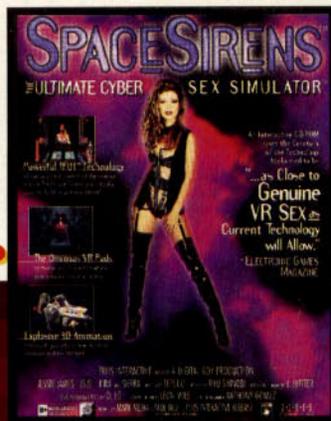


Bulletin

YOU TOO CAN HAVE SEX

Hey guys, do you have trouble attracting the opposite sex? Are you sad, lonely and frustrated and prone to turning to your PC just to get some company? If you answered a miserable "yes" to both of these questions then you are a) a sad bastard, and b) probably the sort of person that Pixis Interactive are hoping will buy *Space Sirens*, their new interactive CD-ROM, which they describe as "the Ultimate Cyber Sex simulator".

You play the part of a space privateer who's happily flying about in space, picking up alien artefacts, when you hear the irresistible song of the Space Sirens coming from a space station. You enter their domain only to become trapped in a VR chamber. You have to fulfil their every desire or remain a sex slave on the station forever. The game features full-motion video sequences, an original sound track, fluid "interactivity", (ooer) and... TFUI technology. What on earth is that, you may well ask. Well, TFUI stands for Touch and Feel User Interface. This revolutionary new interface enables you to touch and sexually interact with virtual girlies. It all sounds great, doesn't it? The only bummer is that the press release didn't have a contact number for Pixis Interactive on it. Hope we didn't get you all too excited (snigger).



(Left) One for the real saddies this... "As close to genuine VR sex as current technology will allow", eh? Hmm, sounds really fun, eh? I can think of much cheaper ways of getting a thrill, and you don't need a CD-ROM drive.

TIME WARNER PLAN AHEAD

TIME WARNER have several releases planned for this year. First up is *Conqueror*, a strategy game set in medieval England, developed by Software Sorcery.

Your main objective in the game is to establish a fief (land you get from a lord in return for fighting on his behalf). As the game progresses, you must build up the biggest and strongest fief in the land. Along the way you will have to defeat lords who will try and capture your land and challenge rival knights in tournaments, quests and jousts. In addition to the strategic elements in the game, *Conqueror* also incorporates hand-to-hand and sword combat in a 3D environment. The game is still in the early stages of development but it's already looking very impressive. *Conqueror* will be out in April or May on CD-ROM only.

Software Sorcery are also working on *Fast Attack*, a "military simulation adventure", which puts the player in control of a United States fast attack submarine, one of the deadliest subs in the world. Based on current military technology, the game takes the player through 70 different naval missions. Features include 3D-rendered cinematics, CD-quality music and digital sound effects. *Fast Attack* should be out in May or June on CD-ROM only.

Also due out in April is *Striker '95*, the latest incarnation of the long-running football game. Time Warner say the game has significant improvements over previous *Striker* games. In addition to being a fast-paced arcade soccer game, there's a pretty competent football management sim in there too, in which you'll have to buy and sell players, deal with injuries and handle the general running of the club. The game features fluid, rotoscoped player animations running at ten frames per second and SVGA graphics.

Time Warner are also working on *Aristotle McGuffin*, an educational adventure game for children, which should be out at the end of April. *Aristotle* is stuck in the past and players have to help him fix his time machine and get him back to the present. The game will help children learn about life in mid-mediaeval England.

Somewhat further down the road, we can expect to see *Primal Rage*, a beat 'em up in the style of *Mortal Kombat* except the aggressors are all dinosaurs! And *T-Mek*, a *Battle Zone*-type game with texture-mapped graphics. Both of these games will be released in the third quarter of this year.

For more details contact Time Warner on 0604 602800.



DOOMWATCH™ No. 1

A regular series in which David "FragMaster" McCandless scours the world for even more interesting ways of killing people (in Doom).

Modem Doom. Modem Doom. It's alright, isn't it? Well, to a point. But you're stuck with two player only and, as anyone who's been to a Shopper Show recently will tell you, four-player network *Doom* is a different game altogether. Especially if I'm playing. But that, as Hans Christian Anderson would say, is another story.

Now, however, modem *Doom* heads – especially those frequenting CIX, CompuServe, and the Internet – can play four-player games across the phonelines by connecting to specialist "game servers". These are popping up all over the country, but the one most frequented by the PC Zone crew – and FragUberMeiser himself – is GAMES NET Ltd in Cardiff.

Basically, GAMES NET is a BBS dedicated to *Doom* networking. You dial in, register your name and details, and then enter one of the ten "Game Arenas" and challenge the denizens therein to a Death-match-a-thon.

All you need to play is a reasonably fast computer (486/33 and above, preferably with a high-speed 16550 UART serial chip), a 14400 modem, a copy of DOOM II, and a special chunk of software called SERDOOM.ZIP, which you can download on your first visit to the BBS.

Membership is free at the moment (subscriptions are impending, though) and unless you live in the Cardiff area, phone bills could be nasty (so get the permission of the phone owner if you're under 18).

If you want a special modem head-to-head game with King UberFragMeister McFrag, then voice-phone the PC Zone number during office hours.

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Bulletin

GALLUP CHARTS

So many games, so little time – these days, shopping for your PC can be a nightmare. But now, with the help of Gallup's handy household charts, you can check out what you should be playing. There's something for everyone here: full-price PC titles, budget games and even a selection of CD-ROM titles.

Top 20 Full Price Titles

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Sim City 2000 | Maxis/Mindscape |
| 2. Winter Olympics | US Gold |
| 3. Doom 2 | Virgin |
| 4. Mortal Kombat | Virgin |
| 5. Star Trek: 25th Anniversary | Interplay |
| 6. TIE Fighter | LucasArts |
| 7. Soccer Kid | Krisalis |
| 8. The Lion King | Virgin |
| 9. NASCAR | Virgin |
| 10. TFX | Ocean |
| 11. IndyCar Racing | Virgin |
| 12. Colonization | Microprose |
| 13. Brian Lara's Cricket | Audiogenic |
| 14. Transport Tycoon | MicroProse |
| 15. Cannon Fodder 2 | Virgin |
| 16. Cannon Fodder | Virgin |
| 17. The Beverly Hillbillies | Gametek |
| 18. Overlord | Virgin |
| 19. Theme Park | Bullfrog |
| 20. All New World of Lemmings | Psygnosis |

Top 10 PC Budget Titles

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Hexx Heresy of the Wizard | Psygnosis |
| 2. Obitus | Psygnosis |
| 3. Dungeon Master | Psygnosis |
| 4. Armour-Geddon | Psygnosis |
| 5. Hired Guns | Psygnosis |
| 6. Monkey Island 2 | Kixx |
| 7. Creepers | Psygnosis |
| 8. Bram Stoker's Dracula | Psygnosis |
| 9. Theatre of Death | Psygnosis |
| 10. Dune 2 | Hit Squad |

Top 10 CD-ROM Titles

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Mega Race | Mindscape |
| 2. Privateer/Strike Commander | Electronic Arts |
| 3. Doom 2 | Virgin |
| 4. Creature Shock | Virgin |
| 5. Magic Carpet | Bullfrog |
| 6. Wing Commander 3 | Electronic Arts |
| 7. Little Big Adventure | Electronic Arts |
| 8. Ecstasica | Psygnosis |
| 9. NASCAR | Virgin |
| 10. Theme Park | Bullfrog |

The Editors 10 Inches

These monthly rants and raves seem to have been getting at least a few of you to think about things... even if some of you can do nothing more than just complain. Still, at least it's a reaction and that's what I want to provoke.



ACTUALLY, provoking some kind of reaction is pretty much what I want to talk about this month... except it's not a person's reaction, but that of the computer's that I think is important. I don't know if any of you have noticed, but apart from the very occasional meaty chess game, the application of artificial intelligence (AI) in computer games has been appalling. I can't really think of any game which really pushes the boat out in terms of actual intelligence... and this is surprising because designers and programmers have been doing everything possible to make games look "the business" for ages. So why on earth don't they behave in a more impressive manner now?

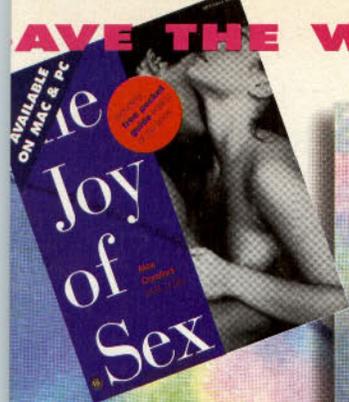
Research into AI is hardly anything new or revolutionary – stuff has been knocking around for absolutely donkey's years. The potential for a game that actually thinks like a human would be tremendous. Until now, though, virtually every game seems to just draw on an extensive library of known moves and simply makes a decision based on existing data. Nothing actually thinks about a situation and nothing actually shows any kind of behavioural trait. Why is this? Are games developers just too lazy? Or do you think it may have something to do with the fact that pc games are becoming more and more like the "bimbo" games that I've been harping on about for months.

Think about it... the most successful games in recent months have been the ones that look the best. You lot are going out and buying stuff that just has pretty graphics and impressive sound. Is it any wonder then that the developers aren't making an effort to introduce AI systems into entertainment products? It seems increasingly that punters just don't care about AI, so why should developers make the effort? Why give something a brain when it has the body of a goddess, eh? Just look at the recent stuff: *CyberWar*, *Creature Shock*, *Cyberia*, *Hell...* the list goes on. Lots of pre-rendered, pre-determined "entertainment" that isn't going to actually challenge anyone or anything when it comes to stimulating the old brain cells. Sad though it may seem there are only a handful of games which can boast anything even vaguely resembling an intelligence. *Warcraft* from Interplay is acknowledged by many as being a bit on the smart side, and *Command and Conquer* which is on the way any day now from Virgin is reputed to be one of the most intelligent games ever produced. Maybe the change will happen... maybe 1995 is the year of the "game that plays like a person".

If the games industry is going to make the next step in technology, it's going to happen in AI. People are already beginning to appreciate multi-player games because they enjoy having an unpredictable opponent. We need computer players that act and play in the same way, though. Surely that's not too much to ask?

If you have any comments on this subject, drop us a line at the usual address or e-mail us on CompuServe at 100142, 2152 or CIX PC Zone @ compulink.co.uk.

SAVE THE WORLD, PLAY TENNIS AND SEE STARS



JOY OF SEX
 Sex Comfort's bestseller 'The Joy of Sex' now on interactive CD-ROM. From nursery, 'The Joy of Sex' will add an interactive dimension to this enduring bestseller, which answers every sexual question any couple would need to know, quickly, simply and in fun. 'The Joy of Sex' contains more than 200 illustrations, three and a half hours of audio and more than 30 minutes of original video.

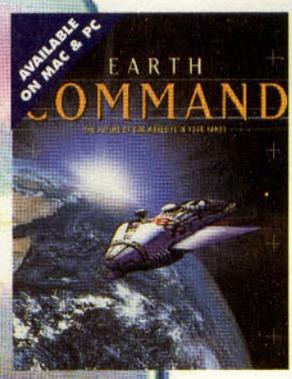
RP: £39.99.

NOW ON CD-ROM



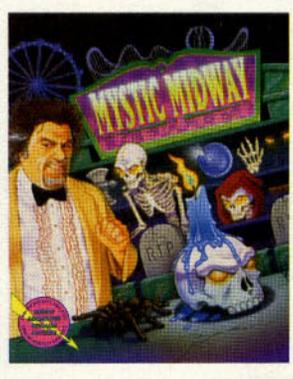
ALONE IN THE DARK 2
 It's California, Christmas Eve, 1924. Prohibition. CARNBY is desperately searching for GRACE, an eight-year-old kidnapped by a gang of bootleggers led by ONE-EYED JACK. The CD-ROM version features an extra half hour of gameplay, with 12 exciting new screens; a magical teleport short cut to bypass the maze, speech from professional actors.

SRP: £44.99.



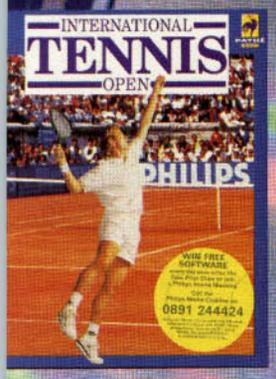
EARTH COMMAND
 The Earth is at CONDITION RED. There are just three hours to save the planet and only you can pull it off. Orbiting in your spacecraft, you'll have to combat famine, civil war, natural disasters, nuclear meltdowns, riots and anarchy. The decisions you take will either save or destroy the Earth. Can you take the pressure?

SRP: £39.99.



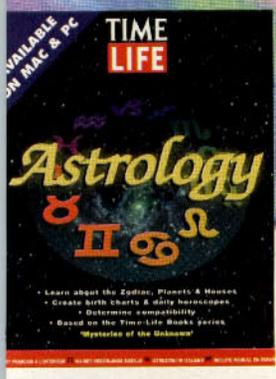
MYSTIC MIDWAY (1) - REST IN PIECES
 Somewhere between Heaven and Earth stands the Mystic Midway, presided over by its live-action 'Master of Cemeteries', Dr Dearth. He'll welcome you to his shooting gallery, 'Rest in Pieces' for 20 minutes of ghoulishly-funny video responses to the doctor's game play, in the High Score Hall of Fame.

SRP: £17.99.



INTERNATIONAL TENNIS OPEN
 A highly-sophisticated, fast-paced, two-player game, voted International European Multimedia Best Game in 1993, in its original CD-i version. Play the pro circuit in London, Paris and New York on grass, clay or cement and move real people on a real tennis court. Choose forehand or backhand and the type of shot, the speed and power of the hit.

SRP: £44.99.



TIME LIFE ASTROLOGY
 Travel through the galaxy and discover the fascinating history of astrology through this stunning presentation of the zodiac, planets, houses, aspects and elements. Study artifacts, drawings and paintings from ancient Mesopotamia to the present day, to reveal the secrets of the stars.

SRP: £29.99.

WHAT THE PAPERS SAY

ALONE IN THE DARK 2
PC Zone:
 "A sequel that is noticeably better than the original".
PC Gamer:
 "...a great game made substantially better by using the CD-ROM to add to the original version's strength's."
CD-ROM TODAY:
 "A game so rich, involving and totally compelling that from the very first moment you load it, you're gripped right to the end".
TODAY newspaper:
 "If you own a PC CD-ROM drive, don't let this game pass you by".

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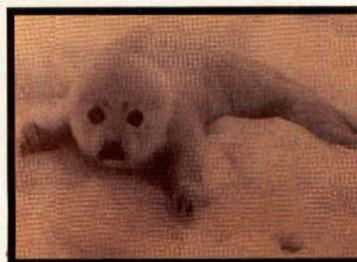
Calls cost 39p a minute at cheap rate and 49p at all other times (maximum cost £3.68), please get permission from the person paying the bill

All rights of the producer and owner are reserved. International Tennis Open, copyright Infogrames. Alone In The Dark 2, copyright Infogrames. Earth Command, copyright Visionary Media. Joy of Sex, copyright Mitchell Beazley. Marco Polo, copyright Infogrames. Cartoon Carnival, copyright Hanna Barbera. Phantom Express, copyright Hanna Barbera/Funhouse.



PHILIPS

Bulletin



MORE FROM MERIT

Merit are busily snapping up just about every computer game under the sun at the moment. First up is *Nerves of Steel*, a would-be *Doom* clone from the makers of the not quite award-winning *Isle of the Dead*. The game will have realistic sound effects, network play for two users and unique maps for each level of play. (It's nice to know they won't be using the same map for every level!) *Nerves of Steel* has no firm release date yet but Merit are threatening to unleash it on an unsuspecting public sometime this year.

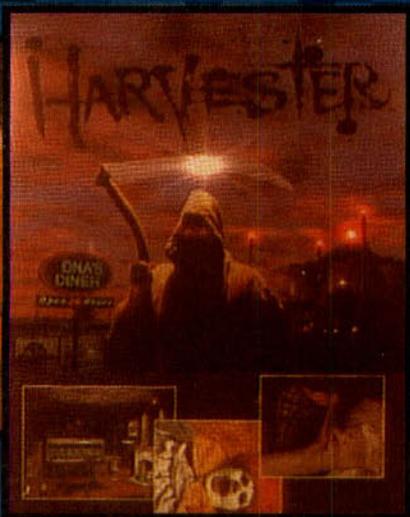
Fighter Wing is an arcade flight combat game currently under development by Gemsoft. This game supposedly offers the ultimate arcade flight combat experience without the steep learning curve. Players can fly all of today's state-of-the-art aircraft, and the CD-ROM version features video footage from the award winning TV series *FirePower*™. *Fighter Wing* should be out by the time you read this.

On the sports front, Merit are releasing *Alex Dampier Pro-Hockey '95*. Players can choose from over 25 international teams depicted in their correct national strips (as opposed to in the wrong ones) and there are various match types, from single-challenge matches to a whole league or even a multi-player tournament. The CD-ROM version features full-motion video and context sensitive match commentary. *Pro-Hockey '95* will be out at the end of this month.

G-Nome is described by Merit as an interactive movie with arcade action, and is due out in May. From the press flyer we received, it looks a bit like the *Journeyman Project* and *Quantum Gate*. Let's hope it doesn't play like either of them.

Probably the most eagerly-awaited release from Merit this year is their interactive adventure *Harvester*, which, despite much cajoling and spurring on from us to the Merit team, is still being described as "imminent". Written by G. P. Austin (who?), the guy who wrote the story-lines for *Privateer* and *Wing Commander* (oh, him!), *Harvester* is set in a spooky old town which has been taken over by an even spookier organisation called The Order of the Harvest Moon.

Key features are SVGA graphics, 3D-rendered backgrounds, hours of interactive dialogue sequences and over a hundred 3D-animated cinematic sequences. It sounds great but will we ever see it? *Harvester* will hopefully be with us in July.



Klik & Play Competition

We told you about it last month, but we're going to tell you again. **PC Zone needs YOU to design an awesomely stonking game using the new game generator from Europress Software. We want the best game in the land to represent us in the International Klik & Play Competition – and we want YOU to win yourself loads of goodies and make us very proud!**



ALL YOU HAVE to do is come up with a stonkingly original, funny and playable game using the *Klik & Play* game generator and send it to us at the address below (just to your right) on a floppy disk, along with your name, address, age and telephone number.

We will then play every entry until it hurts, sort out the Cool-olas from the Woos-olas, and enter the best effort to go forward to represent *PC Zone*.

The winning entry will then be entered into the UK final, and, if it wins, it will go forward to the world-wide championships, along with other inferior and moderately amusing entries from France, Greece, Germany and the USA. The final draw will be made in the spring – and the overall winner and the

runners up will win loads of goodies.

The Goodies

The UK winner will win a holiday for two in Florida, plus spending money. Magazine winners will win exclusive *Klik & Play* baseball jackets, plus £250, and runners up will receive a *Klik & Play* T-shirt and baseball cap, plus £50.



The Serious Bit

The competition will be ran over the next two issues, and all entries must be with us by Friday 7th April, 1995. Entries that are considered good enough may be put on our cover CD and extra points will be awarded to games that feature really bad jokes about the French (*Jeremy just leave the French alone, will ya. Ed.*) This competition is not open to any employees of either Europress or *PC Zone* (Watchitt!) and we have the absolute last say over absolutely everything (so there!).

Send your entries to:

PC ZONE – Klik & Play Compo
Dennis Publishing
19 Bolsover Street
London W1P 7HJ

PC Zone cannot accept responsibility for loss or return of entries!

PC Zone Klik & Play Tips:

If you've got access to a scanner, then scan in these pics to use in your game and you're onto a winner. Alternatively, devise some cunning plot or scenario that uses the following characters/items: an onion, some garlic, a chainsaw, a Frenchman (*I'm warning you Jeremy. Ed.*), some large, pointy spikes, a land mine and a big, rusty, but still very dangerous swinging axe. You are almost guaranteed to come up with a very good game. **Z**





RISE OF THE TRIAD

DARK WARS

18

YOU'RE GONNA GET BLOODY!

(c) 1994 Apogee Software

As a member of the High Risk United Nations Taskforce (HUNT) you are sent to investigate cult activity in an old monastery on a small island off the coast of Los Angeles. In the distance you hear your boat explode. You hear desperate newsmen describing the systematic destruction of Los Angeles. The Ocurido cult in the monastery are planning to kill millions of innocent people.

Features 32 levels of death, mayhem, chaos and terror with four cool bosses, nine wicked weapons including firebombs, sadistic split missiles and flamewalls - these even shatter the windows. Look and shoot up and down. Avoid spinblades, firechutes, pit-traps and lavawalls. Fly off jump pads to reach new heights. Optional modem play for up to 8 players, with real cross modem speech,
NETWORK PLAY FOR UP TO 20 PLAYERS!

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Written and designed by

Chris Sawyer

I N M O T I O N

MICROPROSE

COVER DISK

This CD was prepared on a Plasmon CD recorder. For more information contact Relection Systems Ltd on: 01763 262963.



Well, they've finally arrived – the two sequels everyone in the office has been holding their breath for. So this month we proudly present *Alone In The Dark III* and the follow up to *Doom*, *Heretic*. Need we say more...

CD-ROM Installation

To install this month's CD, make the drive containing the disk current by typing, for example, D: then type PCZONE. A menu will then pop up with a list of this month's demos – simply use the cursor keys to highlight the game you wish to play, hit RETURN and off you go.

HD Installation

To install this month's HD, make the drive containing the disk current by typing A: then type PC ZONE. Then simply follow the instructions below.

European Challenge (Also on the CD)

Well, it's that time of the year when the football season livens up, so this month we've got a fully playable demo of one of the hottest new football games around.

This demo requires either a gamepad or a two-button joystick to play. The controls themselves are fairly straightforward.

Controls

Press button A

Kick the ball
Shoot
Head
Volley
Sliding Tackle

Tap Button A

Pass
Overhead kick
Flick (Joystick must be centred)

Press Button B

Chip the ball
Cross the ball
Clear the ball

Tap Button B

Push the ball
Diving header

System requirements

Minimum Processor: 386 DX/40 (Although 486 DX/33 preferred)

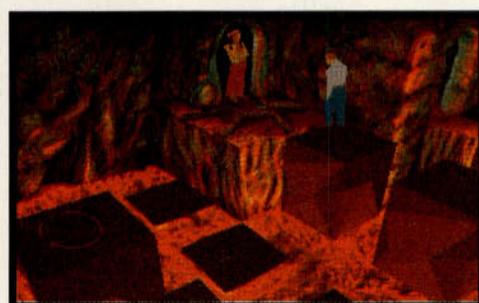
Hard Disk Space Required: 4Mb

Graphic Mode: VGA

Minimum Memory: 4Mb (550k Base + 3Mb Extended)

Sound Cards Supported: SoundBlaster or compatible

Controls: Gamepad, Joystick not Keyboard.



Alone in the Dark III

This is the third of the now legendary *Alone In The Dark* series from Infogrames.

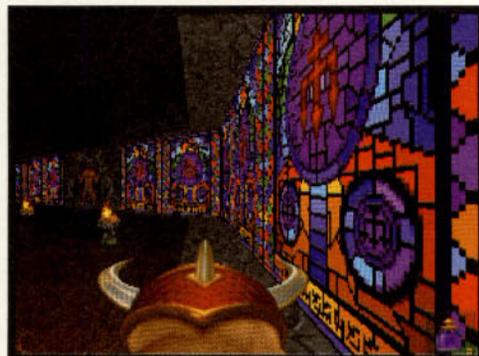
Playing the role of Edward Carnby, you have to roam your way around a rather eerie ghost town-cum-film set and try not to get topped. However, pitted against you are a couple of unpleasant cowboys, exploding bridges and a whole host of other troubles. And all you've got is a pistol and six slugs. Good luck! (You'll need it.)

Control of the game is via the keyboard. Use the cursor keys to move about; pressing <enter> will call up the inventory and a few options. Should you be of a violent bent, selecting the revolver will arm you. Once back in the game face your intended victim, hold down <space> and press the up cursor. Bang!

System requirements

Minimum Processor: 386 DX/33 (Although 486 DX/33 preferred)

Hard Disk Space Required: 5Mb



Graphic Mode: VGA

Minimum Memory: 4Mb

Sound Cards Supported: SoundBlaster or compatible

Controls: Mouse, Keyboard

Heretic

It's here! The follow on from *Doom* by ID. It's basically *Doom* with the weapons changed from Chainsaw to Magic Wand. For the full inside story, turn to page 124 and check out Mark Burgess' review.

Heretic is controlled in exactly the same way as *Doom* was. To alter the controls, go to the directory *Heretic* was installed to and type: Setup.

System requirements

Minimum Processor: 386 DX/33 (Although 486 DX2/66 preferred)

Hard Disk Space Required: 9Mb

Graphic Mode: VGA

Minimum Memory: 4Mb (Although 8Mb is preferred)

Sound Cards Supported: Gravis, SoundBlaster or compatible

Controls: Keyboard, Mouse.

Note: To run a network game, you must have a



ard that uses IPX protocol.
 eretic requires XMS, so if you
 xperience any problems see the
 oubleshooting section.

The Lion King

stunning new platform game from
 rgin, where you play the part of Simba
 e friendly cub. Basically, you leap, jump
 nd maim anything that comes your way,
 is so often the case with lions. To kill
 e various peace-loving herbivores that
 am the jungle, you can either take a
 cious swipe or jump on them (not advis-
 e with the porcupine – a well-placed
 miaow” is in order here).

System requirements

Minimum Processor: 386 DX/33 (Although 486
 X/33 preferred)
Hard Disk Space Required: 2Mb
Graphic Mode: VGA
Minimum Memory: 4Mb
Sound Cards Supported: Gravis, SoundBlaster
 compatible
Controls: Keyboard, gamepad.

Brett Hull Hockey '95

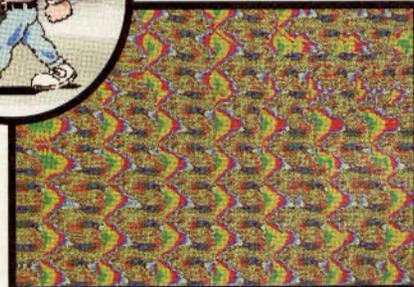
has to be said that this is a really pucker
 e Hockey demo and is a hot new release
 om Accolade. You play the side of St
 ouis and the PC is New York. The game is
 layed in three two-minute periods and is
 ill of the usual Ice Hockey rules that no-
 dy in the UK knows anything about.
 asically, just get the puck in the goal.

System requirements

Minimum Processor: 386/33 (Although 486
 X/20 preferred)
Hard Disk Space Required: 5Mb
Graphic Mode: VGA, SVGA (640x480)
Minimum Memory: 4Mb (580k base + 2Mb EMS)
Sound Cards Supported: SoundBlaster or
 compatible
Controls: Joystick, Keyboard (Numeric keypad).

Big Red Adventure

leptomania in Russia? The Crown Jewels
 one missing? Well, not only does that
 ound like the intro to one of the TV
 episodes of Batman but it also sounds just

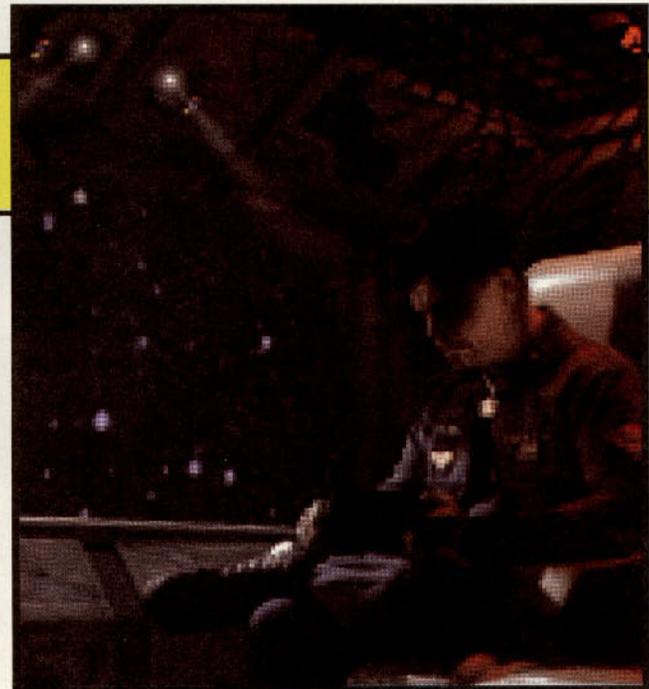


like *Big Red Adventure*, the latest graphic
 adventure from Core Design.

Playing the game is simple. Left click
 with the mouse to move the character
 about. Hold down the right mouse button
 to access the four control icons and the
 inventory. To use something, highlight it
 and click on it.

System requirements

Minimum Processor: 386/33 (Although 486
 SX/20 preferred)
Hard Disk Space Required : N/A (Runs directly



off the CD)
Graphic Mode: VGA
Minimum Memory: 4Mb
Sound Cards Supported: SoundBlaster or
 compatible
Controls: Mouse

Stereo World

Well, some people claim they can see
 them and others say they can't. This is a
 new program that allows you to create
 Stereogram images on your PC, and this
 fully-interactive demo allows you to see



COVER DISK

just what this package can do. Just use the mouse to select on the different options available.

System requirements

Minimum Processor: 386/33 (Although 486SX/20 preferred)
Hard Disk Space Required: 3Mb
Graphic Mode: VGA
Minimum Memory: 4Mb (Requires EMS)
Controls: Mouse

Behind The Scenes Of Wing Commander III

This is a Windows program (sorry) and requires Video for Windows (also on the CD). This will show you how it all happened; interviews with the actors; and even all the out takes. We've also chucked on the demo a copy of *Wing Commander III* if you missed it last month.

System requirements

Windows running in 256 colour + Video for Windows (Included on CD)
Minimum Processor: 486DX/33
Hard Disk Space Required: N/A (Runs off CD)
Graphic Mode: VGA
Minimum Memory: 4Mb (8Mb recommended)
Controls: Mouse

Off the Boards

As per norm, we've got all the shareware featured in the *Off The Boards* section on page 110. The only exception is *Rise Of The Triads* which will be on next month's CD. ☒

NO CD?

If you are unable to get your grubby paws on the CD issue then fear not! Simply fill out the following slip, enclose your HD from the cover plus a cheque for a whole £1 and send it to the following address:

Miles Tudor, CD Exchange, PC Zone, Dennis Publishing
19 Bolsover St, London, WC1P 7HJ

Your Details:

Name:

Address:

.....

.....

.....Post Code:

Please make checks payable to: DENNIS PUBLISHING Ltd.
CDs from previous issues are also available. Phone Miles on 071-917-7693 and he'll sort you out.

HELP!

Is the CD not working? The HD playing up? Or is the PC just being a total bastard? Well chill out, have a cold shower and then phone the relevant help line:

HD DISK HELP

Phone Matthew on: 0274 736990
Any day (except weekends) between 9am and 4pm.

CD-ROM HELP

Phone Miles Tudor on 071 917 7693
Any day (except weekends & Wednesdays) between 2pm and 6pm.

If you are calling either help line, then 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 as much relevant information as possible – 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 to jot down the relevant info.

Trouble Shooting

If you experience a problem, the first thing to do is check out the README.TXT files. This will give you in-depth information on the demo. To do this type:

```
Edit readme.txt
```

If you still have difficulties, the following trouble shooting tips may help.
Amnesia?

The most common problem that you'll hit running any of the demos is a memory problem. Some programs require EMS others XMS and your PC's configuration needs to be altered accordingly. To change the system you will need to edit your CONFIG.SYS in DOS. To do this, go to the C drive by typing:

```
C:  
CDV  
Edit Config.sys
```

You should then look for a line that reads:
Device=C:\DOS\EMM386.exe (If it's not there, type this in under the first line.) You should then add an extra bit which will depend on which set up you require:

```
For EMS  
The line should read:  
Device=C:\DOS\EMM386.exe RAM
```

```
For XMS  
The line should read:  
Device=C:\DOS\EMM386.exe NOEMS
```

You are advised to keep the EMS setting as a default. If you have DOS 6.0 or higher you can type Memmaker at the DOS prompt and say "yes" to EMS if required or "no" if XMS is needed. Remember some games can require up to 590K free base memory.

Boot Disk

If you are still having problems then the next step is to make a boot disk. If you are using DOS 6.0 or lower then follow these steps:

Put a floppy in your A: drive and type:
Format A:/S

This will erase all data on the diskette, so use one that is no longer needed.

When the disk has finished formatting, change to

your A: drive. Type the next lines at the A prompt:

```
Copy con config.sys < Enter >  
Dos=High <Enter>  
Device=C:\DOS\Himem.sys <Enter>  
Device=C:\DOS\EMM386.exe RAM <Enter>  
(Or Device=C:\DOS\EMM386.exe NOEMS if XMS is required)
```

Then add the lines for the sound card and CD-ROM drive in the same manner. (You can get these lines by looking at the original CONFIG.SYS on the C drive.)

Once finished, press F6 <Enter> You should see the message "1 file(s) copied." If the message does not appear please follow the instructions again.

IMPORTANT! ONLY USE THESE INSTRUCTIONS ON THE A DRIVE

Next, type the following lines at the A: prompt:
Copy Con Autoexec.bat <Enter>
Prompt Sp\$g <Enter>

* All Sound card and CD-ROM drive lines. You can find these command lines in the AUTOEXEC.BAT on the C drive. They may look similar to this:

```
Set Blaster=A220 I5 D1 H5 P330 T6  
Set Sound=C:\SB16
```

Check your own AUTOEXEC.BAT beforehand. Once you have completed this press f6 and again you should see message "1 file(s) copied." If the message does not appear please follow the instructions again.

IMPORTANT! ONLY USE THESE INSTRUCTIONS ON THE A DRIVE

Once you have done this, with the disk in drive A, press <Ctrl>-<Alt>-<Delete> keys together to reboot.

Clean Boot

If you have DOS 6.2 or higher you should reboot your computer. When you get the message "Starting MS-DOS", hit the f8 key at the top of the keyboard.

You will see the message "DOS will prompt you to confirm each CONFIG.SYS command". Say yes to the following lines:

```
DOS=High  
Device=C:\DOS\Himem.sys  
Device=C:\DOS\EMM386.exe RAM ( Or NOEMS )
```

The relevant sound and CD drivers.
Say no to the rest of your lines until you are asked to process your AUTOEXEC.BAT. Say yes to this line and the following:

```
Prompt Sp$g  
Path C:\Windows; C:\DOS
```

Also say yes to all sound card and CD-ROM drivers. Say no to everything else. This should sort things out. If you are still having problems, then give Miles a call on 071-917-7693.

Important

Some of the programs on the CD are shareware, and, as such, are supplied as an evaluation service to our readers. If you like the programs and intend to continue using them, register them with the publishers concerned. In return you will receive updated versions, extra levels, junk mail and loads of other stuff (probably). These CD and HD disks have been virus checked; however, neither PC Zone, Dennis Publishing or any associated companies can be deemed liable for any problems that may arise from using this disk. You have been warned.

WE DO NOT SUPPLY LOW RESOLUTION 0.39 DOT PITCH MONITORS OR INADEQUATE 512K GRAPHICS CARDS WITH ANY OF OUR PCS. ALL OUR MONITORS ARE HI-RES 0.28 DOT PITCH AND OUR GRAPHICS CARDS HAVE A MINIMUM OF 1 MEGABYTE VIDEO RAM

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Blueprint

Heretic

PUBLISHER: iD

PRICE: Tba

TELEPHONE: 0800 834619

RELEASE DATE: Spring '95

"Heretic - Doom in Tights". That's what they're saying. It's D&D meets the Doom engine. And then some. David McCandless (you may ken him by his real names: FragMaster, BaronBane, and WadEmperor) checks it out to see if it "can take its frags".



HERE'S OUR NEXT *Doom* fix coming from?, wailed the whole country after stomping, thigh deep in gore, through *Doom I*.

After pacing, waist deep in entrails, through countless WAD files and tiptoeing tentatively, neck deep in jism, through *Doom II*, the whole world's gone *Doom-crazy*. And so has every software company. They're queueing up, five deep, with their new 3D "engines", to unleash the next *Doom* beater: *Corridor 7*, *Rise Of The Triads*, *Dark Forces*, *System Shock*, *Descent*, *Quarantine*, *Terminator Rampage*, *ShadowGate*, *The Fortress of Radiaki* etc., etc., et-bloody-cetera.

The only one which seems to have the credentials and the potentials to beat *Doom* is *Heretic*, a co-operative RavenSoft and iD

release, which unashamedly shoves the *Doom* engine into a pair of wood-elf green tights and a codpiece (a big codpiece) and then plonks it whap-bang into the middle of a Tolkien-esque nightmare.

You can see why they did it, though. Spare a quick thought for all those sado RPG players, somewhat sidelined by the world's obsession with panoramic sci-fi 3D gorefests, and the general public's sudden interest in such magazines as *Chain Gun Monthly*, *What Plasma*, and *BFG User*. Poor things. How did they cope with *Doom*? Not a spell in sight. Not a 70-sided die to be seen. No dragons. No trolls. No elves. And the only fireballs around come from Satan's own molten backside.



Heretic unites the whole gamesplaying populace under one texture-mapped roof. Cool and sad. Machismo cyberpunk death-dealers, with the constitution of a baseball bat with nails hammered into it, and fey bum-fluffed "wizards" with all the *Doom*



ENGINE SPECIFICATIONS



LOOKING UP AND DOWN

Now you can hitch a look at the ceiling or keep your eyes on the ground. The new field of view doesn't reach to *System Shock*'s giddy heights (i.e. straight up) but it's about 45 degrees each way. Actually quite useless in most

situations, but excellent for sniping in *DeathMatch* and for reaching those occasional hard-to-reach flying gargoyles.

FLYING

Massive innovation this one. Collect the suitable power-up and you can take wing and fly. Again, doesn't have too much of a practical use, but helpful in reaching out-of-the-way secret areas and for positioning yourself where your *Deathmatch* chum least suspects (i.e. on top of his head).



Yep, *Heretic* is the *Doom* engine with knobs on. Shiny, mithril, jewel-encrusted RPG knobs maybe, but knobs nevertheless. RavenSoft has taken the *Doom* source code and spruced it up with various neat effects and add-ons. A bit, you could say, like iD should have done with *Doom II* (but that's another story). Here they are:

OBJECTS

Heretic actually gives you an inventory where up to nine objects and power-ups can be stored. This gives the game a slightly risible RPG feel, but it is actually damn useful, and demands that you use your brain and a healthy dose of logistical management to be successful in the game.



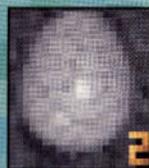
ANIMATED BODY PARTS

A direct hit from a rocket launcher in *Doom*, as we all know, usually reduces your opponents to a satisfyingly squelchy mass of intestines. The same happens in *Heretic*, but this time, the five or so bloodied body parts act independently. So if you squelch a monstie on a staircase, for example, its bits go everywhere. Some trickle down the stairs. Some bounce over your head. Others just slap to the ground. You can imagine the sound effects.



MORPH OVUM

A throwback to RavenSoft's *ShadowCaster*, which ironically was a turkey, this neat effect turns you into a chicken (call that irony? Ed.). Pack a Morph Ovum in



your inventory and a flick of the fire button will turn opponents into edible livestock. Excessive during normal play, but amusing in *DeathMatch*.

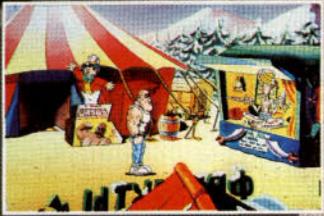
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THE MONSTERS



RED GARGOYLES

These annoyingly omnipresent little beasts have the movement patterns of the skulls from *Doom* and the tenacity of zombie troopers. Although not so tough, their sheer numbers can give pause, as can the tougher, fireball-throwing version on later levels.

MUMMIES

We assume these are mummies. They could be just angry strip-o-gram "actors". Anyway, these are the "Pinkies" of the *Heretic* world, except they move more slowly and more diagonally than their counterparts. They're quite tough, especially up close, when they land their hammy great fists on you (rather like the mummies in that *Dr Who* episode, Pyramids Of Mars).



FLASHY MUMMIES

These look and act like real mummies except they're prone to suddenly stopping, turning all "flashy", and letting loose a heat-seeking skull. Avoid in narrow corridors and public toilets.

SCAREY WHIRLWIND MAKERS

These horrible little buggers are incredibly tough and incredibly annoying with their two-pronged assault. First comes a nasty little homing whirlwind, which can't be destroyed, and which will knock you off any little parapet or ledge that you happen to be standing on. And then in come the fireballs, blasting you to kingdom come.



TALL SKELETAL WARRIOR THINGS

No other name suffices, I'm afraid. These are a cross between the deadly Revenants of *Doom II* and the not-so-deadlyimps of *Dooms I & II*. Tall and, at first, quite tricky, the TSWTs lob spinning axes in your direction. Green axes hurt quite a bit. Red axes which spill blood *en route* hurt big time.



FLOATY LICHES

These are horrible and would be quite scary if they weren't dressed like Joseph And His Multi-colour Coat. You can tell when they're about 'coz they mumble chillingly like Vincent Price in your ear. Up close they're deadly, letting loose a spray of purple firebolts in your direction. They also float about so you can liken them to the Cacodemons (or Tomato Monsters, as we call them) of *Doom*.



you to lay a trail of deadly explosive hour-glasses, while the wings give you a chance to view your handywork from on high.

As you can see, this is all a bit "painting by numbers". The next obvious scenario for a *Doom*-style game, after sci-fi, is fantasy. Whether *Heretic* is a *Doom* beater or not, remains to be seen. We'll reserve the final judgement until we see the registered version. Until then, boot up our cover CD and get playing... [Z]

proWess of a harmonica. All are now united under *Heretic*.

It's so much like *Doom* that the ins and outs of the plot and gameplay needn't be gone into. Suffice to say, its scenario is not 7,000 light years away from the plot of a certain multi-player blaster, and suffice to say, the gameplay - killing, running, killing - is not dissimilar either. Again, the game is split into three episodes, enticingly called Cities Of The Damned, Hell's Maw, and the Domes Of D'Spiral. You can play at five skill levels, from Thou Needst WetNurse (I'm too young...) to A Black Plague Possesses Thee (Nightmare).

The look is atypically RPG. Gone are the Aztec walls and lava rivers. Now you have granite bricks and moats. Say "cheerio" to mechanical doors and barrels. Say "bonjour" instead to portcullises and explosive "pods". Torches, cobwebs, Tudor panelling, castles, parapets, teleports - everything you'd expect from an RPG landscape. And then some more.

The main innovations are nine types of collectable objects (offensive and defensive) and an inventory to stash them in. The Tome Of Power: a black book embossed with a skull, upgrades all your weapons for 30 seconds. Previously pathetic weapons are given a new lease of life. The Elven Wand fires double fireballs; the gauntlets do double damage; the crossbow turns into a firework display; while the DragonClaw

unleashes a mass of steel balls. The Morph Ovum turns your enemies into chickens (no, really, it does); the Ring Of Invincibility is obvious, as is the Mask of Partial Invisibility. Timebombs Of The Ancients allow

WEAPONS



STAFF

RPGers, as you know, never use their fists in a fight. They use their staff. Made of willow from "The One Tree", no doubt. And then they think it looks hard to stick a metal tip on the end. It's useless.

GAUNTLETS

Now we're talking. This is *Heretic's* version of the chainsaw. These natty little gloves let rip a web of magical "electro beams", frazzling even the most hardy of monsties into deep-fried colon.



ETHEREAL CROSSBOW

Fires a big yellow and green globule, plus two baby ones either side. Direct hits will blast most medium-sized monsties. Also, it homes in on your target, rather like a rocket launcher.



Yes, I know it's a rather obvious way to present the new weapons in *Heretic* (every other mag will also be doing it this way), but here they are anyway, in nice little boxes, with nice little captions. Sorry.

ELVEN WAND

The first whiff of elves in this game and whaddya know, the Elven Wand is a rather "fey" weapon, taking to gambolling in the woods and using bows and arrows instead of shotguns and rocket launchers. The Elven Wand is a pop gun really, equivalent to the pistol in *Doom*.



DRAGONCLAW

Chaingun to you. Fires blue bullets at a reasonable rate and can cause serious pain, especially when charged with a Tome Of Power. In that case, each bullet breaks into five steel balls, which bounce around the screen killing things. Great.



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PUBLISHER: Psygnosis

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RELEASE DATE: March

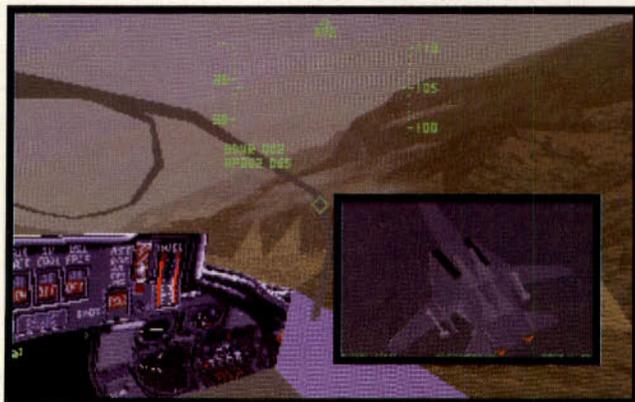
Another Gulf War flight sim is in the offing, this time from Psygnosis. Power-crazed **Steve Pritchard** took to the skies in a bid to outdo **Stormin' Norman**.

SOON TO HIT the screens of your PC is *Combat Air Patrol* from Psygnosis. Rated as one of the best flight sims on Amiga, the game has been re-written for PC and vastly enhanced, according to developers Maverick Simulations.

Set during the Gulf war, you can choose between instant "leap into the cockpit" action or take on the role of the Commander-in-chief of the allied forces in the Persian Gulf as you strive to ensure the success of Operation Desert Storm through suppression of enemy ground and air units - better known as Saddam bashing. You can fly either the F-14 or F/A-18 aircraft which, although offers not as vast a range as other flight sims, has ensured that the maximum attention could be devoted to these two aircraft.

CAP boasts actual 3D landscaping with gourard shading, which ensures that you will feel as though you are flying within the real landscape. The terrain has been designed and developed using maps

(Below) As with all these modern jet sims, you have the regulation padlock view, which of course looks dead impressive.



of the Gulf region, so things like oil fields will lie in their true locations, with the mapping area covering around one million square kilometres.

Networking nights

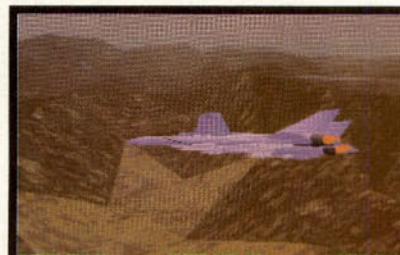
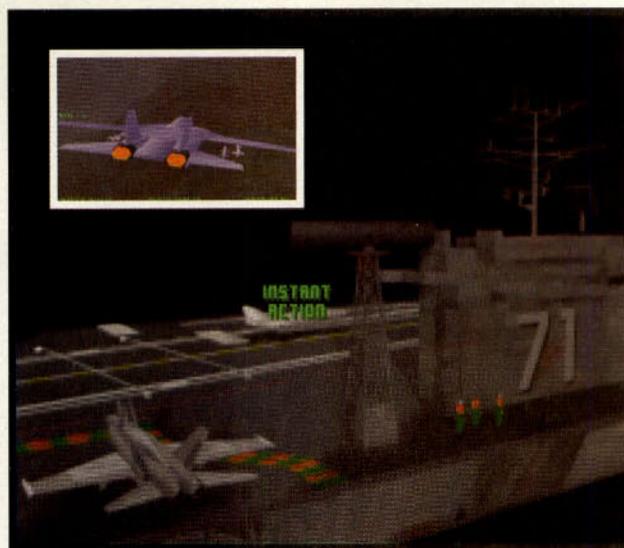
Features include a virtual cockpit which provides the pilot with the ability to padlock an enemy, a facility essential to any keen dogfighter, but often ignored. Loads of attention has been lavished on the sounds, with in-cockpit speech from wingmen included, and... wait for it... 3D sound effects through use of stereo separation and Doppler shifting, if your card can actually support them!

Scenarios run through both day and night, with realistic infra-red night attack equipment available. The gameplay is enhanced by the fact that the enemy vehicles are highly intelligent: they won't just sit there waiting for you to pop them off, they will evade and, if possible, retaliate.

When the game was launched on Amiga, one of the design elements which shone through was the high frame rates. These have been translated onto the PC version which, together with the high quality flight models, ensures that flight sim purists out there will be able to time aircraft roll rates and nod sagely to each other. If you just like a good crack, it's going to be fast and smooth and graphically immense.

For all you people out there with access to lots of kit, loadsa money and a very understanding boss, up to 16 people can play on a local area network. Hopefully nights lost trying to get the likes of *Falcon 3* networked and stable will become a thing of the past.

