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January 1996

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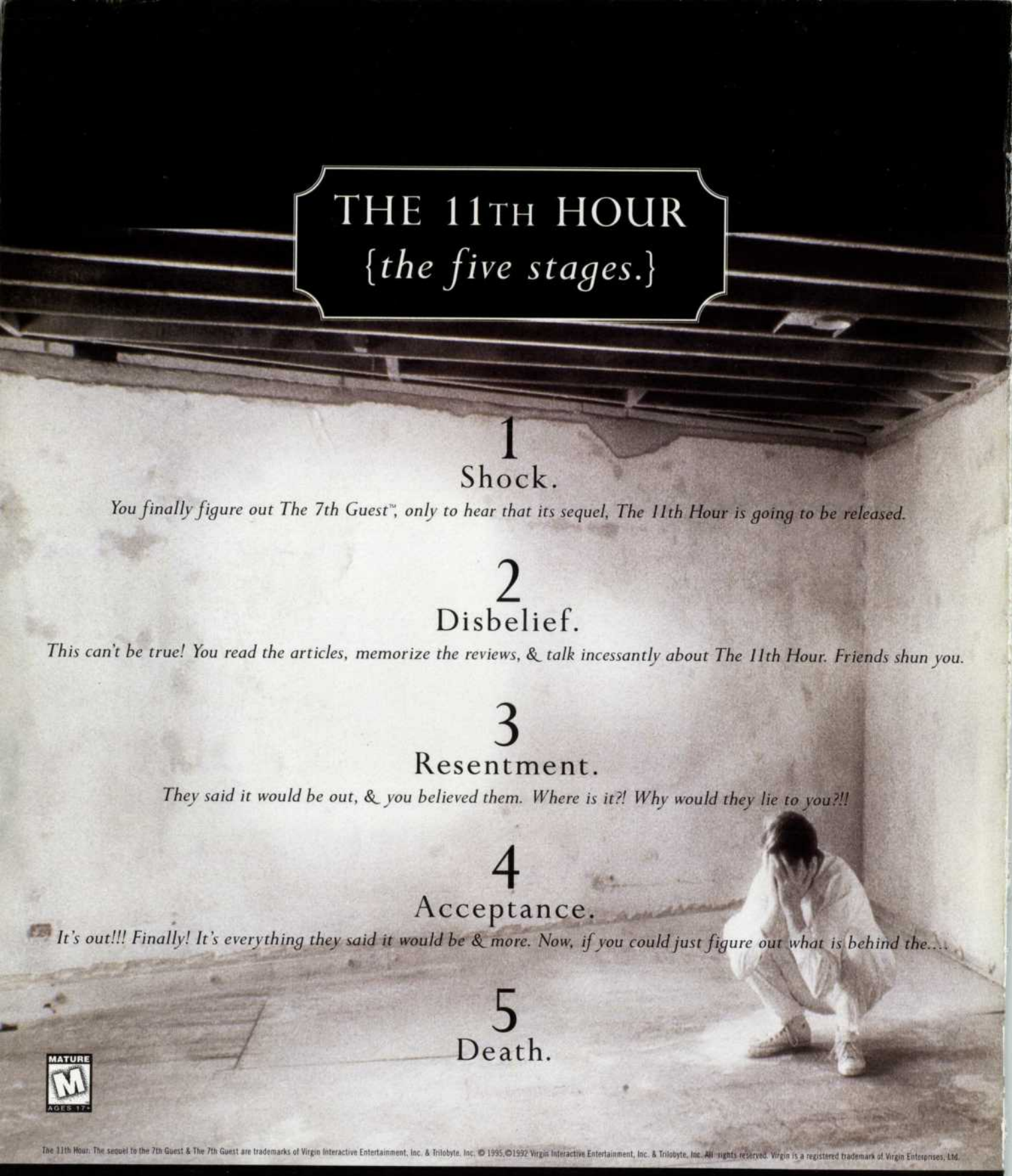

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The 3-D graphics will whiten your hair, not your teeth.

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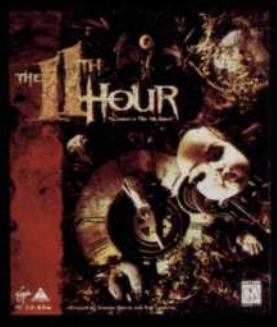

It's finally arrived.

PC GAMER
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ULTIMATE STRATEGY GUIDE

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The Ultimate Strategy Guide

Frustrated by the Nod in *Command & Conquer*? Is your business consistently failing in *Capitalism*? Well, you've come to the right place. We've brought in the experts on the top games to give you the tips, hints, and strategies you'll need to reign supreme.

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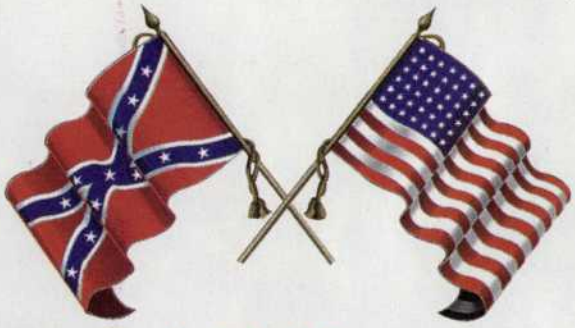

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PC Gamer (ISSN-1059-2180) is published monthly by Imagine Publishing, Inc., Suite 210, 1350 Old Bayshore Highway, Burlingame, CA 94010. Second-class postage paid at Burlingame, CA, and additional mailing offices. Newsstand distribution is handled by the Curtis Circulation Company. Subscriptions: One year (12 issues) US: $89.95, Canada: $103.95. Canadian price includes postage and GST (GST #128220688). Outside US and Canada: Add $2.00 per issue. For customer service, write *PC Gamer*, P.O. Box 51199, Boulder, CO 80322-1199 or call (303) 661-1056. **Postmaster** please send change of address to *PC Gamer*, P.O. Box 51199, Boulder, CO 80322-1199. Corporate, advertising sales, circulation, editorial and production offices: Suite 210, 1350 Old Bayshore Highway, Burlingame, CA 94010. Phone: (415) 696-1688. Fax: (415) 696-1678. Editorial product information should be addressed to Editor, *PC Gamer*, Suite 210, 1350 Old Bayshore Highway, Burlingame, CA 94010. Overnight delivery parcels should be addressed to *PC Gamer*, Suite 210, 1350 Old Bayshore Highway, Burlingame, CA 94010. Unsolicited manuscripts cannot be returned or acknowledged. Imagine Publishing, Inc., also publishes *Game Players*, *CD-ROM Today: The Leading Guide to PC and Mac Multimedia*, *Next Generation: Leading Edge Computer and Video Games*, and *The Net*.

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When in Doubt, Cheat

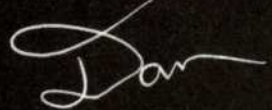
Here at *PCG*, we play just about every game published. We're *good* at it — and so are our readers. But even *we* get stuck from time to time. For some of us, it was that seventh level in *Doom II*; for others, it was that first stand-alone mission in *Marine Fighters* — but sooner or later, we all hit a brick wall.

It's then, boys and girls, that it becomes OK to cheat. We're not talking about your SATs or your bar exam; those aren't supposed to be fun. But games are entertainment, and nothing takes the fun out of a game like a heaping helping of frustration.

That's why we had our top writers and editors put together a big, strapping strategy section. It's packed to capacity with hints, tips, and cheat codes for some of the hottest, toughest games going.

But wait — that's not all! You'll find some juicy new game editors and cheat files on this month's *PC Gamer* CD-ROM. There's nothing quite like hacking into a game like *Command & Conquer*, *Mechwarrior 2*, or *Master of Magic* and tipping the odds in your favor. Check out the *Extended Play* column for details.

Hints, tips, cheats, game editors — is this a full-service magazine, or what?



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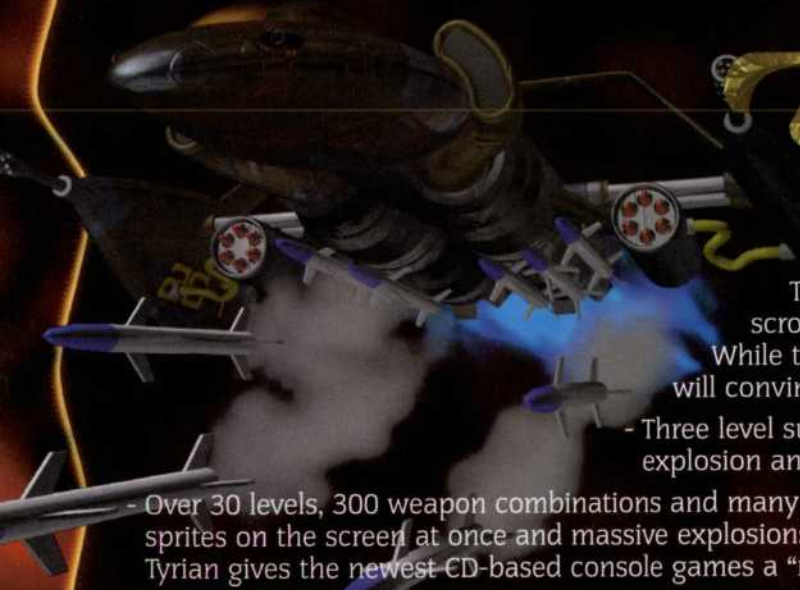

Tyrian

THE ULTIMATE PC SHOOTER

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RADIX: BEYOND THE VOID is an intense 3D action game developed for the PC platform. You'll fly down alien infested tunnels of the Theta-2 base as well as inside the massive alien mothership. You will also fly into the Void, where unknown terrors await you. It'll take great persistence and skill to navigate the small assault fighter through the winding tunnels and corridors to successfully accomplish your mission. (Un)fortunately, heavy alien resistance will attempt to hinder your objective. For more details visit our web site, www.epicgames.com Three huge episodes - **$35.00**

THE CD

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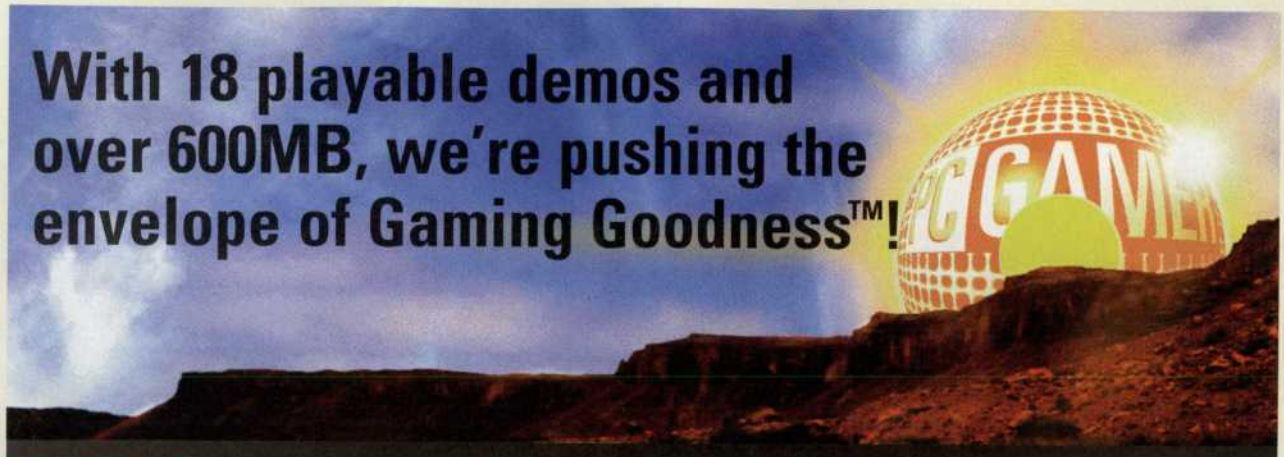
With 18 playable demos and over 600MB, we're pushing the envelope of Gaming Goodness™!



We've packed so many demos on *The CD* this month, there really is something for everyone. Heading the lineup are two demos from those game geniuses at Origin, *Wing Commander IV* and *Crusader*. Both are sure to wow you — provided you've got the system to run them.

The A-List doesn't stop there, though; SSI rolls out *Steel Panthers* and *Su-27 Flanker*, Interplay brings you *Frankenstein*, Sony has *Destruction Derby*, and Mindscape unveils *Air Power*. With a line-up like that, you've got games that span the ages from the 19th century through WWI, WWII, the present day, and beyond. And there's still more!

You know you can always count on *PC Gamer* to pump new life into your existing games, but this month is special. Along with our collection of bug patches, *Doom II*, *Heretic*, and *Descent* levels, we've brought you editors and cheats for *Command & Conquer*, *Panzer General*, and more. And to get you dialed in to even more gaming sources, we have the front ends for GEnie and PlayNet.

These Disc Pages will help you get started on *The CD*, describe what the games are about, and provide requirements, tips and other helpful info. So before you jump blindly into a demo, give these pages a quick review. They're here to help you enjoy the games to their fullest.

Getting Started

The CD Requirements

Minimum Requirements: 386SX; SVGA (640x480x256 colors); VESA driver

We Recommend: 486DX/33; Double-speed CD-ROM Drive; Mouse

These requirements are for loading *The CD* only. Each game demo will have its own additional requirements — so be sure to read the info for each demo carefully! And for you techie types, please note that *The CD* will perform much faster with SmartDrive loaded.

Quick Start: The CD

If you're familiar with DOS, configuring your system, and all those fun things that make PC gaming such an adventure, getting started couldn't be easier. But if you need a little help, here's what you need to do:

1. Insert *The CD*, and change to your CD-ROM drive by typing *D:*, where D is the name of your CD drive, and the *Enter* key at the DOS prompt. If you're in Windows, close out of it (ALT-F4) and exit to DOS.
2. Type *PCG*, and press Enter.
3. You're now in our point-and-click front end, where you can look through the text files and help screens for specific demo requirements. If you have any problems installing a game, proceed to the next column, "Manual Installation."

Manual Installation

In the event that our front end for *The CD* doesn't load or run properly on your system, you can still install each game, bypassing our front end all together.

To manually install a demo, take a look at the Command Box located in the upper-left corner of the following page. This box contains a list of demos along with their directories and installation commands.

To get up and running using the Command Box, first switch to *The CD*, then change to the appropriate directory by typing *CD\DIRECTORY*, where *DIRECTORY* is the one listed in the Command Table next to the game you're trying to install. Once in the appropriate directory, type the *Install Command*, then press *Enter*. For example, to install the *Wing Commander IV* demo:

- Type *CD\WC4DEMO* and press *Enter*.
- Type *INSTALL.BAT* and press *Enter*.

The game will then be installed on your PC.

The CD is manufactured by ASR. Before pressing, it is rigorously tested and certified virus-free.

If Nothing Works...

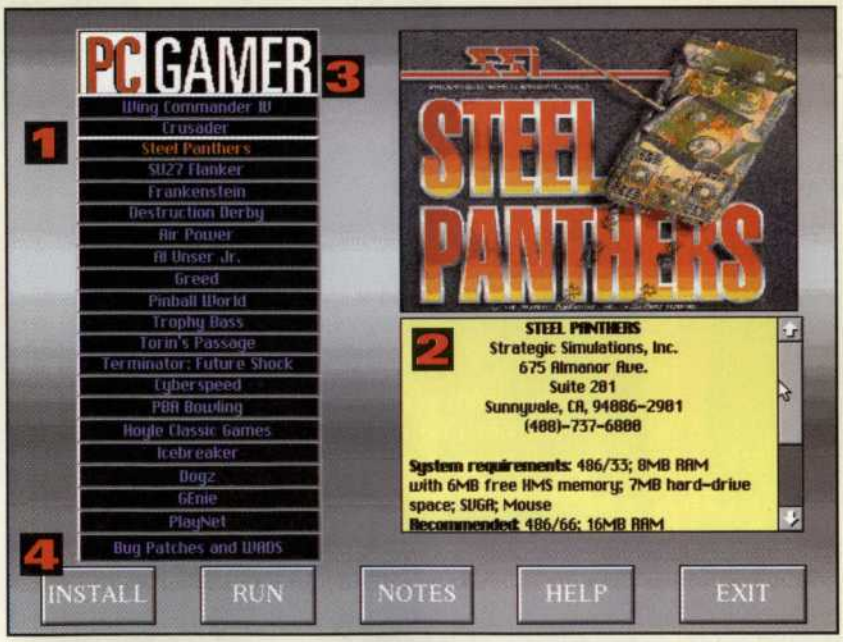
We cannot provide technical and customer support for problems you may encounter with the many different demos and patches on the *PC Gamer CD*. Should your copy fail to run at all, with error messages that indicate your CD-ROM drive cannot read the disc, return it to the following address for replacement:

PC Gamer
The CD #14 Replacement
1350 Old Bayshore Highway
Suite 210
Burlingame, CA 94010

Please do this within the first two weeks after receiving the *PC Gamer CD*. If you're a subscriber, you don't need to mail us *The CD*, but if you purchased the magazine on the newsstand, please include it. Also, indicate any error message you receive.

Game	Directory	Installation Command
Wing Commander IV	\WC4DEMO	INSTALL.BAT
Crusader	\CRUSADER	INSTALL.EXE
Steel Panthers	\	INSTALL.EXE
Frankenstein *	\FRANK	INSTALL.EXE
Su-27 Flanker (DOS)	\SU27\MSDOS	INSTALL.EXE
Su-27 Flanker (Win '95) *	\SU27\WIN95	SU27.EXE
Terminator: Future Shock	\SHOCK	INSTSHOK.BAT
Trophy Bass *	\TBDEMO	SETUP.EXE
PBA Bowling *	\BOWLING	SETUP.EXE
Greed	\GREEDEMO	GREEDEMO.EXE
Pinball World	\	INST.EXE
Torin's Passage *	\INSTALL	INSTALL.BAT
Icebreaker *	\ICEBREAK	SETUP.EXE
Hoyle Classic Games *	\HOYLE	SETUP.EXE
Destruction Derby	\DERBY	INSTALL.BAT
Air Power	\AIRPOWER	INSTAIRP.BAT
Al Unser Jr. *	\ALUNSER	ALUNSER.EXE
Cyberspeed *	\CYBERSPD	CYBERSP.EXE
Dogz*	\DOGZ	SETUP.EXE
GEnie *	\GENIE	SETUP.EXE
PlayNet	\PLAYNET	DOOM1N2 & HERETIC
Descent WADS	\DESCENT	
Heretic WADS	\HERETIC	
Doom WADS	\DOOM	
Bug Patches	\PATCHES	

* = Must install through Windows. *PBA Bowling, Cyberspeed* and *Al Unser Jr.* require Windows '95.



How to use the Front End

1 Table of contents. Click on the program you wish to run — your selection will be highlighted.

2 Once a title is selected, this will give a brief description and system requirements for the program.

3 The *PCG* Logo. Click here to return to the welcome screen at any time.

4 The Icons — when highlighted, the following options are available:

INSTALL — Choose this to install the program to your hard drive, and to set up program options.

RUN — Click here to run the game from The CD.

NOTES — Select this icon for more information on each program.

HELP — This icon offers basic information about the user interface.

EXIT — Click on this one, and it's back to DOS City.

Free Demos!

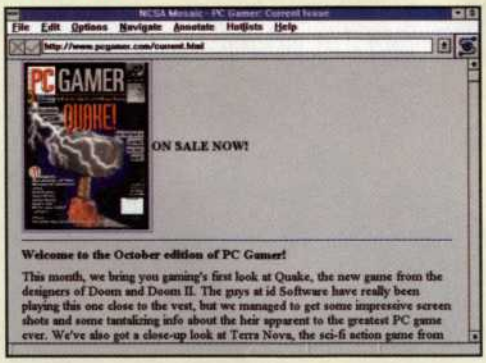
Newsstand buyers now have the choice of purchasing either the CD-ROM Edition of *PC Gamer* for $7.99, or *PC Gamer* without a CD-ROM for $3.99. If you purchase the edition without a disc, you can still get free game demos because all *PC Gamer* readers have the opportunity to get demos and other goodies in several different ways:

1. You can download demos and other cool stuff from our World Wide Web site at *http://www.pcgamer.com* on the Internet.

2. You can mail us the envelope that's bound in this issue. The order form on the envelope gives you two options:

- Get a CD-ROM disc (*The CD*) mailed to you for just $5.95 shipping and handling.
- Subscribe to *PC Gamer* with CD-ROM discs (*The CD*) for $47.95.

Note to our readers:
The Floppy (HD disk) has been discontinued as of this issue. Subscribers currently getting the Floppy Edition will be switched to the CD-ROM Edition.



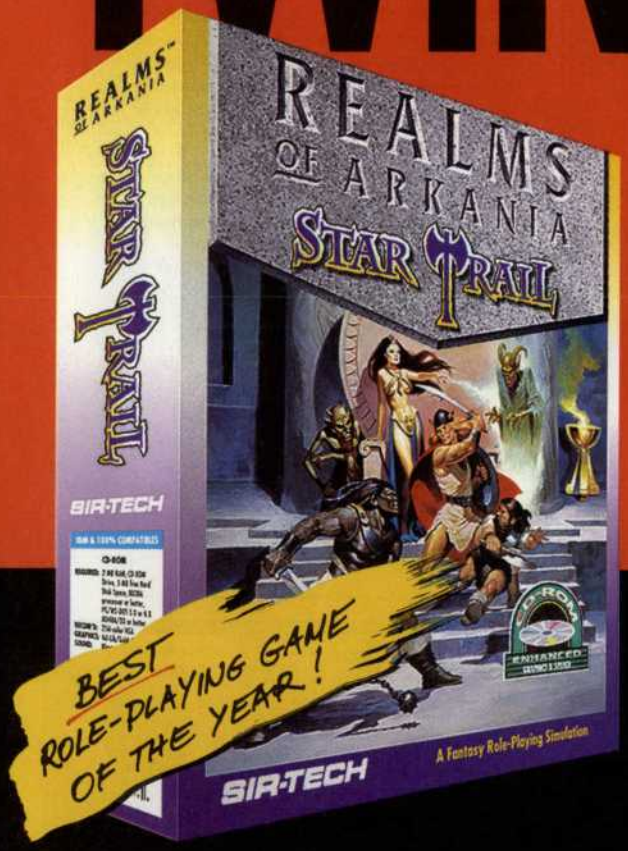
And the PC Gamer Web Site!

You can access our site at *http://www.pcgamer.com* either via an Internet account or through one of the major online services, such as America Online, GEnie, or Prodigy. Check out the game demos, our special Strategy Plus section, and more!

ATTENTION
Windows 95 Users

Although it is possible to run our front-end through an MS-DOS box under Windows 95, we strongly recommend that you reboot into a DOS session before attempting to install or run the demos included on this disc. For details on rebooting into MS-DOS, see your Windows 95 instruction manual.

TWIN PEAKS



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Product Information Number 180

Wing Commander IV

Company: Origin
Phone: (512) 434-4357
Release Date: Available Now
Category: Space-Combat Sim
Required: 486DX2/66; 8MB RAM (7 MB of XMS); VLB; Mouse; 20MB Free Hard-Disk Space
Install: \WC4DEMO\SETUP.BAT

After the Kilrathi were defeated in *Wing Commander III*, those who fought so hard for freedom began enjoying the peace they'd won. But the peace was short-lived, and now the once-quiet Border Worlds are rising in a revolt against the Terran Confederation. Colonel Christopher Blair is called out of retirement to pilot his way to victory for the Confederation — and only you can decide how well he flies.

An all-star cast once again tells the story of how one man can affect the fate of a galaxy. After the fantastic portrayal of characters in *Wing Commander III*, Origin simply *had* to bring back the original cast. Mark Hamill returns as the inscrutable and battle-weary Colonel Blair. Malcolm McDowell also returns to the role of Admiral Tolwyn, and Maniac wouldn't be Maniac without the energy and womanizing vibrance of Tom Wilson, best known for his portrayal of the bully Biff in *Back to the Future*. Along with John Rhys-Davies and Jason Bernard, you can be assured of some of the best acting to be seen in a CD-ROM title.

HINT

If you think five minutes isn't enough time to fully enjoy the feeling of spaceflight, you can adjust the time limit when you first run the demo. Just type "WC4DEMO -L*n*" where *n* is a time between 1 and 15 minutes.

The demo opens with a cinematic trailer, giving you a glimpse into what the full game has in store. The movie preview will loop continuously until the escape key is pressed. At that point, you'll find yourself aboard the *Intrepid*, and will be able to launch into the interactive portion of the demo.

Once in the cockpit of your fighter, press A to autopilot your way out of the landing bay, or fly out yourself by increasing your speed with the + key. Once underway, press A to autopilot to your first nav point. You'll be there for only a few seconds before an enemy freighter appears from a hyperspace jump. You'll have pirate ships to deal with, and five uninterrupted minutes to destroy as many enemy fighters as you possibly can. They'll come at you two at a time, so watch your back.

The new flight engine has been optimized since *Wing Commander III*, but otherwise it's quite similar. If you've played the previous game, you'll find the controls are the same. If not, see below for a list of keyboard controls. Your strongest weapons are your missiles; don't be afraid to use them.

Wing Commander IV promises to be even more exciting and action-packed than the last one. And if the interactive portion of this demo is any indication, the smarter enemy AI should keep space jocks everywhere on their toes. The full game should be on store shelves now.

TECHNICAL NOTE

***Wing Commander IV* does NOT support expanded memory (EMM). You must use extended memory to run the demo (XMS). You can do this by typing "rem" in front of the line "DEVICE=C:\DOS\EMM386.EXE" in your CONFIG.SYS file, or you can use the "Bootdisk" program located in the *Wing Commander IV* subdirectory on *The CD*. Also, make sure SMARTDRV.EXE is *not* loaded, as it takes up needed memory and could slow performance of the demo. See the README.TXT file in the *Wing Commander IV* subdirectory for more information.**

Lock on, and aim for the green target tracking circle that leads the ship. If you fire direct at the circle, you're almost guaranteed to hit the enemy and take him out for good.

The price of freedom is eternal vigilance.

Malcolm McDowell did such a great job as Admiral Tolwyn in *Wing Commander III*, Origin just had to have him back for an encore.

Control Keys

Decrease Throttle 5%	–
Increase Throttle 5%	+
Set Throttle to 0	Backspace
Set Throttle to Max	/
Afterburners (while held down)	Tab
Select Next Gun Mode	G
Full Guns	F
Select Next Missile Mode	M
Select Next Target	T
Select Closest Target, Match Speed	Y
Lock Target	L
Fire Missile (for joystick, press buttons 1 and 2)	Enter
Fire Gun (for joystick, press button1)	Spacebar
Autopilot	A
Exit the Demo	Alt + X
Calibrate Joystick	Alt + C
VGA Mode	Alt + 2
SVGA Mode	Alt + 4
Pause Spaceflight	Alt + P
Options Screen	Alt + O

Destruction Derby

Company: Sony Interactive
Phone: (415) 655-5683
Release Date: Available Now
Category: Racing Sim
Required: 486DX2/66; 6MB RAM; 16MB Hard-Drive Space; 400k Free Conventional Memory
Install: \DERBY\INSTALL.BAT

Take a plunge into the world of automobile destruction with *Destruction Derby*, a killer new game from Psygnosis. Originally designed for the Sony PlayStation, *Destruction Derby* comes to the PC with all the car-crunching and bumper-bending action that made it a hit on Sony's gaming system. It's a race not for time but to be the last car moving — and if you're not quick enough, it won't be you.

In the full game, there are several different racing modes. One is a straight stock car race, where the first one to finish wins. The second is Wreckin' Racing; you want to finish first, but you gain points by destroying the competition, too. The last, and the one featured in this demo, is Destruction Derby. Try to stay alive as long as you can. You gain more points by pushing other cars into three-sixties or one-eighties. Control of your car is simple and straightforward: Use the left and right arrow keys to steer, A to accelerate, and Z to brake and back up. Pressing F1 or F2 will zoom your view of the action back and forth; when you zoom out, you can see more of the action and hit the other cars before they hit you.

You can watch with glee as your car smashes your opponents to bits.

The collisions you see are calculated on the fly — you'll never see the same thing twice. Similarly, the damage to the individual cars is constantly evaluated, and the cars are redrawn to reflect the changes. On the bottom right of your screen you'll be able to see a status indicator in the form of your car, with light indicating different areas that sustain damage. If you take too many hits, you might want to reconsider your strategies; driving backward helps.

Even though you only play for 60 seconds, it's obvious that the realistic driving model and the incredibly fast, smooth play control will make this title one of the best racing sims ever. It may not have super-high resolution and stunning background art, but who really needs those things in a game where you can smash into the opposition and send parts of their car flying through the air?

CHALLENGE

The name of the game is racking up race points. Bitten by the *Destruction Derby* bug, Todd managed to rake in a good 30 points. You earn more points by spinning the other cars into three-sixties or one-eighties.

Torin's Passage

Company: Sierra
Phone: (800) 757-7707
Release Date: Available Now
Category: Graphic Adventure
Required: 486DX/25; 8MB RAM; Windows 3.1 or higher; Mouse
Install: \TORDEMO\SETUP.BAT

Deviating from his Leisure Suit Larry series, Sierra game designer Al Lowe has put together a colorful graphic adventure suitable for the entire family. *Torin's Passage* tells the story of a young man and his unique adventures through our world. Al Lowe put his original humor into a game that'll delight you with its beautiful animated graphics and easy to use interface.

This demo takes place in Escarpa, the second to last ring of the world that makes up Earth. You must guide Torin to the phenocryst crystal, where he can use the erresdy powder to transport himself to the next world. You can move him using the mouse cursor. The cursor will turn into an arrow when he can go to the next screen.

Sierra has incorporated a different point of view in this game, with vast, panoramic scenes. To look up the cliff that Torin starts on, locate the marker on the right side of the view screen. If you click and hold, you can scan the view up and down the cliffs.

To use an item, simply select it from the inventory. The mouse cursor will change and become that object. If you can use the item on the screen, the cursor will change from grayed-out to solid white. Clicking your mouse will use the item on the object.

This demo will gladly walk you through the basics of playing the game, and will even tell you what you can and cannot do. You can toggle subtitles and sound from the pull-down menu; simply move your mouse cursor up to the top left of the screen to make the menu appear. You can also exit the demo in this manner.

DON'T LET THE BIRD GET YOU DOWN

When you start the demo, this two-headed vulture will block your way. Although one side of him is quite charming and considerate, it's the other head you have to watch out for. To get past this obstacle, take advantage of the eating habits of this foul fowl by placing your haunch of meat on a ramp, found directly above the bird's nest. The two-headed beast will chase the chow and you can continue on your graphical journey.

Sometimes two-headed creatures bear a grudge against trespassers. To get past this one...

...Just go up to this ramp, and drop your meat off of it. It will launch itself down the cliff...

...And the beast will take off after the flying feast. After that, you're free to continue on your way.

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Product Information Number 166

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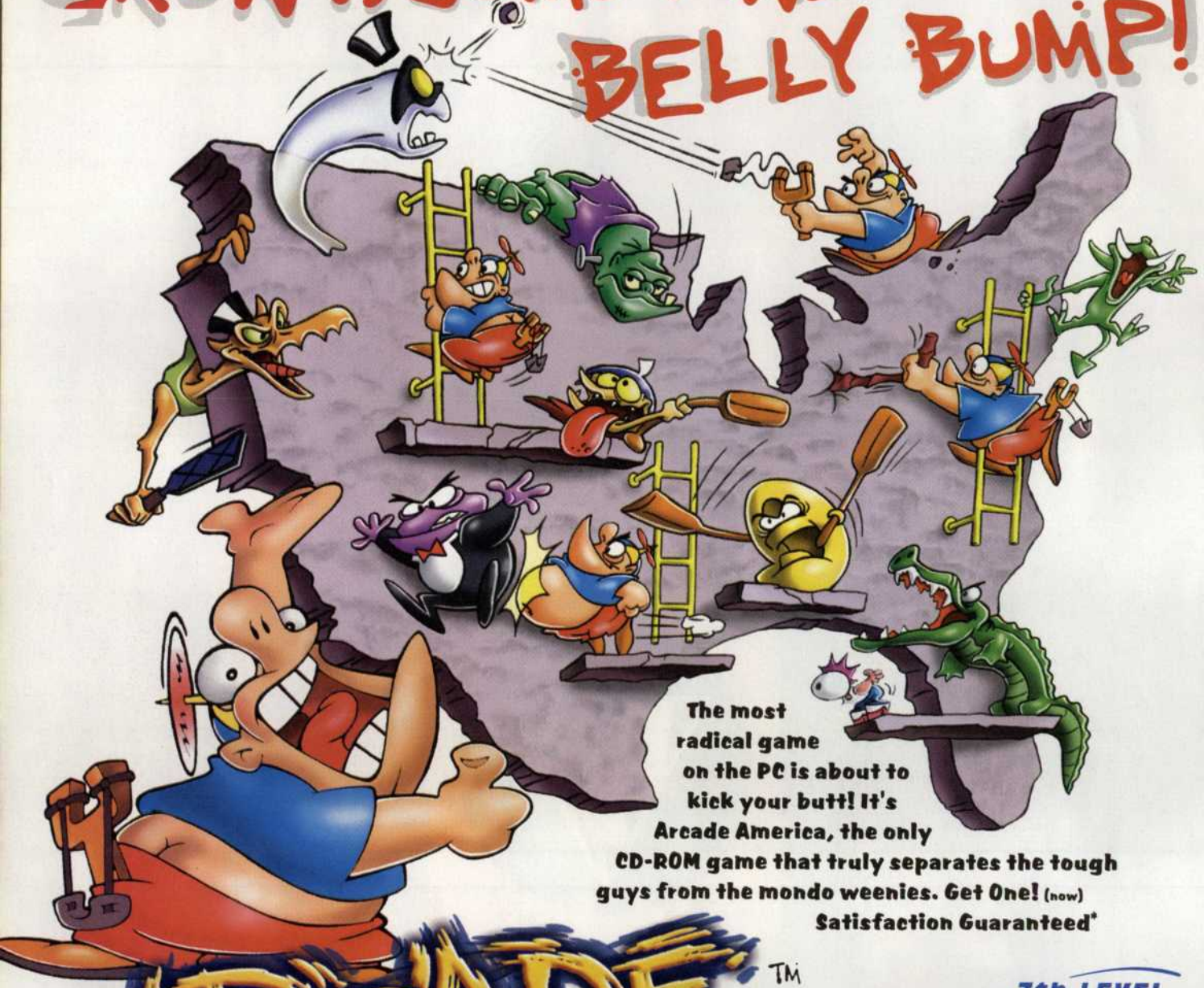

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Product Information Number 81

Su-27 Flanker

Company: SSI
Phone: (408) 739-6137
Release Date: Available Now
Category: Flight Sim
Required: 486DX/33; 8MB RAM; 2MB HD Space
Install: \SU27\MSDOS\INSTALL.EXE or \SU27\WIN95\SU27.EXE

Hop into the cockpit of one of the most realistically modeled flight sims yet, featuring the Russian Su-27 Flanker fighter jet. The aerodynamics are true to life, and the entire simulation takes place in real time. It's so real, you'll jump at the impact of enemy missiles — if you don't avoid them in time, that is.

This demo will show you a pre-recorded mission when you first start up. You can jump in any time by pressing Escape, and then C. You'll then have control of one of the most powerful aircraft around. With its realistic flight model, be prepared for an experience you won't get from arcade-style flight simulators. And because it is so involved, you'll need to study the control keys thoroughly if you want to avoid a fiery death at the hands of the enemy. Some of the most vital commands are to the right; for the full list, look at the CONTROLS.TXT file copied to your hard drive. It might be best to print it out with any text editor, or simply type "copy controls.txt prn" at the command prompt in the Su-27 subdirectory.

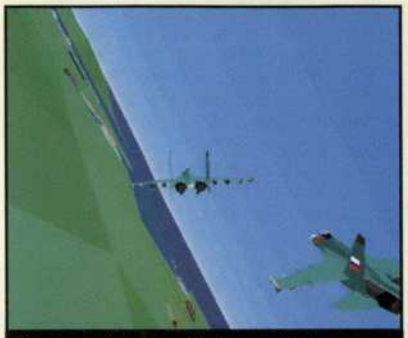
TECHNICAL NOTE

You might not get sound effects in this demo. It comes pre-configured for a Sound Blaster 16 or AWE32 set for PORT 220, IRQ 5, and DMA 1. If your sound card does not match this configuration, you will not hear sound. However, the full version will come with drivers for most sound cards available.

When you take over the flight of the Su-27, you'll only have 10 minutes worth of fuel to fly with. The full version will, of course, allow for refueling on longer missions.

It might be a good idea to watch the pre-recorded mission first, to get a feel for what's in store. You can change the views during the mission using the function keys. If you change the camera views during the pre-recorded demo, it stays that way and you have complete control over what you see — the computer will no longer switch views.

If you have a joystick, the demo will see it and initialize it on start-up. No matter what type it is, it will act as a two-button stick, with the first button acting as the fire button, and the second selecting your weapons. You can play the demo with the keyboard, but a joystick will give you a much better feel. There is also a file called SU27.ADV to program a Thrustmaster Weapons Control System Mark II.



The external view really shows off the beautiful details put into this flight sim. You can even see the flaps move on the planes as they adjust in flight.

Control Keys

Flight Direction	Joystick/Arrow Keys
Rudder Left (in flight), Left Turn (taxi mode)	Z
Rudder Right (in flight), Right Turn (taxi mode)	X
Increase Thrust Smoothly	KEYBOARD +
Decrease Thrust Smoothly	KEYBOARD -
Airbrake On/Off	B
Eject	Ctrl + A
Landing Gear Up/Down	G
Select Specific Navigation Submode	CAPS LOCK
Toggle Autopilot	A
Toggle Altitude Stabilization	H
Navigation Mode (NAV)	1
Beyond Visual Range Mode (DVB)	2
Close Air Combat (BVB)	3
Air-to-Ground Mode (ZEMLYA)	4
Longitudinal Missile Aiming (FIO)	5
Helmet Mode (SHLEM)	6
Enable/Disable Cannon	C
Dispense Chaff & Flares	Q
Fire Current Weapon	Spacebar
Target Selection (in Beyond Visual Range Mode)	~
Radar On/Off	/
Cockpit View	F1
Outside View (Press Repeatedly to Cycle Through Available Aircraft)	F2

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Product Information Number 192

Crusader: No Remorse

Company: Origin
Phone: (512) 434-4357
Release Date: Available Now
Category: Action/Adventure
Required: 486DX2/66; 8MB RAM (7MB Free XMS); VESA Local Bus Video; 20MB Hard Drive Space
Install: \CRUSADER\INSTALL.EXE

Origin has produced yet another hot title with the release of *Crusader: No Remorse*. Blending arcade action with the puzzles and story line of a graphic adventure, *Crusader* is sure to be one of the biggest hits this year.

In the far future, you are one of an elite militia for the World Economic Consortium (WEC), the major governing force in the world. You are one of the Silencers, and your task force is a major component of the WEC's Security Cartel. When you and some fellow Silencers allowed a group of civilians to escape a raid, the WEC attempted to terminate you. You survived, but your friends didn't. As a result, you have left the WEC to join The Resistance, a group of people who oppose WEC rule. With your skills and knowledge of WEC personnel and weaponry, your new commander, General Maxis, has decided to trust you to help further the cause of The Resistance. The rest is up to you.

There are several ways to control your Silencer. You can use a gamepad, or the keyboard with the mouse. If you use the keyboard, it's possible to play the entire demo with only one hand. For the keyboard commands, look at the Control Keys Box to the right. You can use the keys to walk, turn, ready your weapon, fire your weapon, select a weapon or item, use an item, select an item to manipulate (such as a computer terminal or item chest) and manipulate it, as well as perform special maneuvers like crouch, roll left or right, or even side-step in either direction. Although the number of commands needed to control the Silencer may be daunting at first glance, we found that after only a few minutes, we were cruisin' down hallways and torchin' security guards.

The demo shows you only a fraction of the full game. Your first mission, assigned by General Maxis himself, is to destroy a thermonuclear coupler powering an important WEC installation. You'll have to infiltrate the WEC facility, taking what you can and killing anyone you find. You'll face robots, security cameras, mechanized machine-gun nests, and booby traps. But we're certain that when you get to the end of this demo, you'll be yearning for more.

The graphics are crisp, creating a world you can explore and, if you like, destroy. By firing repeatedly at objects, you can destroy them with explosive power. You'll be amazed at the intensity and detail of this great game from the creators of *Wing Commander IV*.

Control Keys

The majority of the keys needed in *Crusader* are on the numeric keypad. The Num Lock needs to be on for the keypad to work properly.

Walk Forward	8
Turn Left	4
Turn Right	6
Back Up	2
Crouch	5
Roll Left	1
Roll Right	3
Scroll Through Weapons	*
Scroll Through Inventory	-
Ready/Fire Weapon	0
Use Selected Inventory Item	.
Select Nearby Object to Manipulate	+
Manipulate Selected Object	Enter
Run	RIGHT Shift + 8
Jump	J

DEADLY TRICKERY

There are other ways of killing security guards besides shooting them. For example, here's a guard waiting for you to come out of hiding...

A well-placed shot will set the barrel near the guard rolling in his direction. When it hits, it will explode...

...and the security guard will burst into flame. It's kinda chilling the way they scream as they burn, huh?

Getting past these transformers could be a shocking experience if you don't destroy them first.

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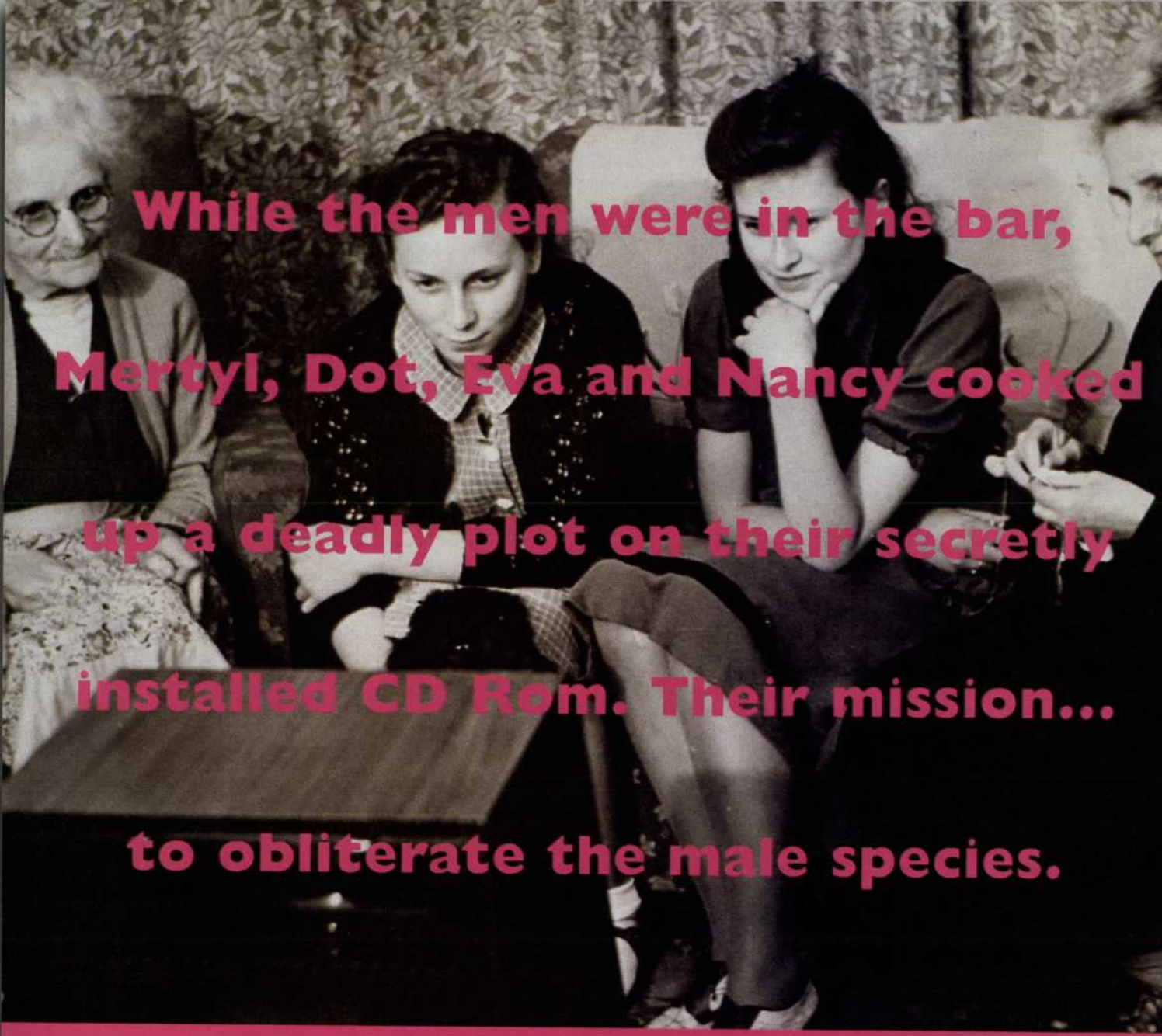

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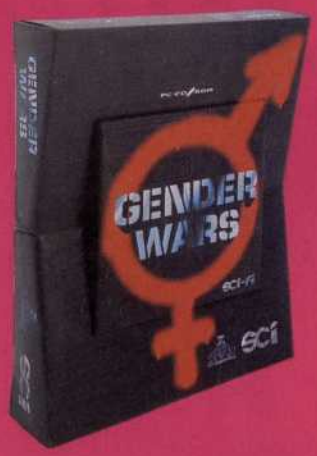

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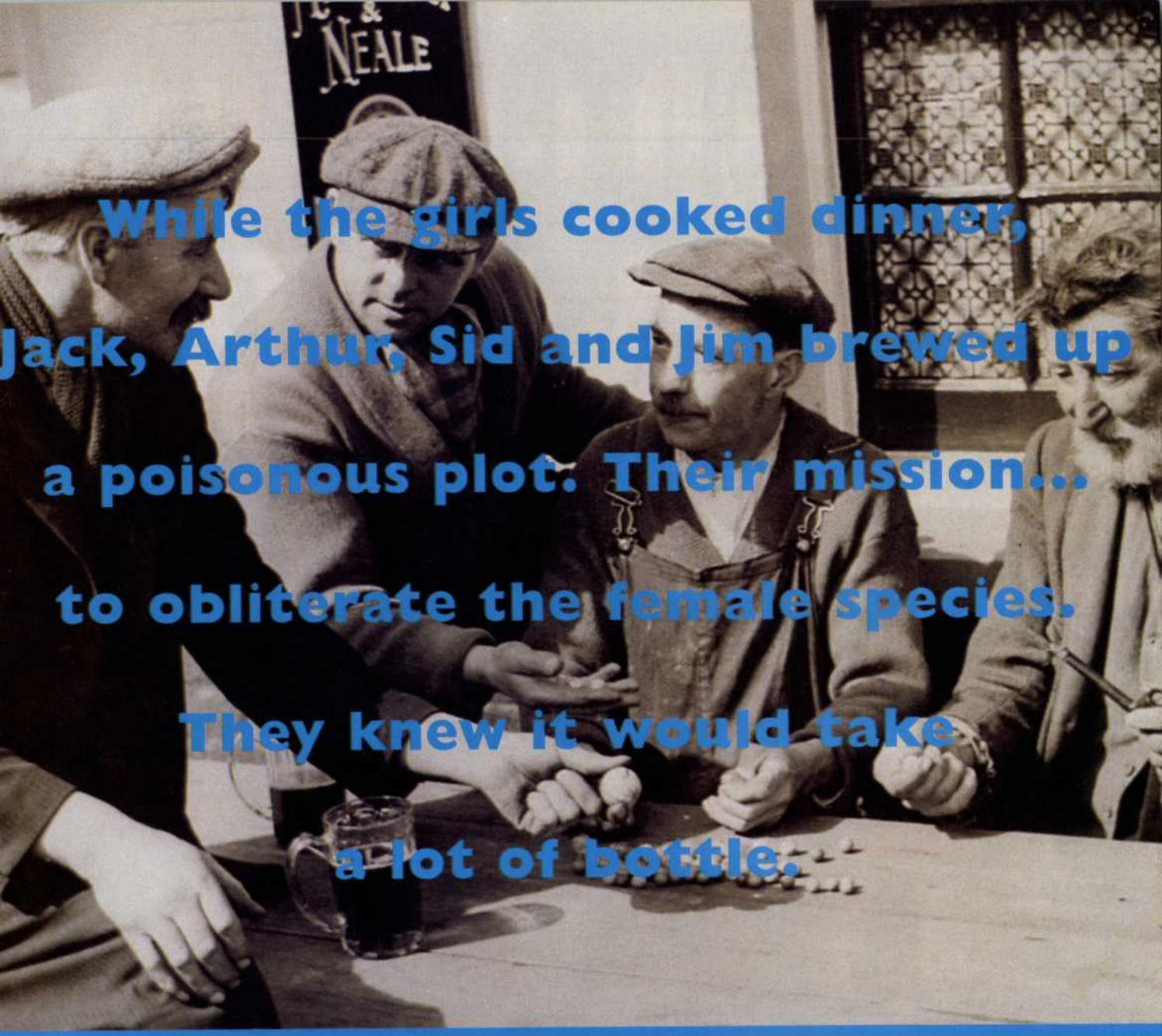

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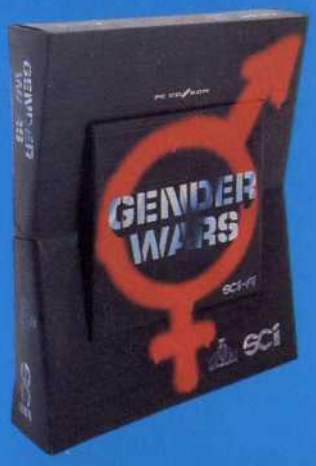

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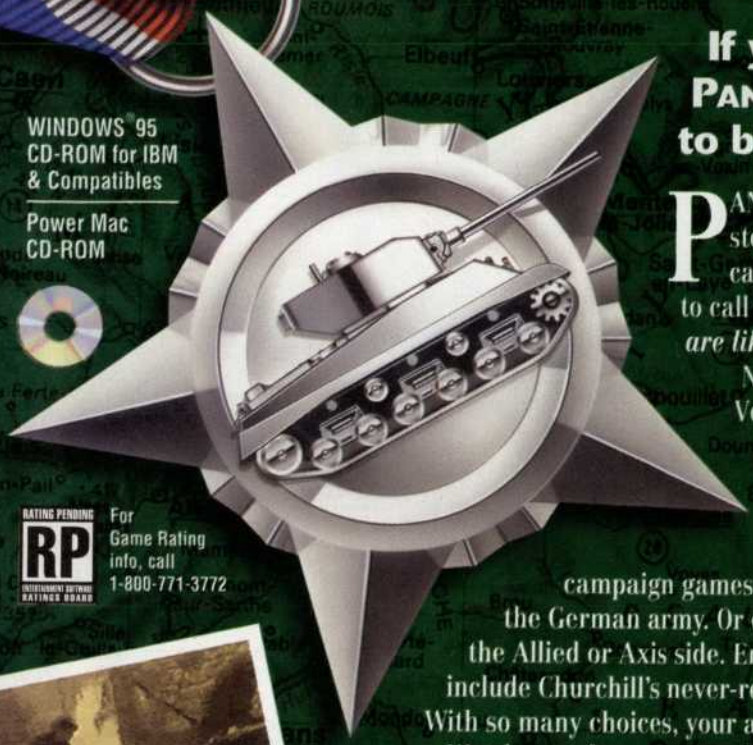

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Frankenstein

Company: Interplay
Phone: (714) 553-6678
Release Date: Available Now
Category: Graphic Adventure
Required: 486DX/33; 8MB RAM; Windows 3.1 or higher; SVGA
Install: \FRANK\INSTALL.EXE

When Phillip Werren is accused of kidnapping innocent children from neighboring communities — including his daughter Gabrielle — he is sentenced to death by hanging. His last thoughts are of the coarse rope around his neck as it breaks his spine.

Then, he awakes on a table in a scientist's laboratory. How he got there he doesn't know. But the doctor above him gloats, saying that he's accomplished a triumphant scientific feat by resurrecting the dead. Phillip realizes that *he* is the resurrected dead man! This is where you take control of Phillip's new life, and you must help him solve the mystery of his own death.

Frankenstein: Through the Eyes of the Monster retells Mary Shelley's chilling tale of one scientist's obsession with regeneration of the dead and the tribulations his subjects must be put through.

How'd you like this to be your first sight waking up? Tim Curry can be a chilling sight at any moment...

You play the part of the monster, searching for answers to difficult questions. Tim Curry plays Dr. Frankenstein, giving the sinister character an evil ooze. The beautifully rendered castle you awake in is dark and frightening, and the devices you'll find scattered about Frankenstein's home are gruesome to the extreme.

You control the game completely with the mouse. The hand icon will point in a direction when you can turn or walk forward. When the icon looks like a grabbing hand, you might be able to manipulate an object or device. If you pick up an object, it will be attached to your cursor and you'll be able to move it around the screen. At this point in the game, you can only carry one item at a time, but in the full version it is possible to find a bag to store your inventory.

There is a lot to see and do in the castle. Although a few items and some areas are inaccessible in this demo, it's very much like the beginning of the full version. You can talk to Dr. Frankenstein, and wander around his home. He will pop in from time to time with a tidbit of information when you are looking at something particularly interesting. Tim Curry adds flavor to the role, and from the beginning, you will sense that Dr. Frankenstein is not only a madman, but also a perversely evil genius.

HINT

A very useful feature in *Frankenstein* is the Help Cursors. To access the pulldown menu, press the spacebar. Then, under Preferences, select Help Cursors. When you can manipulate an item or device, the grabbing hand will animate. That way you can simply scan the screen to determine if an action can be performed.

Air Power

Company: Mindscape
Phone: (415) 898-5157
Release Date: Available Now
Category: Flight Sim
Required: 486DX/33; 8MB RAM; 10MB Hard-Drive Space
Install: \AIRPOWER\INSTALL.BAT

Part fighting-flight sim, part diplomatic strategy game, Mindscape's *Air Power* puts you in the role of an heir to the throne of Karanthia. Not only do you have to battle your way to victory against the military might of your enemies, but you also have to gain the trust and respect of the people you hope to lead. You can choose from four characters, each with differing agendas and ideals. It's your job to fly your way to victory in a world where airships rule the skies, and the single-propeller fighter planes make all the difference necessary to determine rulership.

In this demo, you fly one mission against your enemies. No matter which character you choose or which plane you select, you'll fly a Goblin fighter against the enemy's fleet of airships and fightercraft. It'll take cunning and some skillful piloting to stay in the air for the length of time needed to take out some airships.

These fighters aren't all that much trouble to take out, but they can slow you down if you don't dispatch with them quickly.

You can use a joystick or keyboard to control your fighter, but as is the case with flight sims, a joystick is probably your best bet. Fire your guns with button one, and you can select between your guns and rockets with button two. Be careful with your rockets, though; you only have six to fire at the enemy.

Soon after you begin the mission, several enemy fighters will fly at you with guns blazing. It doesn't take much to annihilate the small craft, but they can be deadly if left unattended. Also, be careful when firing at the airships: the propeller plane you control isn't as maneuverable as a jet fighter, and if you're not careful you'll end up crashing into a zeppelin.

You can play in either low or high resolution. A 486DX2/66 is recommended if you want to battle in SVGA, however. Using the function keys, you can select from several views as you rat-a-tat-tat your way to victory. To return to the cockpit view, press the Escape key. To quit a mission, simply press Alt-X.

HINT

If you can take out an enemy airship or two, you'll be hailed as a hero back home and crush enemy morale. When you first start the mission, target a nearby airship and head straight at it. You start a little above most, so if you point right at it, you can fire off your missiles in quick succession and pull out of the dive before you hit the ship. Then, as you battle the other enemy craft, you can watch as the attacked airship slowly angles and falls to the ground.

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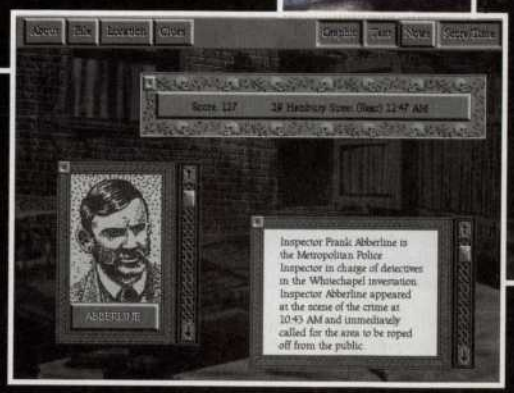

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Jack the Ripper

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Product Information Number 132

If you come into contact with an enemy pyramid, death is accompanied by a sweet-voiced "Uh-oh" and a vision of your ghost fluttering to the pyramid-free heavens.

Icebreaker

Company: Magnet Interactive
Phone: (202) 625-7171
Release Date: Available Now
Category: Puzzle/Arcade
Required: 486DX/33; 8 MB RAM; Windows 3.1 or higher; Mouse
Install: \ICEBREAK\SETUP.EXE

Pyramids are evil. At least, that's what Magnet Interactive wants you to believe in their new game *Icebreaker*. In this addictive, fun little title, your job is to destroy all the pyramids you can. Some are stationary, some are mobile. But they all must die!

You're an anti-pyramid trooper who, oddly enough, takes the form of a white pyramid set on its side. Your plasma gun will help you in your mission to free the universe from the demented geoforms. The pyramids come in many colors, each denoting a level of intelligence and offering a clue as to how they can be destroyed. Of the stationary pyramids, you'll see blue, red, green, purple, and gray. The blue pyramids are the only pyramids you can safely run into. As a matter of fact, that's the only way to destroy them. Shoot the red pyramids with your plasma gun to destroy them. The green ones are tricky — they can only be vanquished if the moving pyramids run into them. The purple ones are easy to kill — just shoot them with your plasma gun. But they'll leave behind a pit that will drop you into the depths of the earth if you fall in. The gray pyramids are made of stone — it will take ten shots from your gun to take them out.

HINT

When you kill Seekers, they keep regenerating until you've destroyed all the immobile pyramids. For this reason, if a dumber Seeker is stuck behind a pyramid, it might be best to let him stay there rather then take him out. That way he won't regenerate from somewhere off the screen, and it will make one less Seeker to worry about as you go around destroying the immobile pyramids.

A few well-placed shots will disintegrate those pesky red pyramids. They even evaporate pretty.

But it's the moving pyramids (called Seekers) you have to watch out for. They have varying degrees of intelligence, which you can use to your advantage. The yellow ones make a bee-line straight for you, and will be stopped by a pyramid in their way. The light blue and pink Seekers are a bit smarter — they'll move around obstacles, but will readily fall into pits. The green ones, however, are smart enough to avoid obstacles and hazardous tiles, so watch out for them.

You can control your killer anti-pyramid with the cursor keys or joystick. Use arrow keys to move, and Enter or the Spacebar to fire your plasma gun. On the joystick, either button will fire. We've found that the best control is with a joypad, like the Gravis Gamepad.

This demo will give you ten levels to experience the *Icebreaker* world. The full game will not only have more advanced Seekers and immobile pyramids, but will feature *150* levels to test your pyramid-killing ability.

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Product Information Number 137

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Back in the year 2032, maintenance workers in now defunct fuel facilities between Earth and Pluto created a game that would later take the entire solar system by storm. Today, twenty four years later, experienced MagCar racers from all over the solar system hone their skill on the MagZone circuit in hopes of making it to prestigious All System MagZone Championship. One on one or two on two, they race magnetic cars at speeds of up to 600 MPH inside vast 3D shapes (MagZones). Here they battle to gain control of a magnetic ball and fire it into the opposing team's goal.

This is your invitation to join the Circuit. Get your bearings on the Free Access Shape. When you think you're good enough and fast enough, buckle up and join the pros as you battle alone or with a teammate for control of the MagZone. And, oh yeah, did we mention...there's NO GRAVITY!

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Product Information Number 204

Pinball World

Company: 21st Century Entertainment
Phone: (716) 872-1200
Release Date: Available Now
Category: Pinball Sim
Required: 486DX/25; 4MB RAM; VGA
Install: \PINBALL\INSTALL.EXE

Once again, 21st Century Entertainment challenges our notions of computer pinball simulations. Their latest, *Pinball World*, takes you all over the world playing pinball tables that will test your wits as well as your flipper skills. Although there are only three tables available in this demo, many more await you in the full version.

To complete a table and move on to the next, you must light up the name of the table you're playing. There are different ways to get this done. On the Hollywood table, you must make the ball go up the ramp that leads to the freeway. In South America, you must light the three footprints in the middle of the table. When you manage to get the name lit, you can travel to another table by hitting the ball into the appropriate chute — which isn't always easy to do.

The Far East is filled with beauty and danger. It's one of the busiest tables, with plenty of bonus items to hit.

There are also transitional games from table to table. For example, going from Hollywood to South America, or vice versa, requires that you pilot a buggy through a maze-like desert to the appropriate location. If you can't find the right place, the game is over. When you reach the right place, the screen will change to the new table. (You direct your buggy using the arrow keys.) When you go from South America to the Far East, your ball will fall down a whirlpool that will shoot you directly into the land of colorful parasols.

You control your flippers with the shift keys. If you miss hitting the ball and it falls below your flippers, it will enter one of several boxes. If the number by the box reaches zero, you will lose your ball and the game is over. You only have one ball, so hang onto it.

If you manage things right, you may even find some bonus tables. We won't tell you where they are — you'll have to find them.

South America is one of the harder tables. In order to open the door to the Far East, you have to light the three paws just to the left of the word Amazon.

JUST FOR FUN

Although pinball is a game of points, in this game you can keep the ball in motion for a long time. See how long you can hold onto your one ball, going from table to table and back again. One of the *PC Gamer* staffers managed to keep the ball in motion for a full hour before it was lost in the desert wasteland between South America and Hollywood. But don't tell Dan — he thought we were writing a two-page strategy article on it.

PBA Bowling

Company: Bethesda Softworks
Phone: (301) 963-2002
Release Date: Available Now
Category: Bowling Sim
Required: 486/33; 8MB RAM; Windows 95
Install: \BOWLING\SETUP.EXE

If you were getting close to losing hope that you'd see a good bowling simulation, your patience has been rewarded. Bethesda has created a bowling sim that will challenge you like you've never thought possible. It may not be the real thing, but it's still a whole lotta fun.

Before you begin, you need to create a new player. Choose Add Bowler under the Bowlers menu. Type in your name. You can also adjust the color of your shirt, pants, and ball. Select your skill level, and whether you're left- or right-handed. Click OK to continue.

Use the smaller window in the middle to aim the ball toward the pins.

The controls are as simple as can be. Once you've created a new player and started a new game, it only takes a few clicks to attempt a strike. First, decide where you want your player to stand. You can use the mouse to move him (or her) back and forth until you're satisfied. Then, in the smaller window in the middle, you can set your aim toward the ball. Keep in mind that the triangle dots represented are about three feet from the throwing line. Then you bowl by clicking and holding on the ball next to your player. The longer you hold the mouse button down, the more power behind the throw. If you go into the red, however, expect some inaccuracy.

That's all there is to it in the beginner level. If you play the intermediate or advanced level, you will have a spin meter. First click and hold for the power, and then click again for the spin. This takes much more finesse, and can be quite a challenge.

This demo will take you through half a game. In the full version, you can expect games against multiple players and tournament play.

CHALLENGE

In a bowling game, what could be a better challenge than to score a perfect 300? Well, since you can only play half a game in this demo, we challenge you to score all strikes in the frames you're given. We did.

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VIACOM NEWMEDIA™

Product Information Number 209

PC & MAC CD-ROM

Hoyle Classic Games

Company: Sierra
Phone: (800) 757-7707
Release Date: Available Now
Category: Card Sim
Required: 486DX/25; 8MB RAM; Windows 3.1 or higher
Install: \HOYLE\SETUP.EXE

Gaming giant Sierra brings yet another family favorite to the PC. *Hoyle Classic Games* is a collection of games we all loved as kids, and they still touch our hearts. In this demo, you can play Hearts or Crazy Eights.

If you're unfamiliar with the games or don't remember the rules, here's a quick lesson. Crazy Eights deals seven cards to each player. The object of the game is to rid your hand of cards. You do this by placing them in the discard pile in the center of the playing area. You can only place a card from your hand that matches the top card in either suit or number. If you lay down an eight, you can

This is an unfortunate situation. You'll have no choice but to play your only club, and since it will be the highest club on the table, you'll have to take the 13 point Queen of Spades.

select the suit to be played next. With Hearts, the goal is to receive the least points possible. Each player is dealt a card until the deck is finished. Then, you select three cards to pass. Each player must play a card of the same suit. If they do not have a card of the suit played, they can play any card they like. The person who has the highest of the played suit takes all the cards. Each heart card is worth one point, and the Queen of Spades is worth 13. When all the players have emptied their hands, the score is tallied. When a player reaches a score of 100, the game is over, and the player with the smallest score wins.

HINT

When one of the players is gathering all the points possible, it's called "Shooting the Moon," and all the other players get 26 points. The computer won't try too hard to Shoot the Moon, but if it does, take a couple of points intentionally so you don't get 26.

Al Unser Jr. Arcade Racing

Company: Mindscape
Phone: (415) 898-5157
Release Date: Available Now
Category: Racing Sim
Required: 486DX2/66; 8MB RAM; Windows 95
Install: \ALUNSER\ALUNSER.EXE

If you've ever wanted to race on a Formula 1 track, here's your chance. Get behind the wheel of these speed demons for a spin around a track that will leave you breathless. Even under Windows 95, the feeling of speed is incredible.

The controls are simple. Use the arrow keys to control your car; the Spacebar is your accelerator, and the Control key is your brake. You'll have to use both in conjunction to avoid collisions on the track. If you do collide, though, don't worry. Just keep speeding along — there's no punishment for reckless driving except the loss of time.

If you make it to certain points quick enough, your time will be extended. Although the speed of this demo is impressive with full detail, you can adjust the viewing level in the options menu, along with joystick control and sound options.

With its impressive frame rates under Windows 95 and the true feeling of speed, we're sure this racing sim will be a big hit with Formula 1 fans as well as armchair racers everywhere.

If you hit the rise just right, at the right speed, there's a good chance you'll catch some air and have to look down at the other racers.

JUST FOR FUN

There's a point on the track where you'll actually catch some air. It's a great feeling to be airborne, but it's not easy, so you may have to practice a bit.

Product Information Number 147

INTERACTIVE MAGIC PRESENTS

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  -*Strategy Plus*, October 1995

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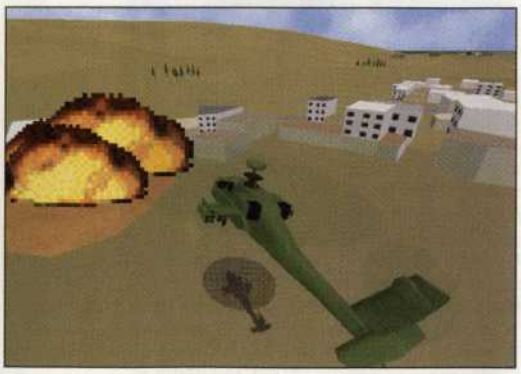
  -October, 1995



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INTERACTIVE MAGIC PO Box 13491 Research Triangle Park, NC 27709
Product Information Number 145

INTERACTIVE MAGIC

Trophy Bass

Company: Sierra
Phone: (800) 757-7707
Release Date: Available Now
Category: Fishing Sim
Required: 486/25DX; 8MB RAM; Windows 95
Install: \TBDEMO\SETUP.EXE

The relaxing sport of bass-fishing comes to the PC! And you'll be able to reel in large-mouths (no, Martha Rae was the *big*mouth!) without having to worry about mos-quitoes, tangled lines, hooks in your fingers, or that nasty dirt-in-your-oatmeal taste in the morning.

You'll start in your boat on a peaceful lake, and it's your decision where to cast your line and how to reel in the big one. In the full version, you'll be able to choose from more than 200 lures, go to several different fishing hotspots, and seek the wisdom of the experienced fishermen of the world. You can even choose the type of fishing you do — a peaceful lake, a single tournament, or a career of four tournaments on five different lakes.

CHALLENGE

As in all fishing sports, its the size of the fish that counts. In this demo, the biggest bass (only bass count) we were able to reel in was a whopping 8lbs. 6oz. We're sure there are bigger fish in the lake, though...

When you start the demo, you'll be on a virtual Lake Murray. There are two ways to cast your line: Use the mouse to position your crosshairs at the point where you want to cast the lure, and left-click. Then, you can click on "Cast" at the bottom of the screen, and watch your hook fly. Or, if you wish to do it manually, click and hold on the Cast button. Moving the mouse back will determine how far back your cast is, and to throw the lure, move the mouse forward and release the mouse button.

If you've picked the right bait, you'll get a bite. Click and hold on the Reel button to bring him in. Be careful, though — if you go too fast, or your drag is set too high, all you'll land is a fish story like your old Uncle Leroy always tells.

You can control where you want to cast your lure, even if it's right on top of the heads of the fish you're trying to catch.

Terminator: Future Shock

Company: Bethesda Softworks
Phone: (301) 963-2002
Release Date: Available Now
Category: First-Person Shooter
Required: 486DX2\66; 8MB RAM (6.9MB XMS); 20MB Hard Disk Space; Mouse; VGA
Install: \SHOCK\SETSOUND.EXE

Skynet has been in control of the world for over 20 years, and things are getting rough for the rebellion. It's 2015, and John Connor, the leader of the human remnants, needs your skills to save earth for humanity, and defeat Skynet's mechanized nightmares.

This demo lets you play a single three-part mission: You're to locate an enemy facility, download information relating to Skynet from three computers, and escape alive. It won't be easy, but there are plenty of weapons and armor lying around to assist your efforts — if you're clever enough to find them, that is.

Control of your character is similar in many ways to other first-person shooters. Take a look at the README.TXT file for the key commands you'll need. Although the game can be played completely with the keyboard, we recommend using the mouse in conjunction with certain keyboard commands. The mouse will control looking from side to side and up to down, while the keyboard will control your movement.

There's plenty to find in the Terminator world, from machine guns to rocket launchers to laser rifles. In the full version, you can look forward to many different weapons, several levels, and some of the deadliest robots to hit the streets of L.A. You'll also be able to drive armored vehicles through the streets of the decimated city, and pilot aircraft in attacks against the anti-human cyborgs.

The two-legged machines aren't too strong, but if you don't take them out quick, their lasers can do a lot of damage.

Product Information Number 148

DARKSEED II

Based upon the fantastic artwork of H. R. GIGER

MIKE DAWSON'S LIVING NIGHTMARE CONTINUES AS HE AGAIN BATTLES THE DARK POWERS ASSAULTING HIS MIND. THIS TIME, MORE THAN HIS SANITY IS AT STAKE. THE FATE OF THE ENTIRE WORLD NOW RESTS ON WHETHER MIKE CAN MAINTAIN HIS GRIP ON REALITY.

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ON CD ROM
For Windows™ and Macintosh

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Product Information Number 155

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In Pursuit of Greed

Company: Softdisk Publishing
Phone: (318) 221-8311
Release Date: Available Now
Category: First-Person Shooter
Required: 486DX/33; 8MB RAM
Install: \GREEDEMO\GREEDEMO.EXE

At first glance, *In Pursuit of Greed* may appear to be just another first-person shooter. But this title has things you've never seen in *Doom* clones before, like the choice to play five different characters, each with their own weapons and styles. Additionally, the items you'll be able to use range from grenades to proximity mines to instant walls. With the rotating heads-up-display (HUD) and the rear-view A.S.S. cam (that's for Aft Sensory System), this first-person shooter demands that you do more than just kill everything in sight.

Something like this doesn't need much of a story, but here it is anyway: Far in the future (the year 15432, to be exact), criminals turn to a life of pillaging and thievery for profit. To these ends, they employ scavenger hunters, which infiltrate outlying planets and make off with anything that isn't tied down. In the process, there are Nops (non-cooperatives) that try to protect their treasure. You play a scavenger hunter, working for a corporation intent on making profit on what you steal. Your job is to take everything you can, and kill everything that stands in your way.

The controls are pretty straightforward. See the README.TXT file on The CD or select Help inside the game for more details. You can toggle heat sensors and movement sensors, which will tell you where your enemies are.

In addition to the items you can find in this three-level demo, the full version of *Greed* will give you a holo-suit, an item that 'll let you take on the appearance of anything else in the game — even a tree. With 8-player networking (which *is* included in this demo), this could cause some interesting ambushes when multiplaying. Along with the holo-suit, there are portable holes, teleport jammers, and soul stealers that will take life from your enemies and give it directly to you.

These big-headed saber-tooth beings are some of the Nops you'll encounter on the first level. They may look small, but they pack quite a wallop.

Cyberspeed

Company: Mindscape
Phone: (415) 898-5157
Release Date: Available Now
Category: Arcade/Racing
Required: 486DX2/66; 8MB RAM; Windows 95
Install: \CYBERSPD\CYBERSP.EXE

In *Cyberspeed*, you race down a track against other vehicles, but you're not on the ground. You're not airborne, either; You're connected to a laser track above your ship, where you can spin around in circles while flying down a round track. Sound interesting? It is.

The only way you can pass an opponent is by speeding by above, below, or to the side. You spin around as you pass, avoiding hitting the other vehicle. Of course, you could always do it the anti-social way and simply shoot the offending competitor...

Your ship is controlled with the joystick or keyboard. Use the arrow keys to accelerate (up arrow) and side arrows to spin around. The joystick will spin you, but you still have to hold the up arrow key to accelerate.

The demo runs under Windows 95, but unless you have a high-end Pentium you might want to turn the textures and details down under the Options menu. This will greatly increase the speed, and you'll really feel it as you fly down the curved track.

JUST FOR FUN

Hit "V" for an inside view of your cockpit. Make sure you take some Dramamine, though, because you might get a little motion-sick from spinning around as you speed along.

The inside, first-person perspective can be a bit disorienting, especially on high end machines. It's kinda like a ride at Disneyland...

Product Information Number 149

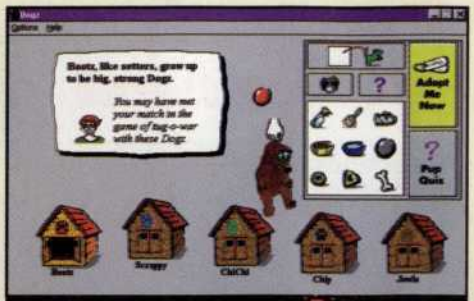
Dogz

Company: Virgin
Phone: (714) 833-1991
Release Date: Available Now
Category: Virtual Pet
Required: 486DX/25; 4MB RAM; SVGA; Windows 3.1 or higher; 6MB Hard Disk Space
Install: \DOGZ\SETUP.EXE

They're cute, fun, and trainable! If you've always wanted a dog but just couldn't get the go-ahead from your significant other, here's your new virtual pet! From a selection of five dogz, you can choose the one you want to let live in your computer and warm your heart on those cold nights when the heat from your PC's monitor simply isn't enough.

In this demo, you can play with the five dogz up for adoption, and decide which one you want. Pet them. Play fetch with them. When you are ready to adopt, simply click on Adopt Me, and you can call the number listed on the screen for the special unlock code to gain access to your newfound computer pet. The price is $19.95 plus $3.95 shipping and handling.

Not only do the dogz run around and look cute, but you can train them to do tricks. They age, they sleep when you aren't playing with them, and they'll even get moody on occasion. A screen-saver option lets them guard your computer from intruders, and will make you laugh with their outrageous antics. And don't worry — they won't eat your 3rd-quarter interim reports...



If you right click and hold on the dogz, you'll pick them up. It doesn't hurt them, but they do whine a bit.

JUST FOR FUN

One of the many things you can do with your dogz is play ball. Try throwing the ball (hold down the mouse button, move the mouse and let go) far from the dogz you are playing with, and they'll sometimes do flips or somersaults to catch it. In the full version, you'll be able to give the dogz a treat for such stunts, and they'll learn to repeat the trick.

Steel Panthers

Company: Strategic Simulations Inc.
Phone: (408) 737-6800
Release Date: Available Now
Category: Strategy
Required: 483DX/33; 8MB RAM; 6MB Free XMS; SVGA; Mouse
Install: \STEEL\INSTALL.EXE

Relive the battles of World War Two in SSI's new tactical simulation, *Steel Panthers*. You can lead either side in battles of steel against steel, man against machine. Although there are many scenarios as well as a scenario editor in the full version, in the demo on *The CD* you can experience two different battles — the Kasserine Pass in February of 1943, and the Tip of the Spear battle of July, 1944, when the British attempted to break out of the Caen sector past German Panzers. Decide how to use your tanks and infantry to the greatest advantage, and see if you can change the results of these battles that decided the fate of a world.

You can zoom out to see a lot of the battlefield at once, or zoom in. This perspective is zoomed out all the way.

At the very beginning of the Tip of the Spear scenario, British fighters try to clear a path for the units trapped by the Germans.

There are many options you can use to control your units, including zooming in or out of the map. Take a look at the pullout bar to the left for the Unit Order Toolbar. For more detailed directions on how to play, read the README.TXT file that is installed to your hard drive in the \SP_DEMO subdirectory. With a bit of practice, you'll put the fear of God into those German troops...

TAKING CHARGE

1. Find the Next Unit
2. Find the Last Unit
3. All-Formation Mode Toggle
4. Find the Next Formation HQ Unit
5. Load Unit onto a Vehicle
6. Set the Firing Range for the Current Hex
7. Attack a Hex with Indirect Fire
8. Reduce Suppression of Current Hex
9. Fire weapons at Target for Current Hex
10. Set Direct Fire Target for Current Hex
11. Attack a Hex with Direct Fire
12. Create Smoke in a Hex with Direct Fire
13. Zoom In
14. Zoom Out
15. Clear Dark and Smoke Hexes
16. Go to Unit Menu
17. Undo Last Move
18. Quit Orders Phase
19. Go to Option Screen
20. Overall Map

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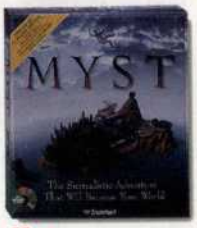

Myst
Interact. Game 5004304

WIN	386/33	4mb	M	
MAC	LCIII			

Mechwarrior 2 NEW
Arcade Style 5043609

DOS	486/66	8mb	M	

Full Throttle
Adventure 5046404

DOS	486/33	8mb	M	K

Dark Forces
Arcade Style 5046503

DOS	386/33	8mb	M	
MAC	LCIII			K

Nascar Racing
Driving Sim. 5001300

DOS	386/40	8mb	M	
			J	K

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How To Select CD-ROMs For Your System.

WIN	386	4mb	M	P
MAC	LCIII		J	K
SYSTEM	CPU	RAM	PERIPH.	

SYSTEM Button indicates the available operating environment(s) for a given selection: DOS (for PC); Windows (for PC), Macintosh.

CPU Button indicates the *minimum* processor required. If a title is available in PC and Macintosh formats, the top half of this button represents PC system requirements and the bottom half represents Macintosh system requirements. Note: Ser.=Series, Class.=Classic, Pent.=Pentium. For Mac – LC series includes LC 475, Performa 475, Quadra, Centris, Powerbook 180C, IIFX or better.

RAM Button indicates the *minimum* amount of RAM required.

PERIPHERALS Button indicates required peripherals. M=mouse, J=joystick, K=keyboard, P=printer.

For all titles, the *minimum* system requirements recommended (unless otherwise indicated) are: Hardware: SVGA monitor (256 colors), sound card, 40MB hard drive, double speed CD-ROM drive. Operating System: DOS 5.0, Windows 3.1, Macintosh System 7.0.

7th Guest
Interact. Game 5004700

DOS	386/33	4mb	M	
MAC	LCIII			

Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing
Typing Tutor 5015102

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PlayNet

Company: PlayNet
Phone: (800) PLAY-NET
Required: 486/33; 8MB RAM; 9600 Baud Modem
Install: \PLAYNET\DOOM1N2 or HERETIC

So you want to play *Doom* across the phone lines, but you just can't seem to find anybody who's willing to join you in a Deathmatch at 1 a.m.? Well, look no further. *PlayNet* is a multi-player network that's been established specifically to take advantage of *Doom* and *Doom II*'s modem capability and to give you the opportunity to play with like-minded Deathmatchers.

In addition to support for *Doom* and *Doom II*, *PlayNet* now supports *Heretic*, and will soon support *Descent*. You'll also get other features you'd expect from an online service, like shopping, file libraries, chat areas and E-mail.

To run *PlayNet* you'll need *Doom*, *Doom II*, or *Heretic*, a 9600 baud modem and, of course, this front end.

After installation, you'll need to fill out the configuration screens. After that, you'll be able to make new friends and then kill them. Payment info is online. Your initial call is 100% free.

As of this writing the rates for *PlayNet, Inc.* were:

Target Class	**$10.00**	**5 hours**
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Looking for new ways to enjoy *Doom* and *Heretic*? Hop on to PlayNet and go head-to-head.

Game Wads/ Bug Patches

This month we've got all the bug patches mentioned in Extended Play, and more. For those who are fond of cheating, you'll also find the editors and cheat utilities mentioned in the column, along with the *Command & Conquer* files mentioned in the strategy article on *C&C*.

We've also rounded up some great WADs and HOGs for *Doom II*, *Heretic*, and *Descent*. You can play a full fifteen new levels with the "PAN" WAD for *Doom II*, and there are six new levels for *Descent* in "CORAL4M." There are several other add-on levels, and they're all great. Check them out. And in a first for *The CD*, we have two new *Doom II* WADs by two brothers. Those who WAD together, bond together. Oh, and don't forget to put on your fightin' gloves and enter the arena with "GLADIATOR," one of the three *Heretic* levels we've picked up for ya. It's a fast-paced battle in an enclosed area that will make your head spin. And of course, everything works for Deathmatch. Check it out. You'll be glad you did.

[*Editor's Note: PC Gamer* can't accept resposibility for these WADs, patches, etc. We recommend that you make a back-up of your game files before trying them.]

Using the CCEDIT for *Command & Conquer* means that anyone can toss rockets around.

The *Doom II* WAD "Ebola" starts off in this circular room. Watching that demon die is a beautiful sight.

GEnie for Windows

with Cyberstrike and SVGA Air Warrior

Company: GEnie
Phone: (800) 638-9636
Required: Windows 3.1, 4MB HD space
Install: \GENIE\INSTGENI

For our readers who prefer human opponents over some programmer's idea of artificial intelligence, you'll want to check out the online network *GEnie*. Like most online networks, *GEnie* offers E-mail, BBS access, conferencing and, as our readers will be glad to note, multi-player gaming. To take advantage of the multi-player games, we've included the front ends to run *Cyberstrike* and *SVGA Air Warrior*, two of the most popular games on *GEnie*.

Flight sim fans will want to try out *SVGA Air Warrior*, which will have you flying all types of warplanes through several eras of air combat, from biplanes to modern aircraft. The controls are fairly simple, but with all those human opponents, the missions can get pretty challenging.

Cyberstrike takes you into a futuristic battle scenario where you pilot a massive battle-mech. It's a pretty demanding sim, but once you've got a handle on the controls, you'll be able to roam around blasting the armor off of other online pilots. Energy runs everything in this game — shields, guns and engines — so be sure to stay powered up.

The *GEnie* front end will require Windows, 4MB hard-drive space and VGA graphics. *Cyberstrike* will require an additional 2.5MB hard-drive space, and *SVGA Air Warrior* will require a whopping 38MB of additional hard drive space. Each game comes with a README.TXT or MANUAL.DOC file that details the various controls.

For basic service, including E-mail, multi-player games and online chat, the current rates are $8.95 per month for the first four hours non-prime time and $3.00 per hour after the initial four hours have been used. There's an additional surcharge of $9.50 per hour for any prime-time usage. All rates apply to the continental U.S.

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than *Doom*™."

— Strategy Plus Magazine

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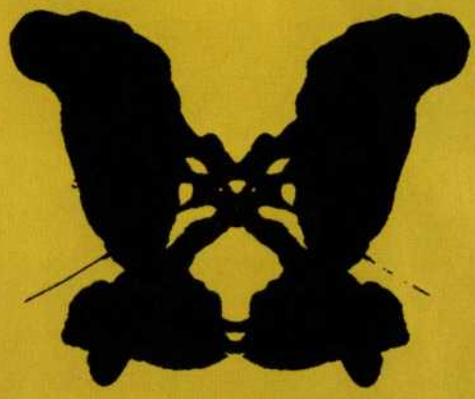
"Exploding robot brains."



"Smeared android pus."

"Ruptured cyborg guts."

"More exploding robot brains."

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MATURE M

Product Information Number 220

Dungeon Keeper

Welcome, stranger! Nice to eat you!

Dungeon Keeper turns the tables on those traditional RPG do-gooders by putting the forces of evil at your beck and call.

—Todd Vaughn

Stop me if you've heard this one before: A dark, ominous presence has risen to power, spreading fear and destruction throughout the known world. Heroes, ranging from noble knights to powerful wizards, are rallied from across the land to rise up against these dark forces and defeat them return returning the balance of power to good over evil.

Sound familiar? It should. From the very beginning, this has been the basic premise of computer roleplaying games. Typically, you assume the role of one of these heroes and travel off to far-flung lands to kill evil creatures, talk with other characters, and gain experience in spell-casting and sword-swinging, all in preparation for the ultimate showdown with a terrible wizard or horrible monster.

Bullfrog's latest creation begins where most of those games leave off; in *Dungeon Keeper*, you *are* the horrible monster, and you'll relish the chance to feast on the bones of those pesky adventurers and shake them down for every penny they've got.

Given Bullfrog's well-deserved reputation for creating unusual and innovative games, it shouldn't come as much of a surprise that *Dungeon Keeper* won't look, sound, or play like anything you've seen before. The same fresh approach to graphics, interface, and storytelling that was used in titles like *Magic Carpet*, *Populous*, and *Syndicate* have been applied to the RPG world, bringing us a fertile new environment to explore.

But this is much more than a new way to look at RPGs; it's actually the basis for a challenging strategy game, as completely absorbing and entertaining as any on the market. You assume the role of a diabolical entity, sort of a demonic landlord, charged with ridding the planet of all that's warm and fuzzy in order to build a much darker, festering armpit of a world, filled with magical beasts and all-consuming evil.

You'll build massive dungeons, conjure creatures to defend them, then lure in adventurers and instigate wholesale slaughter against all comers in the hopes of gaining unsurpassed wealth and power. But as *Dungeon Keeper*'s Executive Producer Peter Molyneux explained, "being the ultimate bad guy is a really tough job. It's just not as easy as it sounds."

The game provides you with the

FYI. FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Game: Dungeon Keeper
Developer: Bullfrog
Publisher: Electronic Arts, 1450 Fashion Island Blvd., San Mateo, CA 94404-2064 (415) 571-7171
Projected Price: $59.95
Percentage Complete: 90%

In a nutshell:

Bullfrog puts a new spin on traditional roleplaying games by putting you in control of powerful monsters intent on spreading evil throughout the land.

What's so special?

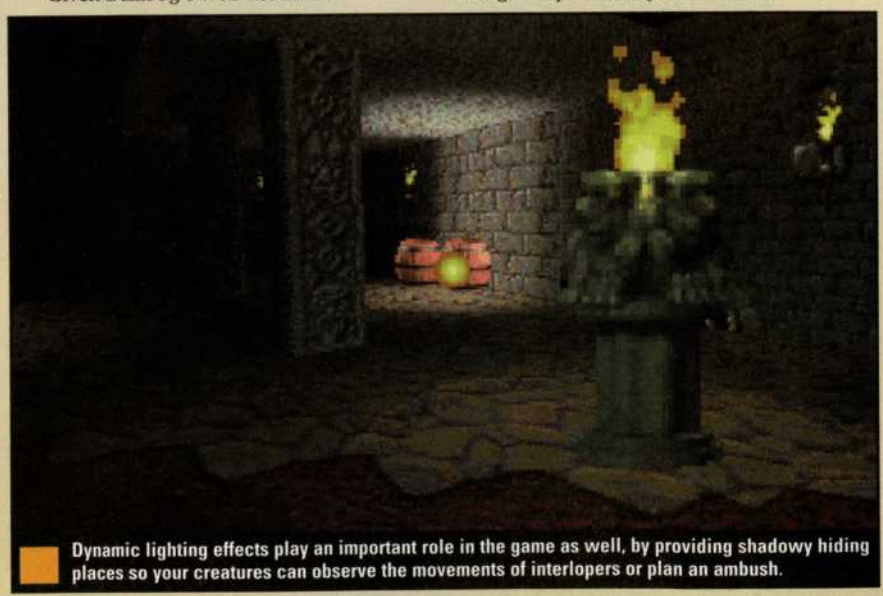
Dungeon Keeper isn't just a new look at RPG gaming; it also brings in demanding strategic elements, first-person action, and multi-player options.

Why should I care?

This is one of those rare, truly innovative twists on traditional game design, and one which provides humor, strategy, action and adventure all in one highly enjoyable package.

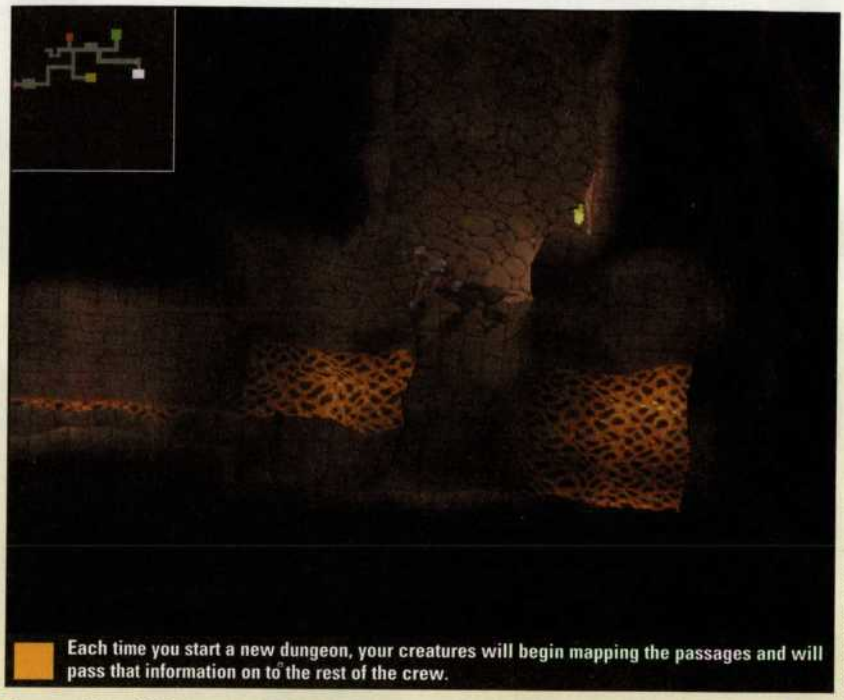
And when's it coming out?

February 1996



Dynamic lighting effects play an important role in the game as well, by providing shadowy hiding places so your creatures can observe the movements of interlopers or plan an ambush.

As adventurers begin exploring your dungeon, your creatures will rally to fight them off.



Each time you start a new dungeon, your creatures will begin mapping the passages and will pass that information on to the rest of the crew.

only the bare essentials: a modest lair, money, and a creature generator that you use to summon the monsters that'll populate your dream dungeon. It's up to you to decide which creatures will be the most effective, then hope they'll be enough to defend against the waves of adventurers who wander into your dungeon.

Your one unseen ally in the game is the complex artificial intelligence that determines the behavior of the denizens of your dungeon.

"We've been working on AI ever since our first game, which was *Populous*," Molyneux said, "and *Dungeon Keeper* is a culmination of everything we've been working on since that time.

"To get characters to walk around a dungeon or a maze and act intelligently — and not hug the walls or just get lost aimlessly — is tremendously difficult. What we've tried to do with our artificial intelligence in *Dungeon Keeper* is to have our creatures actually learn and remember the layout of the maze as they explore. When a creature walks around a corner and sees a dead end, they'll know not to go down there again. And when there are heroes lurking about, they'll cautiously look around corners or hide in shadows; they'll even do things like look at the dust on the floor and see if there are any footprints that lead off to areas they've not explored."

Of course, the AI is a double-edge sword. As those pesky heroes journey into your lair, they'll be gaining experience as well, mapping out the dungeon, searching for gold and mana, and basically trying to put and end to your evil ways.

If you've built a successful dungeon filled with traps and confusing labyrinths, you've already fought half the battle, and can send your monsters in to do the rest. But if you let just one of these heroes survive the expedition and leave the dungeon, he'll come back with a higher experience level, and he will have told countless other adventurers the intimate details of your dungeon.

From there, *Dungeon Keeper* can take a frantic turn. Adventurers no longer need to explore your dungeon and will head straight for your treasure room or your spell library and begin using your hard-earned wealth and magical powers against you.

And even though the creatures are perfectly suited to carrying out your orders, having such a diverse lot of monsters at your disposal can be just as trying as any group of adventurers. These creatures are invariably untrustworthy, demanding, and downright lazy, and are just as likely to give you as much trouble as any of the heroes that venture into your domain, by demanding more money and better creature comforts (no pun intended). But Molyneux and Co. found a suitably evil way to handle that problem as well.

"It's essential that you regularly torture or sacrifice some of your creatures, because it's basically the only way you'll gain their respect," Molyneux said.

Throughout much of the game, you'll watch over your dungeon from a three-quarter, top-down perspective, issuing orders to your creatures, building newer and better traps, or adding to your dungeon. It's an effective way to watch the comings and goings of the adventurers and creatures, but *Dungeon Keeper* has a few more surprises up its sleeve as well.

"In *Dungeon Keeper*, the perspective can be almost anything you choose it to be," said Molyneux. "Not only do you have the three-quarter view, but you can zoom that right in or pull back out and twist the dungeon around and look at it from any angle. Then, of course, you can look through a creature's eyes. And that's really what I wanted to get across in the gameplay; that you can experience the dungeon you created through one of your own creatures' eyes.

"It's also a nice gameplay twist," he said, "in that your creatures are ultimately untrustworthy, and the only way that you can really trust them to do something is to take control of them and perform the task yourself."

This first-person style of gaming also lends itself well to one of *Dungeon Keeper*'s most exciting aspects — multiplayer gaming — providing much of the same thrills as in another Bullfrog title, *Magic Carpet*.

With its strategic element, wide variety of control options and fresh, new view on the traditional RPG theme, *Dungeon Keeper* is certain to be a hit among a wide range of gamers, from traditional RPG conoissuers to strategy and action fans. And it does so in a way that will leave you asking the question. "Why didn't somebody think of it sooner?"

PCG

The mana room is the center of your magical energy and a prime target for the groups of adventurers who hope to gain its power.

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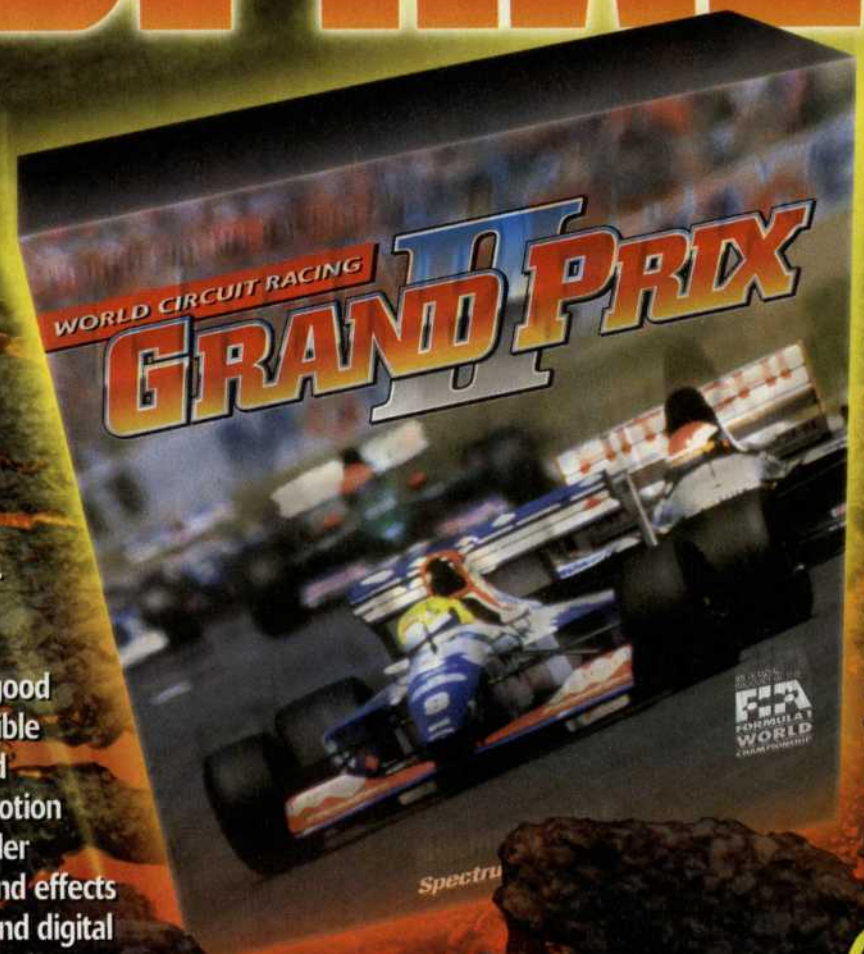

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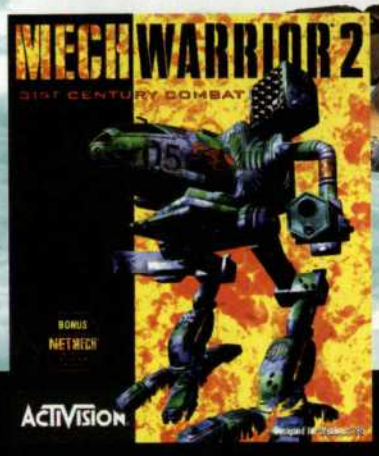

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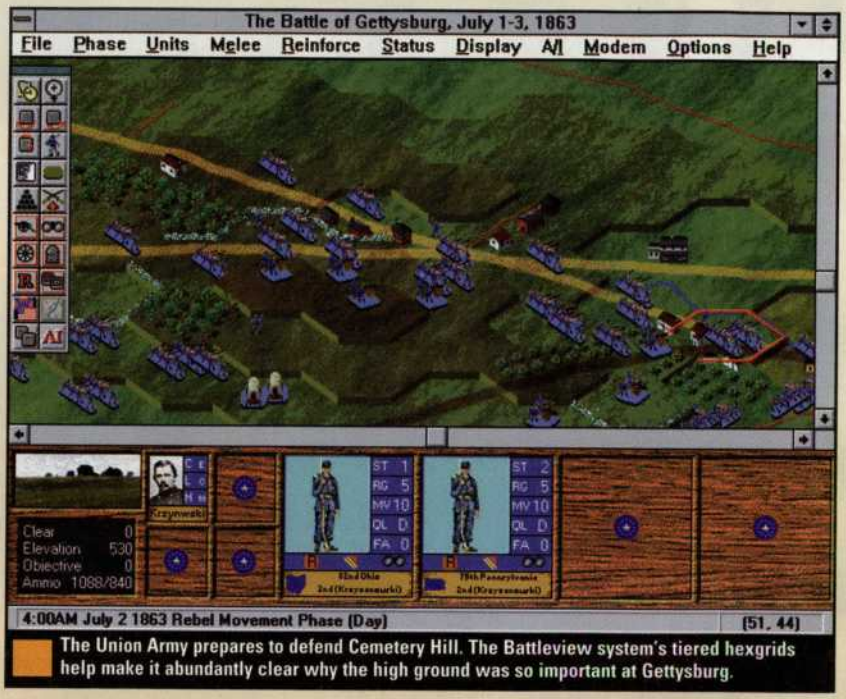
Product Information Number 219

Battleground: Gett

Here's a Civil War game worth a rebel yell!

This second volume in TalonSoft's Battleground series may prove to be the Gettysburg game wargamers have been lusting after.

— William R. Trotter



The Union Army prepares to defend Cemetery Hill. The Battleview system's tiered hexgrids help make it abundantly clear why the high ground was so important at Gettysburg.

FYI. FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Game: Battleground: Gettysburg
Designer: TalonSoft
Publisher: Empire Interactive, 13220 Wisteria Dr., Germantown MD 20874, (800)-216-9706
Projected price: $59.95
Percentage complete: 70%

In a nutshell:

The most decisive battle ever fought on American soil is recreated here with all the color, pageantry, and authenticity you could ask for.

What's so special?

Like its predecessor, *Battleground: Ardennes*, this is a wargame that should satisfy the pickiest *grognard*, but it's also delightfully accessible to the newcomer.

Why should I care?

Anybody who got swept away by Ted Turner's lavish epic film will find this game uncannily evocative of that experience. It's a must-play for Civil War buffs!

And when's it coming out?

Early 1996

Man, TalonSoft is coming on *strong!*

Back when I saw an early beta of this feisty new company's Battle of the Bulge game, it occurred to me that the basic engine would serve to recreate 19th-Century warfare just as well, if not better, than it does for modern conflicts. The unique "Battleview" system combines, in one elegant package, the colorful literalism of an elaborate tabletop/miniatures game with the rock-solid playability of the time-tested hexgrid format.

What is immediately striking about *Battleground: Gettysburg* is how much lusher and more realistic the graphics are, and how swiftly TalonSoft has been able to incorporate player-suggested feedback to refine an already strong concept. Clearly, this series of games is dynamic, evolving, and ripe with promise.

The list of good PC Gettysburg games has not been a long one — rather surprising, in view of how many

Rebel forces mass for an assault. The unit icons create the feel of a tabletop miniatures game.

ysburg

TalonSoft swiftly incorporated player-suggested feedback to refine an already strong concept. Clearly, their Battleground series of games is dynamic, evolving, and ripe with promise.

outstanding boardgames the battle has inspired. Wargame connoisseurs generally cite SSI's *Gettysburg: The Turning Point* (first issued in 1986) as the champion, and it still commands respect (it's also still in print, and available at a rock-bottom price) for its playability, despite its antediluvian graphics. Swfte's multimedia version of the battle, incorporating footage from the Turner film as well as the mellow, bourbon-rich voice of Shelby Foote as narrator, was (unfairly, I thought) dismissed by most reviewers as a lightweight. So TalonSoft's new version has a good shot at topping the charts.

Certainly, it is the best-looking Gettysburg game ever, in any format. The rolling fields, wooded heights, and windswept ridges of the actual battlefield are reproduced both faithfully and beautifully, and the contour-line hex sides are cunningly blended into the landscape in such a way as to minimize any sense of terrain being artificially manipulated to conform to a gaming-system.

Ditto the units in the contending armies. The careful attention to scale yields the visual drama of a huge tabletop game — one of those high-class setups with exquisite, hand-painted miniatures — but avoids the cluttered, horde-of-ants appearance that has compromised so many miniatures-style Civil War games in the past. These animated regiments and batteries move and fire and react in a highly plausible, yet aesthetically satisfying, manner.

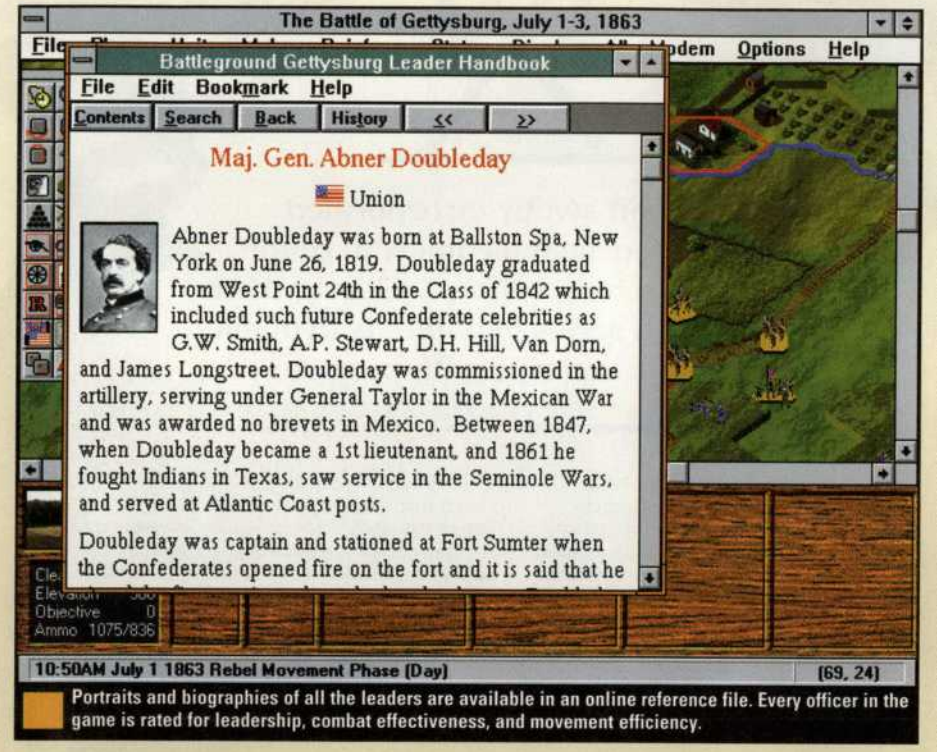
When a unit takes an especially punishing volley of musketry or grapeshot, for instance, you actually see a little animated soldier crumple to the ground. Moreover, the dead stay dead — they don't just fade into the pixels as they do in so many games — so that when the tide of battle recedes, the field stays littered with slain men and horses, smashed cannon, burning caissons, etc. The carnage of a real Civil War battle is at least suggested.