To sum up, what Psygnosis and Maverick Simulations have set out to do is create a world-beating yet accessible simulator. The specifications are extremely impressive and it remains to be seen whether the finished product delivers, but personally I can't wait. **Z**



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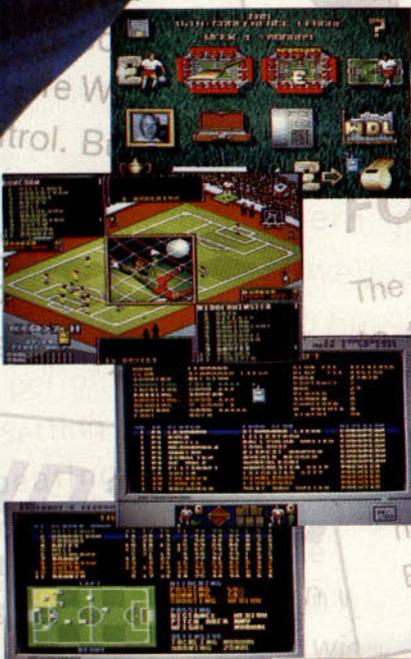
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Blueprint

Full Throttle

PUBLISHER: LucasArts (VIE)

PRICE: TBA

TELEPHONE: 081 960 2255

RELEASE DATE: March



Since he likes the feel of leather against his skin and once owned a Gritter pushbike, we felt that **Jeremy Wells** was the most qualified to preview the latest talkie adventure from LucasArts.



(Above) Meet Ben. One real mean biker-dude with a fully coiffured quiff and more facial hair than all of ZZ Top put together.



LUCASARTS have always had a reputation for producing the best adventures you're ever likely to come across on the PC. *Sam & Max Hit the Road*, *Day of the Tentacle*, *Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis* – all classics in their own right, absolutely bursting with originality, humour and playability. If you haven't yet treated yourself to any of the above then go and do it now because they are currently doing a special compilation offer on a lot of their games at a reduced price (see our compilation games feature on page 111).

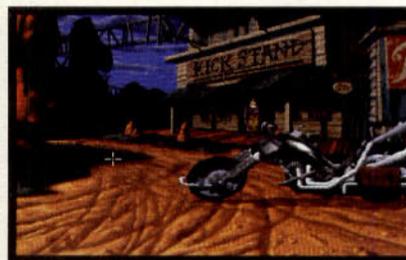


Continuing their tradition of excellence, *Full Throttle*, their latest foray into the point-and-click world, looks like being their greatest triumph yet. As usual, it's highly original, with a plot that's as new, fresh and intriguing as ever.

In a desolate future, justice is a thing of the past and the new law is the highway code. Or is that the code of the highway? Well, it's pretty nasty either way. The sort of place where you have to wipe the seat of your Harley with a damp bleached cloth before you get on it, and the cats eyes have grown razor blades, so you can only overtake if your bike has pneumatic tyres.

You play the character of Ben. A real cool biker dude with a quiff that stands tall in a tornado, and more facial hair than Barbara Cartland. He's tough (the sort that wipes his nose on the sleeve of his biker jacket without even caring) and he's got a voice that's deeper than the Grand Canyon. He's also the leader of a

motorcycle gang called the Polecats. Trouble is, he's been framed for the murder of Malcolm Corley. Corley ran Corley Motors (oh really?), the last manufacturer of the bikes that



sustain Ben's way of life. Separated from his gang and on the run from the law, Ben must hunt down the true killer, clear his name and convince Corley's rebellious daughter to help him save a threatened institution. It's a dirty job and you're the one that's got to do it.

Walkin', talkin', livin' dude

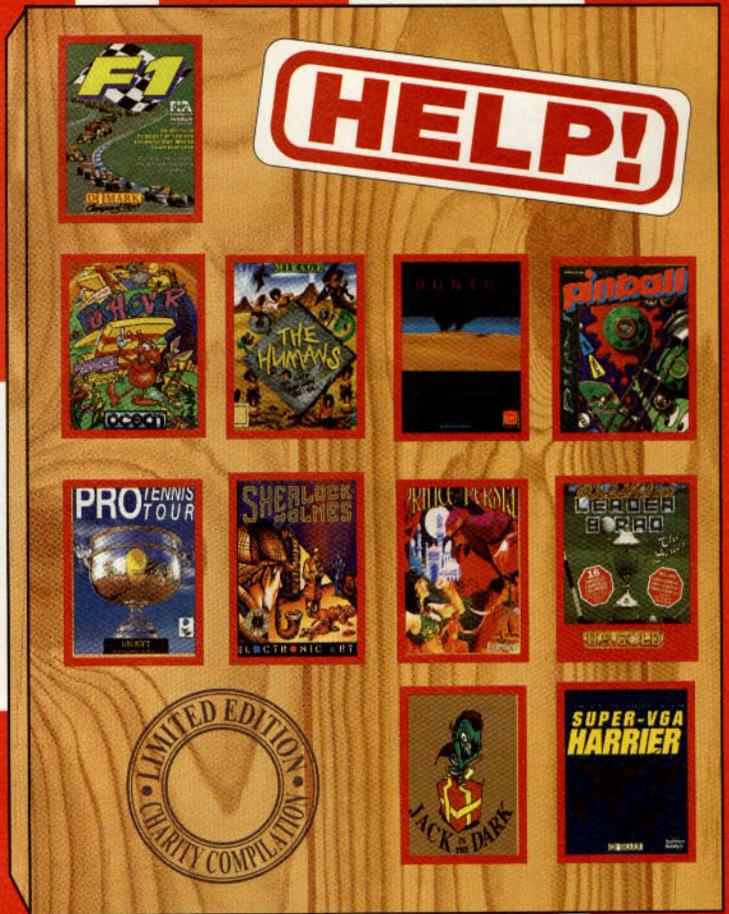
Apart from looking completely smart in the graphics department (as you can see from the screen shots, it's all done in a rather slick, cartoony style), the way the characters move, the cut scenes and the animation are quite superb. It features full speech (of course) and Mark Hamill really hams it up with a spoof "Eastwood" voice which just rumbles from your super woofer and really brings the character to life. In fact, all the voices suit the characters exactly, just as they did in the first *Sam & Max* game. The sound effects are also suitably roudy and come at you in stereo (if you've got the right card). When Ben turns the key in the ignition, your bike roars into life and gently purrs away into the distance when your leather-clad hero drives off into the sunset. Beautiful.

In true LucasArts fashion, the interface is both superbly simple and brilliant to use, making it an absolute joy to play the game.



A LITTLE HELP

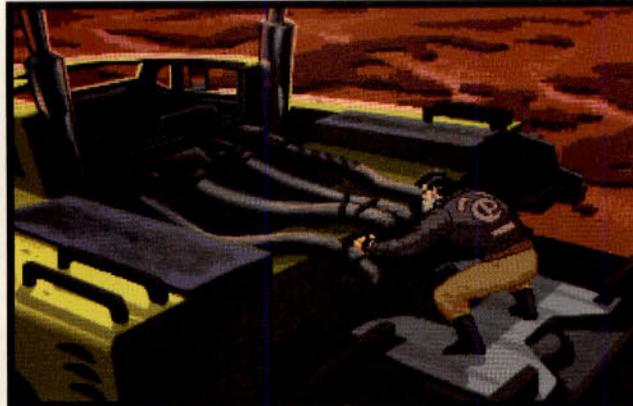
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(Below) It's not all point-and-click puzzle solving. There's gratuitous action bits a-plenty to keep everybody happy.



(Above) The cut scenes and animation are superb. But we wouldn't really expect anything less from LucasArts, now would we?

to what has traditionally been a rather static experience as far as the mouse mat is concerned. That's not to say that it's full of naff bits which require you to frantically fight with your mouse to survive, though. It's not. They just make things a little more interesting as far as building up tension and atmosphere goes, and they really aren't that difficult to complete.

Full speed ahead

As it stands at the moment, *Full Throttle* is "almost complete", which means we can't give it a score. However, from what we've seen so far, and bearing in mind LucasArts' previous track record, it's pretty obvious that we can expect nothing short of excellence when *Full Throttle* is released in the spring. Brmm, Brmmm. Z

There are no frustrating commands to memorise, no complicated menu systems to negotiate and no real limitations as to what you can do. It's basically your average mouse-driven, point-and-click affair with a floating cursor that changes into a kind of "target" icon when you move it over something or someone with which/whom you can interact.

"What makes this game so special however, is that there are no namby-pamby icons to worry about."

the mouth. It really is that simple and it works like a dream. Moreover, if you try to do something a little out of the ordinary, and click on a door and then the mouth

icon, you are immediately put in your place as Ben draws "I ain't puttin' my lips on that!". And if you click on his treasured Corley and then click on the boot (giving Ben the instruction to kick his beloved super-bike) a rather stern Ben will reply with a terse "No way!" making it fun to use (and misuse).

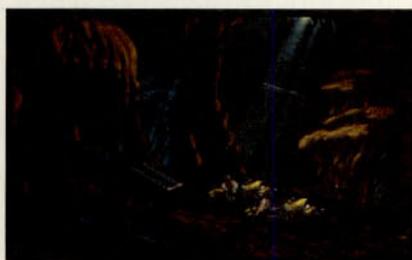
Full throttle action

As well as all the usual puzzle solving, the superb cut scenes, humour, splendid animation, characterisation and "keep 'em guessing" plot that are now trade marks of any LucasArts adventure, *Full Throttle* also includes some real-time action sequences that you need to complete. This not only helps give the game a certain "in yer face" feel as you battle with chain-wielding bikers from hell who try to force you off the road (with the obvious intention of plucking out your nostril hair and stealing your tax disk just for the hell of it), but it also introduces a much needed sense of urgency

What makes this game so special however, is that there are no namby-pamby icons to worry about. You're a cool biker, remember? You don't believe in fairies, you never wear a helmet and you can stay out until half-past ten, as long as it's not a school night, that is. You do your talkin' with your fists and your boots - and if it that doesn't work you might just utter something completely cool. Luckily, your icon thingy knows this, and looks similar to a tattoo that Ben might sport on his forearm, consisting of a rather crude skull with a fist, boot and mouth set on a triangle. If you want to pick something up, or use it, you click on it with the left mouse button and then click on the hand/fist. If you want to kick something, you click on the boot. If you want to talk to someone, you click on



(Above) Ben uses Ultrabrite tooth paste for a whiter than white smile and a cool mint taste.



(Left) Moody, mean and full of surprises. Full Throttle looks and tastes great.

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RELEASE DATE: Out now

Patrick McCarthy once lived in a tower block. He's such a common scumbag.

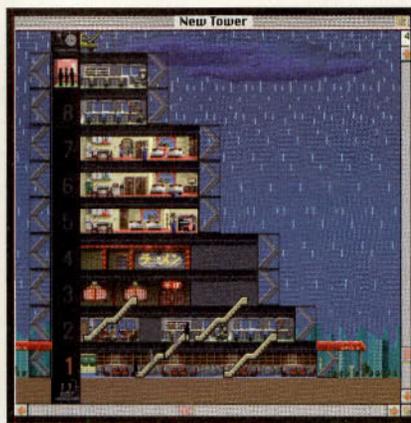


MY MEMORIES of life in a tower block seem to consist almost entirely of throwing up over balconies in attempts to hit passing prams below. I looked all through the manual for "Sim Tower", and can't find anything under "balconies, vomiting over". I can find just about everything else, though. Yes, those cheeky chaps at Maxis have thought of yet another way of sucking the pennies from your pockets. We've had *Sim City* (and about 400 data disks, including terrain editors and ancient and future city scenarios); we've had *Sim Ant*, *Sim Farm*, *Sim City for Windows* and *Sim City 2000 - This Time It's Municipal* (or whatever that one was called); now they've gone all small scale on us.

More of the same?

There are obvious parallels with its more wide-ranging cousins. Instead of building a huge city, you build a huge skyscraper. Instead of worrying about the flow of traffic downtown and the effects of lead-poisoning on the under-fives (pretty smart, from what I've seen), you fret about your tenants getting irate and falling down lift-shafts 'coz the lift's under repair. You build offices to lure gullible business types into your grasp, then whack up the rent. You build hotel rooms, hire them out and watch people getting undressed. You build fast-food joints to encourage heart attacks, and then

(Below) It's nighttime and the offices are empty. Clearly they don't work for PC Zone.



create a hospital wing. You build a church for when your victims die. And so on.

Peep-hole show

One of your tools is a magnifying glass, which lets you peer into people's lives, a tad like an all-powerful version of *Through The Keyhole*, but without the involvement of some tosser with a terrible accent. The good bit about it is that, you can not only see how the people feel about the fact that their apartment now backs onto a bowling alley, but you can also click on individual people. This lets you find out who they are and where they're going and - whoop de doo - lets you give them a name. Obviously, there's all sorts of scope for secret joy, here - name someone after the boss you particularly despise and drive him to despair by ruining his living



(Left) Spy on the inhabitants, at your leisure.

(Below) Juggle around with the accounts to your heart's content.

| Year 1 | | Quarter 1 | |
|---|--------|--------------------------|---|
| Total Income | | Total Maintenance | |
| 13280 | | 0 | |
| Population | Income | Maintenance Expense | |
| Office | 84 | Lobby | 0 |
| Single Room | 0 | Elevator | 0 |
| Twin Room | 0 | Exp Elevator | 0 |
| Hotel Suite | 0 | Sec Elevator | 0 |
| Shops | 0 | Escalator | 0 |
| Fast Food | 40 | Parking Ramp | 0 |
| Restaurant | 0 | Recycling Center | 0 |
| Party Hall | 0 | Metro Station | 0 |
| Theater | 0 | Housekeeping | 0 |
| Condo | 24 | Security | 0 |
| <small>(Items with no income or expenses are not displayed)</small> | | | |
| Net Revenues | | 13280 | |
| Other Income | | 0 | |
| Construction Costs | | -25425 | |
| Last Quarter's Balance | | 20000 | |
| Total Balance | | 7855 | |

conditions, etc. There's even a "Find" facility so that you can pry into people's lives at any hour of the day or night. There's no option to wake people up, though.

As the Sim weeks roll by, you'll get fires to deal with (or not, if you can't be bothered to pay the fire brigade), visits by top VIPs (let's hope they pay their bills themselves, eh?) and less welcome visits by terrorists - which apparently the designers think is still fashionable. Tsk.

What ever next?

Now obviously, this could be the start of a trend from Maxis, with their products becoming more and more localised in scope. What are they going to bring out next? Sim Semi-Detached? (Wallpaper the hall! Knock up some rather nice shelving! Plant some begonias!) Sim Bathroom? (Fill the bath! Change the shower curtains! Mop the lino!) Sim Flannel? (Let it get damp and rather smelly! Don't!) Only time will tell. In the meantime, *Sim Tower* is already out on the Mac. (Cue the sound of the nation's Mac owners fainting into their porridge at the news that something's actually reached their standard format first.) And it'll be coming to the PC in about three months' time. Hold me back, our Doreen, or I'll be down that games shop, queuing with my trusty sleeping bag, before you can say excitable consumer. (Not!) Z

"There's even a 'Find' facility so that you can pry into people's lives at any hour of the day or night."



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or

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- 2 Work out the answer to the question.
- 3 Scratch off the panel next to the answer you have chosen.
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- 7) Please allow up to 28 days for your prize to be sent.



Blueprint

Guilty

PUBLISHER: Psygnosis

PRICE: £34.99

TELEPHONE: 051 709 5755

RELEASE DATE: March



The sequel to *Innocent Until Caught* is coming your way. **Chris Anderson** takes a sneaky peek at the story so far.



INNOCENT UNTIL CAUGHT was one of the better point-and-click adventure games around when it was originally released.

Based around the zany exploits of Jack T. Ladd, it had fiendishly difficult puzzles and a unique inventory system that allowed you to combine objects in a way never seen before to produce some truly wacky items. The sequel will soon be upon us and it

has an improved control system, all-new graphics and, amazingly, a built-in soap opera. As the game progresses, you will be kept completely up to date on the romance blossoming between our hero Jack T. Ladd and the lovely Ysanne Andropath. "Who the bloody hell is she?" you may well ask. Well, Ysanne is the new co-star in the Innocent adventure series. Jack no longer

gets to hog the limelight all on his own with the arrival of the Luscious Pouting One. Unfortunately for Jack, luscious and pouting as Ysanne is, she's also a policewoman who watches his every move. Even more unfortunately for Jack, she hates men! This is where the "Guilty" in the title comes. Jack appears to have finally got his come-uppance and the law has finally caught up with him.

At the start of the game, you have to choose which of the characters you will

play, Jack or his new female friend. Which one you choose directly affects how the game develops, and so you could say that

you're really getting two games for the price of one. Both characters have different capabilities; have access to different locations, and get different responses from the in-game characters. This effectively means that you could complete the game playing Jack, start all over again playing Ysanne, and see different places, solve new puzzles and have different conversations with the characters in the game. And as if all this "brand-new" stuff wasn't enough, they've even given the sequel a completely different plot as well. Here's the gist of it.

Incredibly short plot scandal

Using his amazing Houdini-type skills, our Jack escapes from his prison cell aboard the prison ship Relentless, only to leave the craft stranded with a merciless alien inva-

(Below) As you can see, the graphics in *Guilty* are, er, a bit like they were in the first one.



(Right) Jack does his bit for animal rights.





(Left) Jack takes a look at his spanking new luxury accommodation.



on fleet heading its way. With only Ysanne, a ruthless man-hating police-woman for company, he has to, er, save the world, probably. I apologise if that last bit sounds like a bit of a cop out but the press release ran out of ideas in its first paragraph and that's all I've got to go on. I suppose I could make the rest of the plot up for you but I don't think Psygnosis would be very happy if I did so, er, I won't.

Still more new bits

You will no doubt be absolutely delighted to hear that, unlike the original *Innocent* game, in *Guilty* you are not punished with death every time you get one of the puzzles wrong. The press release falls over itself attempting to emphasise this point: Gameplay is designed so that you cannot

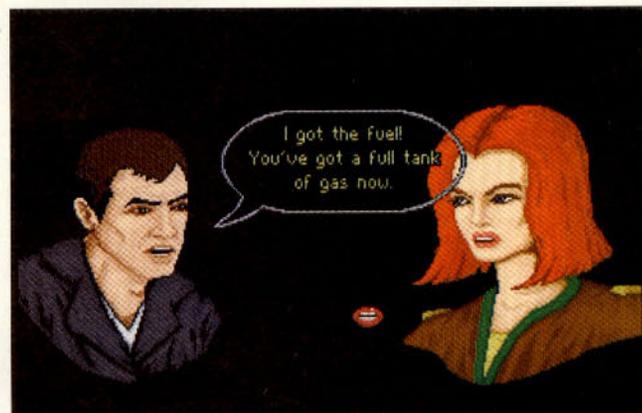
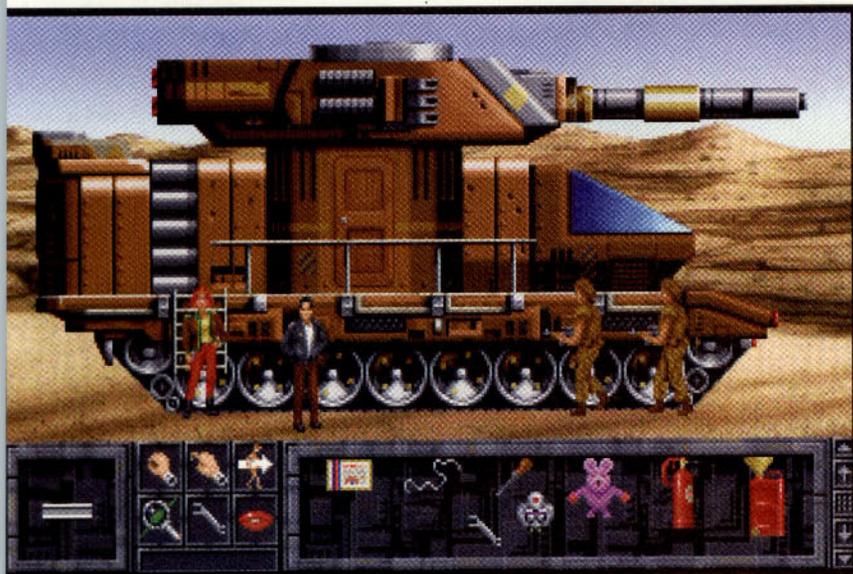
be killed", it proudly proclaims. "The game will not end until it is completed", it states in a funny, state-the-absolutely-obvious kind of way. In addition to making the game easier to play, the programmers have been beavering away, cramming as much into it as is humanly possible. With over 100 locations to explore, *Guilty* is much, much, bigger than its predecessor. Psygnosis claim that, considering the sheer size and complexity of the game, even the very experienced adventure-game players will take months to complete it. So, *Guilty* gets a big thumbs up in terms of quantity, as for the quality...

Indy returns

The graphics have changed. The Jack sprite is much more detailed and the locations

are better drawn. There is another, more important reason however, for getting excited about the prospect of an *Innocent Until Caught* sequel. The CD version will feature full digital speech for the characters. Add this to the fact that there will be a male and female character interacting with each other (er, you know what I mean) and another well-known CD adventure talkie springs immediately to mind, namely *Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis*. Now normally, this sort of "similarity" in games would be universally frowned upon, but the Indy game was such a classic that if Psygnosis get the right actors to do the voice overs for *Guilty*, they could well be on to a real winner.

Psygnosis are giving nothing away about how the plot develops, but my money's on Jack and Ysanne, who initially won't give each other the time of day, coming over all mushy with each other and falling in love and girly stuff like that. All will be revealed when the game comes out in March. *Guilty* will retail at £34.99. Z



(Above) Jack tries his best pickup line on Ysanne.



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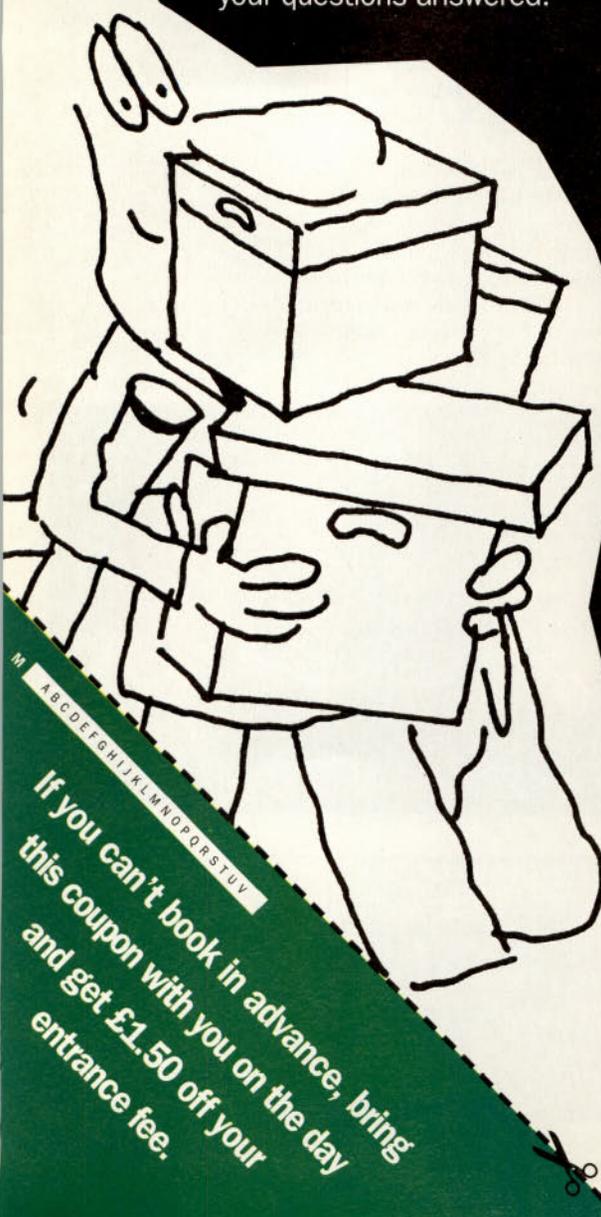
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Blueprint

Flight Unlimited

PUBLISHER: Virgin Interactive

PRICE: £Tba

TELEPHONE: 081 960 2255

RELEASE DATE: March



Since his head is always in the clouds, we thought that we could pass

Jeremy Wells *Flight*

Unlimited without him even

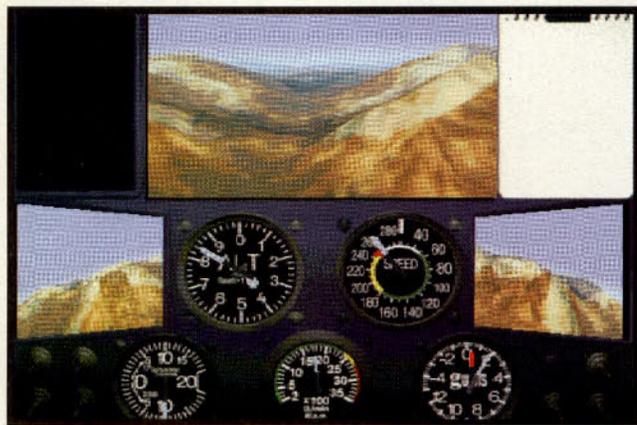
noticing. When he finally came back down to earth we couldn't shut him up.



I'LL ADMIT that flight sims have never really caught my attention. I never really saw the appeal of sitting hunched over the keyboard, frantically

leafing through a manual thicker than your local telephone directory for a key control to lower my under carriage, while

(Below) Did you know that light aircraft had wing mirrors?



the horizon bobbed and swirled in front of me. It just all seemed rather pointless. You take off, press around 4000 keys, then set your course, press a further 1000 or so keys and land.

Things get slightly more appealing when a combat scenario is introduced. At least you have something to do like shoot the enemy, your wingmen or even a tree, depending on how droll the whole experience happens to be.

I suppose the biggest let down for me has always been the graphics. Correct me if I'm wrong, but at least part of the whole flying experience is not just controlling something that is in real terms very heavy and keeping it off the ground, but looking down at the world below, pointing excitedly to the horizon and remarking how everything looks just like a toy town. Flying around (and into) a murky, flat and usually rather dull environment via my PC therefore does very little to excite me. On top of this, the control system always seems too far removed from the real thing to be anywhere near accurate (even when

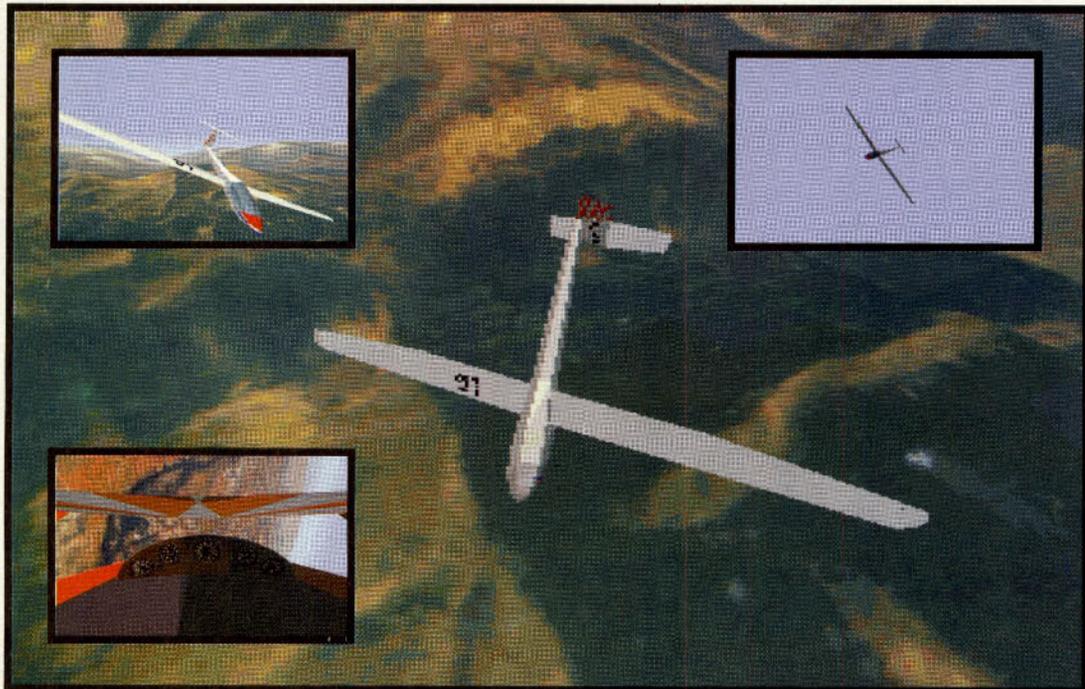
wielding a mighty Thrustmaster) and it just didn't feel like I was, well, flying.

Arcade type flight sims like *TFX* are okay, and as long as the emphasis is on flash graphics, there aren't more than a dozen different keys and I have something to do, like shoot at something, then I'm moderately happy. Call me a simple minded Philistine who wouldn't know his rudder from his flaps, but I know what I like and I like what I know. Flight sims that attempt to simulate what flying a real aircraft is like are boring - period. Airline pilots get paid an awful lot of money and it's pretty obvious why. Those inane grins and cool aviator shades aren't anything to do with the money they earn, or the fact that they get to shack up with all the air hostesses on long haul flights. They're there to hide the expressions of pain and boredom that inevitably come to be a permanent fixture after sitting for hours in a cock-pit with nothing to do but read the in-flight manuals and have farting contests with the co-pilot.

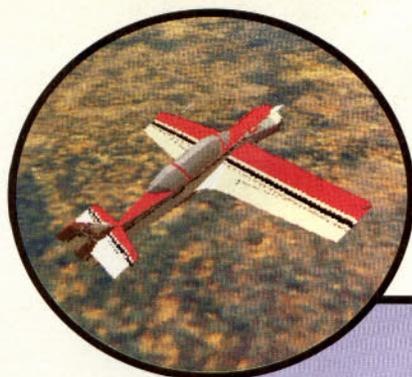
Flight conversion corner

Flight Unlimited, I was promised, would change my life forever, and I would be converted into a propeller head before I knew it. I was yet to be convinced. A quick look at the press release confirmed my worst suspicions. You get to take off, fly around one of five areas measuring a measly six square miles and then land again. No combat, no jets to crash at high speed into the ground, no flying over Italy and flushing the toilet - no way!

When the day came that *Flight Unlimited* was ready for preview, I thought about swinging a sicky. You know the scene. You had a bit of a heavy sesh the night before. The next thing you know, you're wide awake with a thumping headache, fumbling with the alarm clock. What day is it today? Flight sim preview day. You lay back in bed thinking up exotic illnesses that you could have feasibly contracted in the space of 10 hours. Malaria? No, Dan tried that one the other week and everyone laughed at him. A sore throat, or just a good old-fashioned cold? Sounds a bit wimpy. Better get up and face the music.



(Below) By the time the game's out, it'll be covered in condos and a freeway.



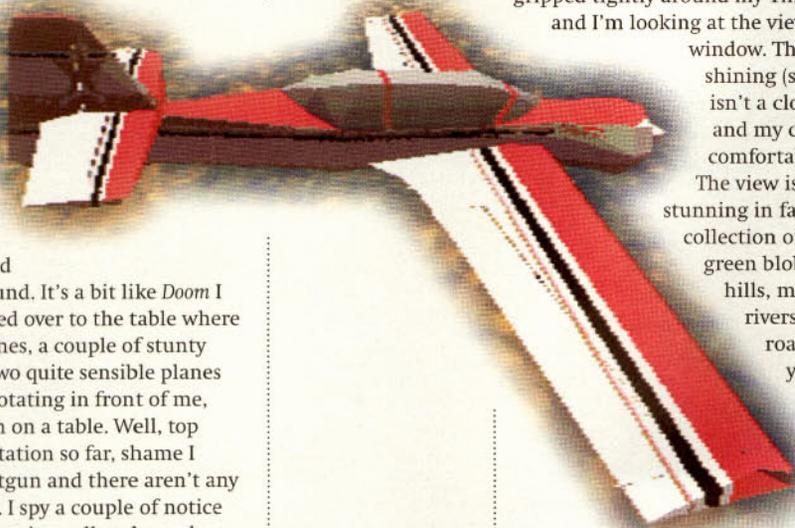
(Right) Yes, it's the only way to travel.



Well, it's not quite Doom is it?

must add at this point that I hadn't seen any screen shots. I know that this was perhaps a little irresponsible of me, but I like surprises and being a bit of an optimist (my glass is usually half full, rather than half empty etc.) I was hoping for the best.

As I loaded the CD into the caddy, the machine whirled and the screen prang to life and I found myself in a rather small, but immaculate airport. I grabbed the nose and started to have a look round. It's a bit like *Doom* I thought as I moved over to the table where five different planes, a couple of stunts looking affairs, two quite sensible planes and a glider sat rotating in front of me, beautifully drawn on a table. Well, top marks for presentation so far, shame I haven't got a shotgun and there aren't any comatose monsters. I spy a couple of notice boards on the opposite wall and wander over to investigate. On them are pinned overlapping bits of paper with various destinations scrawled on them: Arizona, Alaska, Maine. Another notice board sports similar notes with various skills or stunts: The Roll, Knife Edge, Inverted Flight.



(Below) "If you look to your left ladies and gentleman, you'll see where your pilot tried to land yesterday."



Hmmm, sounds a bit interesting. I move away from the noticeboard, look out of the window (the sun is shining), check again to see if a shotgun has appeared under the table and choose my plane and location.

Take me higher

I'm sitting in my plane now, a rather sporty single engined affair that looks a bit special. The engine is droning, my hand is gripped tightly around my Thrust-master and I'm looking at the view out of the window.

The sun is shining (still), there isn't a cloud in the sky and my chin is resting comfortably on my lap. The view is amazing, stunning in fact. It's not a collection of grey and green blobs, it's full of hills, mountains, rivers and the odd road. I'm sure if you looked hard enough you'd see birds singing in the trees and small, furry animals

gathering nuts. I want to move to Maine, build myself a log cabin, wear checked shirts and I want my own plane.

Of course, the closer to the ground you fly, the less detailed and blocky it all looks, but as long as you remain at a "sensible" height it's all pretty impressive. Although the flying area, at around six square miles is quite small, it's set on a loop so you can't fly off the end of the world or anything stupid. Apparently, there are more areas on the way, so you may (in theory at least) be able to fly over, or near a region you are familiar with.

The reason *Flight Unlimited* looks so much better than any other flight sim currently on the market is that it uses aerial photos of actual scenic locations that have been digitised, "stereo imaged" and "texture mapped" to give the pilot the most amazing views possible - and it works a



treat. It also handles realistically thanks to a rather complicated flight engine that accurately recreates the behaviour of the air flow as it hits the plane. As a result, you'll find yourself battling with thermals, swooping through valleys and struggling with the controls as you perform any of the 25 stunts or an emergency landing. In fact, it's so realistic, Looking Glass Technologies (the developers and people behind *System Shock* and *Chuck Yeager*) maintain that with extensive use it actually reduces the number of lessons required to obtain a light aircraft pilot's licence.

At the moment there's talk of a combat version that will use the same engine, but that won't be for a while yet. In the meantime, you'll have to make do with learning to fly (there's an on-board tutor to teach you), master the 25 special manoeuvres or stunts (again with full instructions and assessment) or try your hand at one of the many daring racecourses (you can view these later using the in-game playback feature). There are also plans for a multi-player link up and VR compatibility. Okay, I'm converted. **NZ**



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PC

ZONE

reviews

Games reviews are what *PC ZONE* is all about, and over the next 100 or so pages you'll find loads! All games receive an overall mark out of 100 and are scored according to the following guidelines:

90+ (PCZONE Classic)

Highly-original idea, expertly executed, utterly flawless in all departments and boasting long-term playability.

80-89 (PCZONE Recommended)

High degree of originality and extremely well executed in all but one department.

70-79

Strong idea and well executed, though not necessarily very original. Weaknesses do not impair playability and it has a reasonably long life.

60-69

Adequate. Games falling into the "If you like this style of game you'll like this, if not you won't" category.

50-59

Seen it all before. Take it or leave it. Not a terrible game, but definitely not exactly fab either.

40-49

Dodgy but playable (probably only once).

39 & Below

Seriously weak - avoid at all costs!

Specs Box

Check out the Specs Box for a guideline as to what memory, graphic and sound support you will need to run the game, and if you're still not sure what we're on about the In Perspective box should give you an idea as to how the game compares with others of its genre.

WHAT'S IN OUR DISK CADDIES?

Some PC games get played, others get nicked, some get binned. Here's what's on our harddrives/in our disk caddies this month:

.....
Earthsiege
.....
Rise of the Triad
.....
Heretic
.....
Magic Carpet
.....
Discworld
.....
The Joy of Sex
.....

- 52 DARK FORCES
- 59 WINGS OF GLORY
- 64 SUPER KARTS
- 68 ALADDIN
- 71 HELL
- 74 KING'S QUEST VII
- 78 TIE FIGHTER
- 81 KICK OFF 3 E.C.
- 84 KNIGHTS OF XENTAR
- 86 MENZOBERRANZAN
- 88 EARTHSIEGE
- 92 STAR TRAIL
- 94 DOOM CLONES



(Left) Each level is more than just a blastathon. Specific goals are set at the start - this level requiring you to steal plans for the Death Star for instance - all of which go towards the overall story.



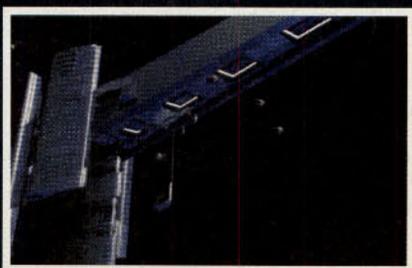
Dark



Paul Presley was having a severe asthma attack when LucasArts' latest arrived in the office. Everyone else thought he was just doing a particularly good impression of Darth Vader. Subsequently, he writes the following from his deathbed.

BEFORE I BEGIN this little five-page opus into the merits and/or cons of this much-awaited space-age shoot 'em up, I need you, our precious reader, to do something. Don't worry, it won't hurt. I simply need you to turn your minds back. To remember. To remember the first time you played *Doom* and the subsequent emotions that racked your body for hours afterwards. Do you remember the adrenaline that pumped through your veins? The nerves that stood momentarily on end every time you opened a new door? The beads of sweat that formed across your erudite brow after surviving a particularly vicious onslaught? These were primitive emotions, the very stuff of man. *Doom* was more than just a violent action game, it was a game that appealed to the very deepest reaches of our subconscious mind. A game that brought our prehistoric heritages directly to the fore. Man's deepest hidden desire is to kill - the very first tool we ever picked

(Below) A useful feature is the overlay map that can be called up, zoomed in and out and moved around while you still continue with the main action. Very handy indeed.



(Left) These are what it's all about. Dark Troopers, the Emperor's newest weapon in the never-ending battle. Possessing jetpacks and major mutha guns, these babies are hard with a capital nut.

up was a weapon. *Doom* had no real pretensions at a plot, at a logical, thought-provoking challenge. It was simply kill or be killed and, as such, it captivated us.

Where I'm going with this is that every *Doom*-inspired game that has come since has failed to recreate these feelings and addictions simply because they constantly try to better the original by adding new features, more of a storyline, larger and more complex puzzles to solve. And all the time they fail to recreate the true essence of *Doom*, the basic, simple need to turn living matter into its exact opposite. So, does *Dark Forces* manage to address our primitive desires? No, sadly it does not.

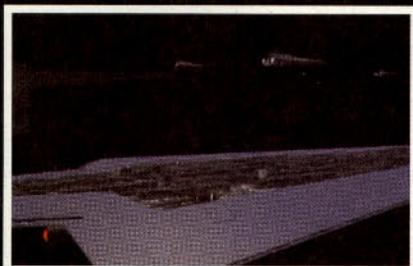
Enough psychology, already!

Right you are, on with reviewing it as a game. Despite not being able to capture the original "Holy shit, this is f***ing amazing!" feelings that *Doom* ushered into everyone's workday lives, it does hold up as a challenging, involving and atmospheric game. Just a game mind you, nothing more than that. *Dark Forces* doesn't look set to become a major way of life or anything, just a damned fine blast to be getting on with until the sequel appears (not that there's any news of a sequel - it's just a figure of speech).

You are a rebel agent, a sort of laser-toting James Bond, devoted to overthrowing the Empire and freeing the universe of its icy grip. This is accomplished (or as much as possible within the constraints of the larger *Star Wars* storyline) through a series of challenging missions, from obtaining the plans to the Death Star to freeing prisoners from Jabba and blowing up Imperial manufacturing plants. The ultimate aim - and this is hinted at throughout by different elements of each mission - is to seek out and destroy the Emperor's latest weapon, the Dark Trooper. An upgraded Stormtrooper, these guys appear as you get closer to the end of the game.



(Below) Towards the end of the game you do indeed run around a Star Destroyer, causing death and destruction at every turn.



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Forces



wielding bigger weapons than Matrix Churchill and buzzing around the levels on jetpacks no less.

Artistic versus film licence

It was while trying to recollect my fragmented memories of the three films that I stumbled innocently upon the problem with *Dark Forces*. You see, it doesn't really have a main problem as such, more a series of very little things that you may find somewhat irksome while playing, but not enough to put you off in any major way. The first of these is the amount of creativity that LucasArts allowed their designers to wield during the designing process. When you first start you're thinking, "Wow, it's *Star Wars*. Look that was in the film, so was that, and that, and that..." and so on. The trouble is it doesn't last. After about four or five levels you'd be hard pressed to

The Total Star Wars Experience

The classic "oppressed good guy versus tyrannical bad guy" story has been immortalised in gaming form ever since the early '80s with the original wireframe arcade machine. Since then we've had just about every kind of game you can think of - from poxy film licence wasters on Atari STs and Amigas, to state of the art filmic action in *Rebel Assault*. Along the way we've passed through console platform games, flight simulations and side-on, *Defender*-style shoot 'em ups. Most notable have been the recent offerings from the film's own creators at LucasArts though, namely *X-Wing* and *TIE Fighter*. At last, we cried, at last we can really take part in the colossal struggle between right and might, and feel as though, no matter how small, our contribution in some way helps the greater good.

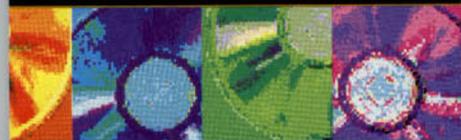


What we haven't had from Mr Lucas' talented team, and this is quite surprising when you consider that this type of game is LucasArts' bread and butter, is a graphic adventure. You can speculate as to why this strange state of affairs exists until the cattle returns to its living areas, but I would hazard a guess at this. If you take every *Star Wars* game that LucasArts has produced you'll notice that they all, in a loose way, fit together

in some way. What I mean is that there are no storyline crossovers. If somebody wrote a sort of linking program, it would probably be possible to tie everything together in one ultimate game. I reckon that LucasArts has an overall *Star Wars* plan hidden somewhere in its office and as yet, the adventure game hasn't been reached. It will be, though, one day.



(Left) Introducing the world's first virtual character actor. In case you don't recognise him, he also appeared in Virgin's KGB. Honest.



(Above) Water makes survival a little trickier because the currents will push you about in different directions. Usually the water will plunge you straight towards a group of waiting Stormtroopers. C'est la vie.

find any real semblance of *Star Wars*, the game being reduced to little more than *Doom* in space. Sure the designers have tried to make it *Star Wars*-esque, but the films only have a limited amount of material that you can carry across effectively and once you start making your own material up it starts to fall apart.

Other small points worthy of note are the annoying size of the guns and their difficulty to aim, the apparent emptiness of some levels and the lack of movement options pioneered in *System Shock* (for which I would have thought it was de rigeur for every *Doom*-game creating team to rip off). You can jump and crouch/crawl in *Dark Forces* which isn't all bad, but I would really have loved to have had the total movement experience that *Origin* offered in *System Shock*. Being able to flatten yourself against a wall and cautiously peer around the corner would have actually made some of the later levels feel more *Star Wars*-like.

It would also have been nice if the bad guys had tried to be a little bit more than the mindless cannon fodder they've turned into. Having Stormtroopers ducking taking cover, trying to pin you down and the like, a basic bit of enemy AI as it were, would have put *Dark Forces* way above the rest of the *Doom* games currently available. The ultimate test I was giving the game was to see if it could create something close to the scene in *Star Wars* when Luke, Han, Leia and Chewie were trapped in that prison block. If a situation like that had produced itself anywhere, I would have been jumping onto the rooftops of a Chipping Norton housing estate and proclaiming *Dark Forces* as king. It didn't, so the residents of Abercrombie Terrace were able to sleep peacefully at nights.

There is one "minor point" that stands head and shoulders above the others, though. One feature that by its omission is causing howls of anguish in magazine offices everywhere. Read on...

Instrumentalia of Mass Death and Destruction (or Weapon List)

There are ten tasty weapons up for grabs in *Dark Forces*, and the good part is that a majority of them have two functions. Unless you redefine the keys, "CTRL" will issue a normal blast of fire, while "Z" activates the weapon's secondary function. A list follows (I made up the names, by the way. Heaven forbid LucasArts should be silly):



Fists Of Death – As a highly trained agent, naturally your hands are classified as deadly weapons. As an agent that hasn't been home in several months, they're also classified as highly contagious.



Poxy Single Shot Wimp Gun – Your initial weapon,

capable of one shot every half an hour and about as much use as a plastic spoon. Upgrade quickly.



Rapid Firing "Han Used That In Star Wars" Gun – The rapid-firing giver of death to Imperials everywhere. Tends to run out of ammo, though.



Thermal Detonators – A bit like the one Leia used in *Return Of The Jedi*. You can either lob them for an instant explosion or use the secondary option for a delayed detonation.



Blue Gun Of Hard To Aimness – More powerful still, and

capable of single or three-way fire, but impossible to aim properly and hence a huge ammo-waster.



Cartridge Firer Of Much Joy – A very meaty weapon. Either a single shot from one of the four barrels or a super deadly, all-at-once shot.



Magnetic Mines – Two time settings on these babies

make you think they've failed to work in some way. Just when you go back to check them... boom, usually.



Missile Happy – Very satisfying when you first pick one up. Able to fire over walls and down into chasms etc. One word of warning though, don't even think about firing them in a tunnel.



Confuser Gun – An odd gun that doesn't really look as though it's working

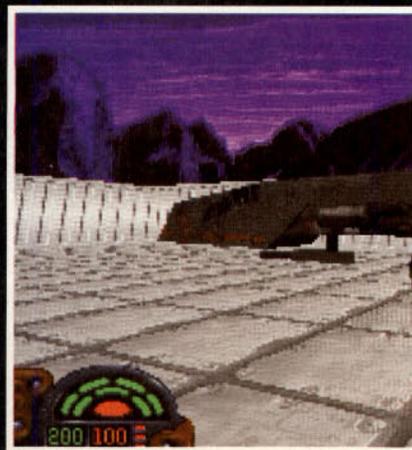
– until you see an explosion far off in the distance and several Stormtrooper helmets rolling their charred way towards you.

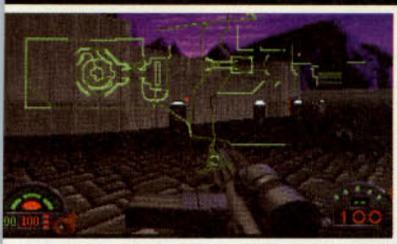
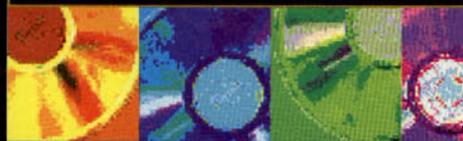


Look At The Size Of That, It's So Big It's Blocking Half My View Gun – Either rapid-firing mega death or long-distance rockets. Whichever you go for, you'll find people just run away.



Here's a sample puzzle. You start by negotiating your way nicely across one of the narrow gangways over the water to the central pillar. Inside you find a button which opens some locked doors elsewhere on the level. Unfortunately, it also causes the narrow walkway to start revolving madly so that it becomes much trickier to get back again.





Onesome pines

The one aspect of the game that really caused the great Whoop-so-meter in fate's missed chances cupboard to start swinging in LucasArts' direction is the lack of any kind of networking option. The

official reason behind the absence of multi-player shenanigans is that *Dark Forces* is all about the trials of a lone rebel hero and a multiple player interfacing scenario wouldn't fit in with the game. Well yah boo sucks to LucasArts for that decision. If memory serves as it often doesn't, *Doom* was supposed to be about a band of hardy space marines single-handedly (or foursome-handedly if you like) ridding a space station of a pesky alien infestation. I doubt the storyline called for a four-player bloodfest, but it happened. Such is life. I can't speak for the entire world, but I'm pretty sure most of the games playing populace would agree with me by saying that we wouldn't care less about storyline integrity when it comes to a good laughter between four chums. You should have gone for it, Mr LucasArts. You should have thrown caution to the wind and made friends with gamers everywhere. Plus you should have given us the option to play as different characters (Stormtroopers for instance). Still, maybe when the sales figures inspire a sequel, eh?

Meanwhile, at the rebel base...

I always like to get the negative elements out of the way first, allowing you to approach the positive comments with a completely objective mind. So strap yourselves in and put that critical look on your face that you always get in these situations because, to coin a phrase, "We're going in".

Dark Forces, when you get right down to it, is a lot of fun. It's fun to play, fun to look at, fun to talk about, fun to listen to people talking about. Hell, the *Dark Forces* conference on CIX was swarming with excited activity months before the game ever hoveled into view. There are bags of weapons to play with (see panel with the clever and witty name), it has very professional presentation which seems to have used the usual tin of LucasArts polish to give it some oomph, and it contains plenty of good "little points" to balance out against the bad ones mentioned earlier.

First of all (because it's standard practice for long magazine reviews to waste a paragraph or two telling you all about the graphics when you can see them for yourself in the pictures) there are the graphics. When it tries to be faithful to the *Star Wars* mythos, it succeeds in droves. Particularly pleasing was the appearance of those little shoebrush robots, buzzing under your feet like a Big Trax gone wild. Also the ability to look up and down, although done before, is handled nicely and often creates some impressive feelings of height and depth when looking up or down a particularly deep chasm (and there are certainly quite a few to be found).

The sound is also put to very good use throughout, utilising not only some effectively subdued musical pieces, but a clever pseudo-surround sound system to provide you with lots of audio clues as to



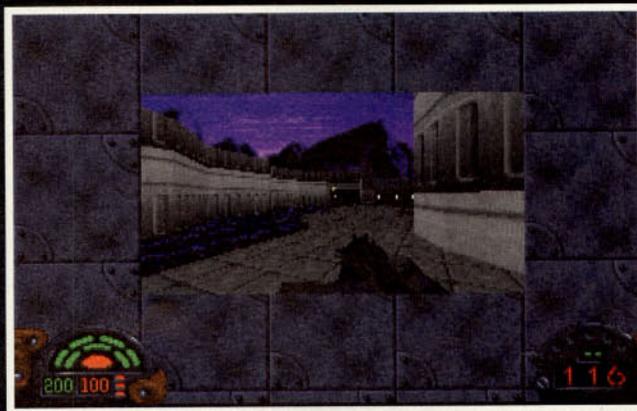
what's going on. You might turn a corner hear a soft "Stop, rebel scum" from the left side speaker and, providing your reactions are quicker than a puma in heat, you'll be turning to face your enemy

(Above) I'm not sure, but I'll take this as a warning not to go into the water.

"One aspect of the game that caused the great Whoops-o-meter to start swinging is the lack of any networking option."

before he knows why he bothered to shout anything in the first place rather than just start firing. Add to that lots of very nice atmospheric effects (howling wind in the mountains, drumming engine noises on board ships etc.) and you just get further proof as to why George Lucas was able to invent an entire sound standard of his own..

Where it really shines is in the design of each level. Rather than a simple collection of rooms and corridors laid out in a random manner and filled with bad guys to shoot, the



(Left) Just like *Doom* (et al), the screen size can be reduced for less powerful machines. Such as anything less than a Pentium (it's an American game, remember).



(Left) Most of the missions come to an end when you manage to find your escape ship and complete your other goals. How you manage to fly the ship out of this completely closed-in room is another question.



It's great to see that all your *Star Wars* favourites are here: Stormtroopers, Imperial guards and the rest. And that some of the lesser known characters and robots have been included. Gamorrean Guards, those floating black orbs, the silver balls Luke trained against with Obi Wan, and even those annoying little shoebrush robots thingies that tripped up those Stormtroopers in the first film.

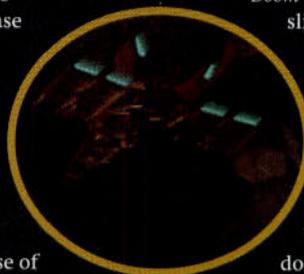


levels actually feel as though they make sense (unlike that last sentence, let me try again). I mean that Jabba's palace actually feels as though it is a palace, the Imperial base has everything laid out in a manner that would be realistic (should such a thing exist) and the abandoned city is authentic enough to make you think the LucasArts boys spent some time wandering around Preston for inspiration.

Doom got 96

And *Dark Forces* gets 95. Does that mean it's not as good? Sort of. It's as good as. It doesn't have that sense of total originality that *Doom* offered, but then nothing ever

will again. That's why *Doom* scores slightly higher. You'll never be able to recreate those feelings of raw emotion.



Other than that *Dark Forces* is as good as, if not better than *Doom*, simply because that's what time does for a genre. Things will always progress and people will always produce slightly better product than before. *Dark Forces* is *Doom* with nicer graphics, more complex puzzles, a few neat extras and a storyline. With a multi-player option it might have got 97. But it doesn't, so it didn't. Live with it. ☹

(Right) A mixture of massive firepower, laser-reflecting walls and a dozen or so Stormtroopers all add up to a corridor that you couldn't pay me to walk down without a cheat mode or two.

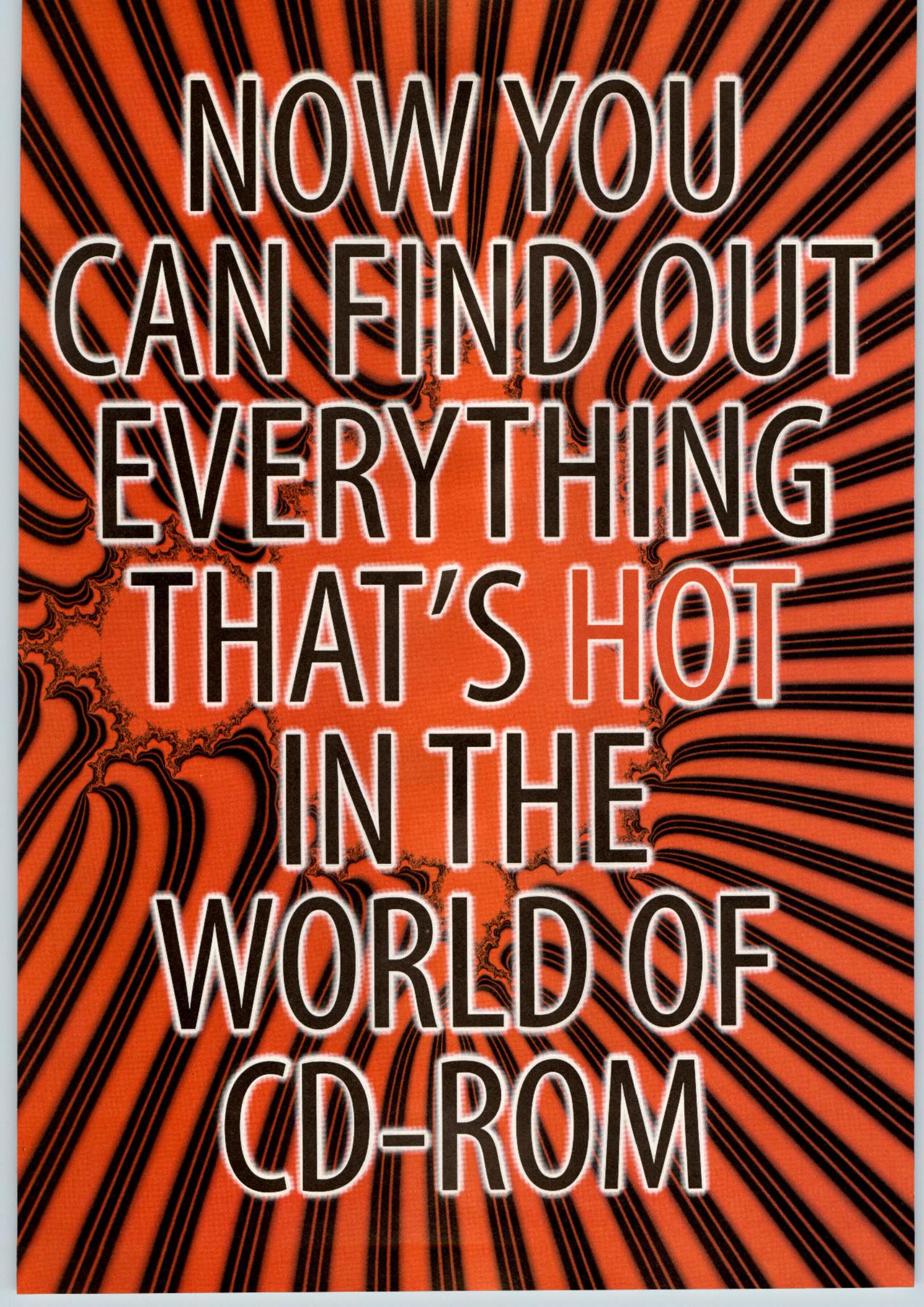


SCORE

The best *Doom*-inspired game to date, based on *Star Wars*.

- Minimum Memory: 4Mb RAM
- Minimum Processor: 486DX 33
- Hard Disk Space Required: 0.7Mb
- Graphics Modes Supported: VGA
- Sound Cards Supported: All major Rolands and SoundBlasters.
- Controls: Mouse/Joystick/Keyboard
- Price: £54.99 Release Date: March
- Publisher: LucasArts/Virgin Tel: 081 960 2255





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(Left) Well, here I am. Hungover and symmetrical of visage. I just wish I spoke English.



Wings Of Glory



You normally only see **Simon Bradley** wearing a leather hat and goggles in the privacy of his own home. But we got him to wear them out just so that he could take

a suitably attired peek at the new WW1 air combat simulator from Origin.



ANY, MANY YEARS AGO, even before *The Two Ronnies*, air combat was a gentlemanly affair. That does not mean, dear reader, that the protagonists would wave cheerfully at each other and then take terribly polite pot shots before going back to the mess for a pink gin. Oh no. What it means is

that, as gentlemen everywhere do, these pioneer fighter pilots would find anything that may be considered fair game and shoot as many holes in it as possible. If it couldn't shoot back, so much the better. If it belonged to the enemy, well that just made it patriotic as well as good sport. As a result of this, young pilots tended to die with depressing regularity. Indeed, even the great aces tended to shuffle off their mortal coils while still in their twenties. An added bonus was the high probability of being killed by your own aeroplane if the enemy didn't get you. The Sopwith Camel, for example, killed more British pilots than German ones. Flying training was at best basic, and to get to the front with more than a dozen hours would make you an instant veteran.

So what does this have to do with anything?

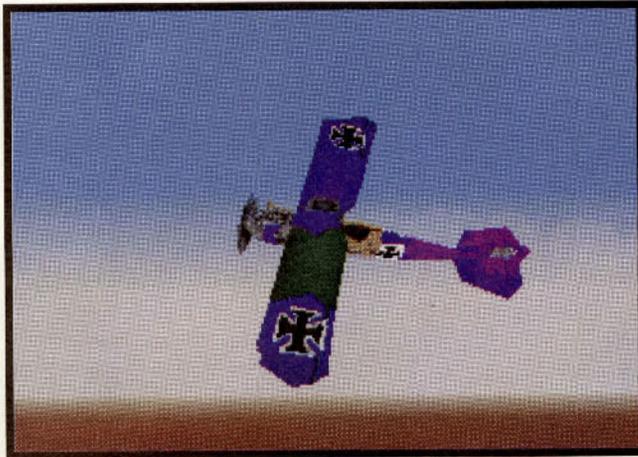
For some reason, this dark period in our history holds a strange fascination both for propeller heads and flight sim writers. So I

"Symmetrical faces and out of synch lips are allied to a storybook which guides the player through his career."

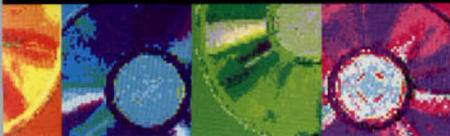


guess that it was inevitable really that Chris Roberts, the man responsible for the *Wing Commander* and *Strike Commander* series, would eventually turn his attention to the war to end all wars.

As a result we have a new CD-ROM outing, *Wings Of Glory*. Symmetrical faces and out of synch lips are allied to a storybook which guides the player through the career path of his character. Naturally, being a flight sim from the Origin stable, the graphics are pretty good and all the links have been done neatly. The selection of aeroplanes is perhaps a little small, and progress seems rather linear, but generally first impressions are favourable.

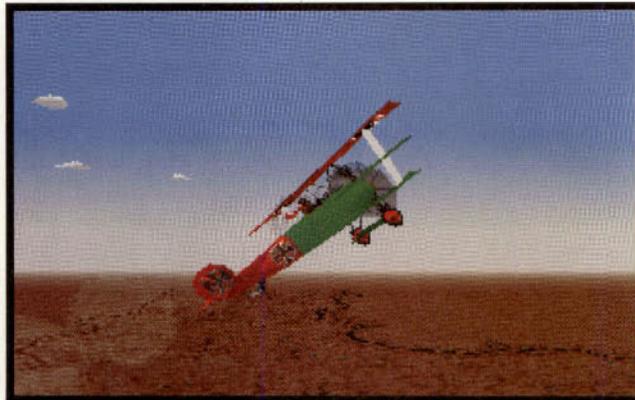


(Left) There he is! Psychedelic cabbage crate at 3 o'clock!



(Left) AAAAGGGHHSSSHH HHHHTTT!!!!

(Below) Nice day for flying, Ginger - What ho, Bertie.



You mean you've decided?

Only on first impressions. Don't get all judgmental on me. I suppose I should make a confession now. I like Origin games. I also like flight sims. And I particularly like First World War flight sims. In fact, I bought *Red Baron* (remember that?) when it came out, all those years ago, and still have it on my hard drive. The way that the plot and characters are developed is still a pleasant change from the normal sterile intelligence reports. There is even a degree of humour incorporated, but more on that later.

Flesh it out a bit, then

Well, the game places you at the beginning of January, 1917, at St Marie Capel, a Royal Flying Corps base on the Franco Belgian border. In case you aren't aware of the background, a full motion video introduction shows you that this is indeed a multimedia game, and explains that you are at war with the Germans (gosh - is that what was going on?). You are a Lieutenant, and you are currently nursing a hangover. Your CO is furious with you and your best mate is both a dipsomaniac and as camp as a row of tents. But worse than all this, you are American. Very American. And your lips don't move in time with your speech.



Forget the characters, what about the game?

Well, like a number of recent offerings, this looks damn good. Origin set the trend really with *Strike Commander*. You know, shit hot graphics, superb detail, beautiful landscapes and a frame rate so slow you could measure it with an egg timer. So you bought that DX/2 you'd had your eye on and everything was okay.

For a while, anyway. The bad news, folks, is that you need a serious piece of kit to run this at anywhere near a decent rate if you want it to look good. It will run on an a DX33, but it is s-l-o-w. Having said that, it doesn't jerk around like earlier things did. Well, not as much anyway. It just takes an eternity for anything to happen when you move the stick. As for the sound, it's brilliant and the music is just right. Maybe I'm just tired, but I could have sworn that the effects were in stereo.

They certainly do a lot to add to the atmosphere, which at times needs all the help it can get.

Sounds promising

Yeah well, it would be apart from one small thing. The flight model. Okay, I admit that I have never flown a Sopwith Pup. But having spoken to a number of people who have, and looked it up in all my reference books, the general consensus is that it would turn on a sixpence, and would out-manoeuvre pretty well anything else in the sky. In fact, the Germans regarded it as the most dangerous



IN PERSPECTIVE

World War I sims are a bit thin on the ground at the moment and the original Dynamix game, *Red Baron*, is probably still the best around.

Wings of Glory

Dawn Patrol

Red Baron

What are the characters like?

Two dimensional in every sense. Ignoring the rather overstated facial peculiarities of the people involved, they don't gel as well as those in earlier Chris Roberts offerings. Some of them look a little too odd, but the most damning thing about them is their



(Left) Biggles discovers that the cockpit heater is sometimes over efficient.

(Below) "Take that dastardly Hun!"



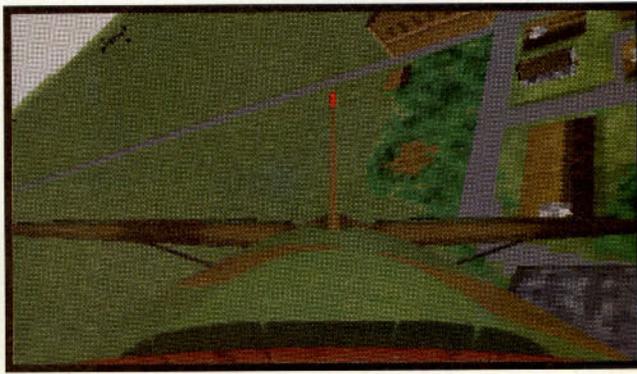
wrong. It bleeds energy too fast and yet it will sustain a maximum rate turn forever. It won't spin out of a stall and can't be made to sideslip (or rudder roll). However, the engine torque effect is nicely done and the flight is certainly challenging enough. Wings break off in a strangely pleasing way, and your demise in a ball of broken struts and tattered canvas is quite neat for the first few occasions.

But how about shooting at things?

Combat is as good as the compromised flight model will allow it to be. The sound effects are especially pleasing, with the other engines all changing pitch as appropriate, as well as your own. The excellent graphics make it easy to see what is going on as well as adding a great dollop of atmosphere. Tracer bullets are well done, and the sight of bits flying off the target as you pepper it is really satisfying. To add a little variety to the proceedings, there are also strike missions involved, some of which offer poetic licence in the form of rockets! Now again, I am happy to admit that I am not the world's number one history of close air support boffin, but I am seriously unconvinced that we had rockets in 1917. Apart from anything else, rockets and doped canvas are not a good combination. Still, rockets you have, and they are quite good for redesigning small buildings, trains etc. Ground attack is actually easier on a slower machine as you then have time to line up and fire before things get too threatening. But there, as they say, is the rub.

aircraft to meet because it was so nimble. The Albatross DV, on the other hand, handled like a barge. So how come these Albatrosses could out turn me all the time in my Pup? And what miracle of science allows the rear gunner of a Halberstadt to fire at me when I'm below him? This all combines with the irritating fact that your rookie wingman can always take a target out with a few rounds while it takes you everything you've got to just make the sucker smoke and puts a bit of a dampener on the whole thing. Although not as bad as the original release of *Strike Commander*, the aerodynamics don't quite cut it either. Now I fully accept that there will be some slightly strange effects from using a low-end machine, and that this is, I think, a late Beta version of the game and so is still awaiting final tweaking. But even with detail turned right down (you can't tell the baddies from the goodies, so shoot at everything) and flight options turned to maximum realism, the thing just flies

"To add variety, there are also strike missions, some of which offer poetic licence in the form of rockets!"



(Left) Make sure you are facing the right way around before entering into any combat.

Wings Of Glory

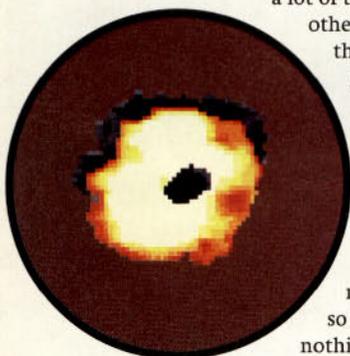
(Right) Nice detail - and we all know what that means, don't we kids? Yep! It's ninjabast PC ahoy!



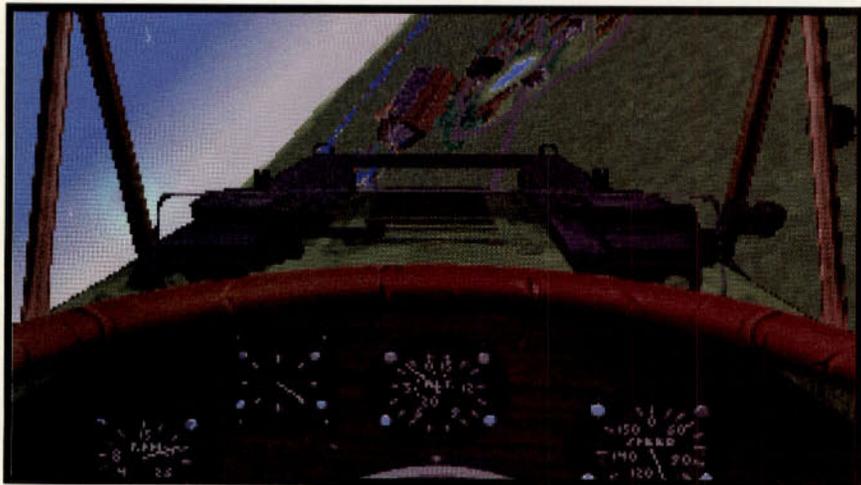
So go on, what's the catch?

Ah yes. The catch. Of course, there has to be one, doesn't there? And, of course, it's a beaut. You see, this game really does look bloody good. Detail is there in abundance. The aeroplanes look right. The ground looks good. Your cockpit is wonderfully detailed. The sky is lovely. Even the sodding trees look good. But that means an awful lot of little textured polygons racing around your screen. And that in turn means an awful lot of little textured electrons racing around your processor. So many, in fact, that unless it is

a truly Ninja-esque chip, like a P-90, perhaps, a lot of these electrons will trip over each other in the rush to squeeze down the narrow corridors inside and get kind of held up. And that means, of course, that our old friend Jerkvision will come and visit. Now I know I said that it isn't too jerky. Well, I guess that is true until you really come to the crunch. Even then, jerk probably is the wrong word to use. Lurch would be more appropriate. Okay, Lurchvision it is. Anyway, the result is that the gap between frame updates becomes so great that your control inputs are vastly magnified as nothing happens quickly, and you suddenly lurch into a



(Right) It all looks so beautiful up here, above the clouds. If you listen hard enough you can almost hear the angels singing. And then some Jolly Olly comes along and tries to shoot you down in flames. War is indeed a terrible thing.



new position and attitude. Normally, this is not where you want to so you initiate another lurch in the opposite direction. In this way, you gradually overcontrol your way into the ground or manoeuvre yourself to exactly where your opponent wants you. But, and this may seem a paradox, the whole process remains strangely smooth and fluid. The odd thing about it is that it is actually far more frustrating to have a smooth slow game than a jerky one. It just seems that you can compensate better if you can actually see the problems.

"Wings Of Glory is not a turkey but I do feel it could fly better and have a little more atmosphere."

Alright then, what's the verdict?

The jury is still out at the moment, but I'm afraid it isn't looking too good. I have this thing about flight sims. They need to offer three things: proper simulation, reasonable graphics and something to make them different from the others. *Wings Of Glory* is not the best simulation on the market by a long way, but it isn't too bad. The graphics are excellent - no complaints at all about those apart from the strange faces of the characters. But there is really nothing here we haven't seen done better before. Take *Red Baron* and shove *Pacific Strike* firmly up its bottom. That will give you a World War One flight sim with a plot of sorts, career progression and a peculiar way of walking. And that just about sums up *Wings Of Glory*. Don't get me wrong, it's not a turkey. But I do feel that, as with many games of this sort, it could fly better and have a little more atmosphere. But then again, if you are into the aerial equivalent of bare knuckle fighting, you should give this a good look over. And then buy it with the change from your newly discounted Pentium. **Z**



SCORE

Not bad but we've seen it all before.

- Minimum Memory: 8Mb
- Minimum Processor: 486 DX/33
- Hard Disk Space Required: 6.5 Mb
- Graphics Modes Supported: VGA
- Sound Cards Supported: Sound Blaster, AdLib, Roland
- Controls: Joystick, Mouse, Keyboard, Thrustmaster.
- Price: £TBA Release Date: March
- Publisher: Electronic Arts Tel: 0753 549442

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| Ecstasica | £28.99 | Links Challenge | £19.99 | Amiga 500X Plus 75 | £9.99 | ADI Junior Reading 6-7 | £13.99 |
| Elder Scrolls Arena | £29.99 | Links Fantasy Course* | £19.99 | Amiga 500X Plus 76 | £9.99 | ADI Junior Reading 6-7 | £13.99 |
| Empire Soccer | £19.99 | Links Kapalua Course* | £16.99 | Amiga 500X Plus 77 | £9.99 | ADI Junior Reading 6-7 | £13.99 |
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| Eye of the Beholder | £12.99 | Links St Andrews Course* | £16.99 | Amiga 500X Plus 80 | £9.99 | ADI Junior Reading 6-7 | £13.99 |
| Eye of the Beholder 2* | £12.99 | Links Sun Valley | £16.99 | Amiga 500X Plus 81 | £9.99 | ADI Junior Reading 6-7 | £13.99 |
| F1 | £19.99 | Links The First Tee | £16.99 | Amiga 500X Plus 82 | £9.99 | ADI Junior Reading 6-7 | £13.99 |
| F14 Fleet Defender | £28.99 | Links Challenge | £19.99 | Amiga 500X Plus 83 | £9.99 | ADI Junior Reading 6-7 | £13.99 |
| F14 Fleet Defender Scenarios | £13.99 | Links Fantasy Course* | £19.99 | Amiga 500X Plus 84 | £9.99 | ADI Junior Reading 6-7 | £13.99 |
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| F153 | £10.99 | Links Mauna Kea | £16.99 | Amiga 500X Plus 86 | £9.99 | ADI Junior Reading 6-7 | £13.99 |
| F117A* | £10.99 | Links Pebble Beach | £16.99 | Amiga 500X Plus 87 | £9.99 | ADI Junior Reading 6-7 | £13.99 |
| F20 | £11.99 | Links St Andrews Course* | £16.99 | Amiga 500X Plus 88 | £9.99 | ADI Junior Reading 6-7 | £13.99 |
| Fantasy Empire | £14.99 | Links Sun Valley | £16.99 | Amiga 500X Plus 89 | £9.99 | ADI Junior Reading 6-7 | £13.99 |
| Fantasy Manager | £19.99 | Links The First Tee | £16.99 | Amiga 500X Plus 90 | £9.99 | ADI Junior Reading 6-7 | £13.99 |
| Fantasy World Dizzy | £7.99 | Links Challenge | £19.99 | Amiga 500X Plus 91 | £9.99 | ADI Junior Reading 6-7 | £13.99 |
| Fields of Glory | £29.99 | Links Fantasy Course* | £19.99 | Amiga 500X Plus 92 | £9.99 | ADI Junior Reading 6-7 | £13.99 |
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| Frontier Elite 2 | £24.99 | Links Sun Valley | £16.99 | Amiga 500X Plus 97 | £9.99 | ADI Junior Reading 6-7 | £13.99 |
| Front Lines | £26.99 | Links The First Tee | £16.99 | Amiga 500X Plus 98 | £9.99 | ADI Junior Reading 6-7 | £13.99 |
| Front Page Sports Football* | £26.99 | Links Challenge | £19.99 | Amiga 500X Plus 99 | £9.99 | ADI Junior Reading 6-7 | £13.99 |
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| Gateway 2 Homeworld | £15.99 | Links Pebble Beach | £16.99 | Amiga 500X Plus 103 | £9.99 | ADI Junior Reading 6-7 | £13.99 |
| Genies Curse* | £26.99 | Links St Andrews Course* | £16.99 | Amiga 500X Plus 104 | £9.99 | ADI Junior Reading 6-7 | £13.99 |
| Graham Gooch Cricket | £19.99 | Links Sun Valley | £16.99 | Amiga 500X Plus 105 | £9.99 | ADI Junior Reading 6-7 | £13.99 |
| Great Navy Battles | £9.99 | Links The First Tee | £16.99 | Amiga 500X Plus 106 | £9.99 | ADI Junior Reading 6-7 | £13.99 |
| Great Navy Battles 2 | £25.99 | Links Challenge | £19.99 | Amiga 500X Plus 107 | £9.99 | ADI Junior Reading 6-7 | £13.99 |
| Greatest | £31.99 | Links Fantasy Course* | £19.99 | Amiga 500X Plus 108 | £9.99 | ADI Junior Reading 6-7 | £13.99 |



"You push and I'll drive" exclaimed Paul Lakin excitedly as we lead him towards his shiny new kart. "But it's got an engine – you don't have to push it", we replied. "Zoiks! When I was a lad you had to push 'em!" exclaimed Paul sincerely. He exclaimed a lot that day.

Super Karts



KARTS MEAN different things to different people. To Damon Hill they probably mean some flash speed toy with which he cut his motor racing teeth. To me they mean this really hopeless thing my Dad made, all balsa wood and green paint, which the wheels fell off the first time I used it. Which probably goes some way to explaining why Damon Hill went on to narrowly miss out on winning the Formula 1 World Championship while I went on to trying to flog a knackered mini with no rear bumper and a dodgy handbrake. Parents, they really screw you up.

Super Karts bears little relation to the world of wobbly wheels and not-quite-dry paint that was my karting youth. However, it's not quite the world of future millionaires that Damon Hill grew up in either. There are eight drivers on display here, each representing a different nationality. The UK contestant looks like a cross between Big Vern and George Cole. We are in the world of the arcade... in fact, we are in the world of the console.

Kart for karts sake

The set up of *Super Karts* is basically very simple. In fact, *Super Karts* as a whole is very simple. Whether that's a good thing or not is down to you. (Write your answers on one side of the paper only, additional marks will be given for the use of diagrams or formulae.) At the start of the game you select your character from a range of racial stereotypes. If you are playing the arcade option you then

have to finish in the top three to qualify for the next race. If you elect to play a season (or half season) you race on all the courses, gaining points and money for fast laps, plus, of course, any bonuses you pick up along the way.

Bonus of contention

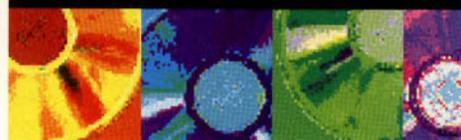
The structure of the races is so familiar it makes *Rocky 5* look like a stunningly original piece of post-minimalist theatre. As you race around the track you can pick up cash bonuses with which to tart up your car – sorry, kart – between races, plus additional oil, skid tyres and turbos. All three of these (which, if you failed to collect them *en route*, are among the things that can be bought between rounds) can be activated during races. Two out of three are barely worth the effort. The oil is for you to do your famous squid impression (always goes down a storm at the office party) where you spray a slick in front of oncoming cars causing them to... well, causing them to do the square root of bugger all as far as I could tell. As for the skid tyres, well, they presumably improve your grip on those oh-so-tricky parts of the course. In my first race I bought loads of them, and, with a grin of triumph, activated about three as I approached a sharp hairpin corner. "I think they're working", cried, accelerating – straight into the wall at the first bend. The only worthwhile bonus is the turbo charge. Activate that and you can flick the v's at your opponents as, with engines blazing, you fly past them – straight into the wall at the first bend.

"The set up of Super Karts is basically very simple. In fact, Super Karts as a whole is very simple."

(Right) Kit your kart out with the latest performance enhancing add-ons courtesy of the kart shop. The staff are very helpful and polite and it's open on Sundays.

(Far right) Check out those clouds – we must be racing in dear ol' Blighty again.





(Far Left) Someone's making hot tracks, and it ain't me!

(Left) It's a bit like show jumping - except there aren't any horses, just karts. But there are water jumps and everyone wears tight trousers.



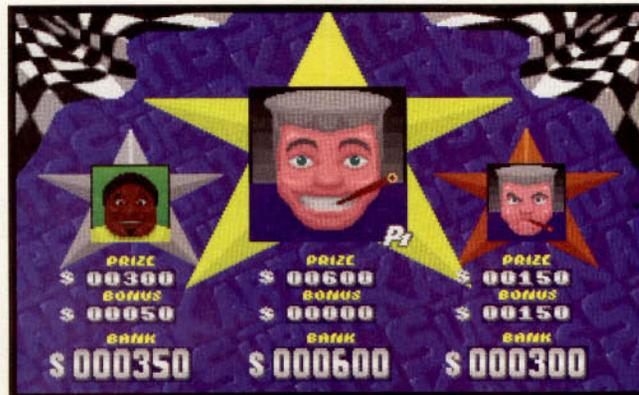
(Far left) Race around the streets of Japan in the dark, or take a speedy cruise around India (left). The choice is yours.

Race relations

My first actual race was something of a disappointment. Carefully checking my mirror I waited for the light to go green and slowly pulled away from my starting position. Everyone else was driving like a blooming maniac so I pulled over to let them pass. In the absence of any road signs I decided to stick to a steady 30mph. 40 laps (and three or four days) later, I finished. Null point. Nothing. Zero. No marks for the careful way I positioned the kart before that difficult right-hand bend. No bonuses for my sensible topping to stretch my legs and have a coffee every three hours.

Not even a special commendation for pulling over to let faster karts pass. I'll never get the hang of these driving games.

A quick chat with my more competitive comrades and I began to get a grip on things (except the track, on which I seemed to have no grip whatsoever). The races are over between one and 40 laps and pretty much anything goes. You know those great starts in formula one where everyone crashes into everyone else and the race gets called off (or rather Eddy Irvine crashes into everyone else and then spends the rest of the week-end getting beaten up by the other drivers)? Well the whole race is a bit like that. You crash,



(Far left) It's not exactly an autobahn, but it'll do for now.

(Left) Yep, I won - \$600 in fact. Easy money this karting lark, I may even take it up professionally if I can get this reinforced twiglet out of my mouth.

(Right) Okay, I'm currently last, but with just one lap to go I'll finish in the top three - I promise.

(Below) Choose your character with care. Remember, Italians never indicate and are very bad drivers.



Tracks of my Tears

There are eight countries in the Super Karts tour (one for each nationality of driver). You visit each at least a couple of times (depending on whether you play a half or full season), though I could never quite make my mind up whether the courses were different on each visit. It's a clear, driving mind like that which makes me such a natural at games like this. The countries and their course characteristics are...

USA - LOS ANGELES 2

THIS IS A CIRCUIT WHERE YOU CAN GET YOUR FEET REALLY WET IF YOU'RE NOT CAREFUL. A STEADY SPEED CAN BE MAINTAINED BY STICKING TO THE NARROW SAND BANKS WHICH KEEP YOU MOSTLY DRY.

TERRAIN: SAND AND SERT SUPERKARTS, NOT SUPERBOOTS!

INDIA - DELHI 1

LARGELY OCCUPIED IN DIRT AND SEMI-PRECIOUS STONES AS A CITY FOR THE MARRAJAN'S NEPHEWS, THIS CIRCUIT STANDS OUT AS ONE OF THE MOST EXPENSIVE TRACKS EVER CONSTRUCTED.

STONE WITH GRASSY VERGES. TURBO AND SUPERGRIP HERE...

GERMANY - BERLIN 1

A DESOLATE INDUSTRIAL SITE PROVIDES THE IDEAL SETTING FOR THE THIRD RACE OF THE SEASON. THERE ARE A FEW OBSTACLES TO CONSIDER WITH THOUGH, INCLUDING A SPECTACULAR WATER-JUMP.

CONCRETE & CORRUGATED IRON. GET A GOOD LINE ON THE JUMP!

BRAZIL - SAO PAULO 2

A VERY SLIPPERY, WINDING TRACK COVERED WITH GRASS, SAND AND UNCLEWITTIED OBSCURE SPICES MAKES A CHALLENGING LAPPING RATION WHICH WILL TEST YOUR DRIVING SKILLS TO THE FULL.

SAND AND VEGETATION. STAY WIDE ON THIS CORNER...

USA - LA
This is the easiest of the courses (it's the first "level" if you play the arcade version). Lots of sand and a bit of water. Hang on a bit - I think these courses do change with each visit 'coz there was more water the second time around. Anyway, there's not much danger of crashing here so simply turbo your way to the front and hang on in there. You'd have to be a complete mongoose not to win this one.

India - Delhi
You know those times when you've had far, far too much beer and you stagger into the tackiest Indian restaurant in town? It's full of wall coverings and more furniture than is strictly necessary and the colour scheme begins to make you feel dangerously queasy? Well this is that restaurant. Very sick making indeed. Not for the weak stomached (Yes, I think we've got the message now. Ed.)

Germany - Berlin
All very Kraftwerk, this is. Lots of steel, corrugated iron and signs saying "Achtung". One of the easiest in which to crash and so throw away the lead that you've been hanging onto for about three million laps. It's also the easiest in which to lapse into suicidal depression, start listening to mid 70's Bowie albums and start muttering about post-industrial dehumanisation.

Brazil - Sao Paulo
If this is Sao Paulo then it's about time someone got onto the council to do something about the streets. When they say it's a jungle out there, they mean it. It's all very green and lush and, therefore, in the true spirit of environmental awareness, this is the one on which everyone chooses to use their oil spray. Another course where it's easy to get disorientated. (Well, if you're as crap as me, it is.)

AUSTRALIA - AYERS ROCK 1

THE RED SANDS AND OPEN PLAINS OF AUSTRALIA ARE A ARCHITECT SETTING FOR THIS CIRCUIT. THE COURSE IS ACCOMMODATING, BUT THERE ARE A FEW MAJOR PUZZLES WHICH CAN SLOW YOUR PROGRESS.

MOOD AND WATER. FLY OUT, EXCEPT HERE...

BRITAIN - LONDON 1

LOCATED IN CHELSEA HARBOUR, THIS WIDE, EASY TERRAIN COURSE SEEMS A GOOD ONE, BUT THE PUNISHING TYPING-BANNERS SOON TAKE THE FUN AWAY.

TERRAIN: TYPING. WATCH OUT FOR THE HAIRPIN...

RUSSIA - MOSCOW 2

LOCATED NEAR THE CENTRE OF MOSCOW YOU CAN SEE THE ANKOR DORES OF THE CITY FROM THE CIRCUIT. THIS IS THE OLVIARTE CHALLENGE. THE HARROW, CORRUPT COURSE IS AS SLIPPERY AS FALTY GET.

STONE, SNOW AND ICE. DID SOMEONE SAY IMPOSSIBLE?

JAPAN - TOKYO 2

A MERE SEA MOUNTAIN HAS PASSED SINCE THE COMPLETION OF THIS CIRCUIT AND IT IS ALREADY PROBABLY BE THE Toughest track OF THE SERIES. IT IS ALSO THE LAST.

TERRAIN: MAN-MADE POLYMER. USE THE SPEED STRIPS...

Australia - Ayers Rock
Presumably not sponsored by the Australian tourist board. This is not the land of Crocodile Dundee's outback. This is the land of oil rigs, mud and stormy skies. More like Crocodile Dundee's backside, to be honest. The course is a bit similar to the USA. Once gained, the lead is fairly easy to hang on to.

UK - Chelsea Harbour
Rather like the real thing it's a complete nightmare to navigate your way around. There's a hairpin from hell, which nine times out of ten I'd smash into. (On the one time, I'd over do it, get disorientated and find myself going the wrong way round the track.) Not a great advert for Docklands life.

Russia - Moscow
No ten-mile bread queues to plough into, unfortunately for me. Just lots and lots of slippery, slidy, dangerous ice. This is one course where the old adage "More haste less speed" definitely comes into play. Another adage that sprang hastily to mind just moments before I crashed was "These super-grip tyres were a waste of chuffing money."

Japan - Tokyo
The last, so presumably the toughest, of the courses. This one's actually my fave. All modern and neo and very, very fast. The Japanese driver recommends hanging back a bit on this one - which is what he does. On the first race I laughed in the face of such caution and did it all at break-neck speed, finishing a glorious seven places behind the Japanese.



mash and slide your way around the course with seven other drivers who wouldn't feel that they'd been in a race unless they'd sent you spinning into a wall.

Fast forward

As I said earlier, *Super Karts* is not the most complex of games – which is one of its strengths. We all know the old cliché about CD games having great graphics, mind-blowing sound and rather less gameplay than a bag of crisps. Well, *Super Karts* reverses that. The graphics are good but hardly out of this world. I'm not sure that they're really any better than in *Super MarioKarts* (a game that this game resembles quite closely). Likewise, the sound. But the gameplay is fast and addictive. Two hours after having started, my head was spinning, my eyes strained and I was in the advanced stages of CSI, but I was having more fun than when I... but you don't want to know about that. The game has a great sense of movement as well as speed. As the karts fly around the tracks you lean into corners and grit your teeth as you hit the turbo and attempt to accelerate away from the pack. Smart. It may not have the visual splendour or fancy plotline of *MegaRace* but it's a thousand times more fun.

The only area *Super Karts* really falls down is in longevity. Sure, it's got a two-player and even an ultra fabby eight-player network option. However, if you don't use a network or have any friends (or if you do use a network and therefore have no friends) I can't see this game lasting all that long on your play list. There aren't really enough options or bonuses and the variety between the courses is fairly minimal. In the great tradition of the more sophisticated racing sims, the game does include a huge variety of camera angles from which to observe the race, but I couldn't see the point. If there was a way of filming things, I didn't find it, so you had to use the cameras "live". This meant that having spent a few minutes watching the lead car from a range of angles and distances you went back to find your own car – crashing straight into the wall at the first bend.



(Left) Yep, last again! But I am a good finisher. It's just I'm feeling a little dickie and have only got one pair of hands.

There is a degree of strategy to it. You can choose from a range of enhancements between races (improved engine, better tyres etc.) but the choice isn't great. It's not like a pre-match session in a race sim, nor is it as fun as the tooling-up shops in games like *Super Cars*. Borrowing from the world-racing sims, it incorporates pit stops, which are quite important if you don't want to find your car spluttering to a halt just before the finishing line. At the end of the day, though, (when all's said and done, Brian) it's just a hack around a track.

"You crash, smash and slide your way around the course with seven other drivers."

Memories

Super Karts reminds me of a console game or games like *Power Drift*, which came out on the Amiga about eight squillion years ago. (That's the thing with being old – all you've got left are memories.) To be honest, though, in terms of gameplay *Super Karts* hasn't really moved on much from these such games. Yes, it's brighter, faster, slicker, but still basically the same at heart. Then again, for a CD game, it's simply dripping with playability. It's great because it's simple and instantly playable, but then again, it's a bit weak because it's simple and instantly playable.

Oh dear, this reviewing lark really doesn't get any easier. (Reviewer casts nervous eye towards score box. Right. It may have limitations in terms of longevity but it's still great fun, especially in multi-player mode.) At last, here's a game for those who were too embarrassed to be seen playing *Super MarioKart*. Z



SCORE

Jolly good fun – but for how long, I'm really not sure.

| RACE RESULT – LOS ANGELES 1 | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------|----------|--------------|
| | BONUSES | BEST LAP | POINTS TOTAL |
| 1 CHARLIE SMITH | | 27.38 | 10 |
| 2 KEVIN MOORE | | 27.63 | 07 |
| 3 LUIZ SANCHEZ | | 27.41 | 05 |
| 4 TODD MATE | | 28.48 | 04 |
| 5 MUSTAPHA GEE | | 27.64 | 03 |
| 6 IVAN ZOOMSKI | | 29.01 | 02 |
| 7 KLAUS KRUGEL | | 30.99 | 01 |
| 8 AKI SUN | | 28.45 | 00 |



(Top left) I came second! Not bad for a novice from Stalingrad.

(Far left) Come rain or shine, sleet or snow, you'll always find me on the track, karting it up.

(Left) "So it's the left pedal to stop and the right one makes you go faster? – Right! I think I've got it now!"

Minimum Memory: 4Mb RAM
Minimum Processor: 386DX (33Mhz 486 recommended)
Hard Disk Space Required: 15Mb
Graphics Modes Supported: VGA
Sound Cards Supported: SoundBlaster, AdLib
Controls: Joystick (including Thrustmaster) Keyboard
Price: £TBA **Release Date:** March
Publisher: Virgin **Tel:** 081 960 2255

ALADDIN

A tale of baggy trousers, pointy slippers and rubbing people up the wrong way. But enough of Jeremy Wells' personal life, what about Aladdin?



I MUST CONFESS, before I go on, that I haven't seen the Disney version of *Aladdin*. All nephews and nieces were unavailable at the time the film was on at

our local Pally, and I was therefore unable to attend myself. I know, I could have gone anyway, but I just couldn't face it. I think it was the music that put me off. I just hated that song they kept playing on the radio. It brought me out in a rash just thinking about it. So mushy, so slushy, so blueberry pie. *Aladdin* is not set in mid-west America and that song just reeked of it.

And so to the game. It's a platform game. It's the sort of thing a console machine does very well and it's very reminiscent of the other big Virgin/Disney release, *The Lion King*. In fact, change the main character from a lion to a bloke with baggy trousers, a turban and a scimitar; change the scenery from a jungle to a market bazaar; add a few tweaks and there you have it. Even the bonus levels look and play the same. Another Disney endorsed, sure-fire seller.

Well, nearly. Perhaps that's too harsh. Platform games per se are very samey. You leap, you duck, you spin, you collect things, you get power ups, bonus levels and defeat end-of-level nasties. What really sets one platform game apart from another is really the tweaky bits, the polish, the gloss, what the character does when you don't touch the controls for a short while, whether he



(Above) No Aladdin game would be complete without a genie. This one is blue.

smiles when you do something good, how he dies. In all of the above, *Aladdin* (just like *The Lion King*) excels. It just oozes gloss and you get the feeling the developers polished it until they could see their faces in it. Of course, purists (or indeed, your average school boy) will tell you that it's heaps better on his Mega Drive, but as far as PC conversions go, this has no real failings.

Boom, boom – seikh the room

It does (I am told) follow the plot of the film as closely as it can, and all the main



(Left) It's a platform game – there are loads of different levels, power-ups and nasties to battle through. What else do you need to know?



(Right) Aladdin helps Colin the camel achieve the world wind-breaking record.



(Below) Swooping effortlessly through the air courtesy of a handy vine.

characters can be found in the game in one form or another. Animation is good and Aladdin himself can run, crouch, leap, swipe with his scimitar, climb ropes and do somersaults. The sprites themselves are quite large, pretty detailed and look very "Disney", so full marks here. In fact, the only real criticisms are that the perspective is sometimes misleading (i.e. you think you can jump up onto a ledge, but it's either in front or behind you) and it's not that difficult. I know that this is probably aimed at the younger end of the market, but most kids I know could complete this kind of stuff in a couple of hours.

There's not exactly much variation either, but this is more a failing of platform games in general so I can't really fault it much here either. The sound is good, there is plenty to do and you won't be disappointed with presentation, it's just not exactly full of surprises. **B**

70

SCORE

A platform game that looks and plays like any other.



- Minimum Memory: 4Mb
- Minimum Processor: 386DX 33
- Hard Disk Space Required: 5 Mb
- Graphics Modes Supported: VGA
- Sound Cards Supported: SoundBlaster and compatibles
- Controls: Keys, Joystick, Gravis four button game pad and 100% compatibles.
- Price: £29.99 Release Date: Out now
- Publisher: Virgin Tel: 081 960 2255

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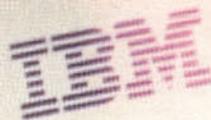
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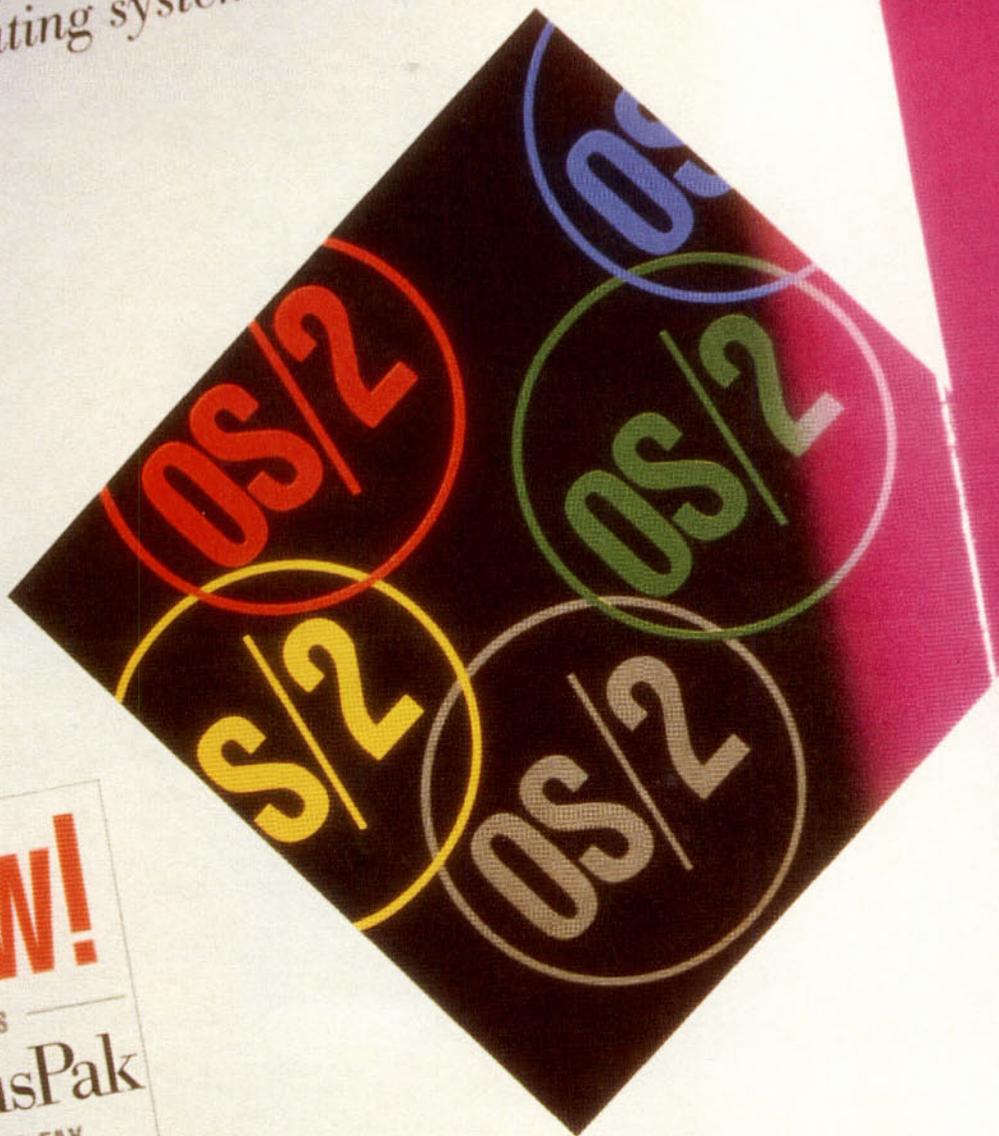
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FEATURE

OS/2 Warp



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OS/2 *Warp*

Version 3 Enhances Your Existing DOS and Windows



ONE OF THE biggest pains about using a PC is that most games run under DOS, and you usually have to do a lot of messing around with your system files to free up enough memory in order to get them to work. Windows applications, on the other hand, can be run without having to worry about all this, as Windows itself makes sure that the right amount of memory is available. It would be extremely nice, therefore, if you could run games under Windows and save yourself hours of fiddling around with CONFIG.SYS and AUTOEXEC.BAT settings.