And when units get close enough to melee, the fought-over hex appears to seethe with violence, thanks to some neat animation techniques. This is certainly more satisfying than what happens in some earlier miniatures-style games, in which the animated soldiers appear either to be milling around aimlessly or dancing with one another, instead of trying to bash each others' heads in.

Each hex represents 125 yards, each turn 20 minutes, each contour line approximately 25 feet. Since Gettysburg — more than most battles — evolved around specific terrain features, you get a very convincing feel for the importance of the high ground over which so

The opening round: Buford's desperate delaying action bars the gates to Gettysburg on the first day of the battle. Fans of the Turner Entertainment film *Gettysburg* will find the same epic sweep in TalonSoft's game.

I was instantly sucked into the fray, forming brigades, targeting batteries, throwing out skirmishers, just having a grand ol' time.



Portraits and biographies of all the leaders are available in an online reference file. Every officer in the game is rated for leadership, combat effectiveness, and movement efficiency.

much blood was shed.

Players have the option to refight the entire three-day battle, or they can select scenarios that focus on the critical engagements fought on any particular day: Little Round Top, Devil's Den, Cemetery Ridge, etc.

The interface is similar to that of *Battleground: Ardennes*, but with some period-specific changes. There are several toolbox buttons that control formation and unit-facing — both so important to the post-Napoleonic tactics of the time. There are also new buttons that allow you to see, at a glance, which units have fired, or which units have been routed. Another button controls limbering/unlimbering artillery and mounting/dismounting for officers and cavalry.

Another new feature allows you to display the battlefield in full-screen mode. This adds to the panoramic sweep of the graphics, and was implemented at the request of gamers.

Officers (all depicted with colorful little portraits) are rated for leadership, command effectiveness (how well they rally or inspire their men) and movement efficiency. An "A"-rated officer's troops will be steady, reliable, highly maneuverable, and able to stand up to a lot of punishment without breaking; a "D"-rated officer, logically enough, is not the man you want holding a critical section of the line. (An "F"-rated officer, and there are a few, is best employed holding the reins of somebody else's horse.)

There's a complete online reference guide, with portraits and brief but thorough biographies of each officer who fought in the battle.

In the new, full-screen, mode, the graphics are really sumptuous.

The use of video clips will be even more refined and creative than it was in the Battle of the Bulge game. TalonSoft found a source for what its founder, Jim Rose, described as "some of the most exciting re-enactment footage I've ever seen." When the full panoply of sound effects and video vignettes is implemented, this should be one of the most viscerally exciting wargames on the market.

In the early beta version I've been playing, there's only one "sample" battle implemented, but I was instantly sucked into the fray, forming brigades, targeting batteries, throwing out skirmishers, just having a grand ol' time.

Not long after the release of *Battleground: Gettysburg*, TalonSoft plans to design several "bundled" Civil War packages, each containing battles that have never before been presented in PC format — that is very good news indeed for Civil War buffs.

No doubt about it: this is a great-looking, slick-playing simulation of the most important battles in American history.

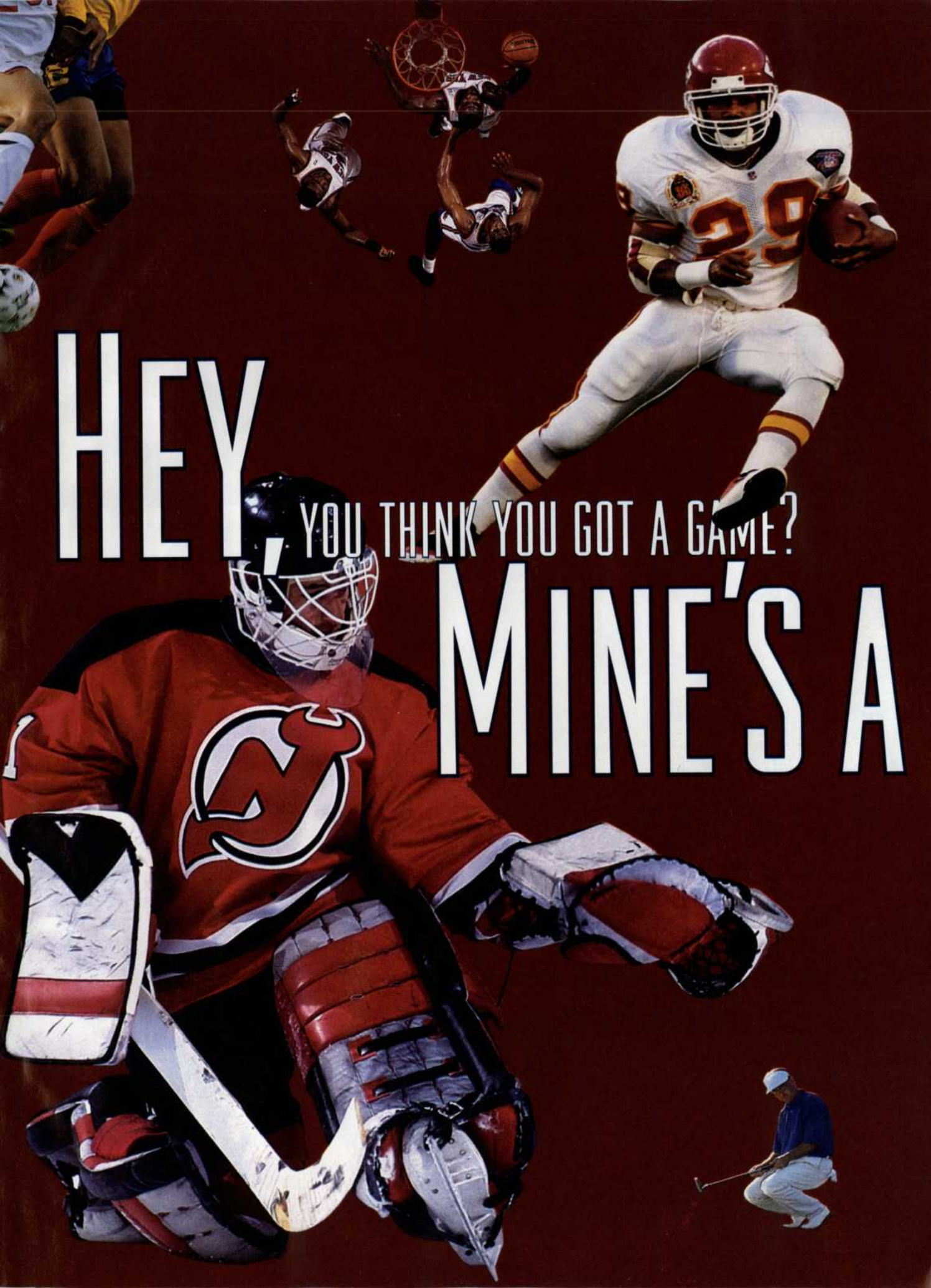
PCG

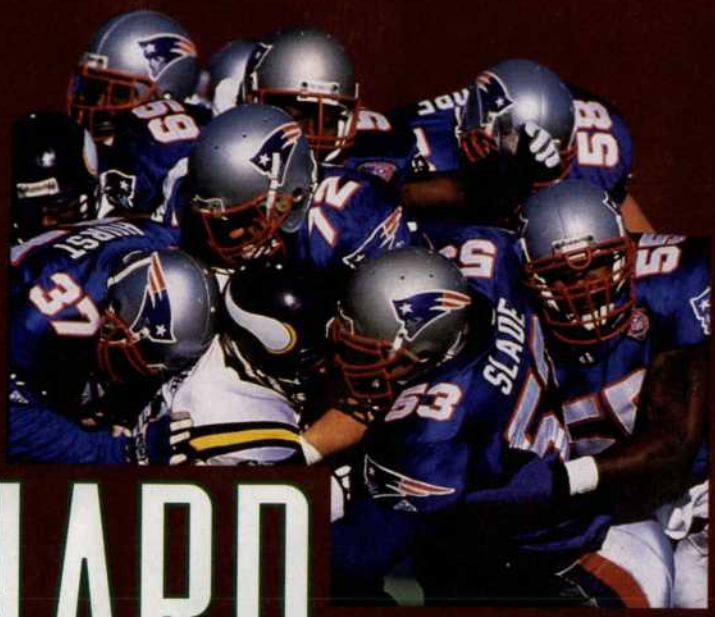
SUGGESTED NEW READING

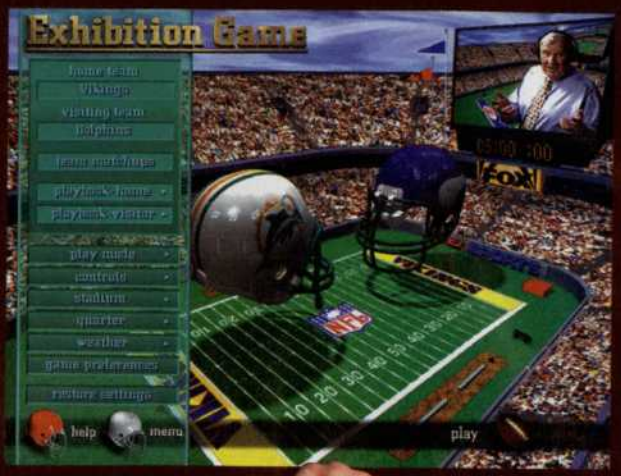
The bibliography on Gettysburg is vast, of course, but there are a couple of new additions that should prove exceptionally interesting to readers who want to bone up on the battle before playing TalonSoft's game.

Ted Turner's Gettysburg movie was based on Michael Shaara's *The Killer Angels*, surely one of the finest Civil War novels ever penned. But Turner Publishing's follow-up book, *Gettysburg*, is a handsome volume indeed. It showcases dozens of magnificent full-color paintings by Mort Kunstler, and features a swift, clean narrative by historian James McPherson. (Turner Publishing, $24.95)

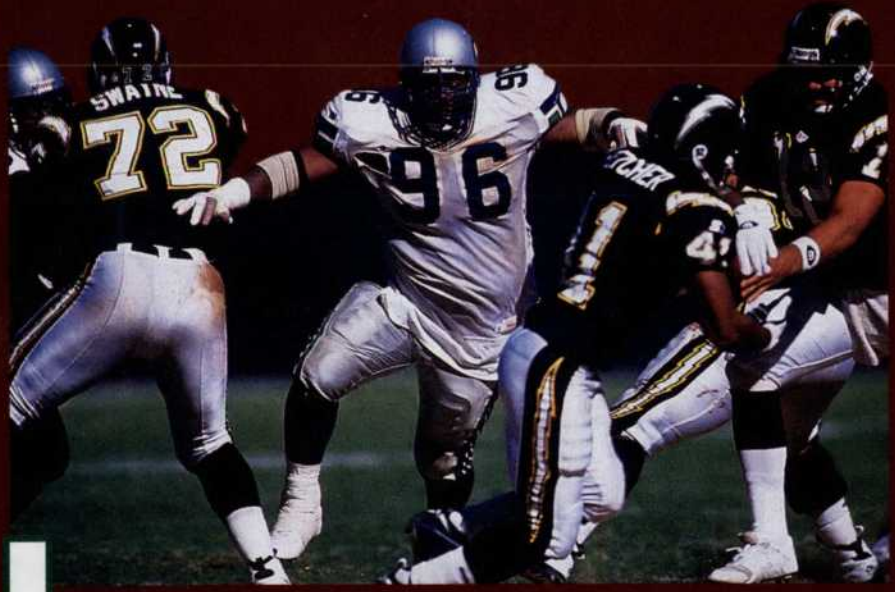
Shelby Foote has by now become an American institution unto himself, and his trilogy *The Civil War: A Narrative* has attained classic status. The centerpiece of that epic was Foote's stirring, dithyrambic, account of Gettysburg. In 1995, that section of the trilogy was published as a separate book, *Stars in Their Courses: The Gettysburg Campaign*. Foote's lyrical style and his unerring eye for just the perfect detail bring the battle to life on a Homeric scale. (Modern Library, $19.95)


HEY,
YOU THINK YOU GOT A GAME?
MINE'S A

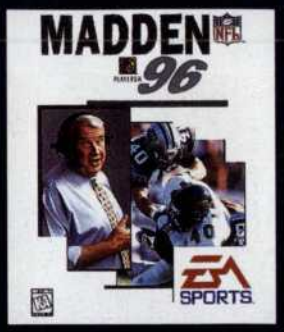




HARD HITTING BOMB-TOSSING



MADDEN 96



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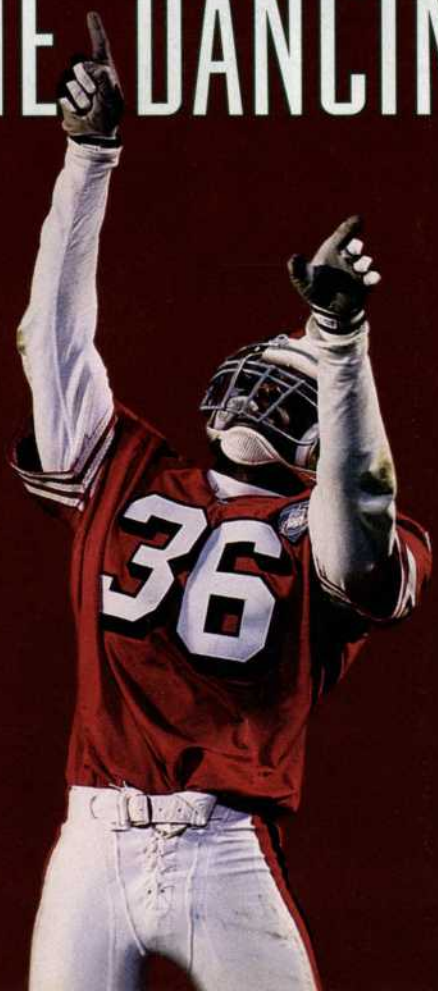

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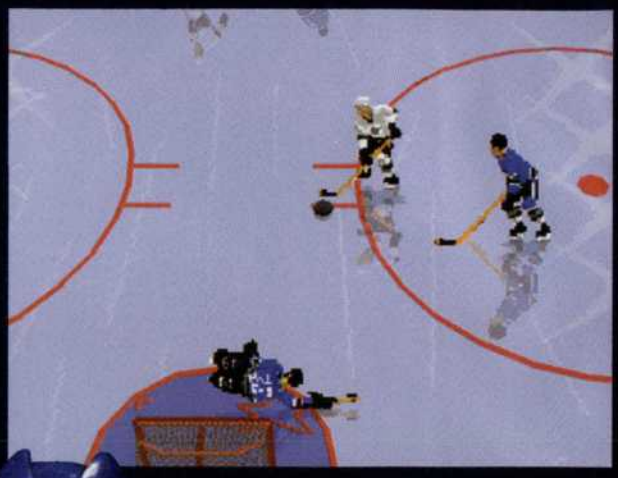
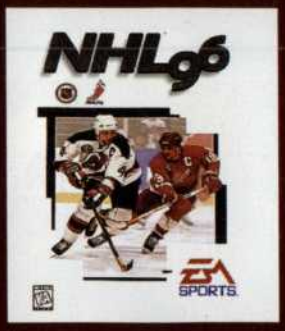


ICE CREASE

MELTING PUCK-DIGGING

NHL 96



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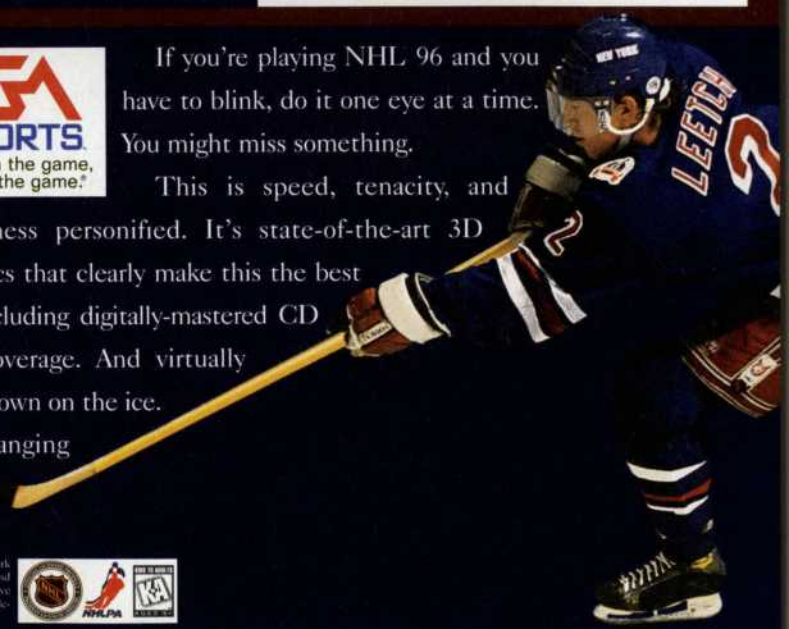
You manage the variables. From changing lines on the fly to whether you drop pass or go top shelf in a one-on-one with the goalie. It's all here. If you can keep up.



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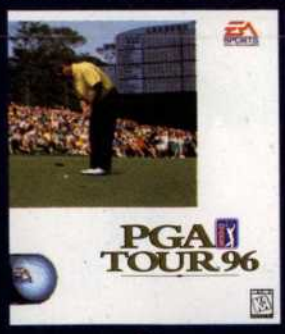
HOLE 1
PAR 5
KITE
1
To pin: 292 yds
11 ft below
Lie: Fairway
247
3W
PUTT-BENDING, SAND-BLASTING, SHHHHH
HOLE 3
PAR 3
SAVE
REPLAY
OKAY
MULLIGAN
FAXON
2
Shot dist: 46 ft
Shot lie: Cup
PETER JACOBSEN
Peter Jacobsen
Career Earnings: $4,000,000+
TOUR Victories: 6
1994: 3 top ten finishes
Back-to-back TOUR victories
in 1995
1994/95 PGA TOUR Statistics
VIDEO
PRIOR PRO
NEXT PRO

PGA TOUR 96



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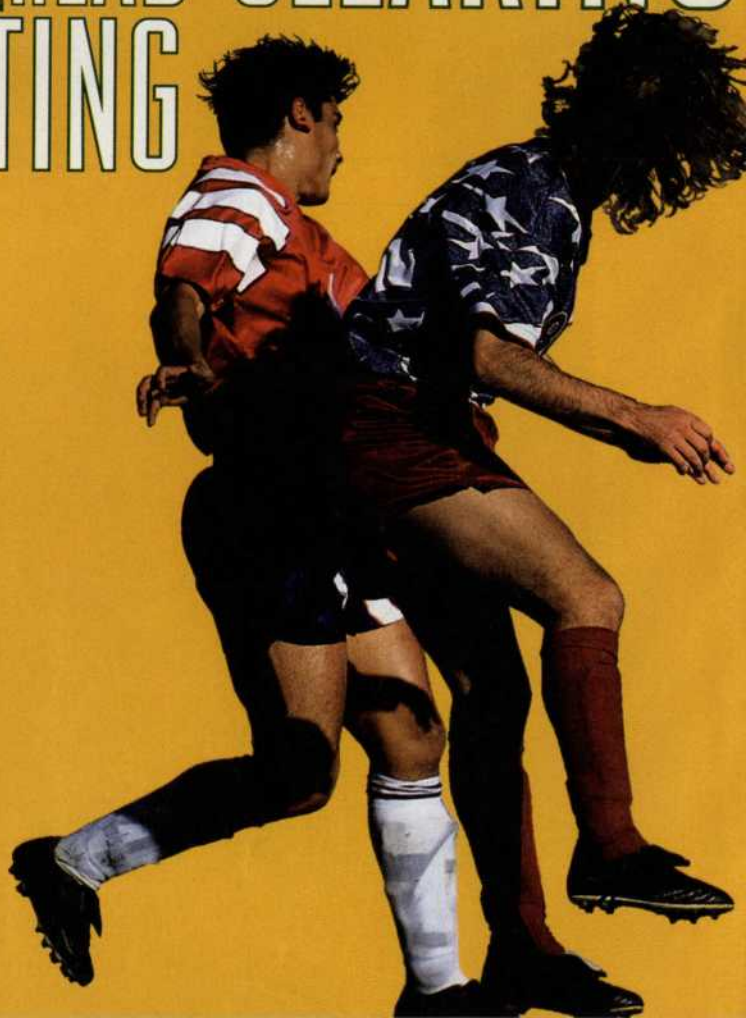
MID HEAD-CLEARING GRASS-CUTTING



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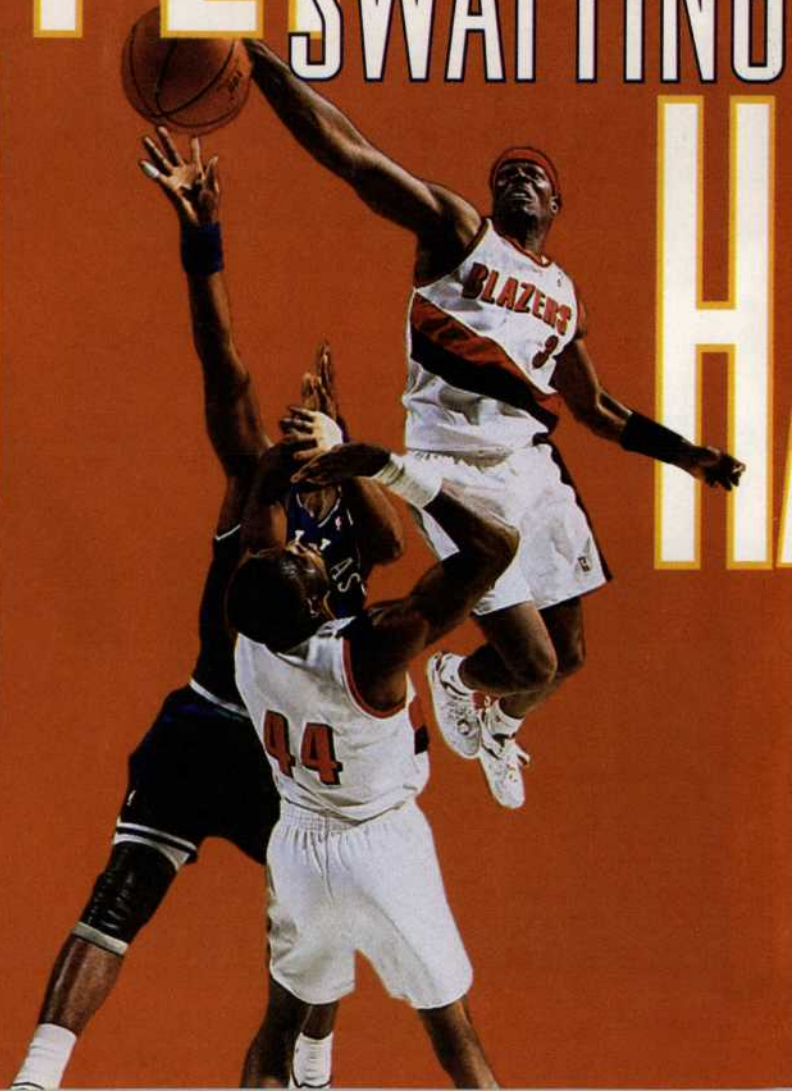
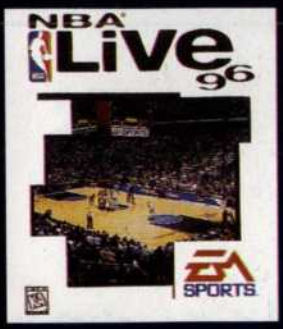
RIM ROCKING FLY SWATTING HA



NBA LIVE 96



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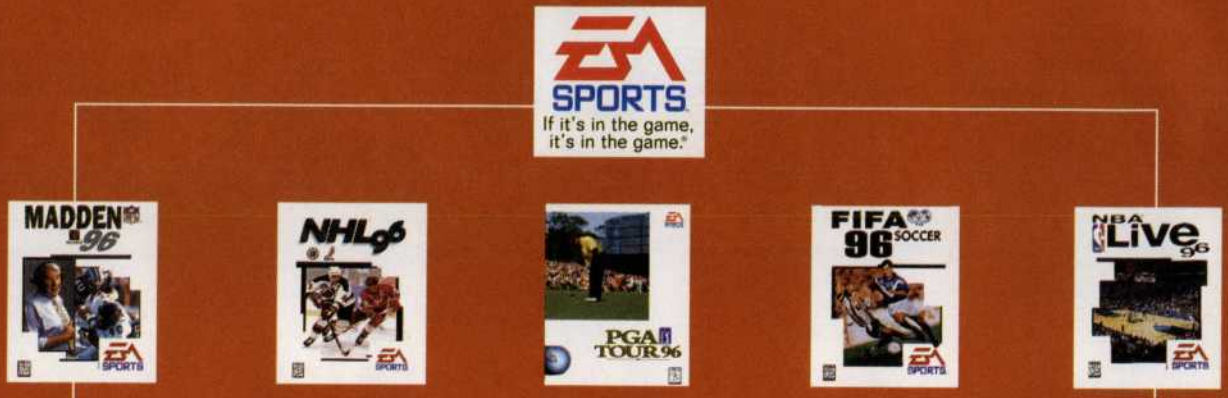

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Product Information Number 121

Destruction Derby

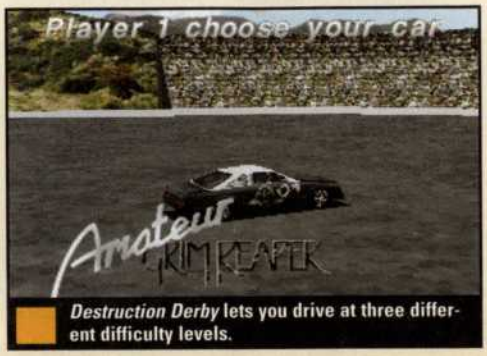
Take the wheel and dent some steel!

Offensive driving is the order of the day in this thrill-packed action game, and automotive mayhem has never looked so good.

—Dan Bennett

You've probably heard it a thousand times: People only watch auto racing because they're hoping to see a wreck. That's not entirely true; there are scads of fans who simply enjoy the sport — they get off on the roar of the engines and the split-second, nerves-of-steel talent of the drivers and pit crews. But, like most cliches, this one contains a grain of truth: as horrifying as it can be, a major crash is an amazing thing to see.

If you've invested any time in a serious racing sim like Papyrus' *NASCAR Racing*, you know what a thrill it can be to slip into the groove on a particularly tough track and gradually work your way to the front of the pack — but you also know that smashing into another car at 150 mph and causing a huge pileup is pretty cool, too. And you've probably tried turning around and driving the wrong way down the track, seeing how much speed you can build up before the inevitable head-on collision. Never mind that you'll never win a race that way; you do it because it's fun. It's the great paradox of PC racing games — in most of them, you're actually trying to *avoid* seeing the coolest sights the game has to offer.



Destruction Derby **lets you drive at three different difficulty levels.**

Enter *Destruction Derby*, a game that not only rewards you for being in accidents; it actually gives you *extra* points for causing really spectacular wrecks. It's an antisocial, politically incorrect, thoroughly unrealistic racing game — and it looks like it's going to be a helluva lot of fun.

Originally created for the Sony PlayStation, *Destruction Derby* lets you play in three different modes. The

The CrossOver track is perfect for Wreckin' Racing, where the goal is to beat your opponents by passing them all — or by taking them out of the race entirely.

FYI. FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Game: Destruction Derby
Designer: Psygnosis
Publisher: Sony Interactive Entertainment, 919 East Hillsdale Blvd., 2nd Floor, Foster City, CA, 94404 (800) 438-7794
Projected price: $59.95
Percentage complete: 90%

In a nutshell:

Here's a game that rewards you for doing what you try to avoid in all those deadly serious racing sims.

What's so special?

Destruction Derby features state-of-the-art texture-mapped graphics, controls that couldn't be simpler, and variations that make it feel like three games in one.

Why should I care?

Sony's PlayStation is the first dedicated game console in years that actually has some PC gamers eyeing it with envy. As the first of a series of PlayStation conversions, ***Destruction Derby*** proves that we can have the same great action and graphics on our machines.

And when's it coming out?

Early 1996

Before a race is over, your car may look more ready for the junkyard than for Winner's Circle.

"When converting *Destruction Derby*, we were determined not just to match [the PlayStation version], but to add more detail."

— Martin Edmonds, senior developer for Destruction Derby

Destruction Derby mode puts you in a huge blacktop arena called The Bowl, then tosses in a crowd of other cars. Your goal is simple enough: smash into your opponents and put them out of commission before they do the same to you. But there *is* a little skill involved; you can't just broadside the other guy, or hit him head-on. You score points by hitting the other cars in just the right spot to set them spinning — a three-sixty is worth more than a one-eighty, etc. As the derby progresses, you take damage in six different areas of your car, and all that wear and tear can affect your car's performance — too many hits to the right side, and you'll suddenly find yourself unable to turn in that direction. Needless to say, that can make for some interesting strategies.

Another mode, Wreckin' Racing, is a little closer to a traditional driving game. You're trying to be the first to complete a number of laps on one of five tracks — but you still get extra points for bashing the competition.

The third mode is Stock Car Racing, a straightforward race to the finish line with no rewards for offensive driving. It's a lot of fun, too, but we suspect it'll be the least popular option in the game — who wants to run a fair race when the same game lets you win by playing dirty?

Destruction Derby is spectacular on the PlayStation, but there's been a lot of press about how sophisticated Sony's dedicated game console is; it's a pretty fast machine as videogames go, and its specialized video hardware makes some amazing 3D graphics possible. That raises some obvious questions: Will *Destruction Derby* be anywhere near as good on the PC as it is on the PlayStation? And just how powerful will your PC have to be in order to let you play at PlayStation quality?

"When converting *Destruction Derby*, we were so sick of people joking about the amount of track detail we'd have to take out for the PC version that we were determined not just to match it, but to add more detail," says Psygnosis' Martin Edmonds, senior developer for *Destruction Derby*.

"It is actually possible to set the detail level higher than that of the PlayStation," Edmonds says. "We added track details such as lakes, car and truck parks, skidmarks, road markings, paths and so on to the PC version. If you wish to play the game with this extra detail switched on, at around 23 frames per second, you *will* need a Pentium. But there are plenty of options for reducing the detail level to cater to 486 users."

In The Bowl, you have only one purpose: bash your opponents' cars into scrap metal before they can do the same to yours.

You can save those really spectacular crashes to disk and enjoy them all over again, thanks to the game's replay feature.

Edmonds says translating *Destruction Derby* from PlayStation to PC was a fairly straightforward task — especially with the special tools Psygnosis created for the job.

"We wrote our own set of libraries from scratch on the PC," he says. "These emulate as closely as possible the way the PlayStation's hardware and library system works. The advantage of this method is we only have to write those routines once, and it allows us to convert the bulk of the game very quickly. This leaves plenty of time for fine-tuning and adding extra features which we may feel would benefit the PC version."

According to Edmonds, the only big challenge in doing the conversion came from the differences in the two machines' graphics hardware.

"The basic mechanics and calculations of *Destruction Derby*'s game code convert across without any problem, since it was written in C," Edmonds says. "The main problem is the lack of any graphics hardware on the PC. All these routines have to be written from scratch and must be very fast.

"The PlayStation's processor is relatively slow compared to, say, a Pentium," Edmonds explains. "For this reason, the main game code — collisions, handling, intelligence, etc. — runs much faster on the PC. But this advantage is more than outweighed by the PlayStation's dedicated hardware. All of the graphic and hardware effects, such as texture-mapping and transparency — which we take for granted on the PlayStation — have to be coded from scratch in assembly language on the PC."

The result of that hard work is that the PC version of *Destruction Derby* looks every bit as good as the original — possibly better. If our early look at this game is any indication, Psygnosis has done a fantastic job of bringing its light-hearted brand of auto action to the strait-laced PC racing field.

PCG

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Product Information Number 136

3D B

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Judgment Day

Microsoft launches games developers' kit

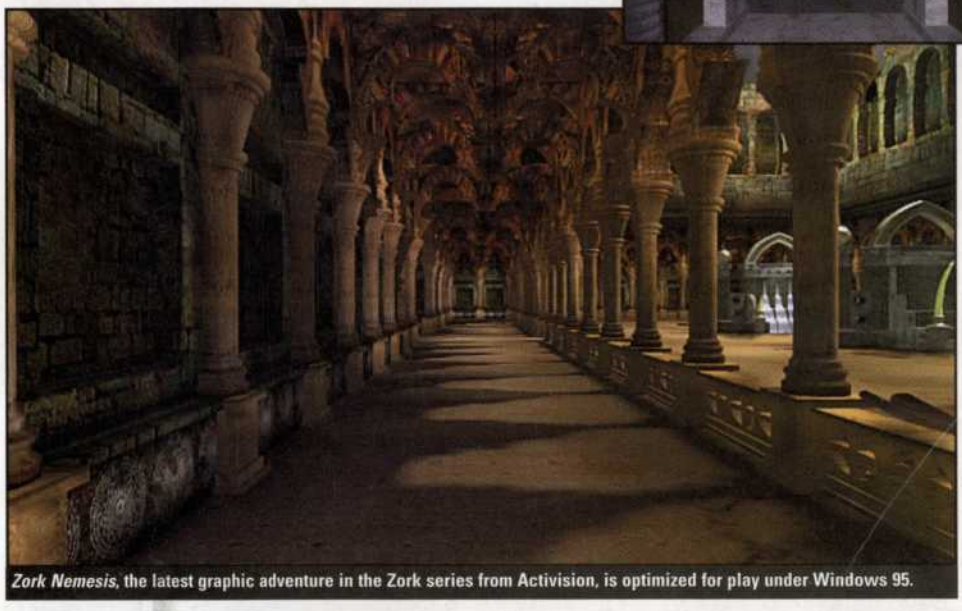
On October 30, Microsoft held a party celebrating the release of Windows 95 and its game software developers' kit (SDK). Called Judgment Day, the party's Halloween-inspired theme centered on the death of DOS as a major operating system for games on the PC.

The atmosphere could only be described as macabre; demons roamed the crowds, and a haunted house designed by a Hollywood production company gave visitors a fright. Scarier still were members of the rock/performance-art band GWAR, who staffed the house of horrors. Representatives of Activision, ATI, id Software, LucasArts, Mindscape, Zombie, and other game publishers and hardware manufacturers joined Microsoft in ushering in what they hope is a new age in PC gaming.

Bill Gates himself kicked off the party, sending in his welcome via video. Booths lining the path to the main stage displayed new games developed for Win 95, as well as peripherals designed to take advantage of the new DirectX technology and the Game SDK. Creative Labs showed off their 3D Blaster video card; Virtual i/O demonstrated their i-glasses! virtual reality headset; and Microsoft displayed its new Sidewinder 3D Pro joystick — all built or modified to run exceptionally well under Windows 95.

Many game developers took advantage of the Halloween festivities to display their new wares, with an emphasis on titles that will take full advantage of the new operating system. As many as 75 Windows 95 game titles were set to hit store shelves in time for Christmas, all of them from major game manufacturers.

Activision blasted spectators away with demonstrations of their new version of *Mechwarrior 2* for the operating system. They also gave us a glimpse of *Earthworm Jim*, the popular cartridge-based game, which will be wiggling its way onto Windows 95.



Zork Nemesis, the latest graphic adventure in the Zork series from Activision, is optimized for play under Windows 95.

Mindscape's *Cyberspeed* also will take full advantage of the Win 95 operating system.

LucasArts brought out its new graphic adventure, *The Dig*, as well as unveiling *Rebel Assault II: The Hidden Empire*. SSI was on hand with *Allied General*, the sequel to *Panzer General*, and a Win 95 version of *Su-27 Flanker* (check out both the DOS and Windows demos of this new air combat sim on this month's *PC Gamer* CD-ROM).

Viacom's *Beavis and Butt-Head in Virtual Stupidity* brought an injection of humor to the Judgment Day proceedings, and Trimark Interactive's long-awaited action game *The Hive* looked stunning with its detailed graphics and smooth gameplay. Virgin Interactive made a strong showing as well, with a Windows 95 version of *The Daedalus Encounter*, and the first virtual pet we've seen, *Dogz* (also on this month's CD).

Getting a first-hand look at all the new Win 95 games was exciting, but things really heated up around midnight, when the finalists for Deathmatch 95 took the stage. Some of the best *Doom* deathmatchers in the world gathered together for a final shootout that ended with four talented players up on stage, battling it out for the championship.

They played on Falcon Northwest Pentium 133 machines hooked up to a DWANGO (Dial-Up Wide-Area Network Gaming Operation) server, matching wits and reflexes in two five-minute rounds of *Doom II* — and better *Doom*-ing has rarely been seen. In the end, the two players who racked up the most kills moved on to the final confrontation in id's *Hexen: Beyond Heretic*. For fifteen suspenseful minutes, the skilled contestants battled it out until one was named the victor.

Dennis Fong, known as "Thresh" to the online gaming community, finally took the throne as the most dangerous deathmatcher on the planet. His reward: A killer PC gaming setup from Falcon Northwest, worth more than $10,000. It includes a Pentium 133; Forte Technologies' VFX-1 virtual reality headset; Diamond's 8-speed CD-ROM drive; and some of the hottest new titles from LucasArts, Activision, and several others. Talk about a Halloween treat!

For more information on Judgment Day and the Games SDK, tune your Web browser to http://www.microsoft.com/windows/games.

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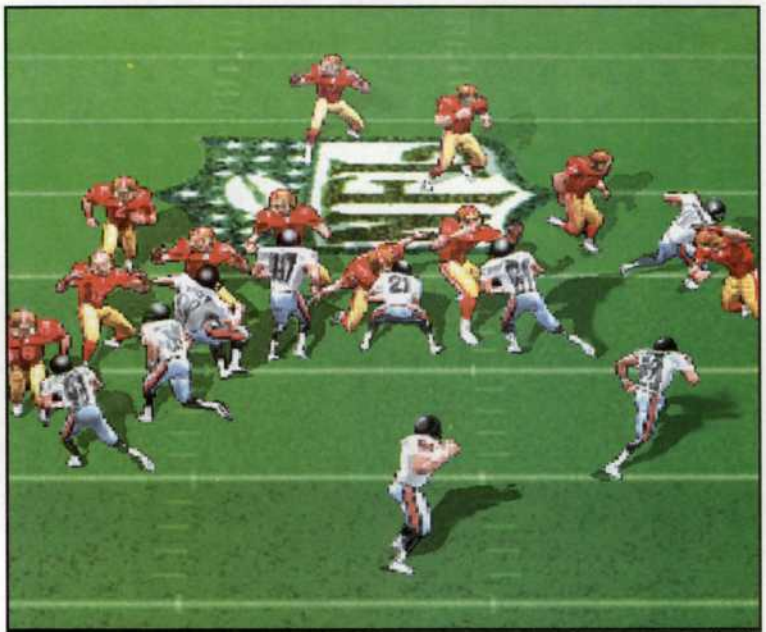
Product Information Number 94

Mad for Madden

EA's popular Madden license comes back to the PC



The gridiron action of *Madden '96* will feature some pretty remarkable SVGA animations, and will utilize the same intelligent camera angles used in *NHL '96* to give you the best view possible.

Despite the increasing complexity of today's computer football simulations like Sierra's Front Page Sports: Football series and the Ultimate Football line from MicroProse, many sports fans (and a few *PC Gamer* editors), still consider the reigning champ of computerized football to be the cartridge-based John Madden series from Electronic Arts. But even though many PC gamers have been begging for a new version of this highly playable, action-oriented game, EA has kept that special Madden touch just out of their reach for years. Until now, anyway.

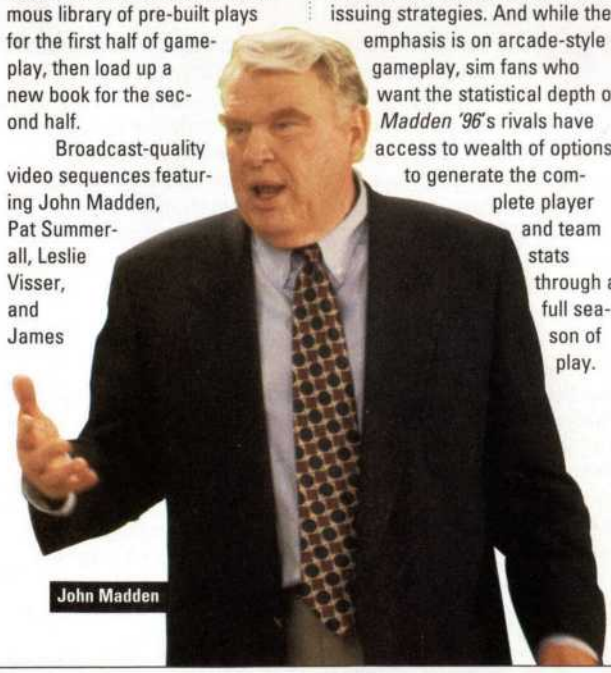
Starting this January, PC users will finally get the chance to tackle the Madden brand of football gaming when EA unleashes *Madden '96* for PC CD-ROM. *Madden '96* will share a lot of qualities with its videogame cousins — fast, hands-on action, a playbook filled with easy-to-use offensive and defensive plays — but EA realizes that simply updating the cartridge games for the PC won't cut it in this high-stakes, simulation-oriented field. So they've gone the extra mile, designing a brand new game engine utilizing the 32-bit processing power of the PC and adding a number of little extras you could only find in a top-notch PC simulation.

We recently paid a visit to EA to find out just what we can expect when this entirely new *Madden '96* takes the field, and now we're eager for the kickoff.

Some of the features you can look forward to in *Madden '96* are the stunning 640x480 SVGA graphics used throughout the game, with richly detailed player animations for the onfield action and intelligent camera angles that follow the plays from the best perspective. These camera views will have the same customizable features as in EA's other sports offerings, *FIFA Soccer '96* and *NHL '96*, giving just the right angle on those long bombs or crushing blitzes. You'll also be able to build your own custom playbooks from an enormous library of pre-built plays for the first half of gameplay, then load up a new book for the second half.

Broadcast-quality video sequences featuring John Madden, Pat Summerall, Leslie Visser, and James Brown also figure prominently in *Madden '96*, bringing the look and feel of "Monday Night Football" to your PC with loads of play-by-play commentary and pre- and post-game analysis.

And, of course, all of the quick, accessible features that gave the cartridge games such widespread appeal will appear in the PC version — like the easy options for setting up plays and issuing strategies. And while the emphasis is on arcade-style gameplay, sim fans who want the statistical depth of *Madden '96*'s rivals have access to wealth of options to generate the complete player and team stats through a full season of play.



John Madden

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

It's a whole new year, and that means a whole new year's worth of games are on the way. Here's a quick look at some of the more intriguing ones waiting just over the horizon.

Star Emperor

Stardock Systems Inc., one of the few major developers for the OS/2 operating system and creator of the well-received *Galactic Civilizations*, will once again enter the OS/2 gaming arena with three new titles.

The first, *Star Emperor*, will use the *Galactic Civilizations* game engine to create a game of intrigue and conquest on a cosmic scale. Using the multi-threading technology of OS/2 to let your computerized opponents plot their moves while you make yours, it should be an impressive improvement over *Galactic Civilizations*.

Star Emperor will capitalize on the popular *Galactic Civilizations* engine for OS/2.

Avarice

Also from Stardock for OS/2, *Avarice* will be a *Myst*-like graphic adventure that will feature incredible artwork in a computer-generated world. Once again utilizing OS/2's capabilities, *Avarice* will be able to load into memory every scene you can reach from the current scene, so screen transitions will be

Continued on page 68

Continued from page 67

much quicker than in most other graphic-intensive adventures.

Entrepreneur

Entrepreneur will challenge gamers to achieve world domination in a unique way — by choosing, researching, and marketing products. This third new OS/2 title by Stardock Systems will not only appeal to the tycoon inside you, but it will also support network play so you can match wits with other would-be kingpins. Also available will be *Student Entrepreneur*, a version designed to teach the player about modern economics and marketing. With the intelligent AI and depth of play, this one should push OS/2 to its limits.

The colorful graphics and addictively simple gameplay should make *Knight Moves* another hit from *Tetris* creator Alexey Pajitnov.

Knight Moves

Alexey Pajitnov, the famous creator of *Tetris*, has designed a brand new game for Spectrum HoloByte. *Knight Moves* will be a puzzle game in which you control a noble knight, striving to save the world from an ancient evil. You move the knight in the traditional chess fashion (two squares up and one over, or vice versa), but that's where the similarity to chess ends; there'll be special items and monsters attempting to stop you from making your way into the Adversary's lair. And since it's from the mind of Alexey Pajitnov, it's a safe bet it'll be diabolically addictive.

Continued on page 71

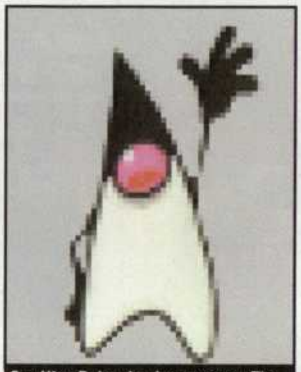
Sun Does the Java Jive

Language adds new capabilities to the Web

Is the World Wide Web the next-generation gaming platform? Considering today's static, text-based web pages, it hardly seems likely. But as technology races ahead, the future of gaming on the Internet is getting brighter.

The release of Sun Microsystem's Java programming — language, and its accompanying HotJava Web browser — has created deep rumblings on the Internet. Insiders are saying that Java, in combination with Windows 95 and the World Wide Web, may just be the spark that lights the fire under Internet gaming. But what is it?

Java is an object-oriented programming language that promises cross-platform compatibility, which means code written on a UNIX machine (for example) can be compiled and then used in a Windows or Mac environment. It was originally developed for use with a failed interactive television system, but when that project fell through, the developers at Sun decided to use their powerful language for the World Wide Web.



Say Hi to Duke, the Java mascot. The first Java-compliant web browser is Sun's own *HotJava*, available for Windows NT and 95, Solaris (Sun's operating system), and Unix. OS/2 and Macintosh versions are on the way.

Web page developers can use Java to create small World Wide Web applications, or "applets," which are nested in a standard HTML document. When one of these applets is encountered, a Java-compliant browser will load and launch the applet.

These applets can run the gamut from animations and cartoons to live data feeds — a stock market ticker, or continuously updated box scores for your favorite sports, for example. Other possibilities for Java-based Web Pages on the Internet include live chat over the Web, background music for Web pages, and interactive 3D models of objects, which the user could view and rotate with their mouse.

GUS meets AMD

New Gravis UltraSound uses InterWave chip

We've always been able to count on Advanced Gravis to produce high-end computer peripherals that won't break the bank of the average gamer. And although they're known mostly for their line of controllers, such as the Gravis Gamepad, Phoenix, and their new GrIP system, they've always been a little ahead of the crowd in PC sound technology.

They pioneered affordable wavetable synthesis with their UltraSound card back when everyone else was still doing FM synthesis, and now they've combined resources with Advanced Micro Devices (AMD) to produce their newest high-end sound card — the UltraSound Plug & Play. The new line of sound cards built for the Windows 95 environment will use AMD's InterWave chip, created in a collaborative effort between the two companies.

The chip will provide wavetable synthesis in compliance with the new MPC-3 multimedia standards, but one of the most exciting features of the new GUS is its full-duplex capabilities. This means the card can send and receive data simultaneously, making real-time spoken communication through the Internet a reality (normally, internet "telephone" systems have required participants to take turns speaking).

The card will come bundled with a microphone and software like the CompuServe Internet Access Kit (which will include the Mosaic Web browser), and the Internet Phone system. The UltraSound Plug & Play will also support multi-track, digital-quality audio recording.

The standard card will come with a fully functional, speed-compensating joystick port and 1MB of sampled sounds for wavetable playback. A Pro version will add have 512K of onboard RAM for customized sound uploads. Both cards will be upgradeable to 8MB of RAM using standard 30-pin SIMMS. They should be available as you read this, with suggested retail prices of $149 for the standard card and $199 for the Pro. For more information on the UltraSound, contact Advanced Gravis at (800) 663-8558.

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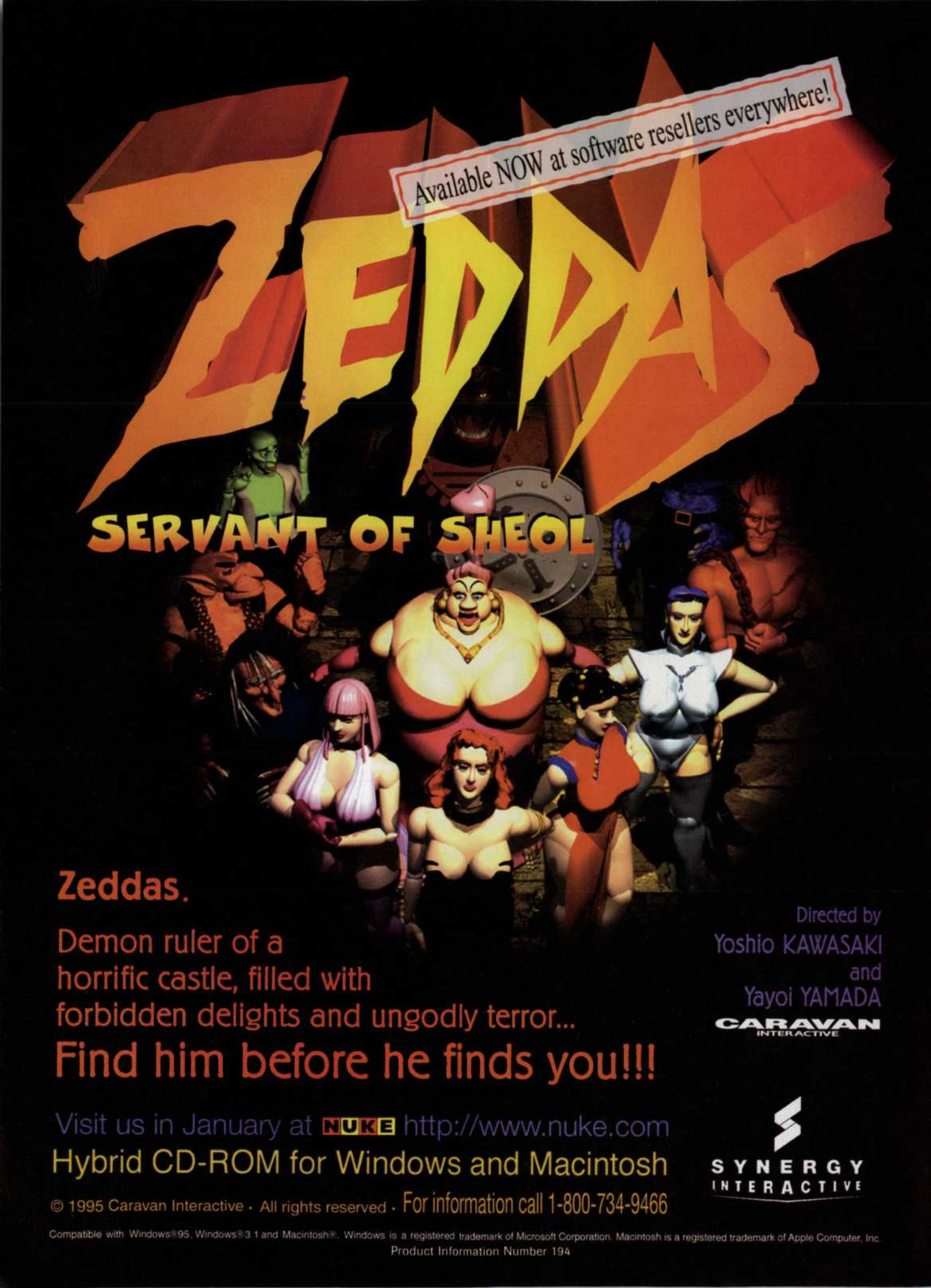
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Product Information Number 194

AOL Hosts Strike-A-Match

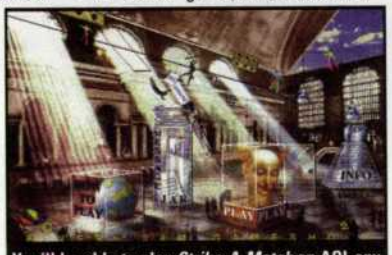
Online game show designed by "Jeopardy!" creator

Log on to America Online and use the keyword "BOXERJAM," and you'll find yourself at the home of one of the first online game shows on the Information Superhighway.

Strike-A-Match, created by Julann Griffin, creator of the hugely popular TV game show "Jeopardy!", pits AOL users against each other in a battle of wits.

The idea of the game is very simple: You're presented with six words; two of the six are related to each other in some fashion. If you think you know which two they are, you try to hit the space bar before your competitors can, then use the mouse to select the two words. For example, if you see the words "bonwit," "bobby," "cotter," "limit," "cable," and "tyr," the correct answers would be "bobby" and "cotter," because they're both pins.