Unfortunately, because we all want games' developers to squeeze the last drop of power from our PCs and give us the most awesome graphics that they can muster, they have to be run under DOS. The reason for this is that Windows wants to retain control of many parts of the system; the same ones that are needed to get the most out of games.

A prezzy just for you

As luck would have it, we've included on this month's coverdisk a demo version of OS/2 Warp, which is the latest version of IBM's 32-bit operating system for PCs. Rather than simply tarting up DOS (giving you a few extra commands or whatever), OS/2 gives you a Windows-style graphical interface that by-passes DOS altogether. (This concept will be familiar to anyone who has ever used a Mac.) Although some applications have been written to run under OS/2 directly, IBM have realised that most people still use Windows software, and so OS/2 enables you to run these applications directly. The best bit, however, is that they've also included the facility to run DOS programs, and OS/2 itself sorts out all those annoying memory hassles.

The upshot of all this is that to run games, all you have to do is double-click on an icon, and you can chuck all those boot-lisks down a big pit to the depths of Hell where they belong.

Of course, before all this hassle-free gaming is available, you are going to have to install OS/2, and while this should be fairly straightforward, bear in mind that you're installing a complete operating system and so a bit more care has to be taken than when simply sticking a new game on your hard-disk.

The first thing that you're going to need is your original Windows disks, as OS/2 will ask for them during installation. Once you have found them, put the OS/2 installation disk into your floppy drive, and re-boot.

After a bit of a wait, the installation

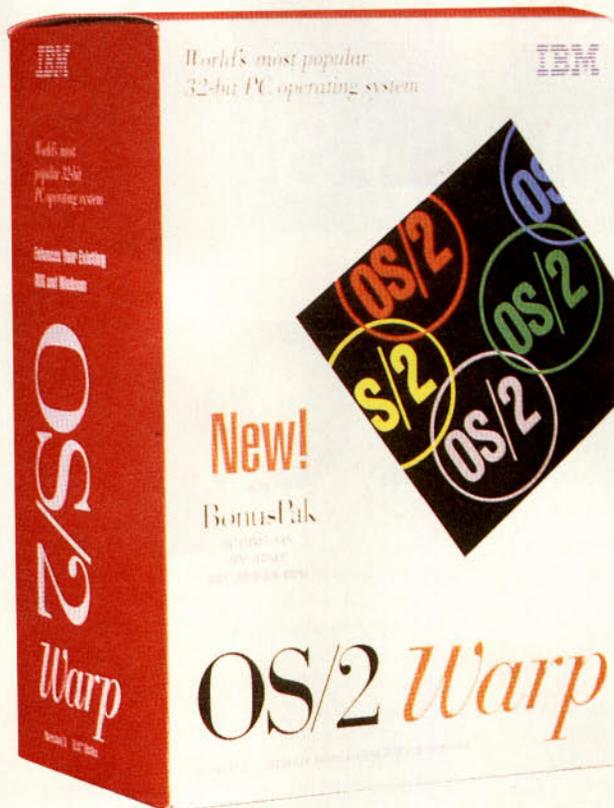
screen should appear, and you will be presented with a choice of "Easy" or "Advanced" installation. Unless you are a) experienced at installing 32-bit operating systems, or b) a complete prat, you should go for the Easy Installation, as this makes all the correct choices for you and gives you a good default set up. Before selecting this option, you must insert the CD into your drive.

After a lot more thrashing around, you should be presented with the System Configuration screen, which is where you tell OS/2 about your set up.

To change a setting, click on the icon and scroll down the list that appears until you find the right option. At this point, use the standard VGA setting for your Primary Display, even if you have one of the other supported graphics cards, because if anything goes wrong, you want at least to be able to see what's happening (you can change this setting later). Click on "OK" to proceed.

The next screen that appears is "Set up" and "Installation". From here you select which components you want to install. It is best, at this point, to go for everything except the High Performance File System and REXX (these last two are far too techie for the likes of us). Once you've done all this, after a bit of a wait, the installation should finish and you'll be prompted to shut down and restart your PC. Click on OK again, and once restarted, you should find yourself in the unfamiliar and slightly scary world of OS/2.

To help dispel any fears, use the tutorial to find your way around, as this contains all the information that you need to learn about the user interface and where to find various settings. If, at any time, you want to switch back to your old set up, double-click on the OS/2 System icon, open Command Prompts and then double-click again on Dual Boot. Answer "y" to reset your system, but bear in mind that OS/2 is still installed. To return to OS/2 at a later date, type:



If you have any problems with OS/2 Warp please read section 5 of the Try Warming Now booklet which has all the relevant details.

PC Zone is unable to help so please do not call our technical support line.

If you require a list of available stockists of OS/2 Warp call the IBM Software Enquiry Desk on 01329 242728.

C:\OS2\BOOT /OS2 from the DOS prompt.

Right - now you've got OS/2 installed, and it's all very pleasant, but how do you get your DOS games up and running? Well, first of all you need to create a program "object" to run the game in question. So open up the Templates folder and (using the RIGHT mouse button) drag it to the DOS Programs folder. As soon as you do this, a box will pop up called "Settings". Type in the name of the file contain-

ing the game in the "Path and File Name" box, and its directory in "Working Directory". Once you've done this, a window will pop up that will ask you to select the game you have chosen (assuming that you've typed in the name and path correctly, that is). Next, select the "Session" tab on the right, click on "dos full screen", select "dos settings", "All dos settings" and "OK". You're now presented with a list of parameters that affect the way the game is run under OS/2. Many games (such as Doom) contain "read-me" files which show you exactly what values to give to each of these parameters, which, with some minor modifications, can be used for most games.

You will have to experiment here, using the on-line help as a guide - if you need to update these parameters at a later date, click the right mouse button on the Program icon, and select "Settings" from the pop-up menu. If you don't have any luck, try contacting the game's manufacturer, or alternatively, you can contact IBM (see left for Helpline), who have produced a pack of settings for 100 of the most popular games.

It may all sound a bit daunting at first, but once it's all set up, you'll find that the luxury of being able to play a level of Doom while using a Windows word-processor is pretty hard to forget, and you may well consider it worthwhile forking out for the full version of OS/2. ☐

HARDWARE REVIEWS

These pedals were made for flying – and driving – so **Simon Bradley** wasted no time checking out the the pros and cons of pedal power.

CH Products Pro Pedals

SCORE

80

Product: Pro Pedals

Manufacturer: CH Products

Distributor: CH Products (0844 345406)

RRP: £TBA

CH IS ONE OF THOSE irritating companies which always seems to make good stuff. You know the ones. They really should be Japanese, because even their entry-level, cheap 'n' cheerful stuff is of the sort of quality that must have other joystick manufacturers sobbing into their Babychams. Just forget the shiny, cheap-looking plastic offerings from certain other companies. And don't even think about ridiculously little lengths of low-quality cable with moulded plugs. Oh, and cast out any notions of fashionable- or even stylish-looking products. We are talking about plastic mouldings that Jaguar would be proud of. Yep, no less than your industrial-grade cable with screw connectors and shapes governed by function rather than fashion. Pretty they are not. Well made, they most certainly are.

For some time, Thrustmaster has had the specialist end of the market pretty well cornered, being as they were the only company who made big, ugly joysticks with loads of extras. Until now they were the only people to provide pedals as well. All that has changed though, with the arrival on the market of a new set of pedals from CH. Now, the biggest real difference between CH and Thrustmaster has always been the shape of their products. Thrustmaster offers faithful copies of real-life controls, which tend to be somewhat unattractive and often less than ergonomically perfect, compromised as they are by the design limitations in real aircraft. CH works from scratch, resulting in something equally unattractive but probably slightly more comfortable for normal (i.e. non pilot) people to use. Well folks, these pedals are no exception. They are, for want of a better phrase, ugly as sin. Imagine a really big, battleship grey joystick. Then snap off the stick and put a pair of those foot measuring thingys you get in shoe shops on top. There. Functional design at its very finest.

Power to those pedals

CH has stolen a bit of a march on its competitors here, though. First of all, the Pro Pedals need less floor space than usual, because the pedals slide on top of the base rather than pivoting around a central point. They

also have nifty rubber feet to stop them from going walkabout when things get intense. Second, the pedals tilt as well as slide. Not only does this mean that you can always get comfortable; it also means that by sliding a switch on the top, your rudder pedals convert to brake and gas for driving games.

Well, I tried them on *Nascar* and *Falcon 3* (surprise, surprise). They are really pretty good. The only problem I found was that there is no real advantage to having pedals in a driving game if you have to steer with a joystick. Now, that either means buying a wheel specifically for your driving pleasure (not the cheapest option); flying with a yoke (fine, if Cessnas are your thing but hopeless for combat); or just grinning and bearing it. Flight simulation games are massively improved by the addition of pedals, regardless of the way they work, and these are at least as good as any others I have tried.

So there – as Barry Norman would say – you have it. If you're really into driving games you'll probably go for the Thrustmaster

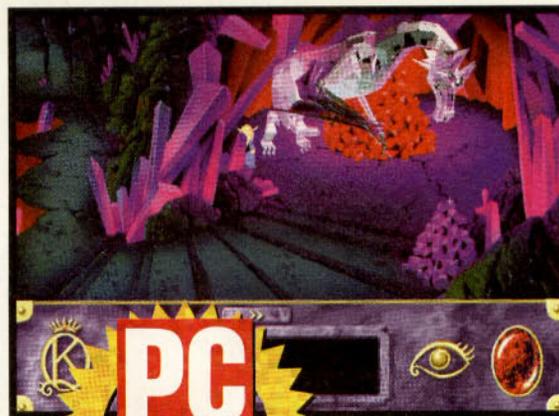
T1 and use a normal joystick for other relaxation (Ooo-er!). If you're a flight sim aficionado, you need pedals, and at least these will give you a dollop of flexibility. Are they worth getting? I reckon so. **Z**



An avid believer in the old maxim, "you can never have too much of a good thing", Teresa Maughan dribbled in anticipation at the release of the seventh chapter in the *King's Quest* saga.

King's Quest VII

The Princeless Bride



(Above) One of the more breath-takingly beautifully animated sequences in KQ VII.



IF THE *King's Quest* series was anything like the *Rocky* movies, you'd be forgiven for dismissing this, the latest offering, *King's Quest VII - The Princeless Bride* (KQ VII), as just more of the same. Same plot, same graphics, same gameplay, with a slightly different scenario - all designed to rob you of another 50 quid. Thankfully, the *King's Quest* games are nothing like the *Rocky* movies, since each subsequent adventure in the saga is both an improvement and diversion on the game before. KQ VII not only betters its predecessor KQ VI, it puts on its steel toe-capped Doc Marten boots and kicks the stuffing out of it!

Get me down the pub NOW!

Roberta Williams, creator of the famous *King's Quest* adventures, had one major problem to overcome when embarking on the design of the seventh instalment in the series - how to make it bigger and better than KQ VI, keep it fresh and innovative, yet retain the *King's Quest*

"In the animated intro, Rosella's rendition of Land Beyond Dreams makes Julie Andrews look like Madonna."

adventure style? At this stage she did what every normal human being would do and decided to go down the pub. Thankfully for us - you because otherwise there would be no KQ VII, and me because I wouldn't be earning any dosh writing this review - after a swift half and a packet of pork scratchings she decided to put pen to paper and began to write what I would say is possibly one of the most impressive adventures I've ever had the good fortune to play!

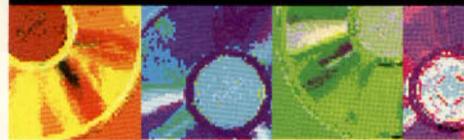
On launching the CD (KQ VII will only be available in true multimedia) you are treated to a beautifully animated cartoon which outlines the game's scenario in gobsmacking form. In fact, you'll be so intent on watching the animation that you'll have to watch it several times before you discover the plot. So I'll save you the bother - Queen Valanice (who *King's Quest* aficionados will recognise from the previous incarnations) berates her daughter Princess Rosella (who's more wholesome than a Hovis cracker) for not having tied the knot at the decrepit age of 20. Rosella, understandably so, wants to have fun and is not too enamoured of this "marrying" idea, particularly

(Right) Now how can Rosella get hold of those tongs?

(Centre right) One of the many animated sequences throughout the adventure. Mathilde, King Otar Ferris III's nurse is a useful source of info.

(Far right) Who'd have thought Delia Smith would pop-up?





(Left) Just one of the many devilishly difficult puzzles to solve.

since the suitor lined up for her is Prince Frogmorton, who's hobby is conjugating Latin verbs. (What a wuss!)

Whilst Valanice continues to nag her daughter, Rosella is lured into a magical pool by a flying seahorse, leaving only her golden hair comb behind. Valanice plunges in after her, but it is too late - she cannot find her beloved daughter. Valanice later finds herself stranded alone in a desert in the Land Beyond Dreams.

Gobsmacking graphics

It is here that the adventure really begins, but before I get into all that, let me just mention the graphics because they really are a bit special. Although the animated introduction sequence promises stunning graphics, it is all too often that multimedia games sport spectacular sequences up front, only to be let down by a mediocre in-game appearance. This is not the case in *KQ VII*. The seventh chapter in the series is a refreshing departure from the other *King's Quest* adventures in the presentation department, with Disney-esque animated characters set in cinematic-like backdrops where the attention to detail is amazing. Every character is brought to life with digitised speech and captivating animated performances.

Wolf In Sheep's Clothing?

Anyway, I digress, let's get back to the all-important gameplay. We have no wolf in sheep's clothing here either. Those fancy graphics hide nothing more than a full-bodied adventure, bursting at the seams with a plethora of puzzles, a cast of weird and wonderful characters and several hundred mini-animations. Moving around this so-called Land Beyond Dreams is as easy as shelling peas - just move the on-screen cursor and you can explore the landscape and interact with both objects and creatures. When there is something to interact with, the wand-like cursor will start flashing, thereby enabling you to click on the object under investigation. This is really quite handy when you're apparently stumped, since it is easy to miss items on first perusal. Not only that, though, for when you

want to move to a different location the interface automatically moves you onto the shortest route.

Gameplay takes place in the main window, with the game controls and inventory occupying a small box at the bottom of the screen. Objects in the inventory can be examined by selecting one and then placing it over the "eye" icon, whereupon a window pops up allowing you to view a rotatable 3-dimensional image of the item in question. I'll let you into a secret here - pay particular attention when examining your inventory objects as many can be manipulated to reveal something rather important.

Sound like your kind of game? Well actually the sound track is also superb. Sierra has put an immense amount of work into producing a fully



(Right) Rosella may look squeaky clean but she can't resist peaking at the Male Troll Mudbath.



The Final Chapter



Chapter One

"Where In The Blazes Am I?"

Good question! After plunging into a magical pool after her daughter Princess Rosella, Queen Valanice finds herself marooned in the desert (quite a nice pinky one, isn't it?). You play Valanice and your quest is to go in search of Rosella.



Chapter Two

"A Troll Is As A Troll Does"

Find your way out of the desert (so finishing chapter one) and the scene switches to the Vulcanix Underground, home of the trolls. Here you play Rosella – she's an ugly troll princess and needs you to help transform her back to human form.



Chapter Three

"The Sky is Falling"

In Chapter three you switch back to play Rosella's mother, Queen Valanice. However, before you go embarking on your adventure in the once magical woods you must defeat this dragon/monster type thing. (He's a nasty piece of work!)



orchestrated package, featuring over a hundred melodies and many original scores. In the animated intro, Rosella's rendition of Land Beyond Dreams makes Julie Andrews look like Madonna, but it all adds to the Disney ambience. The sound effects are very realistic and the magnificent voice talent gives characterisation and personality to the animated inhabitants of Etheria. I loved the chicken who runs around telling everyone the sky is falling!

What about the puzzles?

I was just getting to that. For a start there are hundreds of them to complete and they come in every shape and size. Some puzzles are really simple (just use one object on another type of thing) whilst others are so cunningly difficult (perform a sequence of actions in the correct order to solve part one of the puzzle and move on to the next bit variety) that they'll leave you frothing at the mouth and tearing your hair out! When you solve a particular problem you are rewarded with brilliant and often quite funny animations of the resulting effect. It pays to keep both your ears and eyes wide open when exploring since there are loads of useful clues to help you solve problems along the way.

You'll have plenty to explore as this game is BIG! There are six

(Above) Looks like a Young Conservative Club meeting in progress!

(Right) I had to put this one in to prove I had finished chapter one.





King's Quest VII unfolds rather like a fairy tale in a series of chapters, numbered one to six. You can choose to explore any of the six chapters, but you may not get very far into a chapter if you haven't completed the chapter before it as you won't have the relevant inventory objects. I'm not sure if I approve

of being able to peek at forthcoming chapters as it spoils some of the fun (it's a bit like reading the end of a murder mystery to see whodunnit at the beginning), but since the option is available, here's a glimpse of those first screens – close your eyes if you don't want to spoil the surprise!



Chapter Four

"Will The Real Troll King Please Stand Up?"

Restored to human form (you're Rosella again) you have escaped the Vulcanix Underground and must now go in search of the King of the Trolls. Set in Doga Booga land, this chapter has a horror theme and features gravediggers, ghouls and bogeymen.



Chapter Five

"Nightmare In Etheria"

Those of you with a split personality will be at home since you are now back to playing Valanice again. Set in Falderal, initially your quest is to restore the moon to its original place since you have been accused of swiping it.



Chapter Six

"Ready, Set, Boom!"

After you've battled through the preceding chapters, this is where you end up. In the role of Rosella again, you must save Etheria from the evil enchantress Malicia. (God only knows how can you tell which troll is the impostor as they're pig ugly.)

chapters, all with at least a dozen different locations plus loads of further sub animations.

Bottom burps and all

Even perfection has its faults (I bet even Keanu Reeves farts in the bath) and *KQ VII* is no exception. First, those graphics – yes, they are impressive, but they are a little *too* good to be true. Even the Disney movies can be a bit frightening when the occasion calls for it. (I hid behind my bucket of popcorn during the stampede scene in *The Lion King!*) I'm not asking for *Reservoir Dogs* cinematography, but it really has to be said that the ogres and death scenes could look at least a tad scarier. Also, some of the puzzles are a little too lemon squeasy – just see how long it takes you to suss out how to scare the Jackalope.

I also experienced animation hang-ups in the forge (which meant my game wasn't saved), so I had to go back and re-do a lot of the puzzles, but, admittedly, that may have been particular to my machine. You also have to wait a while before arriving at a new location and automatic animation sequences, which isn't that surprising considering the amount of information being loaded. The former point you can't do anything about but the latter you

can fast forward through, which is a real blessing when you've seen the animation several times and gleaned all the clues therein.

The bit at the end

How many times have you bought a well-hyped game only to find that it's all mouth and no trousers, eh? Well, you'll be pleased to discover that although *King's Quest VII* may have all the looks of Mel Gibson or Michelle Pfeiffer, within it throbs a heart of Sean Connery or Sharon Stone. Roberta Williams and her team have managed to produce a beautifully crafted product that will appeal to those who enjoy adventures of the LucasArts ilk while still managing not to put off those who have played the *King's Quest* saga from its inception. If *KQ VII* was a car you'd be driving around in an Aston Martin. A multimedia masterpiece. **Z**



(Left) Clifford, have you been eating chillies again?

93

SCORE

In *Kings Quest VII* you'll find stunning graphics and superb gameplay. Buy It!

Minimum Memory: 4Mb

Minimum Processor: 386

Graphics Modes Supported: SVGA

Sound Cards Supported: Most major sound cards

Controls: Mouse

Price: £44.99 **Release Date:** Out now

Publisher: Sierra **Tel:** 0734 303322



Paul Presley just used up his best Darth Vader joke in the *Dark Forces* intro. Now he's giving up and just using the force to get a laugh.

TIE FIGHTER DEFENDER OF THE EMPIRE



JUDGING BY the company's previous record, you could hardly accuse LucasArts of attempting to flog a dead horse. Indeed, the stables at the Skywalker Ranch in Texas are positively brimming with thoroughbred stallions, each a substantial race winner in its own right (except *Loom* which was sold to the glue factory a long time ago). However, with *Defender Of The Empire (DOTE)*, the new add-on mission disk for the exceptional *TIE Fighter*, you start to think maybe they're trying to flog some of the good horses at less than cost price.

There's nothing wrong with the game, of course - it's *TIE Fighter* and *TIE Fighter* is excellent - it's just hard to see why any of us should really feel compelled to shell out for more of the same when we can be pretty sure that there are far better *Star Wars* related products around the corner.

More...

So what is there? For a start there are two new battle campaigns to plough through, following on directly from the end of *TIE Fighter* (presuming you got that far - if you



didn't, see below). You've saved the Emperor from death at the hands of the traitors but they haven't given up their attack. Of course, this means it's still more TIE Fighters versus TIE Fighters. The rebel (i.e. X-Wing etc.) ships still don't get that much of a look in. Part of the fun of being a stormtrooper is blowing up the rebels. It's no fun fighting your own side.

Also with this disk comes a new ship to fly - a missile boat. Somewhat similar to the gunboat it just has... er, more missiles.

(Above) Feel the force and blast the bastards.

Finally, there's the obligatory TOPACE pilot, a saved game that allows you to play any of the missions or view any of the cut-scenes in the original game. No doubt, someone, somewhere has already distributed a similar pilot on CompuServe, though.

...Of the same

In an ideal world *DOTE* would get 50 in the score department, as it adds nothing substantial to the original but still has everything that made *TIE Fighter* good. Of course, this isn't an ideal world and giving a game 50 effectively means "it's crap, don't buy it". I once promised myself that I would never use the next phrase in a review, but there really isn't another way of describing *DOTE* other than - if you like this kind of thing, you'll enjoy it. More precisely, if you liked *TIE Fighter* and want more, you'll enjoy it. Otherwise you're getting nothing that's going to radically alter your life in any way other than to ruin your eyes a little bit more by low-level radiation poisoning and to lessen your social calendar slightly. ☒



(Left) Time to home in on some pesky TIEs.

73

SCORE

More of the same. But then the same was pretty good to begin with...

- Minimum Memory: 4Mb
- Minimum Processor: 386/33
- Hard Disk Space Required: 6Mb (+TIE Fighter)
- Graphics Modes Supported: VGA
- Sound Cards Supported: All major (and a few minor) sound cards supported
- Controls: Mouse, Joystick, keyboard
- Price: £19.99 Release Date: Out now
- Publisher: LucasArts Tel: 081 960 2255

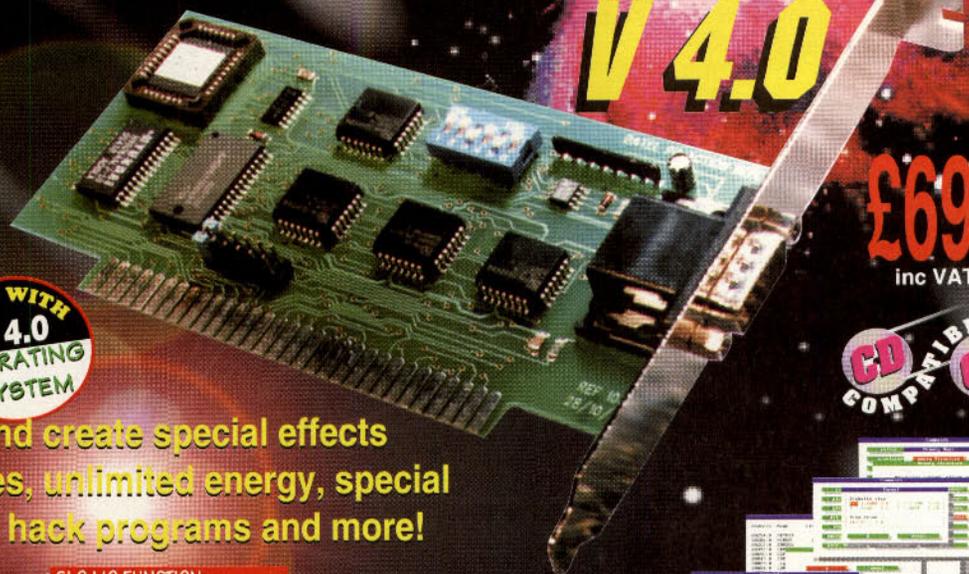
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System requirements
386/486 DOS 3.2 and above

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- +DOOM21B3B8031 Shotgun Shells
- +DOOM21B3B84FF Plasma Cells
- +DOOM21B3B8831 Rockets
- +DOOM21B3BA401 Walk through walls
- +DOOM21B3BA402 Invincible
- +DOOM21B3BA403 Walk T Walls & Invincible
- +DOOM21B3BA404 1 Point walk
- +DOOM21B3B1C01 Get Computer Area Map
- +DOOM21B3B6001 Get Shotgun
- +DOOM21B3B6401 Get Chaingun
- +DOOM21B3B6801 Get Rocket Launcher
- +DOOM21B3B6C01 Get Plasma Rifle
- +DOOM21B3B7001 Get Plasma Launcher
- +DOOM21B3B7401 Get Chainsaw
- +DOOM21B3B7801 Get Super Shotgun
- +DOOM21B3B2401 Get Blue Key
- +DOOM21B3B2801 Get Yellow Key
- +DOOM21B3B2C01 Get Red Key
- +DOOM219BBE002 Get Radar Map
- +DOOM219BBE000 Turn off Radar Map
- +DOOM21B3B1508 Partial Invisibility ON
- *+DOOM21B3BD801 Rapid Fire
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"The PC version is the best yet, combining powerful code crunching with lethal game busting" VIDEO GAME SHOPPER

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CALLERS WELCOME

Kick Off 3 did for footie games on the PC what Paul Merson did for the clean-living image of premier division footballers. Thankfully, at least one of the above has decided to mend its ways and get it together for the new year. We sent **Jeremy Wells** down to Anco to see if the new year's resolution held any water or was just another case of strange tasting sherbet.

KICK 3 OFF 3 EUROPEAN CHALLENGE



WELL, I THINK we can all agree that the less said about the original *Kick Off 3* (KO3) the better. It was, well, not quite up to expectations and seriously damaged the otherwise glistening reputation of the *Kick Off* series, leaving

footie fans across the land feeling as gloomy and frustrated as your average Ipswich Town supporter. (You know who you are!)

However, unperturbed by this momentary lapse of programmer's block, the peeps at Anco have decided to put it all behind them and right their previous wrong in an attempt to win back those fans of fast and furious footie games, who, after purchasing KO3,

hurriedly absconded to the *Sensi* side of the terraces to lick their wounded wallets and seek solace in the pixelled bosom of the mini-sprite. *Kick Off 3 - European Challenge* (KO3 - EC) can, therefore, be considered as a desperate attempt to win back original fans who favoured speed over, sometimes, cumbersome cuteness; a ball that stuck to your foot; and more menus and options than your average Pizza Hut restaurant.

Always something there to remind me

With this in mind, KO3 - EC doesn't really disappoint, but that's not to say that it's full of surprises either. Like all the previous *Kick Off*'s, it boasts a quite extraordinary and diverse number of options, ranging from sprite detail, speed, skill, ball "glueyness", offside, as well as the more usual switchable factors, such as weather, pitch type, etc. So you can tailor the game to play just how you want it to (in theory, at least)

and make it as difficult or easy as you like. There are numerous different game options to choose from, including various Cup matches, leagues and custom competitions, whilst you can arrange friendlies with teams from all over Europe and get your players a nice sun tan by playing in Spain every week.

In keeping with the rather absurd belief that the more teams your game has the better it is, you can opt to play for any one of the 24 international sides or 96 European club sides, and each have their own particular brand of tactics, strengths and weaknesses. If you're not amply impressed by having to play with a team with made-up names (Anco had to change the names slightly to avoid copyright hoo-haahs, although they are still quite recognisable to anyone with a modicum of footballing knowledge), you can edit in your own names and play some of the great matches the world is never likely to see i.e. Albert





(Left) Test your skill against the cone heads - they're smarter than you think.

(Below) The sprites are nice and big, but you can forget about the sound - it's a bit sad.



Square Athletic v Coronation Street United; Summer Bay Albion v Ramsay Street Rovers; an FA Cup Final Match between Fulham and Northwich Victoria, etc.

Play it again and again...

As far as gameplay and presentation go, *KO3-EC* is better than its predecessors, but there's still room for improvement. Yes, there may be loads of different options, but thanks to the rather scrappy and unhelpful menu system and the lack of any detailed instructions, it's very much a case of trial and error at first. Consequently, you'll probably find yourself in a bit of a tangle until you've gone through the game and familiarised yourself with exactly what's available and how you select it - you might even want to take notes.

On a more positive note (as Michael Fish is apt to say when reading the weather) the gameplay is there in abundance - it's just that you've got to find it. I always found the control system in the *Kick Off* games a real bugger to cope with, although friends (yes, I have more than one - there's my mum, my little sis...) claim that once you've got

the hang of it, it's far superior to any other games of its ilk on the market in terms of speed and ball control, I'm yet to be convinced. You can, however, polish up your ball skills in the numerous practice "modes", become intimately acquainted with the various set pieces and corner options, and play with yourself until it hurts, in an attempt to improve yourself. There are 16 different player actions in all to master (which are best accomplished using a gamepad like the Gravis with four

"On a more positive note... the gameplay is there in abundance - it's just that you've got to find it."

buttons, although you can get by using just two), and it can get a little complicated even on the easiest level, using the best team, with all the favourable options

switched on and no opposition - it's still hard. That said, like all the best footie games, it is quite playable in two-player mode once you've got the hang of the controls. You can even play two players on the same side, but it's still pretty difficult. Even with the player intelligence set on high, it's hard to meet crosses perfectly, whilst set pieces and free kicks need a lot of practice before you become any way near-proficient.

If you can stick at it long enough, work



(Above) The names have been changed to protect the innocent. Ooh Aarrh - Kantonah!

(Left) The menu system will test your mettle - the gameplay will make you wince, unless you've got a gamepad.

your way through the sloppy menu system and put in the hours practising different moves, you'll probably be quite impressed with *KO3-EC*, and it should win back many die-hard fans. If, on the other hand, you never did get on with the other *Kick Off* games and want a game you can just load in and play rather than a sim, then you'd best look elsewhere. This game is not for whimps. **Z**

70

SCORE

The best *Kick Off* by far. Difficult to get into, but it's (nearly) all there.

Minimum Memory: 4Mb RAM and 550k of conventional memory

Minimum Processor: 486SX

Hard Disk Space Required: 6Mb

Graphics Modes Supported: VGA

Sound Cards Supported: SoundBlaster and compatibles

Controls: Keyboard, Joystick, Gamepad (Recommended)

Price: £29.99 **Release Date:** Out now

Publisher: Anco **Tel:** 0322 292518

(Left) With a hop, skip and jump, you might even score if you believe in miracles. When you do you can save it to disk.

SX

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| Battlech 82 | 19.99 | Empire Soccer | 16.99 | Leisure Suit Larry 6 | 24.99 | San Francisco | 25.99 | Time Machine 82 | 22.99 |
| Battlech 83 | 19.99 | Empire Soccer | 16.99 | Leisure Suit Larry 6 | 24.99 | San Francisco | 25.99 | Time Machine 83 | 22.99 |
| Battlech 84 | 19.99 | Empire Soccer | 16.99 | | | | | | |

Knights of Xentar

(Below) Token semi-clad bimchette.

Chris Anderson fancies himself as a knight in shining armour. Well, he did until he came across Megatech's latest gaming disaster.



FIRST CAME INTO CONTACT with Megatech when I reviewed their beat 'em up *Metal and Lace*. The "gameplay" in that game involved beating the hell out of lots of chicks in the hope that they would reward you by taking their kit off. The graphics were at best, adequate. It had an entertainment value rating of zero, and generally the whole affair was really a bit of a catastrophe.

After suffering the aforementioned non-game, I surmised that no matter what the peeps at Megatech did in the future, it couldn't possibly get worse. I was wrong! They really have excelled themselves with *Knights of Xentar*. This alleged role-playing game has all the graphic splendour of *Ultima 4* (and that was released years ago, they're on number 8 now!), and has the worse digital voice-overs I have ever heard in a computer game. The music sounds like the work of a five-year old who has just discovered their new Casio synth actually makes noises, and the sound effects are totally unrealistic and unconvincing. So much for the presentation then, on to the gameplay.

Obligatory Tolkien-esque section

Knights of Xentar is a role-playing adventure in which you have to find a mystic Falcon sword, fight Deimos the King of Darkness, and ultimately save the world of Xentar. It's all suitably Tolkien-esque and RPG-like. There are two parts to the game. When you're travelling, you see a top-down view of the landscape. This is where you spend most of the game. Gameplay during this section involves roaming around the land of Xentar, fighting hundreds of monsters and collecting loads of cash. The graphics for this section are absolutely awful and the fights are a complete yawn. The other part of the game is standard Megatech "any excuse to exploit scantily-



clad females for a healthy profit" stuff. When you enter buildings you will sometimes encounter "maidens in distress". You don't have to do anything to save them. The computer takes up the story-line and shows a picture of you doing something heroic. The distressed maiden in question then rewards you by whipping off her togs and showing you what she bought from her mail order lingerie catalogue. Brilliant! What a game. Naff graphics, zero gameplay and a few gratuitous and embarrassingly tacky soft-porn scenes. To make matters even worse, all the characters sound as though they have just graduated from the "Neighbours School of Spectacularly Crap Acting".

At the moment, Megatech have no official UK distributor that we know of, so the chances are that you will never have to see any of this rubbish in the UK. If you *do* come across it, however, don't even think of buying it. This game has absolutely nothing to offer in any department and should be ignored accordingly. ☒



(Right) There's nothing like a good beat 'em up and this is...

(Far Right) Half the fun is trying to find the main character on screen.



SCORE

Utterly pathetic excuse for a role-playing game. Avoid at all costs.

Minimum Memory: 640k

Minimum Processor: 386 or better

Hard Disk Space Required: 30Mb

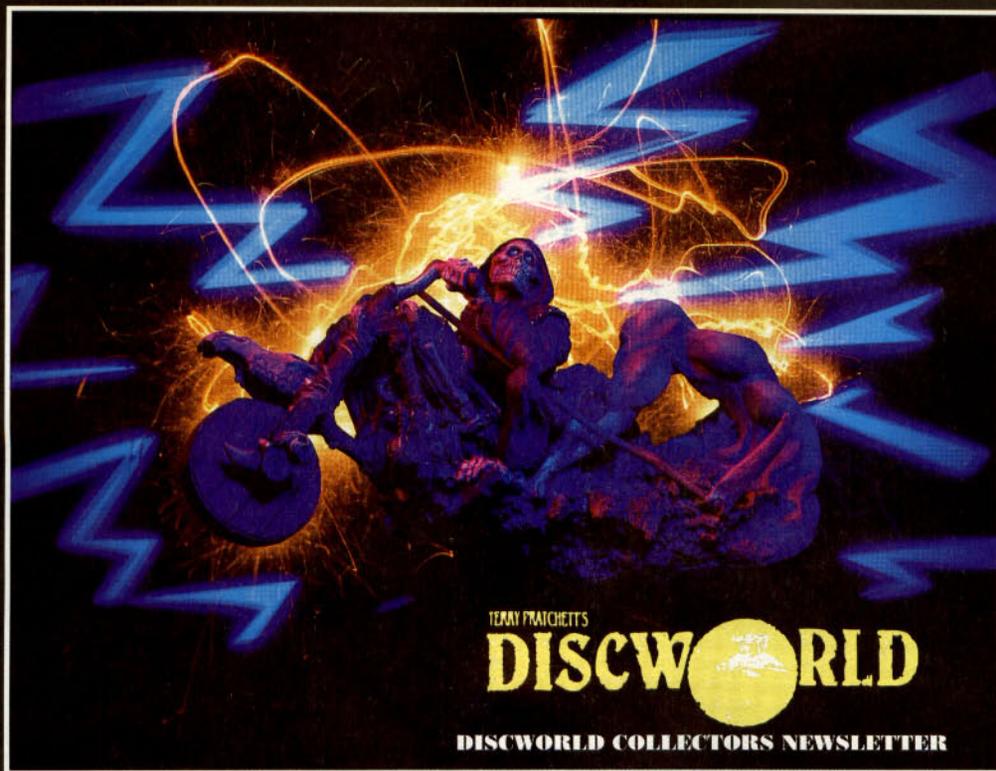
Graphics Modes Supported: VGA

Sound Cards Supported: SoundBlaster and compatibles, Pro Audio Spectrum, AdLib

Controls: Joystick, mouse, keyboard

Price: £49.99 Release Date: Out now

Publisher: Megatech Tel: 0101 310 539 9177



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 E-Mail to dan@warren.dungeon.com

Name: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

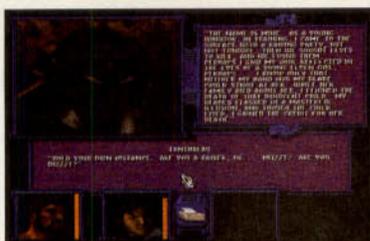
Address: _____

Your favourite character: _____

Post Code: _____

Have you seen these Miniatures before ? **Yes/No**

Offer is limited to the first 20,000 replies.
 One miniature per household



(Left) Here's me chatting to Drizzt. The digitised voices are good but there's very little depth to each encounter.

Is it a cough medicine? Or a role-playing game? We gave it to Andrew Wright – a sad, pathetic bloke who gets his kicks out of Benylin and Tunes.

MOST GAMES companies, when they release the follow up to a good game, go for the imaginative approach when it comes to the name. Let's face it, *Doom 2* tells you all you need to know, doesn't it? Of course, it's just possible that if the original was a load of crap, a new name might disguise it from the gullible games-buying public. But let's not be too cynical 'cos lo and behold, *Menzoberranzan* (*Menzo*) is the follow up to *Ravenloft*. Better interface, different plot, same approach.

For those of you who missed it, *Ravenloft* was a thoroughly unremarkable role-playing game that uses the 2nd edition AD&D rules. You know the story by now – fill the four character slots and toddle off on "ye quest". Oddly enough, that's just what *Menzoberranzan* is too. Okay, it has a few enhancements here and there, and there are more spells and different monsters but, at the end of the day, *Menzo* is really *Ravenloft* revisited.

Pick and click

The game has a stylish, if unpredictable, user interface which has been tidied up a little from the *Ravenloft* original. There are

MENZOBERRANZAN



four character slots for your party of adventurers and a large window into the obligatory three-dimensional world. Two styles of play are allowed – you can turn smoothly through 360 degrees (as in *Ultima Underworld*), or a square at a time (as in

(Below) The inn is where it all starts. I wouldn't bother leaving if I were you – it'll take more than Heineken to refresh this adventure.

Dungeon Master and *Eye Of The Beholder*). The former method looks and feels much more realistic, but it does take up time and processing power. Clicking on the characters' portraits brings up the inventory and information screens, letting you rearrange clothing, items and weapons, see how well they're doing in terms of experience, and so on. On the main adventure screen, weapons, class abilities and spells are readily available and the party is moved using the arrow icons in the lower centre of the screen. In fact, there are two alternative movement methods. You can click inside the main window and then use the mouse to guide the party, or you can use the keys on the numeric keypad. In practice, the latter is by far the best method because you can call up weapons or spells with the mouse at the same time. Occasional actions, such as resting, regaining spells and saving the game, are made available by clicking the buttons in the top corners of the screen.

The interface isn't entirely without its troubles, however. Picking up and using items is made much more difficult than it should be by requiring a double right click rather than the more intuitive left click.

Drinking potions and reading scrolls is pretty erratic – if you happen to click wrongly in the middle of combat, the potion can easily go flying off into the middle distance or pop back into someone's backpack. It takes quite a bit of practice.

Combat in the game is carried on using the mouse. Simply click on the enemy and the various characters will hack and slash all over the place until whatever it is falls over and becomes a puddle on the floor. You can also add spells but they're not exactly dramatic. In fact, running into a minor monster is just plain annoying as you have to take a few swipes to get rid of it. Wandering into a pack of them is a recipe for RSI of the right forefinger.



RANZAN



A spot of elf bashing

SSI has chosen plot number 3A for this game. In other words, it's off into the badlands to rescue your mates who have been captured by the evil drow or dark elves. You start off in a village, which is under attack by the same drow, and have to pursue the raiders down into the Underdark to the city of Menzoberranzan.

Beginning with two characters, you generate yourself. The first thing to do is wander abroad in search of someone else to take

with you. Added to the game are ranger and thief abilities, such as Hear Noise, Hide in Shadows and Backstab, plus the characters can gain the ability to fly, levitate and jump when necessary.

Unfortunately, you don't have any real choice about how to go about things. The game has to follow the plot that's laid down, and in this respect it can become a bit mindless. Do this dungeon, do that one, collect the whatsit, head back there, and so on. In the end though,

there's only one way of doing things. For instance, to enter the Underdark you need enchanted gems or you'll die of radiation poisoning. The gems lie in a cave near the village and you have to defeat the inhabitants, take the gems to the local crackpot mage and then head into the depths. This sounds fine, but sadly the game won't allow you into the lower realms until you have the gems. So much for freedom of action, eh?

Other things annoyed me too - the village is still burning if you return to it several days later and you even get the same conversation with the inhabitants. Apparently you're supposed to help put the fire out, but that's about as much fun as cutting

(Above) The auto-mapping feature is a real bonus - you can even annotate it yourself. In fact, if you don't you'll never find your way out some of the places ever again...

someone else's toenails.

To add insult to injury, as far as the keen RPG-er is concerned, each area of the map has finite boundaries. Wander out of the village and into the wilderness and whichever way you turn you'll come up against the cliff that surrounds the whole area. This doesn't matter quite as much in the dungeons but the maze-like way these levels are designed, without any rhyme or reason to them, makes them border on being plain boring.

Interaction with non-player characters is, to be honest, a bit sad. That's if you call three-line conversations "interaction". I don't. The first bloke you meet is Drizzt, a born-again drow. As he's a 15th level Ranger he's well worth having along. Other NPCs include a talking sparrow thingy and a centaur, either of which fill up the fourth slot quite happily.

As a game system, SSI's offering isn't bad, though. It's slick, reasonably fast and rather pretty to look at. Unfortunately, those elements don't make it a good game overall, unless you like adventuring in a straight-jacket. It's too rigidly plotted without any real sense of atmosphere or interaction. **Z**

"The village is still burning if you return to it days later and you even get the same conversations."

IN PERSPECTIVE

Tries to be *Ultima Underworld* and fails miserably. Even the outdated *Dungeon Master* manages to offer more excitement.

Ultima Underworld

Dungeon Master

Menzoberranzan



(Left) It's the inventory screen - a well-designed and polished affair.

68

SCORE

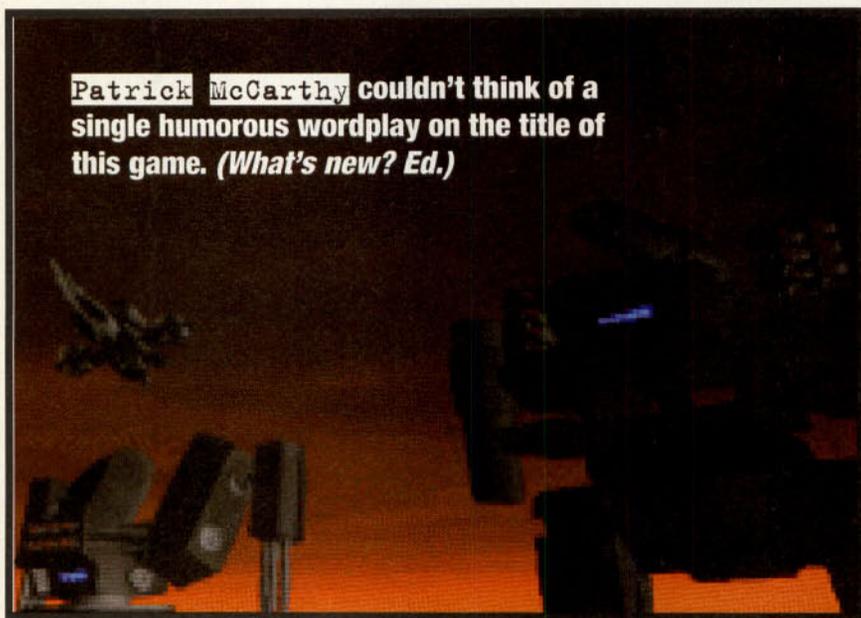
A case of dumb dungeoneering stylishly put together, but lacks any role-playing feel.

- Minimum Memory:** 4MB RAM
- Minimum Processor:** 386DX (DOS 5 or later)
- Hard Disk Space Required:** 13 MB
- Graphics Modes Supported:** VGA
- Sound Cards Supported:** All major sound cards supported
- Controls:** Mouse or keyboard
- Price:** £TBA **Release Date:** Out now
- Publisher:** Mindscape **Tel:** 0444 246333



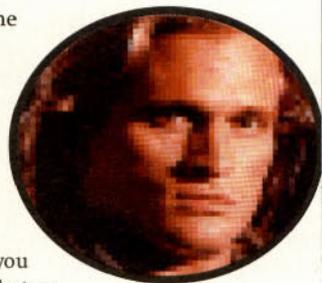
Metaltech

Patrick McCarthy couldn't think of a single humorous wordplay on the title of this game. (*What's new? Ed.*)



the floor and generally playing the lackey, and decides instead to wipe out the human race.

And this is where you come in. A small band of rather foolhardy humans has decided to make a stand against the mighty warmongering machines – probably to impress some chick, or something – and you enrol as a pilot. Well, it's either that or get a job in Burger King. The question is can you overthrow the demonic creations from the pits of some sick scientists' minds, or will you get wiped out before you've even switched the ignition on?



Wrecks on legs

What you'll be piloting is, in effect, a gigantic tank with legs. Quite why they wanted to put the thing on legs is beyond me – let's face it, it's the first thing anyone's going to shoot at, isn't it? But we've already established that scientists are fools. Like a tank, there's a main turret which can swivel independently of the direction you're travelling. Like a starfighter from *X-Wing*, there's also a central power supply which can be adjusted and directed to wherever you feel it's needed most – extra oomph to the particle beam, more zap to the pulse cannon, more power to the cigar lighter, or whatever. Also, like a starfighter, the operational direction of the shields can be adjusted. (More shield power behind when you're running away is always handy.) And like a flight sim, there's a Head Up Display to show your waypoint, turret orientation, target lock, etc.; a Head Down Display to show the status of your HERC and communicate with other HERCs in your squad (assuming you haven't allowed them all to be wiped out already).

DON'T YOU JUST LOVE scientists? When they're not poking sharp bits of metal into hamsters' eyeballs to see if it hurts or not, they're busy fiddling with dangerous things that by rights should earn them a punch in the testicles, but instead, usually gets them an enormous government grant on the off-chance that whatever they're making can be used as a weapon.

It's November 29th, 2471, at half past six, and the scientists have gone and done it again. They've created an artificial intelligence with neural connectors and a biological model. Anyone else would think, "Well, that worked. Well done, everybody, but let's switch it off now, because I seem to remember from watching some old films and playing antique computer games that

these things have an unnerving habit of going awry."

But not a scientist. Scientists are empiricists to their very core. So they stick it into a HERC – a heavily-armoured, battle robot the size of an office block, equipped with more weapons of destruction than the average Third World country. I think we can all guess what happens next. And sure enough, at approximately six thirty-two, the new cybrid decides that it doesn't want to spend its time emptying ashtrays, polishing



The Playing Area

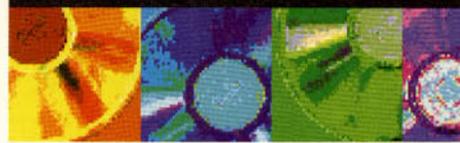
My only gripe with the game is the relatively small playing area. Most of the time you don't notice it, but if, while pursuing a helpless and fleeing cybrid, you were suddenly told that you'd reached the edge of the playing area and to continue would result in your mission being aborted, you'd notice it, wouldn't you? Especially when you can see the aforementioned cybrid waving at you in the distance, out of the playing area. It's not enough that they're bigger, faster and more powerful, but they can also hide outside the playing area. My mood wasn't helped when, turning round in a high dungeon, I was immediately killed by two of his mates who'd been hiding behind a rock.

(Below) The leader of the human resistance – but he's hardly Captain Kirk.





(Left) One of the many HERCs available - Samson, a sturdy, strapping robobabe.

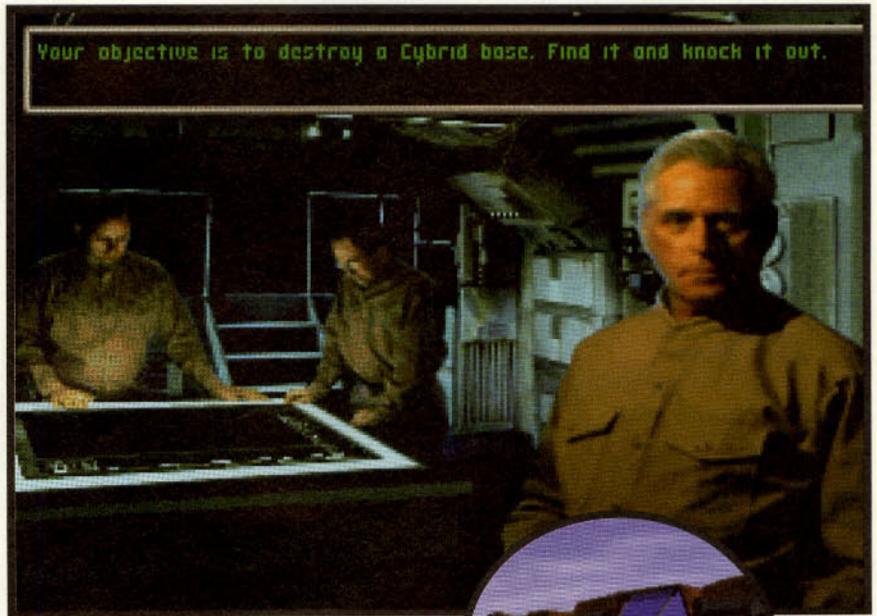


Earthsiege



One-off missions

Like all Dynamix simulations from *Red Baron* onwards, there's a fairly extensive range of ways to customise individual missions to make things as easy or difficult as you like: you can be invulnerable and have unlimited weapons, and still choose from a range of difficulty levels which will operate independently of other selections. (The harder the difficulty, the quicker, more numerous and more intelligent your enemies, and the greater their rate of fire.) You can decide whether it's a day, dusk or night mission, and what the level of visibility is like. More importantly, you can select any HERC to carry out the mission - you're not just stuck with the lightweight, crappy ones, you can go for anything from the nippy but vulnerable Roadrunner, right up



to the gigantic, lumbering and aptly-named Colossus. The cockpit layout differs from machine to machine. You can load any combination of weapons onto them (as long as the structure has room for them). And you can choose the type of mission - patrol, reconnaissance, scramble, or whatever.

Campaign mode

In Campaign mode, you're in trouble, basically. The wide range of HERCs available to you in the one-off mission modes are nowhere to be seen. This is because the human resistance forces have no way to make the machines, so are forced to make do with what they can get - and what they can get are the two crappiest machines available. They're light and fast, but have little strength compared to some of the heavy-firing, gargantuan monsters you'll be facing. And because they're so relatively light themselves, the armaments they can carry are reduced to cannons and the odd laser - in other words: few, not especially heavy-hitting, and basic.

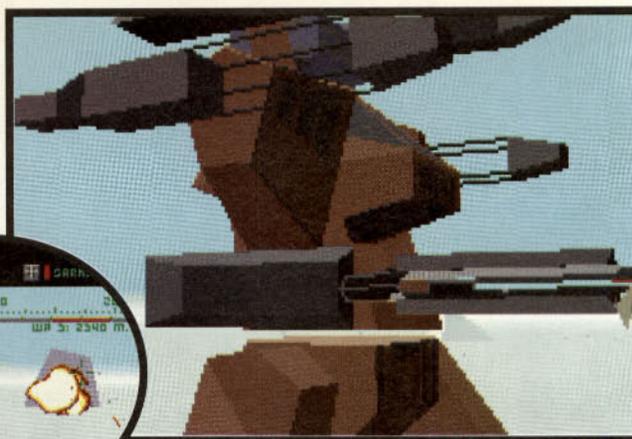
The only way to improve matters is to salvage parts and technology from the cybrids you take out. Unfortunately, this tends to go against every rule of survival: if someone's shooting at you with a big cannon, it's a good idea to shoot the cannon yourself. But this means one less gun to

(Below) Preparing for an almighty scrap with a metal mutha.



(Right) See that! That's you that is. Sitting there inside that mass of heaving, shaking metal.

(Below) You'll never have to worry about parking in the city ever again. In fact, park where you like.



Firing Chains

One of the nice touches in the game is that weapons can be set to fire in a certain order with the flick of a switch. For example, you might want to fire off a blast with the particle beam, then follow up with a few million rounds of cannon fire while it re-charges. Or a quick go with the electromagnetic pulse cannon followed by several with the lasers and a nice volley of missiles. There are three customisable firing chains (weapons can also be fired individually, of course) which can be altered on the fly.



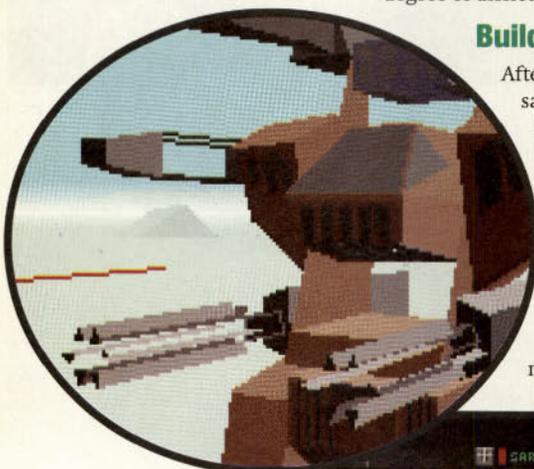
salvage. The ideal approach is to shoot at their legs (see? I told you) so that they're disabled and the resistance can grab as much stuff as possible from the fallen mess. And this is where it gets tricky: first of all, even the big cybrids seem to be as fast-moving as you. They're also bigger, more numerous, more heavily armoured and have better weaponry. (That job in Burger King is still going if you've changed your

(Above) Shoot at their legs and watch 'em tumble. Then go and salvage what's left, take it back to base and make something new. It's a bit like being a Womble really.

mind.) Anyway, this means you don't really have the time to stand around, aiming carefully at their legs; if you do, it won't be long before your much-prized HERC is only fit for recycling into beer cans. This means the Career mode has quite a high degree of difficulty.

Building

After each mission, the amount of salvage your squad collected is given to you in numerical terms. (It operates more like a unit of currency than a collection of actual body parts.) The Build screen is where you use the stuff to create new HERCs; the amount needed to build the next machine in the upgrade process is shown, along with how much you've got. It's the only way



you're going to get a better one, and even then, some of the salvage will be needed to repair damage to the HERCs already being used. The damage indication screen is extensive, to say the least, covering everything from legs and weapons to on-board toasters and nasal hair trimmers. The damage accrued is always logical, both on your own and on enemy cybrids, with external systems being written off before internal ones (one of the function keys gives you a rough estimate of the enemy's damage during combat, so that you can target your attacks effectively).

"The damage indication screen is extensive, covering everything from legs and weapons to nasal hair trimmers."

War is heck

Basically, that's it. Your progress in the game affects the success of the human resistance forces, and it will take a great deal of invested time and effort to win through in the end.

The sound effects are extremely effective - among the best I've heard for "blow-uppy" noises - and the graphics are pretty good for the machine shapes, even if the buildings and hills still look a bit polygon-like. The movement of the various machines is well done, and there are few more satisfying sights than seeing a cybrid slump to its... er, hips I suppose... after you've blown its legs off. It has good attention to detail, plenty of game life and is good blasting fun. ☑



SCORE

The best of the bunch in terms of gameplay and presentation.

(Above left) The bigger your HERC the more weapons it can carry.

(Left) Don't shoot your buddies, or they get really upset and say things like "Watch your target sir!" Understatement or what?

Minimum Memory: 4Mb RAM

Minimum Processor: 386DX33
(486DX33MHz recommended)

Hard Disk Space Required: 8Mb

Graphics Modes Supported: VGA

Sound Cards Supported: All major sound cards

Controls: Keyboard, Joystick, Thrustmaster

Price: £39.99 Release Date: Out Now

Publisher: Sierra Tel: 0734 303322

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Realms of Arkania Star Trail



YOU KNOW you are getting old when the policemen start looking younger, so they say. It's worse with me. I've started drinking a cup of coffee in front of the TV while the pubs are open. I've even started listening to *The Archers*. And if that's not proof enough, I've just found an RPG game I actually enjoyed playing. There is no hope.

Now I talk about character generation. I tell people how all good stories are a quest really. I know the difference between the various sorts of elves, for Pete's sake. It's all the fault of *Star Trail*, part two of *Realms Of Arkania*.

Realms Of Arkania was a stunning piece of work when it appeared in September 1993. Massive and complex, it kept our then resident RPGer busy, or at least quiet, for a month. Obviously it kept its programmers quiet for a while too because the sequel, *Star Trail*, has just appeared.

It's reassuringly like the original, but there have been some major improvements under the surface. The dialogue system is better, with a nice keyword approach. The fighting is better and so is the



(Above) The *Star Trail* creatures go clubbing.



travelling. Oh, and with the CD version we now have characters who talk, belch and go "Uuuurgh!".

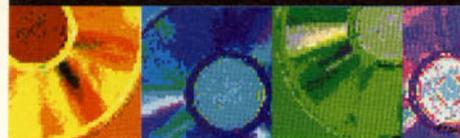
Searching for stones

So what's it all about? In the first episode - *Blade Of Destiny* - you had to find a magic sword that would put the Orcs to flight. It wasn't that simple because the sword was in pieces and so was your map. It gave the game a certain challenge. Now, in *Star Trail*, you are searching for the Salamander Stone. This was made to celebrate the alliance of the elves and the dwarves which defeated the Orcs (this was another battle, another Orc uprising). The stones have become lost, the elves and dwarves have fallen out and...





(Left) Time to name your beefcake and give him some qualities, like intelligence perhaps.



wouldn't you just know it? There is another Orc uprising. Good lord, it's worse than the prisons.

Right at the beginning there is a moral conundrum. An elvish ambassador asks you to find the stones and take them to the dwarf ngramosch. (I got home that night late and said: "Sorry I'm so late, I was talking to an elvish ambassador." I can't describe the look I got.) Then an evil looking merchant asks you to get the stones for him, for cash down. Of course the Mr Nice Guy/Gal approach is the right one. You can't be a shit in Middle Earth.

Like in all RPGs you have to assemble a team. And, like the cop movies, you can make it hard or easy for yourself. You can create every character from scratch or you can just use the computer's selection. One of the great things about this game and its predecessor is that you can swap between the two levels of difficulty - Novice and Advanced - any time you feel like it.

You start in the town of Kvirasim. The game comes with a huge coloured map, so you know that it's wise to stock up with food and weapons before you start your epic journey.

"On your journey, you'll come across various characters. Always try to get involved in a fight."

gave up counting at 53) and you have to learn which ones are feasible and prudent for any given situation.

There are also gods - 12 major ones - and you may find yourself in one of their temples (you start off in one). Giving offerings to the god will help you. In a tight clinch you may even get a miracle.

Fighting with magic

While on your journey, you will come across various characters and scenes of trouble.

Always try to get involved in a fight. You often learn most from damsels in distress.

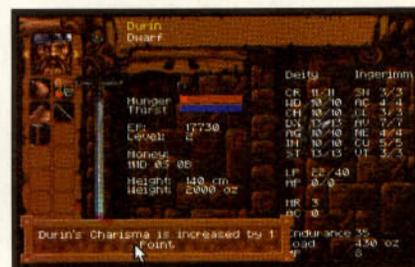
The combat screen is like the original, an isometric perspective. You can control all your warriors yourself or let the computer take control of all of them or all but one. In every fight you get the choice of using magic. Save the game before you decide because the magic takes some getting used to and the first encounters will be with people who are much better at it than you.

Otherwise you will come across cheerful elves, wandering hunters, unemployed astrologers and the like. When you speak to them leave the contentious subjects (Orcs, elves and dwarves) until last.

One good thing about this game is that it's non-linear. If you make a mistake, you can often go back and correct it. Tasks can be done in any reasonable order.

The 3D display is very good in a sort of *Ultima Underworld* way and the interface is generally good. I had a few bad experiences at first, but that's because I rarely use the right mouse button. It's an RPG so it's not a quick start game. You are going to have to read the manual. Apart from anything else there are dozens of icons and they take some learning. The game will let you do all but the most stupid things (like camping in a lake), and a little "Are you sure?" dialogue box will pop up before you do anything irrevocable.

In case you haven't guessed, I really enjoyed this game. It might be a bit big and complex for RPG novices, but it is very user friendly and you can get the computer to do a lot of the work. For serious RPGers it's a must, of course. Now I must get back to my cocoa and *The Archers*. You know, I saw a policeman today and you would think... Z



(Above) Durin The Dwarf's vital statistics.

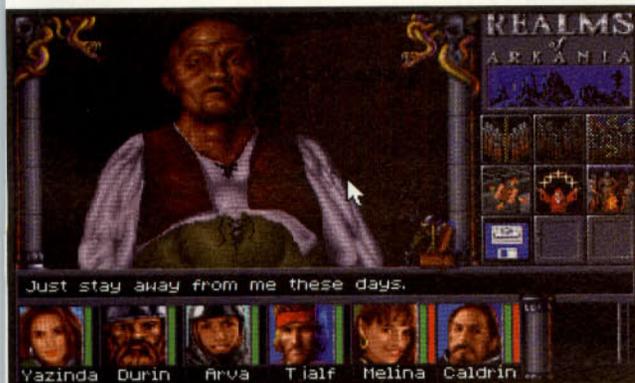


SCORE

Slightly old-fashioned looking, but it's got what it takes.

- Minimum Memory: 2Mb RAM
- Minimum Processor: 486 - 33
- Hard Disk Space Required: 30Mb
- Graphics Modes Supported: 256 colour VGA
- Sound Cards Supported: All major cards
- Controls: Mouse

Price: £44.99 Release Date: Out now
 Publisher: US Gold Tel: 0121 606 1800





(Left) Oh no! It's...er... the Jolly Green Giant?

Doom Clones Head to Head

Doom clones: head to head. Starring *Virtuoso* (ooh!) and *Fortress of Dr Radiaki* (aah!). "Mirror mirror, on the wall, who's the most Doom-like of them all?," asks

Chris Anderson.

Sounding off

The music and sound effects in the *Doom* games contribute as much to the brooding atmosphere the games create as the graphics. The designers of *Virtuoso* obviously disagree with me on this one. It has an utterly crap American nerd-rock soundtrack that will drive you mad after about 60 seconds, and sound effects that are, at best, passable. *Dr Radiaki* may look like *Doom* but it certainly doesn't sound like it. Strange Spanish persons utter even stranger Spanish noises when you shoot them, and the music is way too jolly for this type of game. These are the scores for the music and sound effects in each game:

| | |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Dr Radiaki | 10 |
| Virtuoso | 4 |

Storytime

We're now on to the plots. A good storyline is not the most important element in a computer game, but it can help to set the atmosphere. *Dr Radiaki* takes a humorous approach, with its tale of the mad doctor himself threatening to nuke the world unless he gets a billion dollars from the UN. You've got to go to his island, get inside his fortress and "sort him out". And if you think that sounds boring, you won't believe the plot for *Virtuoso*. You play the role of a rock star who is so successful that he can't walk outside his hotel room without getting mobbed to death by millions of fans. Cut off from the rest of the world, he sits in his hotel room and plays a Virtual Reality game called (you guessed it) *Virtuoso*. So, nothing to set the world alight in the plot department for either game then. The plot scores are:

| | |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Dr Radiaki | 10 |
| Virtuoso | 3 |

(Above) Baseball, anyone?

BARELY A MONTH GOES BY without a new *Doom* clone turning up at the office. But how good are they? How close to the original classic do they get? In this review, we will pitch the two latest pretenders to the "Doom throne" directly against *Doom* itself to see how they get on. We'll look at all the millions of ways in which these games are just like *Doom* and score them on their own merits, too. We'll give them a score out of 20 for each section and tot up their final score out of a hundred at the end. Get the gist? Good, let's start off with the graphics.

Looks familiar?

Dr Radiaki looks very *Doom*-like indeed. In fact, when one of our advertising people saw it, he shouted excitedly "Is that *Doom* 2?" Well, no, it isn't, but the scenery graphics look so spookily *Doom*-esque that you could be forgiven for thinking that it was. They don't look as atmospheric as the graphics in *Doom*, though. As for *Virtuoso*. Oh dear. The graphics in *Virtuoso* are positively grim. The walls look garish and the sprites are laughable. The main hero (the guy you play) is depicted in the game, so you can see him at all times. He tries his best to look cool but doesn't quite pull it off. So then, here's the scores out of 20 for the graphics in each game:

| | |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Dr Radiaki | 14 |
| Virtuoso | 8 |





(Left) Witness the graphics of yesteryear in *Virtuoso*.



It's all in the game

It's the big one – gameplay is what it's all about, and any game that can match the gameplay in the *Doom* games is on to a winner. *Dr Radiaki* tries very hard to be like *Doom* in this department, but fails miserably. Okay, there's switch pressing in it and it has a map just like the one in *Doom*, but *Dr Radiaki* has fatal flaws. Lining up targets is a nightmare. You cannot control your character precisely enough, so by the time you get the nasties in your sights, they've already shot you to pieces. Also, the map is really crap and the keyboard keys are not re-definable, so you end up using the weird configuration that it comes with. *Dr Radiaki* does have some neat touches, though. You get to bash people with a baseball bat; the nasties look good, even close up (specially the Ninjas who throw ladders at you); but overall, the gameplay is distinctly average.

Virtuoso is like *Doom* in as much as you go around shooting at things, but that's where the similarity ends. There are keys you have to find before you can access certain locations; you kill nasties (robots etc.); you find exits and so on; but it hardly matters because after about an hour you get totally bored out of your mind by the repetitive and un-exciting gameplay. The gameplay scores are:

| | |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Dr Radiaki | 11 |
| Virtuoso | 5 |



In the long run...

This is the part where I determine whether or not each game gives you as much value for your money as the *Doom* games do. Let's start with *Virtuoso*. Now let me see, I played it for a number of hours but that's only because I had to. You, on the other hand, don't have to review it, so I expect you'll play it for about half an hour and decide it's crap. *Dr Radiaki* – if you can put up with the annoying control system – will probably keep you busy for a few hours.

Here's how the games score in the value-for-money stakes.

| | |
|-------------------|----------|
| Dr Radiaki | 9 |
| Virtuoso | 5 |

Almost done

Well, our quest to find out which of the games under review is the best *Doom*-clone is almost over. All we need to do is tot up all the scores and see what we've got. Here then, is the overall "Doom-score" out of a hundred for each one.

| | |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Dr Radiaki | 55 |
| Virtuoso | 25 |

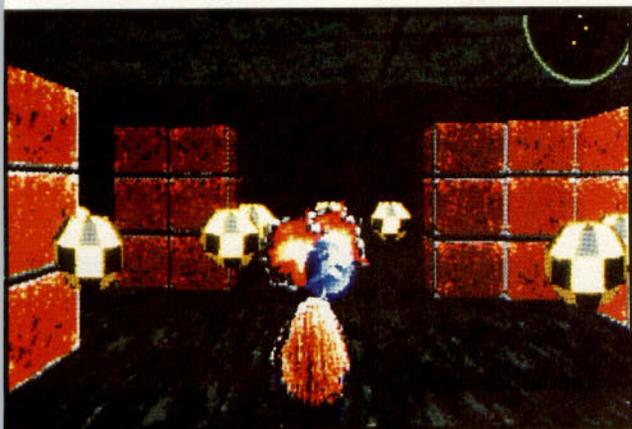
The verdict

Well, *Fortress of Dr Radiaki* is definitely no *Doom*-beater but it saw off *Virtuoso* without any problem. If you really want a *Doom*-type game to beat them all, you really can't do better than buying *Doom* itself. If you've got that already (and *Doom 2*) and want to try something a bit different, give *Quarantine* a go (reviewed issue 22). Failing that, wait for *Dark Forces*, the new 3D shoot 'em up from LucasArts, which wipes the floor with the whole lot of them. ☒

(Above left) Blimey, it's a killer toaster. Weird, man.

(Left) Our hero takes out his frustration on some Virtual Reality diamonds. Whacky!

(Below) Time for a spot of Dalek bashing.



SCORE

***Virtuoso*: Looks awful and plays just as bad.**

Minimum Memory: 4Mb
Minimum Processor: 486DX33
Hard Disk Space Required: 3Mb
Graphics Modes Supported: VGA
Sound Cards Supported: SoundBlaster and compatibles
Controls: Joystick, control pad
Price: £39.99 **Release Date:** Out now
Publisher: Elite **Tel:** 0922 55852

SCORE

***Fortress of Dr Radiaki*: Rather disappointingly average shoot 'em up with an awkward control system.**

Minimum Memory: 4Mb
Minimum Processor: 386DX33
Hard Disk Space Required: 1Mb
Graphics Modes Supported: VGA
Sound Cards Supported: SoundBlaster and compatibles, Awe32, Pro Audio Spectrum, Roland Sound Canvas
Controls: Mouse, keyboard
Price: £39.99 **Release Date:** Out now
Publisher: Merit **Tel:** 091 385 7755

PC UPGRADE PART 1

David Matheson wakes up, his eyes full of sleepy gunge, thinking about last night. His head is filled with images of cavorting around plush night-spots with top models, driving home to his country mansion in his red Porche, and partying until dawn...



DAM! - IT WAS JUST another dream. Oh well, at least I can do the next best thing and sit around all day playing *Magic Carpet* on my new Pentiu... hang on... At this point, you wake up properly and realise that you are the proud owner of a 486SX/20 with an 80MB hard disk, and frankly, you're going to get more excitement taking the hamster for a walk.

The problem is that, even if you could fit any decent games on to your disk, they'll still be rubbish. Game's developers these days don't care about us (well, they do a bit but it doesn't show). They want to give us the best graphics they can manage, the most gut-wrenching sound effects, and the most elaborate intro-scenes, and to do



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(Right) You can only enjoy the SVGA glory of games like US Navy Fighters on a pretty high-spec machine. On anything less than a 486/66 you'll have to settle for a far less impressive resolution.



his, the games need to be played on decent hardware. Although many games claim to run on a 486SX, the harsh reality is that you really are going to have to do a lot better than this.

By now you're probably ready to reach for the razor blades, but don't fret, as over the next three months we'll be showing you how to upgrade your humble old PC into a games machine to be proud of.

The best things in life... COST!

Extremely bloody obvious fact: The more money you spend, the better things will be. Whoever it was that said that the best things in life are free, obviously didn't own a crappy PC. So be prepared to beg, steal or borrow the necessary readies. To show you how it's done, we're going to upgrade a particularly nasty machine that's sitting in the PC Zone office, by spending sums of about £200, £500 and £1000 on it. This machine-with-no-friends is a 486sx/25 with an ISA bus, an 80MB hard disk, a tossy old VGA card, 4MB of RAM and no sound card or CD-ROM drive.

The kind of games that will run on a machine like this are basically *old* ones. While *Doom* will work, basically, but the screen will have to be reduced in size to squeeze a decent frame rate out of it, and any game with 3D-graphics will have to be played with most of the detail turned off. You could play arcade or platform games on it, but the lack of a sound card means that the average Megadrive owner is better equipped, while games such as *Magic Carpet*, *Little Big Adventure* and *US Navy Fighters* are going to sit up and sneer at your pathetic efforts.

Okay, you should be feeling pretty darn inadequate by now, but fear not as this is where things start to pick up. I'm now going to tell you how to spend your first two hundred quid.

Upgrades up to £200

A severely underrated aspect of many games is the sound effects. A couple of years ago, the best that you could expect were a few bleepy sounds from the PC's internal speaker, but, happily, you can now buy a sound card capable of playing back digitised sounds and music that fits into one of your PC's expansion slots. Although 16-bit wavetable cards give better quality, many games still don't take advantage of their extra features, and if you're skint you can spend about £40 on an 8-bit effort (SoundBlaster 2 compatible) that'll do the job pretty well. If you want stereo sound, then you might think about spending an extra £25 on a SoundBlaster Pro compatible card, as this means that each sample won't

just cut out when the next one is played.

Of course, there's no point in having loads of lush sounds if you're being driven mad by Jerk-O-Vision, and the only solution to this is to take the potentially scary step of upgrading your processor. The best way to forget your fears is to find a mate with a faster machine than yours, let them show you some games, and you'll be on the phone to your local CPU vendor before the smug grin has vanished from their face.

Upgrading a CPU is pretty much a matter of extracting the old one and plugging the new one in. However, if you want to upgrade from a 20 or 25MHz chip to a 33 or 66, you'll need to make sure that your motherboard can run at 33MHz (486DX2/66 chips run internally at 66MHz, but 33MHz externally). To do this, you'll need to check the manuals that came with your PC, and probably change a jumper switch or two. We'll be covering this kind of thing in more detail in the next couple of issues, but if you've lost your manuals, or the idea of mucking about too much fills you with dread, you can still upgrade to a DX2/50 with a simple replacement. Typical prices for processors are £115 for a DX2/50 and £150 for a DX2/66, so after paying VAT you'll still have a bit of change from £200.

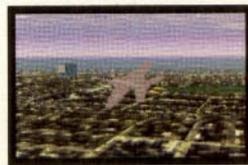
The other major pain is that of the "poxy hard disk". Many games' programmers these days seem to have mates that own disk factories, or so it would seem from the endless very pretty but completely-sodding-useless animations that they love padding their games out with. The upshot of all this is that most games take up at least 10MB, and an 80MB drive is going to fill up quicker than the trousers of a 17-year old rookie in combat for the first time.



(Above) A pile of cack: This is the machine that we'll be using to test the theory that you CAN make a silk purse out of a pig's ear - if you've got a few hundred quid to spare, that is.

The good news here is that hard drive prices are falling drastically, and you can now get a 210MB unit for £110 or a 528MB drive for £180. As with CPU upgrades, you'll need to check your existing set-up, and you may have to spend an extra £20 on another disk controller. Again, don't worry about details for now as in the next couple of issues we'll be completely overhauling our test machine and dragging it kicking and screaming into 1995. ■

(Right) While you can run games like *Doom 2* and *US Navy Fighters* on slow machines, you're going to have to make some compromises on the graphics front if you want to avoid total Jerk-O-Vision.





PC ZONE READER'S SURVEY **COMPETITION**



THOSE SPLENDID people at Creative Labs are helping us celebrate our 2nd birthday by giving you the chance to win a 3DO-Blaster Multi-media Kit and loads of multi-media gear.

Now, all you have to do is complete the questionnaire opposite and send it off to us at the address shown, to reach us by the 31st March, 1995. You will then automatically be entered into our special anniversary prize draw where you can win any one of the following fabulous prizes:

FIRST PRIZE
SECOND PRIZE
THIRD PRIZE

A Complete 3DOBlaster Multimedia Kit

Two Creative Labs Multimedia Kits

Three Creative Labs SoundBlaster 16 sound cards

Winners will be notified by post and will be announced in the June issue of *PC Zone*.

This competition is not open to employees of Dennis Publishing or Creative Labs. *PC Zone* cannot accept any responsibility for loss or return of entries.



WIN! WIN! WIN!
Ya'self a 3DOBlaster and heaps of Creative Labs gear!

ABOUT YOUR HARDWARE

1) What kind of processor does your PC have? (Tick only one in home and one in work (if applicable); if you have more than one PC, tick the one you usually use for playing games on)

| | Home | Work |
|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 386SX | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 386DX | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 486SX | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 486DX | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 486DX/2 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 486DX/4 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Pentium | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other processor | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

2) Which of the following bus slot types are fitted in your computer? (Tick all applicable)

| | Home | Work |
|----------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| ISA | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| MCA | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| EISA | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Vesa LB | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| PCI LB | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do what? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

3) How big is your hard disk in Mb?

Home Work

Enter RAM size in Mb _____
Please enter '0' if you don't have a hard disk

4) In total, how much RAM (memory) do you have fitted?

Home Work

Enter disk size in Mb _____
If you have less than 1Mb RAM, for example 640K, please enter '0'

5) What was the last computer or games console you used regularly for games?

This is my first computer/games console

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Another PC | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Commodore Amiga | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Atari ST | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sinclair Spectrum | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Commodore C64 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sega MegaDrive | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Super Nintendo | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Philips CD-i | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Some other games console | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Some other computer | <input type="checkbox"/> |

WHAT YOU BUY

6) Are you intending to replace your computer in the next 12 months?

| | Home | Work |
|----------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Not sure | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

7) If yes, what do you intend to buy?

| | Home | Work |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 486SX | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 486DX | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 486DX/2 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 486DX/4 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Pentium | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other processor | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other computer or games console | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

8) Are you intending to upgrade your existing computer in the next 12 months?

| | Home | Work |
|----------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Not sure | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

9) Do you have a CD-ROM drive?

| | Home | Work |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Yes, but I intend to replace it soon | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No, but I intend to buy one | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

10) Do you have a joystick?

| | Home | Work |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Yes, but I intend to replace it soon | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No, but I intend to buy one | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

11) Do you have a modem?

| | Home | Work |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Yes, but I intend to replace it soon | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No, but I intend to buy one | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

12) Do you have a graphic accelerator card?

| | Home | Work |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Yes, but I intend to replace it soon | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No, but I intend to buy one | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

13) Do you have a soundcard?

| | Home | Work |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Yes, but I intend to replace it soon | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No, but I intend to buy one | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

14) Do you have an MPEG playback card?

| | Home | Work |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Yes, but I intend to replace it soon | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No, but I intend to buy one | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

15) How much do you intend to spend on hardware for your PC over the next year?

| | Home | Work |
|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Nothing | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Up to £299 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| £300 - £599 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| £600 - £999 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| £1,000 - £1,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| £2,000 - £4,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| £5,000 or more | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

16) On average how much do you spend on PC games in 3 months?

| | Home | Work |
|--------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Up to £49 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| £50 - £99 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| £100 - £199 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| £200 - £399 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| £400 or over | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

17) If you have a CD-ROM, do you still buy any games on HD?

| | |
|-----|--------------------------|
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No | <input type="checkbox"/> |

18) How many games do you own?

Enter number of floppy disk games:
Bought Pirated

Enter number of CD-ROM games:
Bought Pirated

*The data for this question analysed separately is not linked in any way to your name

19) Which of the following most influences your decision to buy a game?

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Subject matter/genre | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Packaging | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Review in PC Zone | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Review in other magazines | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Review on TV/Radio | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Word of mouth/Comments on BBSs | <input type="checkbox"/> |

20) Have you ever bought a product as a result of reading a review in PC Zone?

| | |
|-----|--------------------------|
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No | <input type="checkbox"/> |

WHAT YOU DO WITH YOUR PC

21) Approximately what percentage of time spent on your PC is taken up with playing games?

| | Home | Work |
|-------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 76-100% | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 51-75% | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26-50% | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 25% or less | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

22) What else do you use your home PC for? (Please tick all that apply)

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Education/Information | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Design/Graphics | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Music | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Programming | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Home/personal finance/organisation | <input type="checkbox"/> |

23) Are you on-line?

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Internet | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| CompuServe | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| CIX | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No, but I intend to soon | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No | <input type="checkbox"/> |

PC ZONE !! WIN !! WIN !!

What types of game do you play?
(Please tick all that apply)

| | Home | Work |
|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Simulations | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Arcade games | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| RPGs | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Graphic adventures | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Strategy games | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sports games | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I only play Doom | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Please indicate your favourite software publisher listed below

- Activision
- Domark
- Electronic Arts
- Empire
- Gametek
- Gremlin
- Interplay
- MicroProse
- Microsoft
- Mindscape
- Ocean
- Psygnosis
- Sierra
- US Gold
- Virgin

WHAT YOU THINK OF MAGAZINES

Do you buy PC Zone:

CD issue HD issue

| | CD issue | HD issue |
|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| On subscription | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Every month | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Most months | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Regularly | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Occasionally | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

How many other people read your copy of PC Zone?

- None
- 1
- 2
- 3
- More than 3

On a scale of 1 to 5, how do the following elements affect your decision to buy PC Zone? (1: little or no influence, 5: very influential)

- Contents of cover disk
- Cover
- Review content
- Preview content
- Features
- Competitions
- Tips

29) How would you rate the following sections of PC Zone on a scale of 1 to 5?

(1: crap, 5: excellent)

| | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| News | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Blueprints (Previews) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Cover Disk pages | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Features | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Troubleshooter (Tips) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Games Reviews | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Hardware Reviews (New) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Bits & PCs (Tech stuff) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Off The Boards (Shareware) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mr Cursor | <input type="checkbox"/> |

30) Which of the following magazines do you buy?

Regularly Occasionally Never

| | CD | HD | CD | HD | CD | HD |
|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| PC Format | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| PC Review | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| PC Gamer | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| PC Games | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| PC Home | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| PC Power | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| CD-ROM Today | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| CD-ROM Now | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| MPC User | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| CD-ROM Magazine | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Computer Shopper | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Computer Buyer | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| PC Pro | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Home Entertainment | <input type="checkbox"/> |

31) Is PC Zone better, the same or worse in your opinion than the following magazines?

| PC Zone is | Better | Same | Worse |
|------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| PC Format | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| PC Review | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| PC Gamer | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| PC Games | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| PC Home | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| PC Power | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

32) How do you rate our CD-ROM cover disk in relation to other magazines?

| PC Zone is | Better | Same | Worse |
|------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| PC Format | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| PC Review | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| PC Gamer | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| PC Games | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| PC Home | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| PC Power | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

33) How do you rate our HD cover disk in relation to other magazines?

| PC Zone is | Better | Same | Worse |
|------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| PC Format | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| PC Review | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| PC Gamer | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| PC Games | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| PC Home | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| PC Power | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

34) Would you prefer the PC Zone cover CD-ROM to be:

- In a plastic wallet at £3.95
- In a plastic CD case at £4.95

YOURSELF

35) How old are you?

Please enter your age _____

36) What is your sex?

- Male
- Female

37) Do you have children?

- No
- Yes

38) What is your job status?

- Employed/Self Employed
- Student
- Unemployed
- Other

39) What is your annual income?

- Up to £9,999
- £10,000 - £14,999
- £15,000 - £19,999
- £20,000 - £29,999
- £30,000 or more

40) If PC Zone is your favourite magazine, please tell us why. If it isn't, please tell what is and why

41) Please tell us one way we could improve the magazine and one way we could improve the cover disk for you

READER'S SURVEY COMPETITION

To have a chance of winning any of the fabulous Creative Labs prizes on offer you must complete both the Reader's Survey and the following question. Then send the whole lot to:

1994 Reader's Survey
PC Zone
Customer Interface Ltd
Bradley Pavillions
Pear Tree Road
Bradley Stoke North
Bristol BS12 0BQ

Who was the first editor of PC Zone?

- Paul Lakin
- Lord Lucan
- Freddie Mercury

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

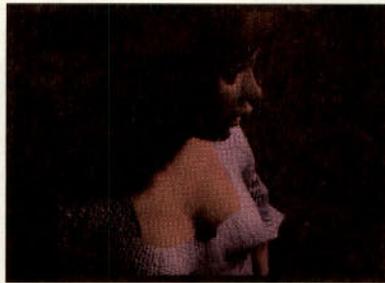
Daytime phone _____

Please indicate here if you do not wish to receive details of further relevant special offers or new products.

We've always wanted to give
Patrick McCarthy hell.
 This was a poor substitute.
 (And that was a
 poor joke. Ed.)



Hell



(Left) For some reason, this young thing thinks that you're oogling at her breasts...can't think why?



banned is lycra.

One or two people have decided enough is enough, and formed underground rebel cells with really snappy names and nice bandanas. It's a risky business, though, because anyone who's caught "sinning" is sent straight to Hell, which turns out to be everything it's cracked up to be. Although it obviously isn't a permanent arrangement, because the city is stuffed to the gills with the walking dead who've been there and back and spend all their time telling everyone else what a nightmare it is.

You come into it round about here, either playing Gideon Ashanti (poncey name, poncey guy) or Rachel Braque, the chick with the unsound taste in T-shirts. Formerly Artificial Reality police, they suddenly find they're being hunted by the very people they used to work for. The Hand wants them dead, and you now have to find out why.



It's 2095, and Washington DC is in a bit of a two-and-eight. Hellspawn stalk the streets, demons slink down the alleys and lapsed nuns hang about in doorways. Why? Because the city has become the place where hell meets earth. There's probably a precise term for this, but neither the author of the game's manual nor I know what it is. What can be the cause of this unfettered evil? A too restrictive gun law? People not keeping up with their abortionist-shooting quotas?

Whatever the reason, something had to be done, and the country has been taken over by a right wing extremist, religious political party going by the name of The Hand Of God. Presumably they came to power on the back of a cheating at sport and recreational drugs for all ticket.) Getting right to the root of the problems, they've banned new computer technologies, AI and medical health enhancers. Then they decided they hadn't quite gone far enough, and decided to ban everything else: rival political parties, alcohol, gambling, free speech... the only thing that seems to have escaped being

"Have you ever spoken to a Christian? This game's like being stuck in the kitchen at a party full of Christians."

Stars ahoy

Hell is one of those games that comes with an advert for itself inside the box. Weird thinking, but there you go. On the advert it says "Hell. A cyberpunk thriller starring Hollywood legend Dennis Hopper and the exotic - (ad-speak for black) - Grace Jones."

Unfortunately it sounds like a prime case for invoking Sonia's Law, which explains the inverse proportion between the number of alleged celebrities "starring" in a game and the quality of the game itself. (Incidentally, this law has also been applied successfully to Special Guest Stars and American sitcoms in their third series.)

Shut up

Whichever character you play, the other one tags along with you. You control the characters with a good old point and click interface, and a set of icons that pop up if you move the cursor to the top of the screen. These are fine, as far as they go - it would be



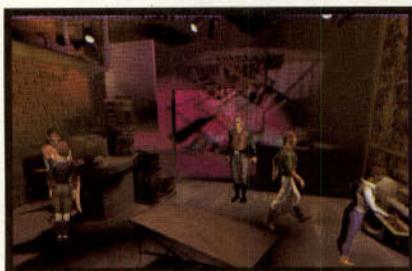
(Far Left) Bars are always good places to meet weird people in. (Left) The kid on the left is possibly the geekiest person in the history of geekdom.



(Far right) Gideon and Rachel attempt, and fail miserably at looking even remotely cool.

(Centre right) Natty headgear is all the rage in the year 2095.

(Right) Hmm... lycra and over-developed abdominal muscles. The future bodes well for health freaks.



It's difficult to get this sort of thing wrong – and everything seems hunky dory. It's when you interact with the first extra character that things start to go downhill.

Just shut up

It's the bloody conversations. They go on, and on, and on, and on. (And on.) Boring, trite, tedious, vacuous and incredibly dull. You have time to walk away, do other things, come back and they'll still be talking. About nothing. Just chatting away about themselves, the weather, the trouble they had getting to work. It's like being stuck in a lift with Ann and Nick. Clearly, whoever wrote the script is practising for some kind of satirical piece on the death of decent conversation. Suddenly, in the middle of it all, I had a horrible flashback to when I once got sent on a training course in the middle of nowhere, and had to spend three days in isolation with eleven people with whom I had absolutely nothing in common. There was someone who clearly thought himself a "character", and everyone else laughed at everything he said. The thing was, compared to them, he was a bit of a wildman. I think he was an accountant. And sitting in front of this game, I was suddenly reminded of the long, nightmarish evening meals in the company of those people.

For heaven's sake, shut up

The game claims 50 hours of playing time. I'd put about 49 of those hours down to sitting in front of the monitor, listening to people waffle on. I know why they've done it, of course. Have you ever

(Below) Your party eventually comprises of four people, each possessing an unremarkable skill.



spoken to a Christian? Well, this game's like being stuck in the kitchen at a party full of Christians.

Shut uuuuuuuuuuuuuuuup!

And basically, there's not much else to the game. I'd go on at some length about what's wrong with it, but after playing this I've had about enough of going on at length. So I'll be brief: You travel around by clicking on a map. You wait for someone to mention another location. (And wait and wait.) They mention one; it becomes selectable on the map; you click on it and there you are. The animated characters in the game move with less spontaneity than the cast of *Stingray*. Their movements are endlessly repetitive. Mouths are out of synch. The dialogue could do with taking a lesson or ten from the likes of *Sam And Max*. Everything is over-verbalised – even the descriptions of characters.

With the growth in religious and political extremism around the world, there's certainly room for a good futuristic thriller based on the Extreme Right coming to power. This isn't it. There was a time, before *Blue Velvet*, when Dennis Hopper could only get crap parts in awful films. He now seems to be reduced to getting the same in awful computer games. I'll shut up. Which is more than anyone in this game ever does.

Ah, the soothing effects of silence. **Z**

SCORE
25
It's not very good.

Minimum Memory: 4MB EMS
Minimum Processor: 386/33 (486/33 recommended)
Hard Disk Space Required: 20Mb
Graphics Modes Supported: VGA
Sound Cards Supported: All major sound cards
Controls: Mouse
Price: £39.99 Release Date: Out now
Publisher: Gametek Tel: 01753 553445

when you

insist on

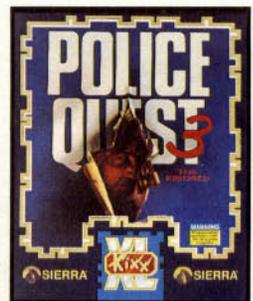
Q

Quality &

CHOICE



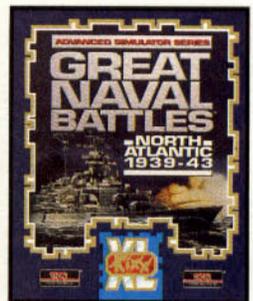
Space Quest™ IV
CBM Amiga,
IBM PC & Compatibles 3.5"
RRP **£16.99**



Police Quest™ 3
CBM Amiga,
IBM PC & Compatibles 3.5"
RRP **£16.99**



Eye of the Beholder III
IBM PC & Compatibles 3.5"
RRP **£16.99**



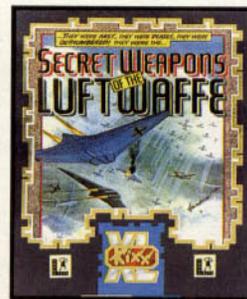
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The Battle of Britain®**
Atari ST, CBM Amiga,
IBM PC & Compatibles 3.5"
RRP **£16.99**
Also available -
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RRP **£10.99**

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Compilation
Games

ALL Together NOW...



A round up of compilation games by Paul Presley. (Hey, you think it's easy to come up with witty intros month after month? Hah! You should try it once in a while, Chester. This job ain't all free games and long lunch breaks, you know.)

Every single week of every single year, thousands of hapless punters are conned by flashy, exterior visual presentation and superlative-adorned review magazines into spending upwards of 40 Earth pounds on a single game. Little do these pleasure mavens know that by waiting a mere matter of months (I see that alliteration school's paying off again. Ed.) they could save fortunes at a time by investing in a package that offers two or more of their favourite time-wasters for the price of one. However, even this road of gaming gratification is not without its pitfalls, so join me as I jump aboard the criticism express and thunder mercilessly towards the sleepy hamlet known as Compilationsville, determined to let only the value-laden titles survive my onslaught.

Anyhow, that's enough padding (Surely educating and informing? Ed.), and on with the round-up...

Winter Olympics



World Cup USA '94



Links

CD-ROM Interactive Collection Volume 1

World Atlas



The Interactive Space Encyclopedia

The Classic Collections

ONWARDS, EVER ONWARDS we push, now arriving at a charming little quartet from US Gold that go by the titles of Sport, Adventure, Flight and Adventure respectively (obviously there was a mix-up somewhere along the line and the two Adventures made it through). First up is Sport, which comprises the original version of *Links*, and it's at this point I should like to get all personal and intimate with you (while maintaining a safe heterosexual distance in order to avoid feelings of discomfort) and let you know exactly what I think of both *Links* and its illegitimate son by a second marriage, *Links 386 Pro*.

With all due respect to my colleague in arms, Mr McCarthy, and his delightfully charming golfing feature of last month, I have to stress that in my view, which is surely the view of right-thinking gentlemen everywhere, there is no finer golfing game on God's Green Earth than *David's Leadbetter's Golf* from MicroProse. There, I said it and I stand by it (or as close as these trousers will allow). *Links* is all very pretty but it plays like my dad at his local course (i.e. badly). I would urge any of you that are considering paying for this collection to hold fast to your monetary units and purchase the lad *Leadbetter* instead. You'll get more courses in that single package than are available here, and by gum you'll get a better golfing game to boot - one that includes handicaps and a database of every

IHATE FAMILIES, but families will love this comprehensive package of games, education, reference and entertainment titles. (And the award for weakest segway goes to... Ed.) Truth be told, this isn't a bad package at all. It contains enough of each software genre to keep everyone happy, from Little Billy and his thirst for things to kill to Uncle Joe and his as yet uncharged love of animals. The whole list runs as follows: *World Cup USA '94*; *Winter Olympics*; *Links*; *The Animals*; *World Atlas*; *The Interactive Space Encyclopedia*; *Thunderhawk*; *Curse Of Enchantia*; *James Pond 2: Robocod*; *Out Run*; *Print And Paint Power*; *Comedy Central - It's All Relative*; *Johnny Castaway*; *Madonna*; *Phil Collins* and *Michael Jackson*.

Now, if you happen to be the leader of a family unit and want to feel as though you're making a purchase that will allow your immediate kith and kin to gather around the warm, basking, radioactive glow of the monitor and have some "quality time", here's your cookie. Worry not that the games are all at least three years old and that the annoying brat from across the street has conned his dad into buying *Doom 2* and is currently developing a psychological disorder while remaining to seem somehow "cool" to his schoolyard chums. At least your kid will walk away from this package with the knowledge that the panther is actually considered to

be a "small cat" and that Madonna was still in her prime before she started wearing lingerie on the outside. As for me, I got the most use out of *Paint Power*, using it to view some illegally obtained GIF files. But then that's another story completely, perhaps for when you're older.

CD-ROM Interactive Collection Volume 1

Publisher: **US Gold**
Telephone no: **021 625 3366**
Price: **£44.99**



Curse Of Enchantia



Outrun



James Pond II: Robocod

Flashback

Flashback



shot you ever play so you can show off to your friends. Let me put it this way, if PC golf games were sex, *David L's* would be half an hour of foreplay followed by a 20-minute orgasm, whereas *Links* and co. would be a quick grope in the office car park just after the security guard's gone home. And I can't say fairer than that. I can type it but I can't say it. Something to do with oesophaguses I shouldn't wonder.

Next up is *Adventure (1)*. A title that fills one with a sense of "Ooh!" - a feeling that anything could happen and probably will. This is actually a collection of Delphine Software's greatest hits, from its earliest titles - *Future Wars* - to its most recent - *Flashback* - stopping through *Operation Stealth*, *Cruise For A Corpse* and *Another World* along the way. This really is a damn fine assortment of games from a company that has managed to remain consistently fresh and exciting while others have all fallen by the wayside. And what's more, it's French. Lawks!

Now although the pedantic among you are already compiling letters that read: "Dear Sir, I would like to point out that the *Adventure* collection actually consists of three adventures and two platform games. Surely this is a breach of the Trade Descriptions Act?", I would say to you that I care not. The difference between *Flashback* or *Another World* and, let's say *Cool Spot*, is that Delphine's offerings seem to have just that little bit more than the usual amount of running and jumping, and somehow make you feel as though you're playing a fully-fledged adventure game with your joystick. Whatever reservations I may have had about you exchanging payment for the *Links* collection, I wholeheartedly reverse for this one. One of the best compilation

Another World



packages around. (Trying to get quoted on the back of the box again, aren't you? Ed.)