There are four rounds in a game of *Strike-A-Match*, and each round is harder than the last as the relationships between the words get more and more obscure. You can play with two other people, either online, or at the same computer at home (of course, even if you're on a single computer, you'll have to be logged on to AOL to play). There's a "Quick" game, which automatically hooks you up with two other players; or you can "host" a game, which lets you select the people you want to play against so your friends can agree to play at a certain time and meet online. There's also a chat room, where participants can discuss the game and make challenges.



You'll be able to play *Strike-A-Match* on AOL any time of the day or night. Just download the client software, and away you go!

Strike-A-Match is the first of a series of online games planned by Boxer Jam Productions, a company that formed as a collaboration between Boxer Films, founded by Alan Cunningham and Temple Fennel, and Julann Griffin's JAM Productions, which she formed with her sister Maureen Roberts. With the combination of the film-making expertise of Boxer Films and the 25 years' experience behind JAM Productions, Boxer Jam will produce a series of real-time, interactive game shows that can be played online at any time of the day.

You're Surrounded

Labtec's Spatializer Imager gives you 3D sound

Using the Spatializer Pro system, sound engineers for megahit albums like Michael Jackson's *HIStory* and *The Lion King* soundtrack have given their projects 3D sound that seems to escape the boundaries of your stereo's two speakers. Now this amazing technology is available for your PC.

Stephen Desper, a recording engineer known for his work with the Beach Boys, created the Spatializer system during his quest for a more realistic playback of recorded music. Over the past several years, the technology has grown, being used on hundreds of albums and built into several home stereo systems. And with stereo sound cards in almost every PC, it's a natural for home computing.

Labtec is one of many companies hopping onto the Spatializer bandwagon; several models in their new, vastly improved line of computer speakers feature Spatializer circuitry. And now, with Labtec's new Imager, that same surprising 3D sound can come from any pair of speakers.

Using the Imager is simple. The sound signal travels out from your sound card to the Imager, and from there to any two speakers. Push the power button, and the 3D sound kicks in.

Here's how it works. Your brain figures out where sound comes from by comparing how loud it is in each ear; traditional stereo creates an illusion of a wide sound field by making some sounds louder in one speaker than the other. 3D sound systems like the Spatializer use digital delay to trick your brain into placing the sounds farther to the left or right than your speakers' positions.

The greatly enhanced separation of sounds means it's much easier to pinpoint the source of a noise in games that make good use of your stereo sound card. If a robot in *Descent* fires a missile at you from the left, you'll instantly know which way to turn to blast it into oblivion. And since the Imager works its magic on *any* stereo signal, it's automatically compatible with just about every game you've got.

The Imager should retail for around $50. For more information, check out the Spatializer web page at http://www.spatializer.com.

Continued from page 68

Civilization 2000

Fan of *Sid Meier's Civilization* (in other words, just about every PC gamer on the planet) will be glad to know that they're about to get a sequel. *Civilization 2000*, now in development, will add features to the original game that players have been requesting since 1991.

Included in the update will be new military units, such as paratroopers and elephants, new Wonders of the World, and some preset scenarios based on topics like Alexander the Great and World War Two. With a new interface running under Windows 3.1 or 95 and an enhanced diplomatic system, it sounds like it could be even better than its award-winning predecessor.

CivNet is a new version of *Civilization* that lets you compete online for world domination.

CivNet

On the subject of things *Civilization* fans have been clamoring for years: *CivNet* should be available as you read this. This new game will finally let CivNuts all over the world compete for world domination via the Internet, a local area network, or modem. *CivNet* will run under Windows 3.1 or Windows 95, but it won't have all the features and additions of *Civilization 2000*. Once you get the program, you can find other Internet players by checking out the *CivNet* web site at *http://www.microprose.com/civnet*.

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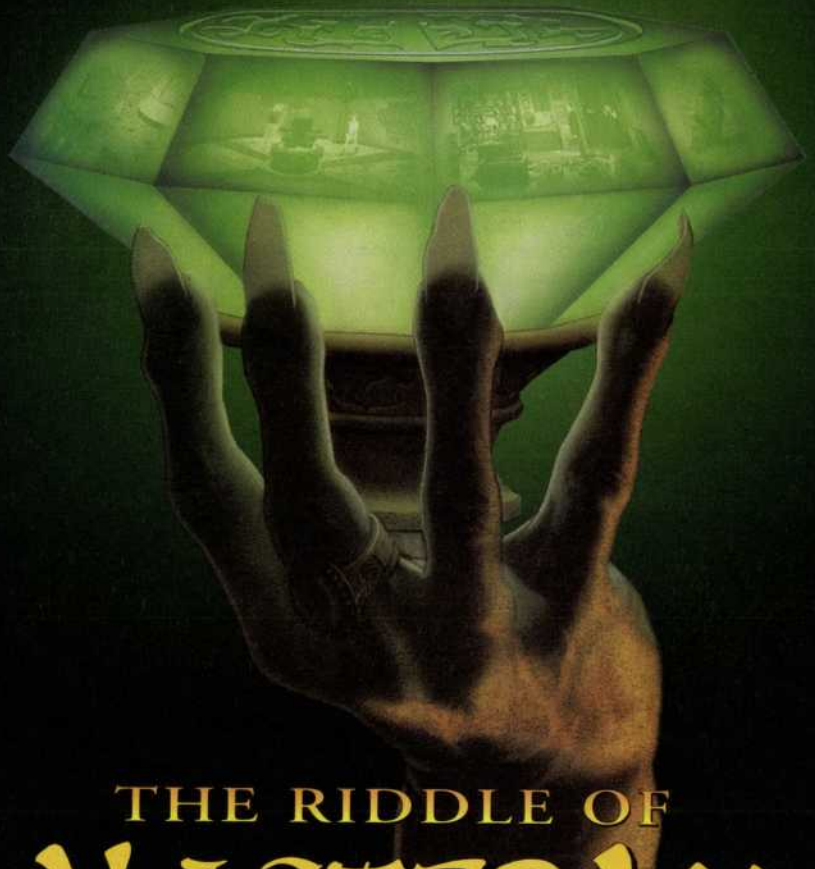
Ripley's — Believe It or Not!

A two thousand year old mystery riddled with danger.



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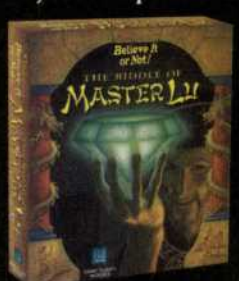

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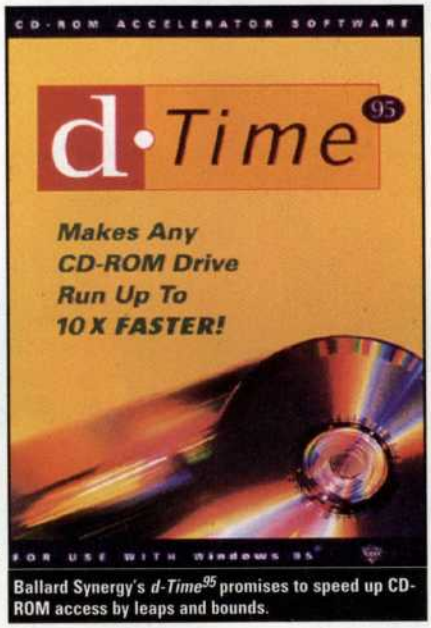
Product Information Number 175

Cache that Disc!

New Windows 95 utility makes CD-ROM as fast as your hard drive

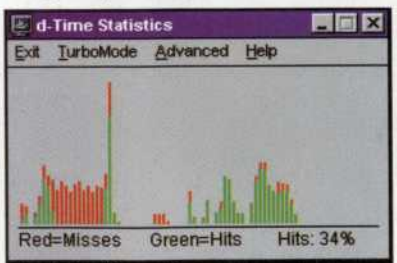
With nearly every new game coming out on CD these days, even the fastest CD-ROM drives are being pushed to their limits, but a new product now offers an unusual solution to the problem.

There are a lot of utilities out there (MS-DOS's SmartDrive is one) that will speed up your drive by using what's called a RAM cache. They allocate a certain amount of system memory to store information read from the CD; since the computer can access information in RAM many times quicker than from a CD, the RAM cache speeds up the flow of information from the CD to your computer. Unfortunately, in many cases the blocks of information the computer needs from the CD are too big to fit into an average RAM cache (usually about 1 or 2 megabytes), so the caching software can actually slow down some programs. Also, the memory needed to effectively cache the CD takes away from precious extended or expanded memory needed by most games.



Ballard Synergy's *d-Time95* promises to speed up CD-ROM access by leaps and bounds.

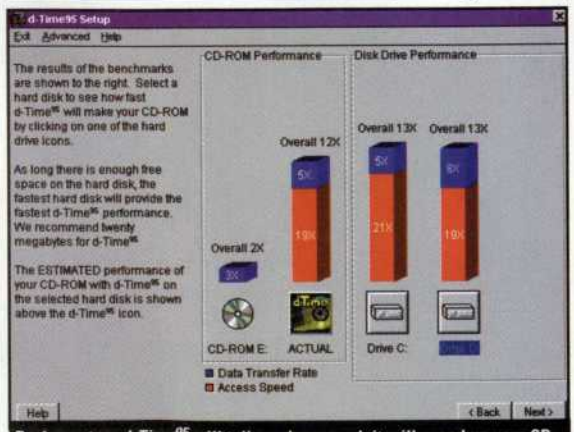
Ballard Synergy has figured out a way around this bottleneck. Instead of using a RAM cache, their new product, *d-Time95*, designed specifically for Windows 95, uses hard-drive space as a cache (even though the hard drive is much slower than RAM, it's still 20 to 30 times faster than a CD-ROM drive). Plus, *d-Time95* uses about 20 megabytes of disk space for its cache, so large chunks of data will actually fit in it. And while this may seem like a large chunk of hard-drive real estate to give up, it can actually save space, since you'll only need a minimum installation with many CD-ROM games to get the same performance that the 40 or 50-megabyte full installation would normally provide.



The *d-Time95* box will give you a continuous update on how well the cache is working.

Ballard Synergy also claims that the cache on the hard drive becomes "smarter" as time goes on. Because it is on the hard drive and not in RAM, the stored information isn't gone when you shut off your computer. That means *d-Time95* can continuously update itself and figure out what files are used most with a given CD-ROM.

d-Time95 is for Windows 95 only, but the previous version, *d-Time10*, caches the CD for Windows 3.1 and DOS, for those of you who haven't moved to the new operating system. *d-Time95* should already be on store shelves for a list price of about $89.95.

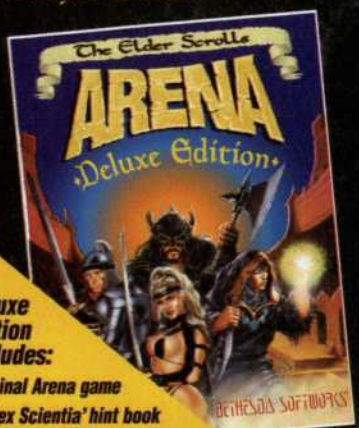


During setup, *d-Time95* will tell you how much it will speed up your CD. In this example, using *d-Time95* should make the CD ten times faster.

When we released ARENA, gamers got a good chuckle. Bethesda doing RPGs?! Yeah, right. Then a funny thing happened...

Premier Award: Role Playing Game of the Year: Winner
Computer Gaming World
Role Playing Game of the Year
Golden Triad Award
Computer Game Review
Computer Game of the Year: Nominee
Electronic Games
Editor's Choice Award
PC Gamer
One of the "Top 40 Games of all Time"
PC Gamer
Role Playing Game of the Year: Runner-Up
PC Gamer
Role Playing Game of the Year
Computer Player
Role Playing Game of the Year: Runner-Up
Interactive Gaming
Single Character RPG of the Year: Runner-Up
Strategy Plus
Role Playing Game of the Year
Game Machine
Editor's Choice Award
PC Games Plus

For those of you who have not yet experienced The Elder Scrolls® you might want to take a look at Arena Deluxe Edition®



Deluxe Edition includes:
Original Arena game
'Codex Scientia' hint book
'Empire of Tamriel' mouse pad

and get acquainted with the Empire of Tamriel before...

Welcome to the great outdoors!

TERRA NOVA™
STRIKE FORCE CENTAURI

A Looking Glass Technologies Production

Distributed by Virgin Interactive Entertainment, Inc.

PC CD ROM

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Coming soon from the creators of Ultima® Underworld™ I & II and System Shock™

Product Information Number 146

Big Blue Branches Out

IBM enters gaming with new football sims

Sure, IBM created the PC, and their OS/2 Warp operating system is pretty sharp, but we've never seen much from them in the way of games. However, like Microsoft, NEC, and so many other computer giants, they seem to be changing their tune.

Two serious football games — the latest version of *NFL Pro League Football* and *All-American College Football*, both created by Micro Sports Incorporated — are the latest additions to IBM's gradually growing game line.

Both titles are solid sports sims, with statistics and teams ranging as far back as 1960. They won't be arcade sports games as much as number-crunching simulations intended for heavy-duty fans. The incredible statistical depth includes everything from injuries to trades and substitutions. *NFL Pro League Football* even has the 1995-96 team rosters, including the two expansion teams, the Jacksonville Jaguars and the Carolina Panthers.

You can call the plays for a single game or run through an entire, painstakingly accurate season in a matter of minutes. Users will be able to change rosters, trade or draft players, and even compare years. How would the 1967 Green Bay Packers fare against the 1972 Miami Dolphins? With *NFL Pro League Football*, you can find out. And — most intriguing of all — the game includes options for multi-player action via the Internet.

The same features will be found in the new release of *All-American College Football*. It will have more than 80 Division 1-A university teams, plus 340 of the greatest college teams ever to play the sport. You will even be able to compete for the Heisman Trophy and the Coaches' Award.

In *NFL Pro League Football*, you will be able to choose from every team since the 1960s. The statistical background for each of these teams is completely accurate, as well.

The PC Gamer Playlist

You know as well as we do that true gamers can't go long without their fix. It's something we need to make us whole. Without games, we are nothing; with games, we can conquer the world.

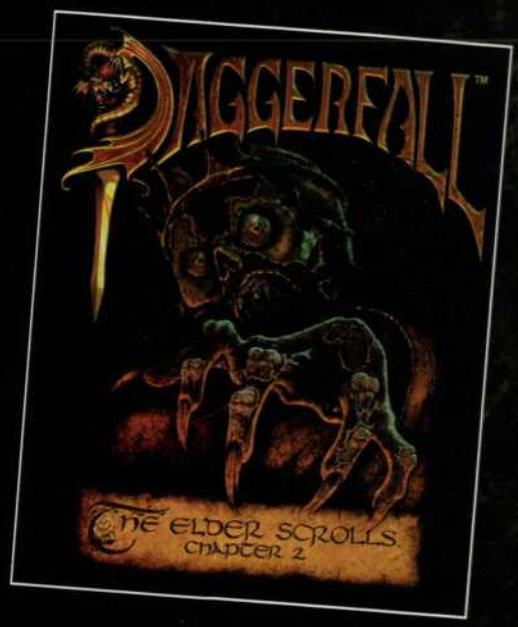
And conquer the world we did. We all have tasted the sweet gaming goodness of fighting the Nod and GDI forces in *Command & Conquer*. But our sweetest fixes came when we amassed our forces and launched into all-out-war against each other in network play. (Of course, with all of this playing, we're as sick of that funky music as you are.)

When we stopped fighting each other in *C&C*, we quickly plotted against each other in *Heroes of Might and Magic* and then moved on to *Hexen*. So much gaming goodness, so little time...

1. *Command & Conquer*/Virgin — Everyone
2. *Crusader: No Remorse*/ Origin — Todd, Mike, Joe, Dan, Jason
3. *Battles in Time*/American Laser Games — Lisa, Dan, Robin
4. *Heroes of Might and Magic*/ New World Computing — Joe, Beth, and anyone else who has a copy
5. *Dip & Twiddle II: The Quickening*/Monkeys Gone South Productions — Everyone
6. *Magic Carpet 2*/Electronic Arts — Rick, Dan, Caroline
7. *Hexen*/id Software — Caroline, Todd, Joe, Jason
8. *3D Lemmings*/Sony Interactive — Carol, Mike, Todd
9. *Caesar II*/Sierra — Robin, Rick, Caroline
10. *Millenia: Altered Destinies*/Take 2 Interactive — Emily, Carol, Dan, Mike

A griffin is a valuable addition to your army in *Heroes of Might and Magic*.

...The second chapter of The Elder Scrolls is released.



This is the game that hard core RPG fans have been waiting for since the beginning!
—Trent Ward PC Gamer

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Product Information Number 97

STONEKEEP™

AFTER FOUR YEARS IN THE MAKING,
A BUDGET OF OVER FIVE MILLION
AND THE TALENTS OF MORE THAN TWO HUNDRED INDIVIDUALS...
THE ADVENTURE, THE FANTASY AND
THE MAGIC IS AT HAND.

ON NOVEMBER 8, 1995
THE EXPERIENCE BEGINS.

Full-screen graphics let you feel the full intensity of your quest.

Step into the mystery of Stonekeep and begin a quest through dark corridors, treacherous sewers and subterranean realms of fairies, magic and the living dead. You'll discover a world where darkness reigns and where you become part of an in-depth storyline that unfolds at your command. Defeat evil, reclaim your immortal soul and experience the adventure that is Stonekeep.

It's an epic experience more powerful and realistic that anything you've imagined. Using innovative new technology, Stonekeep draws you into its dark reaches so completely you'll forget it's just a game. Your hands will wield weapons of metal and magic. You'll battle disembodied foes, rescue your allies from evil, liberate a massive dragon from bondage and discover an experience more realistic than anything you've ever imagined.

Hollywood special effects, heart-pounding music and 3-D effects will draw you into this epic adventure.

An epic production more than four years in the making, Stonekeep comes in a very special, limited-edition tombstone box with a hologram cover. It also includes the first chapter in the Stonekeep saga - *Thera Awakening*, a hard-bound novella, by Steve Jackson and David Pulver.

"By Gamers. For Gamers." is Interplay's slogan and Stonekeep is the kind of game we've always wanted to play. It looks fantastic, sounds great and tells a really good story. It's one of those games you'll stay up playing until three in the morning on a work night. Basically, it's just a whole lot of fun... and to us, that's what games are all about.

An intelligent journal keeps track of characters encountered and clues you've heard and automatically maps your travels.

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SSP1

Product Information Number 141

HOW TO MAKE FRIENDS AND ANNIHILATE ENEMIES

Infiltrate the enemy Comm Bunker.

You've crashed on a strange planet. You quickly become friends with the local alien, Gaan. Together, you'll go from hauling butt through the forest to blasting into a bomb-filled mine shaft to fighting through an armory to destroy a reactor. It's Alien Odyssey — the PC CD-ROM game with incredibly smooth character animation and Argonaut's exclusive 3D adventure game technology. It's total annihilation. But in a friendly sort of way.

Use teamwork to solve puzzles and outwit invaders.

ARGONAUT

ALIEN ODYSSEY

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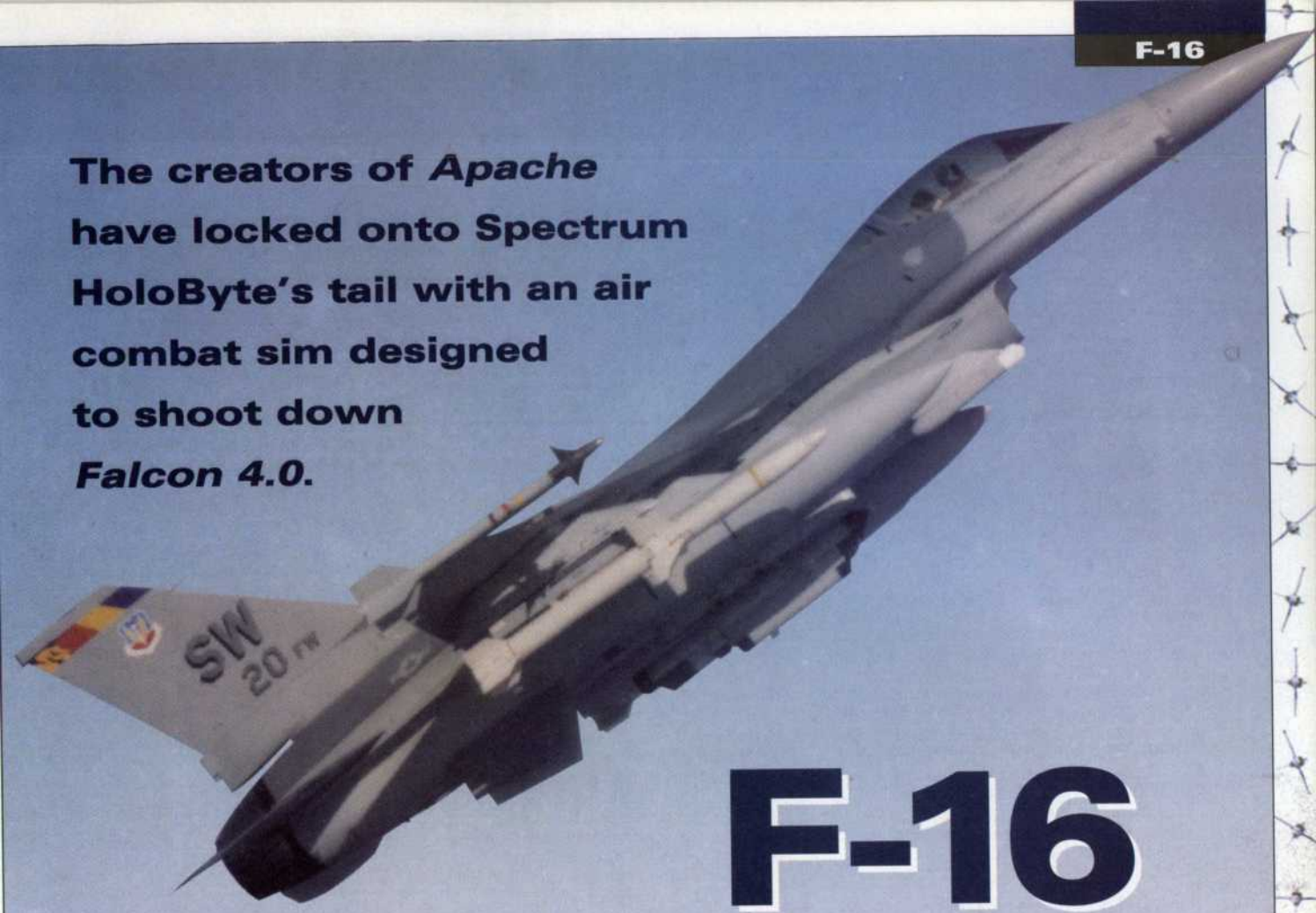
For more information call 1-800-340-7888. Visit our Web Site at http://www.philipsmedia.com/media/games

Product Information Number 169

The creators of *Apache* have locked onto Spectrum HoloByte's tail with an air combat sim designed to shoot down *Falcon 4.0*.



F-16 FIGHTING FALCON

by T. Liam McDonald

It's probably the best-known fighter jet in the world: the F-16 Fighting Falcon. From its stunning performance in the Gulf War to patrolling the no-fly zones over Bosnia and Iraq, it is the workhorse of the American military machine, as well as that of numerous other countries. In air-to-air combat, it has a victory ratio of 69:0, a pretty good run for a fairly inexpensive plane. It's that relatively low price ($12 million), plus flexibility in both air superiority and ground strike roles, which have made it the world leader among fighter aircraft.

Public perception of the F-16 is pretty high. We see it on CNN in the skies above the world's flashpoints, an unmistakable symbol of American power. We watched the evening news on the edges of our seats when F-16 pilot Scott O'Grady was missing for six days after being shot down over Bosnia. And, of course, it is the favorite plane

among computer flight simulators. Titles like Spectrum HoloByte's *Falcon, Falcon AT,* and *Falcon 3.0,* and Electronic Arts' *F-16 Fighter Pilot* have done a lot to raise awareness of this unique aircraft, and they've given gamers a taste of what these birds can do.

Falcon 4.0 has been looming on the horizon for some time now: a high-visibility title with a strong foundation of name-brand recognition and support. But the folks at Digital Integration and Interactive Magic are poised to beat Spectrum to the punch. DI is probably best known for their more recent sim titles: the terrific *Apache* helicopter sim, published by Interactive Magic, and the sadly underrated *Tornado,* published by Spectrum. But they're also responsible for the well-received *F-16 Fighter Pilot,* released around the same time as the original *Falcon.* Now, in partnership with Interactive Magic, DI is returning to familiar territory to create *F-16 Fighting Falcon* — and they intend to give *Falcon 4.0* a good run for the money.

A Direct Hit

DI's *Apache* scored a direct hit with critics and gamers alike. *PC Gamer* gave it one of our highest ratings ever for its flexibility as both a simple arcade shooter and a high-tech helicopter simulation. Interactive Magic shipped 200,000 units in the first month alone, proving that the Digital Integration/ Interactive Magic combination can deliver a powerful punch.

But why take on the F-16 with other F-16 sims already on the market and *Falcon 4.0* in development? Interactive Magic head Bill Stealey, responsible for countless top-notch flight sims when he was at MicroProse, is candid: "Look, you can always do it better when you're using the latest technology. Digital Integration did the F-16 already, and when they did it they came up with 60 million things they wanted to do better. They're a great team. They have a real head for research and developing sims, and we have the ability to market and sell those sims, so I think we make a good combination. We can bring them the marketing focus, and we hope to bring them some new technology we're working on.

"As for *Falcon 4.0,* who knows *when* it will be out? I have a lot of respect for *Falcon* and for the people at Spectrum, but they've been promising that game for years. People want to fly the F-16 *now.* Besides, they've been promoting it so much, it can only help *F-16 Fighting Falcon.* When people see what this game can do, they'll want it. It'll be here, and *Falcon 4.0* won't."

F-16 Designer Rod Swift adds, "We focused on the Apache Longbow for a helicopter simulation because it is the most exciting and capable attack helicopter in the western countries' inventory. The F-16 was chosen for a fixed-wing simulation for the same reason. Its outstanding air-to-air combat performance and air-to-ground attack versatility gives us the opportunity to provide an outstanding range of missions with incredibly exciting gameplay.

"Five or six years ago, our *F-16 Combat Pilot* came out at the same time as the original *Falcon* and did very well," Swift says. "Overall, in the life of the product, we sold half a million units. I think there's room for more than one company to produce a simulation of one kind of aircraft. What I think is going to differentiate us is that gameplay is going to be quite different. I think a lot of people will buy both."

F-16's graphics, including the texture-mapping and advanced shading shown above, are a vast improvement over *Apache*'s excellent graphics.

Tracking Target

Digital Integration plans to give gamers everything they could want in *F-16,* and a lot of the ideas that made *Apache* successful will be carried over. To begin with, there will be a wide range of difficulty levels, from a free-for-all arcade mode to rigorously accurate and realistic flight

F-16: TECH SPECS

Primary Function:
Multi-role fighter

Builder:
General Dynamics Corp. (until 1993)
Lockheed Martin (since 1993)

Power Plant:
F-16A/B: One Pratt and Whitney F100-PW-200 turbofan engine with afterburner.
F-16C/D: One Pratt and Whitney F100-PW-200/200 or General electric F110-GE-100 turbofan engine with afterburner.

Thrust:
F-16A/B: 24,000 lbs
F-16C/D: 27,000 lbs

Dimensions:
Length: 49", 5"
Height: 16"
Wingspan: 32"8"
Wing Area: 300 square feet

Speed:
1,500mph, Mach 2 at sea level

Ceiling:
Above 50,000 feet

Weight:
Weight Empty: 16, 285 (A/B) 19,500 (C/D)
Maximum Takeoff Weight: 37,500 lbs

Design Load Factor:
9g

Range:
More than 2,000 miles ferry range.

Armament:
One M-61A1 20mm multibarrel cannon with 500 rounds. External stations can carry up to six AIM-9 infrared missiles, conventional air-to-surface munitions, and electronic countermeasures pods.

Cost:
F-16A/B: $9.5 million each
F-16C/D: $12.8 million each

Crew:
F-16 A/C: one
F-16B/D: two

Inventory (U.S.):
804 active, 634 Air National Guard, 150 reserve

Source: Air Combat Command Public Affairs Office, October 1992 fact sheet; Lockheed Martin.

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GREAT NAVAL BATTLES VOL. IV

BURNING STEEL, 1939-1942

CD-ROM for IBM PC and Compatibles

IBM 256-COLOR SVGA DISPLAYS.

Europe Aflame!

SSI's masterful ADVANCED SIMULATOR SERIES sails on! GNB IV: BURNING STEEL™ is an enormous simulation that covers all European theaters of war from 1939–1942.

You'll have access to the Italian, French, Russian and British navies — *all major European ships and aircraft present in World War II!* A Random Battle Generator lets you create unlimited conflict — from small surface engagements to full-blown carrier task force battles!

Use the powerful Scenario Editor to create your own battles or modify existing ones in areas like the North Sea or the Mediterranean. For unprecedented control, a sophisticated customizer lets you alter various aspects of the game routines.

An intuitive, easy to use interface, Super-VGA graphics and an astounding sound track put this simulation right on target!

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Call 1-800-771-3772 for Game Rating information.

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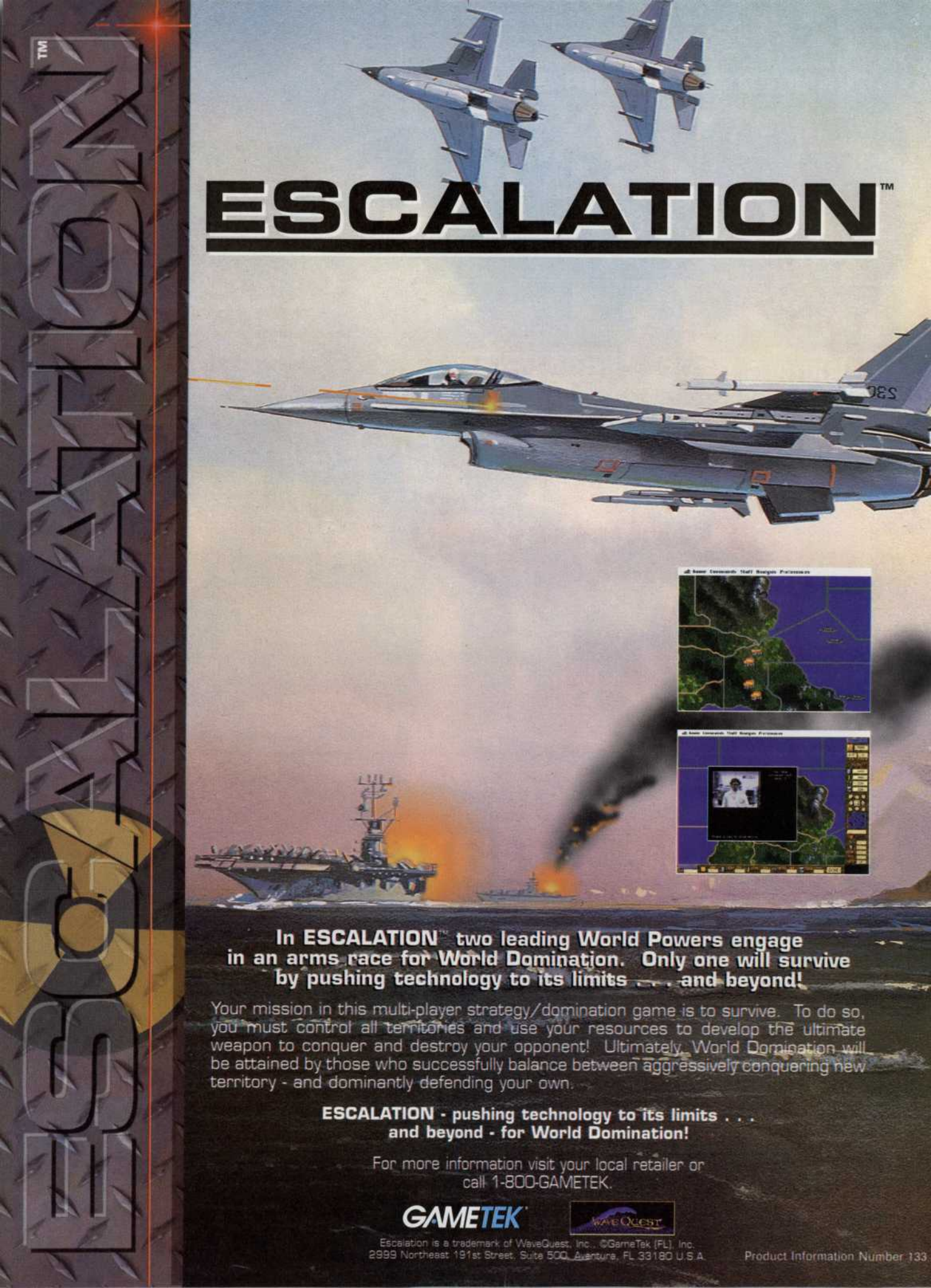

In ESCALATION™ two leading World Powers engage in an arms race for World Domination. Only one will survive by pushing technology to its limits . . . and beyond!

Your mission in this multi-player strategy/domination game is to survive. To do so, you must control all territories and use your resources to develop the ultimate weapon to conquer and destroy your opponent! Ultimately, World Domination will be attained by those who successfully balance between aggressively conquering new territory - and dominantly defending your own.

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WAVE QUEST

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Product Information Number 133

In keeping with the F-16's unmatched versatility, the new sim will include a wide variety of mission types. "Point Attack" missions will have you taking out bridges and other fixed targets.

"Smart" computerized wingmen will have an important role in *Fighting Falcon*.

models. Within seconds of starting up *F-16*, you can drop into a combat environment in the air, with unlimited ammo, a bogey locked on target, and even complete invulnerability if you want. It's like shooting fish in a barrel: you have target-rich skies and the leisure to pick them off at will. Or you can turn off the invulnerability and take your chances with the enemy. This quick-start arcade mode will undoubtedly draw a lot of people to *F-16* who might otherwise find themselves intimidated by it.

Of course, seasoned pilots will want to take on scenarios and campaigns. *F-16* will come with three theaters of combat: Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. In Europe, you'll be flying under the American flag, but in Asia and the Middle East you'll be under the command of regional air forces. The scenarios aren't worked out yet, but they'll all be built around potential real-life crisis points and involve the Falcon in a wide range of roles. There's even a hint that nuclear weapons might play into some scenarios.

There will, of course, be a number of training scenarios to ease players into the complex controls and weapons of the F-16. These will start with simple takeoff and landing tutorials and continue with navigation, air-to-air weapons practice, ground strikes, and a "final exam" featuring all the challenges you can count on facing in the real scenarios. In addition to the stand-alone scenarios, there will also be a campaign in each of the combat zones. These will be executed with multiple levels and a scripted story line running throughout, showing the progress or defeat of the wing under your command. Even more power will be added with the Command mode, which is discussed below.

"The F-16 will be flying a complete range of missions," says Swift. "It's such a flexible multi-role aircraft that you're going to have air-to-air combat, air defense, precision strike, area denial, battlefield support, anti-shipping, and so on. It's so flexible that there's a lot we can do with it. It's also well able to look after itself, so there can be a lot going on in any single mission."

Pilots can count on meeting the F-16's most ubiquitous enemies: the MiG-29 and Su-27. But the range of missions and threats is indeed wide and diverse. Its roles break down into a series of categories.

- "Battlefield Support" will place the Falcon in the role of tank-buster, artillery support, and air-to-air-defense.
- "Search and Destroy" missions include such targets as SAM and artillery sites, other aircraft, trains, convoys, enemy bases, radar sites, and supply dumps.
- "Point Attack" involves taking out bridges, air bases, bunkers, depots, and light industry.
- Dogfight fans will be glad to learn that the full range of "Air-to-Air Support" is also included in *F-16*, featuring the usual range of fighters and bombers as well as transport, tactical support, anti-helicopter, escorting bombs, AWACS, and transport, and recon.
- There are also "Tactical Support" missions in the form of zone clearance and air defense suppression, and a good variety of search and destroy sorties against frigates, gunboats, supply vessels, surfaced subs and other ships.

Not to be left out are the always-challenging night missions. The LANTIRN pods that give the F-16 its unique night-fighting abilities will be modeled in full. This system utilizes terrain following radar (TFR) and forward-looking infrared (FLIR) sensors for target detec-

THE F-16: A HISTORY

1972 — The U.S. Air Force's Lightweight Fighter Prototype Program yields competing designs for a single seat air-combat fighter for daytime operations. General Dynamics is awarded a contract to create the XF-16.

February 2, 1974 — First flight of first XF-16 prototype.

January 13, 1975 — XF-16 selected for full-scale development. Role of the XF-16 extended to night-time operations. Addition of expanded air-to-ground capabilities and all-weather radar and navigation capabilities.

July 1975 — Production of six single-seat F-16As and two-seat F-16Bs begun. F-16B is developed as a fighter/trainer, with reduced fuel space to accommodate tandem cockpits.

December 8, 1976 — First flight of full-scale F-16A is successful.

August 1978 — Aircraft goes into full production.

January 1979 — 388th Tactical Fighter Wing, Hill Air Force Base, Utah receives first operational F-16A.

February 1980 — Under U.S.A.F. Multinational Staged Improvement Program (MSIP), aircraft capability expands to include ground attack and beyond-visual-range missiles, as well as wiring and structural changes to accommodate new systems.

Continued On Page 84

tion and lock-on. The FLIR uses and infrared camera to project an image on your head-up display (HUD), and this image can be magnified to provide a tighter view. The image can also be set to either "black-hot" or "white-hot" modes, with "black-hot" giving a daylight type of image with more detail than "white-hot," which is used to track heat sources. The TFR also throws information up on the HUD, giving you the required flight path and data necessary to miss any ground features.

THE F-16: A HISTORY

Continued From Page 83

November 1981 — All F-16s produced now have built-in MSIP improvements.

July 1985 — MSIP leads to the F-16C (single seat) and F-16D (two-seat trainer), including improved core avionics; cockpit and airframe changes; multi-mode radar with better range; resolution, and more operating modes; advanced cockpit with better interfaces and up-front controls; wide-angle HUD; two multi-function displays; mission data transfer equipment and radar altimeter; increased electrical power and cooling capacity; structural provision for increased take-off weight and maneuvering limits; and special weapons interface for use of smart weapons such as AMRAAM and AGM-65D IR Maverick.

October 1986 — 86th Tactical Fighter Wing at Ramstein AB, Germany is first to receive the F-16C/Ds.

Mid-1987 — Addition of multi-target compatibility with AMRAAM; voice message unit; Shrike anti-radiation missiles; crash-survivable flight data recorder and modular common inlet duct allowing full thrust at low airspeeds.

May 1988 — Development of radar missile capability results in firing of AIM-7F and AIM-7M missiles, guided using pulse-Doppler illumination, from an F-16C.

March 1, 1993 — Lockheed buys all of the military aircraft business from General Dynamics and begins producing F-16s under the Lockheed name.

Source: Jane's All the World's Aircraft, 1994; Air Combat Command Public Affairs Office's October 1992 fact sheet; Lockheed Martin.

Locked On

F-16 is going to be a unique sim in many ways. First, it will build on the technology used for *Apache*, taking it to the next step while adapting it for the specific requirements of fixed-wing flight. More textures and shading will be used for the 3D graphics, as well as more elaborate cloud and explosion effects. But DI is not just drawing on their experience with *Apache*. Their "lost" sim, *Tornado*, is also figuring very heavily in their minds as they design *F-16*.

The cockpit view features the same detailed avionics that helped make *Apache* and *Tornado*, another DI creation, so impressive.

Tornado had a lot going for it, but still managed to sink in the American marketplace without leaving much of a trace. Flight hounds recognized it for the powerful, landmark program it was, but the general public either found that *Tornado* didn't have enough name recognition (it's primarily a European plane), didn't think its primary role as a strike aircraft would yield the high-intensity dogfighting action they craved, or simply found it far too complex to learn. (It had a much steeper learning curve than *Falcon*, and even seasoned desktop jet jocks found themselves with their hands full.) Most likely it was a combination of all three. But the core ideas behind *Tornado* were excellent, and when combined with DI's new emphasis on a wide range of difficulty levels, will undoubtedly score a hit with sim fans.

The strongest and most unusual element of *Tornado* was its Mission Planner, and this will be expanded for *F-16*. With the Mission Planner, you can design individual missions or an entire squadron's flight plan. The planner also lets you edit existing missions to change the composition of a strike force, loadouts, waypoints, or even the target. This can be used at a variety of levels; if all you want to do is take a different path to the target, that's pretty easy to change. There are essentially two modes: one in which pre-planned missions can have their flight routes and plan details (such as weapons) changed, and a deeper Command mode in which the player can makes changes to the mission goals or design his own missions.

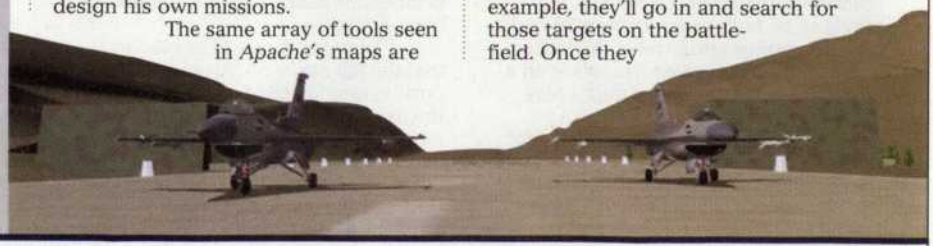
The same array of tools seen in *Apache*'s maps are carried over into *F-16*. There is the briefing screen, a map that can be zoomed and rotated, and the usual array of symbols and waypoint settings. The "3D" mode, used for flying through waypoints in a kind of mission rehearsal, is also going to be included, as well as options for setting payload. But, where the detailed flight planner was not fully implemented in *Apache*, it will be for *F-16*. Swift explains the decision:

"The Apache's role is that of tactical support rather than precision strategic attack, so a detailed mission planner was not a necessity. The F-16, like the Tornado, is used for split-second, multiple-aircraft precision attacks against strategic targets. This necessitates a detailed mission planner like that in *Tornado*."

The *F-16* planner goes beyond that in *Tornado*, however. In *Tornado*, you could only control Tornados, but in *F-16* you'll be able to control every aircraft that's on the ground and ready to fly for your particular scenario. This means that, in Command mode, you can actually create the entire air war. You have a certain set of goals that need to be accomplished, and a certain number of aircraft with which to accomplish them, but the rest is up to you.

"Command mode is a multi-mission scenario in which you're not only flying the aircraft," says Swift, "but you're commander as well. So you're having to put together multiple task missions. There will be a strong strategy element.

"You'll be able to say that a mission type is air-defense," explains Swift, "so the planes will fly in an air defense mission. Or you can create a precision attack, or any other kind of mission. In a battlefield tactical support mission, for example, they'll go in and search for those targets on the battlefield. Once they



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Product Information Number 210

find them, they'll engage them. What you set as the task type determines how you will fly those missions."

These functions will be added by including "Waypoint" and "Tasking" buttons on the map screen. The "Waypoints" button lets you add, delete, or move waypoints for a flight plan, while the "Tasking" button is used to set up an aircraft task group from the pool of aircraft available at a particular airfield. Transport aircraft and supply vehicle tasks can also be set up to move fuel and munitions between bases. The result will be a game like *Tornado* and *AV-8B Harrier*, in which the pilot not only flies the mission, but creates the strategic plan behind it as well, combining wargame and flight sim in one package.

Pilot to Wingman

Any *Falcon 3.0* fan will tell you that two things make it stand apart from the pack: strong modem support for head-to-head play and a variety of wingmen under the control of the wing leader. Similar features will be found in *F-16*. The gamer will be given complete control over wingmen via a series of hotkeys. Commands such as "return to base," "attack target," "cover me," and other vital instructions will be used to maintain control over "smart" wingmen.

As with *Apache*, modem play is also a high priority for DI. Full network and modem support will be included, allowing gamers to go head-to-head in one of two ways: A one-on-one combat mode sets one gamer as "red force" and one as "blue," letting them fight it out in a meeting engagement. The pilot/wingman mode puts two players in the same mission, one flying as wing leader, the other as wingman.

Head-to-head play, great graphics, a diverse group of missions and campaigns, and one of the most innovative strategic elements ever tried in a flight sim: these are the things that are going to make *F-16 Fighting Falcon* a viable contender against *Falcon 4.0*. It's also almost certain to beat *Falcon* to the marketplace, giving it a nice window in which to capture a good part of the gaming market. One thing is certain: 1996 is going to be a very good year for desktop jet jocks.

As for Bill Stealey, he can't wait to get his hands on the new game: "The F-16 is a terrific plane. Its multi-role capabilities, while not as good as the F-15's, make it a really great jet. People ask me why I like doing these fighter sims — I say, 'Because I never get to fly these planes!' Hell, I spent 10 years dropping bombs on the Pine Barrens in New Jersey, doing training. But if I really want to put the F-16 through some combat, I have pick up a sim like this!"

PCG

THE WEAPONS

GUNS

Internal 20mm Gun: For either air-to-air or air-to-surface attack. Maximum fire rate for 20mm rounds is 5,000 per minute, with an optional 4,000 rounds-per-minute, which the pilot can set. Can fire either "free" or have the weapon computer fire when it has a solid lock on the target.

External 30mm Gun-pod: For either air-to-air or air-to-surface attack. Good anti-tank weapon. Fires 30mm rounds at a maximum rate of 2400 rounds-per-minute.

AIR-TO-AIR

AIM-9L Sidewinder: Short-range, infrared-homing air-to-air missile. Travels 10 miles at a rate of Mach 2.5.

AIM-120 AMRAAM: Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missile. Beyond-visual-range fire-and-forget missile. Has a range of 45 miles (high altitude) or 35 miles (low altitude), traveling at Mach 4. Flies a preprogrammed course until it reaches the vicinity of the target, when it switches to active radar-seeking.

AIR-TO-SURFACE

LAU-3A Rocket Pod: Holds 19 Hydra unguided rockets with the following possible warheads:
- **M151:** High-explosive warhead with delayed fuse.
- **M247:** Hollow charge for anti-tank use.
- **M255:** Flechette warhead releases submunitions in the form of 2500 metal darts. For use against helicopters and infantry groups.
- **M261:** Multi-purpose warhead with 9 hollow-charge fragmentation submunitions, for armor, material, and personnel.

Maverick Missile: Guided missile with the following versions:
- **AGM-65B:** TV-guided version with 125 lb. high-explosive shaped charge.
- **AGM-65D:** Infrared guided version with 125 lb. high-explosive shaped charge. Expensive, used only for high-value targets.
- **AGM-65E:** Laser-guided version with 300 lb. blast penetrator warhead.
- **AGM-65G:** Latest infrared version with 300 lb. blast penetrator warhead. For use against hard tactical targets. Has a tracking feature that allows the impact point of the target to be selected.

GBU-15 Durandal: Anti-runway bomb can penetrate concrete up to 16 inches thick, with a one-second delay so the warhead doesn't explode until it's buried under the runway, making repairs much more difficult.

AGM-88A HARM: High-Speed Anti-Radiation Missile with a passive radar seeker, 15 mile range, and 145 lb. high-explosive fragmentation warhead. For use against radar sources.

BOMBS

Mk-82 500 lb. GPB: General purpose bomb with 275 lb. warhead. Can be laser-guided with the addition of a Paveway seeker head.

Mk-83 1000 lb. GPB: General purpose bomb with 445 lb. warhead. Can be laser-guided with Paveway.

Mk-84 2000 lb. GPB: General purpose bomb with 945 lb. warhead. Can be laser-guided with Paveway.

M117 750 lb. GPB: General purpose demolition bomb with 400 lb. warhead. For destroying buildings or clearing forests, minefields, and so on.

CLUSTER BOMBS

DAACM: Direct Airfield Attack Combined Munition. Ejects anti-runway bomblets and area-denial mines, for runway and hardened shelter destruction.

CBU-87B: Combined Effect Munitions carries 200 bomblets that consist of a hollow charge anti-tank warhead and anti-personnel case.

CBU-89B: An air-deliverable mine scattering system, laying out 72 anti-tank and 22 anti-personnel mines.

Confessions

OF A GAME ADDICT:

Day 1: I was driving down the freeway eating a chili dog, shifting into fifth, balancing a copy of WIRED® on my lap, when the cellular rang. It was Bob from Sierra. He wanted to know if I could write reviews for a bunch of new CD games they had coming out.

I had 40 days, 15 games, and a closet full of sunflower seeds, instant coffee and Pop Tarts®.

HOW COULD I SAY NO?

Day 5: I'm not sure
Chapter 6 of Phantasmagoria

GABRIEL KNIGHT®: THE BEAST WITHIN™

The top two computer gaming magazines both named the first *Gabriel Knight* mystery the best adventure game of the year in 1994. Creator Jane Jensen might want to start dusting off her awards shelf again, as *The Beast Within* mixes a strange, new brew of mutilation murders, a centuries-old curse, and criminal misdeeds on multiple CDs.

Gabriel Knight, a detective of the supernatural, is summoned to Munich to investigate a series of murders blamed on werewolves. The edge-of-your-seat tale unfolds to implicate the mad King Ludwig II, a lost Wagner opera, and Gabriel's own dark past.

Shrewd thinking and paying attention to details are rewarded as players unravel clues while taking on the role of Gabriel and his partner, Grace Nakimura. Shot on location in Germany and the U.S. with more than 40 surprisingly talented actors, *The Beast Within* is possibly the most visually stunning, realistic adventure game to come out on CD this year. Even the photo on the box is enough to induce a minor heart palpitation.

INTERACTIVE CINEMA *The rich, realistic movie-like look of* The Beast Within *came from shooting more than 1,000 backgrounds here and in Germany.*

WIN'95 WIN DOS MAC MATURE M

PHANTA
HORROR

Unless you've spent the last couple of years spelunking in Zanzibar, you've already heard of *Phantasmagoria*. Now it's finally here with all the elements of a big hit: a master story teller in the person of Kings Quest® creator Roberta Williams, feature-film quality footage, and a story so rich and elaborate it took a record-setting seven CDs to contain it all.

The tale of Don and Adrienne's bizarre discoveries about their newly-acquired mansion is told in realistic live video. No, you don't watch a movie and then click on a plot option. You run this show.

But the thrill of *Phantasmagoria* isn't simply the technology, it's also the story. As Adrienne explores her new home, its dusty secrets begin to reveal themselves. The original owner, an illusionist, died in the house after the suspicious disappearances of his

INTERACTIVE NIGHTMARE *The most film footage ever shot for a CD game lends* Phantasmagoria *the sinister qualities of a great horror feature film.*

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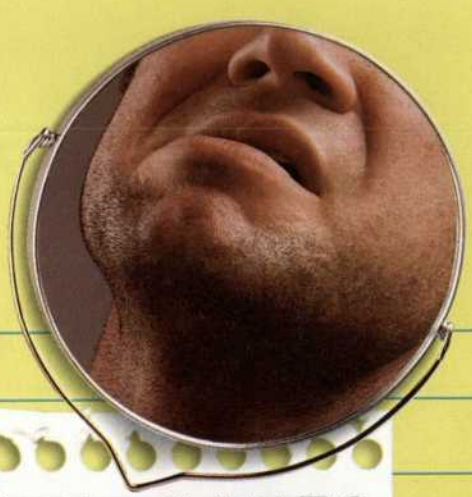
what's more frightening:

or my face.



SMAGORIA™
ON 7 CDs

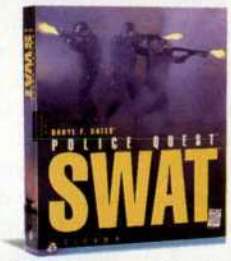
many wives. An evil force still inhabits the maze of rooms, and its effect on Don is disturbing, terrifying, and deadly.

With perseverance and wit, you can discover the clues that save Adrienne from Don, and Don from himself. This is truly the kind of game you'll find yourself staying up all night to play. And, with its decidedly macabre storyline, the middle of the night may be *Phantasmagoria's* finest hour.

HORROR ON 7 CDS *Players control every movement of Adrienne– and this game doesn't "show" you anything. You have to find it.*

WIN'95 WIN DOS MAC MATURE M

DARYL F. GATES POLICE QUEST®: SWAT™



When he headed the L.A.P.D., Chief Daryl F. Gates founded SWAT, the first Special Weapons And Tactics team. Now these highly trained forces are the elite of law enforcement, while Gates' *Police Quest: SWAT* stands as the elite in tactical simulation games.

In this, the fifth installment of the successful *PQ* series, you join a SWAT team, take intensive training, and learn to handle advanced class 3 weaponry, like an MP5, Benelli tactical shotgun, M16 and LASH radio. After a few hours on the shooting range comes the "fun" part. That is, if you consider getting nearly blown away in a real-life crisis fun. Work with your team, make the right split-second decisions, fire accurately and you could advance through the ranks to become an Element Leader. Mess up, and it could cost you your on-screen life.

The video action was shot using actual SWAT officers at their training facilities and in the streets of L.A. to lend an unmistakable air of realism. At least some of the country's major police departments think so–they now use *Police Quest* CDs to train their officers.