Adventure (2) is also pretty good, but in a nostalgia-inducing, "Remember the good old days?", sort of way. It's a collection of five elderly LucasArts games and is noteworthy for its inclusion of one of the few times LucasArts got it wrong - *Loom*. The others are *Monkey Island*, *Zak McKracken*, *Maniac Mansion* (still the only computer game to get a television sitcom made about it - pretty funny it was too) and *Indiana Jones And The Last Crusade*. It's best described as good, but not essential.

Finally, my little love muffins, is *Flight* - a collection comprising *Jetfighter II*; its add-on *Mission Pack*; the *Jetfighter II Clue Book* and a copy of the perennial Mac favourite *Spectre VR* for good measure. It has oft been quoted that *Jetfighter* was, is and will always be one of the best flight sims ever made, and who am I to argue with that? Especially when I agree with it. It oozes playability like a... like a... like a playability-oozing thing. It may not have the Gonad-shading or the Ray-tracing of today's top-o'-the-range fighters, but it's got it where it counts, and I'll waggle my finger rather aggressively to anyone who says otherwise.

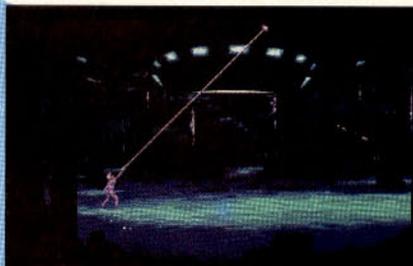
Classic Collections

Publisher: **US Gold**
 Tel: **021 625 3366**
 Price: **Links: £24.99**
Adventure 1: £29.99
Adventure 2: £29.99
Flight: £24.99

Spectre VR



Future Wars



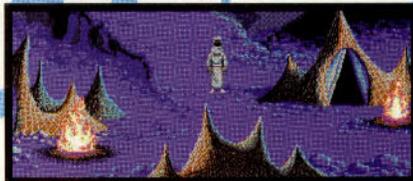
Operation Stealth



Jetfighter II



Cruise For A Corpse



Loom



The Secret Of Monkey Island



Maniac Mansion



Indiana Jones And The Last Crusade

Day Of
The
Tentacle



Indiana
Jones And
The Fate
Of
Atlantis



Tornado



Comanche:
Maximum
Overkill

LucasArts Limited Editions

FIRST UP IS THE strangely titled X2 package, which is identical in every respect to the X3 adventure package, except that it doesn't have *Sam & Max Hit The Road* and comes on a CD-ROM. What you do get is *Indiana Jones And The Fate Of Atlantis* and *Day Of The Tentacle* all on one shiny disk and all with shiny voices to complement the on-screen text. The X3 package is disk-only, and to make up for the lack of speech, it offers the wonderful *Sam & Max* as compensation. Needless to say, but I'll say it anyway, whichever pack you opt for, you're in for a treat.

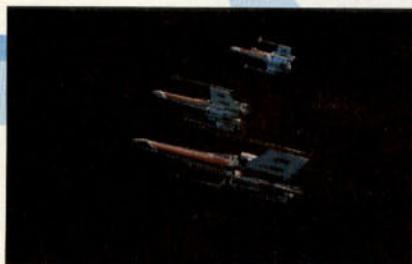
Indiana Jones is a rollicking yarn that actually has three different adventures in one. *Sam & Max* is just plain funny with a capital "F" (and includes one of the most

memorable lines I've ever heard in a computer game intro sequence - the one about gnawing the dashboard and screaming like a cheerleader, for those of you that know it) and it's left to *Day Of The Tentacle* to wear the "weakest member" badge, although it's hardly a bad game in its own right. Be that as it may, I'd have preferred to have *Sam & Max* on the X2 package with *Indy*.

The other X3 pack is the X-Wing collection. This comes with *X-Wing* (but then it would, wouldn't it?) and the two data disks: *B-Wing* and *Imperial Pursuit*. Now unless you're either particularly prophetic and saw this collection coming, or you happen to be a writer for a computer magazine that has a gift for blagging free games from software houses (grin), you've already bought *X-Wing* because we told you how wonderful it was first time round and you believed us, as you should. If that's the case you have to ask yourself whether you want to pay 50 quid for two add-on disks (and if your answer is "yes", then kindly hit yourself repeatedly with a blunt object for separately they only cost £40). It would be wiser to buy *TIE Fighter* or wait for *Dark Forces* instead. If you don't have *X-Wing* or any of its brood, though, my advice is to buy, buy, buy! Shop, as Woodrow Wyatt is wont to say, until you drop.

LucasArts Limited Editions

Publisher: **US Gold**
Telephone no: **021 625 3366**
Price: **X1 Adventure: £59.99**
X2 Adventure: £44.99
X3 Adventure: £44.99



X-Wing



Imperial
Pursuit

Sam
&
Max



The Simulation Compilations

ASILLY TITLE but it was the best I could come up with without having an official one thrust into my hands by an eager young office junior looking to make a good impression. What we have here is an assortment of compilations that have no link other than they all deal with the noble beasts that are simulations. First into the flames of my critical fire is *Falcon Gold* (and I've just used up my quota of words beginning with "F" for this month so sadly I won't be able to use frugivorous anywhere in this piece). *Falcon 3.0*, *MiG-29*, *Hornet*, *Operation: Fighting Tiger* and the digitised video recording of *Art Of The Kill* come together on one CD to make what some might call the "ideal package" for anyone with a network. You all know what a wonderful piece of kit *Falcon* is so I'll just say that this is easily one of the best compilations around, *Art Of The Kill* being a particularly nice extra treat for those interested in these kind of things.

Sticking with *Falcon* for a moment we come to the *Falcon 3.0/Tornado* pack from Digital Integration. This is a sort of Britain versus American compilation, comprising two of the best simulations money can buy in one box. Just decide whether you want the full *Falcon* experience with Mr. Gold or if you want a bit of diversity with this package. About the only bad point is that the two can't be linked together and played head-to-head. Oh well. Fortune favours the foolish. (You're back on "F" words again. Ed.)

Less simulation-ish but no less enjoyable for it is the *Comanche Maximum Overkill Super Pack*. The original *Comanche* plus its two mission disks is the deal and a jolly decent one it is too. *Comanche* did come in for a bit of a criticism originally; people claiming that there wasn't all that much to it and it soon became repetitive, but despite that, it's managed to stand the test of time and has proved to be a popular choice among the gamesplaying masses. If you haven't got it yet and you've been considering buying it, this is the best way to get your grubby little mitts upon its shiny rotor blades.

688
Attack
Sub



MiG-29



Wing
Commander

The Origin CD-ROMs

One of the Twin Calibre series from The Hit Squad suffers from the same "oldness" as the Digital Integration jobbie a paragraph ago, but has a saving grace in the shape of everyone's favourite wrinkly pilot, Chuck Yeager. It's funny how Electronic Arts was able to create such an amazingly playable flight sim so long ago and have no company rip it off and produce something similar. Other flight sims might come and go but I bet we're still playing *CYAC* by the turn of the century. Add to this the not too bad submarine sim *688 Attack Sub* and this isn't a bad package for a mere 20 spot.

Finally there's *Combat Classics 3* from Empire. The sim in question is the perennial favourite *Gunship 2000* and it comes here with the two fair to middling war-games, *Campaign* and *Historyline 1914-1918*. Unless you hankering after *Gunship*, I wouldn't bother disturbing your wallet from its peaceful slumber.

Falcon Gold

Publisher: **MicroProse**
Telephone no: **0454 326532**
Price: **£44.99**

Falcon/Tornado

Publisher: **Digital Integration**
Telephone no: **0234 567890**
Price: **£39.99**

Comanche

Publisher: **US Gold**
Telephone no: **021 625 3366**
Price: **£39.99**

Twin Calibre

Publisher: **Ocean/The Hit Squad**
Telephone no: **061 832 6633**
Price: **£19.99**

Combat Classics 3

Publisher: **Empire**
Telephone no: **081 343 7337**
Price: **£34.99**

TO START WITH there's the *Wing Commander Flame-Grilled Combo Meal*. *Wing Commander 1* and *Wing Commander 2* all in one lightly toasted box, covered with our delicious secret sauce. Now I know that opinions on the *Wing Commander* family are as divided as the Conservative party discussing Europe and, the chances are, that if you are a fan of these games, you've already got them. Therefore, barring sad completist types

who must have everything that comes in an Origin box, I wouldn't bother with this particular little morsel.

The same goes for the *Wing Commander 2/Ultima Underworld 1 Happy Meal*. Both fine games in their own right (if you like that kind of thing) but old enough to have found a place in surely everyone's collection by now. Besides, *Underworld 2* is better and *System Shock* is better still. My advice is to plump for one of those instead and compilations be damned.

The Extra Value *Wing Commander 1* with added *Ultima VI* is also an oldie that's past its sell-by date, and really the manager should be sacked for storing food that old on the shelves. *Ultima VI*, of course, was the turning point for the *Ultima* series and it may be of interest to newcomers to the scene looking for some fake nostalgia in a decorative box, but that's about it.

However, our final offering from the menu of good American entertainment is the Special Offer *Privateer* and *Strike Commander Sandwich* (with extra fries). Again we've got the "love them/hate them" syndrome surrounding both games, but you can't argue about the value for money this package offers. Both games for around the same price one would cost? Hey, it spells value to me, whatever the dictionary people might say. Plus, this is probably the first recorded case of a compilation package requiring a ninja PC to work properly. Times they are indeed a-changing.



Wing
Commander
II



Privateer

The Origin CD-ROMs

Publisher: **Electronic Arts**
Tel: **0753 549442**
Price: **WC1/2: £39.99**
WC2/UW1: £49.99
WC1/U VI: £49.99
Priv/SC: £44.99

Privateer

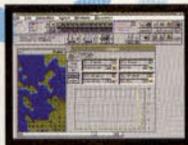
Heimdall



Thunderhawk



Sim Life



Unlimited Adventures



Dungeon Hack

Games That Wouldn't Fit Into Another More Comfortably Sized Segment

FIRST IS FANTASY FEST - SSI's attempt to sell four *Dungeons & Dragons*-based games that didn't do that well first time round. *Unlimited Adventures* is the DIY adventure creator that will allow you too to create games that look seven years out of date. *Dungeon Hack* was the last gasp for the *Eye Of The Beholder*-style series and provided a never-ending series of random dungeons for you to er... hack. *Fantasy Empires* is a sort of board-game style war-game, which can prove to be quite fun with about six human players. Finally there's *Stronghold*, which is probably the best of the bunch because it at least tries to look like a modern game with some *Populous*-style graphics. Essentially it's like a side-on version of *Civilisation* but without the depth.

Another Twin Calibre package is the *Dune/Robocop 3* pairing. This should perhaps be retitled *The Different Compilation* as both games were originally attempts to try something new - *Robocop 3* seeing Ocean trying to do something other than a platform game with a film licence, and *Dune* just being as different a strategy game as you can imagine. They're both not bad, but they're also both not that good.

Encore from Core Design is a CD-ROM package comprising *Thunderhawk*, *Heimdall* and *Curse Of Enchantia*. Yes, I know you're thinking that it sounds like quite a spiffy, little boxed set, and indeed you would be correct. This is one of those compilations that comes along and restores your faith in the British computer industry. Although the boy *Enchantia* might be leaning towards

averageness, the other two more than make up for it. Recommended if you don't already own one of the included games.

Another great British title is the one from Renegade. The Bitmap Brothers Volume 1 is a celebration of those good old boys from Wapping who rarely put a foot wrong. Volume 1 offers *Xenon*, *Cadaver* (and *The Final Payoff* - a previously unpublished add-on disk) and *Speedball 2*. Okay, *Xenon* might be pushing things, but the other two are still playable to warrant attention. Worth a look if you've money to burn.

And finally, to round off this trip, our final compilation (sniff, wipes tear from eye). Step forward please Mr Maxis and show us that which is *Sim Classics*. Containing *Sims Life*, *Ant* and *City*, this is one for the megalomaniacs out there (you know who you are - it's the rest of you I want to convince). Quite an attractive package, even if it does include the oddly hard-to-get-into *Sim Life*.

Fantasy Fest

Publisher: SSI/Mindscape
Tel: 0444 246333
Price: £44.99

Twin Calibre (Robocop/Dune)

Publisher: Ocean/The Hit Squad
Tel: 061 832 6633
Price: £19.99

Encore

Publisher: Core Design
Tel: 0332 297797
Price: £34.99

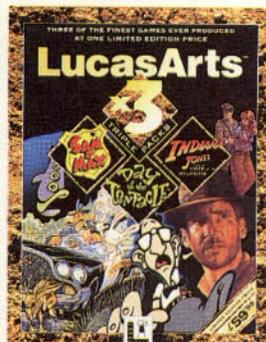
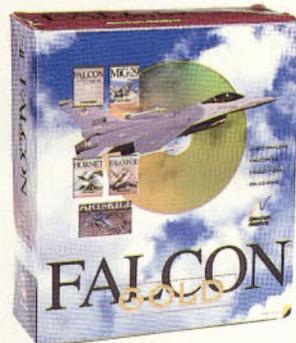
Bitmap Brothers 1

Publisher: Renegade
Tel: 071 481 9214
Price: £29.99

Sim Classics

Publisher: Maxis
Tel: 071 490 2333
Price: £17.99

Well that's about it from me now, I'll pack up my things and move on to bigger and better endeavours. Before I go, though, I'll just let you know that of all the compilations I covered on the preceding pages, the three that I will most be trying to con the editorial office into thinking I need to "hang on to for further research" will be *Falcon Gold*, the *Delphine Collection* from US Gold and X3 adventure package from LucasArts. And that's as close as this feature is going to get to handing out awards, so count yourself lucky. Toodle-pip. Z



Speedball 2



PC NEXT MONTH

ZONE MONTH



IN NEXT MONTH's issue of PC Zone we'll be boldly going where no PC games magazine has gone before - aboard the USS

Enterprise NCC-1701D to bring you an exclusive review of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* from Microprose. And if that's not enough to get you scratching at your newsagent's door, pining pathetically, we'll be taking the first look at *Virtual Pool* from Interplay, *Tank Commander* from Domark, *Iron Angel* from Ocean and *Dominus* from US Gold.

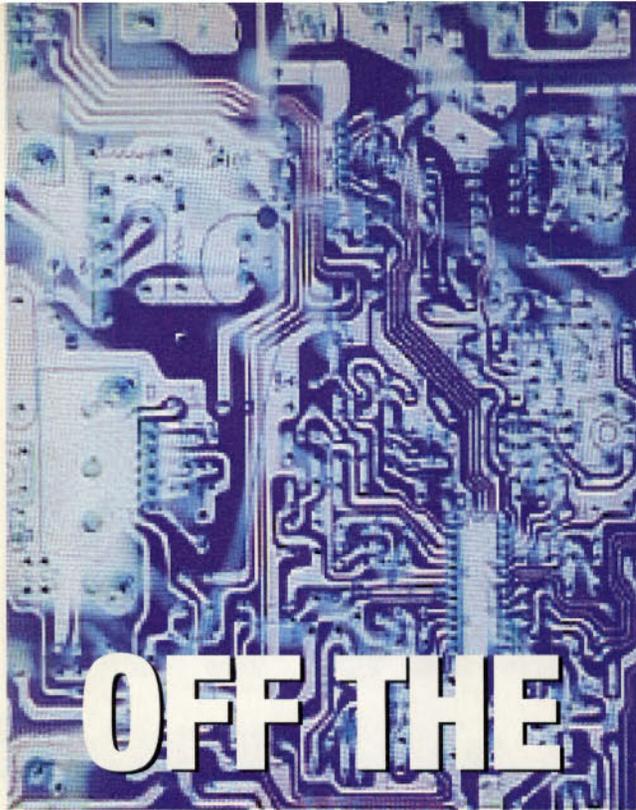
Issue

Exclusive! Star Trek: The Next Generation

We'll also be looking at the latest *Doom*-clones to surface onto the PC, with the first full reviews of both *Heretic* from iD/Ravensoft and *Rise of the Triad* from Apogee. Flight buffs can salivate over *Flight Unlimited* from Virgin, and *Top Gun* and *Navy Strike* from Microprose, whilst armchair strategists can stretch their grey matter to the tune of *Command & Conquer* from Virgin and *Across The Rhine* from Microprose. On top of all this, we've got a special feature on MPEG hardware and software, a round up of dedicated speakers and amps for the PC and the second part of our *Upgrading Your PC* feature. When you consider all this, you just cannot afford to miss it. **Z**



PLUS:
Exclusive!!!
X-COM: Under
The Deep Demo
and 1,000 new
DOOM levels!!!



OFF THE BOARDS

Mark Burgess has a look at the latest *Doom* clones, *Heretic* and *Rise of the Triads*. Do they just prove what a unique game the original was? Plus a home-made game, a level designer and a peek inside your skull. All appearing on a bulletin board near you (or look at the cover CD).



HERETIC

HERETIC IS HERE AT LAST. This is one *Doom*-type game that bears iD's seal of approval. It was developed jointly by iD and Raven Software. The press release described it as a sword and sorcery shoot 'em up and "everything you loved in *Doom* and more".

You start off with a blasting wand - a kind of equivalent of the old magic missiles - and the aim is to get out of each level in one piece.

There is no real plot, but so what, eh? On the way, there are power ups and new weapons - many of them in hidden areas. The first useful weapon is the gauntlets of the necromancer, but the best is the crossbow which fires ethereal arrows. There are also spells - and not the usual rubbish about great damage, either: one turns your enemies into chickens. All the spells and weapons mean that you have a fair bit to remember, a lot when you're in the thick of battle, anyway.

The enemies range from little red devils - mere nuisance like midges - to some really tough baddies on the later levels. There are a few that are a bit like the Arch-Vile in *Doom II*, but none of the enemies are as frightening as the ones in *Doom*. It seems a shame to compare anything to *Doom*, I know, but the producers of *Heretic* are doing just that and they need to be told. It doesn't have the same atmosphere. The spooky light effects are missing. The action isn't the same either. *Heretic* contains a few more puzzles, which you might think is a good thing.

It does have some interesting moves - including flying - which will whet everyone's appetite for whatever iD do or license next. Like *Doom*, it supports modem and network play. Up to four players can play either co-operative or deathmatch. *Heretic* comes with DM - an easy to use front end for *Doom*, *Doom II* and *Heretic*. In multi-player mode your opponents look like the murdering dwarf in *Don't Look Now*, not much like a wizard at all.

The first episode, *City of the Damned*, is shareware. Registration gets you *Hell's Maw* and *The Dome of D'sparil*. It also gets you extra weapons such as Hellstaf and Phoenix Rod together with other useful power ups.

Heretic is good, and deserves to attract a cult following. The network play will ensure that it will live long and prosper.



Shareware from: Raven Software for iD
Registration: \$40
Needs: 486/66 or above, 4MB RAM, VGA
Supports: Keyboard/Mouse/Joystick; PC Speaker/AdLib/SoundBlaster; IPX network/modem and serial cable.



RISE OF THE TRIADS

THIS IS APOGEE's entry into the *Doom* stakes. Again, the plot doesn't really matter: the object is to stay alive. The first thing in the game is to choose the level of violence. This ranges from none through some, a lot and excessive. Excessive is good. When you shoot the baddies, eyeballs fly off. But exactly what the baddies are supposed to be is confusing. They look like officers from the First World War. They wear greatcoats and stand sideways on to fire - like in a duel. One of the strengths of *Rise of the Triads* is the way it uses different levels of the game arena. There's a lot of running up free-standing staircases and a bizarre number of trampolines. Finding the exits is a real pain, I can't remember a game like it. There's lots of hidden areas concealing food and weapons.

But there's a dilemma - it's not that good. Don't get me wrong, it's better than most shareware. The problem is that the learning curve is very steep - it gets difficult quickly - and you really don't have much of an idea what you're supposed to be doing. The features,

such as looking up and down and falling off the playing area if you're not careful, are fine, but the game isn't much fun on your own. Network play is far, far more exciting. In the shareware version you are restricted to playing one of five characters and ten levels. Registration gets you the chance to play any of the characters and there are 32 game levels. It also brings network support for 11 players.

Apogee say it could run on a 386DX/40, but recommend 486DX2 with 8MB RAM and a local bus video card.

Shareware from: Apogee
Registration: \$29.95 (\$34.95 for CD version)
Needs: 386DX/40 or above, 4MB RAM, VGA
Supports: keyboard/Mouse/Joystick; PC Speaker/AdLib/SoundBlaster, IPX network/modem



BRAINIAC

ANOTHER WINDOWS program that takes a look inside your skull, like Skull Scan (Issue 16). Brainiac is a demonstration version of a serious piece of educational software.

You can either examine the surface of the brain or look at a series of slices through it. Most of the parts are labelled (a few are not in the shareware version, nor can you go through any coronal sections). There is enough to enable you to find out what the inferior frontal gyrus looks like (because I know we've all wanted to know, haven't we?). All very fascinating stuff, and also extremely useful if you're a medical student or on some sort of Frankenstein kick.

The registered version includes 27 Pal-Weigert Stained sections, 11 Coronal sections, 7 Horizontal section and 7 Brain surface images (gyri and sulci).

Shareware from: Medical Multimedia Systems
Registration: Site License (5 machines) \$499,
 Instructor Version-single user
 \$149 Student Version \$49

Needs: Any computer running Windows 3.1 or above,
 4MB RAM, 256 colour VGA



BOPPIN

THIS IS MAINLY aimed at children, but it comes with a warning about "graphic treatment of suicide". The authors are called Accursed Toys and have a weird sense of humour. This is the one game this month that has a plot. Aliens have stolen characters from computer games and you must rescue them. That was worth waiting for, wasn't it?

Boppin is a puzzle game, an odd mixture of *Tetrix* and *Brix*. Most of the puzzles involve you matching blocks and working your way through mazes.

Pressing CTRL-V gives you a slide show of all the levels so that you can see what's ahead. The difficulty of *Boppin* is just about right, it isn't one of those puzzle games where no one can get past level three. It's

entertaining, too, and if you liked *Heartlight*, you should give this one a look.

The full registered version has 80 new levels and an editor for you to make or modify your own.

Shareware from: Accursed Toys for Apogee
Registration: \$19.95
Needs: 386DX/40 or above, 4MB RAM, VGA
Supports: Keyboard/Mouse/Joystick;
 PC Speaker/AdLib/SoundBlaster,



WHAT IS PUBLIC DOMAIN AND SHAREWARE?

PUBLIC DOMAIN



This is software that's free. You can copy and distribute it as you like. The only conditions are that you do not pass the work off as your own, do not incorporate it in another program without due credit and, of course, that you do not charge money for something you have got for nothing.

SHAREWARE



This is software that asks for a registration fee, either after a specific time or "if found useful". The fee varies enormously and you are morally obliged to pay it or stop using the program although it is true that many programs ask you to send \$5 to an address in Wichita. A leading shareware author recently estimated that about 90% of users don't register. Registration brings the latest version of the program, a place on the mailing list for updates and, often, a properly printed manual. Not to mention a warm glow of moral satisfaction.

OTHERS



Bannerware/Adware:
 These are programs where the author does not ask for any payment but reserves copyright. This means that you have a free license to use and copy the game.

DEMONSTRATIONS



Many commercial software houses will release a playable demo of their latest games so that you have some idea of what you're expected to pay £50 for. Not often found in libraries, they tend to live on the cover of magazines or on bulletin boards.

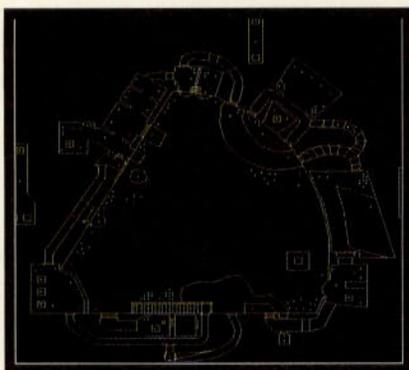
WHAT DO YOU GET?



The disk should contain a file called READ.ME or README.
 1ST. Read it by typing:
 TYPE README.1ST | MORE.

There will also be some sort of batch (.BAT) file in the disk. Typing in the name of it should load the program.

Most programs will come in archived form. This is because the library is trying to fit as much information as possible on a 760k disk. The files will have extensions such as .ARC, .ARJ, .LHA, .PAK, or .ZIP. However, the disk will come with a program that will decompress the files, together with instructions on how to use it.



This month's programs

CompuServe Forum

| Forum | Section | Program | Filename | Size |
|--------|-------------------|------------------------|-----------------|---------|
| GAMERS | Action | Heretic | htic10.zip | 2876540 |
| GAMERS | Action | Rise of the Triads | rott.zip | 3891200 |
| GAMERS | Action | Egyptian Chopper Force | forcechoppe.exe | 341085 |
| GAMERS | Action | Boppin | boppin.zip | 1289773 |
| GAMERS | Action Games Aids | DoomCad | dmcad5.zip | 661527 |
| GAMERS | Multimedia | Brainiac! | Braini.zip | 1007237 |

DOOM CAD

WE'VE LOOKED at games that try and be like *Doom* and we've looked at a home-made game. Now here's your chance to make a home-made version of *Doom*. One of the huge strengths of *Doom* is that, its open architecture. There are hundreds of new levels for it floating around the bulletin boards and taking up space in shareware libraries and on cover disks.

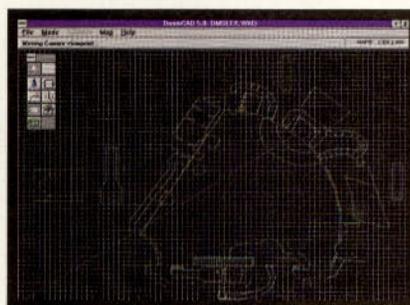
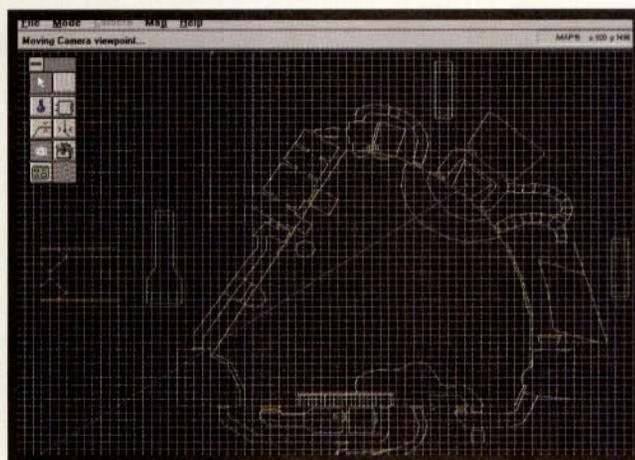
However, the way in which *Doom* deals with objects is not simple, and creating a new level is hard work. *Doom cad* tries to take some of the pain out of the whole process. It runs under *Windows* and works like any CAD program. This doesn't mean that you can dive straight in, though. Fortunately, *Doom CAD* comes with an excellent help file which explains just how *Doom* WAD files work. It also comes with a tutor that leads you through the design of your first level.

It's very easy to use (but you must read the help file) although building a *Doom* level is never going to be a five-minute operation. The best thing is to start with levels that are more or less "tennis courts" and then tackle the clever stuff once you've had more practice.

Please note that it *only* works with *Doom II*. It has a routine that converts *Doom I* WADS to *Doom II* format.

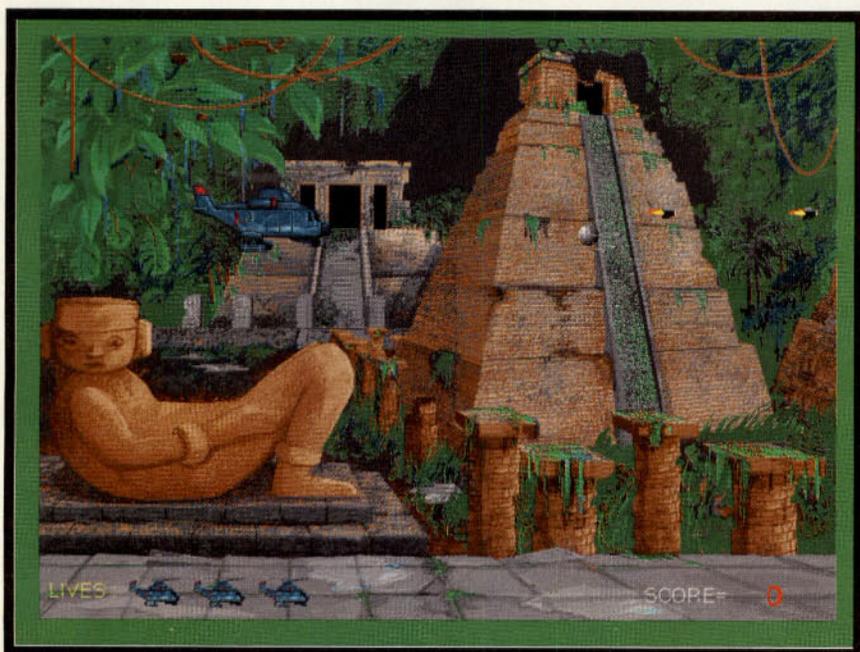
This is really good program and one for every *Doom* player's library. The registration cost is only \$20.

Shareware from: Matt Tagliaferri and others
Registration: \$20
Needs: Any computer running *Windows 3.1* or above



Thanks to this new technology, everyone can now make their very own *Doom* game. But remember, we never said it was going to be easy...

EGYPTIAN CHOPPER FORCE



You just can't resist a game with a name like this, now can you? But the really interesting thing is that, it was made with *Klik and Play*, the *Windows* game writing package from the peeps at Europress. The aim of the game, as it says on the intro screen, is to "shoot the shit out of anything that moves". Just like most of the games that we've reviewed this month, in fact, but at least *Egyptian Chopper Force* is honest about it.

You control a helicopter and shoot sputnik-like things that come at you. It's a simple, horizontally-scrolling, shoot-the-aliens thingy. In other words, it suffers from the same faults as all *Windows* shoot 'em ups: nice graphics, big sprites, but dull and repetitive game-play. Having said that, the game does pass the time while you're waiting for *Windows* to do something.

It's written by Mike Henn and it's freeware, so there's no registration fee.

Freeware from: Michael Henn
Registration: None
Needs: Any computer running *Windows 3.1* or above, 256 colour VGA



ZONE

ware

Are you a few parts short of a complete solution? Or still desperate for that *Space Hulk* cover disk? Then be still your beating heart because on these pages you can order all the back issues you desire. And if the cashpoint machine is salivating at the sight of your card, why not pay less for your fun by taking a dabble in the world of shareware. Nine out of ten bank managers recommend it.

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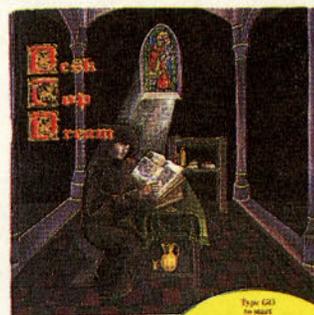
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The HackMasters™



H... HERE WE GO AGAIN. Another plethora of hacks and cheats for you to peruse and be bewildered by. Hacking is an art, you know, so try to use a hack at least once in your life. It's an experience never to be missed. But be warned. It's highly addictive.

BACK UP

Most, if not all, of the hacks on this page will require changing actual game files (mainly SAVEGAME files, peppered with the odd main .EXE file). It is then sensible to back up the file specified in the hack. To do this, simply enter the directory containing the file, say for example SAVEGAME.SAV, and back it up thus:

```
COPY SAVEGAME.SAV SAVEGAME.BAK
```

If you make a bad mistake and start crying and all, then restore files by typing:

```
COPY SAVEGAME.BAK SAVEGAME.SAV
```

HEXADECIMAL

Your PC counts strangely. In hexadecimal (base 16). We count in decimal (base 10). For the HackMaster's experience you only really need to learn a few choice hex numbers (see table below).

WHAT YOU NEED

There are three things every HackMaster™ groupie must have (well, at least one of them).

① **DEBUG** Free with DOS is a program called *debug*. A very useful program it is too, since it allows you to edit files of all descriptions and subtly change the data therein. It is the program we use most in the Hackmaster Zone™, and since it is the most user-unfriendly program on this planet, a brief introduction/explanation is necessary. Here's a step-by-step guide to a *Debug* hack:

To run it just type DEBUG in the appropriate directory (i.e. the one mentioned in the hack blurb). It should run automatically and produce a little '>' prompt. If you get a "file not found" style error then your DOS path hasn't been set properly. Refer to the MS-DOS manual and remember the bottom line – don't ring us (no matter how desperate) unless it's TruePlayer™ Tips day.

| HEX | DECIMAL |
|-----|---------|
| 09H | 09 |
| 0AH | 10 |
| 0FH | 15 |
| 10H | 16 |
| 20H | 32 |
| 28H | 40 |
| 32H | 50 |
| 40H | 64 |
| 63H | 99 |
| 64H | 100 |
| C8H | 200 |
| FAH | 250 |
| FFH | 255 |

```
1 >HEL2M12.OVL <return>
```

Now, once you have a little '>' prompt you should type in the commands listed in the program, starting with the line above the "N" command. This tells *debug* which program is to be hacked. There should be no space between the "N" and the full filename.

```
2 >L <return>
```

This command loads the file you've just specified into memory and into the hands of the hacker.

```
3 >E 0103 v <return>
```

This is the Edit function. Simply type as it appears above, i.e. with a space between the "E" and the address (0103) and the "v". The "v" stands for a value you will enter yourself, ranging between 00 and FF (0 to 255 decimal).

```
4 >E0595 FF FF FF
```

If the edit command looks something like this (i.e. a long list of numbers), then press RETURN after the address (the first four-digit code) and *debug* will repeat your command (see below). Then simply type in the values which follow (FF,FF etc.) pressing SPACE between each one, except the last when you should press RETURN. So basically, the command should be enacted thus (with what you must type shown in green):

```
>E 0595<Return>
21FB:A97F 01.FF <space> 00.FF <space>
00.FF
```

```
>
```

```
5 >W <return>
```

This command writes the hacked file back onto the disk. A message saying "writing xxxxx bytes" will appear, where xxxxx is the size of the file (it varies). Nothing will have been changed on your hard disk until you type this command. Therefore, if you've made a mistake earlier just quit *debug* and start the process again.

```
6 >Q <return>
```

This quits you back to DOS.

② A DISK SECTOR EDITOR

Another useful bit of kit is a Disk Sector Editor, such as *XTree Gold* or *PC Tools*. If you own one, then you'll know how to use it – but it is important to note that the offset (or address) in a debug hack is for *debug* which automatically adds 256 bytes (or 100 hex) to the address. So, if you prefer to use your editor, and a separate disk editor hack isn't included, then you just deduct 100 hex from the address. So, if an address is 0141 on the page, then your address will be 0041. It's a simple case of deducting one from the second figure on the left. If in doubt, use *debug*.

ALADDIN (Virgin Interactive)

Liked the film, disliked the game, but that hasn't stopped Archduke von HackMaster, Johnathon Mell, producing a quick but authoritative hackette. The plan is simple. Backup the file ALADDIN.EXE, quickly UNP it, and then debug:

```
>NALADDIN.EXE
>L
>E B518 90 90 90 90 90 Infinite life
>E B32F 90 90 90 90 90 Infinite apples
>E 4EA8 90 90 90 90 90 Infinite lives
>W
>Q
```

Afterwards, just run the game as per normal. Well, if you consider immunity from death and infinite apples "normal".

COLONIZATION (MicroProse)

Every budding hacker and his chimpanzee seems to have had a go at this little sim game. As a result, we have a spread, nay a feast, of possibilities for you to peruse:

1 This one is courtesy of Cameron Adams. It is quite complicated so try it at your peril. Using a sector editor (such as Xtree Gold), edit the file COLONY01.SAV (the top save slot). Search for the sequence

```
04 00 05 00 06
```

This string of numbers occurs on the edge of a block of zeros. Once you've found the sequence, you must count out the required number of positions depending on your country (it starts to get complicated now...)

| Country | Count |
|-------------|--------------|
| ENGLAND | minus 50 hex |
| FRANCE | plus EC hex |
| SPAIN | plus 228 hex |
| NETHERLANDS | plus 364 hex |

Having found your position (and if you have, you're a better man than me) enter the follow digits at that address:

```
FF FF FF 7F
```

for "squillions of dollars". You must utilise the hack early into your game or the quintessential string will be hard to find.

- 1** Much easier than the above is Dennis Kwek's neat little in-built cheat activator.
- A** Locate the file MENU.TXT in the COLONIZE directory.
- B** Back it up.
- C** Edit the file and ignore the warnings about world-wide disasters.
- D** The file is broken up into sections beginning with headings like "@CUP" and "@PEDIA".
- E** Locate the section starting with "@CUP" and note there is a line below beginning with "CHEAT".
- F** Highlight the entire "@CUP" section, cut it, and paste it below the "@PEDIA" section.
- G** Save and quit out of your text editor.
- H** Run the game as normal.
- I** Note you now have access to the

COLONIZOPEDIA menu.

J That's the CHEAT menu.

K Have fun.

WACKY WHEELS (Apogee)

Never heard of this game - no, that's not correct. We, the HackMasters, have remembered. It's that *Mario Kart* clone. And Dale Sampson has found a small but delicate cheat for it. Start the game as per normal and then press and hold down the fire button for about six seconds. You will be endowed with the mysterious "Ice Cube weapon" which will freeze your opponent for 8-10 seconds. Cool.

ELITE II (GameTek)

For those still not impressed with our long running series of *Elite II* hacks, this hack from Mark Young will finally close the issue, put icing on the cake and nick the last straw. This hack will give you any item of equipment you could possibly desire. And then some. But follow the instructions carefully.

Firstly, make a backup of the EL2M12.OVL file in the ELITE directory. Secondly, UNP it. Thirdly, run debug and use the follow commands:

```
>HEL2M12.OVL
>L
>E 04D1 00 00 XB13 Dummy Mine
>E 04DD 00 00 XB74 Proximity Mine
>E 04E9 00 00 KL790 Homing Missile
>E 0501 00 00 NK500 Naval Missile
>E 050D 00 00 Auto Refueller
>E 0519 00 00 Atmospheric Shield
>E 0525 00 00 Laser Cool. Booster
>E 0531 00 00 Cargo Bay Life Sup.
>E 053C 00 00 Scanner
>E 0549 00 00 LMW Pulse Laser
>E 0555 00 00 Radar Mapper
>E 0561 00 00 ECM System
>E 056D 00 00 Automatic Pilot
>E 0579 00 00 Extra Pas. Cabin
>E 0585 00 00 Hypercloud
>E 0591 00 00 Shield Generator
>E 059D 00 00 5MW Pulse Laser
>E 05A9 00 00 Fuel Scoop
>E 05B5 00 00 Cargo Scoop
>E 05C1 00 00 Inter Drive
>E 05CD 00 00 MB4 Mining Machine
>E 05D9 00 00 LMW Beam Laser
>E 05E5 00 00 Class 1 Hyperdrive
>E 05F1 00 00 Energy Booster
>E 05FD 00 00 30 MW Mining Laser
>E 0609 00 00 4MW Beam laser
>E 0615 00 00 Naval ECM system
>E 0621 00 00 Hull repair
>E 0639 00 00 Escape Capsule
>E 0645 00 00 20 MW Beam Laser
>E 0651 00 00 Class 2 Hyperdrive
>E 065D 00 00 100MW Beam Laser
>E 0669 00 00 Class 3 Hyperdrive
```



```
>E 0675 00 00 Class 1 Military drive
>E 0681 00 00 Class 4 Hyperdrive
>E 068D 00 00 Class 2 Military drive
>E 06A5 00 00 Class 5 Hyperdrive
>E 06B1 00 00 Small plasma
>E 06BD 00 00 Class 3 Military drive
>E 06C9 00 00 Class 6 Hyperdrive
>E 06D5 00 00 Large Plasma
>E 06E1 00 00 Class 7 Hyperdrive
>E 06A3 00 00 Fighter Launch Device??
```

Now just run the game as usual.

WARCRAFT (Interplay)

Just a quickie for this strategy RPG "thing" sent in separately by Mervyn Lemon and Peter Doherty. Save your game in the top slot, quit out, back up the file SAVE0.SAV and then debug:

```
>NSAVE0.SAV
>L
>E 017C FF FF 65K Lumber
>E 0190 FF FF 65K Gold
>W
>Q
```

That's better, isn't it?

THE BOTTOM LINE

If you get into trouble or are a bit scared then ring us on TruePlayer Tips day (Wednesday 2pm-6pm) for free tips support.

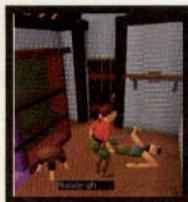
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The TruePlayers™



Ecstatica



Authoritative – yes! Complete – yes! Easy to follow – yes! Spoiled – yes! All these adjectives and more describe this month's complete, authoritative, easy to follow spoil for *Ecstatica*, the fab ellipsoid adventure 'em up by Psygnosis. Fresh from the pen of Nick Davison of Bristol, it is. Onward TruePlayers™...

FIND A WEAPON

Go to 11 immediately and grab the sword. Leave the armour behind. It slows you down and once you fall over, you'll never get up until you're killed by the big guy.

HISTORY AND SPELLS

Go to 8, run past the bear, and go upstairs. Read the book on the middle floor and then go up one more floor to find another book which will teach you your first spell.

LITTLE GIRL

Take the teddy bear from the bed on the middle floor. Go to the stable (6) and throw the bear on the floor. The girl will jump down and lead you to the church (4). Follow her down and wait for her to open the door to the dungeon. Kill the skeletons and continue down into the pit where you will get scared off.



THE MONASTERY

Take the bible from the floor of the church (4). Leave the village at the square with the scarecrow. Go up the steps and bear right. Now follow the path to the gates to the monastery. Stop outside the gates and read the bible.

THE RELIC

Attack the monks, fight your way in, and take the relic from under the cruxification.

LEAVE THE MONASTERY

Go through the rooms to the right and drop through the hole in the floor. Run along the passage and get your skull smashed in by the bloke at the end.

FLOWER

You wake up, strung up on "hig". Swing free and leave the relic there. Now get out, bearing right at the fork. After about three screens you will find a flower growing in the path. Take it back to the cauldron on the top floor of 8.

EFFIGY

Go to the church (4) and get the brown stick like thing at the entrance. Add it to the cauldron at 8.

HERB

Go to the shop (2). Fight off the werewolf who is attacking the man. Take the key from the man's hand and open the door at the back. Go in and take the herb (green and brown thing). The werewolf will now probably smash the door in, so get ready to hide in the barrel.

BECOME A MONGOOSE

Return swiftly to 8 and add the herb to the cauldron. Watch the metamorphosis. In this form, you cannot fight. Use the action keys (7 and 9) to run. AVOID ALL COMBAT, particularly with pigmen and snakes. Just run past them.

EXPLORE THE DUNGEON

Go to the church at 4 and head downstairs. Go through the small hole the girl nipped through earlier. Turn left, then right. At the end you should become human again.

GOLDEN SWORD

Go upstairs to the old knight's room. Let him try to hit you. He will miss and drop the sword and then begin to cower. Pick his sword up.

BECOME A KNIGHT

Leave the village (you may be ambushed by pigmen and dragged underground). Bear

left at the fork and continue onwards until you reach the pool with the fountain. Pass it to the cottage and turn right, away from the castle, to get to the lake. Stand on the stone at the side of the lake and throw in the sword. Wait for the lady to rise and knight you.

RE-ARM

Go back to 8 where you dropped the sword on becoming a mongoose. Pick it up.

THE BROOMSTICK

Leave the village, taking the route to the lake. When you get to the cottage, go in and take the broom.

THE CASTLE

On leaving the castle, turn right away from the lake, towards the castle. But make sure you go up the right hand side of the castle or the portcullis on the left will kill you. Kill the little runt should you desire, for a bit of fun.

DUNGEONS

Enter the mage's chamber and go out through the other doorway. Walk across the walkway to the tower and go down the spiral staircase. At the bottom you will meet a guard who blocks your way. Fly past the guard with the broom.

SPELL BOOK

Leave the broom before fighting the animated swords and shields, and then collect it afterwards. Go straight across the stepped chamber. Go around the side of the room with the missing floor and use the broom to dodge the spikes on the steps. Leave the broom on the bottom of the two middle steps so you can reach it if you need it later. To get back up, tiptoe. Go down the right side of the steps. At the bottom, carefully edge past the spikes and go right between the two statues. You may have to kill the red beastie here. In the torture chamber, listen to the lizard. Don't kill him, and then take the spell book.

GET THE BONE WAND

Go back out. Leave your sword near the broom. You won't have room for it in a moment. Go back to the fork by the village where you left the bone relic and pick it up. Bear left and follow the path till you can first see the castle steps. Run into the foreground. Continue along the path to the stone circle and stand on the rock in the middle. Lightning strikes and when you



regain control, the bone will act as a wand. It fires energy by pressing 7. This is the only way to hurt the daemon.

TALKING TO THE KING

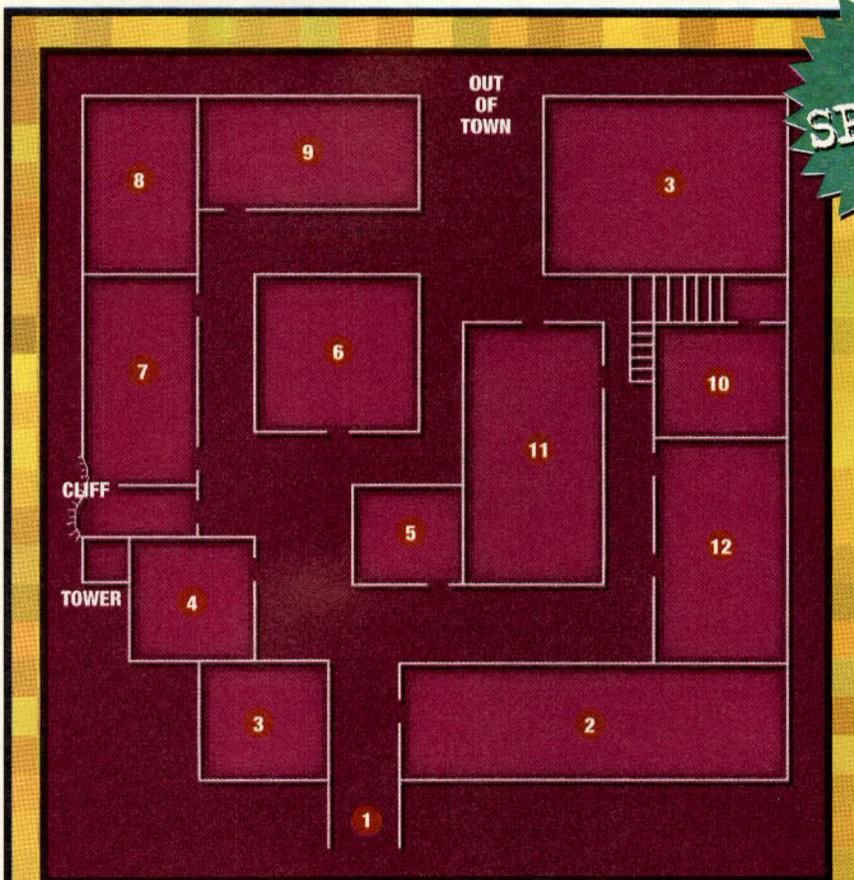
Return to the castle. Go down to the broom and sword. Take the sword. Go down the left hand side of the stairs and then walk under them, by the statue. Go left between the two statues, down the stairs and into the pool area. Take the first right, and then go down the stairs to the King's chamber. Kill your mirrorself and go to the king for a blessing.

MEET THE DAEMON

Return to the torture chamber and go through the secret passage (now unveiled). Go down the steps and follow the orb to the table. Listen to the daemon's offer.

RESPOND

Either drop the wand, give in to him and live out your days in pleasure, or attack him with the wand. In either case you'll get the opportunity to watch the end sequence. [Z]



ROOMS WITH A VIEW

- 1** The bridge. It will collapse if you try to cross it.
- 2** The herb shop. Hide in the barrels in the back room.
- 3** A blocked house.
- 4** The church. The bible and effigy are on the floor here.
- 5** The Inn. A dragon is attacking a crusader here. You can also find the mace in here.
- 6** The stable. Rest in grass to heal.
- 7** Smashed up room. There is a dagger on the table, but be warned, the table will attack you if you try to take it. You can also hide in the cupboard.
- 8** The sorceress' house. There is a drunk bear sitting on the ground floor. Run past him to avoid being hit.
- 9** An impaled woman on a table and an exit from the town.
- 10** The old knight's house.
- 11** The armour and a sword.
- 12** The barrel house.

MONSTIES

Here's a quick at-a-glance guide to the monsties inhabiting the *Ecstatica* universe and the best way to deal with them. In order of difficulty:

RATS

Ignore them. They don't hurt but you can pick them up.

SNAKES

Impossible to hit. Only really a threat when you are a frog or a mongoose. RUN AWAY.

PIGMEN

Use sweep attacks if you can get several in at a time. Take about three weapons hits.

TABLE

Two or three hits. No mercy.

SPIDER

Three to four weapons hits. Even less mercy.

SKELETON

A few weapon sweeps.

SWORDS & SHIELDS

These two fight together but you can hit them both at the same time with a good sweep. They're not dangerous though, unless they pin you down.

MONKS

Three or four hits. Take them on one at a time.

LITTLE HUNT

The wizard's henchman takes a few hits to dispatch but doesn't really register on the Dangerous-o-meter.

LITTLE DRAGONS

Hit them repeatedly. They are quite easy to kill with a weapon but, once they succeed in hitting you, they keep on hitting so you have to fall back and re-attack.

RED BEASTY

Get three fast hits in to kill him. Do not move as the spiked floor below will probably get you.

MIRROR SELF

Hit repeatedly. If it hits you, run away and attack again. If it hits you, it won't stop.

WEREWOLVES

Beat them back. Once forced away they may run away or at least leave you alone for a while. They will not chase you once you're out of sight. And you cannot kill them.

MINOTAURS

RUN AWAY. They're hard to kill and run faster than Werewolves. In if doubt, hide.

DAEMONS

You'll only get to fight him once he has turned into a large dragon. He is very tough and one hit will kill you. Only use the wand – nothing else works. Wait until he exposes his soft stomach and then fire. It takes a lot of hits to kill him, so be prepared to keep running around to get a good position.

BUYERS' GUIDE

Welcome to the all-singing, all-dancing **PC Zone** Buyers Guide that is to gaming what the **BR** timetable is to trainspotters. You name it, it's here – painstakingly compiled by our very own engine driver.

Issue 1 – April 1993

Dune II
(89: Recommended) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Strategy £35.99
Civilization meets *Sim City* in a frantic spice 'em up.

LeMmings 2: The Tribes
(88: Recommended) Psygnosis – Puzzle Game £39.99
A brilliant reworking of one of the best computer games ever written.

Ragnarok
(60) Mirage – Board Game £35.99
As the great man said: if you like this sort of thing, this sort of thing you like. Let down by too many inessential, flashy bits and not enough on the main, interesting idea. As stand-alone shareware, *The King's Table* would rate 75%.

Reach For The Skies
(52) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Flight Sim £35.99
Uninspired ww2 flight sim with pretensions to strategy that don't stand up to close inspection.

Shadowworlds
(60) Krisalis – Role-Playing Game £34.99
We asked a hundred people who'd played *Shadowworlds* if they thought it was a damn good game with a smart control system. They said "Yes". Our survey said "Erk-err". Sorry, they lose.

Stunt Island
(82: Recommended) Infogrames – Flight Sim £49.99
A unique simulation that combines all the fun elements of flight sims with superb 3D construction, film and editing utilities. A bit on the pricey side, but good value for film buffs nonetheless.

Tegep's Mercenaries
(50) Electronic Arts – Strategy – Deleted
Not funny. Not entertaining. And not very good.

The Complete Chess System
(80: Recommended) Kompart (UK) Ltd – Chess £34.99
Good enough for the expert, easy enough for the beginner.

The Legend Of Myra
(65) Grandslam – Puzzle 14.99 – £10 direct
One of the best *Boulderdash* clones to appear recently. Hardly original, but fun for a while if you've got fast reflexes.

Transactica (CD)
(55) Simitaris – Strategy £39.99
Reads a lot better than it plays. Very disappointing.

Ultima Underworld II: Labyrinth Of Worlds
(94: Classic) Origin – Role-Playing Game £39.99
Just go out now and buy it, okay.

Issue 2 – May 1993

Archer Maclean's Pool
(87: Recommended) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Sport £25.99
Excellent pool game. An impressive, if not wildly different, sequel to *Whirlwind Snooker*.

Battlechess 4000
(81: Recommended) Electronic Arts – Chess £44.99
Brilliant, funny and with a workmanlike chess sim attached. But for how long will it stay funny?

Blade Warrior
(40) Zeppelin Games – Combat £9.99 (£12.99 CD)
Arcade combat jaunt with a smattering of detailed quest elements.

Buzz Aldrin's Race Into Space
(90: Classic) Interplay – Strategy £39.99
Testing strategy/historical simulation. Buy it.

Crystals Of Arborea
(47) Simitaris – Role-Playing Game £2.99
A badly designed RPG with only its price to recommend it.

Heroquest
(66) Gremlin Graphics – Board Game £11.99
A good, but uninspired conversion of the classic board game.

Jordan In Flight
(70) Electronic Arts – Sport £39.99
Looks good, plays okay. There's just not enough to it, and it's a bit too easy.

Metal Mutants
(45) Simitaris – Combat £2.99
Impress your friends – this disk makes an unusual coaster that will brighten up any coffee table.

Ringworld
(80: Recommended) Tsunami – Adventure £39.99
An engaging interactive point 'n' click sci-fi romp.

Shadow Of The Comet
(87: Recommended) Infogrames – Adventure £44.99
A successful attempt to recreate the work of *Lovecraft* for game players. A must buy.

Space Quest V: Roger Wilco The Next Mutation
(72) Sierra On-Line – Adventure £39.99
Better than the usual twee nonsense from Sierra.

Spear Of Destiny
(60) Psygnosis – Shoot 'Em Up £39.99
Out classed, out of time and overpriced.

Storm Master
(70) Simitaris – Strategy £12.99
An attractively presented and absorbing strategy game.

Veil Of Darkness
(70) US Gold – Role-Playing Game £35.99
Good script, easy to play but a little short.

Wacky Funsters
(30) Accolade – Compendium (not available in the UK)
The game never gets beyond being the equivalent of an enjoyable demo.

X-Wing
(88: Recommended) LucasArts – Space Combat £45.99
Fabbo space-based shoot 'em up.

Xenobots
(75) Electronic Arts – Combat £39.99
A spanking good, strategic shoot 'em up, which has too short a life expectancy for our liking.

Zool
(85: Recommended) Gremlin Graphics – Platform Game £34.99
The best platform game released for the pc so far.

Issue 3 – June 1993

DJ Puff
(62) Codemasters – Platform Game £9.99
Okay, but it looks like an 8-bit console game.

Dogfight
(50) MicroProse – Flight Sim £44.99
Far too easy, major flight model discrepancies and grass can kill you. All in all, a pile of jobs.

International Athletics
(55) Zeppelin Games – Sport £9.99
Fun as far as it goes, which isn't far.

International Rugby Challenge
(67) Domark – Sport £34.99
Scores a try, but doesn't quite manage the conversion.

Serpent Isle: Ultima VII Part Two
(89: Recommended) Origin – Role-Playing Game £44.99
Origin's flair for storytelling and atmosphere creating pays off once again.

Spaceward Ho!
(25) New World Computing – Space Combat £44.99
There are better strategy games for free.

Strike Commander
(65) Origin – Flight Sim £44.99
There are lots of brilliant bits, but unfortunately there's also an equal number of "unbrilliant" bits.

The Greatest
(70) Beau Jolly – Compilation £39.99
A good way to save £81.98 and try out some good, if slightly old, games.

The Legacy
(60) MicroProse – Role-Playing Game £44.99
A brave attempt to create a gothic role-playing game which doesn't quite gel.

The Terminator 2029
(50) Bethesda Softworks – Combat £29.99
Terminal Case.

Tony La Russa II
(73) SSI – Sport – Deleted
An exceptionally-detailed baseball game, and almost a very good one.

Unlimited Adventures
(59) SSI – Role-Playing Game £37.99
Competent, but not the most essential purchase ever.

Wayne Gretzky Hockey 3
(69) Bethesda Softworks – Sport £44.99
May appeal to buffs, but has nothing to attract the casual browser.

World Cricket
(30) Zeppelin Games – Sport £9.99
Fails to provide either action or strategy.

Issue 4 – July 1993

Boston Bomb Club
(70) Simitaris – Puzzle £9.99
Fairly basic but fairly addictive puzzler.

Cohort II
(30) Impressions – Strategy £34.99
All the fun and entertainment of a barium meal.

Eye of the Beholder III: Legend Of Myth Drannor
(64) SSI – Role-Playing Game £39.99
Has none of the feel or atmosphere of its prequels. Strictly for the yellow-fingernailed brigade only, I'm afraid.

Freddy Pharkas Frontier Pharmacist
(85: Recommended) Sierra On-Line – Adventure £39.99
An utterly absorbing, entertaining and difficult point 'n' click adventure with some incredibly naff in-jokes.

Maelstrom
(70) Empire – Strategy £39.99
You've read the review – you decide.

Nippon Safes Inc
(66) Global Software – Adventure £34.99
Great plot, nice artwork, decent price but nothing out of the ordinary.

Populous And The Promised Lands
(85: Recommended) Hit Squad – Strategy £14.99
One of the greatest games ever written – buy it!

SimLife For Windows
(69) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Strategy £35.99
If you liked *SimEarth*... Fun, but not lasting fun.

Space Hulk
(90: Classic) Electronic Arts – Strategy £44.99
Death, destruction, blood, gore, tension, fear, and a damn good game as well.

Starblade
(22) Simitaris – Space combat/Trading £9.99
It crashes a lot, but why care?

Strike Fleet
(75) Hit Squad – Wargame £14.99
A worthwhile addition to naval sims.

Super Ski II
(20) Microids – Sport £9.99
Sad, speedy ski game.

The 7th Guest
(60) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Adventure £44.99 (CD)
Technologically okay, but disappointingly weak on gameplay.

Tom Landry Strategic Football
(75) Merit Software – Sport £44.99
A very good, strategic, American football sim that could do with more player involvement.

V For Victory 3 – Market Garden
(82: Recommended) Three-Sixty Pacific – Wargame £34.99
Why bother with boards, hexes and counters when you've got games like this?

Where In Space Is Carmen Sandiego?
(85: Recommended) Electronic Arts – Edutainment £39.99
Educational, fun and highly recommended.

Issue 5 – August 1993

10 Intelligent Strategy Games
(60) Oxford Softworks – Compendium £34.99
Good sampler and cheap if you need them all.

688 Attack Sub
(78) Hit Squad – Submarine Simulation £14.99
Sub-standard? Definitely not!

Air Bucks v1.2
(49) Impressions – Strategy £34.99
A potentially interesting variation on a theme, which fails largely due to being more than a tad unexciting.

Betrayal At Krondor
(91: Classic) Dynamix – Role-Playing Game £44.99
The licence makes a lot of difference – great story, great game.

Championship Manager '93
(75) Domark – Sport £29.99
An undoubtedly "serious" management game that's involving, but occasionally unnecessarily slow.

Chess Maniac 5 Billion & 1
(60) Spectrum Holobyte – Chess £44.99
Falls between two stools – and I'm being very nice here.

Dizzy Collection
(60) Codemasters – Compilation £35.99
Contains: *Fast Food Dizzy*, *Fantasy World Dizzy*, *Kwik Snack*, *Dizzy Prince Of Yorkfolk*, *Magicaland Dizzy*.
A poor egg-scuse to make totally unfunny egg yolks. Just about playable.

Ishar 2: Messengers Of Doom
(50) Simitaris – Role-Playing Game £32.99
Would have been a real contender if it had been released a year or two earlier.

James Pond 2: Codename Robocod
(87: Recommended) Millennium – Platform Game £30.99 – Only available in a compilation
"Nifty scrolling, great gameplay" is our first remark on playing *Robocod*, closely followed by "Has anyone got a pair of sunglasses?"

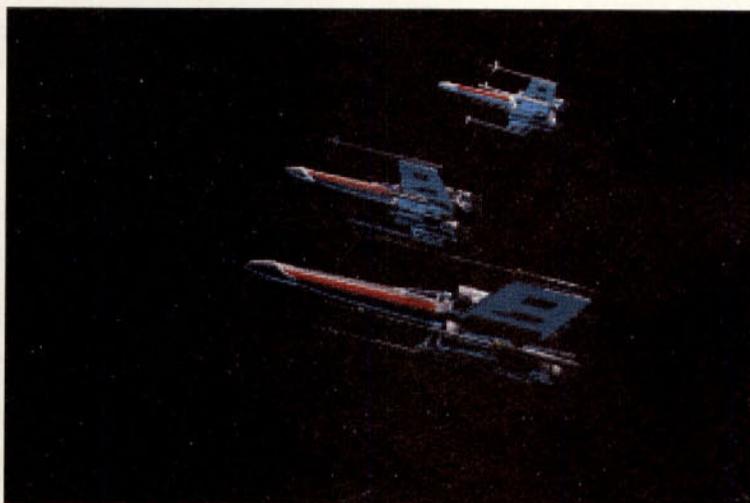
Premier Manager
(59) Gremlin Graphics – Sport £29.99
Not recommended as a full-priced game – it would make a good, fun budget game.

Prince Of Persia 2: The Shadow And The Flame
(89: Recommended) Brøderbund – Platform Game £39.99
We reckon they could have done more with it, but it's a corker nevertheless.

Protostar
(80: Recommended) Tsunami – Space Combat/Trading £39.99
A slick game that's full of nice touches and good ideas, but if you're not patient, don't bother.

Syndicate
(90: Classic) Electronic Arts – Strategy £44.99
Incredibly violent, completely amoral and brilliant fun.

The Cycles
(55) Hit Squad – Sport £12.99
Sadly, an overpriced and underpowered ride into the past.



X-Wing: groove on down to the old "destroy the Death Star, save the croissant-haired princess" tune.

War In The Gulf

(81: Recommended) Empire – Wargame £34.99
Another great set of blood-thirsty missions for one of the most playable 3D battle sims ever.

Worlds Of Legend

(73) Mindscape – Role-Playing Game £25.99
Perfectly reasonable but rather old-fashioned fantasy RPG jobbie.

WWF Wrestlemania

(58) Hit Squad – Sport £9.99
Fairly limited beat 'em up, which was delivered much better on the console.

Issue 6 – September 1993

Blade Of Destiny: Realms Of Arkania

(78) US Gold – Role-Playing Game £39.99
Large in scale, absorbing to play – but more suited to "serious" role-players than your average gamer.

Blue Force

(35) Tsunami – Adventure £39.99
Tiresome controls and sloppy design mar what could have been a decidedly average adventure.

Caesar's Palace For Windows

(65) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Casino Compendium £35.99
A good compilation; unnervingly addictive.

Fields Of Glory

(89: Recommended) MicroProse – Wargame £44.99
A brilliant sim that puts even the most reluctant wargamer right into the thick of it. Only its speed prevents it from being awarded Classic status.

Flashback

(89: Recommended) US Gold – Platform Game £37.99
It's *Prince Of Persia* in the future (but this time he's got a gun).

Lotus – The Ultimate Challenge

(68) Gremlin Graphics – Driving Game £34.99
Nothing particularly new, but good fun, especially in two player mode.

Maniac Mansion 2: Day Of The Tentacle

(85: Recommended) LucasArts – Adventure £42.99
Lovely graphics, good music, quite challenging but a bit too American for my roast beef and dumplings taste buds.

MIG-29: Fulcrum

(70) Domark – Flight Sim £14.99
Almost no scenery, but a nice flight model.

Monopoly

(75) Supervision – Board Game £34.99
A faithful conversion, which is slightly too flashy for its own good.

Napoleonics

(79) On-Line Entertainment – Wargame Compendium – Deleted £34.99
Three excellent and original Napoleonic wargames for tactical experts.

Open Golf

(50) Ocean – Sport – Deleted
A disappointing foray into the world of golf sims from Ocean.

Pinball Dreams

(78) 21st Century Entertainment – Pinball Simulation £37.99
As enjoyable as the real thing, but a bit on the pricey side.

Prehistorik 2

(50) Titus – Platform Game £7.99
A very average platform game, which competes with some budget titles but little else.

Rags To Riches

(60) Interplay – Strategy £39.99
Lacks excitement; unlikely to have a long life.

Return Of The Phantom

(73) MicroProse – Adventure £44.99
Delightfully atmospheric and aimed at beginners, but a tad too short and easy to justify the price.

Sensible Soccer

(70) Renegade – Sport £34.99
The best football game around for the PC, but still not as good as it should've been.

Space Legends

(75) Empire – Compilation £34.99
You'll like at least two out of three.

The Immortal

(70) Hit Squad – Role-Playing Game £14.99
At least four Sunday afternoons' play we reckon.

Tornado

(93: Classic) Digital Integration – Flight Sim £44.99
The more you play, the deeper it gets – eventually you'll need a bathyscape. Not for beginners.

Issue 7 – October 1993

Ambush At Sorinor

(70) Empire – Strategy £39.99
Short, sharp missions, and plenty of them, make this an interesting strategy game.

Archer Maclean's Pool (256 colour version)

(88: Recommended) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Sport £30.99

Exactly what it claims to be – the same game with more colours. Score assumes you don't have the original.

Caesar Deluxe

(70) Impressions – Strategy £34.99
More user-friendly than its predecessor but the game remains the same.

Clash Of Steel

(67) SSI – Wargame £39.99
Intricate and well presented wargame with plenty of appeal for the dedicated wargamer.

Day Of The Tentacle (CD)

(87: Recommended) LucasArts – Adventure £45.99
A very taxing, very American adventure, with some of the best animation ever.

Dune (CD)

(82: Recommended) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Adventure £44.99
A shining example of a good game made into a great game for CD.

Eric The Unready (CD)

(77) Accolade – Adventure £34.99
Hilarious, but the creaky interface isn't so funny.

F-15 Strike Eagle II

(85: Recommended) Kixx – Flight Sim £16.99
It still holds its own in a dogfight.

Flames Of Freedom

(70) Kixx – Strategy/Arcade £9.99
A bit old, a bit saggy, but will still give purists much fun.

Galactic Warrior Rats

(75) Alternative Software – Arcade £9.99
Totally simple, totally basic, but quite good fun nevertheless.

Gumbout

(54) Hit Squad – Submarine Simulation £14.99
A better idea than game.

Hardball

(20) Hit Squad – Sport £12.99
Interesting only as an example of how bad baseball games used to be.

Imperial Pursuit

(80: Recommended) LucasArts – Space Sim £19.99
Long, involving "story-driven" tour of duty, perfect for Skywalker-wannabes.

King's Quest VI (CD)

(90: Classic) Sierra On-Line – Adventure £49.99
Excellent use of a CD, despite the "soft" story.

Lands Of Lore

(90: Classic) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Role-Playing Game £35.99
A tasty and involving reminder of what *Eye Of The Beholder III* could have been.

Legend Of Kyrandia (CD)

(82: Recommended) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Adventure £44.99
Stunning to look at, but not really challenging enough if you're the type who has played a lot of adventures before.

LNX Attack Chopper

(88: Recommended) Hit Squad – Flight Sim £14.99
Still one of the classic flight sims.

Loom

(72) Kixx – Adventure £14.99
Simple and enchanting adventure; an ideal game for beginners.

Mean 18"

(60) Hit Squad – Sport £9.99
Reasonable mid-table golf game.

MIG-29

(75) MicroProse – Flight Sim £19.99
An excellent add-on for *Falcon 3.0* fans, but nothing groundbreaking in flight sim terms.

NHL Hockey

(91: Classic) Electronic Arts – Sport £44.99
A great version of a brilliant game.

Pirates Gold!

(75) MicroProse – Strategy £44.99
As good as the original. Unfortunately, it almost is the original.

Railroad Tycoon Deluxe

(72) MicroProse – Strategy £39.99
Not significantly better than the original, but if you haven't got that then add 20% to the score.

Ringworld (CD)

(82: Recommended) Tsunami – Adventure £39.99
An alternative to having it on disk; nothing more!

Rules Of Engagement 2

(91: Classic) Impressions – Strategy £44.99
A game of great depth and complexity.

Seal Team

(77) Electronic Arts – Shoot 'Em Up/Strategy £44.99
In storyboard form I imagine it looked fabulous. In transition to code, however, it feels like something has gone astray.

Simon The Sorcerer

(86: Recommended) Adventuresoft UK Ltd – Adventure £39.99
At last an Anglo answer to the average American adventure. Recommended.

The Lost Vikings

(80: Recommended) Interplay – Arcade £34.99
An excellent puzzle/platform/arcade game (categorise it yourself, we can't be bothered).

The Patrician

(65) Daze Marketing – Trading Sim £34.99
Desperate for a trading game set in the Hanseatic League but which could have been given more zap? Look no further.



Simon The Sorcerer: at last, an adventure game with a sense of humour – albeit a bit Pratchett-esque.

Wing Commander Academy

(60) Origin – Flight Sim £19.99
This is only really worth it for *Wing Commander* combat addicts.

Issue 8 – November 1993

Battle Chess

(45) Interplay – Chess £44.99
Stalemate for the *Battlechess* series.

Blue Force (CD)

(40) Tsunami – Adventure £39.99
A criminal waste of a CD.

Conquered Kingdoms

(71) Mirage – Wargame £44.99
The rather second rate packaging and laughable manual conceals a highly playable, fantasy wargame.

Cover Girl Strip Poker

(40) On-Line Entertainment – Card Game £34.99
An appallingly bad poker game; a weak excuse for some dirty pics.

Flight Simulator 5.0

(90: Classic) Microsoft – Flight Sim £35.00
The definitive flying simulation, but not the definitive flying "game".

Gear Works

(62) The Software Business – Puzzle Game £19.99
Not good enough for the price and not cheap enough for what it is.

Grand Prix Circuit

(50) Hit Squad – Driving £12.99
Playable but crap for the price.

Hard Drivin' 2

(30) Hit Squad – Driving £12.99
Unplayable and crap for the price.

Homeworld: Gateway II

(75) Accolade – Adventure £39.99
Long, hard trek through pretty unatmospheric space.

Lord Of The Rings

(60) Interplay – Role-Playing Game £44.99
New and improved role-playing Tolkien jaunt for patient fantasy fans only.

Lost In Time

(69) Cocktail Vision – Adventure £44.99
Tough, good looking adventure that comes a cropper at the end.

Motor Stars

(75) Revell – Racing £59.99
Sex on CD for kit-heads but coffee mat for everyone else.

Patriot

(45) Three-Sixty Pacific – Wargame £44.95
A revolutionary but seriously flawed approach to land-based wargaming.

Shadowlands

(65) Hit Squad – Role-Playing Game £12.99
One for the RPG addicts.

Solitaire's Journey

(87) Mirage – Puzzle £44.99
The closest that solitaire fans will get to Heaven, on Earth.

Stronghold

(80: Recommended) SSI – Strategy £35.99
Extremely addictive even if you'd normally steer clear of D&D™.

Super Space Invaders

(75) Hit Squad – Arcade £9.99
Here's a blast from the past for less than a round of drinks.

T2

(80: Recommended) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Arcade £29.99
Mindless, chaotic and highly addictive.

The Silver Seed (Ultima VII Add-On Disk)

(50) Origin – Role-Playing Game £19.99
An utterly pointless addition to a brilliant game. One can only turn to Origin and ask "Why?"

Troddlers

(79) SCI – Puzzle Game £29.99
Not at all bad, but it smacks too much of other games to achieve classic status.

Issue 9 – December 1993

Blue Angels

(30) Hit Squad – Flight Sim £12.99
Interesting, but hardly spectacular.

Brutal Football

(65) Millennium – Sport £29.99
Too much violence, not enough game.

Chuck Yeager's Air Combat

(85: Recommended) Hit Squad – Flight Sim £14.99
Living proof that pensioners still have what it takes.

Clix

(62) The Genesis Arcade – Puzzle Game £14.99
Nice idea, shame about the gameplay.

Cogito

(57) Mindscape – Puzzle Game £29.99
A reasonably entertaining and challenging puzzle game, but only for the patient.

Dark Sun: Shattered Lands

(83: Recommended) SSI – Role-Playing Game £45.99
The next best thing to an *Ultima*.

Dino Dini's Goal

(60) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Sport £35.99
Kick Off with sideways options (but it works). Not as good as *Sensible Soccer*.

Dracula

(65) Psygnosis – Arcade £39.99
A good, challenging game, but the execution should have been better.

Frontier: Elite II

(95: Classic) Gametek – Space Trading Sim £39.99
Without doubt an unrivalled classic; nothing else even comes close.

Front Page Sports Football Pro

(85: Recommended) Dynamix – Sport £39.99
The best around, but you'll definitely need a high-spec machine.

Gobliins

(50) Cocktail Vision – Puzzle – £39.99
An unimproved CD version of an original but inspired game.

Hook

(35) Hit Squad – Adventure £12.99
At last we have perhaps the most faithful film conversion around. The movie was a turkey, so is the game.

Jack The Ripper

(39) Mirage – Adventure £44.99
Ugly, unpleasant and boring. Give it a job with PC Zone.

Jutland

(72) On-Line Entertainment – Strategy £59.99
Good but sadly there are too many unnecessary gimmicks.

Kasparov's Gambit

(85: Recommended) Electronic Arts – Chess £44.99
Excellent chess game with attitude and personality.

Magic Candle II

(80: Recommended) Hit Squad – Role-Playing Game £14.99
Good as an RPG, excellent as a budget.

NFL Coaches Club Football

(70) MicroProse – Sport £44.99
A good attempt that's let down by the rather poor passing system.



IndyCar Racing: great graphics and playability make this the best ever driving game.

Privateer

(75) Origin – Flight Sim £49.99
Wing Commander fans will love this. X-Wing fans won't. It's as simple as that.
Sim Farm
(79) Maxis – Strategy £34.99
Quite good if you're like farming, but not as good as Sim City.

Steel Thunder

(60) Hit Squad – Arcade £12.99
Reasonable fun, but not one you'd come back to.

Street Fighter II

(81: Recommended) US Gold – Beat 'Em Up – £29.99
Addictive and violent but the cross over to the pc hindered unless you invest in a game pad.

Strike Commander: Tactical Operations

(80: Recommended) Origin – Flight Sim £19.99
Essential if you're determined to get the most out of Strike Commander.

V for Victory 4: Gold-Juno-Sword

(78) Three-Sixty Pacific £34.99
It's still the best computer wargames system but it needs a shot in the arm... or leg... or both even.

When Two Worlds War

(63) Impressions – Wargame £34.99
An unattractive attempt at a strategy wargame that fails to add anything new – including excitement. Give us dice and counters any day...

Issue 10 – January 1994

8 Ball Deluxe

(75) Supervision – Pinball Game £34.99
Technically, the best pinball game there is, but there's not enough of it for the price.

20th Century Almanac

(30) The Software Business – General Interest £74.99
Outrageous price for a poor substitute for a hardback encyclopaedia.

Aces Over Europe

(78) Dynamix – Flight Sim £44.99
It's better than Aces Of The Pacific, but so it should be. Dated, but still very playable.

Air Combat Classics

(60) US Gold – Flight Sim £45.99
Shows just how far things have progressed in five years.

Alien Breed

(75) Team 17 – Shoot 'Em Up £29.99
Enjoyable, undemanding shoot 'em up that comes into its own in two-player mode.

Dracula Unleashed

(85: Recommended) Mindscape – Adventure £39.99
Classy adventure that you can really get your teeth into.

Dreamlands

(72) Daze Marketing – Compendium £29.99
The ideas and graphics are interesting, the gameplay, however, isn't.

Goblins 2

(67) Coktel Vision – Puzzle Game £44.99
Zany puzzle game, frustrating at times but mostly good fun.

IndyCar Racing

(93: Classic) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Driving £44.99
The new definitive driving game. And it comes with a free moustache.

Innocent Until Caught

(84: Recommended) Psygnosis – Adventure £44.99
Well worth nicking. Ho ho.

Jurassic Park

(73) Ocean – Adventure £34.99
Despite some irritating flaws, an atmospheric and addictive game.

Knights Of The Sky

(79) Kixx – Strategy £16.99
A game that's well worth buying for the two-player option alone.

Links Championship Course: Innisbrook

(75) US Gold – Sport £24.99
If you really want another Links course, then this is one.

Links

(80: Recommended) Kixx – Sport £16.99.
An excellent golf game for anyone with a less than ninja pc.

Lords Of Power

(85: Recommended) Ubisoft – Strategy £39.99
A first class simulation which you would be mad not to buy.

Network Q RAC Rally 2

(80: Recommended) Europress Software – Driving £34.99
A rather good addition to the current crop of driving games, if you can stand the opponent's amazing skills.

Newsweek Interactive

(30) The Software Business – General Interest £39.99
Over-priced, over-patronising and over here.

Night Shift

(70) Kixx – £12.99
A suitably frantic and frustrating puzzler.

Oceans Below

(70) The Software Business – Edutainment £39.99
Initially interesting, but unfortunately the novelty all too soon wears off. Strictly for scuba diving fans.

Protostar (CD)

(80: Recommended) Accolade – Space Sim £39.99
Absorbing, well designed and, if you can forgive its weaker moments, it'll keep you busy for ages.

Return To Zork (CD)

(90: Classic) Activision – Adventure £49.99
Bad news for text-adventure purists who thought that Zork was sacred. Hal!

Return To Zork

(90: Classic) Activision – Adventure £45.99
A highly imaginative and enjoyable adventure game with some very clever knobs attached.

Shadowcaster

(66) Electronic Arts – Role-Playing Game £44.99
Neither Wolfenstein nor Underworld. And not much in-between.

Speed Racer

(49) Accolade – Racing £39.99
Nice intro, shame about the game.

Star Trek: Judgement Rites

(79) Interplay – Adventure £44.99
The stories are poetic and the variety of gameplay is "fascinating" but it is not the best flight sim or adventure game.

Strike Squad

(25) Empire – Strategy £39.99
Just turn the page and get on with enjoying life, okay?

The Blue And The Gray

(78) Impressions – Wargame £39.99
Dedicated blood 'n' guts fans will find it a little simplistic, but it's a great all-round wargame with hidden depths and long term playability.

The Even More Incredible Machine

(89: Recommended) Dynamix 39.99
If you've never played The Incredible Machine now's the time to start.

World Class Rugby

(60) Audiogenic – Sport £14.99
Not really worth the waggle.

World War Two: Battles Of The South Pacific

(62) Mirage – Strategy/Action £44.99
Innovative mix of naval strategy and action. The gameplay doesn't quite live up to expectations –

Issue 11 – February 1994

Advantage Tennis

(55) Infogrames – Sport £35.99

Unexciting tennis game that lacks punch.

Alone In The Dark 2

(97: Classic) Infogrames – Adventure – £39.99

Absolutely Brilliant! What the pc was made for.

Alone in the Dark (CD)

(92: Classic) Infogrames – Adventure £44.99

Still the best thing since sliced bread. Buy it.

B-Wing

(72) US Gold – Space Sim £19.99

Your sister either fancied Han Solo or Luke Skywalker. You'll either fancy B-Wing or, er, something else.

Capitol Hill (CD)

(75) Software Toolworks – Edutainment £39.99

Comprehensive introduction to American politics

Chessmaster 4000 Turbo

(90: Classic) Mindscape – Chess £34.99

Tough opponent: gentle teacher.

Critical Path (CD)

(72) Media Vision – Adventure £49.99

Slick and atmospheric but way too short.

Dungeon Hack

(62) SSI – Role-Playing Game £39.99

Not enough there. Not enough design options. Not enough gameplay. Very hardened and grizzled role-players only.

Fire And Ice

(75) Renegade – Platform Game £29.99

A fun, but difficult game, marred only by an over-inflated price and ridiculous copy protection.

Flight Sim Toolkit

(80: Recommended) Domark – Simulation £49.99

Recommended, but only if you find Stunt Island limiting. It can be very heavy going.

Global Dominator

(65) Impressions – Strategy £39.99

Slick, addictive strategy game but it presents no long term challenge.

Goblins 3

(75) Coktel Vision – Puzzle Game £39.99

Good for beginners and a pleasant diversion for seasoned adventurers.

Kingmaker

(88: Recommended) US Gold – Board Game £37.99

Without doubt the best board game conversion for a long, long time.

Magic Boy

(60) Empire – Platform Game £25.99

Not very "magic" at all.

Master of Orion

(72) MicroProse – Strategy £44.99

A good one for all the accountants out there.

Rebel Assault

(93: Classic) LucasArts – Shoot 'Em Up £49.99

It's Star Wars. It's also the most important game to date.

Striker

(55) Elite – Sport £29.99

Another Paul Bodin penalty of the gamesplaying world.

Subwar 2050

(88: Recommended) MicroProse – Simulation £44.99

Easily the best "fun" simulation that MicroProse has produced.

The Labyrinth Of Time

(89: Recommended) Electronic Arts – Adventure £39.99

Beautiful, alluring, a touch slow and a little fussy. A quite superb adventure though.

The Terminator Rampage

(75) Bethesda Softworks – Arcade £39.99

Okay, but once you've seen Doom, you'll laugh in Rampage's face and spill its pint.

VGA Planets

(70) PAW PBM – Role-Playing Game £24.99

A rather interesting type of role-playing game that takes some time, but is generally worth the wait.

Issue 12 – March 1994

Campaign

(52) Empire – Strategy £39.99

Dim-witted attempt at simulating armoured action – too buggy to recommend, despite colourful graphics and arcade sequences.

Championship Manager '94

(80: Recommended) Domark – Sport £29.99

It's still the best (just).

Championship Manager Italia

(80: Recommended) Domark – Sport £29.99

It's the best too, just with a few more noughts at the end of the transfer figures.

Combat Classics 2

(50) Empire – Flight Sim Compendium £34.99

Sadly, this compilation contains one classic and two rather second-rate duds.

Companions Of Xanth

(73) Accolade – Adventure £39.99

Awful puns. Questionable Humour. Very Monkey Island-esque. What more could you want from an adventure?

Cyber Race

(64) Cyberdreams – Racing £44.99

Mildly entertaining for a quick blast, but that's about it.

Fury Of The Furies

(85: Recommended) Mindscape – Puzzle/Platform Game £39.99

A riveting platform puzzler, but not for the easily frustrated.

Gabriel Knight

(92: Classic) Sierra On-Line – Adventure £39.99

Brilliant and frightening offering from Sierra.

Genesis

(83: Recommended) Mindscape – Strategy £34.99

A little bit of Populous, a little bit of Civilisation.

Hand Of Fate

(82: Recommended) Virgin Interactive Entertainment

Adventure £39.99

You've got to hand it to Westwood, this is a bit of a stunner.

Hairs To The Throne

(43) Mirage – Strategy £44.99

If I got this kind of quality from a PD game I'd be blinking well complain.

Indianapolis 500

(65) Hit Squad – Driving £14.99

A once-great giant succumbs to the ravages of time.

Leisure Suit Larry 6

(75) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Adventure £35.99

The best Larry yet; but he's getting way past his sell-by date.

Lilil Divil

(90: Classic) Gremlin Graphics – Puzzle Game £39.99

An excellent puzzle game with wit and flair.

Police Quest 4: Open Season

(78) Sierra On-Line – Adventure £39.99

A thoroughly professional job for those who can think and click at the same time.

Premier Challenge

(78) Tai Chi – Sport £24.99

Design your own game. Boost this score.

Premier Manager 2

(65) Gremlin Graphics – Sport £34.99

It's better, but still too obsessed with interior decorating for my liking.

Shadow Of Darkness

(80: Recommended) Sierra On-Line – Adventure £39.99

A compelling storyline makes up for the dull battle scenes.

The Incredible Toons

(82: Recommended) Dynamix – Puzzle Game £39.99

Zany, silly and highly addictive.

Issue 13 – April 1994

Archon Ultra

(78) US Gold – Strategy £39.99

More beat 'em up than strategy.

Beneath A Steel Sky

(83: Recommended) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Flight Sim £39.99

Graphically good and pleasingly puzzling jaunt that you'll feel like returning to.

Conspiracy

(67) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Adventure £44.99

Takes all the fun out of Ruskie bashing.

D-Day

(38) US Gold – Wargame £35.99

D-Day lies bleeding in the no man's land of wargames.

Daemongate

(45) Gametek – Role-Playing Game £29.99

Out-dated, tedious and visually vestigial.

Doom

(96: Classic) id Software – Arcade £34.99

The best arcade game and the best multi-player game ever. Doom is the best.

Hired Guns

(77) Psygnosis – Role-Playing Game £44.99

Ishar 2 with robots.

Hot Sound And Vision

(85: Recommended) Interplay – General Interest £44.99

An outstanding collection.

Interplay's 10 Year Anthology

(85: Recommended) Interplay – Compendium £49.99

A cost-effective way to build an instant library of classic games.

Micro Machines

(70) Codemasters – Arcade £29.99

A good two-player game (if you have a decent pc).

Mortal Kombat

(80: Recommended) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Beat 'Em Up £29.99

Not as good as the SNES Street Fighter II, but the best on the pc.

Nomad

(78) Gametek – Space Strategy £29.99

Good game if you're more into exploring than fighting.

Pinball Fantasies

(80: Recommended) 21st Century Entertainment – Pinball Game £37.95

The meanest machine of them all and a worthy successor to the original Pinball Dreams.



Myst: "great graphics, what gameplay?" disease claims another hapless victim.

Reunion
(80: Recommended) Grandslam – Strategy £TBA
Reunion has something for everyone.

Sim City 2000
(92: Classic) Maxis – Strategy £39.99
Brilliant game that'll make you anally retentive in the extreme.

Star Trek: 25th Anniversary
(86: Recommended) Interplay – Adventure £49.99
A game boldly going where it's been before, just a little more vocally.

Strike Commander (CD)
(86: Recommended) Electronic Arts – Flight Sim £49.99
Superior flight sim, but you need the hardware to match.

The Complete UMS
(58) Mirage – Strategy £44.99
Both classics in their day, the two UMS games are a bit too long in the tooth to excite anyone but the real enthusiast.

The Lawnmower Man
(77) Sales Curve Interactive – Arcade £54.99
Excellent presentation. Just a little more complexity in the gameplay and it would have been unreservedly recommended.

Winter Olympics
(64) US Gold – Sport £42.99
Has its moments, but you'll probably play it for a few hours and thereafter pick it up once a year if you get really bored.

Wizard
(73) Psygnosis – Role-Playing Game £44.99
A good stepping stone into the land of RPGs.

of the year.

Buzz Aldrin's Race Into Space (CD)
(95: Classic) Interplay – Strategy – £39.99
A stunning improvement of an already classic game.

Cannon Fodder
(90: Classic) Virgin Interactive Entertainment – Arcade/Strategy £34.99
Great fun for all the wrong and right reasons.

CD-ROM Challenge Pack
(75) Software Toolworks – Compendium £39.99
Reasonable good compilation, but there are better ones around.

Championship Manager For Windows
(79) Domark – Sport £29.99
A wasted opportunity. Not as good as the DOS version.

D/Generation
(85: Recommended) Mindscape – Adventure £19.99
Probably the best game that Windows users have ever played.

Excellent Games
(85: Recommended) Beau Jolly – Various £39.99
Great games at a great price. A compilation not to be missed, including *Populous 2*, *Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker*, *Car And Driver* and *Robocod*.

Fantastic Dizzy
(50) Codemasters – Platform Game £9.99
Wrong time. Wrong format. Wrong price.

Gabriel Knight (CD)
(90: Classic)
Sierra On-Line – Adventure £44.99
Brooding, atmospheric thriller.

In Extremis
(67) US Gold – Arcade £37.99
You'll shriek! You'll shout! You'll yawn!

Johnny Quest
(12) Software Business – Arcade/Adventure £29.99
Can basically be summed up in one word. Dreadful.

Megarace
(65) Mindscape – Racing £39.99
A superb demonstration of what can be done graphically with CD-ROM... and how easy it is for gameplay to suffer as a result.

Merchant Prince
(82: Recommended) Mirage – Strategy £44.99
Don't let the dodgy graphics fool you. If you give this game half a chance you'll be hooked.

Microcosm
(70) Psygnosis – Shoot 'Em Up £49.99
Brilliant graphics and excellent sound. Let down by limited gameplay.

NFL Pro League Football

(50) Digital Integration – Sport £39.99
As a play-editor it's okay, but playing the game itself is disappointing.

Privateer: Righteous Fire
(80: Recommended) Electronic Arts – Add-On £19.99
Privateer fans definitely won't be disappointed with this one.

Seawolf
(83: Recommended) Electronic Arts – Simulation £44.99
A highly atmospheric sub sim with a control interface from hell.

Starlord
(70) MicroProse – Strategy £44.99
It could have been excellent. Could have been. Damn!

The Patrician (CD)
(70) Daze Marketing – Strategy £39.99
A good game on disk, slightly better on CD.

The Red Crystal
(43) Mirage – Role-Playing Game £44.99
Don't ask your friends to play this if you want to keep them.

Unnecessary Roughness
(66) Accolade – Sport £39.99
Best described as "alright". It's as good as most American footy sims.

Issue 15 – June 1994

Bloodnet
(75) MicroProse – Role-Playing Game £39.99
Hindered by outdated implementation, but still well worth a look.

Carriers At War II
(63) Electronic Arts – Strategy £44.99
For die-hard strategy aficionados.

Darkseed
(90: Classic) Cyberdreams – Adventure £44.99
If you have a taste for the macabre, you'll never forget the *Darkseed* affair.

Diggers
(40) Millennium – Puzzle Game £34.99
Mind-numbingly tedious.

Disney Animation Studio
(75) Infogrames – General Interest £99.99
More serious approach with superb sample animations that you can't use!

Dragonsphere
(69) MicroProse – Adventure £39.99
A beautiful adventure game that won't tax your brain too heavily.

Evasive Action
(40) Mindscape – Simulation £34.99
So close, but more bugs than Watergate.

F1
(40) Domark – Sport £29.99
The champions of sport produce yet another world-beater.

Fleet Defender
(86: Recommended) MicroProse – Flight Sim £44.99
Heavyweight flight sim, both helped and hindered by over-clever graphics.

Hanna-Barbera Animation Workshop
(75) Empire – General Interest £49.99
Tries to make everything fun and encourages you to try out other methods of animation.

Hornet Naval Strike Fighter
(80: Recommended) Spectrum Holobyte – Flight Sim £TBA
As that well known saying goes: "If you like *Falcon 3*, you'll just love *Hornet*".

Myst
(67) Electronic Arts – Adventure £44.99
Surreal and atmospheric, if not realistic.

Pacific Strike
(80: Recommended) Electronic Arts – Flight Sim £49.99
Miles better than *Strike Commander* but requires a state-of-the-art, ninja PC.

Pagan: Ultima VII
(78) Electronic Arts – Role-Playing Game £44.99
Without doubt a love/hate relationship for *Ultima* purists.

Ravenloft
(78) US Gold – Role-Playing Game £45.99

Issue 14 – May 1994

Air Transport Pilot (CD)
(70) RC Simulations – Simulation £79.95
Not my idea of fun but a reasonable effort for a simulation of this type.

Airlines
(20) Kompart (UK) Ltd – Strategy £39.99
Ugly, fiddly and totally boring.

Arena: The Elder Scrolls
(62) Bethesda Softworks – Role-Playing Game £45.99
Disappointing really.

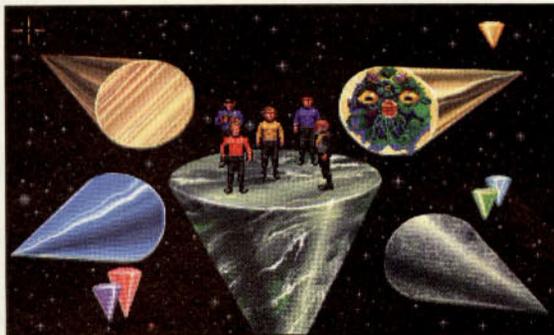
Award Winner Gold Edition
(88: Recommended) Empire – Arcade £34.99
Superb quality games with unrivalled value for money. Buy it now!

Battle Isle 2
(91: Classic) Blue Byte – Strategy £54.99
Without a shadow of a doubt, the strategy game

Sam & Max: The clue's inside the cat. Rip it's head off! (Sick, or what?)



Star Trek 25th Anniversary: Oh no! It's the alien cornettos!



Directory For Buyers

- 21st Century Entertainment
0235 851533
- Accolade 081 877 0880
- Alternative Software
0977 797777
- Bethesda Softworks
021 625 3388
- Brøderbund 0753 549442
- Codemasters 0926 814132
- Daze Marketing 071 328 2762
- Digital Integration 0276 684044
- Domark 081 780 2222
- Dynamix 0734 303322
- Electronic Arts 0753 549442
- Empire 081 343 7337
- Grandslam 081 680 7041
- Gremlin Graphics 0742 753423
- Hit Squad 061 832 6633
- Impressions 071 351 2133
- Infogrames 071 738 8199
- Interplay 0865 390029
- Kixx 021 606 1808
- Kompart (UK) Ltd 0727 868005
- Krisalis 0709 372290
- LucasArts 021 625 3388
- Maxis 071 490 2333
- Merit Software 091 385 7755
- Microids 071 328 2762
- MicroProse 0454 326532
- Millennium 0223 844894
- Mindscape 0444 246333
- Ocean 061 832 6633
- Origin 0753 549442
- Oxford Softworks 0993 823463
- Psygnosis 051 709 5755
- Renegade 071 481 9214
- Sierra On-Line 0734 303322
- Simarils 071 328 2762
- Spectrum Holobyte 0454 326532
- SSI 021 625 3388
- Three-Sixty Pacific 0753 549442
- Titus 071 700 2119
- Tsunami 081 877 0880
- US Gold 021 625 3388
- New World Computing
021 625 3388
- Virgin 081 960 9900
- Zeppelin Games 091 385 7755



TIE Fighter: Who wants to be noncey Luke Skywalker when you can be mates with big Darth?

SSI has finally got "real" and produced a playable and accessible RPG.

Red Hell

(60) Cyberdreams - Adventure £39.99

The graphics are poor and the control system is dire. Avoid it.

RedShift

(95: Classic) Maris Multimedia Ltd - General Interest £89.00

A stunning program which will be hard to beat.

Sabre Team

(60) Krisalis - Strategy £29.99

This has all been done before, and done much better as well.

Shadowcaster

(70) Electronic Arts - Role-Playing Game £39.99

Considerable enhancements for CD but the gameplay remains the same.

Spaceship Warlock

(70) Reactor/Ubisoft - Adventure £44.99

Very slick, very polished. The gameplay's a bit limited but it's fun all the same.

TFX

(80: Recommended) Ocean - Simulation £44.99

Great game with totally superfluous bells and whistles.

UFO Enemy Unknown

(93: Classic) MicroProse - Strategy £44.99

Brilliantly designed, perfectly implemented and totally absorbing.

Washington DC Scenery

(85: Recommended) Supervision - Flight Sim Add-On £39.99

One of the best flight sim add-ons to date.

Issue 16 - July 1994

Castles II

(65) Interplay - Strategy £49.95

Interplay usually releases excellent games - this isn't one of them.

Comanche (CD)

(90: Classic) Optima - Flight Sim £49.99

Brilliant action-packed helicopter simulation at a great price on CD.

Companions Of Xanth (CD)

(84: Recommended) Accolade - Role-Playing Game £39.99

Great game on disk. Even better on CD.

Corridor 7

(55) Gametek - Arcade £19.99

Nothing new or exciting.

Detroit

(85: Recommended) Impressions - Strategy £39.99

An intriguing strategy/sim which boasts both originality and playability.

Dragon's Lair

(67) Elite Systems - Adventure £39.99

An interactive cartoon that's more "cartoon" than "interactive".

Eye Of The Storm

(40) Rebellion - Space/Strategy £39.99

Very futuristic, very Elite and very, very crap.

Great Naval Battles 2

(86: Recommended) US Gold - Simulation £45.99

SSI cruises easily to the head of the fleet with this simply stunning sim.

Hand Of Fate (CD)

(78) Virgin Interactive Entertainment - Adventure £49.99

Good game, shame about the conversion. In this case, more equals less.

Jack Nicklaus Signature Edition

(85: Recommended) Accolade - Sport £19.99

A good golf game at an amazing price.

Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker

(80: Recommended) Hit Squad - Sport £14.99

Dangerously addictive snooker sim.

Lucky's Casino Adventure

(60) Mirage - Card Game £44.99

Challenging, fun, totally addictive but a bit pricey.

Lure Of The Temptress

(55) Hit Squad - Adventure £14.99

Old and fading.

Power Game 2 (CD)

(70) Activision - Simulation £29.99

Worth looking at if you don't have the hardware to run the latest sim.

Robinson's Requiem

(85: Recommended) Daze Marketing - Role-Playing Game £39.99

This is a highly original and addictive "survival sim", which, unfortunately, has some annoying bits.

Sam And Max Hit The Road

(93: Classic) US Gold - Adventure £45.99

Brilliantly original and a highly humorous jaunt.

Sim City Classic

(70) Hit Squad - Strategy £16.99

Still a great game but check out *Sim City 2000* first.

Sim City Enhanced

(82: Recommended) Interplay - Strategy £49.99

Sim City's an excellent game but 50 quid is a bit steep for a few enhancements.