DEAD-ON AUTHENTICITY Police Quest: SWAT *doesn't kid around: blow a decision, fail to communicate or mishandle your weapons and you're toast.*

WIN'95 WIN DOS MAC TEEN T

ENTER TO WIN AN IBM APTIVA. Call 1-800-757-7707, surf http://www.sierra.com, or log on at AOL or CompuServe.

Day 14: My family keeps bugging me. I told them, "can't

TORIN'S PASSAGE™

Leave it to Al Lowe–creator of some of the most entertaining and enduring computer games–to unleash *Torin's Passage* on the world.

In coming up with this remarkable new game, he has delivered to our CD drives an adventure game with as much intrigue and brain-twisting challenge as any hard-core gamer has ever tackled *AND* a funny, musically-rich, visual treat that takes gaming to a new level.

Torin's Passage is the story of a young man's encounters in the nested worlds *beneath* the surface of the planet, Strata. These bizarre lands, replete with flowing hot lava, unworldly creatures, and a host of other cunning obstacles, must be traversed if Torin is to reach his goal.

Making matters worse (for Torin, more exciting for you) is a formidable line-up of brain-teasing puzzles at the end of each chapter–all of them, double black diamond challenges.

There is one word to describe the artistry in *Torin's:* "whoa!" Multi-plane scrolling, spectacular backgrounds, and hand-drawn cel animation add a depth and realism you've never seen in a game before. The sheer talent and imagination of the artists is, by itself, worth the price of admission.

But your eyes aren't the only things that get to dip into the candy box. *Torin's* also features an original digital music score composed by three-time Oscar™ winner, Michel Legrand.

There's a pop-up TelePrompTer™ that lets you replay dialogue to listen for crucial clues, plus a 3-D interface with online hints for the less-experienced players. There was, however, one hint missing: How do you avoid work, eating, chores and sleep so you can play *Torin's Passage* endlessly?

THE WONDER DOWN UNDER *The subterranean worlds of* Torin's Passage *provides the setting for a challenging quest with brain-teasing puzzles and humor.*

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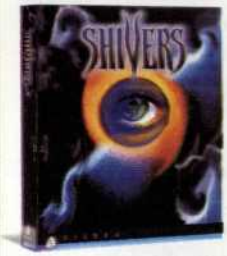
me to let them play Torin's Passage™.

you "see orking?"

SHIVERS™



It's amazing to think that the same computer used to balance the family checkbook can produce an even bigger scare. What's required is the addition of a terror-filled, nail-biting, spine-tingling CD like *Shivers*.

In this new game aimed at teens and adults, players must rely on their wits and raw nerve to survive a nightmarish trip through a surreal, abandoned museum. The goal is to vanquish the ghosts and phantoms that haunt the museum before they steal your life's essence.

Along the way, a series of beads-of-sweat-producing puzzles await, along with chilling moments of live-action video that delivers twists and turns in the plot.

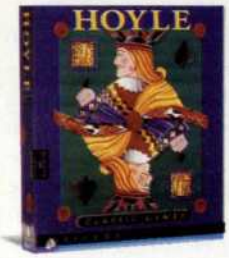
Shivers sets a haunting stage through an eerie original music score and "as seen through your own eyes" graphics. The first-person views are handsomely rendered, you might even say "mystical." But the real draw remains the story.

It tantalizes, draws you in, and–fittingly–gives you the shivers. This is definitely one game that will keep you glued to your seat. Or, at least, the very edge of it.

NOT HOME, NOT ALONE *Players have to spend the night on guard in search of the evil spirits that haunt a sinister, derelict museum.*

WIN'95 WIN

HOYLE®
CLASSIC GAMES



"According to Hoyle®" means "by the rules; done the right way." This remarkably sophisticated collection of 10 favorite games lives up to its name, giving families great variety, totally accurate play action, and an interesting twist on the old idea of playing against the computer.

Sit down at the *Hoyle® Classic Games* poker table, for instance, and you play against a rogue's gallery of computerized competitors. Take on a crusty, old prospector, an over-the-hill movie star, or a number of other players, each sporting an accent and an attitude.

The more you play, the more sides you'll see to their weird, witty personalities. Add in their different card-playing styles, and you end up with a much more fun (and realistic) way to challenge the microchips to a game.

Along with five card draw, you can also play bridge, solitaire, old maid, hearts, crazy 8's, gin rummy, checkers, backgammon, and hearts. With its cast of characters and jam-packed variety, you'll definitely want to ante up for this card game.

TEN GAMES IN ONE Hoyle® Classic Games *give you ten card and board games and 10 animated competitors to outwit.*

The "Hoyle®" trademark is used under license from Brown & Bigelow, Inc.

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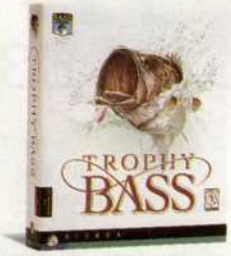
Day 19: Today I defeated a horde of commanded a U-boat and

TROPHY BASS™



Surely you've seen them. Those guys on cable TV, sitting in a boat, reeling in a big one, saying stuff to each other like, "Oh, he's got a lot of fight in him there, Jim."

At last count, there were 50 million people in this country like Jim who love to feel the tug on a rod. And now they've got their own computer game: *Trophy Bass*.

There are three sides to *Trophy Bass*. You can choose tackle, pick your bait, read the water, set the weather conditions, and then finesse your casting technique on one of five virtual lakes. Option two is to play in Tournament Mode and try your luck against conditions and competitors dished out by the computer.

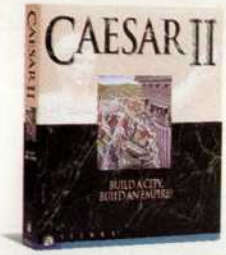
Or you can get even more serious and watch the full motion video "how-to" section and pick up more than 100 nuggets of solid advice from America's top tournament bass fishermen.

Now, obviously, the Jims of the world are going to love this game, because playing can bring you more success out on the water. But, surprisingly, you don't have to know what a lunker bucketmouth is to get a charge out of *Trophy Bass*. As Jim would say, "It's a keeper."

CAST OF THOUSANDS *The super-accurate simulation and detailed how-to information earned* Trophy Bass *the endorsement of B.A.S.S., America's largest fishing organization.*

WIN'95 WIN

CAESAR™ II



A city simulation? Hmmm, haven't I seen something like this before? Yes and no. Yes, you've seen amazingly-detailed 3D renderings before. And, yes, you've played sims that put you in the municipal driver's seat.

But, no, you've never played anything quite like *Caesar II*. For starters, if you do a good job quelling riots, dowsing fires, recruiting soldiers and building great cities, you earn approval ratings that grant you the right to take on another province.

Then it really heats up. Along with wearing your city planner hat, you get to don the general's helmet and fight off hordes of barbarians in battle sequences (check out the Carthaginians on armored elephants). With each additional province you control, the closer you get to the best hat of all: the emperor's snappy laurel wreath.

By combining great graphics, intricate strategizing and battle action, *Caesar II* isn't merely simulation. It's *stimulation* for those who hanker for action and power.

BUILT IN A DAY? *The historical accuracy and detail in* Caesar II's *cityscapes are astonishing, while battle sequences–a twist for sim games–add another layer of challenge and fun.*

WIN'95 DOS

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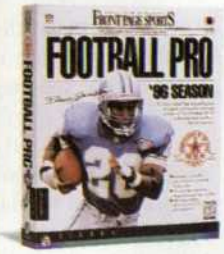
fished for bass,
barbarians won the playoffs,
ate six Cup Noodles®.

FRONT PAGE SPORTS®: FOOTBALL PRO '96™



When *Football Pro '95* was hailed as "the best football game on the planet," you'd think Sierra would send in the third string and retire to the locker room for a tall, frosty one. But, no. They put the pads back on, threw out the old playbook, and came back with *Football Pro '96*.

It keeps all the things that earned its forefathers the Best Sports Simulation award three years running: Slavish attention to real NFL player and team stats, a play book with over 10,000 combinations of X's and O's, and league play over CompuServe.

Ah, but that's the old stuff. For 1996, you can suit up as a player for an arcade game or appoint yourself coach for the football sim. What's more, 3D animations were created using films of actual players shot from dozens of angles simultaneously, so tailbacks juke, wide receivers sprint, and linemen grunt just like their real-life counterparts. The awesome realism of this new version is sure to earn some accolades. "Best football game in the solar system?" Could be.

THIS IS NOT TV *The "motion capture" based 3D animation will have you think you've tuned in to the NFL game of the week. But this is better: No commercials.*

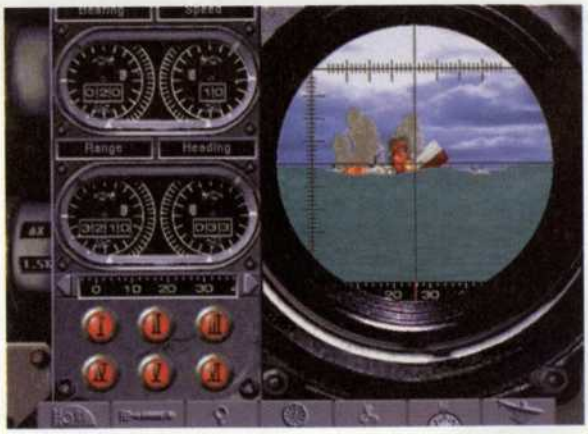
WIN'95 DOS

COMMAND: ACES OF THE DEEP®

Now hear this. All personnel who want to see how the Simulation Game of the Year has been improved, report to your software dealer. *COMMAND: Aces of the Deep*, with its incredible realism and historical accuracy, has taken a giant leap forward with the addition of phenomenal texture-mapped graphics and voice activation.

With Windows® 95 and IBM VoiceType®, you bark commands at your U-boat crew and watch them respond to your orders to dive, surface, fire torpedoes, and more. While you don't need the voice command option to play the game, it adds yet another dimension to the realism.

Your strategic skills get a sweat-producing workout in the cat-and-mouse pursuit sequences, while a new two-mode deck gun lets you play a more arcade-style game. Here, you get to do to other ships what *COMMAND* has done to other simulation games: Blow them out of the water.



DIVE! DIVE! *Shout out the orders, and your crew reacts on the double in the first voice-activated CD-ROM simulation game ever.*

IBM VoiceType is a registered trademark of IBM Corporation.

WIN'95 NATIVE

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Day 27: It took 3
but I finally reached Level
Not every

3-D ULTRA PINBALL™

The pinball wizards at Sierra have just come up with a better idea on how to stick five vertical feet of pinball machine onto seven inches of computer screen. While most other pinball games show you the table as if it were shot pointing straight up, Sierra's *3-D Ultra Pinball* slants the table so you can see the whole thing easily without scrolling. This bit of cleverness was then totally exploited with the most amazing spacescape graphics to appear this side of Alpha Centauri.

Another innovation: *3-D Ultra Pinball* uses advanced physics formulas to give you an uncannily accurate feel of a real table. Thanks to genius programming from some people who weren't sleeping during Physics class, flipper responsiveness, table bumping, ball rolling and ricochets look and react just like an authentic tavern machine. It even tilts like classic pinball. Damn!

The game's three tables can be interconnected so you can keep going until the sun comes up. And action on all versions is super fast; an amazing feat especially for a Windows® game. If there's one downside to this addictive game, it may be that the garbage isn't going to get taken out for a while, and the dog may have to start walking himself.

FAST AND FURIOUS *The full dimensional graphics of* 3-D Ultra Pinball *haven't slowed things down. Action is fast, frenzied, and richly animated.*

WIN'95 WIN MAC

THE

Now that the Windows® 95 frenzy is going full tilt, you may wonder, "is there a game specifically designed for this amazingly cool new operating system that takes full advantage of its multi-threading capabilities?" Or perhaps you'd like to know, "is there a game so incredibly wicked that it will actually increase my supply of testosterone?"

The answer to both questions: Yes. And you're looking at it.

Thexder flies, runs, jumps, morphs into a tank or plane, and blasts his way through five worlds, each with ten different levels of increasing hair-pulling difficulty.

Your job in all this is to help *Thexder* work his way through mind-numbing mazes while steering clear of energy fields, sheer drop offs, and other assorted game-enders. Then, in addition to robots, aliens, cyborgs and other

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solid days,
10 of Thexder.
member of the family jumped for joy.

XDER®

enemies, *Thexder* also has to contend with burning lava, crushing ceilings, and unpredictable explosives.

Thanks to your droid-fast reflexes, and *Thexder's* ability to morph, you can struggle your way to the 50th level to face Primus Tech, the numero uno enemy. Actually, there are other enemies you can take on: the bad dudes you play against on your network or your modem.

All this battling is supercharged courtesy of Windows® 95. Along with the main horizontally-scrolling action window, there are five additional screens to keep you filled in on your position, available equipment, enemies and weapons. Due to that multi-threading business,

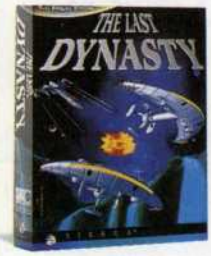
every screen is constantly updated without slowing down the main action one hair.

Thexder–sure to be one of the season's best sellers–has arrived, pumped on Windows® 95 steroids, and ready to do some serious damage.

LIKE A MALL MOVIE THEATRE *The five screens of* Thexder *churn out loads of info and action simultaneously. It's all made possible by the only game to take advantage of the multi-threading abilities of Windows® 95.*

WIN'95 NATIVE TEEN T

LAST DYNASTY™



Last Dynasty isn't the best new game to come along in a while. It's more like two of the best.

Start by parking yourself in its first-person, full-view, real-time combat simulator. The completely customizable cockpit, with continuous on-line help, locks on and destroys typical space fight games. The information overload as you plan an attack, while your radar and windshield fills with enemy ships, is truly stomach-churning. Then comes an even cooler part: You can grab a momentary breath during all this chaos by switching into strategy mode, where you can map out and execute your next attack from a mega-choice of battle strategies.

Carrying the action game forward are spectacular interactive cinema clips, haunting original music, and enough mind-racking tension to have you sweating an arsenal worth of bullets.

While the action side of this equation beats most pure space arcade CDs at their own game, *Last Dynasty* shines again in the fully-rendered, high res scenes in the adventure portion of the game. This mind-puzzler takes place aboard a multi-level space station. From a first-person angle you explore, look for clues, remove a few ruthless strangers, and keep your nerve endings on alert-mode in wait for a surprise attack.

Consider *Last Dynasty* as an excellent, addictive, warp speed, mysterious, challenging, over-stim'd value.

DOUBLE YOUR PLEASURE *If you can't make up your mind between the action overload of a space fight, or the brain tease of an adventure game,* Last Dynasty *gives you both.*

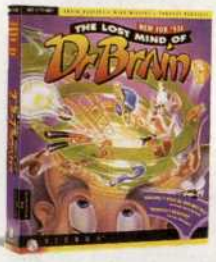
WIN'95 WIN TEEN T

ENTER TO WIN AN IBM APTIVA. Call 1-800-757-7707, surf http://www.sierra.com, or log on at AOL or CompuServe.

Day 39: Help! My reviews are due tomorrow and I'm stuck in Mary, Mary Quite Contrary's garden.

Where's my 4-year old?

THE LOST MIND OF DR. BRAIN™



You have to love something that makes your kids smarter, keeps them happily occupied for hours, and *isn't* TV. In this case, that something is *The Lost Mind of Dr. Brain.*

This third installment in the immensely popular *Dr. Brain* series gives kids 10 different wildly entertaining puzzles to solve–each challenging the 10 learning centers in real live kid brains. Some involve mazes, others memory games, and there's plenty of fun with words and music. Since you can set the degree of difficulty, both ten-year olds and teens can have their brains put to the test.

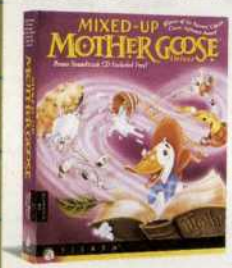
But here's the real truth. These puzzles are also a blast for those of us who, ahem, haven't doodled on a Pee Chee for many moons. (My favorite: sending the right colored balls down the railroad track maze to the station.)

So don't get the idea this is some stuffy, bookish "learning aid." The puzzles are pure fun, surprisingly funny, and always a challenge. If you've got kids, buying *The Lost Mind of Dr. Brain* is clearly a no brainer.

BRAIN CENTRAL *There's an object to this game: Help restore* Dr. Brain's *brain which he accidentally transferred to his rodent assistant, Rathbone.*

WIN'95 WIN MAC

MIXED-UP MOTHER GOOSE® DELUXE



The list of the awards *Mixed-Up Mother Goose* has won from magazines, parents' groups and the software industry could fill up the rest of this page. And no wonder. Here is a game that has introduced more than 500,000 little ones to the computer, while helping build their problem-solving and learning skills.

Sounds like a textbook? It's not. In the new deluxe version of *Mixed-Up Mother Goose* kids search through Mother Goose Land to find missing objects from classic rhymes. A successful recovery is rewarded with a song–but not like you've ever heard before. Imagine "Little Jack Horner" done in reggae and you'll get the idea.

The game can be played in English or Spanish, and there's a free bonus audio CD of the 18 songs in the game so kids can sing along after you've commandeered the computer so you can play your games.

TAKE A GANDER *Mother Goose Land is laid out in beautiful, hand-painted graphics, with dozens of places for kids to explore.*

WIN'95 WIN MAC

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Product Information Number 178

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Which Sierra game comes with 7 CD-ROMs? _____

Which Sierra game takes place in an abandoned museum? _____

Which Sierra game visits subterranean worlds? _____

Which Sierra game features voice activation? _____

Name _____

Address _____

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No purchase necessary. Offer good in USA only. Sweepstakes is open to residents of the US over 18 years of age. You may use this card or enter on a plain 3x5-inch card. All federal, state and local laws apply. Taxes, if any, are the sole responsibility of the prize winners. Decisions of the judges are final and binding. Offer void where prohibited by law. Employees and family members of Sierra On-Line or IBM Corporation are not eligible. Odds of winning depend upon number of entries received. Only one answer per question, one entry per household.

Entries will be randomly selected and answers verified for correctness to identify and select winners. Winners will be selected February 15, 1996. Grand Prizes will be shipped to winners at address shown on entry form. Total approximate value of Grand Prize is $5,000 each. Winner cannot transfer prize. Prize is not redeemable for cash.

Each winner will be required to sign a release allowing Sierra to use his or her name and likeness in advertising.

Winners will be announced on Sierra forums on-line and in Spring issue of InterAction. For a list of winners, available 90 days after Sweepstake drawing, send a stamped self-addressed envelope to Winners List c/o Sierra On-Line, P.O. Box 53210, Bellevue, WA 98015-3210.

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Day 48: Bought two Sierra games, got a third free*. Free game was actually not junk.

Hard to believe, but there are even more Sierra games than we could squeeze into this ad. So check them all out by going to the place where you like to buy games or call 1-800-757-7707 and order directly from Sierra. Then, when you buy any two games from the list below between November 1, 1995 and January 31, 1996, you can select one more from the other side of this card and we'll send it to you for free.

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- ❑ Caesar II
- ❑ COMMAND: Aces of the Deep
- ❑ Front Page Sports: Football Pro '96
- ❑ Gabriel Knight: The Beast Within
- ❑ Hoyle® Classic Games
- ❑ Kings Quest VII, 2.0
- ❑ Last Dynasty
- ❑ Lode Runner On-Line
- ❑ Lost Mind of Dr. Brain
- ❑ Mixed-Up Mother Goose Deluxe
- ❑ Outpost 1.5
- ❑ Phantasmagoria
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- ❑ Shivers
- ❑ Space Quest 6
- ❑ Thexder
- ❑ 3-D Ultra Pinball
- ❑ The Incredible Machine 3.0
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- ❑ Trophy Bass

* Well, OK, free plus $5.95 for postage and handling.

Please tape closed (No staples)

CSA060

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- ❑ Hoyle's® Classic Card Games
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- ❑ PowerHouse
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- ❑ Talking Tutor: Alphabet Blocks
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Please allow 4 to 6 weeks for delivery. Offer valid in the U.S. and Canada only. Not valid with any other offer. Requests must be postmarked by February 15, 1996. This offer may be discontinued without notice. Sierra reserves the right to limit quantities. No dealers, please.

CSA060

ULTIMATE STRATEGY GUIDE

Our readers are the best PC gamers around — but everybody needs a little help from time to time. So don't be afraid to jump into these pages and show those games who's boss.

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Apache

SAMs and ZSUs getting you down? Here's some vital advice from a real expert on the world's finest attack chopper.

Rex Swetnam is nuts about Interactive Magic's *Apache*. Currently a Warrant Officer in the Virginia National Guard, Rex spent a good deal of his Army time training in Apaches. Flying both front and back seats (all Apache pilots spend time flying both positions), he cites the power, flexible weapons systems, and maneuverability as some of the things that make the AH-64 the best attack helicopter going. (And, yes, you *can* pull a loop in an Apache, although it does strain the rotors and is forbidden by the Army. Rex assures us that he, of course, would never try anything of the sort. Honest.)

National Guard Warrant Officer Rex Swetnam knows all about the Apache — after all, it's his office.

As for the *Apache* sim, Rex calls it "the closest you're going to have to the real thing for a helicopter flight simulation. Tactics, flight performance, weapons systems: it's there. It really has a lot of the details. For example, when you fire that 30[mm gun] in a real Apache, it's right under the seat of your pants. You squeeze that trigger, you definitely feel it. It's a very specific sound, and in the game itself, that's the way it sounds."

Rex spotted an ad for *Apache* and called up Interactive Magic to offer his help. He wound up spending eight months with the game as a tester and adviser, and he's flown every single mission and been through every campaign. He took some time to offer us his expert advice on succeeding at this game.

Flying

Flying a fixed-wing jet is a snap compared to the tricky controls in any helicopter. *Apache* offers easy flight modes, but the real challenge, of course, is in mastering the realistic ones. And since *Apache* is so realistic, it's a shame not to spend a little extra time and learn the controls. Flight is a balance between the cyclic, which controls the pitch and roll of the Apache, and the collective, which controls the amount of lift the blades provide.

As Rex points out, keeping the helicopter airborne is a "tradeoff between airspeed and altitude. If you pull that stick back [the collective] and don't compensate in power [the cyclic], you're going to go up in altitude. Same going down: you nose that stick forward and don't have power, you're gonna take it right into the ground. The game gives you a sense of how busy the pilot really is in making adjustments."

You have to find the balance between forward speed and altitude, and you have to keep it. The key is in concentrating and having a good "cross-check." This means constantly looking at airspeed, heading, and altitude, over and over again, and adjusting flight to keep it on track.

Don't waste your Hellfires on low-threat targets like this riverboat; save 'em for SAMs.

"A lot of times, people concentrate on one thing," Rex observes. "They zero in on heading, for instance, and forget about altitude. It's a gradual thing. They're losing a little altitude at a time as they concentrate on heading, and next thing they know, they're in a tree. You have to keep up the cross-check."

This is especially important, considering the way Rex — and all combat pilots — fly the Apache: close to the deck. Rex keeps altitude around 50 feet, following the terrain as closely as possible. This takes tight concentration, even more so in night missions, where a lot of your visual cues aren't available. (Trainers have found that one hour of night flight is equal to three hours of daytime flight in the way it fatigues pilots.) At this altitude, Rex feels comfortable keeping his radar lit up almost all the time: something a lot of desktop pilots frown upon.

"I do it in the game and in real life," Rex says. "Sure, if your radar is on, the enemy can paint you. But I want to know what's out there. I don't want something sneaking up on me. And if you fly low enough and really use your terrain to your advantage, you're really not going to have to worry about keeping the radar lit through the whole flight."

Approaching Missions

Each mission is different and requires a different kind of approach, and the most important thing to do before going out is to pay careful attention to your briefing. This helps you set a strategy for approaching the mission, determining priority targets, and dealing with any threats encountered.

Much of how you approach a mis-

CHEATER'S CORNER

If you're like most gamers you've probably launched into this strategy section looking for that special tip that will help you through your favorite games, so in addition to our expert tips on the hottest games, we've compiled the best cheat codes from past issues of *PC Gamer* along with a few new ones to help you get through everything — from the toughest action games to demanding strategy games.

Having trouble with those pesky guards? Use our cheats to get the best weapons around.

Crusader: No Remorse

It took some doing, but we've come across a few cheats for Origin's tough action-adventure *Crusader: No Remorse* that'll have you blasting through those demanding missions with complete invulnerability or give you all the items you need. To enable the cheats type **JASSICA16** and you will hear a voice saying "Crusader: No Remorse". Then by pressing **Alt-F10** you'll become invulnerable, while pressing **F10** gives you all items and weapons.

Dark Forces

Following up on the success of *X-Wing*, *TIE Fighter*, and *Rebel Assault*, LucasArts brought

sion depends on what the threat is. Rex uses the following example from *Apache*:

"There's a mission where you have to lase [laser designate] a target for an F-16: a bridge. You have to be at the target area at 22:20. You're flying along, getting engaged by a lot of aircraft, and while you're engaging all these systems, you hear over the speakers 'Alpha 95, ready for bomb delivery.' You realize you have one minute to get to your target halfway across the map. You forgot what your mission was. You got involved with busting tanks and air defenses, instead of being involved with what needs to be done. Instead of being stealthy and getting into that battle position, you got distracted. You have to pay attention.

"Find out what the priority is on that particular mission. Let's say your objective is tanks," Rex says. "If you go out in high-threat radar for that entire mission, guess what? You'll never see them. Out to the battle position, you should go out in high-threat, since that'll help you get your air defenses and so on. At the mission objective area, if I'm told to engage tanks, then I switch to medium-threat radar to engage all the targets. On the way out, I go back to high-threat radar. You do this because radar doesn't pick up tanks, since they're not considered a high threat."

Weapons

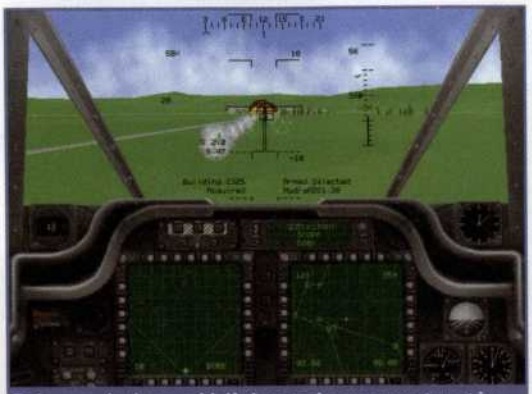
On your way out to the mission point, the key to your survival is in neutralizing air defense systems. Surface-to-air missiles have the longest range, so if you can't stay out of range, then take them out with a precision guided munition. If you *can* stay out of range, just avoid it. But you have to prioritize: you take out a SAM before a ZSU anti-aircraft gun.

"Air defense systems warrant a Hellfire missile," Rex points out. "You don't mess around with those guys. Go ahead and deliver a pinpoint missile on one of those things. If you were in a crew, and you encountered an air defense missile, getting in with guns puts you too close within their range. The key is to always know the weapons system and employ maximum standoff range. If I'm up against a ZSU, and it can only fire out to a couple thousand meters, I can sit back at five thousand meters at a hover all day long and it can't even touch me. I can pick it off at leisure. If I can do that, why should I risk getting in to three thousand meters?"

Tanks are busted with Hellfires, which is what those missiles were designed for. The Hydra rockets are designed as an area suppression system, not a precision munition. You fire a number of them to cover a wide area — usually to immobilize convoys, light armor, and infantry. There are two types of warhead for the Hydra: The M255 Flechette is a non-penetrating rocket that, upon reaching the target, deploys tiny flechette rounds that disperse over a wide area, which makes it good for lightly armored vehicles and infantry. The M262 contains a shaped charge for piercing armor and other hard targets.

One thing to remember when using Hydras is to "make sure you're locked when firing," Rex says. "That puts the automatic elevation on the pod. Otherwise, you have to manually adjust the pod. If you lock, the computer calculates the range and automatically selects the pod elevation. Once you lase [laser designate] the target, the fire control computer adjusts the hydraulic servos on the pod for that target. You get greater accuracy and you don't have to adjust the pods manually."

— T. Liam McDonald



Before you let loose with Hydras, make sure your target is locked so the rocket pods can adjust their elevation.

The explosions in *Apache* are pretty and fun to look at, but if you're this close to an anti-aircraft threat when you destroy it, you've taken an unecessary risk.

the popular Star Wars universe to life earlier this year with their first-person shoot-'em-up *Dark Forces*. But if you've been struggling through the challenging missions and need a little help defeating the Empire, help is on the way.

To activate the cheats, simply type the code you want during the game.

LABUG — Bug mode: This cheat lets you squeeze through narrow passages (very helpful in the garbage crusher).

LACDS — Reveal map: Use this cheat to get a full map of your current level.

LADATA — Reveal navigation counter.

LAIMLAME — Invincibility toggle: Similiar to God MODE in *Doom*.

LAMAXOUT — Full ammo, shields and weapons; plus complete inventory of items, all maxed out.

LANTFH — This cheat allows you to teleport to the current map position one level above or below your current location.

LAPOGO — Disables height checking:

LAPOSTAL — Get all weapons and ammunition.

LARANDY — Weapon supercharge power-up, giving you an increase in rate of fire from all weapons for

Continued On Page 103

When you're face-to-face with one of these ugly critters, nothing works better than the LARANDY cheat for rapid-fire excitement.

If you could feel what they feel...

The crush of helmets, the thud of pads, the smooth silk of the ball as it settles into your waiting hands. The grass falling away behind you as you run.

The sheer joy of playing the best game in the whole world.

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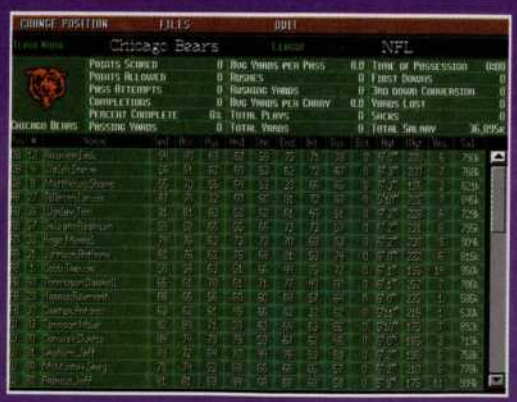
Take on the best of the NFL! All-new player animations and realism are your ticket to true NFL football competition – a quantum leap over its predecessors!



If you really want to take charge, the expanded General Manager and stats options put all the excitement and strategy right at your fingertips!

Special Limited Time Offer. Competitive Upgrade Offer! Good Only Until November 30, 1995. Call 1.800.245.7744 Mention offer number UR96-112.

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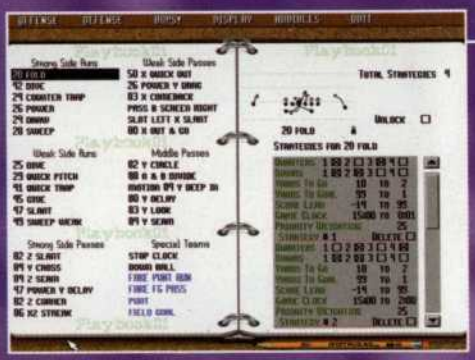
Go into action with 30 NFL teams and more than 1300 NFL stars. Unnecessary Roughness '96 has it all!

Develop a devastating offense and a smothering defense with the most complete set of play design tools.

Enjoy the fast-action automatic pass reception, or keep your opponent on his toes with the real-time "Pro" passing mode.

See every play up close and personal – back angles, reverse angles, side angles, even helmet cameras!



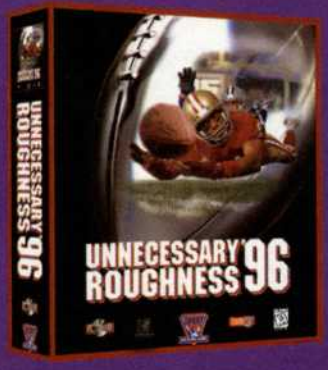
Set up your game plan; even add audibles! Test your plays against any kind of lineup. You're in control, right down to the nitty gritty!

Check out the game summaries and look over stats during season play. Over 100 different stats and ratings!

With:
- new player animations
- league-leading stats
- expanded plays
- General Manager options

Unnecessary Roughness '96 delivers the ultimate in hard-hitting football action!

The replays are almost as much fun as the plays themselves! See action on-screen like never before with unlimited camera angles!



Team NFL

PLAYERS INC

SPORT ACCOLADE

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Nazrac invites you to enter his tournament arenas for an explosive, addictive challenge to defeat deadly alien drones and vicious arena bosses. Cinematics and voiceover from the coin-op version enhance this sharply detailed, futuristic combat simulator. You'll battle it out in one of six different MEKs, each equipped with it's own individual maneuvering capabilities, battle defenses and powerful, merciless special weapons that absolutely destroy opponents. Fire super-charged Shockbolts, metal-eating Acid Drones, white-hot Plasma Throwers or two kinds of high-speed, pilot-guided missiles. Up to two players can invade the arena via PC parallel connection or modem to modem, and up to four players can play using an IPX compatible Network connection. Defeat your challengers, destroy a powerful boss, then face your final, deadly challenge — annihilate Nazrac himself and tear down his wicked empire. It's a loud, immersive, fight for survival and supremacy! **NAZRAC AWAITS YOU!**

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TIME WARNER INTERACTIVE

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Product Information Number 199

Ascendancy

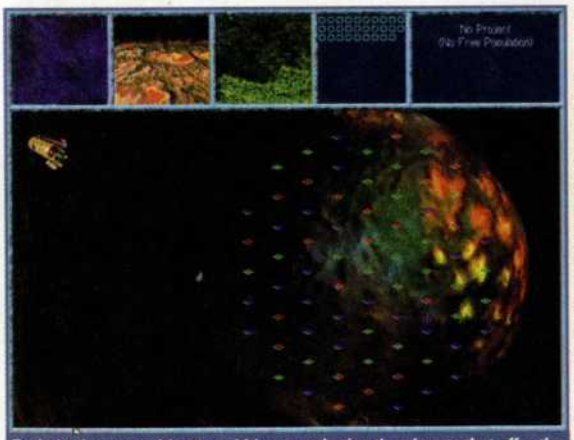
The universe is a big place, and it's full of hazards. Here's some advice that'll help you along the path to galactic conquest.

It's not easy to come up with specific strategies for winning a game of *Ascendancy*. It's about as "open-ended" as a strategy game can be, and with more than 100,000 possible combinations (galaxy size and density, competing races, political ambience, etc.), every game is going to be different.

After 100-plus hours of play, though, we've come up with some general strategic tips:

1 Know Your Planets: Each planet in the game is labeled according to category. Some are self-evident; some are not. Many players may find it helpful to know what's what, so here's a quick run-down on the various categories and their significance, in alphabetical order:

- **Cathedral Planet:** exceptionally well suited for research projects, almost a quarter of these worlds' surfaces will be composed of blue (research-favorable) squares.
- **Chapel Planet:** Expect about 40 percent black squares (unusable until they're terraformed); of the remainder, blue squares may outnumber other types.
- **Congenial Planet:** About 80 percent of the surface will be suitable for development, with a random scattering of red, green, blue, and white squares.
- **Cornucopia Planet:** These are rare but exceedingly valuable worlds, with no black squares at all. A typical Cornucopia Planet will comprise about one-third red, one-third blue, and one-third green squares.
- **Eden Planet:** Good for general, balanced development, these planets will have no black squares, lots of white squares, and a smattering of random specialty squares.
- **Husk Planet:** As the name implies, these are dead worlds (all black squares). They are often sites for alien artifacts, however, and so may be worth a visit. Also, in the more advanced stages of the game, they can be terraformed, although they will usually be of only marginal worth even then.



Early in the game, it's a good idea to colonize the planets that offer the best balance of red, blue, and green squares.

Cathedral Planets are especially hospitable to research projects.

- **Mining Planet:** while almost half of these planets are black, the remaining squares are usually red and white, favoring industrial development.
- **Primordial Planet:** A "yin-yang" kind of world: half black, half white. Having a colony here is better than not having one, but if there's even a marginally better world in the system, and you only have one colonizer module, pass these by.
- **Rich Planet:** Thirty to 40 percent black squares, 30 percent white squares, the rest pretty evenly divided among red, blue, and green.
- **Super Mining Planet:** These planets are at least 20 percent red squares, and about 20 percent black; the remainder is mostly white.
- **Tycoon Planet:** Almost 50 percent of these worlds comprise bonus squares of red, blue, and green, usually framed with white. Little, if any, dead space.

2 Hey, Bud, Let's Party!: Some of you may wonder, as I did, if there is any purpose, other than the sheer hell of it, for instituting "Endless Party" on a colony. Well, obviously, if your colonists are having fun, their "prosperity" rating increases. But there's a subtler factor at work, too. If a colony's population is stagnant and you can't figure out why, try throwing an "Endless Party" for a few weeks. The resulting planet-wide hanky-panky may cause that population curve to start rising again.

3 Research, Research, and More Research: Obviously, *balance* is the key to suc-

CHEATER'S CORNER

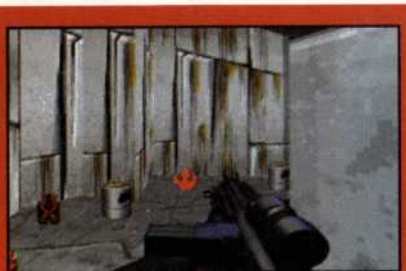
Continued From Page 99

50 seconds.

LAREDLITE — Freezes enemies in their tracks. All enemies take damage in this mode, but you'll need to toggle it off before it takes affect.

LASKIP — Typing this cheat successfully completes the current level.

LAUNLOCK — Get all keys, code cards, the broken Dark Trooper gun, data tape, ice cleats and Phrik metal.



With the map cheat, you can locate the secret rooms that are sprinkled throughout the Emperial settings in *Dark Forces*.

Level Codes

LASECBASE — Level 1: Secret Base (The Death Star Plans)

LATALAY — Level 2 Talay: Tac Base

LASEWERS — Level 3 Anoat City (The Subterranean Hideout)

LATESTBASE — Level 4 Imperial Weapons Research Facility

LAGROMAS — Level 5 Gromas Mines

LADTENTION — Level 6 Imperial Detention Center

LARAMSHED — Level 7 Ramsees Hed Docking Port

LAROBOTICS — Level 8 Robotics

Continued On Page 104

Don't plant your colonies in solar systems where another race has already built colonies of its own; not unless you're ready for a fight and have sufficient firepower to prevail.

cess in *Ascendancy* — in the three prime areas of research, industry, and prosperity. But I would suggest plunging into research early and pushing it hard; harder than the other two areas. That's because a seemingly small, insignificant, lag in research can grow exponentially as certain types of game unfold. When warfare breaks out, you can't afford to have, say, a "plasmatron gap" between you and your opponent. Of course, numerical superiority in ships *can* offset inferior weaponry, but given the time and expense of building a large fleet, that's a risky and improbable circumstance.

The "Endless Party" option boosts planetary morale, but it can also remedy slow population growth.

4 "Well, Isn't That Special?!": One of the game's most interesting features is the "Special Ability" given to each species. It's fun to use your special ability, because it makes you feel, well, *special*. But note well: the game informs you when your species has accumulated enough SAPs (Special Ability Points) to do the hoo-doo that you do so well, but you don't *have* to use it at that time. In fact, for many species, timing may be a critical ingredient of a winning strategy.

For example: Take the Chamachies. Their SAPs permit them to complete any currently-feasible research project in 24 hours. If you're playing this species, and the game notifies you that your SAPs are on line, immediately consult the Research Tree. You may be 30 days away from reaching your current research goal, but farther down the tree, you see a quantum-leap discovery that's, say, 240 days away. Just be patient and let the clock run out on the current project, *then* evoke your Special Ability. You've just saved yourself 210 days of research time. Analogous situations will arise for other species.

5 Hey, Buddy, What's the Hurry?: Sure, it's fun to vaporize enemy ships, invade their colonies, and plunder their technology, but there's a lot to be said for a passive, laid-back strategic posture. Exploration ships are not likely to draw hostile attention; heavily armed warships carrying invasion modules most certainly will.

Don't worry if your empire ranks second or even third in the number of colonies. Your more warlike neighbors will not perceive you as a threat, and quite often you can sit back and watch the bigger empires tear each other to pieces without risking your own precious colonies. Later on, if you're of a mind, you can pick up some of the pieces at greatly diminished risk.

And *don't* go planting colonies in a system that some other species has already colonized, unless and until you're able to back up the perceived threat with lots of firepower. Even in a "Peaceful" or "Neutral" atmosphere, claim-jumping arouses suspicion and dries up potentially fruitful diplomatic opportunities.

A passive posture invites diplomatic contact and a more liberal exchange of information — particularly in the research area.

Keeping a low profile, of course, doesn't mean being weak. Strong defenses, a good mix of Surface Mega Shields and Long Range Orbital Whoppers should enable to you decimate and repel any invasion force smaller than the Spanish Armada. Once you've given a would-be invader a bloody nose and vaporized half-a-dozen Enormous-class ships, you'll probably be left alone for a long, long time.

6 The Zen-Garden, or "Navel of the Universe," Strategy: We have it on good authority (from a source close to The Logic Factory) that it's possible, under certain rare circumstances, to *win* the game without ever leaving your home planet. We just wanted toss that in as a teaser, because it might well be the ultimate challenge for the *Ascendancy* addict who's looking for a very strange and unique gaming experience. Lotsa luck.

— *William R. Trotter*

CHEATER'S CORNER

Continued From Page 103

Construction Facility
LANARSHADA — Level 9 Nar Shaddaa
LAJABSHIP — Level 10 Jabba's Ship
LAIMPCITY — Level 11 Imperial City
LAFUELSTAT — Level 12 Fuel Station
LAEXECUTOR — Level 13 The Executor
LAARC — Level 14 The Arc Hammer

Descent

Interplay's *Descent* took the popular *Doom*-style shooter to a whole new level with 360 degrees of motion, twisting caverns and deadly adversaries at every turn. Not only is it one of our all-time favorites, it's also one of the toughest games on the market. So if you've been having trouble completing those tough levels, here are the cheat codes that will get you back on track.

Having trouble getting through the tough levels of *Descent*? We've got all the help you need with these special cheats.

Type the codes during the game to activate the cheats.
GABBAGABBAHEY — Cheats enabled.
SCOURGE — WowieZowie Weapons.
MITZI — All Keys.
RACERX — Invulnerability On/Off.
GUILE — Cloak On/Off.

Continued On Page 109

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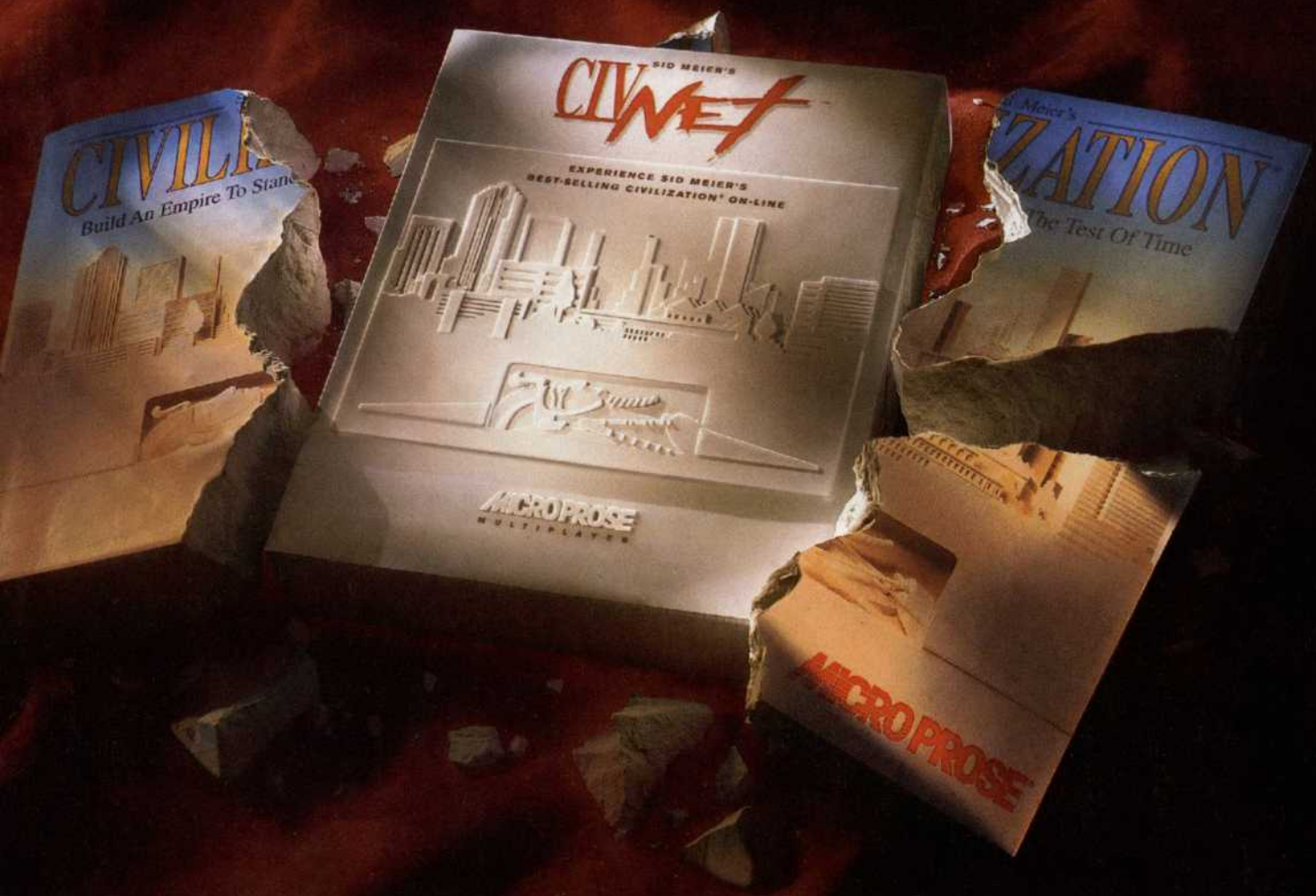

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Product Information Number 159

SOME MEMBERS OF CONGRESS TRIED TO BAN "NIGHT TRAP" FOR BEING SEXIST AND OFFENSIVE TO WOMEN. (HEY. THEY OUGHT TO KNOW.)

It seems that not everyone is if you don't wear a navy blue rescue a houseful of teenagers from a bunch of sickoid vampires who do indescribably mistakes can prove to be quite ugly. See for yourself. (And get "Dangerous Games," purchase.) And while we're not arguing, we think some congressmen might benefit from

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enthusiastic about the radical action in Night Trap. But chances are

suit and bifocals, you will be. After all, you'll be helping Dana Plato

disgusting things to their victims. It's not an easy mission. And your

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a second look too. (It might even keep some of them out of trouble.)

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MS-DOS
Microsoft Windows 95
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MATURE M

Product Information Number 118

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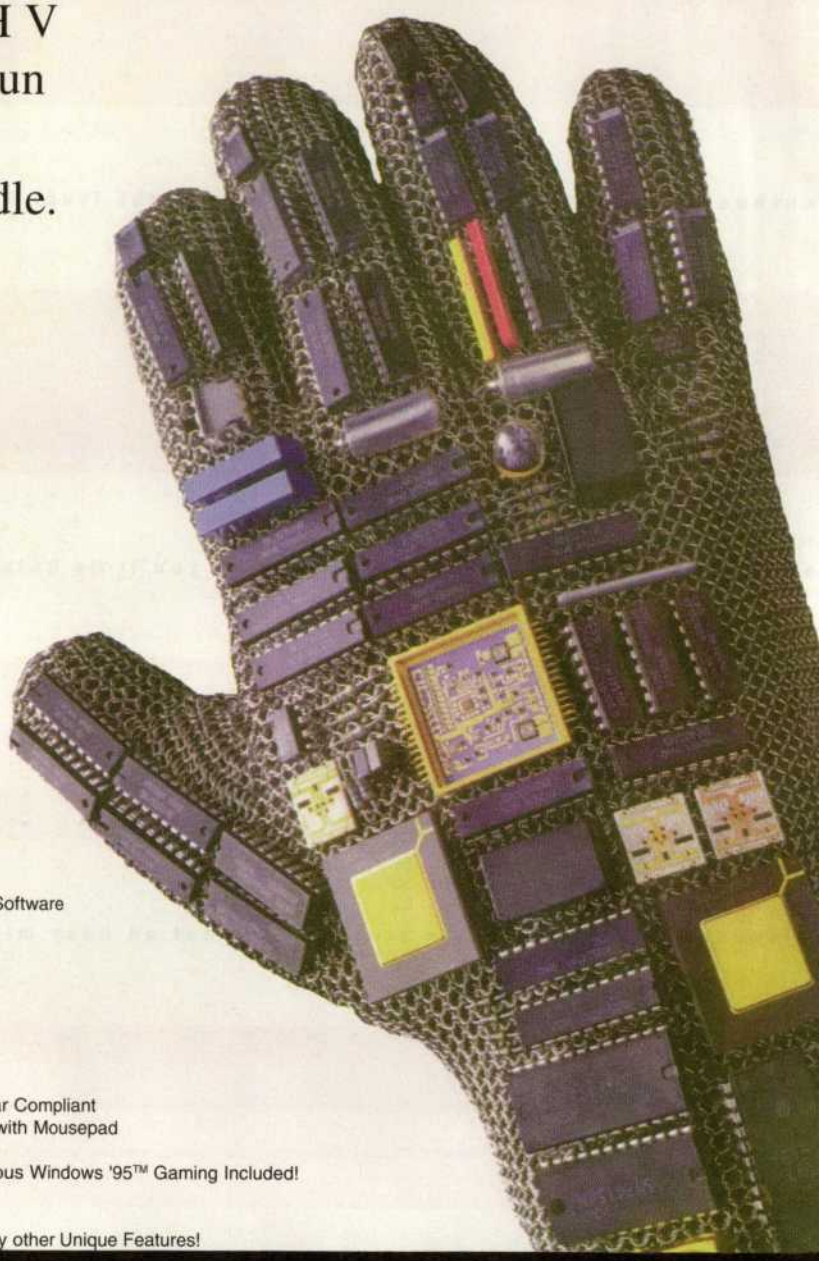

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Product Information Number 126

Caesar II

Becoming Emperor isn't easy; sooner or later, you're going to have to go to war. It pays to know your enemies, so read up.

One of the niftiest elements in *Caesar II* is the way each enemy army presents you with new and different tactics — and greatly varying levels of discipline — as you advance from province to province. The good people at Impressions have provided us with an exclusive order-of-battle summary that should prove invaluable in your quest to become Emperor. (We've ignored the Latin tribes you'll encounter at the start on Sardinia, Corsica, and in Cisalpine Gaul — they're basically rabble and can be handily beaten by any sufficiently numerous cohort).

With a little help from our friends at Impressions, we've gathered detailed intelligence on all your *Caesar II* foes.

CARTHAGINIAN

Tribe: Carthaginians
Home Province: Carthage
Troop types: Light infantry (spearmen) and war elephants
Threat level: Moderate. This is a professional army, and a large one.
Tactics: Carthaginians attack in good order, light infantry in front of elephants.
Roman tactics: Have lots of slingers concentrate fire on the nearest elephants, who will balk and eventually run amok. Then you can cut the light infantry to pieces.

GREEK

Tribe: Greeks
Home Province: Achaea
Troop types: Heavy infantry (pikemen); light infantry (pikemen); missile troops (slingers)
Threat level: Dangerous
Tactics: Light infantry usually attacks ahead of the heavy Hoplites, and those pikes have a long reach. Your chances of victory are slim unless your troops are numerically equal or superior.
Roman tactics: If your slingers can disrupt their light infantry's line, the Greeks may halt to reorganize before the Hoplites can engage. A Roman charge, timed perfectly, may rout them. Try to hit their slingers, too, if you see an opening.

EGYPTIAN

Tribe: Egyptians
Home Province: Aegyptus
Troop types: Heavy infantry (spearmen); light infantry (swordsmen); missile troops (bowmen)
Threat level: Fairly high; these are big formations of disciplined regular troops. Man for man, however, they are mediocre fighters.
Tactics: Egyptians like to try flanking attacks, formed in columns, while their bowmen concentrate on the threatened wing of your army.
Roman tactics: Pre-empt the flanking maneuver by striking the Egyptians while they're in motion. Use the largest columns of heavy infantry and auxiliaries you can muster. Keep out of range of their bowmen as long as you can until their supporting infantry is tired, then attack the bowmen using the tortoise formation.

PARTHIAN

Tribes: Galatians, Armenians, Parthians
Home Provinces: Cappadocia, Armenia, Mesopotamia
Troop types: Cavalry/missile troops (horse-archers); light infantry (swordsmen)
Threat Level: *Very* dangerous.
Tactics: Light infantry will attack first, usually trying to turn one of your wings. They are clad in mail armor, which makes them dangerous in close combat.
Roman tactics: Deal with the light infantry first, even if you must turn your entire wing against them. The horsemen will rarely dismount and come to their aid. Once the light infantry have been neutralized, attack the cavalry in front with two units in tortoise formation, then smite them on the flank with heavy infantry. (Special note: Unless you're experienced and have a very large force, your chances of victory are actually better if you turn command over to the computer!)

NORTH AFRICAN

Tribes: Mauri, Blemmyes
Home Provinces: Mauretania, Cyrenaica, Africa Proconsularis
Troop types: Heavy infantry (spearmen); Light infantry (swordsmen); Missile troops (bowmen)
Threat level: Low
Tactics: Mass attacks that often result in confusion.
Roman tactics: Enter tortoise formation and let them come. Send a column or two after their bowmen, then turn your columns on the infantry mass and strike them in the rear. As soon as the bowmen break and run, order "pursuit."

PHOENICIAN

Tribes: Judians, Phoenicians, Cypriots
Home Provinces: Judea, Syria, Cyprus
Troop types: Light infantry (swordsmen); Missile troops (bowmen)
Threat level: Low
Tactics: Rudimentary
Roman tactics: About the only blunder you can make is a premature charge at the bowmen, who tend to be numerous. Cut down as many of the light infantry as possible to lower

CHEATER'S CORNER

Continued From Page 104

TWILIGHT — Shields Recharged.
FARMERJOE — Warp to level.
BUGGIN — Turbo mode; everything (including enemies) speeded up.
BRUIN — Extra Life.
BIGRED — SuperWowieZowie Weapons (includes ALL weapons).
FLASH — Shows the path to the exit.
AHIMSA — Keeps enemy ships from firing.

Heretic
If you need help getting through Raven's mystic action game *Heretic* just type these codes in while you're playing to give you everything from invincibility to weapons aplenty.

QUICKEN — The same as God Mode in *Doom*. It's the path to invincibility.
MASSACRE — Kills everything on the level.
SKEL — Get keys.
RAMBO — Get full health, armor, and weapons recharge.
ENGAGE — Level warp. Type "engage" and then the number of the level you wish to warp to.

Continued On Page 110

To clear a level of all the enemies in id software's *Heretic*, type the Massacre cheat at any point in the game.

morale, then go all-out for the bowmen. Victory should be yours.

MEDITERRANEAN

Tribes: Macedonians, Thracians, Cretans, Seleucids
Home Provinces: Campania, Macedonia, Creta, Caria, Thracia
Troop types: Heavy infantry (pikemen); Light infantry (pikemen); Missile troops (slingers)
Threat level: Moderate to high
Tactics: Their pikemen are very dangerous in defense. Tie them down with light infantry formed in tortoise, then strike their flank with heavy troops. You can usually ignore their slingers, who are neither numerous nor very good. If you're outnumbered, just form all units into tortoise defense and let the enemy wear himself out. Mediterranean armies rarely try flanking maneuvers, so you can extend light units out from your flanks, in effect "boxing" them in.

TURKISH

Tribes: Cilicians; Bithynians
Home Provinces: Lycia Et Pamphylia, Bithynia Et Pontus
Troop types: Heavy infantry (spearmen); Light infantry (spearmen); Missile troops (bowmen)
Threat level: Low to moderate
Tactics: Their infantry tend to spread out when attacking; don't break your line with flanking maneuvers until the Turks are heavily engaged — the very chaotic nature of their movements makes them unpredictable, and they *will* take advantage of any openings.
Roman tactics: When the Turks are committed fully, flank them with your auxiliaries, then order a methodical advance with your heavies; keep your slingers behind them and advance them in step with the heavies.

SLAVIC

Tribes: Dalmatians, Scordiscans
Home Provinces: Illyricum, Dacia
Troop types: Heavy infantry (swordsmen); Light infantry (spearmen); Missile troops (axemen)
Threat level: Pushovers
Tactics: Disorganized attacks, often aimed at slinger units.
Roman tactics: Just remember to protect your slingers with an infantry screen, and they'll wreak havoc at close range.

IBERIAN

Tribes: Celtiberians; Sicilians
Home Provinces: Hispania Tarraconensis, Baetica, Lusitania, Sicila
Troop types: Heavy infantry (swordsmen); Light infantry (spearmen); Missile troops (bowmen)
Threat level: Low
Tactics: They'll attempt to outflank you, but usually get disorganized in the process. They tend to appear in large numbers, however, so don't get lazy.
Roman tactics: As soon as the Iberian flanking movement loses cohesion (their troops will more or less mill around aimlessly), smash them with columns of heavy infantry. Station a century of infantry behind your slingers, and move them to intercept any threatening Iberians.

GAULISH

Tribe: Gauls
Home Provinces: Gallia Narbonensis, Gallia Lugudunensis, Aquitania
Troop types: Heavy infantry (swordsmen); light infantry (spearmen); Missile troops (bowmen)
Threat level: Generally low, but their ferocity can make them dangerous
Tactics: Reckless, precipitate attacks. Flanking attempts quickly become disorganized, but their numerous heavy infantry can go berserk and do lots of damage.
Roman tactics: Keep your wings strong and you should be all right. You might also consider a "sucker play" — withdraw just before the Gauls make contact — the farther they have to advance, the more confused they become.

GERMANIC

Tribes: Pannoniae, Chatti, Frisians
Home Provinces: Pannonia, Germania Superior, Germania Inferior
Troop types: Heavy infantry (swordsmen); Light infantry (spearmen); Missile troops (axemen)
Threat level: Moderately dangerous
Tactics: They will close quickly and charge with their axemen.
Roman tactics: Form your men with a couple of columns on each wing — light infantry will do, if you can't spare any heavies. Move one column out to intercept flankers, use the other to hit the enemy center when it's still two-three squares away from contact; hopefully, this will take the steam out of the axemens' assault. If you're greatly outnumbered, form all units into a tortoise and move the whole cohort off-center, throwing the Germans off-balance.

The Picts are some of the most formidable enemies you'll encounter in *Caesar II*, but like all barbarians, they can't maintain a tight formation.

BRITON

Tribe: Britons
Home Province: Britannia
Troop types: Heavy infantry (swordsmen); light infantry (swordsmen); Missile troops (bowmen)
Threat level: Extremely high
Tactics: British armies are disciplined and skilled tacticians, and are quite adept at flanking maneuvers. Their bowmen are both numerous and lethal and tend to appear in large numbers.
Roman tactics: Brave as they are, they're still barbarians, and they tend to become disorganized. Your best bet is to hit them in the flanks before they can hit you in the center. Despite the rain of arrows you must endure, avoid direct attacks on their archers until you've broken their infantry.

PICT

Tribe: Picts
Home Provinces: Caledonia, Hibernia

CHEATER'S CORNER

Continued From Page 109

KITTY — This will let you walk through walls just like IDCLIP does in *Doom II* — just be sure to turn it off when you want to pick up an item or activate a switch.
COCKADOODLEDOO — We're not going to say what this one does, but you'll certainly get a laugh when you try it out.

Since *Hexen*, the sequel to *Heretic*, is filled with bigger, badder monsters just aching to rip your lungs out, keep these codes handy.

Hexen

While *Hexen* is another one of the hot new games that arrived too late for review in this issue, we're happy to report that Raven's highly anticipated sequel to *Heretic* brings a whole host of new baddies waiting to grind unsuspecting wizards, warriors, and clerics into dust. So if you're like us and need a little assistance getting through those tough levels, we've provided this list of the cheat codes for the commercial version.

SATAN — God mode.
NRA — All weapons.
LOCKSMITH — All keys.

Continued On Page 112

COULD ZILLIONS OF DROOLING PYTHON ZEALOTS BE WRONG?

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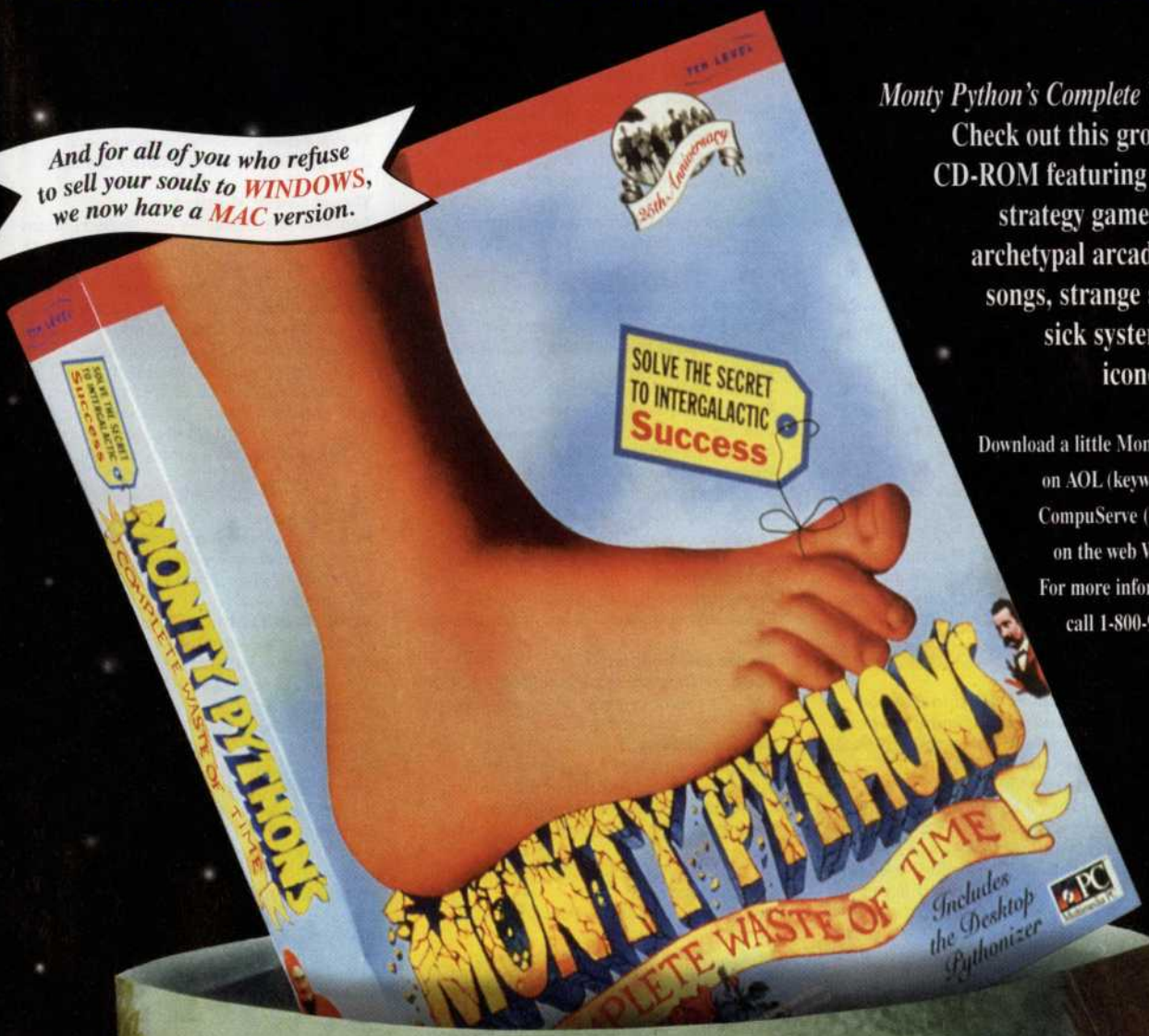

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7th LEVEL

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Product Information Number 82

Your arie approaches another on the road. If they're Dalmatians or Scordiscans, you're fine — if they're Huns, brace yourself.

Troop types: Heavy infantry (swordsmen); light infantry (swordsmen); Missile troops (bowmen)
Threat level: Deadly
Tactics: The Picts are bad news; they can outflank, they like to mount quick sorties against your missile units, and they fight like demons.
Roman tactics: If you're in Brittania, hire lots of Mauri bowmen and try to thin out the Pictish ranks as they advance. Use light infantry in tortoise to break up their charge, then deliver short, sharp ripostes with your heavy formations. Always protect your slingers — Picts are drawn to them like iron filings to a magnet. And don't even *think* about attacking their archers until you settle the hash of their heavy infantry. Your only real advantage against this valorous foe is the fact that they can't maintain a tight formation. Capitalize on that in any way you can, but be ready for a brutal engagement.

ALAMANNI

Tribe: Alamanni
Home Province: Noricum Exterior
Troop types: Heavy infantry (swordsmen); Light infantry (spearmen); Missile troops (axemen)
Threat level: Moderate
Tactics: They'll try to close with their axemen, and if you let them, there will be great slaughter and loss of morale.
Roman tactics: Try shallow flanking attacks to slow them down, but put the center of your line in tortoise formation. If you can avoid the full impact of their axemen, and can inflict even moderate losses, the Alamanni tend to loose heart very quickly. When their morale declines, deliver another flank attack.

ARAB

Tribe: Arabs
Home Province: None — they appear along the silk trade routes in many areas.
Troop types: Heavy infantry (spearmen); Light infantry (spearmen) Missile troops (bowmen)
Threat Level: Very dangerous
Tactics: Arab armies tend to have huge contingents of archers. Very dangerous at a distance, the bowmen are also impetuous and tend to break formation.
Roman tactics: Of course, when the archers are moving, they aren't shooting. Keep your men out of range and wait for that moment. Without their bowmens' support, Arab infantry can be crushed.

NUMIDIAN

Tribes: Numidians
Home Province: The sea; they *are* pirates
Troop types: heavy infantry (spearmen); Light infantry (swordsmen)
Threat level: Variable, but usually high
Tactics: The large number of heavy infantry and high level of zeal makes the Numidians formidable raiders.
Roman tactics: Unless you have absolute numerical superiority, let the computer handle these battles.

VANDAL

Tribe: Vandals
Troop types: Cavalry/missile troops (horse-archers); Heavy infantry (swordsmen)
Threat level: Variable
Tactics: Their swordsmen usually attack first, but tend to retreat when counterattacked by heavy infantry.
Roman tactics: Tortoise formations will blunt their attacks. Once you've broken their infantry, try to surround the horse-archers from all sides, advancing your units in tortoise formation.

VISIGOTH

Tribe: Visigoths
Home Provinces: Dacia Exterior, Asia Exterior
Troop types: Cavalry/missile troops (horse-archers); Heavy infantry (swordsmen)
Threat level: High
Tactics: Visigoth tactics are basically similar to those of the Parthian regulars. Any maneuver a regular army can perform, they can perform, so expect anything.
Roman tactics: Fortunately, you won't encounter them often until you're promoted to Emperor; if you choose to invade one of their home provinces, expect a long, arduous campaign. Since their own tactics are so flexible, and their fighting proficiency so great, your best option is simple numerical superiority.

HUN

Tribe: Huns
Home Province: None — they can appear anywhere along the silk trade routes.
Troop types: Cavalry/missile troops (horse-archers); Heavy infantry (swordsmen)
Threat Level: Murderous
Tactics: The Huns are very skilled at combined-arms operations, mixing archers and infantry, keeping formations, timing their moves with uncanny skill.
Roman tactics: Better let the computer handle these encounters. If your ego demands personal control, however, form a line and a column to deal with their swordsmen, form the rest of your men into a compact mass, in tortoise formation, and try to cut through to their horse-archers just as soon as they start firing.

SAXON

Tribe: Saxons
Home Province: Germania Exterior
Troop types: Heavy infantry (swordsmen); Light infantry (swordsmen); Missile troops (bowmen)
Threat level: Extremely dangerous
Tactics: Saxon armies combine the ferocity of a barbarian army with the discipline of seasoned regulars.
Roman tactics: Bring along as many archers/slingers as you can. Saxon missile formations tend to be small and can be smothered with Roman firepower. Meet their infantry attack with strong formations on both wings, and extend them early in the fight. If you can distract them with these flanking attacks, your heavy infantry, in the center, may — and I emphasize "may" — be able to push them back. Once again, numerical superiority is highly desirable, but a fight with the Saxons is always going to be a desperate and dicey enterprise.

—William R. Trotter

CHEATER'S CORNER

Continued From Page 110

INDIANA — 25 of each artifact.
CASPER — No clipping mode.
DELIVERANCE — Pig mode.
WHERE — Display your coordinates.

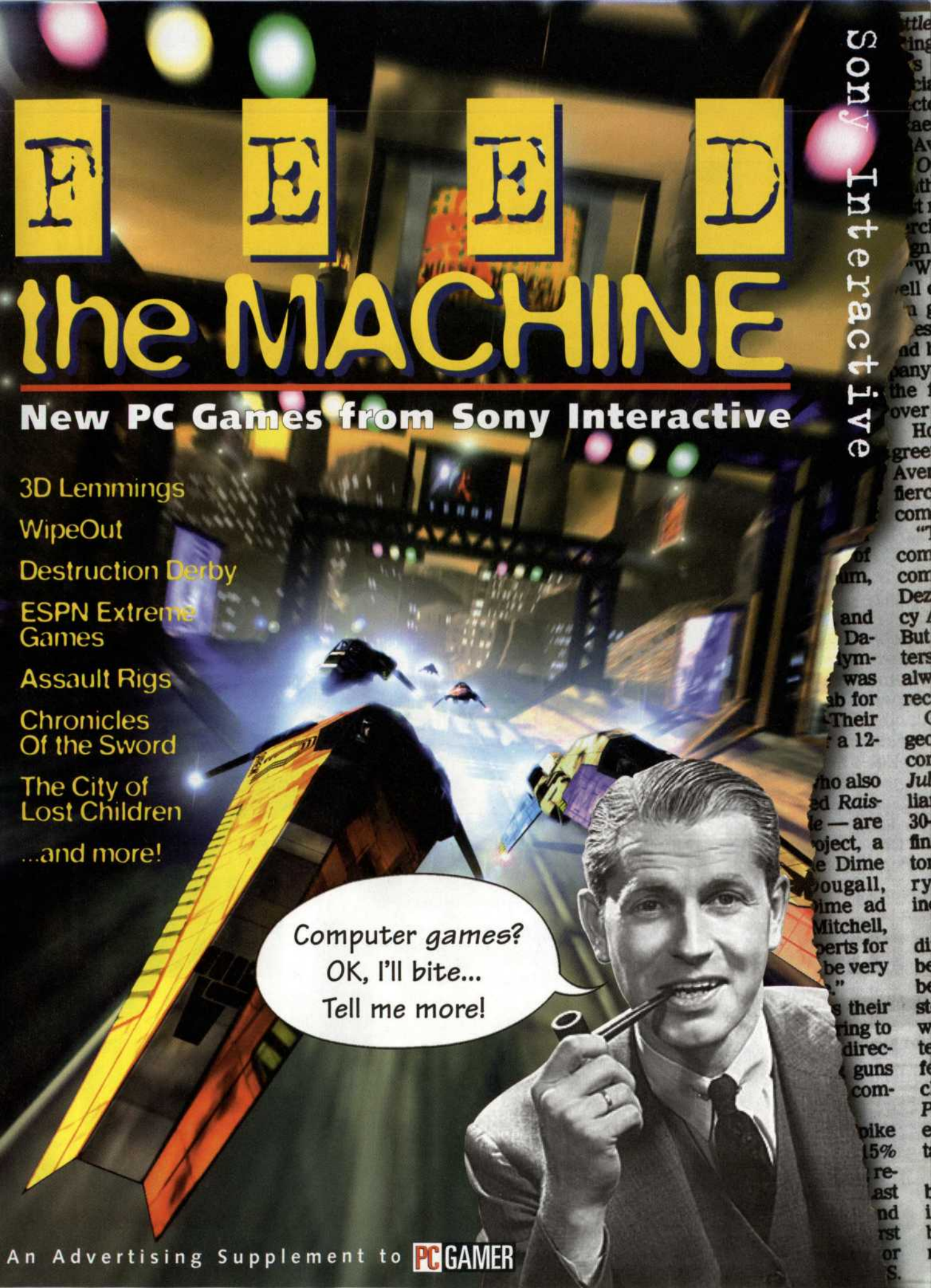
Jazz Jackrabbit

To enable these cheats, you'll need to pause the game by pressing the P key, then hit the Backspace key before you type in the code for the cheat you want to enable.
Note: In some versions you have to add the letters **DD** before each cheat.

Even fun arcade games need a cheat now and again, and we've got a lot of extra gameplay out of these for Epic's *Jazz Jackrabbit*.

SABLE — Turn Jazz red and get a big increase in speed.
CSTRIKE — Gives you a flying surfboard.
BAD — Gives you the escort bird.
DOOM — Makes the enemies tougher.
KEN — Exit to DOS.
HOOKER — Collect a gem.
MARK — Kills Jazz.
APOGEE — 16 color mode which runs at half the speed.
LAMER — Skip the current level.
HOCUS — Teleport around the current level.
BOUF — Become invincible.
GUNHED — Get all weapons.

Continued On Page 129


FEED
the MACHINE
New PC Games from Sony Interactive
Sony Interactive
3D Lemmings
WipeOut
Destruction Derby
ESPN Extreme Games
Assault Rigs
Chronicles Of the Sword
The City of Lost Children
...and more!
Computer games? OK, I'll bite... Tell me more!
An Advertising Supplement to PC GAMER

NOW SHOWING

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WipeOut

"Why must Daddy drive like that?
It makes my tummy ever so woozy!"

p.6

Destruction Derby

Where repressed commuters go to unwind

p.8

ESPN Extreme Sports

Finally, sports that can really hurt you.

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3D Lemmings

Suicidally yours...

Coming Soon...

Assault Rigs
The "Do Unto Others" game

Chronicles of the Sword
The real Camelot — more faithful to Arthur than his wife was, that's for sure.

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The City of Lost Children
Not nearly as grim as it sounds...

Sentient
Murder: Because some things never change

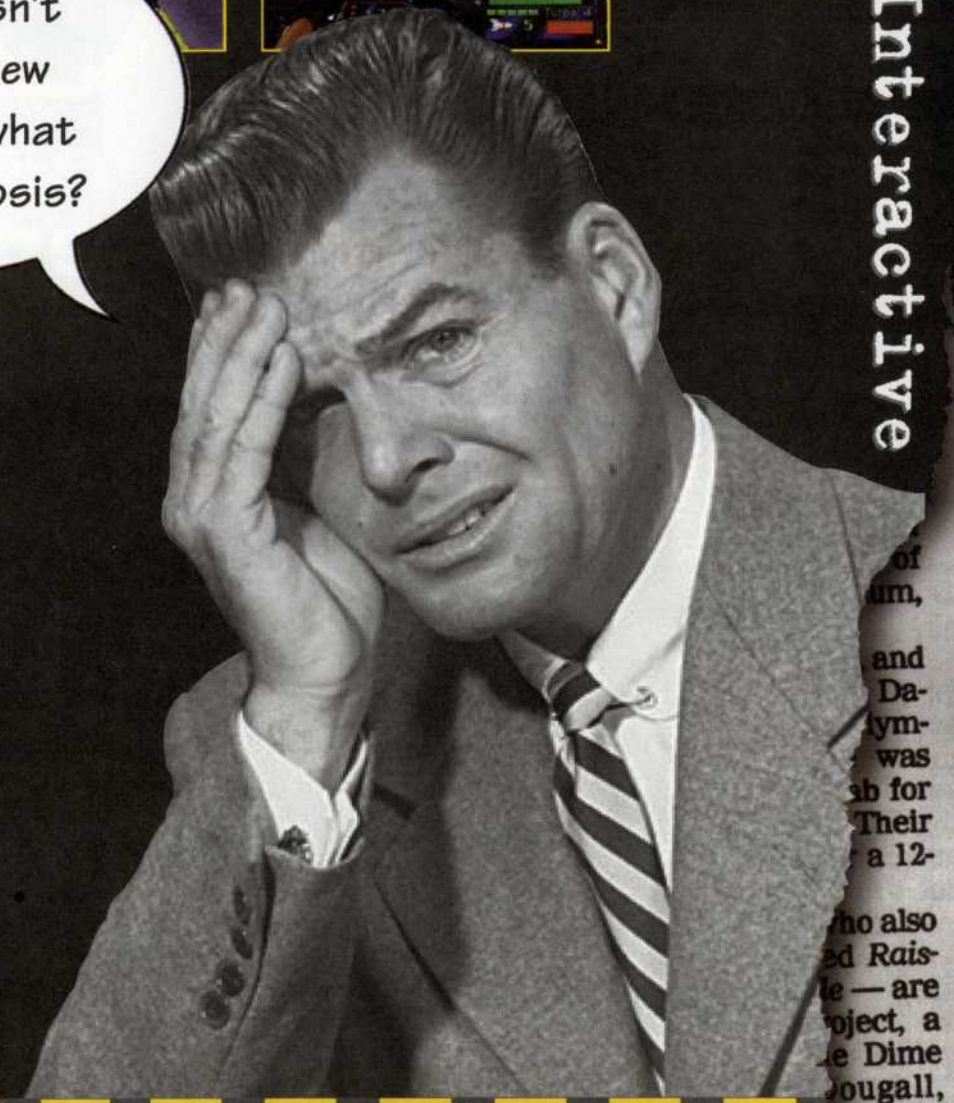
Simon the Sorcerer 2
Can spell-casting substitute for common sense?

PLUS:

- Krazy Ivan
- PowerSports Soccer
- WarHawk
- Twisted Metal
- Eastern Minds: The Lost Soul of Tong Nou

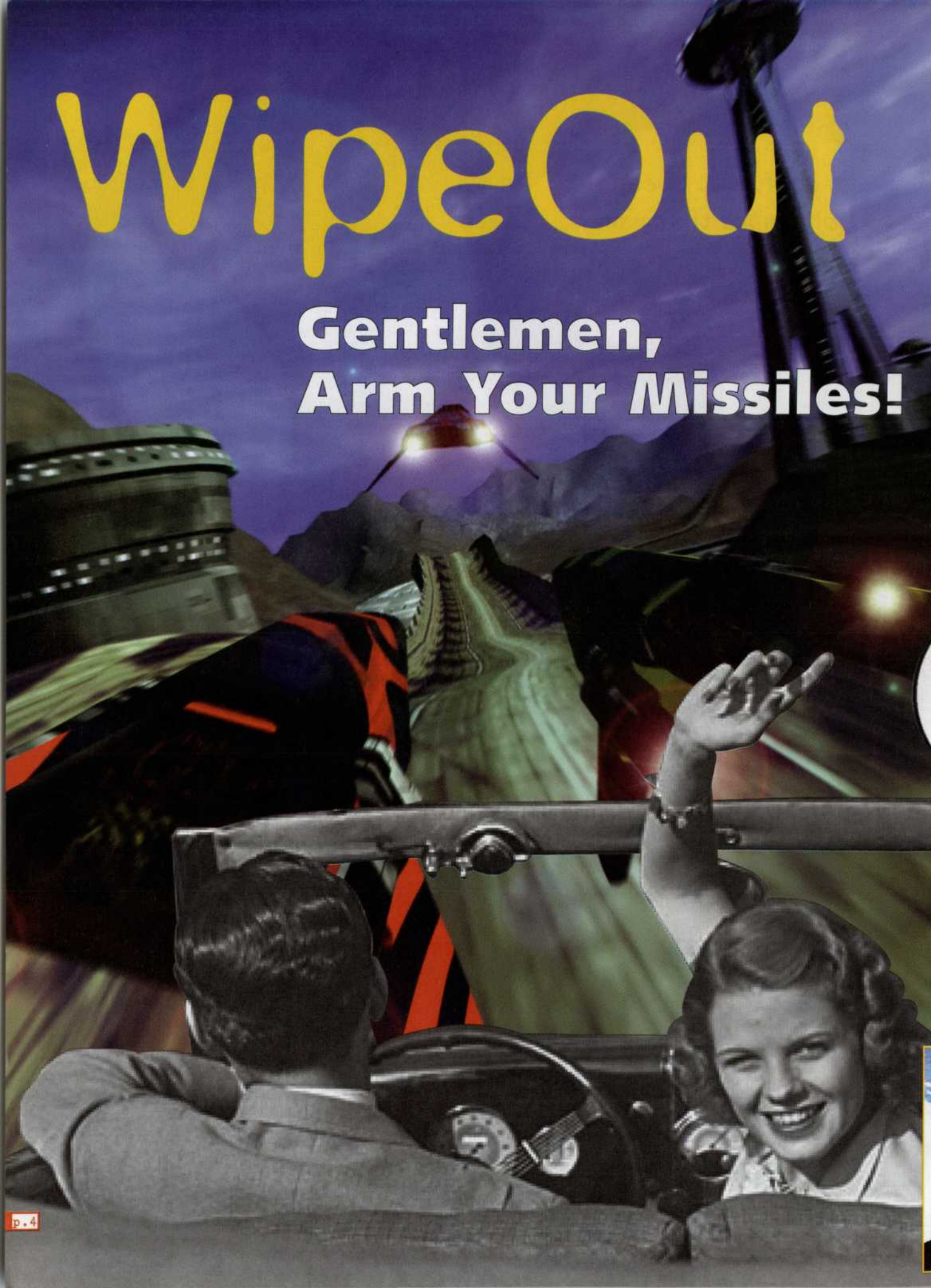
Sony Interactive

I'm confused. Doesn't Sony make that new PlayStation? And what happened to Psygnosis?



Psygnosis

The company that brought you PC favorites — like Lemmings, Ecstatica, and NovaStorm, to name a few — is now part of Sony Interactive. And yes, Sony is the company behind the PlayStation, today's hottest, most advanced videogame system. But Sony is just as committed to bringing great games to the PC as they are to creating cutting-edge PlayStation titles, as you'll see over the next several pages. In fact, with all the high-end design work coming out of Sony Interactive, PC gaming may never be the same...


WipeOut
Gentlemen,
Arm Your Missiles!

In the future, it's victory at all costs

Welcome to the Formula 3600 Anti-Gravity Racing League. And good luck — you'll need it if you hope to survive WipeOut, the fastest, roughest, most impressive racing game of all time. Boasting fast-forward 3D graphics and a frame-rate that'll make you feel as though you're in the game, WipeOut redefines not one, but two old concepts: Motion Sickness and Shell-shock.

Gosh, honey, you were right! Reckless driving *is* fun!

WipeOut features six entirely unique courses, each designed and rendered to provide one-of-a-kind 3D action. You'll leap across chasms, slide through hair-pin turns, and slap your vehicle through relentless twists and turns — all to the pounding sound of digital techno tracks.

You'd wouldn't last even a single lap on a WipeOut track driving your old Ford Escort (although it would be fun to try). The key to this game's high-speed intensity is gravity — or rather the lack of it. You take to the track in one of eight Anti-Gravity craft, each with its own strengths and liabilities. Each craft is armed to the teeth, but there's a catch: You have to cruise over a Weapons Grid to activate your weapons, and only one weapons system can be activated at a time.

Obviously, you're gonna have to make every shot count!

p.5

Destruction Derby

No Rules...No Limits... No Checkpoints...

You know what we're talking about. You're driving home, and some idiot in a souped-up Plymouth Duster cuts you off. You have to slam on your breaks to avoid hitting him — but what you'd really like to do is punch the accelerator and drive his ass right into a ditch! Well, now you're gonna get that chance. You'll not only get to hit other motorists on purpose, but you'll score points for doing it! It's a little thing we like to call Destruction Derby, the ultimate in race-driving thrills.

Finally, a chance to drive the way you really want to!

Destruction Derby has been called the best title yet for the PlayStation, and it comes to the PC with all the fender-bending features that have made it such a hit. The graphics are phenomenal, and accurately track the damage to your car and every other on the road — an impressive feat, considering the absolute mayhem of every race! Exploding debris and smoke add to the game's authenticity — and ensure a good adrenaline rush every time you play.

As impressive as the look of the game is the physical model behind it. Your car just feels right as you accelerate, slamming into some slob's quarter panel and sending him into a full spin (you'll get big points for that!). You slam on the brakes and throw it into reverse, steering hard to the right — and your car responds just as it would in real life. That accuracy is thanks to a unique 3D engine by Reflections, the design team that created Destruction Derby. They also designed Psygnosis' Shadow of the Beast series.

You have your choice of racing styles, too. There's wreckin' racing, stock car racing, time trials, and pure destruction derby madness in store — all with plenty of emphasis on mayhem, of course.

ESPN Extreme Games

Radical Road Racing
*Bactine not included

Considerably more exciting than swimming

Another PlayStation mega-hit! ESPN Extreme Games is road-racing at its most outrageous, featuring four of today's hottest new sports. You'll get to do some inline skating, mountain-biking, skateboarding, and even street-luging, all in fully realized 3D worlds.

Yeah, yeah, these sports can be dangerous. You might scrape yourself up pretty good if you fall — or if one of your competitors comes along and knocks you to the asphalt. But the good news is that you can inflict as much pain as you'll endure, punching and kicking anyone who gets close enough to reach. There are three difficulty levels so that you can tailor the action to suit your skills, and even an option to race alone for best times.

ESPN National Hockey Night

The big names. The real teams. And ESPN's Bill Clement calling the action. You'll only find this combination in ESPN National Hockey Night, the most realistic hockey sim on the shelves.

ESPN National Hockey Night has the licenses from both the NHL and the NHL Players Association, so you know it's as close to the real thing as you can get.

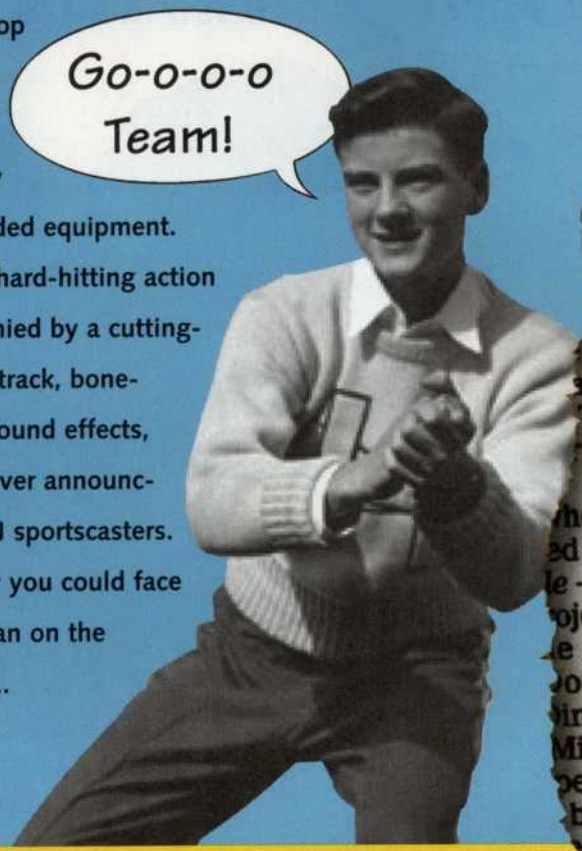
Play alone or with a friend — either head-to-head or cooperatively — in single games or a complete 84-game season. Either way, you'll have the full stats and rosters of all 26 NHL teams at your disposal — both the '93-'94 and '94-'95 seasons.

The action on the ice is as realistic as the stats, thanks to accurate player and puck physics. Add full CD-quality audio, and you'll swear you really are facing off against Mark Messier!

You can race on five courses, covering locations from all over the world — San Francisco, Lake Tahoe, South America, Rome, or Utah. No matter where you race, though, you'll be treated to incredible sights and some unique challenges.

Whether you skate, bike, luge, or board will depend on the type of terrain you face. Each racing form has its own strengths and special moves, making some better suited to the various road courses than others. Performance is vital, because you can compete in a season-long event, collecting money for top finishes with which you can buy new, upgraded equipment.

All the hard-hitting action is accompanied by a cutting-edge soundtrack, bone-crunching sound effects, and voice-over announcing by ESPN sportscasters. Now if only you could face Chris Berman on the street luge...

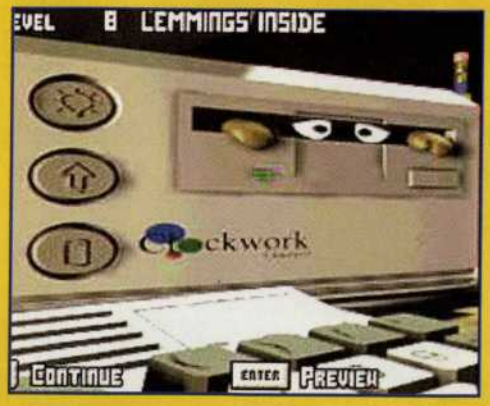


NBA Airborne '95

It's pure monster-jam action! NBA Airborne '95 is two-on-two basketball, and lets you choose from 81 of the biggest stars in the game, representing all 27 teams. You can pick and choose from among the best, assembling an all-star dream-team of your very own for fast-paced, full-court NBA action.

The game also feature full-motion video clips and ESPN scouting reports on all the featured players, and an SVGA option for super-sharp graphics on the court. And of course, there's support for two players — competitive or cooperative. This is the NBA at its best!

Even in 3D, Lemmings just aren't too bright...



The Lemmings games have sold millions of copies and won awards all over the world, making them the undisputed champs among PC puzzlers. Throughout the series, the basics have remained the same: You have to help guide a hoarde of lime-topped rodents to safety because, if you don't, they'll walk right into the jaws of death. Lemmings aren't very bright, you know.

Now, the Lemmings face a whole new dimension filled with potentially horrible deaths as they make their debut in 3D Lemmings, the most ambitious title in the series. It's the same addictive premise, but this time around you'll have to manuever in three dimensions if you're to keep those lovable mop-tops from harm. Even if you consider yourself a Lemmings master, 3D Lemmings is sure to challenge. And if you've never played with Lemmings before, this is the perfect time to get hooked!

Although you're now herding Lemmings through a three-dimensional world, the game's multiple camera angles ensure that you can get just the right perspective on the action. There are four cameras placed strategically throughout the environment, as well as a Virtual Lemming view that'll let you experience life from the Lemmings' perspective.

3D Lemmings is as playable as ever, but that third dimension guarantees mind-boggling new dilemmas sure to challenge even the most experienced Lemmings wrangler. Looking around each deviously designed level is almost as much fun as the game itself, as each is fully 3D modeled and complete in every detail. And with new features like trampolines that'll send Lemmings soaring through the air (and often into hot lava), just watching the action unfold — zooming around the environment with the fully positionable cameras — is pure joy.

The new game features 20 training levels, variable difficulty settings, 100 new puzzles, and nine fully rendered Lemmings skills. Bottom line? The worlds best puzzler is now even better.

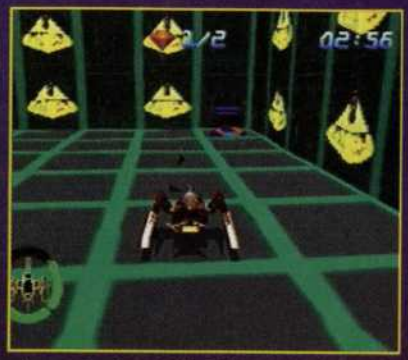
Coming Soon...

Assault Rigs

The "Do Unto Others" game

If you love 3D shooters, you can't afford to miss Assault Rigs, a stylized game of corporate-sponsored competition. In the future, the world's most beloved sport is Assault Rigs — a kill-or-be-killed network game played out in a high-tech cyber-arena where death or glory await those Rig jockeys brave enough to risk it all.

The exciting premise is brought to life with real-life vehicle physics, unique wire-frame and textured graphics, and an arsenal that would make most third-world nations envious. Each



stage in Assault Rigs features multiple levels, with ramps, push-blocks, and elevators for true three-dimensional action.

The game features over 40 huge mazes to explore, set in four different environments: Hybrid VR, Steam Punk, Military and World at War. Each environment has three dedicated interactive rigs for the player to control, each with its own distinct physical characteristics.

Down the Road...

Here are a few other killer games — and while they're still a ways off, you won't want to miss a single one of them!

Krazy Ivan

A gun-slinging slice of Mother Russia, Krazy Ivan is an intense first-person shooter. Our hero, Ivan, is a bolts-for-brains Russian soldier sent to counter an alien invasion. How can one man stand a chance of surviving the mission? Well, Ivan's 40-foot suit of cybernetic battle armor should even the odds... Ivan's battle armor can be tailored to suit any playing style. You can sacrifice armor for speed and agility, or become a walking munitions platform — it's all up to you. The game will have you blasting texture-mapped aliens across five distinct battle zones — Russia, the Middle East, Europe, the U.S., and Japan — and you can expect pure action every step of the way.

Chronicles of the Sword

The real Camelot — more faithful to Arthur than his wife was, that's for sure.

Sony Interactive

From designers DCD Ltd comes Chronicles of the Sword, a sweeping, three-dimensional graphic adventure that's as faithful to Arthurian legend as it is involving, complex, and beautiful. The game's designers spent countless hours researching both the history and folklore concerning the once and future king, all in a quest for the ultimate in authenticity and compelling storyline.

It all takes place in a vast, completely developed game world with dozens of locations and characters — displayed in stunning SVGA with up to 32,768 colors. You'll match wits with the evil Morgana; battle foes — human and otherwise — with an innovative combat interface; even come face to face with a gigantic dragon.

Chronicles of the Sword also boasts a true cinematic look and feel, complete with dynamic musical score, that'll bring the legend of Arthur to life like no other source has. And the almost invisible game interface guarantees that nothing will come between you and this incredible account of Camelot.

PowerSports Soccer

It's the world's most popular sport, and it's coming to the PC like you've never seen it before in PowerSports Soccer. Achieving just the right balance between gameplay and realism, PowerSports Soccer lets you test your skills through three leagues — and if you're victorious, you can try for the European Cup.

Cutting-edge graphics are the real stars of the game; all the latest motion-capture techniques have been used to give the 3D-modeled players an amazing realism and fluidity you just have to see to believe. The game's stats base is just as impressive, with extensive management options and a complete database of teams from all over Europe. This is the real deal, sports fans...

The City of Lost Children

Not nearly as grim as it sounds...

In an astounding post-industrial future, a strange man named Krank lives alone on an abandoned oil rig. He's growing old at a remarkable rate because he's lost the ability to dream, and out of desperation he begins kidnapping children, hoping to somehow slow his aging and even regain his lost youth.

Based on Marco Caro's upcoming film by the same name, The City of Lost Children will cast you in the role of One, a loner whose little brother has disappeared. You must find your brother, and to succeed you'll have to enlist the aid of Miette, the young leader of a band of orphans whose friendship will grow as the adventure progresses.

Along the way, One will meet and deal with countless bizarre characters and explore a truly unforgettable world. High-res graphics, 3D-modeled people and locales, and full voice acting complete this one-of-a-kind adventure.

Sentient

Murder: Because some things never change...

A sun, a space station, a plague, a photograph, a crash-landing, a case of mistaken identity, a murder, a resurrection, a haunting dream, another murder, a mask, a race against time, and a handful of terrible truths.

Sentient is an interactive adventure unlike any you've ever experienced. The breathtaking graphics, top-quality soundtrack and voice acting, and engrossing storyline will suck you in — and the quest for ultimate truth will compel you to keep playing until you've unraveled the many secrets that lie ahead.

WarHawk

What could be better than flying realistically-modeled, futuristic aircraft? Flying futuristic aircraft with big guns, of course — and that's what WarHawk is all about. You'll pilot assault aircraft against both air and ground targets, enjoying full 360 degree freedom of movement through a 3D world.

But make no mistake: the emphasis here is on action. WarHawk serves up gut-wrenching battles and high-speed maneuvers that'll please even the most ravenous appetite for destruction.

Simon the Sorcerer 2

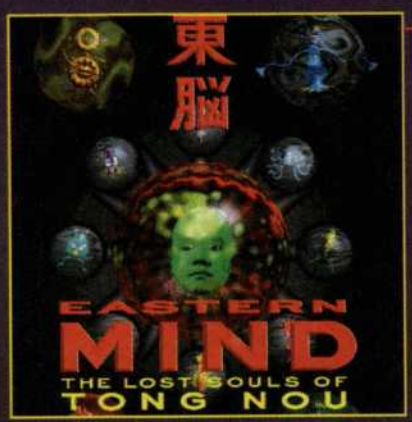
Can magic substitute for common sense?

The original Simon the Sorcerer pulled thousands of fans into the tongue-in-cheek world of Simon Woodroffe, renowned author and game-developer. Now Woodroffe and his character, the normal teenager turned wizard Simon, are back with Simon the Sorcerer II: The Lion, The Wizard, and the Wardrobe.

The game will feature over 100 game characters, and challenge you with more than 80 different settings. More than just a sequel, Simon II incorporates the suggestions of the those who played the first game to take the series to a new level. Scrolling backgrounds, an enhanced interface, and thousands of animations make Simon II even better than its predecessor. One thing that hasn't changed, though, is Woodroffe's gift for storytelling and outrageous humor — the qualities that set this adventure apart from the crowd.

Eastern Mind: The Lost Soul of Tong Nou

Sometimes, you've got to die to win



One of Japan's most popular CD-ROM titles comes to The States! It's Eastern Mind: The Lost Souls of Tong Nou, from multimedia artist Osamu Sato.

Eastern Mind is based on the philosophy of reincarnation, and centers around one soul's struggle to evolve, through death and rebirth, and achieve a higher spiritual existence. And since reincarnation is so much a part of the game, you'll actually have to die no less than nine times to succeed.

All this is couched in a true multimedia environment of original music, inspired graphics, and detailed character interaction.

Twisted Metal

Big-city drivin' was never so much fun! Twisted Metal puts you behind the wheel of your choice of 12 high-tech vehicles — ranging from ice-cream trucks to taxi cabs! Each is heavily armed and armored, though, so you won't have to worry about taking any crap as you make your way through the city.

You can view the action from four playing perspectives, including a dashboard view that affords that you-are-there feeling, and a blimp view for top-down, big-picture detail. Multi-player options mean you won't have to drive alone. Talk about car-pooling!

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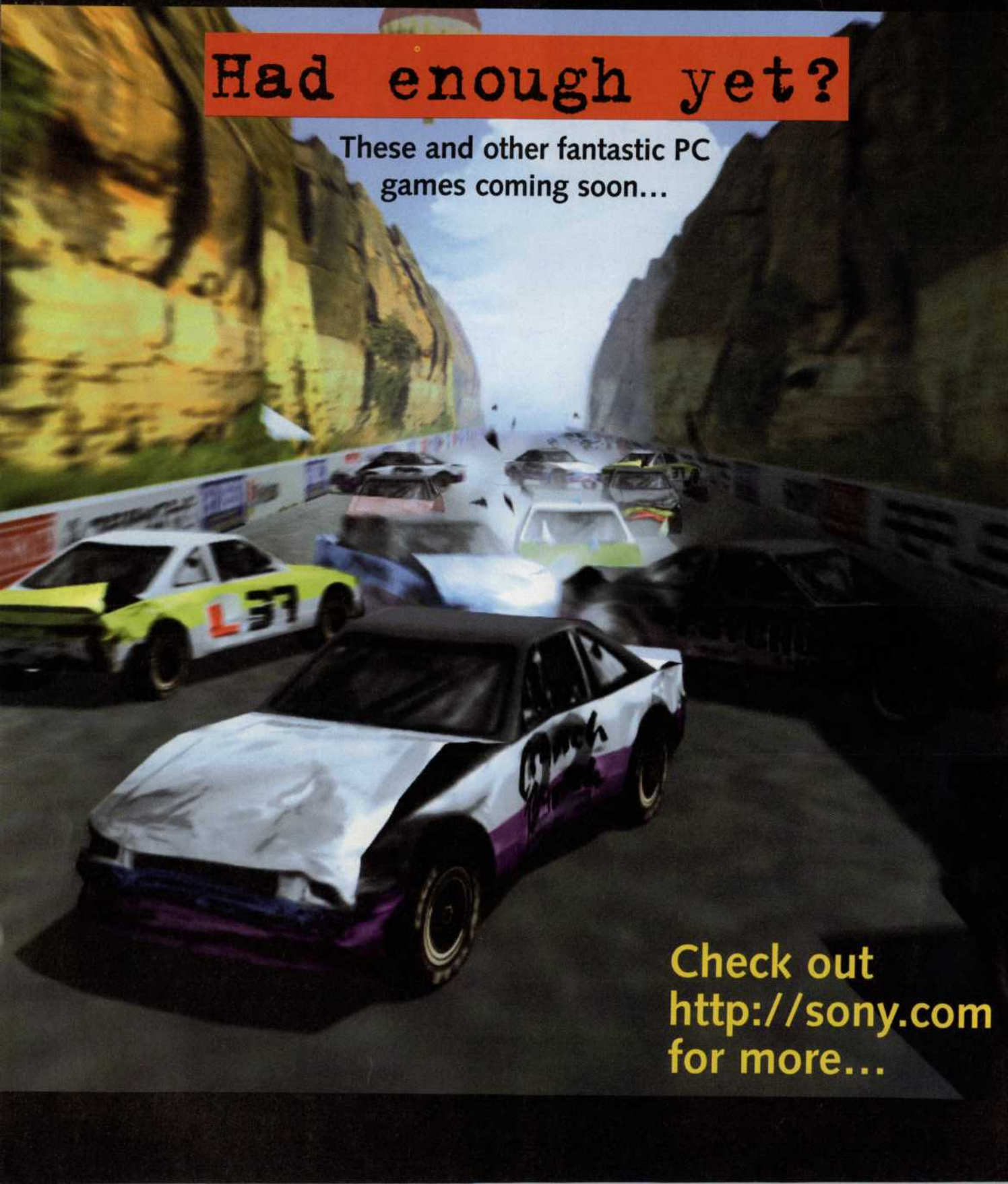
Sony Interactive



Capitalism

The love of money is the root of all evil; but losing it is pretty bad, too.

Capitalism — both in the simulation and in the real world — is tough business. Shifting supplies of materials and goods, fluid demand for products, and ruthless rivals threaten your career at every step. Sure, you've got a few million to bankroll your budding empire, but pitfalls are everywhere. Just ask Ted Turner. (Well, ask someone else — it *does* seem pretty easy for Ted.)

If you're going broke playing Interactive Magic's excellent business sim, you'll want to study these tips.

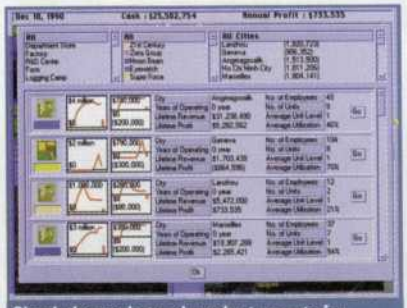
Retail First

The fastest way to get some cash flowing in is to open a department store. The investment is minimal, and if you pick the right products, you can establish enough revenue to fund more ambitious projects.

When you launch your career, let a day or two pass before you start spending money. Don't jump on the first products to show up in the seaports. By waiting a day or two, you'll have a better selection of goods. Go for the consumer goods, especially necessity items like furniture and diapers. Build a department store and set up the units to buy and sell the goods you've chosen.

Now check the stock market information for your company. The share price will be very low. That will change quickly, so move now; issue some additional shares, then buy them up with your funds from your personal account.

Fast-forward the game (Y key). The stock price for your company's shares will jump rapidly. Issue more shares — causing the price to drop — then make another purchase from your personal funds. Now, as revenues increase, you'll be in a position to reap the rewards.



Check the market and product reports for opportunities to move in with your own lower-priced or higher-quality products.

Farming for Fun and Profit

If you start with enough capital — more than $10 million — you can take control of the production end of your budding business. Find a city near a seaport that's importing consumer goods. Build a farm near the city to raise cattle and produce meat products.

Along with department stores, farms are the best means of generating capital early in the game. And if you have a competitor in your city who's selling a product that you can produce on a farm, you can contract to sell to your rival. As a supplier to your competitors, you'll be able to determine the retail price of their products.

The placement of farms and manufacturing facilities is critical. The closer the suppliers are to your factories, the higher your profits will be. Ideally, use your farms to produce materials that can be used in more than one product. For example, build a farm to produce meat products from cattle and sheep.

Take advantage of every opportunity available in terms of geography and production potential. Back to that farm where you're producing mutton, leather, and wool. If the area will support cotton, grow it on the same farm. Now, a nearby factory will have everything it needs to produce sweaters, shoes, and leather jackets.

Research Is Essential

A little money spent on research goes a long way. When you can research raw materials, such as textiles, go for it. Research on a consumer good enhances the quality of that product alone, but money spent on raw material research will boost the quality of every product that uses that material in production.

It Pays to Advertise

After you get a few production links and retail outlets, fork over some advertising dollars. Don't rush in blindly, though. Remember, if a competitor is selling the same product in the same market, your advertising will build awareness of your rival's product, too. In that situation, the best way to distinguish your own product is through private labeling. Once you build brand awareness, open a second department store in the city. You'll gain market share and be better able to control prices.

Crushing the Competition

Try your hand at the stock market as another means of building your bank account. Make your moves early in your career, when your competitors are starting out. Check out the corporate summary and find out which of your rivals is making money. Early on, their stock will be cheap. Buy a big chunk of a profitable company, then watch the cash roll in.