Sleepwalker

(45) Hit Squad - Platform Game £9.99

Third-rate platformer. Stay well away from it.

Space Hulk

(87: Recommended) Electronic Arts - Strategy £39.99

Still a tremendous game, but not as good as the disk-based version.

Summer Challenge & Winter Challenge

(80: Recommended) Accolade - Sport £19.99

Good compilation, great value.

The Horde

(87: Recommended) US Gold - Strategy/Arcade £44.99

Not an original concept but extremely well implemented.

The Rock 'N' Roll Years - The '50s

(70) Supervision - General Interest £24.99

Handy for '50s music lovers or as a reference - but we doubt if it'll get you rockin' round the clock.

The Settlers

(89: Recommended) Blue Byte - Strategy £39.99

A damn fine, engrossing game.

Theatre Of War

(70) Hit Squad - Strategy £12.99

Excellent strategy game and it looks cool too.

UFO

(93: Classic) MicroProse - Strategy £44.99

Incredibly addictive strategy game.

Wembley Rugby League

(66) Audiogenic - Sport £29.99

This manages to be quite an improvement on previous rugby games.

Wolfpack

(60) Optima - Strategy £29.99

Disappointingly average.

World Cup Challenge

(48) Winsport - Sport £29.95

Disappointing, absurdly RAM-hungry and limited in its playing life.

Issue 17 - August 1994

1942: Pacific Air War

(89: Recommended) MicroProse - Flight Sim £44.99

Two great games - *Carrier Battles* and *Task Force 1942* - in one package. It's a winner!

AI Quadrum: The Genie's Curse

(40) US Gold/SSI - Role-Playing Game £35.99

The thinking amoeba's beat 'em up.

Burntime

(43) Max Design - Strategy £39.99

Hey, it's just like being there.

Cool Spot

(80: Recommended) Virgin Interactive Entertainment - Platform Game £29.99

Charm and accessibility save it from being strictly seventies-up!

Delta V

(64) Bethesda Softworks - Shoot 'Em Up £45.99

Very fast and pretty stunning to look at, but it won't keep you up into the night.

Dinosaur Detective Agency

(42) Alternative Software - Platform Game £16.99

Cheap - but that's no reason to be cheerful.

Empire Soccer

(57) Empire - Sport £29.99

Let down by the small viewing area, unintelligent player reactions and poor scrolling.

Good To Firm

(50) New Era Software - Sport £29.99

Horse-racing fanatics might get something out of it, but the experience will pall.

International Tennis Open

(88: Recommended) Philips Interactive Media - Sport £44.99

Definitely the new number one seed in the field of PC tennis simulations.

Jack Nicklaus (CD)

(78) Accolade - Sport £16.99

A perfectly serviceable golf game with a good course editor tacked on.

Newsweek 3 Globocop (CD)

(0) Mindscape - General Interest £39.99

The most expensive beer mat in the world.

Overlord

(85: Recommended) Virgin Interactive Entertainment - Simulation £39.99

An old idea made new with some interesting tweaks.

Pinball Dreams 2

(70) 21st Century Entertainment - Pinball Game £19.99

Not bad at all. There's plenty for pinball wizards to get their flippers into.

Shanghai II: Dragon's Eye

(88: Recommended) Activision - Puzzle Game £29.99

Puzzles galore in this excellent addition to the rather mediocre range of games currently available for Windows.

Sherlock Holmes - The Case Of The Serrated Scalpel

(48) Electronic Arts - Adventure £49.99

Elementary, my dear Watson... and that's the problem.

Simon The Sorcerer (CD)

(89: Recommended) Adventuresoft UK Ltd - Adventure £44.99

A tricky adventure jaunt boosted by excellent talkie bits.

Syndicate (CD)

(92: Classic) Electronic Arts - Strategy £39.99

What a game. What a barg.

Tactical Manager

(75) Black Legend - Sport £34.99

An interesting little number with the odd weakness, but several nice ideas.

Theme Park

(93: Classic) Electronic Arts - Strategy £44.99

A highly inventive "business" sim that's fun, fun, fun all the way. Hip hip hoorah for Bullfrog.

Walls Of Rome

(74) Digital Integration - Strategy £16.99

Good, if thin, fun.

World Cup USA '94

(78) US Gold - Sport £32.99

Good features; difference of opinion over the gameplay.

Zool 2

(82: Recommended) Millennium - Platform £34.99

As they say, if you liked *Zool*, you'll love this.

Theme Park: Sim City eat your heart out.



Issue 18 - September 1994

Beneath A Steel Sky (CD)

(72) Virgin Interactive Entertainment - Adventure £39.99

Comic book-style adventure with an excellently funny dialogue but lacking any real depth.

D-Day

(40) Impressions - War Game £39.99

A sluggish, unrealistic and bug-ridden attempt at a war game without many redeeming features.

FIFA International Soccer

(70) Electronic Arts - Sport £39.99

Looks and sounds great, but lacks gameplay.

Harpoon II

(70) Electronic Arts - Simulation £44.99

Massive, embarrassingly serious sim. Superb detail, occasionally nail-biting, always sloooow.

Inherit The Earth - Quest For The Orb

(72) US Gold - Adventure £39.99

A well-thought out gentle little brainteaser for those who fancy a "sensible" game.

International Sensible Soccer

(78) Renegade - Sport £19.99

One of the best on the PC, but still not up to the Amiga version.

Little Devil (CD)

(88: Recommended) Gremlin Graphics - Adventure £34.99

Excellent, original and addictive.

Metal And Lace: The Battle Of The Robo Babes

(35) Megatech - Beat 'Em Up £39.99

Totally devoid of any entertainment value whatsoever.

On The Ball

(68) Ascon - Sport £34.99

Too many frills, not enough body.

Outpost

(84: Recommended) Sierra On-Line - Strategy £49.99

A superb game. Addictive if you've got the hardware, hell if you haven't.

Shadow Of The Comet (CD)

(88: Recommended) Infogrames - Adventure £39.99

A worthwhile reworking of a great game, but still very idiosyncratic.

Soccer Kid

(30) Krisalis - Platform Game £29.99

If you want happening platform action, then buy something else.

Theatre Of Death

(35) Psygnosis - Arcade/Strategy £34.99

Below average imitation of an above-average game.

TIE Fighter

(94: Classic) Virgin Interactive Entertainment - Space Sim £49.99

Sheer, undiluted quality. Treat yourself to a copy.

Issue 19 - October 1994

74 Wargame Construction Set 2: Tanks!

(90: Classic) SSI - Wargame £39.99

Never mind the 50-ton tanks - this is 50-ton of solid, fire-belching wargame. Absolutely brilliant.

Battle Bugs

(65) Dynamix - Strategy £TBA

A battle game with bugs in it (as opposed to a bugged battle game).

Dark Legions

(85: Recommended) SSI - Strategy £35.99

Wonderfully entertaining animations and game screens with hidden strategic depths.

Heimdall 2

(45) Core - Adventure £39.99

Great game, shame you can't play it.

Hell Cab

(50) Time Warner - Adventure £49.99



Commander Blood: We're not saying the French are a tad weird, but...



Alone in the Dark 3: More Carnby, cobwebbs, murder, mystery and mayhem.

It's the same old story. Great graphics, but sadly lacking in gameplay.

IndyCar Racing Expansion Pack

(94: Recommended) Virgin Interactive Entertainment - Driving £17.99

These tracks are better than the original tracks (if you pretend Phoenix doesn't exist).

Ishar III: The Seven Gates Of Infinity

(50) Simarils - Strategy £39.99

Sum up *Ishar III* in one word? Avoid. Simple as that. The worst of a bunch.

KGB

(65) Hit Squad - Adventure £14.99

Bargain? Maybe. Boring? Definitely.

Kick Off 3

(55) Anco - Sport £29.99

Nice features, but gameplay not up to much.

Manchester United Premier League Champions

(60) Krisalis - Sport £29.99

Semi revisited (although not as good) with a lot of features thrown in.

Planet Football

(68) Infogrames - Sport £39.99

The World Cup produced a rash of rush releases. This is not one of the best.

Police Quest IV - Open Season

(80: Recommended) Sierra On-Line - Adventure £44.99

Atmospheric and very entertaining. A bit of a let down at the end, though.

Summer Challenge

(73) Hit Squad - Sport £12.99

Not a bad game by sports sim standards and easy to cheat at, but do you really want another sport sim?

Under A Killing Moon

US Gold - Adventure £59.99

Pigs can fly. Interactive movies do exist. Sort of.

Wing Commander: Armada

(76) Electronic Arts - Flight Sim £44.99

Lots of good ideas stuck together but it doesn't hang quite right.

KA-50 Hokum

(85: Recommended) Virgin - Simulation £39.99

Without a doubt the very best helicopter simulator money can buy. Something for the propeller heads out there.

NHL Hockey 95 (CD)

(91: Classic) EA - Sports/Arcade £34.99

A new version of the top-down scrolly, ice hockey game from EA. Basically the same as the original (reviewed issue seven) but with new stats.

PGA 486 (CD)

(91: Classic) Electronic Arts - Sports £44.99

Gorgeous looking, solid playing, tasty little golf game. One of the best on the PC so far.

Pinball Dreams CD

(70) 21st Century - Arcade £39.99

Eight wonderfully designed, smoothly scrolling pinball tables. Why is it on CD? 'Cause there are lots of pointless rendered bits, that's why.

System Shock

(95: Classic) EA/Origin - RPG £44.99

Pant-wettingly fantastic, cyberpunk, RPG thing. All hail *System Shock*, that shalt be king hereafter (until *System Shock II* comes out, that is).

Issue 21 - December 1994

Alone in the Dark II CD

(93: Classic) Infogrames - Adventure £44.99

A sequel that is noticeably better than the original and with some serious CD enhancements. What a refreshing change.

Dawn Patrol

(80: Recommended) Empire - Flight simulation £44.99

A gorgeous looking VGA WWI flight sim with a bit of a different idea behind it... it's an interactive book apparently.

Dreamweb

(74) Empire - RPG £44.99

Cyberpunk RPG with lots of violence and a shagging scene that has now become infamous.

Ecstasica

(93: Classic) Psygnosis - Adventure £44.99

An utterly brilliant *Alone in the Dark*-like with ellipsoid-generated characters and lots of pert buttocks.

FIFA CD

(76) Electronic Arts - Sports £39.99

A smart-looking footy game that just falls short of being an absolute belter.

Little Big Adventure

(93: Classic) Electronic Arts - Adventure £44.99

A truly amazing adventure with pretty graphics and weird French gameplay. Gobsmaacking.

Discworld: Just possibly one of the best point'n'click adventure game ever.



Magic Carpet

(96: Classic) Electronic Arts - Shoot 'em up £44.99

The sequel to one of the best games ever. New graphics, a new gun and new monstrosities. Miss it at your peril.

Project X

(76) Team 17 - Shoot 'em up £19.99

A very competent and nicely low-priced little shoot 'em up.

Rise of the Robots

(88: Recommended) Mirage - Beat 'em up £44.99

Possibly the best beat 'em up on the PC so far with some excellent rendered sprites.

Space Simulator

(75) Microsoft - Simulator £39.99

A huge simulation of man's quest for space that is a little too ambitious for its own good.

Star Crusader

(60) Gametech - Shoot 'em up £39.99

Basically this is a poor man's *Wing Commander* with some nice CD bits.

Transport Tycoon

(94: Classic) MicroProse - Strategy £44.99

One of the best strategy games around and a more than worthy sequel to *Railroad Tycoon*.

Total Carnage

(74) ICE - Shoot 'em up £27.99

Good challenging fun and a more than competent conversion of the original arcade machine.

Issue 22 - January 1995

Aces of the Deep

(90: Classic) Dynamix/Sierra - £39.99

The graphics, gameplay, sound and atmo combine to make this the best sub game available.

All New World of Lemmings

(78) Digital Integration - £39.99

If you like all the other *Lemmings* games, you'll like this one too.

Armored Fist

(86: Recommended) US Gold/Novologic £44.99

Comanche on wheels. Er, tracks. You know what I mean.

Creature shock

(78) Virgin - £49.99

An engrossing, atmospheric 3D adventure game. Great graphics, absorbing levels, but lousy soundtrack.

CyberWar

(55) SCI - £49.99

It looks amazing. The gameplay isn't.

Dark Sun II

(80: Recommended) Mindscape - £44.99

Love it for its brains not for its looks.

Discworld

(96: Classic) Psygnosis - £49.99

Discworld is possibly the best point-and-click adventure game ever made.

Front Page sports Baseball

(85: Recommended) Sierra - £44.99

It takes all the best bits from all the best games and ends up being the best.

Klik 'n' Play

(88: Recommended) Europress - £39.99

Neat intuitive, and loads of fun.

Novastorm

(40) Psygnosis - £44.99

Repeat ad nauseam: "Pretty graphics doth not a game make."

Power Drive

(50) US Gold - £39.99

30 whole points off for no two-player mode. Sod off *Power Drive*.

Quarantine

(80: Recommended) Gametek - £39.99

An excellent blast and it looks good too.

Retribution

(45) Gremlin Interactive - £39.99

Not only is it a below average shoot 'em up, it has pretensions too.

US Navy Fighters

(90: Classic) Electronic Arts - £44.99

If it had a multi-player facility, I'd give it 100. But it hasn't, so I won't.

Warcraft

(75) Interplay - £39.99

Good, simple, addictive strategy game.

Issue 23 - February 1995

Alone in the Dark 3

(95 - Classic) Infogrames - Adventure £44.99

The mega-stonkingly weird and wonderful final chapter in the *Alone in the Dark* trilogy.

Cannon Fodder 2

(74) Virgin Interactive - Arcade/Strategy £34.99

Just more of the same or is *Cannon Fodder 2* a significant improvement? Sensible returns with more "fun with a gun".

Commander Blood

(81 - Recommended) Mindscape - Adventure £44.99

It's French, and guess what? It's weird. Very weird. We try not to get at them for it... but this is just plain mad.

Cyberia

(80 - Recommended) Interplay - Adventure/Shoot 'em up £49.99

A contender for the "Best-looking game of 1994" award. Tastier than treacle pudding with lashings of thick custard, and almost certainly better than *Rebel Assault*.

Dragon Lore

(81 - Mindscape) Interplay - Adventure £44.99

Cryo's epic multi-CD graphic adventure finally arrives. Is it just more French weirdness or is it actually a decent game?

Hammer of the Gods

(77) US Gold - Strategy £7BA

Nordic domination and general Euro-bashing in this simple but addictive strategy war sim from New World Computing.

Kyrandia 3

(87 - Recommended) Virgin - Adventure £44.99

Westwood's *Fables and Fiends* series makes it to number three, and this time you get to play the bad guy!

Lion King

(71) Virgin - Platform game £29.99

The smash-hit movie turns into a reasonable-ish platform game. Pretend your PC is a Mega Drive.

NASCAR Racing

(84 - Recommended) Virgin - Racing Sim £44.99

Payrus follows up *IndyCar* with the popular American sport of driving round and round in circles.

Noctropolis

(79) Electronic Arts - Adventure £44.99

Electronic Arts goes all weird, gothic and horrific in this unusual super-hero adventure.

Ultimate Body Blows

(78) Team 17 - Beat 'em up £29.99

An Amiga conversion from Team 17. Don't be put off by that, though - it's actually quite good.

Voyeur

(40) Interplay - Adventure £39.99

Not as pery as people think. Yes, there are suspenders and braziers in it... but no nudity and no naughtiness (well, not much).

Wing Commander 3

(62) Electronic Arts - Flight Sim £59.99

Four million dollars. Luke Skywalker and a well-known porn actress... a potentially interesting situation if ever there was one.

20 GOOD REASONS TO SUBSCRIBE TO PC ZONE

THE PC ZONE CHART

TOP 10 HD GAMES

| Game | RRP | Comment |
|------------------------------|--------|--|
| 1. Theme Park | £44.99 | Possibly the best resource management game around... |
| 2. SimCity 2000 | £39.99 | ...but if you like 'em a bit more serious then this is it |
| 3. TIE Fighter | £49.99 | Play an Imperial pilot in the best space game ever |
| 4. Rise of the Robots (SVGA) | £45.99 | The best beat 'em up on the PC so far |
| 5. NASCAR Racing | £39.99 | Living proof that Papyrus make the best driving games |
| 6. Cannon Fodder 2 | £34.99 | More "fun with a gun" in this Sensible sequel |
| 7. Dawn Patrol | £44.99 | WWI combat in this beautiful flight sim from Empire |
| 8. LucasArts x3 | £49.99 | <i>X-Wing</i> , <i>Imperial Pursuit</i> and <i>B-Wing</i> in special package |
| 9. System Shock | £44.99 | Without a doubt the best 3D RPG around |
| 10. Colonization | £44.99 | The sequel to <i>Civilization</i> : and considerably better |

TOP 10 CD GAMES

| Game | RRP | Comment |
|---------------------|--------|--|
| 1. Theme Park | £44.99 | Bullfrog's classic with added flashy bits |
| 2. NASCAR Racing | £39.99 | The follow-up to <i>IndyCar</i> , and just as good |
| 3. SimCity 2000 | £49.99 | One of the best resource management games with extras |
| 4. King Quest VII | £44.99 | The Sierra saga continues...in SVGA |
| 5. Aces of the Deep | £44.99 | The king of submarine simulations |
| 6. Rebel Assault | £49.99 | The biggest selling CD game ever... <i>Star Wars</i> goes FMV |
| 7. Commander Blood | £44.99 | Wacky, French and undeniably weird adventure |
| 8. Jungle Strike | £39.99 | More frantic shoot'em up malarky in this console classic |
| 9. Dawn Patrol | £44.99 | WWI combat now with added war songs |
| 10. LucasArts x2 | £44.99 | <i>Day of the Tentacle</i> and <i>The Fate of Atlantis</i> on one disc |

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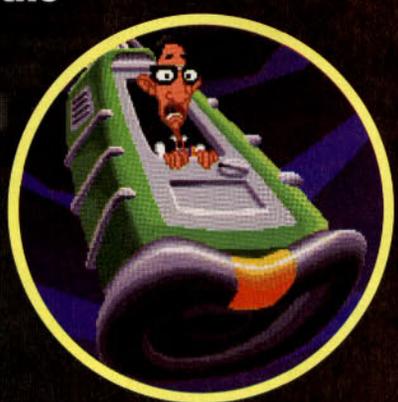
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Why is everyone saying all these bad things about Intel? What is the best way to upgrade? What can you do with a SoundBlaster

that won't work? And can games really corrupt your BIOS? **Mark Burgess** is PC Zone's answer to **Gardeners' Question Time.**

No to Trident

AT THE MOMENT I have a 386SX-33 with 4MB of RAM, two 125MB hard disks, a cheap Trident graphics card and a SoundBlaster 2. Right, that's the embarrassing bit of the way. Now, here's my problem.

Now that we are in the 486 and Pentium age, methinks that a 386 is crap. So what am I going to do about it? I need some advice.

I don't want to buy a whole new computer because some of the components on the 386 are okay, so what about a new: [1] motherboard, [2] graphics card, and [3] controller?

1. I have thought about a 486DX, but the clock doubled DX2's appeal more to us speed demons. I am also not sure about the bus, VESA or PCI. You said in issue 21 that the PCI bus is the future proof bus, but I don't want to go ahead and waste £70 where I should have bought a VESA.

2. I am in favour of the Diamond Stealth 24 (VLB) or 32 (PCI) but I will be happy to buy anything anybody recommends, apart from a Trident. Or is it best to go for a full-motion AVI movie card? Or one with 2MB VRAM?

3. There is just a simple choice to be made here: caching or non-caching? There are the Promises which cache and the... er... that's all. But do I need a caching controller? There is now a VLB controller that doesn't have a cache and which claims to be faster than one that does.

Is it safe to buy just a new motherboard etc. And if so, is there anything that I should know that helps the computer know where everything is? I should have to buy more RAM, shouldn't I? At the moment this all costs about £550, but fear not, I have a well-paid (cough, cough) paper round.

But even so, if no-one advises me, then I may make a mistake like I did two years ago when I bought a 386. Or I'll be forced into playing something like *BasketMaster* or *Blade Warrior* (just two of the pathetic games I bought when I got my

386) while my brother plays *Tie Fighter* nice and easy.

Robert Murray, Romsey, Hampshire

I'm not sure what you want to do with your computer so I'll assume you want to get it up to just beyond an entry level machine. What has the 386 got that you want to keep? From the things you are looking at, it seems only the hard disks, case, monitor and keyboard. I suppose you've thought of getting an entirely new PC? There are some really cheap 486s about just now, and Mesh have got a rather fine machine that uses IBM's Cobalt motherboard and Blue Lightning chip. It's as fast as a DX2/66 for about a grand. On to your upgrades:

1. When you have a 386SX you're stuck with either adding a Cyrix C486SRx2 or a new motherboard. The Cyrix will get you up to 486 performance without having to mess with the innards of your computer. But the recommended upgrade is a new motherboard. A DX2 and a motherboard that has VESA compatible and PCI slots. Make sure it has some ISA slots for any expansion cards you already have.

2. The Diamond Stealth 32 is okay. I've got one. But look at other cards, such as Matrox - they have a reputation for good performance at low cost. Remember that because the Diamond is so ubiquitous, it's well supported. If you're going to do lots of video work then sure, buy an AVI card. But do you really need it? Same with VRAM. 1Mb should be sufficient for most purposes. Unless you use graphics packages like Photoshop (and with a 386 you'd be crazy to try) then just stick to 1Mb and make sure it's got some spare SOJ slots for when you want to upgrade.

3. Caching, all the time. Most controllers should offer this and it could well be on your motherboard anyway. How a controller without a cache can be faster than one with a cache is beyond me. Perhaps it's so well designed that it is as fast as other controllers with caches, but that isn't the same thing.

You most certainly do need more than 4Mb RAM. Try 8 just for starters. And see the improvement that makes before you start spending your hard earned money on anything else.

A new motherboard will come with its own BIOS and it will just be the matter of telling it what disk drives you have. A modern BIOS will probably have an "auto-detect" feature for drives. **MB**

An Australian Writes

I AM HAVING A BIT OF TROUBLE with my brand-new, supposedly brilliant, Sound Blaster 16 value edition card. It will not work very well on a high DMA channel. That is, it skips and blurs and is generally crap. I could live with that but some programs just lock up using the low DMA channel although they work fine without sound (*Warlords II*, *Mortal Kombat*).

I was hoping you could tell me how to check and reconfigure DMA channels and IRQs. I'm convinced that the root of the problem is there

because I've tested everything else. I know the SoundBlaster 16 software lets you change DMAs and IRQs, but it doesn't tell you which is the right one to use. To compound my problems I looked through my junk, and can't find the receipt for it.

How, if it's possible, do you manually change your whole system's DMAs and IRQs? If it can't be done manually, can you include a cover disk with a program that can do it.

I pride myself on being fairly computer competent, but this has really stumped me.

My computer is a 386SX-40, 4MB RAM, Trident video card, SVGA monitor and 210MB hard disk. It has an ordinary I/O card and a 1.44MB and 1.2MB floppy drives. (Does that help?) Thanks for your time and help. The mag's great, don't change it!

James A Kelly, Sydney, Australia

No worries James. Look in your AUTOEXEC.BAT file. You'll find a line that runs:

set blaster A220 17 D1 T6

or something like that. "A" is the port number, "T" is the IRQ number; "D" is the DAM channel and "T" is the type of card. The port for sound cards defaults to 220, and that should be all right. The IRQ can be 2, 5 or 7. 7 is best, but some old games need it to be set at 5. The DMA channel should be either 1 or 0. Type should be 6 for SoundBlaster 16; 2 or 4 for SB Pro; 1 or 3 for the old SoundBlasters and 1 for any clone.

Now IRQs (Interrupt ReQuests) are just there, in your computer, waiting to be used. Same with DMAs (Dynamic Memory Access). So there's no way to reset them for your system. You just have to find the right combination that will work with your card. The problem is that, although all PCs are compatible, there are degrees of compatibility. There is no "right" setting for IRQs and DMAs, which is why you can change which ones the sound card uses through software, or, using the above, editing your AUTOEXEC.BAT file.

If you still run into problems, check that the SoundBlaster driver of the games is okay. Some games are released with bugged sound drivers, so it's as well to check with the publisher.

A Tale of Corruption

I HAVE JUST BOUGHT AN AST Advantage Adventure 6050d. Ever since I bought it, all I keep getting is that the system has lost its setup, whether I have cold or warm booted it. My motherboard has been replaced under warranty. But the problem is still continuing. I was told by the AST helpline that certain games affect the BIOS, ie, *Sim City 2000*, *Rebel Assault*, *Doom II*, *TFX* etc. I phoned the US Gold hot line (Lucas Arts) and told them this story, and they told me that their game could not corrupt the BIOS.

I also phoned Electronic Arts, who make *Theme Park*, and was told the same thing that US Gold had told me.

I phoned back AST again and was told that certain games do affect it. I was also told to use the

What is it with... The Pentium?

I've had a lot of letters about the infamous Pentium and its bug, so I thought I'd answer them all here. This bit is about the insides of your PC, and your PC could well have a Pentium inside it if you're lucky. Or maybe your luck has let you down? I'll explain...

THE PENTIUM is the successor to Intel's 80486. It's the processor that was touted as "the future" and everyone wanted one. The software houses talked of Pentium-only games and Intel talked about shipping seven million chips in 1994. Then it all started to unravel. Badly.

First, the chip was delayed. The specifications for the motherboard that would support it were still being altered as late as last summer. The motherboards for the Pentium 90s were plagued with problems and data sometimes got corrupted when passing through the PCI bus. I spoke to a notebook maker last July and he said that his firm was going down the 486 DX2/ DX4 path until the whole sorry mess was sorted out.

Everyone knew about the shortage of Pentiums and many thought that the shortage had been engineered so that Intel wouldn't be left with a massive stock of superseded processors. But what didn't come out until the very end of last year was that the Pentium had a bug.

Now, bugged software is a pain, sure enough, but there is a chance of getting a patch that will make it work as it should. But a processor is a different animal altogether. It has been made by photolithography. This is where a mask that contains the wiring diagram is imprinted on the silicon. Behind that mask, that circuit diagram, lies years of work development and - we hope - de-bugging. The bug that got through was an interesting one. If you've ever learnt programming you will remember that you are taught to put frequently calculated values in an array and that becomes a "look up" table. The idea is that, instead of doing the same calculation over and over again, the chip just looks to where the result of the calculation is stored. It's a real time saver. If it works.

The problem with the Pentium is that a set of 256 values in the floating point math look-up table is missing.

The processor looks there for a result and finds nothing. So it reports nothing. And that can be a real pain, or a minor inconvenience, depending who you believe.

Intel reckons that the bug will only cause a problem every 9,000,000,000 executions and that few people will ever notice. That's why, Intel says, it didn't say anything to anybody when it discovered the bug last summer. IBM reckons that you could encounter the bug as often as every 24 hours. Others say that the odds of your encountering it are one in 16,000 - those are much better odds than the National Lottery.

Who to believe? Well, IBM has a couple of axes to grind. It's stopped shipping Pentium PCs and offered to change the processor in any IBM. A magnanimous gesture, which puts a lot of pressure on other PC manufacturers, who sell more than IBM, to do the same. IBM could see its rivals seriously hurt, even broken, with the cost of replacing the faulty chips. And IBM is negotiating with another chip manufacturer, NexGen. The failure of the Pentium is a useful "card" to have. And IBM is developing its own chips ... so it's not as simple as it looks. Where does it leave you?

First, do have the bugged chip? It depends how old your Pentium PC is. Here is a test:

```
x=4195835
y=3145727
z= x - (x/y) * y
print z
```

You should get the answer 0. If z = 256, then I'm afraid you've got the bug.

At first, or rather when the world found out about the bug, Intel said it would replace the Pentium chip if users could prove that they needed it. That is, if the users were scientists or actuaries or other specialists for whom a tenth decimal place error is serious bad news. Then Dr Andrew Grove, president and chief executive officer of Intel said "we are announcing today, December 20th, a no-questions-asked return policy on the current version of the Pentium processor." He added that Intel would send a replacement to anybody with the original chip and that Intel would offer free technical support for those who wanted to replace the chip themselves and contract out service centres for those who wanted someone else to do it. As yet, no one has explained how the second option will work.

In most Pentium machines, replacing the processor is

quite easy. But if you've got a notebook, then you're going to be looking at a lot of trouble. Notebook computers are as full as eggs, if you know what I mean. There is a story that Toshiba had to call in an Origami expert to teach its workers how to fold all the cables so that they fitted the inside of its notebooks.

Even if you have a PC and even if you don't have to remove the PSU (Power Supply Unit) to get at the chip, do you really want to replace it yourself? The Pentium comes in 3.3 and 5 volt versions. Which one have you got? Are you sure? Does your chip have a heatsink and/or fan (it should)? Will Intel supply a chip with those on it?

Maybe the whole thing sounds too complicated. After all, will the bug affect you? If you play games on your computer (that's what they, and this magazine are for, after all) then it's unlikely. Programmers avoid floating point maths like the plague. It slows things down, so games are unlikely to use floating point maths to any extent. The best fractal program, Fractint, gets its name and its speed by using integer maths, and that's a proper mathematical program. The people who should worry the most are spreadsheet users. An error in one of the cells, no matter how small, can become serious once various multiplication operations are performed on it.

What should you do if you already have a Pentium? Check that it is bugged, and call Intel (01793 431144) to get it replaced. I mean, even if it isn't having an effect on playing *Magic Carpet*, you never know when a program of yours will perform one of the calculations that gives a wrong result. And you've paid - and paid quite a bit - for something that doesn't work as it should.

The next question is, should you hold off buying a Pentium machine? The answer has to be a definite yes. Intel have to divert production to the new Pentium. Most of those chips will go to replacing chips in the machines of existing users, starting with America because the Americans are fast to reach for their lawyers. Wait until machines are being shipped with the new chip, demand that the manufacturer puts it in writing that you have a new chip and test the machine anyway. And by the time all that happens there will be machines on the market with Pentium substitutes, like the Cyrix M1. You will be able to make a better and more informed choice.

The whole sorry story, once again, proves the truth of the old adage: when it comes to computers, never be the first kid on the block.

machine for what it was intended for, that is, the software supplied.

I'm new to the pc world and I don't know if anyone else has had the same experience that I have had. I would very much like to know how to stop this problem if possible.

Scott Moore, Reading

There's quite a bit of confusion here. You haven't "lost" SETUP. This is the bootstrap program that holds the basic information about your computer. I imagine the error message you are getting is something like

"incorrect (whatever) parameter run SETUP".

To get into SETUP, just hit the delete key as the machine boots up. You will see if the amount of memory, number of disks and hard disk parameters in the tables correspond with what you actually have installed in your computer.

I think the Advantage range has a flash BIOS. This means that you can write to it - usually via a special program on a disk supplied with the computer.

There is no reason for any game to corrupt the BIOS and none will. I'm surprised that AST suggested it as a

possibility. The comment that you should just stick to the software bundled with your computer is an insult pure and simple.

It's pretty likely that the BIOS on the new motherboard isn't configured for your machine. Therefore, run SETUP, in the way described above, and enter the correct values for your computer. Use the manual to help you. If you get into a complete pickle there should be an option called something like "load default BIOS values".

Choose that to get the machine working and then run SETUP again. MB

WORD

processor

SEND YOUR POST TO: **WORDPROCESSOR, PC ZONE, 19 BOLSOVER ST. LONDON W1P 7HJ**



Ultra Sound problems and piracy are on the collective mind this month... and hardly anyone is being insulting.

Gravis trouble

I WOULD LIKE TO WARN all Gravis Ultra Sound users... DO NOT BUY RISE OF THE ROBOTS – well not unless you like listening to the sound of your PC fan. I have just bought the game and it only provides SoundBlaster support. How Mirage can program a game that is so advanced graphically, and then completely arse up the sound, is beyond me. I mean, c'mon, the SoundBlaster is as old as Brian May's haircut!

This is yet another game using DOS4GW without GUS support – the result is no sound. Both Megaem and SBOS run away at the mere mention of the word DOS4GW. I phoned the technical support line at Mirage and the bloke said that they were having problems with other cards. No shit. He didn't know when or even if anything would be done about the problem.

The last game that gave non-SoundBlaster owners problems was *Syndicate*. This only gave SoundBlaster's and 100 per cent compatible support. It's about time that software houses printed on the box which cards the game WON'T work with. I had a problem with *Ultima VIII*... even bought the speech pack like a right prat (*Prat wasn't the name Kerry used, but his was unprintable and we don't want any more gratuitous swearing, now do we? Ed.*), only to find that the game didn't support digital audio for GUS. I wrote to Origin, suggesting that they warn people of this by printing it on the label, and their response was "there's no room". I mean! Who are they trying to kid? They give you a bloody box the size of Wales and then say there's no room.

Any games releasing games using DOS4GW... please give it GUS support. On the subject, I'd just like to thank Mindscape (who recently took over SSI). I bought a copy of *Dark Legions*, and found that it didn't support the Gravis. After e-mailing SSI, I learned that there was a patch disk available. I spoke to Mindscape and they sent a patch disk by return of post. Now that's technical support.

Kerry Hoskin, Cornwall

Considering how widespread the Gravis Ultra Sound card is these days, it's a pretty big surprise that more developers don't support it. Okay, so it's not the accepted "standard", but adding a driver to a product is far from difficult. So how about it then developers? Surely generating code that the GUS will interpret correctly wouldn't be too hard, eh?

An Antipodean Angst

I DO NOT IN ANY WAY condone software piracy, but I don't understand why companies protect their wares in the way that they do. It would take only five minutes to copy even the longest manual, so all it really does is annoy the legitimate user rather than deter the pirates.

I recently purchased the excellent *TIE Fighter*, and whilst it is quite superb the copy protection is nothing more than a pain in the arse. If it had been pirated, there are only 29 code words. This would take, what... maybe 20 seconds to write down?

Software houses seem to be using piracy as an excuse to charge exorbitant prices.

James Kelly, Sydney

You have a point about copy protection... it seems that nothing is going to deter the most ardent pirate. However, what many of the forms do do is deter the casual pirate. Okay, a good hacker can whip out the protection code from virtually any game – but do you know a good hacker? Not many people do.

Your point about the pricing is something that crops up fairly regularly. However, these days the development of a game costs an awful lot. We're now into the realms of the multi-million dollar game, and in an industry where a product will sell much less than a million copies worldwide (it's more like a few hundred thousand) you have to understand why the prices are high. *Doom 2* had one of the largest European ship-outs of any PC game and that only shipped 150 thousand. That's distribution not sales, though. I agree that the prices are too high, but it's not really the piracy that's causing it – the software houses just need to guarantee profits.

Conspiracy?

I HAVE THIS THEORY. Perhaps it's more of a conspiracy theory than the type that teachers try to put forward. It's because of this theory that I fail to enter most magazine competitions.

MATE: Hey, have you entered the competition in *PC Zone* to win a lifetime supply of "UP" cursor keys? (For *Doom* purposes, I have managed to ruin an otherwise decent Cherry keyboard... and no jokes about losing mine.)

ME: No.

MATE: Someone's got to win though!

ME: Ah, but that someone is always a subscriber. They get perks because they're members. All that funny handshaking stuff will make you blind, if you ask me.

MATE: What makes you certain? Have you ever entered one?

ME: Yes I have... and all I got in the post were hundreds of glossy pages of bin-seeking bumf.

MATE: You're a very bitter and cynical man. Was it a difficult childhood?

ME: Yes it was...

The fact that I am basing my theory on one person's experience, namely mine, hasn't deluded

me. I am convinced that despite having bought your magazine since issue one, I shall be forever excluded from any spoils that you have on offer because of my unwillingness to subscribe. Perhaps what I'm really trying to say here is "does the honest man in the street stand an equal chance compared to subscribers?"

Ben Morhall, Preston

Of course it's not got anything to do with whether or not you're a subscriber. What would be the point of that? Also, even if we did do it, it would be extremely difficult to perform. On average we have around 40,000 readers and a number of thousand subscribers. To keep a list of all of their names and then check to see if they've won a compo would be very difficult. The only way we could actually perform this would be to employ some kind of YTS slave... and we don't... so we can't. If you see what I mean. Anyway, tell you what Ben – rather than acting like a spoilt, stropky little kid just because you didn't win a competition – why not try entering another one and maybe you'll win! Gosh, that would be good. You could even try for the competition from this issue.

Tanks!

COULD YOU PLEASE tell me how I can get hold of a copy of *Wargame Construction Set 2: Tanks* (reviewed in issue 19). I have tried every shop I know and nobody seems to have it. On a few occasions I have been told that it's not being distributed in this country. If this is the case, could I get hold of it from abroad? Would it cost more if I bought it like this, though?

Ian Griffiths, Aberdeen

If you can't find it in somewhere like *Future Zone* or *Virgin* try the chaps at *Strategic Plus*. Their number is 081 977 8088 and if there are any strategy games you need, these chaps have either got it...or can get it. If they can't help, no-one can.

Ninja bast

THIS LETTER IS REGARDING the letters in issue 22. A couple of people were bitching about the use of swear words in the mag. One of the main reasons this mag is one of the beast around is the fact that you describe a game as "the bollocks". This gives us an idea that the game is seriously good. Also, "ninja bastard" is now one of my favourite ways of describing a computer. As a computer science student the use of such language is really refreshing, because sometimes you can get lost in all of the technical jargon.

My PC is not yet up to the standard of a "ninja bastard", but in the next few months I hope to upgrade most of it. Is it true that memory and CPU's are cheaper in the US than they are here?

Garsha Zanjani, London SE19

For once, someone isn't whining about the things we say. Thank you... go to the top of the class for being a normal human being rather than a stiff. "Ninja bastard" is fast becoming an accepted term for describing a high-end machine. However, this was originally intended to



describe a 486DX2. With the advent of the Pentium, machines like the P5-90, or even the P5-100, are now in need of a new description, therefore, "turbo nutter ninja bastard" has now been coined... who knows what we'll end up calling the P6?

As for your upgrade question, we understand that the dollar price for components is roughly the same as the sterling price, so (given a good exchange rate) it should be cheaper. However, the import duty on stuff may result in you paying roughly the same.

Cursing mr cursor

DEAR EDITOR

Why do you still insist on dedicating a whole page to that rambling idiot Mr Cursor? What a complete waste of space! I mean, what's the point? Who cares what some jumped up, speccy twat thinks - if he doesn't like computers, then why the hell is he writing for a computer games magazine? Get rid of him and do it now! Alternatively, just give me his address and I'll do the world a favour and put him out of his misery myself!

Richard J. Hartley, Cheltenham, Glos.

Oh dear! Feeling a little tense are we? Bullied at school, per chance? Mummy wouldn't buy you a train set until you were sweet 16? Still got the same wallpaper in your bedroom that you had when you were five? Support Ipswich Town, do you?

Come on now, ever heard of light relief? No, not what you do in your bedroom after lights out, that's your affair. If you don't like what Mr Cursor has to say then don't read the last page of the magazine - go back to your Yellow Pages and stay there!

Dawn patrol

FOLLOWING YOUR RECENT and rather amusing courtroom scenario review of Dawn Patrol, I went out and bought the HD version of the game from the Silica Shop on Tottenham Court Road, London. The lack of a career structure didn't really bother me and I thought I could overcome the keypress problems you mentioned by programming my ThrustMaster WCS with the essential commands. I was right on both counts, but...

The program is littered with bugs, the details of which I won't bore you... And I do know the difference between a bug and a memory problem. More importantly, though, Empire Interactive's so-called

technical helpline has been unable to offer any suggestions, despite me faxing them with a comprehensive list and print outs of my memory configuration and system files. They have faxed Rowan who declined to reply.

My tale of woe was met with sympathy by Silica Shop who took it back in exchange for something else. Empire: nil points, Rowan: nil points, Silica: full points.

Tony Jones, Surrey

There's nothing more annoying than a bug in a program, especially when you can't get any help with it. The worst kind of bugs are always the ones which react in a special way to your particular system set-up. I'm surprised that you've had no help from Empire... I would imagine that the main problem is that they just couldn't re-create the same set-up as you have, and so couldn't re-create the bug. C'est la vie.

Co-pro a go-go

THE "REVOLUTIONARY NEW 64-BIT CONSOLE" Jaguar can't run Doom in the normal high-detail mode as seen on the PC, and it has difficulty moving at a high frame rate. The "twin RISC-based 32-bit home marvel" 3DO can't run it at all, and yet my 486DX33 runs it as smoothly as a baby's bum, with awesome stereo sound as well.

Anyway... onto my point. Why don't developers optimise for maths co-processors rather than for Pentium? I've tried stuff on a 486sx25 with a 387 maths processor, and it is noticeably faster when it's ray-tracing stuff.

With the advent of the PlayStation and the Saturn, PC developers are going to need to be much cleverer about the way they code for our machine, otherwise it'll get left behind.

Gareth Bowman, Hants

Although everyone thinks that a maths co-processor will speed up all of your games, the fact is that, it only speeds up stuff that makes use of floating-point maths... such as a ray-tracing package. Applications that don't rely very heavily on this kind of math aren't effected at all by the co-processor, because it just isn't needed.

Developers are optimising for Pentium at the moment simply because they can. The fact that the processor itself is 64-bit rather than 32-bit means that it can process a significantly larger amount of data in each clock cycle. For example, the reflections in Magic Carpet were designed

WHINER OF THE MONTH

CYNICAL CD

Sorry, it's me again, Mr "Cynical and I won't buy a CD-ROM drive"...and why can't people make games run on a 286 with 1Mb?" (letter in May issue). Well, I've actually gone and bought one, unable to resist the then offer of £99 for an external double-speed drive... and I'm impressed, partly.

Cover CD-ROMs from mags bring back memories of the early days when magazines had only just started putting disks on their covers... they're all ridiculously difficult to install. I got quite nostalgic with the number of times that I've reached for the reset button.

I'm afraid that all of these flashy graphics don't impress me either, I'm much more impressed with how a game plays and - true to what I always expected - demos that rely on CD-ROM as their main source seem to be in that category.

Also, I find that I'm starting to play my favourite game "how to configure the PC's memory", which remains a timeless classic. Crap graphics, but gameplay that's sure to keep you occupied for a good few months... (The letter then continues to waffle on in an even more miserable fashion... so to save you any further suffering, we'll cut it here. Ed.)

M. E. Hicks, Essex

Yes, CD games are still mostly gloss, but this is changing. Just look at things like Alone in the Dark 3 or the more recent Origin stuff. These games are CD only and to be honest... they're absolutely stunning.

It strikes me that you're actually nothing more than a miserable sod. If you bother to check out the reviews of products that are actually good, you'll find some superb examples - examples which, I hasten to add, are more often than not presented on the cover CD as a demo. The majority of these products also make use of DOS protected mode, which means that you don't have to play around with memory configurations at all.

with the Pentium in mind... a DX2 really does struggle when shifting that amount of data around, but a Pentium doesn't.

As far as your comments about the new consoles go, though... you are perfectly correct. PC developers need to be much more conscientious about streamlining their code to make it as efficient as possible. The PlayStation is a seriously wicked piece of kit and can run rings around a high-spec PC when it comes to shifting both sprites and polygons around. It is for this reason that the move to Pentium will come very quickly. The prices of the machines will come down and we'll find that more and more games are Pentium optimised.

Oh, there's just one more point I'd like to make... 3DO can handle Doom, it's just that id aren't developing a version for the system. 3DO owners will most likely see Quake appearing on their system at the same time as the PC version is launched. ☑



Mr Cursor

HE'S AFRAID OF CRAP FAMOUS PEOPLE AND THE LOTTERY...

LUCASARTS *The Dig* is imminent, and everyone seems to be looking forward to it immensely. Normally I'd be in the gang myself - what with LucasArts being who they are - but *The Dig* poses a slight problem from where I'm standing. It could easily be the best thing since Bachelors granulated tomato and crouton cup-a-soup, for sure, but I find myself unable to rave before the event for one single reason, and this single reason is as follows...

"Stephen Spielberg"

Yup, it's him. The famous director. Now, most of the other games mags have been fawning over Spielberg's involvement in *The Dig* as if he's some kind of God. ("It should be excellent," they say annoyingly, "because he's the best director in Hollywood.") I, however, take the opposite tack. In my opinion, Stephen Spielberg is a complete tosser who consistently produces crap (*PC Zone* and *Dennis Publishing* would like to say that this is the personal opinion of Mr Cursor. The management would like to add that it thinks Mr Spielberg is a tremendously talented director and all of his films are truly superb blockbuster mega-epics. Especially *Jurassic Park*. Which is super.) *Jaws*? Yes, okay, okay, that was alright in its time. *ET*? A film for pathetic babies. *Close Encounters Of The Third Kind*? Close Encounters With A Sick Bag, more like. And on and on and on. His films may score with Joe Public, but that doesn't make them good, does it? Let's take the relatively recent *Jurassic Park* as an example: the worst film in the world, just about. Full marks to Industrial Light And Magic for the dinosaur effects and so forth, but as for the rest of it? Yaaaaargggghh! A good director would have told Laura Dern that opening her mouth as far as it could go doesn't necessarily equal fear or awe. Personally I would have sacked her. And as for the two disgusting kids? Forget it. Kids can be great, but never in a Spielberg film. Even *Brundlefly* is allowed to be useless. (*Er, I think he means Jeff Goldblum. Ed.*) I could write a book about how terrible *Jurassic Park* is, but hopefully you'll know where I'm coming from. Spielberg is like Bernard Matthews, in that they're both happy to make heaps and heaps of money out of safely packaged turkeys. Here's my letter to Anne Robinson...

"Why oh why oh why oh why is Stephen Spielberg considered a talent? And how much, how much, how much do you reckon LucasArts paid him for his involvement in The Dig? A zillion pounds? Or do you think it was more? (Money, I might add, that could otherwise have been spent on the game, or taken off the eventual price.) And please, oh please, oh please don't let Spielberg's composer chum, John Williams, start freelancing for computer games: his musical scores are disgusting - they dirge ad infinitum, without any gaps whatsoever. Yours sincerely, disgusted of London."

Still, what will poor old Anne be able to do? The rot will continue, I don't doubt. Oh, and to quickly cover myself - just in case *The Dig* does turn out to be rather enjoyable - all I can say is that it'll be despite, rather than because of, Spielberg's presence. (Allegedly.)

It Could Be You

Anyroad, enough about the Hollywood disease, and on to topic number two... namely the British National Lottery.

Right, I'm not going to get bogged down in the politics of the lottery, but I am going to tell you how to enjoy the event without inadvertently giving a portion of "your quid" to the government.

Listen: now, I'm no programmer, but even I can cobble together a

simple BASIC routine, and I did just that - a week or so before the whole lottery shebang started last year. Cue my QBASIC Lottery Sim. I did several versions, but the one we're interested in here is the one which simply simulates about 30 lottery draws per second and remembers how much you've won. You input six numbers, basically, and then go to bed. When you wake, thousands of years have passed, and you can study the figures at your leisure. And here's a typical result. You've played the lottery every week for 26,000 years. You've won a tenner 23,729 times. You've won £65 only 1354 times. The £1,500 prize has surfaced a mere 24 times. And due to an incredible amount of luck you have actually won the £100,000 bonus prize... once. Oh, and no jackpots by the way. Doesn't sound particularly good, does it? And here are some more numbers and facts to help make it sound even worse. Ready? As I said, 26,000 years have passed since your first lottery attempt. You're now long dead, obviously, but are responsible for the spawning of 900 generations of people who carry bits of your genes (assuming you reproduced of course, otherwise you're just long dead). In your Last Will And Testament you left a stack of dosh and your six "lucky" numbers to a firm of solicitors - with instructions that they continue doing one lottery per week until the money runs out. (We'll assume this firm of solicitors lasts the required length of time.) Anyway, to get to the crunch, at the end of this 26,000 year span you'll have spent, posthumously, a total of £1,352,500. And you'll have won, again posthumously, roughly £461,000. It actually works out - and I've done extensive research - that you can expect to win ten quid per year. You spend 50 quid and win a tenner. Neat, huh? The National Lottery.

But there's always that little "chance", isn't there? That little bit of "hope", which is what makes humans human and Mr Spock merely a Vulcan. So here, as I promised a couple of minutes ago, is how you can play the lottery for real fun.

And what you do is simple. You fill in your numbers as usual... but you *don't* hand in your ticket. And then you watch the draw, live. (It has to be live or this whole thing doesn't work), on telly.

Your emotions will now be the complete opposite to the person who has handed in their coupon and paid their quid, but you will be the one who gets the biggest rush. And believe me, there's no greater sensation than having your first three numbers come up, with the knowledge that if you score a further three you'll be a millionaire - or, more importantly *would have been...* if you'd handed in your coupon and paid the money.

I've already lost a 10 quid win... but I've saved 18 in entrance money. Not bad.

But if all my numbers ever actually *do* come up, I'll be forced to commit suicide.

Now *that's* gambling!!! **Z**



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