Your rival CEOs have different areas of expertise, and you should take advantage of their skills. For example, if a rival is an ace retailer (with an expertise rating in the 90s), try to supply him with product for his department stores. You know he'll sell the product, and you'll both profit. If a competitor is a fantastic farmer, then strike a deal to buy her product; it's bound to be quality stuff.

—Lee Buchanan

CHEATER'S CORNER

Continued From Page 112

Magic Carpet and Magic Carpet 2

To enable the cheats for the original *Magic Carpet*, you need to bring your carpet to a complete stop (or simply type the cheat at the beginning of a level), and type I. You'll be presented with a prompt under the status bar where you can type in a message. To activate the cheats, type "ratty." Now all you need to do is use the following key combinations to make you the most powerful wizard around.

For *Magic Carpet 2*, type "windy" at the prompt to enable the cheats. The Alt + Function keys work the same as in the original *Magic Carpet*.

Wipe out those nasty beaties in *Magic Carpet* by setting the trees and fields on fire.

Alt + F1 — gives you all the spells.
Alt + F2 — gives you more mana.
Alt + F6 — complete healing.
Alt + F7 — kills creatures on level.
shift + C — completes the level.

To jump from one level to another, type CARPET at the prompt followed by the level number (1—50), and you're off!

Continued On Page 131

OUT OF YOUR MIND...

AND IN YOUR FACE!

Immerse yourself in a strange culture full of mystery, magic and deception. All is not what it seems in this bizzare and alien world. Who is friend... who is foe? What has happened to the missing Druid? Which path is safe to choose? Find your answers by exploring this "feature length" story in a three dimensional world. ● Action-based combat system ● Intuitive point-and-click interface ● Over 100 fully rendered 3D locations in SVGA ● Over 10,000 frames of animated cut-scenes ● Progressive nonlinear story with multiple endings ● Seamless animations of characters and creatures ● Rich musical score, sound effects, and speech ● Ready-made male or female characters will start you off instantly, or create your own ● Isometric overhead view of a 3D world ● Featuring a single character party

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Product Information Number 181

Command & Conquer

The war between the GDI and the Nod rages on, but our spies have gone behind the lines to find data that will help you win the war. Many *PCG* brethren died bringing you this information, so use it wisely.

No matter which side you align yourself with, this war is going to be bloody, tough, and extremely dangerous. But there are some basic rules of war you can implement to help you win any battle you encounter.

• Build two harvesters to bring in money faster.

• Don't buy silos; they're a waste of money. You can accumulate money without filling up your tiberium refinery. If you build an expensive item, then cancel it just before it's ready, the refinery will show a depletion in tiberium, and you get all of your money back.

• Build a communications center to give you a satellite view of the battlefield.

• Capture enemy buildings. From there, you can reap the benefits of having the buildings, sell them for money, or build a guard tower or turret next to them to attack all of the remaining enemy buildings.

• Take over an enemy tiberium refinery and harvester at the same time. To do this, wait until the harvester is inside the refinery.

• Keep your units spread out. Artillery, flamethrowers, grenadiers, and air strikes can take out large groups of people at one time.

• Don't forget these keyboard commands found in the READ.ME file:

G — Select your troops and hit "G" to have them guard an area.

X — When you have a group of units selected, hit "X" to make them scatter. This is quite effective when dealing with tanks and bombing runs.

S — This will stop your unit dead in its tracks.

1-0 — You can group selected units into a team by hitting CTRL+ a number from 1 to 0. To select that group later on, just press the number you assigned to that unit. This is great for regaining control of your Orcas in the air after you deselected them.

CTRL: Hold down this key and click the mouse on a target to force your troops to attack it. You can even attack your own troops!

CTRL+ALT: These keys and a click of the mouse will order troops to guard a particular object, like a building or another unit. Use this to send a guard along with your harvester.

GDI

As the good guys, the advantage is yours. One look through the files our spies recovered from a Nod base shows that your side has better weapons, but don't get cocky; the Brotherhood will resort to all sorts of tricks in their attempts to take over the world. Here are some tips you can use to beat 'em:

• Use APCs and tanks to run over people. Be warned, though; the computerized enemy often has an easier time running over your troops than you have squashing theirs.

• Use Orcas to take out Nod turrets. Three Orcas can destroy a turret in one strike, but you'll have to be wary of nearby SAM sites. If Orcas aren't available, use grenadiers and bazooka men. They can get inside the turret's range and take it out without too much difficulty.

• Build as many mammoth tanks as you can, then build some more. These suckers may be expensive and slow as molasses, but they can do some damage quickly. They can also take round after round of attacks, and they will slowly repair themselves to half strength.

• Destroy the Nod power plants before attacking an Obelisk of Light. Without power, the Obelisks — and usually the Nod base — are useless.

A line of mammoth tanks makes a formidable obstacle. Back them up with some rocket launchers and bazooka men, and you can't be defeated.

If At First You Don't Succeed...

We've received a report that you failed to blow up the airstrip in the sixth mission — so now you've been sent back to do the job right. Of

CHEATER'S CORNER

Continued From Page 129

Rise of the Triad

Apogee's ultra-violent answer to *Doom* brought new meaning to the term "wet work" with a gore level that would make Tobe Hooper proud. But if you've been having trouble gaining the firepower that it takes to create the gleeful carnage in **ROTT,** or just want help getting through the game, here are a few codes that deliver just what you need. To use these codes, just type them in during a game (remember to type the first code, **DIPSTICK**, to enable the cheats).

The H.U.N.T. team gets into the holiday spirit when *Rise of the Triad* detects certain system dates.

DIPSTICK — Enable/Disable Cheat Codes.
SHOOTME — Bulletproof Armor.
BURNME — Asbestos Armor.
CHOJIN — Woundless With Weapons.
BOOZE — Drunk Missile.
BONES — FlameWall.
TOOSAD — God Mode (Temporary Invulnerability).
FLYBOY — Mercury Mode.
BADTRIP — Shrooms Mode.
BOING — Elasto Mode.
SPEED — Enable Autorun.

Continued On Page 132

course, it's going to be harder this time — one of the hardest challenges you'll face — but we have some data that will help you come out alive.

When you start out, you land on the shore with only part of your unit. Nod forces waste no time in attacking you as you await reinforcements.

The strategy here is simple: Kill or be killed. The goal: Survive with your two tanks and as many units as possible. Gradually move your remaining units up above the first tiberium field. The farther north you go, the less distance your harvester will have to travel later on, but it's harder to stay alive in the beginning.

Start building two forces. Place one north of your base to protect your harvester, put the other down south to guard your base. As the mission progresses, you will slowly move these two forces closer to the Nod base.

It is critical that you build two harvesters during this time to keep the money flowing in quickly. When

Create a line of tanks just past the entrance of this tiberium field to protect your harvester. The Nod will keep sending two bazooka men at you, but they're easy to kill.

Use grenadiers and bazooka men to fire over the wall at the Nod structures within. You can take out some buildings and troops pretty easily this way. Don't break through the wall, though. It will only cause you havoc as the Nod forces come after you.

A group of stealth tanks can easily surprise and overwhelm lone enemy units or harvesters.

the nearby tiberium runs out, your harvesters will go after a new field in the middle of the map. Advance your northern force just past the entrance of this field, and send some tanks and HUMVEEs in to take out the Nod turret.

Then move your southern force around the bend and through the neutral village. Turn right and head up the passage toward the Nod base.

Now start building up both your forces. Once you have a couple of battalions of grenadiers and tanks, you will have no problem wiping out those evil Nod forces.

NOD

As a member of the Brotherhood of Nod, you're at a disadvantage. You don't have the technology that the GDI forces have, and your commander, Kane, likes to send you on nearly impossible missions to test your loyalty. So here are some tips you can use to defeat the GDI.

- Buy flamethrower-equipped troops and vehicles. These guys can take out groups of GDI forces in one attack.
- Use recon bikes to scout the territory. They are faster than any GDI vehicle, so you can uncover large areas of the map and escape from attacking GDI vehicles. You can also use the bikes as decoys. Send one out into enemy territory and get the GDI forces to follow you back into a Nod ambush.

In the Heat of Africa

One of the hardest Nod missions comes when Kane asks you to recapture some technology centers (Mission 11). The odds aren't good that you will survive, but our operatives have come through with a clear-cut plan to squash the GDI forces.

You start out with just a few troops, plus your biggest asset — a commando.

So How Do I Cheat?

If the enemy forces are proving too tough for you, there are a few cheat files you can use to get ahead of the bad guys. Three of them can be found on this month's *PC Gamer* CD-ROM in the /PATCHES subdirectory, or they can be downloaded from *http://www.world access.nl/~star-base/download.htm*. Please remember that these editors are shareware utilities, so back up your game and proceed at your own risk.

CCMISS: This allows you to jump to any mission. If you are playing GDI, the choices are 1-15; for Nod, choose from 1-13. Simply type "ccmiss savegame.###" where ### is the number of the save-game file you want to edit.

It's easy to "inherit" almost a million units of tiberium and give your bazooka men incendiary rockets. Cheating can be fun!

CCMONEY: Use this to add any amount of tiberium to a saved game. You can input a number up to 999,999, which should be more than enough to build the army of your dreams. Just type "ccmoney savegame.###" where ### is the number of the savegame you want to manipulate.

CCEDIT: This one is the doozy. With this editor, you can adjust the cost of units, the power requirements for buildings, the power output of your plants, and — most importantly — the weapons loadouts for all the units. Just type "ccedit" and go to work. Yes, this means you can equip your mini-gunners with SSM missles or your Orcas with napalm if you like. But be warned — the modifications affect the enemy units, too!

CHEATER'S CORNER

Continued From Page 131

PANIC — Reset to normal, full health, no modes, keys or guns.
WHACK — Whack yourself.
86ME — Kill Character.
DIMON — Light Diminishing On.
DIMOFF — Light Diminishing Off.
GOTO — Go to another level.
GOOBERS — Restart current level.
GOGATES — Exit to DOS.
GOARCH — Exit Current Level.
LONDON — Fog On.
NODNOL — Fog Off.

Using the firebomb cheat in *Rise of the Triad* takes care of your enemies with one super blast.

SHINEON — Light Sourcing On.
SHINEOFF — Light Sourcing Off.
LUNGDUNG — Gas Mask.
SIXTOYS — Items Aplenty.
HUNTPACK — Outfit Player (BulletProof Armor, Keys, HeatSeeker).
JOHNWOO — Double Pistols.
PLUGME — MP40 Machine Gun.
VANILLA — Bazooka.
FIREBOMB — FireBomb.
HOTTIMES — Heatseeker.
SEEYA — Hand of God (Permanent God Mode).
RIDE — Missile Camera On/Off.
WHERE — Toggles coordinate display On/Off.

Continued On Page 135

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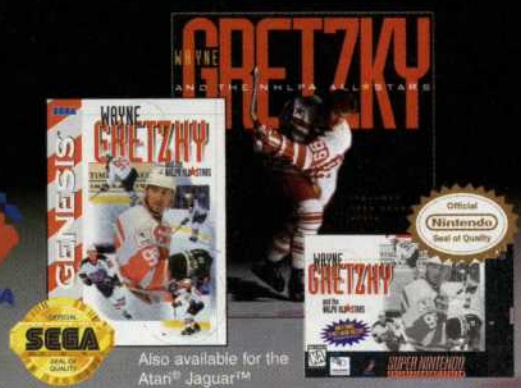

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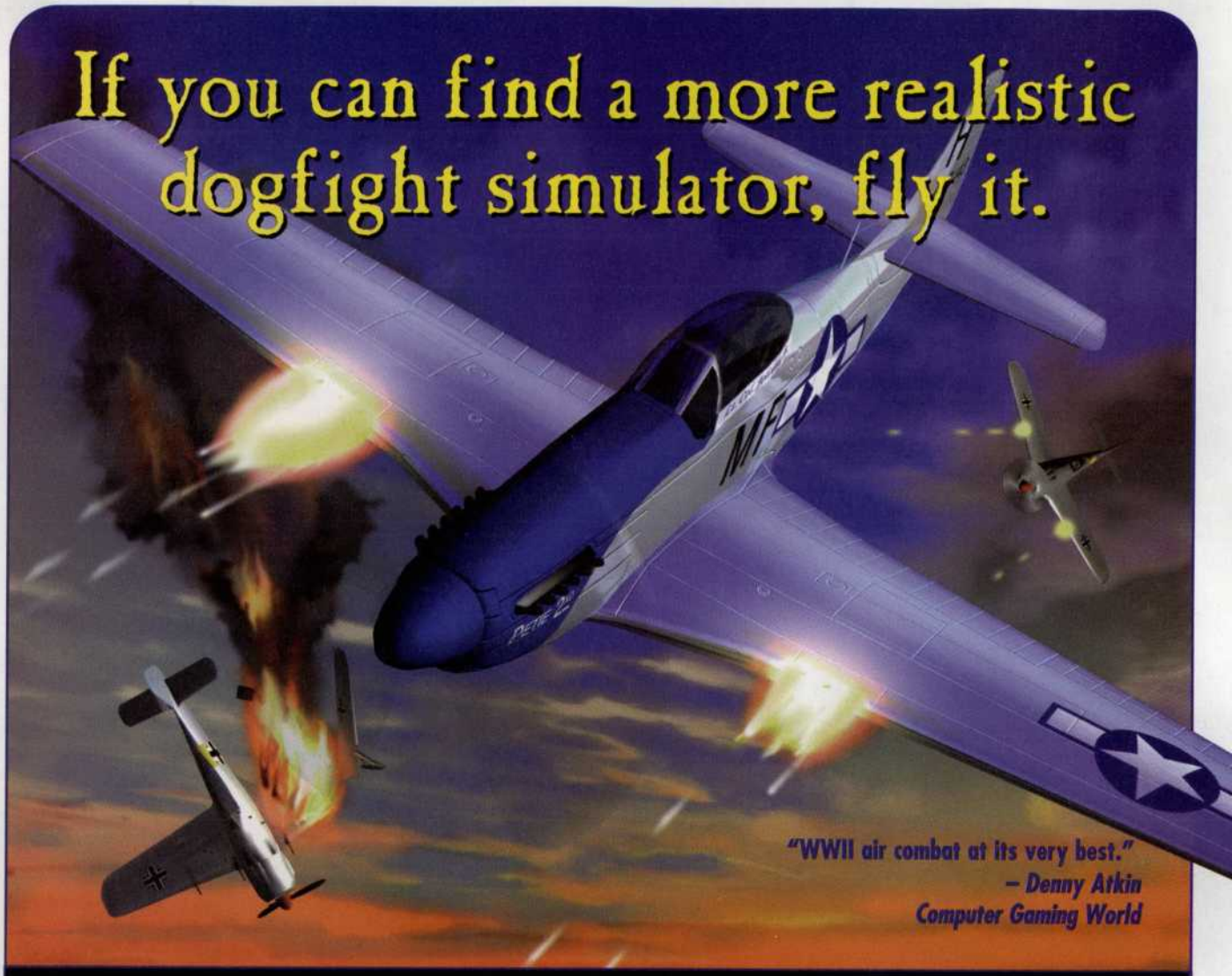

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PHILIPS

Paths to Glory

As you progress through *C&C*, you will gain access to more and more buildings. Here's the rundown on what you can gain by building these structures (keep in mind that you won't have access to all of them until the final missions).

Global Defense Initiative

Tiberium Refinery: weapons factory, communications center, silo
Barracks: helipad, guard tower, mini-gunner, grenadier, bazooka men, engineer
Communications Center: advanced communications center, advanced guard tower
Weapons Factory: medium tank, APC, HUMVEE, harvester
Repair Bay: mammoth tank
Advanced Communications Center: ion cannon, rocket launcher, mobile construction yard
Helipad: Orca

The Brotherhood of Nod

Tiberium Refinery: airstrip, communications center, silo
Hand of Nod: turrets, SAM sites
Airstrip: light tank, Nod buggy, harvester, artillery, recon bike
Communications Center: Obelisk of Light, Temple of Nod, stealth tank, flame tank
Temple of Nod: nuclear strike (To gain access to this, however, you *must* find the crates on levels 6, 10, and 12.)

Watch out for GDI air strikes. The planes will attack your construction yard and power plant early and often. Start repairing them immediately, or you will lose them.

Use turrets and some tanks as a line of defense. Even this mammoth tank won't last long.

Move your force due south, with your commando leading the way and killing all enemy resistance. When you come to the river, cross carefully through the tiberium field and head southwest. Whatever you do, avoid the harvester. Don't destroy it (you're going to need it) or fire at it (it *will* run you down).

Let the harvester head south and follow it in with your mini-gunners and bazooka men. Attack the two guard towers. After they are destroyed, rush your commando and engineers in to capture the technology center and power plant. Then take over the tiberium refinery while the harvester is inside.

You now have control of the first base. Unfortunately, the GDI troops are going to attack you relentlessly and you don't have much money. Immediately build a Tower of Nod, then start building bazooka men and two turrets. Place the turrets in front of the refinery. These turrets are probably your only hope of killing all the HUMVEEs, APCs, and tanks that'll try to overwhelm you. To keep your commando alive through all this, move him up behind the refinery.

At some point, you will notice you have a second group of troops below your base. These troops can't cross the river, but they can be used to destroy the nearby village and reap the bounty from a hidden crate.

If you've made it this far, you should be able to start building up forces. As you do this, be wary of bombing runs. The GDI planes will repeatedly hit your construction yard. To avoid this, build a repair bay next to your refinery; the planes will then concentrate on it. You will have to repair it a lot, but it reduces the chance of losing your construction yard.

When more ground attacks come, use your turrets and some tanks as a line of defense. Use your commando to take out GDI soldiers. And, at some point, place a group of bazooka men along the shore to destroy the GDI gunboat that keeps firing at you.

The key now is to build a massive force of vehicles and soldiers. When you have a large force, move the majority up near the entrance of the GDI base; they will go in through the front and take the brunt of the damage. Move another unit around to the far right side; they will go in at the top entrance.

As you are preparing to go in, harvest enough tiberium to build a new power plant and an Obelisk of Light. Build the plant. Buy the Obelisk, but don't place it yet. Take a unit of engineers, recon bikes, and soldiers up the left side of the base.

Now it's time to attack. It's going to be bloody, but send in all your units in front and on the right. Take out the guard towers, and the base will be yours. After starting the attack, break through the left wall, capture the GDI construction yard, and build your Obelisk of Light to the left of it. This tower of power will help you easily defeat the GDI forces.

—Dean H. Renninger

Sometimes it pays to be sneaky. This Obelisk of Light will help you win this battle.

CHEATER'S CORNER

Continued From Page 132

Syndicate

To use these cheats for Bullfrog's strategy shoot-'em-up *Syndicate*, just rename your team one of the following names (depending on which cheat you want to enable).

NUKE THEM — Select any country on the map.
COOPER TEAM — Get money and items.
WATCH THE CLOCK — Speeds up the clock allowing for faster research completion.

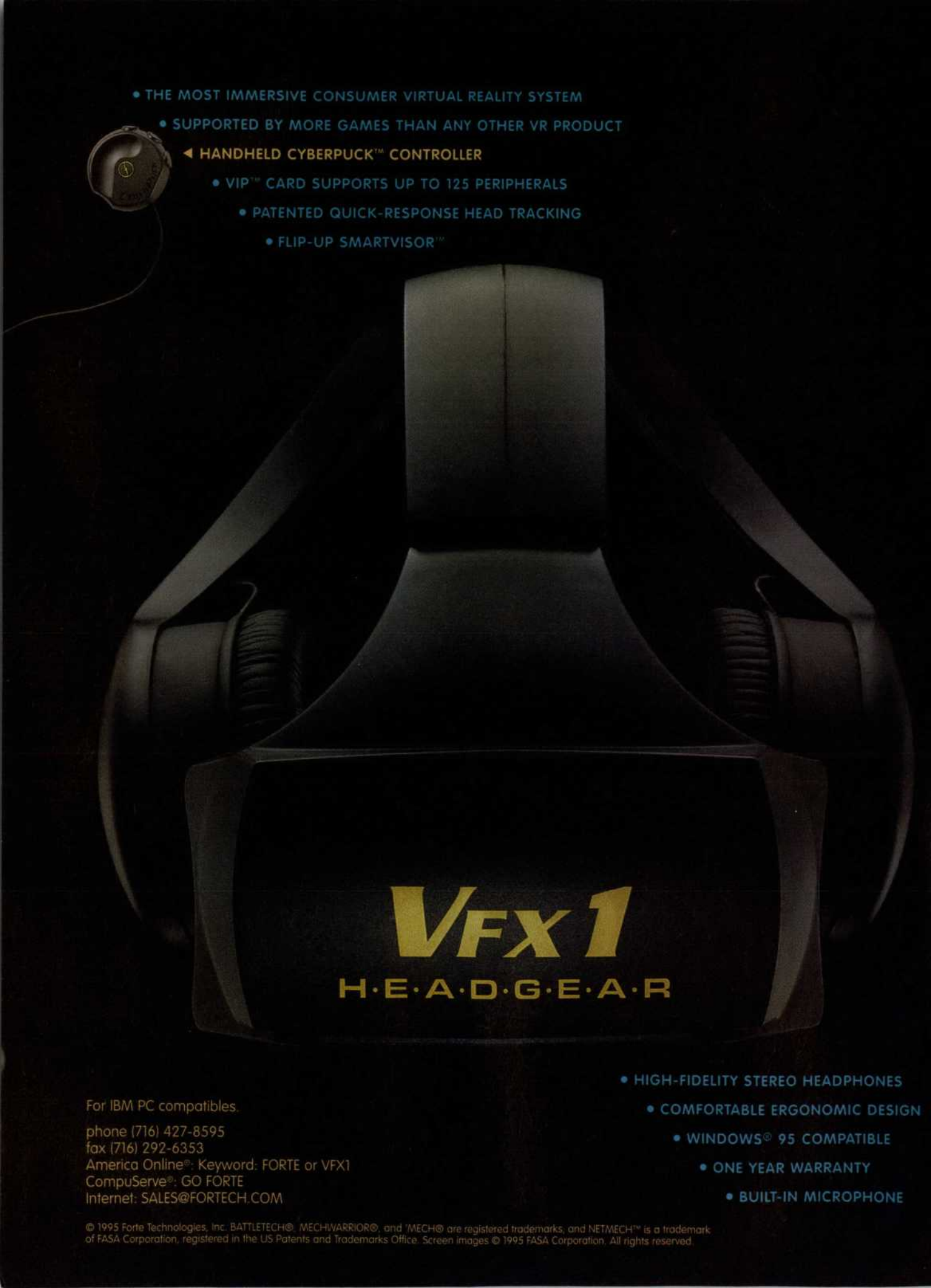
Sending your agents into battle can be scary, but these cheats will help you win in *Syndicate*.

TekWar

While we got our copy of *TekWar* a little too late to include it in our reviews section this issue, we did run across a few cheats that'll help you get through this sci-fi adventure from Capstone. To activate the cheats, simply type the codes at any time during the game.

NOGUARD — Turns off policemen.
NOENEMIES —Turns off all objects.
NOCHASE — Turns off the bad guys.
NOSTROLL — Turns off all of the pedestrians.

Continued On Page 138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FORTE THE WAY IN™

Product Information Number 130

Fury³

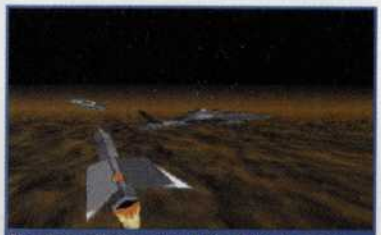
It takes skill to the third power to beat this one — and these tips can't hurt, either.

Anyone who's played *Fury³* knows that the going can get pretty tough pretty quickly. Here are a few tips that should help finish those Bions once and for all.

• Always save your game just before entering a tunnel. (The manual tells you to do this, but we're repeating it here because it's *so* important). You can't save a game inside a tunnel, and while tunnels usually aren't that big a problem, they can bring you major heartache if they turn out to feed into a chamber containing a Boss Guardian (see "Work the Percentages" below).

• Use the external view to safeguard your rear. At the very start of the game, switch to the external view (hit "V" twice), then rotate the view with the "Ins" and "Del" keys so you're looking at your ship from the front. Then, after you pick up some guided missiles (Vipers or Bion Fury Missiles), you can switch to that view and target enemies that are trailing you.

This trick also works pretty well against Boss Guardians inside chambers, if you adjust the view so that you're looking straight down at the top of your ship. When you pass over a Boss, you can switch to that view and fire missiles at him without moving toward him.



No, that missile wasn't fired by an enemy — it's a Viper fired by your ship. Both Vipers and Bion Fury Missiles will target any enemy in sight.

Every Boss has these boxes nearby. You can't destroy the Boss until you blow up all the boxes, and there's a good chance that a box will contain a Shield Restore.

• Visit tunnels more than once. Most tunnels can be visited more than once — and all the weapons that were there on the first trip will be replenished and ready for you to snatch the second, third, or fourth time around. You can really stock up on the firepower with this method.

• Work the percentages. Around each Boss, you'll find boxes that need to be destroyed before your attacks will do any damage to the Boss. Sometimes a box will yield a Shield Restore when destroyed, and sometimes it won't. That's because there's a 50 percent chance that a box will contain a Shield Restore. So if you blow up all the boxes and don't get any Shield Restores in return, load your most recent saved game and try it again. You might get *really* lucky and have all the boxes cough up Shield Restores.

• Check the satellite map early and often. The satellite map covers a much larger area than the micro map displays in the cockpit. Check it frequently to see if there are any nearby weapons bunkers or tunnel entrances — it's the only way you'll get enough firepower to stay evenly matched against the endless hordes of Bions.

Remember to check the Satellite Map constantly — it's the best way to find weapons bunkers that hold the powerups you need to win.

• Explore, explore, explore! Each mission area is huge, and if you take time to travel around once you've completed all your mission goals, you'll find many more powerups than if you just check the satellite map on the way to the Jump Zone. You'll also find some surprises that Terminal Reality and Microsoft threw into the game. Don't have enough Turbo to fly all over the planet? Then type SSMOKIN to get 1000 units of Turbo Thrust.

• Don't waste powerups. If your shields are almost at full strength, don't waste a life-saving Shield Restore by flying through it. Write the coordinates down and return for it later, when you can really use it.

Don't pick up a Shield Restore if your shields are already maxed out! Pause the game and write down the coordinates — you can come back for it when you really need it.

• Bypass the Boss Guardians. On five of the planets, you can bypass the entire third mission and the Boss Guardian altogether by entering a particular tunnel. Be forewarned, though, that some of these tunnel entrances are hidden high on plateaus or in other hard-to-reach places:

Ares: 120,129 Sebek: 83,128
New Kroy: 123,130 Vestra: 123,132
Tiamat: 128,132

—Ned Gaskins

CHEATER'S CORNER

Continued From Page 135

Warcraft

In order to cheat your way through Blizzard's strategy/action game *Warcraft: Orcs and Humans* all you need to do is press ENTER, type in one of these codes, and then press ENTER again.

CORWIN OF AMBER — enables the use of the codes below:

THERE CAN BE ONLY ONE — Makes all of your soldiers invincible to everything except catapults, and can kill an enemy in one hit.

HUMAN # — Warp to any human mission. Replace # with the number of the mission you want to warp to.

ORC # — Warp to any orc mission. Replace # with the number of the mission you want to warp to.

HURRY UP GUYS — ultra fast construction and research.

EYE OF NEWT — get all magic spells available to your team.

IRON FORGE — get the best weapon and shield strength.

SALLY SHEARS — get full map (a help).

POT OF GOLD — Get 10,000 more gold and 5,000 more lumber.

Take your Orcs from these humble beginnings to greatness with these cheats.

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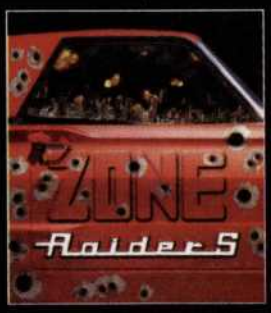
your way, take them out with a burst of machine gun fire. And if that doesn't work, a Sidewinder missile could be more persuasive. Welcome to the world of Zone Raiders. And you thought your commute was tough.



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Product Information Number 212

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Product Information Number 150

Heroes of Might and Magic

To beat this game, you'll have to have your wits about you from the very start.

It seems like such a simple game, but anyone who's played it knows better. At its easiest levels, *Heroes* is a nice, addictive diversion — but with the difficulty cranked up, it's diabolically challenging. Keep these tips handy, and you'll be prepared when those dragons come calling.

You've got a Barbarian hero with good experience and morale; the chances that Goblins will join you are greatly increased.

Getting Started

In the all-important first day of game time, the first order of business is to pick up all unguarded goodies lying around. If you've got plenty of money, buy a second hero and send him goody-gathering, too. The type of castle you have determines which resources and mines are most important to you. You'll also want to build your first dwelling.

After that, try to add a new dwelling every day. If you can't build a new one, build a well or a Mage Guild.

You've got to build up your armies quickly to defeat creatures guarding mines you need. Grab up friendly forces in nearby huts and houses. Also, buy up Rogues and Nomads; they're especially useful early in the game, and this also keeps the enemy from recruiting them.

Keep a spot open in your army. Groups of creatures out in the field will join you on occasion, but only if you have room for them.

Pick Your Fights

Sooner or later, you're going to go to battle. As your army takes shape, you'll want to keep these strategies in mind:

If you have a good number of archers, taking on dwarves or any other slow-moving creatures is a breeze. All you have to do is sit back and fire as they slowly walk toward you. If they reach you, the rest of your army should make short work of them.

Flying creatures, such as Gargoyles and Griffins, are best suited to take on groups of archers. Properly placed, they can tie up the archers as the rest of your army moves in for the kill.

If you can get to a town early,

When you see a desert, go there immediately. If you can get to a Genie's lamp, you can gain a devastating advantage.

they're usually not too hard to take. They bring in 250 gold per day, which helps with the first week's money crunch. Later in the game, towns become tougher to take. If you see an enemy hero take a town, then move along, jump on it; its defenses will probably still be weakened.

Circle around your archers to protect them, then sit back and fire until the enemy's close enough to engage. If you position the archers in a corner, fewer units are needed to surround them.

If you have a unit that can tie up an enemy archer but is very weak, place it next to the archer and don't strike. This avoids any retaliation strike, forcing the archer to use up its turn attacking your weak unit. Of course, this doesn't work if another enemy unit can wipe your weak unit out before the archers'

CHEATER'S CORNER

FX Fighter

GTE's excellent fighting game *FX Fighter* has been a big hit among among PC fight fans, but if you're not familiar with arcade fighters you're probably wondering how to pull off those special moves that every body keeps talking about. Well, here are a few we've found that can work wonders.

Control Keys

Forward — **F**	Back — **B**
Down — **D**	Up — **U**
Punch — **P**	Kick — **K**

Using Ashraf's forcefield is a quick and easy way to end the match — in your favor, of course.

ASHRAF

Forcefield push — F, D, F+P
Overhead throw — F, FU+P
Running/Punch combo — F+P, P, P, P
Chakra ball — B, F+P
Handstand kick — F, B+K
Punch combo — F, B, P
Elbow lunge — F+P or (F, D+P)
Overhead punch — F, F+P
Double roundhouse kick — F, U+K
Underhand punch — B, P
Combo — F, F+P D, B+K
Backbreaker (close range) — F, D+P
Foward flip kick — F, B, D+K

Continued On Page 143

Here's a game you can really sink your teeth into.

LION™

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Product Information Number 176

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Attack Ghosts with the Turn Undead spell and creatures with high hit points. These peasants just contributed 41 extra souls to these Ghostly ladies.

turn comes around.

Pick a specific enemy unit to gang up on. This way, only your first attacking unit will receive a retaliation strike.

If you have more than one set of archers, keep them as far apart as possible so a single enemy unit can't tie them up.

When you've worn your opponent down to a single unit, hit them with the Paralyze and Blind spells. In addition to freezing the unit, this also prevents the opposing hero from casting spells or retreating.

As a rule of thumb, don't use a spell too soon. For example, if you paralyze a Troll, and at least one other enemy unit moves before the Troll's turn, your opponent can undo the spell and free the Troll to fire.

Mixing up creatures from different castle types can significantly reduce that armys' morale. They just don't get along.

Castle Maintenance

Once the crucial first week is over, more pressing issues begin to emerge. Slow down on castle upgrades, especially if it leaves you with no money to buy up new creatures.

At this point, keep a keen eye on your resources while trying to improve your Mage Guild. With more than one castle, build up the Mage Guild at one site. Then, all your heroes can visit that site to obtain spells. If you control a town, don't feel you have to turn it into a castle right away. An extra castle will increase your daily income, but if you don't have the resources to build it up and protect it, you risk losing it and having some other army reap its benefits.

Creatures are devastating in large numbers. It's a good idea to leave one creature in the castle over several weeks to build up strength.

Castles are the heart and soul of the game. Lose them, and you're powerless. Take them whenever possible; you'll receive more money, new spells, and new creatures while denying all this to the enemy.

Outside the Walls

The most painful thing about storming a castle is taking punishment from the Garrison Tower while waiting for an opening in the wall. If you can blind or paralyze all of the enemy units, the Garrison Tower will no longer fire.

When you're defending a castle, you're generally at an advantage, but you'll still be in trouble if the enemy has a significantly superior force. If the attacker has Dragons, Phoenixes or Griffins, there's a trick that will keep them from flying inside your castle. Fill up all five spots in your army, and *don't* move them. Those flying nasties each take up two spaces, so while your units stay put, an opening won't become available until the wall falls.

A situation may arise where you can fly a creature around to the corners of the screen, out of the attacker's reach, as the tower fires away at them.

The Shuttle

There are several variations on The Shuttle, but here's a classic situation where it'll come in handy: Say a large army is about to strike your castle, which is defended by a very weak hero. You have a good army close by, but it can't reach the castle to drop off needed defenders. Your weak army can reach the good army to trade units, but it can't get back.

Solution: Move the weak hero out just one step from your castle. Buy a new hero. Have the new hero go out, trade units with your good army, and head back to the castle. Now your weak army should be able to reach the new army, make the trade and get back to the castle to better defend it. Simple, huh? More heroes can be thrown in as needed. That's the basic concept, but The Shuttle can get very elaborate.

By placing these Gargoyles adjacent to three sets of archers, you've forced them into using their weaker, close-up attack.

Armageddon

Here's a grim situation: Your castle is about to be attacked by a very strong army. You aren't quite strong enough to defend, but you have the Armageddon spell. Buy a Warlock and send him after the enemy army, equipped only with the Centaurs and Gargoyles he comes with. When he engages the enemy, immediately use the Armageddon spell. This will wipe out your Warlock, but with his spell power, he'll put a serious hurt on the enemy — enough to take out a Phoenix, even. If you have enough money, repeat.

—Joe Novicki

CHEATER'S CORNER

Continued From Page 141

Hard Left punch — D+P
High Spinning kick — B+K
Roundhouse kick — U, K

CYBEN 30
Flying torpedo attack — B, F+P
Swing kick — D+K
Flying drop attack (close range) — U+P
Handstand kick and roll — B+K
Shock attack (close range) — F+P
2-hit windmill punch — D+P
Roundhouse kick — F, F+K

Jake's elbow slam is a great move to use on just about any opponent. Just remember — practice makes perfect!

4-hit buzz saw punch — F, F+P
Lunge-punch and spin-punch combo — P+(F, B)

JAKE
3-hit combo (close range) — F, B+P
4-hit combo — F+D+B+P
Hammer punch — F, D+P
Face throw (close range) — F, D+P

Continued On Page 147

DON'T JUST DODGE ROCKETS,

DANCE WITH THEM,

SING A SONG TO THEM,

THEN TATTOO YOUR

ON THEIR

NICKEL

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Product Information Number 160

NASCAR Racing

Winning this ultra-realistic sim takes more than a lead foot; you need real strategy.

NASCAR Racing is one of the most realistic and demanding computer sims you'll find. But it's also extremely rewarding. You'll put in plenty of work just to be in the running, and you'll need consistency and strategy to win.

We'll give you plenty of tips for turning faster laps and outsmarting the competition in the pits, but remember: there is no magic setup. Above all, winning requires patience and practice, both in the garage and on the track.

In the Garage

This is where you get down and dirty, tweaking your car's setup to shave a few tenths of a second off your lap times, but don't start here until you learn your way around the tracks. The stock Ace setups are fast enough to win at most tracks, so concentrate first on driving. Once you've logged enough practice laps on a track to know the fast way around, you can start tinkering with the setup to make the car faster or better suited to your driving style. Start with the Ace setup.

Let's get a couple of definitions out of the way. "Oversteer" or "pushing" is a condition in which the car's front wheels lose grip in the corners, making the car difficult to turn. "Understeer" or a "loose" condition means the rear tires are breaking traction, making the rear of the car swing out. Chassis setup is a constant battle against oversteer and understeer, and it's a battle you'll never completely win.

Like other aspects of setup, the remedies shown in the table below will help only if you're already getting good, consistent laps in the first place. So take off the coveralls, wash up, and put on that shiny new driver's suit. It's time to turn some hot laps.

At Talladega, never ever take your foot off the gas. Stay in the draft, then pull out on the straightaways to pass packs of cars. You should win almost every time out here.

IN THE GARAGE

PROBLEM	TIRES	STAGGER	SHOCKS	LEFT BIAS	RIGHT BIAS	WEDGE	GEAR	SPOILER
Understeer/ Loose	—	decrease	—	—	decrease	increase	—	more rear, raise air dam
Oversteer/ Pushing	—	increase	softer right front shock	—	increase	decrease	—	less rear, lower air dam
Tire too cool	decrease pressure	—	stiffer shock	—	—	—	—	—
Tire too hot	increase pressure	—	softer shock	—	—	—	—	—
Losing grip in turns	—	increase	—	increase	—	—	—	—
Slow speed	—	—	—	—	—	—	shorter 4th gear	lower rear spoiler
Overrev on straight	—	—	—	—	—	—	taller 4th gear	raise rear spoiler

Learn the Track

Concentrate on one track at a time. Each is unique, and each requires a slightly different line.

If you're just starting out — or you're preparing for a track you don't run well — go to preseason practice for a session before you start the race weekend.

On the tougher tracks, lower the opponents' strength by a point or two if you're having trouble keeping up. But don't allow yourself to cheat too much; you'll eliminate much of the incentive to get faster. And being faster on the straightaways than the other cars can be a problem. If you're running up on cars too quickly, you're asking for a wreck.

The Line

Each track has a different one, some have more than one, and you won't win until you find it. It's the racing groove. The line is marked on most tracks by the black skid marks on the racing surface. Note their position all

CHEATER'S CORNER

Continued From Page 143

Headbutt — F, F+P
Uppercut — B, F+P
Sweep kick — F, D+K
High kick — F, F+K
3-hit combo — P, P, K
Six-punch — F+F, P
Body press (close range) — F, D, B+P
Lift (close range) — F, D, B, P
4-hit forward and spin-punch combo — F+P+B, F, B, F
Spinning uppercut (close range) — B, F, P
Hard left punch — D+P
Jumping punch — U, U+P
Spinning kick — F, B+K

KIKO
3-hit combo — B, B, P
Throw star — B, F+P
Handstand kick (when opponent is facing away) — B, D+K
Defensive kick — B, B+K
Knee throw — B, D+P
Knee kick — F+K
Drop kick — B, F+K
Split kick — F, D+K

Continued On Page 149

Kiko's special long-range attack, in which she throws stars, lets her deal some deadly blows from a distance.

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Billy Mather
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Product Information Number 145

I know, you hate those road courses. This is the one place where you'll want to use auto braking and auto shifting, so you can concentrate on hitting the right lines through the turns.

the way through the turns: at the entrance, in the middle, and on the turn exit. If the marks begin next to the wall, high on the track, then that's where you need to be when you enter that turn.

A second way to locate the racing groove is to follow the computer-controlled cars. When you're searching for the groove in practice — or even in a race — play follow-the-leader for a while and see if you can adjust your line.

The line is more than the ideal path around the track; running the proper line also involves knowing when and where to lift off the gas, get on the brakes, and get back on the gas. Again, there's no substitute for practice. When you find the right point at the entrance of a turn to get off the gas and/or on the brakes, mark the precise location using something on the wall or in the grandstand as a reference point.

Cornering

The "apex" method of cornering applies to any form of racing. Apexing means taking a line through the curve that makes your turn as straight as possible. Generally, that means entering a corner at least half way up the width of the track, then cutting down across track near the apex, or mid-way point, of the turn. Let the car drift to the outside coming off the turn, so that you're running alongside the outside wall as you head back down the straightaway.

Avoid tire squeal; it means your tires are losing grip and sliding. Try for a cornering speed that puts you on the edge of tire squeal.

Surviving the Start

The start is easily the most dangerous part of the race, with 40 cars screaming side-by-side toward the first turn. Don't panic. If you're starting on the inside, just try to hold your normal racing line through the first corner. You may lose a position or two, but don't worry about it. You'll have plenty of time to make your moves after your tires heat up and the field strings out in single file.

If you're on the outside at the start, hold your line as you accelerate, then look for an opening to the inside, and get in there if you can. If you're forced to go through the turn on the outside, hold your line and get to the inside as soon as there's a break in traffic.

Cold tires are mainly to blame for those chaotic starts. Use the lap pace to build some heat into the tires, just like the real NASCAR boys do. Steer sharply from side to side, making the tires squeal. You can also repeatedly accelerate and brake to heat the tires. You should be able to raise tire temps by 20-30 degrees. That'll make your car much more stable through the first few turns.

Passing

Passing opportunities vary by track, but here are a few things to keep in mind wherever you're racing.

Follow the leading car as closely as you can, and usually he'll bobble and slip out of the racing groove. By holding your line, you'll pull beside him to the inside. If you're still inside as you enter the next turn, you've got him. On the bigger tracks, try to do most of your passing on the straightaways. Follow the lead car so you're within a car length and gaining as you come out of a turn. Move to the inside, and motor on past. Take advantage of the draft by staying directly behind the lead car until you're ready to make your move.

The Pits

When you can't outrun 'em on the track, you can sometimes outsmart 'em in the pits. Pit strategy depends largely on track position, the number of laps remaining, how fast you're running, tire wear, and fuel mileage. Whether and when to pit is always a judgment call, but here are a few general tips:

If you're hopelessly slower than the pack, pit for tires and fuel during every caution period. Since you're running at the back of the field anyway, you won't lose many positions, and you'll be able to run longer when the race resumes.

If you're fast but running toward the rear, consider skipping a pit stop during a caution if you have more than a half-tank of gas. It's a gamble, but you'll pass every car that pits and move way up in the field.

When you're running with the leaders and in contention for the win, you'll have to be a little more conservative with your pit strategy. If the leaders are pitting under the yellow, you should probably follow them down pit road.

Check out the blimp replay view to see your line around the track. You can usually find room for improvement, and see where you're losing ground to the competition.

Frame Rate

This game is one of the most demanding software products anywhere. If your computer can't run the game at a decent frame rate, a difficult sim can become an impossible one. Racing with a poor frame rate is a bit like driving in a time warp. Your reactions are constantly a split-second behind the action.

Under the Options menu, choose Graphics. Turn off everything you think you can live without.

Controllers

A joystick works just fine (forget the keyboard), but you haven't really experienced *NASCAR Racing* until you've driven with a steering wheel and gas/brake pedals, just like the grownups do. They're expensive — anywhere from about $130 to $500 — but they're a great investment if you're serious about computer racing.

—Lee Buchanan

CHEATER'S CORNER

Continued From Page 147

Spinning kick — D+K
Knee slam (close range) — F, F+P
High kick — U+K
Power punch — F+P
Lunge kick — F, F+K
Triple kick — K, K
Shoulder slam—kick combo — F, U+K

MAGNON

Power punch — U+F+P
Earthquake stomp — F, F, K
Magma breath — B, F+K

Magnon is a fierce fighter, and victory will be yours if you learn his special moves.

Knee/Elbow punch — D, F+K
Lunge punch — B, F+P
Leg toss (close range, opponent down) — F, D+P
Leg stomp (close range, opponent down) — D+K
Punch combo — B, F, P
Upward lunge roll (while crouching) — F+D+P
Uppercut double—punch — F, F+P
Bear hug (close range) — B+K
Shoulder slam — D+P

Continued On Page 150

Primal Rage

You'll need all the rude, crude moves you can muster to beat these beasties.

Here it is — the complete list of moves for *Primal Rage*. These moves will work for either a two-button joystick/gamepad or your keyboard. For a joystick or gamepad, press both buttons while executing the directional commands; and for a keyboard, press the buttons you've chosen as "1" and "3" while entering the directional sequences. Some of these are pretty similar, so if you don't get the expected results, give it another try.

D=Down
U=Up
F=Forward (toward opponent)
B=Back (away from opponent)

Armadon

SPECIAL MOVES
Bed-O-Nails: D-D-U
Iron Maiden: B-U-F
Mega Charge: B-D-F
Gut Gouger: F-F-B
Hornication Uppercut: D-F-U
Spinning Death: B-F-D
Flying Spikes: B-B-U
Chomp Human: U-F-D-B

FATALITIES
Gut Fling: D-D-D-U
The Impaler: D-B-U-D
Meditation: F-D-F-F

Blizzard

SPECIAL MOVES
Mega Punch Short: B-D-F
Mega Punch Quick: B-U-F
Mega Punch Long: B-F-F
Mega Punch Fake: D-U-U
Cold Breath: D-B-F
Ice Geyser: D-D-U
Punching Bag: F-D-B-B
Air Throw: 1+3 (while in the air)
Throw: F-D-U-B
Chomp Human: U-U-F-D

FATALITIES
Brain Basher: U-F-U
To Da Moon: D-D-D-U
Redemption: D-F-U-D

Chaos

SPECIAL MOVES
Grab-N-Throw: F-B-B
Power Puke Slow: U-B-B
Power Puke Fast: U-F-F
Fart of Fury: D-F-U-B
Ground Shaker: B-U-D
Flying Butt Slam: D-F-U-D
Battering Ram: F-F-F
Chomp Human: F-D-B-U

FATALITIES
Golden Shower: D-D-U-B
Cannonball: D-F-D-D
Churl: U-U-D-B

Diablo

SPECIAL MOVES
Fireball Slow: D-B-B
Fireball Fast: D-F-F
Torch: U-D-D
Hot Foot: B-D-F
Mega Lunge: D-U-F
The Pulverizer: U-F-F
Inferno Flash: U-U-U
Chomp Human: D-U-D

FATALITIES
Incinerator: U-B-D-D
Fireball: F-F-F-F
Infernal: U-D-F-D

Sauron

SPECIAL MOVES
Primal Scream: D-U-B
Earthquake Stomp: U-D-D
The Cranium Crusher: D-U-D
Leaping Bone Bash: D-U-U
Stun Roar: B-F-F
Air Throw: Tap 1+3 (in air)
Neck Throw: F-B-B
Chomp Human: D-D-U

FATALITIES
Carnage: B-B-U-F
Grape Crusher: F-U-D-B
Flesh Eating: D-D-D-U

Diablo's been into the hot sauce again! The Hot Foot is easy and yields impressive results.

Talon

SPECIAL MOVES
Brain Basher: B-U-F
Pounce and Flip: F-D-D
Frantic Fury: D-F-F
The Slasher: D-U-F
The Face Ripper: D-D-F
Jugular Bite: B-F-U (after direct hit)
Run Forward: F-F-F
Run Back: B-B-B
Chomp Human: F-D-B

FATALITIES
Shredding: F-D-U-U
Heart Wrenching: F-D-U-D
Stampede: F-B-U-D

Vertigo

SPECIAL MOVES
Venom Spit Slow: D-F-F
Venom Spit Fast: D-B-B
Voodoo Spell: F-B-B
Ground Teleport: D-D-D
Air Teleport: D-U-U
Come Slither: B-B-B
Scorpion Sting: F-F-D
Chomp Human: D-F-U

FATALITIES
La Vache: B-B-D-F
Shrink and Eat: B-B-D-U
Petrify: U-U-F-F

—Steve Poole

CHEATER'S CORNER

Continued From Page 149

SHEBA
Backflip kick (close range) — B, D+K
Hop roundhouse — B, F+K
Leaping attack — F, B+D+K
Claw slash — B, P
4-hit punch — F, B, P
Cartwheel — B+K
Handstand kick and throw — F, F+K
Throw opponent (close range) — F, B+K
Takedown (close range) — F, B+P
Sweep punch — D+P
Face rake (crouching) — F+K

If you're looking for some interesting combat, try a mirror match in which neither opponent has an advantage in size or speed.

Foot charge (crouching) — F, B+K
Punch—Kick combo — B, F+P
Leg takedown (close range) — F, D+K
Lunge kick — U, F+K

SIREN
Throw opponent — B+D+P
2-Punch combo — D, F+P, B
Telekinetic throw (close range) — U+P
Flip/take down opponent — F+P

Continued On Page 152

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Product Information Number 83

U.S. Navy Fighters

The code's been broken, and now we've got our hands on top secret strategies!

Eject! Eject! Eject! Are you hearing those fateful words a little too often in *U.S. Navy Fighters*? Well, don't punch out just yet; we've got some tips that'll help make you a top ace.

Ordnance and Fuel

One of the most important decisions you'll make in a successful mission often comes before you even climb into the cockpit. Choosing the right mix of weaponry can make the difference between returning to your carrier in one piece or getting a 21-gun salute at your funeral.

Since you also have to balance your weapons choices with the load capabilities of your plane and the effect they'll have on your maneuverability, pay close attention in the mission briefing. You'll want serious missiles (like the AIM-54C Phoenix and the AIM-120 AMRAAM) to deal with serious fighters before they get close enough to become a major problem, but you don't want to carry that extra mass if you're only facing MiG-21s. On long-range missions, you'll have to compromise between the ideal loadout and the need to carry enough fuel to take you through all of the mission objectives (and don't forget, you'll want enough juice on hand to use your afterburner for evasive maneuvers).

Landing Exercises

For inexperienced pilots, a carrier trap is without a doubt the most demanding element of *U.S. Navy Fighters* — but there are a few tips that can make these controlled crashes a little less terrifying.

First, you've got to resolve your altitude and speed long before you attempt to line up with the carrier. You do this by setting your altitude at around 2000 feet when you reach the marshal point (usually 10-15 miles from your carrier), then bringing your airspeed down to around 350 knots. You may have to compensate for the movement of the ship if you've been out on an extended mission, so be sure and double-check the carrier's location on radar. Once you've got the speed and altitude down to a manageable level, you can begin lining up with the carrier itself. Take into account that the landing area on the carrier is oriented to the left of the ship's centerline; if you don't compensate early for this, you may have to abort the landing.

Once you're in the landing pattern (three miles out), reduce throttle to 20 percent. As you slow to around 140-150 knots, watch for the central point of the HUD display and the Flight Path Indicator (FPI) to separate. To keep your nose high for a proper landing, set the HUD point to +4 degrees.

You'll want to keep the FPI below the HUD point (the zero-degree mark), but above the horizon, by adding or decreasing throttle. All that's left now is to follow the flight officer's instructions, and you should catch the three-wire without much trouble.

May Day!

In the first single-mission scenario you can choose in the *Marine Fighters* add-on, titled "May Day," your carrier convoy is under attack by Su-24 bombers escorted by the dreaded Su-27. It's a full-out assault on the *Wasp* task force, and it's up to you and your wingman to scramble to your Harriers and save the day. The trick to completing this mission is to get in the air as quickly as possible, protect your wingman until he can join you, then put him to work helping you take out the enemy.

You won't have much time to get into the air in the "May Day" scenario, so lighten your load by cutting way back on fuel.

Before entering the mission, you'll want to get rid of the external drop tank and cut your internal fuel stores to 50 percent or less. Since the bandits are already on top of you, you're not going to need a lot of fuel, and a lighter load will let you jump off the deck and get some altitude a lot quicker. It'll also let you add an extra missile to your plane's loadout.

Once you're airborne, break left off of the carrier and target the first incoming Su-27 escort (be ready with flares and chaff, since the bad guys may already have the drop on you), then pick off his wingmen.

Basically, you're trying to create chaos among the bombers and escorts until your wingman is safely in the air. From there, you'll want to order him to join on your wing and help you take out the Su-24s — as soon as they're finished with their bombing run, they'll turn their guns on you and your buddy. Make use of the support you've got, and you'll eventually beat this tough mission.

—Ned Gaskins

CHEATER'S CORNER

Continued From Page 150

3-Punch combo — P, F+P, P
3-Kick combo — K, U
Rolling kick — F, F+K
Punch/Roundhouse combo — P, F+P B+K
Roundhouse kick — F+P, B+K
Groin kick — F+K

VENAM

Throw opponent (close range) — B, F, K
Neck gnaw (close range) — F, D+P
Leg throw (close range) — B, F+K
Lunge punch — F+P
Spinning kick — U, D+K
Lunge kick — U+F+K
4-hit combo — F+P, B+P
2-handed punch — F, F+P
Spinning punch combo — F, B+P, P, P
Acid spray — B, F+P
Combo attack and back toss (very close range) — P+(F B F B)
2-hit combo (close range) — F, F+K
Overhead throw (close range) — F, D+P
Jump attack — D, U+P
Groin kick — D+F+K

Venam's gnawing attack means a quick death for your opponent. This move is easy to learn, but hard to master.

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Hamilton & Covington Wofford

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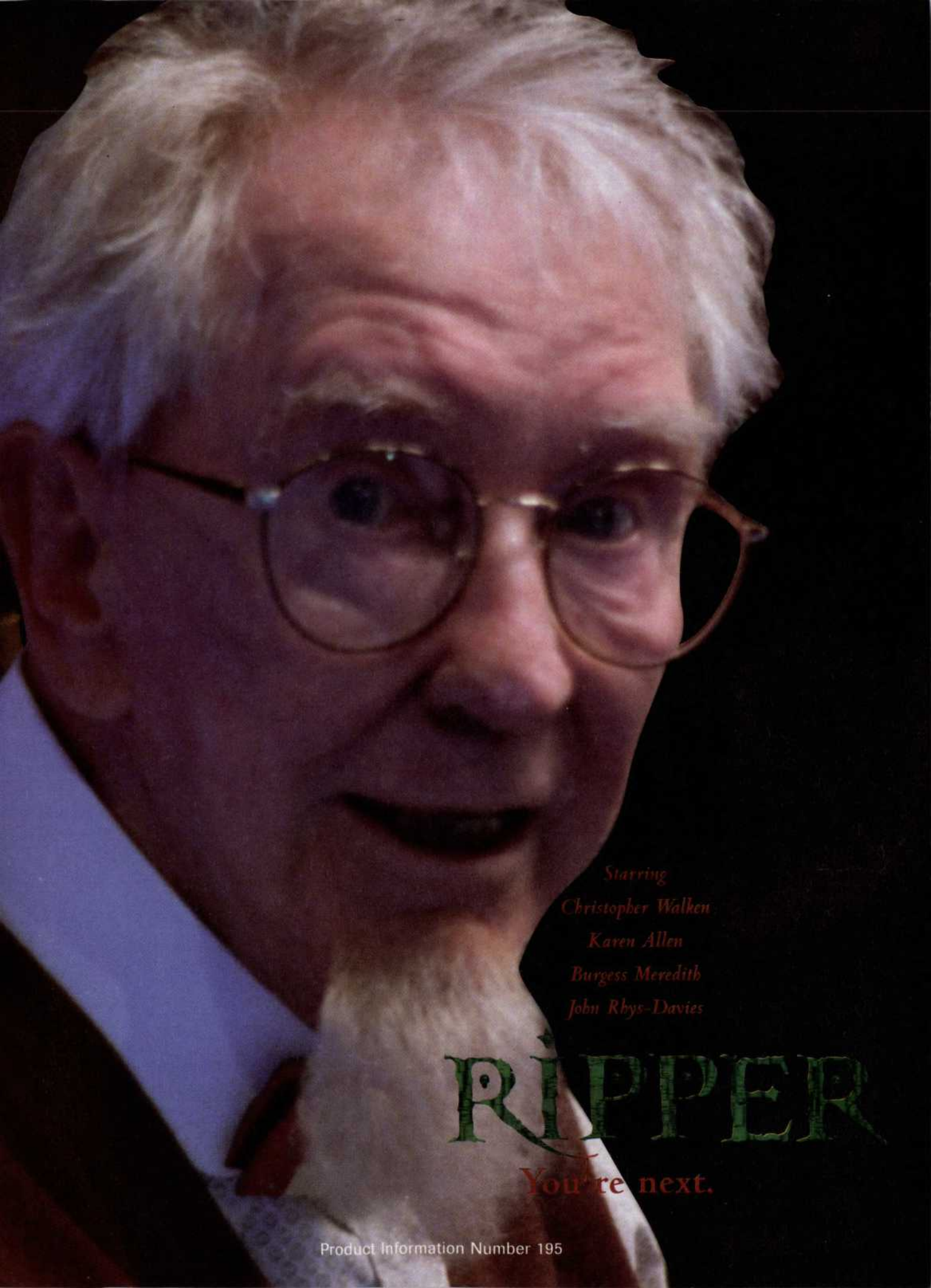

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Gaming in the 3rd Dimension

PART ONE

You've probably already heard about 'em; new video cards designed to give you fast, state-of-the-art 3D graphics on your PC. But what exactly *is* 3D video?

by Charles Brannon

It was easy to be smug about PC gaming when the Super Nintendo and Sega Genesis game consoles were the only competition. After all, PC gamers had superior resources, unmatched for gaming: a 32-bit microprocessor, high-resolution color graphics, CD-quality stereo sound and music, not to mention built-in goodies like CD-ROM drives, oodles of hard-drive storage, fine joystick and mouse control, and — perhaps the most complex controller of all — a 101-key keyboard.

But with the introduction of powerful game consoles like the Sega Saturn and Sony Playstation, some pundits decreed the end of PC-based gaming. While ease of use (just plug in the cartridge or pop in the CD-ROM) is important, it's the stunning 3D graphics these new machines can generate that really blow you away.

Most new PC games have fairly impressive three-dimensional graphics, but they require huge amounts of mathematical calculations. Even a Pentium-based PC with a fast graphics card was no match for the latest videogame consoles and their specialized 3D graphics chips. Until now.

Plug one of the new 3D-accelerated video cards into your PC, and you can have 3D graphics that put the Saturn or Playstation to shame — without taking a huge bite out of your computer's processing time.

These new video cards sport specialized 3D chips that can draw thousands of shaded polygons per second, and most of them include advanced features like texture-mapping, fogging, perspective correction, and anti-aliasing — the nuts and bolts of intense graphic realism (stick with us — we'll explain those terms later on). Most also support the standard "2D" acceleration that's becoming essential for Windows multimedia.

But can a PC be just as *convenient* as a game console? What about the critical ease-of-use problem? After all, the best 3D game in the world isn't any fun if you can't figure out how to make your PC cough up another 10K of free conventional memory.

Windows software is certainly easier to install than DOS software, but plain old Windows 3.1 is a rather pitiful gaming platform. While Windows has powerful graphics capabilities, they're better suited to charts and graphs than exotic aliens and dark dungeons. As much as game designers would have liked to program for Windows 3.1, they just couldn't get enough speed out of it.

Fortunately for frustrated designers, the days of DOS games are almost behind us. Windows 95 is easier to use — to play most Win 95 games, you just insert a CD-ROM, just like plugging in a game cartridge. And the new operating system excels at fast animation and rapid-fire sound effects.

Stuff It!

The secret to this success: Windows 95 lets game designers get in touch with your computer's hardware directly — or nearly so. Put yourself in the shoes of a programmer: When you're flying a starship across the screen, do you want to feed it to the video card pixel by pixel, line by line, or do you want to stuff the whole starship "object" directly into the video card's memory buffer?

Until recently, only DOS gave programmers this level of control, and it came at a price; to work directly with the video card, you need intimately detailed information about the hardware. That locked the game designer into supporting just a few types of popular hardware.

Consider the Sound Blaster standard: With many DOS games, if your sound card isn't 100% hardware-compatible with Creative Labs' Sound Blaster sound card, you're out of luck. Only a few games are versatile enough to include special support for non-standard sound cards.

By the same token, while game designers have yearned to exploit the amazing abilities of Windows graphics accelerator cards, they couldn't afford to develop their own drivers — there are just too many brands and variations.

Domark is developing an enhanced version of *Absolute Zero* for the Diamond 3D Edge, one of the new 3D accelerator boards.

Whose "Standard" is Really Standard?

When 3D hardware was first introduced, industry watchers feared a proliferation of new, different 3D graphics designs. Would you be limited to buying games that were designed especially for your 3D card? Or would a Sound Blaster-style situation leave us all stuck with a single standard that didn't support all the features of our chosen cards? After all, wavetable synthesis isn't part of the standard Sound Blaster spec, and for a while many games lacked support for the wavetable audio built into the latest sound cards.

Papyrus has created special versions of *NASCAR Racing* for just about every 3D accelerator card on the market.

The problem is that it's just too expensive for each game vendor to develop drivers for every type of hardware on the market. Windows 95, on the other hand, doesn't have this excuse — in targeting every PC on the planet, the new operating system is in a market that demands broad and thorough support for every type of hardware.

Freedom to Choose

It's a challenge to create video and sound drivers that are fast enough for games, yet general-purpose enough to support the features of any graphics card. But it's essential. So Microsoft worked hand-in-hand with multimedia vendors and game designers to come up with the DirectX series of programming interfaces: DirectDraw, DirectSound, DirectInput, DirectPlay, and Direct3D (see "Windows 95: The New Face of Gaming" in the August 1995 *PC Gamer* for more about these gaming technologies).

You're probably not a programmer, but you'll appreciate that these new APIs (Application Programming Interfaces) give you the freedom to choose from any brand of video card, sound card, CD-ROM drive, etc. And with most new computers supporting Plug and Play, installing these extras can be a real no-brainer.

Thanks to Direct3D, it ultimately doesn't matter whose card is declared the winner in the 3D graphics accelerator race. Windows 95 provides the glue that seamlessly binds these powerful 3D abilities with your computer's own horsepower and the genius of PC game designers.

Beyond Direct3D

Direct3D is considered a "primitive" gaming technology. Not because it's obsolete or outdated, but because it's intentionally unsophisticated. The goal of Direct3D is a streamlined interface to the core building blocks of 3D graphics. Many game programmers will choose to go with Direct3D to get every last scrap of speed out of their game, or to control some special feature of a particular card.

But creating 3D games with Direct3D can be tedious and time-consuming. Say you're building a model railroad. Do you want to hand-craft and paint all the little details yourself? Or do you like to shop for ready-made trees, houses, water towers, and so forth?

Various companies, such as Criterion and Rendermorphics, have worked hard to invent just such reusable 3D building blocks, or objects. Programmers can use these ready-made objects to more rapidly design a game, without having to reinvent the wheel each time (these objects aren't actual *things*, like tanks, spaceships, or missiles; they're program modules that can be combined together to rapidly design a game's look and feel).

Microsoft liked Rendermorphic's Reality Lab API so much, they bought the company, and they're including Reality Lab and Direct3D with Windows 95...well, sort of.

Even if you have Windows 95, you may not have these advanced game technologies — not yet, anyway. They weren't finished when Windows 95 went to press back in July of 1995. *Most* of the DirectX package is ready now, though, and Microsoft is encouraging video card vendors to include it in updates to their video drivers. Game vendors can also include the updated drivers with products that use them, which are shipping as you read this.

Direct3D, however, is not ready for prime time. Originally scheduled for a Fall 1995 release, Direct3D only recently entered the testing phase with game developers. The first true Direct3D/Reality Lab games could be shipping within a few months, or they might come as late as Christmas 1996, as Microsoft and the game companies shake out the bugs. In the meantime, DOS-based games, using DOS versions of APIs like Reality Lab and Criterion's Renderware, will dominate 3D-accelerated gaming.

That means you'll have to shop carefully. Until universal Windows 95 drivers are available and supported, you'll have to make sure your 3D graphics card is supported by the games you're interested in.

We've been trying out 3D graphics cards from #9, Creative Labs, Diamond Multimedia, Matrox, Western Digital, and others. We'll bring you a full hands-on report in our next issue. Meanwhile, though, let's cover some terminology and take a quick look at how these cards work their magic.

Inside The World of 3D

Some PC games use pre-rendered 3D graphics, like the spectacular, photorealistic scenes in *The 7th Guest*. Graphics like these are made up of raytraced drawings (the computer traces the path of an imaginary ray of light from your eye to the object, as it reflects from that object to any other, until the light is either scattered or absorbed; thousands and thousands of such paths are traced until the scene is built up). It can take hours for the most powerful computers to render just one frame of raytraced animation, so this style of graphics can't be generated on the fly in a PC game — instead, pre-rendered graphics are "played back" from the CD-ROM, frame by frame. That's why you don't have complete freedom of movement in a game like *The 7th Guest*; you're restricted to moving through each scene on a predetermined "track" defined by the pre-rendered animations.

True 3D games like *Doom* and *Magic Carpet* give you full freedom of movement, which means the screen has to be redrawn from scratch, 15 to 30 times per second, as your viewpoint rotates, pans, or zooms in and out. True raytracing is out of the question, but realism is still important.

Games like Interplay's *Descent* contain thousands of polygons per screen; 3D cards can make their successors more complex *and* faster.

(figure 1)

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(figure 2)

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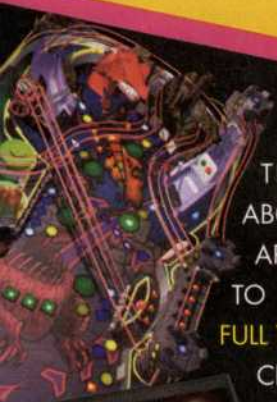

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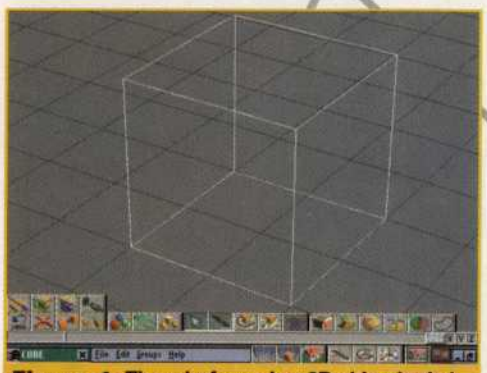

Figure 1: The wireframe is a 3D object's skeleton (demonstrated using Caligari *trueSpace* 2.0).

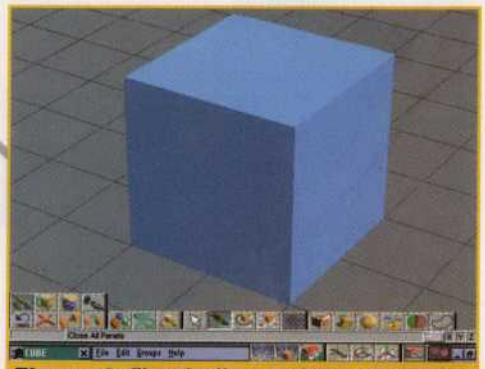

Figure 2: Flat-shading an object creates the illusion of solidity, and covers up surfaces that should be hidden.

Figure 3: A Gouraud-shaded object is more realistic-looking, but still rather plain.

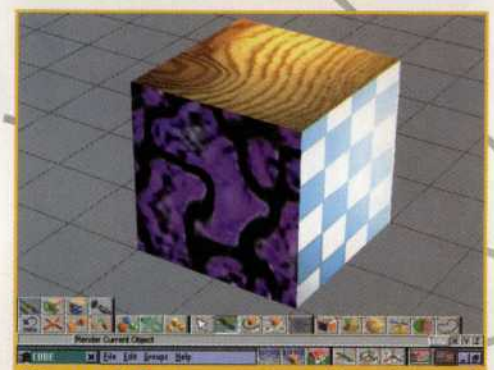

Figure 4: Texture mapping adds realism and tactility to an object.

Consider a simple 3D object like a cube. A cube has six faces, each of them a square. The simplest way to view a cube is as a wireframe (Fig. 1). All you see are the lines that make up the edges of the object. The lines meet at vertex points, also known as vertices.

To add solidity, we can shade the faces of the cube by adding an imaginary light source. We can then calculate the shade of each face depending on how much light reaches each side of the cube. There's a lot of math involved even in such simple 3D; in principle, we'd have to calculate the amount of light falling on every pixel of every face of the cube.

It's easier just to average the amount of light falling on each face, and paint the entire face of the cube with this color. Since each face has only a single color, it's known as flat shading (Fig. 2). To get more realistic results, you can divide an object into smaller and smaller pieces. Each piece is a separate polygon (usually a triangle). You can paint each triangle a different shade, so the more triangles you use, the more accurate the shading — but that also means more of a strain on your PC's processor.

Another shading method spreads the shading across the entire triangle by blending the color from one vertex to another (Fig. 3). This is called Gouraud shading, and its only limitation is that it smooths out the shiny spots, or highlights that can make an object look like it's made of metal (or plastic, etc). Some of the new 3D accelerator cards can actually add highlights to Gouraud-shaded objects in an additional step.

Another way to make the cube look more realistic is to paint each face with a texture map (Fig. 4). A texture is a 2D drawing, or bitmap, such as scanned or hand-drawn wood paneling. Instead of creating thousands of tiny polygons to simulate a woodgrain texture, for example, you can make your 3D cube look like a block of wood by overlaying each face with a flat picture of woodgrain. The texturing is made more realistic by a shading process called blending. It's also necessary to distort the textures you wrap around the cube so they'll follow the perspective of the object. This is called perspective correction.

A cube can be drawn with just a few triangles, but more complex objects — an Indy racer or a starship, for instance — can require hundreds or thousands of such faces. While your computer is powerful enough to calculate the positions of these objects, it takes a lot more horsepower to actually paint the pixels of each triangle.

That's where the 3D accelerator card steps in; it's essentially a triangle-blaster. Your PC's processor tells the 3D accelerator what to draw and where to draw it, and the card takes care of all the details of actually painting (rendering) the scene.

Traditionally, 3D graphics acceleration has been the domain of expensive CAD/CAM workstations, which require perfect precision and high resolution. Of course, games don't have to be so finicky: speed and affordability are the name of the game, so most of these cards are designed for 640x480 resolution using 32,768 colors. That's not terribly impressive as CAD workstations go, but it's heady stuff for PC games, most of which are still done in 320x200 resolution with 256 colors.

It's amazing how powerful these new cards can be. In a single frame, a 3D accelerator can paint hundreds of thousands of shaded, perspective-correct, textured-mapped triangles. As if that's not enough, the cards also smooth the transition between colors, blending the harsh "staircase" effect you often see in diagonal lines with a technique called anti-aliasing. Many cards also feature fogging, which makes far-off objects hazy and indistinct to enhance the illusion of distance.

The Point of No Return

Even a 90MHz Pentium PC can only update a few million pixels per second; the best of the new 3D accelerators can manage more than 100 million pixels per second. Translation: 3D video cards may well be the Next Big Thing in PC gaming hardware.

Next month, we'll take an in-depth look at the top 3D accelerator cards on the market and help you decide which one's right for your system — so be sure to grab the February 1995 issue of *PC Gamer*.

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Charles Brannon's latest book, The Windows 95 Book, *is published by Ventana Press.*

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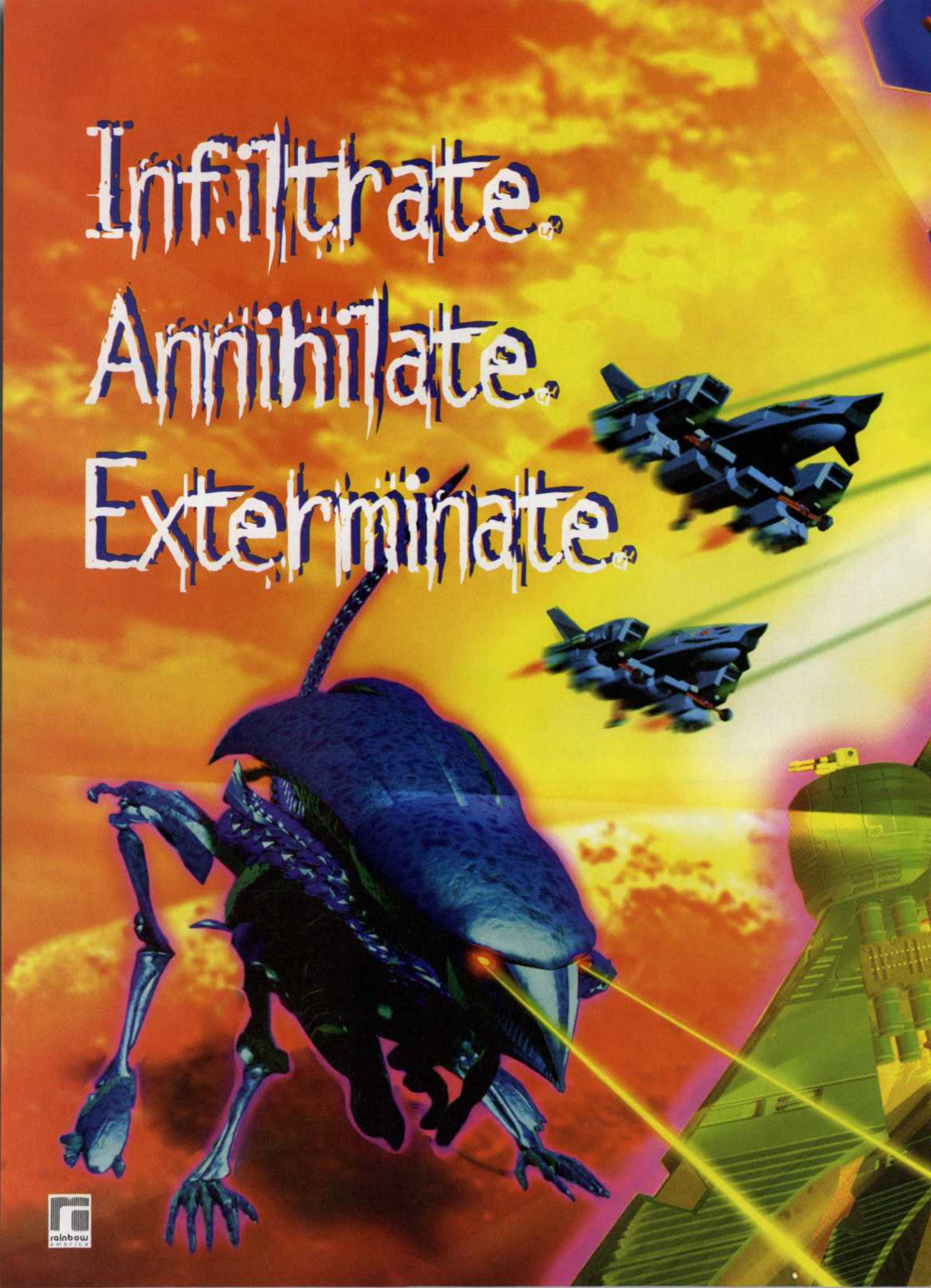
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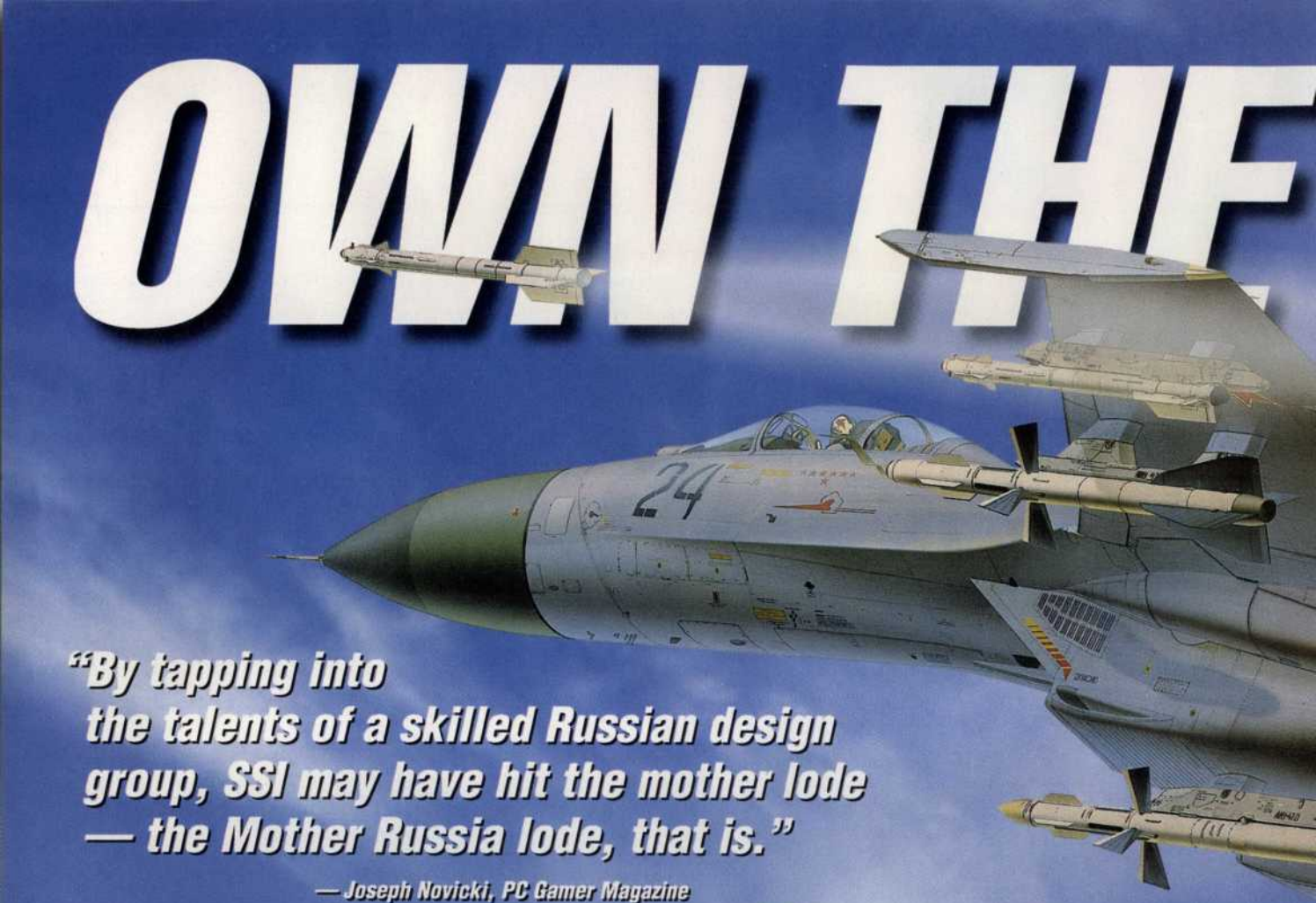

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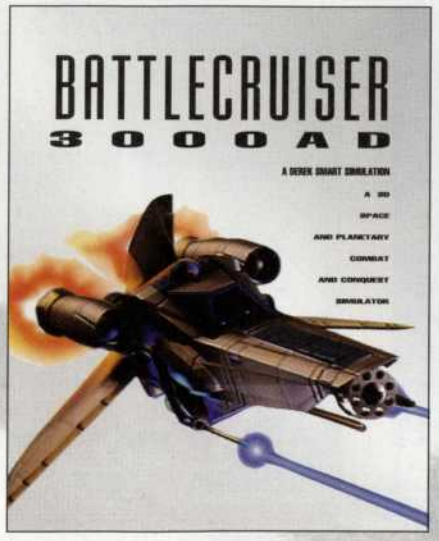

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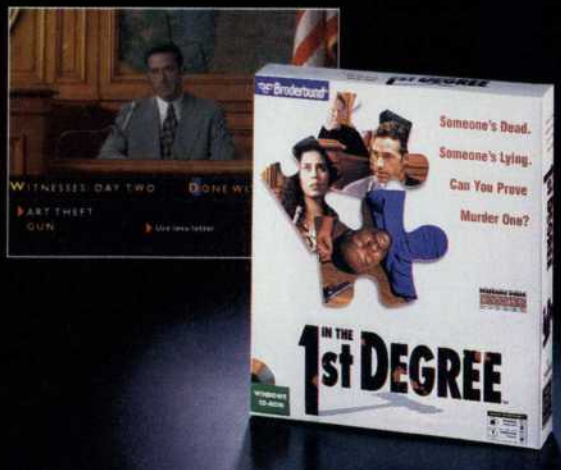

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Product Information Number 103

Feet of Fury

Box-stomping is a time-honored ritual in the *PC Gamer* offices. To the untrained eye, it can be quite disturbing, but there's a method to our madness.

When we review a game, we approach it as impartially as possible, trying to see it in the same way as the average game player who just bought it at the software store. No predetermined reviews, no negative expectations; if one of our editors or contributors is convinced he won't like a game before he's even tried it, he doesn't get to review it.

Once that even-handed, unbiased review is written, however, it's another story entirely. The good games usually stay in the reviewer's personal collection; they're the ones he'll continue to play even though he doesn't have to.

A game that's merely average goes back on the *PC Gamer* shelves, where it'll sit until we need it for a later article. Bad games we know we'll never need again generally go into that circular file the janitor empties at the end of every day.

And then there are the *really* bad games. The ones that leave us slowly shaking our heads at our monitor screens long after we've returned to the DOS prompt. The ones that turn our hair prematurely grey. The ones that leave stains on our hard drives. Those games get stomped.

It's actually very therapeutic. After playing a game that leaves a bad taste in your mouth, nothing clears the palate quite like tossing it on the floor and leaving a great, big Nike print on it. Does it break the CD-ROM? Not usually — it probably doesn't hurt it at all. But it sure makes *us* feel better.

Hardware Requirements

With each *PC Gamer* review, you'll find two very important pieces of information: the game's minimum hardware requirements and the hardware configurations we recommend as the *least* you'll need to really enjoy the game. While a game will run on the minimum system the manufacturer specifies, it might not run all that well. Because of this, we test each game on several systems so we can bring you a more realistic assessment of what you'll *really* need.

THE PC GAMER RATINGS SYSTEM

100%-90% CLASSIC

Not many games can earn a rating over 90%, and even fewer can approach the magic 100. Anything that we rate over 90% is an instant classic — a game that's truly significant in both content and design, and one that we'd recommend without reservation to anyone interested in PC gaming.

89%-80% EXCELLENT

These are excellent games. Anything that scores in this range is well worth your attention, though it may not make any significant advances over its rivals. Also, some genuine benchmark games of decidedly specialist taste will fall into this area — it may be the best 7th Cavalry simulation on the market, but not all of us want to relive Little Bighorn.

79%-70% VERY GOOD

These are pretty good games, which we would recommend to fans of the particular genre — although it's a safe bet that there are probably better games out there.

69%-60% GOOD

A reasonable, above-average game. It may be worth buying, but probably has a few significant flaws that keep it from earning a higher rating.

59%-50% FAIR

Very ordinary games. Not completely worthless, but not a very good way to spend your gaming dollar, either.

49%-40% BELOW AVERAGE

Poor quality. Only a few, slightly redeeming features keep them from falling into the abyss of the next category...

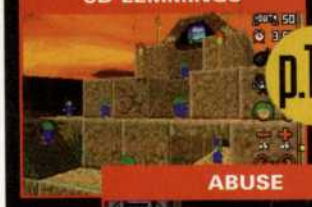
39%-0% DON'T BOTHER

Just terrible games — and the lower you go, the worse they get. Avoid these titles like the Plague — and don't say we didn't warn you!

PC Gamer Editors' Choice Awards

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE

Each and every month, we honor the best games we see — those earning 88% or above — with our coveted Editors' Choice award. It's not easy to earn the Editors' Choice, and there are a lot of excellent games that fall just short of the honor. So when you see the *PC Gamer* Editors' Choice logo on a game at your local software shop, you can bet it's among the best of the best.

3D LEMMINGS

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ABUSE

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BATTLEGROUND: ARDENNES

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BATTLES IN TIME

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CAESAR II

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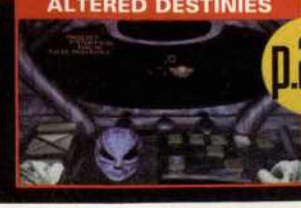
MILLENIA: ALTERED DESTINIES

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Caesar II

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE

Category: Strategy

Developer: Impressions

Publisher: Sierra Online, 3380 146th Place S.E., Suite 300, Bellevue, WA 98007 (800) 757-7707

Required	We Recommend
Double speed CD-ROM drive; 486SX/25; 8MB RAM; SVGA; Mouse	486/66; Supported sound card

M.S.R.P.: $59.95

Epic in scale, exquisite in detail, *Caesar II* may be the finest game Impressions has ever created.

To be successful, a Roman Empire simulation must, above all else, convey a sense of both the epic scale and the dynamic internal mechanisms of the real empire. The Empire was a complex political, economic, and military entity, and during the two or three centuries of its greatest expansion — before Roman society began to rot from within — it achieved remarkable stability because its leaders were able to balance those three elements with skill and some degree of wisdom.

That subtlety of balance is perhaps the key to success in *Caesar II*. A few large, well-trained legions are also helpful, of course — especially in the middle and late phases of the game, when you are no longer fighting barbarian rabble, but enemies of Carthaginian quality.

When the game begins in the third century B.C., there *is* no Empire, just a single province, Latium, and the city of Rome itself. You assume the role of a young, inexperienced civil servant (the Emperor barely knows your name) assigned to subdue and develop one of the provinces adjacent to Latium.

Click on different figures in the Forum to manage labor allocation, troop conscription, and treasury reports.

On the Province level, one of your first tasks should be to build roads connecting all outlying farms and villages with your city.

Your performance will be judged by four criteria:

Empire: How well you have developed the infrastructure of your province — by building roads, ports, farms, mines, trading posts, etc.

Peace: How safe and secure you've made your province. You must place forts at strategic locations and have enough troops in each to stop invaders before they reach your city. If an enemy force does reach your provincial capital, it's up to the city garrison and fortifications to stop them, and troopers on city duty tend to get soft and complacent....

Culture: This rating derives from a complex mix of educational and entertainment facilities, advanced sanitation, attractive plazas and gardens — all the things that make city life worth living.

Prosperity: The game's toughest element, this rating measures your ability to balance taxation against government spending. There will never be enough denarii in the treasury to build every desirable factory, forum, and bathhouse, so you'll need to make compromises and develop good intuition with regard to exactly where and when you want to invest in the more expensive facilities.

Plebs are your basic labor force. They can also be trained as slingers, to add some cheap long-range firepower to your legion.

Fortunately, the game's excellent interface gives you easy access to information useful in making such decisions. By clicking on the Legend Square, you can call up multicolored overlays of every part of your city. These overlays are color-coded, so you can tell at a glance, for example, which parts of your city have good water access, inferior security, or substandard tax-collection rates.

There is so much information available on these overlays that, at first, they may seem daunting. But as you spend time with the game, you'll rely on them more and more, and their use will become automatic.

If you reach a certain level of achievement in each of these categories (consult the Oracle frequently to see how you're doing), the Emperor will promote you and give you a choice of new provinces to govern. As you advance, you'll encounter stiffer resistance and more complicated economic challenges, but if you succeed in all your assignments, you'll get the ultimate promotion when you are named Emperor of Rome.

On the other hand, if your cities decay, your citizens riot, or some marauding tribe loots the treasury and burns half your city, you'll trade the robes of power for the chains of a galley slave.

Success is hard to come by, even with the game set at its easiest level. Money runs out; riots occur even when your citizens *seem* content and secure; and in the later stages of the campaign, you may encounter some foes that are so tricky to defeat that you'll actually stand a better chance of winning if you turn the battle over to your computer. And profits, when and if you start making them, are often disappointingly small. If the game has one flaw, it may be that the "frustration quotient" is simply too high for some players. Others, of

An orderly, prosperous Roman city is a thing of beauty — unless riots, fires, or barbarian invaders perform some drastic urban renewal on parts of it.

If your legion is outnumbered, try putting its men into the "tortoise" formation, which gives them an added defensive bonus.

course, will like it precisely because it's so challenging.

You can play *Caesar II* on the City Level alone, in which case you're basically playing *SimCity* with a lot of spectacular classical architecture, or you can play the full Campaign, which gives you the entire province to manage, and control over all military options.

In the original *Caesar*, you could control the tactical element of the game only if you had a previous Impressions game, *Cohort II*, nested within the newer program. *Cohort II* was a pretty crude, even obnoxious, miniatures-style wargame, and I suspect that most fans of the original *Caesar* didn't bother with it.

In *Caesar II*, however, the tactical system is tight and rather elegant; the battles are often dramatic, but they don't weigh down the overall game — even the biggest engagements play out in less than ten minutes. Miniatures are again used, but they are state-of-the-art in both graphic presentation and animation — light-years better than the risible antics depicted in *Cohort II*.

I especially admire the way Impressions has programmed enemy forces to fight with different styles, weapons, and tactics, as you move from province to province. The battlefield challenge stays sharp and thoughtful throughout the game.

Success comes from a combination of balanced city development and balanced provincial economies. Avoid overspending too early in the game (it's *very* tempting to build all those fancy new forums and circuses as soon as they become available to you), because it takes a long time — a decade or more in some provinces — before your population taxes and industrial taxes grow even with your expenditures, let alone turn a profit.

Negative treasury balances most emphatically do not endear you to the Emperor. He will tolerate a deficit temporarily, and will even cover your expenses from the Roman treasury, but if you don't start showing a profit soon — within a year at the most — you'll receive a series of increasingly testy Imperial messages. If you can't turn a profit within two or three months of receiving a "stern warning," you'll be summarily fired and sent off to join Judah Ben-Hur at the oars of a galley.

Caesar II has a rich, enveloping texture; all the major elements of gameplay and strategy are beautifully balanced, and the more time you spend with it, the more addictive it becomes.

And it's surely one of the best-looking games ever published. The cities are exquisite: soaring temples, marbled plazas, gleaming public baths, bustling markets, forums, theaters, arenas, public gardens, formidable walls and towers. When you have successfully built such a city, you've not only mastered a strategic challenge, you've created something *beautiful*.

Hail, *Caesar II*! Impressions has produced a glowing jewel of a game that'll make Emperors of us all.

—William R. Trotter

From Rufus Publius to His Nephew, Flavius

Salve! I have learned recently, dear Flavius, that our beloved Emperor has offered you governorship of one of several adjacent provinces. Since my retirement from public life, I have spent much time reflecting on my long career and numerous campaigns, and I hope you will not think it pushy of me to offer some advice.

If they are offered to you, I suggest you take Sardinia and Corsica as your first assignment. Being islands, they are relatively immune to invasion, so you'll be spared the expense of constructing walls and towers. Each island is home to but a single hostile tribe, therefore you need only invest in a single provincial fort. Once you have pacified the tribe, however, do not disband your legion — raiding parties from the sea can appear at any time, and you must be prepared to wipe them out before they can pillage and burn.

I have known governors who advanced their careers by bribing the Emperor, but, aside from the moral turpitude of such an act, it is a most risky tactic. If the bribe is not large enough, you will only insult the Emperor; and whatever the sum, once bribed he will expect you to continue your "donations" on a regular basis. It is far wiser to wait until the Emperor asks something of *you* — a shipload of marble or a few tons of wheat, for instance — and, hopefully, your warehouses will be full enough to provide it.

If your province's economy is thriving and your city prosperous, give yourself a modest raise — you will have earned it. Over time, you may amass a personal fortune that can be *very* helpful in the later, more challenging levels of your career. Invest in your cities, however, before your fortune becomes so large that the Emperor decides to relieve you of a big chunk of it.

It is an inevitable paradox that city-dwellers demand security but dislike living close to either prefectures or barracks. For optimum residential land-value, keep dwellings at least two squares away from such places. The land need not be wasted, for you can always build upon it plazas, gardens, or fountains, which are both inexpensive and pleasing to the eye.

Your uncle bids you farewell and wishes you good fortune. My priest read the entrails of two plump doves this morning, and he predicts for you both great challenges and high rewards!

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

93%

HIGHS: Magnificent graphics; well balanced strategy elements; highly addictive; rewarding.

LOWS: Some may find routine city-building monotonous; the frustration level may be a bit too high.

BOTTOM LINE: *Caesar II* provides an colorful, rich, absorbing, game-experience and should delight a large, diverse audience.

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Product Information Number 116

Star Rangers

Category: Space-combat Simulation

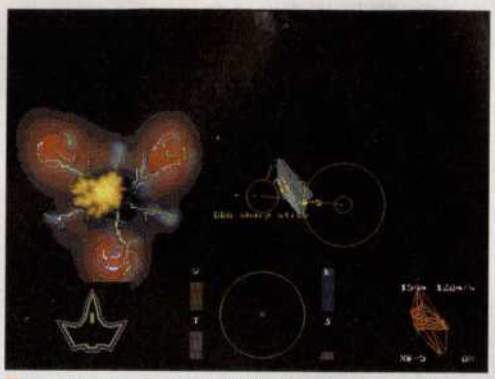
Developer: Interactive Magic

Publisher: Interactive Magic, P.O. Box 13491, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709 (800) 789-1534

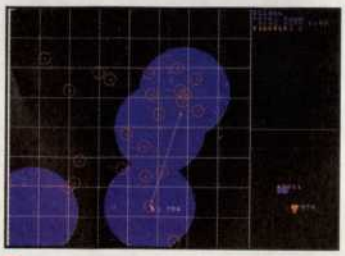
Required	We Recommend
Double-speed CD-ROM drive; 486/66 MHz; 8MB RAM; 18MB hard-drive space; DOS 5.0 or higher; SVGA; Joystick or gamepad	Quad-speed CD-ROM drive; Pentium; local bus SVGA card; Supported sound card

M.S.R.P.: $59.95

Star Rangers' blend of strategy and arcade action will have you on the edge of your seat from start to finish.



***Star Rangers* serves up challenging space-combat action in the tradition of Atari's classic *Star Raiders*.**



The game's strategic elements distinguish it from other space shooters.

The folks at Interactive Magic have confessed that their goal in designing *Star Rangers* — the first project they've developed entirely in-house — was to recapture the intensity and excitement of the classic Atari 2600 game *Star Raiders*. And that's exactly what they've managed to do.

The game casts you as a member of the Star Rangers, an elite group of space fighter pilots who patrol the outer frontiers of "human space." Your purpose is to defend human outposts from the Taureg bandits who are your principal enemies in a series of challenging missions tied to an overall campaign.

Each of these 17 campaign missions has a distinct goal; you and one of five wingmen of your choosing (three male and two female) will head out on search-and-destroy sorties, protect outlying bases against bandit raids, escort civilian ships carrying settlers and supplies, launch attacks on Taureg bases and supply convoys, and more.

The SVGA graphics aren't quite up to *Wing Commander III* level, but they're quite impressive.

It sounds like standard space-combat fare along the lines of *Wing Commander* or *X-Wing*, but several strategic elements borrowed from *Star Raiders* give this game a feel all its own. Because your operations take place in a huge quadrant of space, you must constantly check the strategic map and decide where your assistance is needed the most, then warp to the trouble-spots as quickly as possible.

To help you achieve your goal, you'll use an assortment of wingman commands — attack a target, provide cover for you, return to base, etc. — or you can order him or her to warp to an entirely different sector, then return when needed. This variety in wingman controls is a refreshing change from the more limited options found in most space-combat games.

You also have the ability to drop buoys to increase the range of your sensors, dock at friendly bases for repairs during a mission, and determine how much energy to allocate to your engines, shields, and guns. All these things make *Star Rangers'* the closest thing you'll find to a "thinking man's" space-combat game.

But *Star Rangers* isn't a game of all brains and no brawn. Unless you're playing on the easiest difficulty setting, your dogfighting skills will be severely tested on nearly every mission. Enemy ships constantly perform evasive maneuvers to shake you off their tails, and they'll use their superior numbers to catch you in a crossfire — it's not uncommon to suddenly find yourself the prey instead of the hunter.

Fortunately, you'll get to enjoy some fine SVGA graphics during combat — while they're not quite as good as those seen in *Wing Commander III*, they're still quite impressive. They do an excellent job of creating the sense of being in deep space, and the massive Taureg cruisers and bases give you a real sense of perspective — your ship looks and feels tiny as you fly past one of these monsters.

There are a few aspects of *Star Rangers* that longtime gamers may find disappointing. Some of the sound effects during combat are a little cheesy, particularly the noise you hear when you land laser fire on an enemy ship; it sounds a lot like dice rolling around in a cup. And while the wingmen are supposed to be distinct personalities, they all say pretty much the same stuff during combat — and since that's the only time you hear or see them, they quickly become interchangeable with one another.

Probably the main complaint gamers will level against *Star Rangers* is the linear nature of the campaign; if you're unsuccessful on a mission, you'll have to fly it over and over until you win (the actual placement of enemies is randomly generated each time, however). A branching plot like in the Wing Commander series would give I-Magic's game a little more replay value and help the player become more thoroughly immersed in the game world.

But these minor problems are eclipsed by what *Star Rangers* does deliver: intense space-combat liberally seasoned with strategic challenges. If outer-space dogfighting action is your thing, you'll definitely want to add this one to your collection.

—Steve Poole

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

85%

HIGHS: An exciting mix of strategy and combat keeps things cooking.

LOWS: The linear nature of the campaign game robs the game of realism, as does the lack of character development.

BOTTOM LINE: If you're into space-combat games, check this one out.

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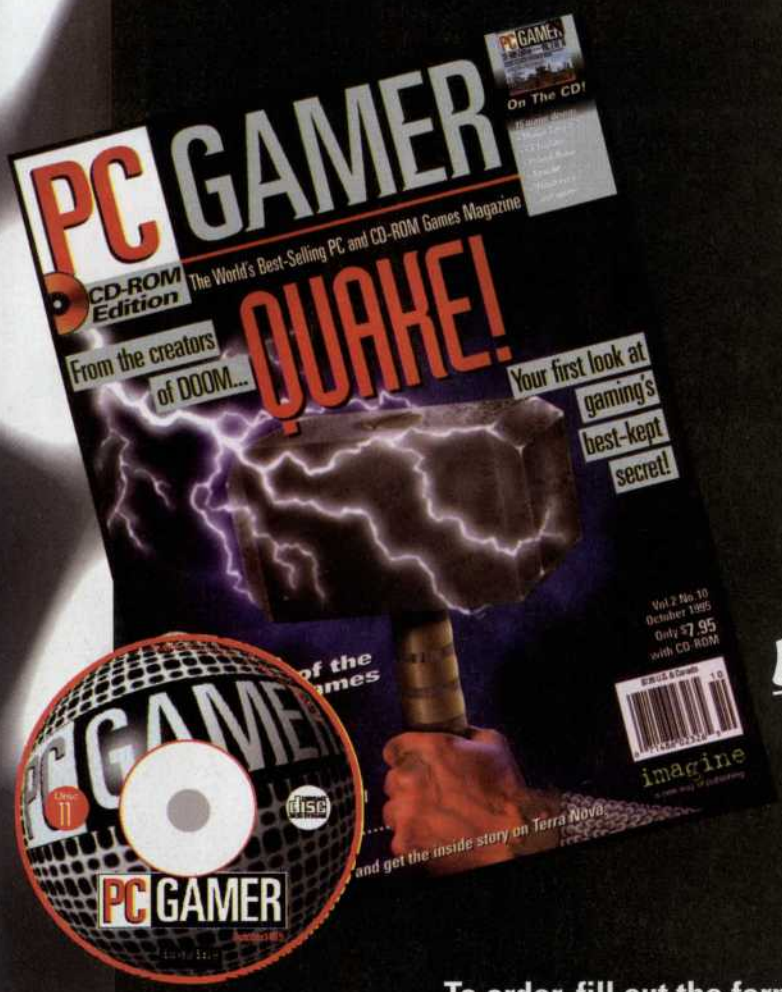

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Product Information Number 128

3D Lemmings

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE

Category: Puzzle game

Developer: Psygnosis

Publisher: Sony Interactive, 919 E. Hillsdale Blvd., Foster City, CA 94404 (800) 438-7794

Required	We Recommend
Double-speed CD-ROM drive; 486/33; 8MB RAM; Mouse	486/66; Supported sound card; SVGA

M.S.R.P.: $59.95

The latest Lemmings puzzler brings some old friends to life with a fresh new look.

If you've been playing computer games for a while now, chances are you've encountered at least one incarnation of the dimwitted creatures known as the Lemmings. Created back in the early 1990s, the Lemmings phenomenon has spread across computer gaming like wildfire, addicting thousands upon thousands of unsuspecting gamers with its unique and often infuriating brand of puzzling madness.

Over the years, we've had a variety of opportunities — in several sequels — to try and save the Lemmings from their own lack of a survival instinct, but this latest offering from Sony Interactive is a far cry from the days when the lemmings were confined to just two dimensions.

3D Lemmings takes the best elements of what were for years some of the most innovative 2D puzzlers around and thrusts those same familiar situations and characters into a 3D world of moving camera views, elaborate environments, and a clever use of both first- and third-person perspectives.

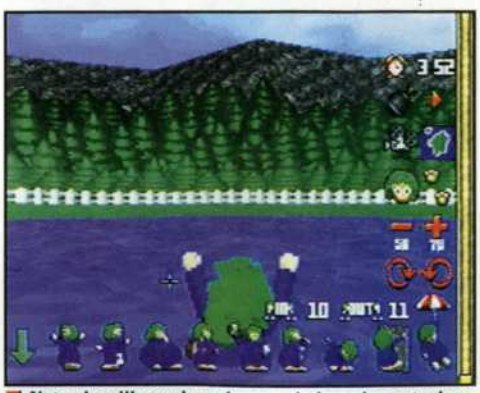
The change in environment is a dramatic one, but the basic ingredients that made the previous Lemmings games such a hit are still here. As in earlier games, your job is to herd a group of furry, slightly suicidal ninnies out of danger and safely home. You do this by choosing the appropriate skill or tool from a limited list, then giving it to one of the lemmings so he'll build, blast, or dig his way around a particular obstacle and allow the rest to get safely home.

By using the Virtual Lemming option, look through the eyes of a selected lemming for a new perspective on the game.

It's never as simple as it sounds, of course. At times, you'll have almost a hundred of these little guys marching headlong toward their deaths, seconds away from falling, drowning, or electrocuting themselves, before you finally solve the puzzle at hand and get them to safety. But if you're one of those dedicated puzzle masochists who can't get enough of this kind of thing, it's all part of *3D Lemmings'* charm.

So just how does this new 3D environment compare to the classic 2D games? In a word, it's seamless. Having played all of the previous Lemmings games, I found the new setting lends itself quite well to the nature of the puzzles and adds some clever new twists that could

Most of the classic lemming skills are back in *3D Lemmings*. Here, a climber makes his way toward a higher purpose.



Not only will your lemmings explode on impact when they fall from high places, you'll have to keep them away from water — lemmings can't swim.

THE Lemmings CHRONICLES

They came from another dimension....

If you've never met a lemming before, here's a brief introduction into the strange world of these careless critters and a loving look back at some of our favorite games.

Lemmings

Our first look at Lemmings came in the early 1990s. A conversion of an Amiga game, it was probably the title that put the game's developer, Psygnosis, on the map. With its innovative concept and countless hours of gameplay, *Lemmings* remains one of the most enjoyable puzzle games ever.

Oh, No! More Lemmings

This title came in the wake of mass Lemmings hysteria (similar, I guess, to that created by another British import, the Beatles) and gave PC gamers more than a hundred new, more challenging levels.

Lemmings 2: The Tribes

With the release of *The Tribes*, Psygnosis brought the Lemmings back with a fresh, new look and introduced us to the entire Lemmings clan. From the brutish Cave Lemmings to the ninja-style Shadow Lemmings, this puzzling tour de force brought a whole slew of new skills to our furry little friends, letting them perform such daredevil acts as hang-gliding, bombing, and even great feats of super-lemming strength. Take it from us: this one is the best of the bunch.

The Lemming Chronicles had notable differences from the other Lemmings games, including new graphics.

The Lemmings Chronicles

While the delicate palate of the dedicated Lemming connoisseur typically marks this Lemmings release, *The Lemmings Chronicles*, with disdain, this fourth edition to the series is notable in its attempt to improve on previous games with larger character graphics, a new tool system and new dangers to challenge our tiny wards.

3D Lemmings' 75 levels range from surreal circuit-board motifs to this Egyptian setting.

only exist in three dimensions.

For instance, with the new perspective you can move your viewpoint into tight corners or zoom the "camera" out to get an overall view of a level and figure out where its hazards are hidden and what you'll have to do to solve it. And with the Virtual Lemming option, you can actually step into the furry feet of a selected lemming and see the action from his point of view.

Level design also benefits from the 3D perspective, with new and more challenging puzzles. With the lemmings trudging through twisting platforms, massive towers and tight passages, you'll have to make the most of your movable viewpoint and plan your strategies wisely before the time runs out or all your lemmings wander into oblivion.

Just mastering the controls and keeping an eye on your little wards is a challenge in itself, at first. But if you make the most of the training levels (which let you practice with a small number of lemmings and one skill or tool at a time), you'll get the hang of things pretty quickly.

And once you've got the hang of it, you'd best make yourself comfortable; you're going to be in front of your computer for a while. There are five skill levels to choose from, with 15 levels each, and you'll probably want to play them all.

—Todd Vaughn

The basic premise of *3D Lemmings* should be instantly recognizable to any Lemmings fan, but the 3D graphics add a new twist.

As in previous Lemmings games, the puzzles are laid out with a number of deadly obstacles you'll have to herd your lemmings safely around or over.

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

91%

HIGHS: A great new look, plenty of control options, and lots of levels that'll keep you busy for weeks.

LOWS: The controls may be a little awkward, even for die-hard Lemmings fans.

BOTTOM LINE: *3D Lemmings* is an addictive puzzler that's a bit out of the norm.

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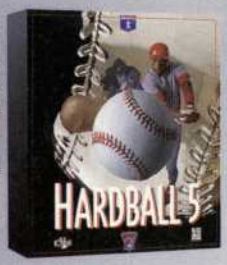

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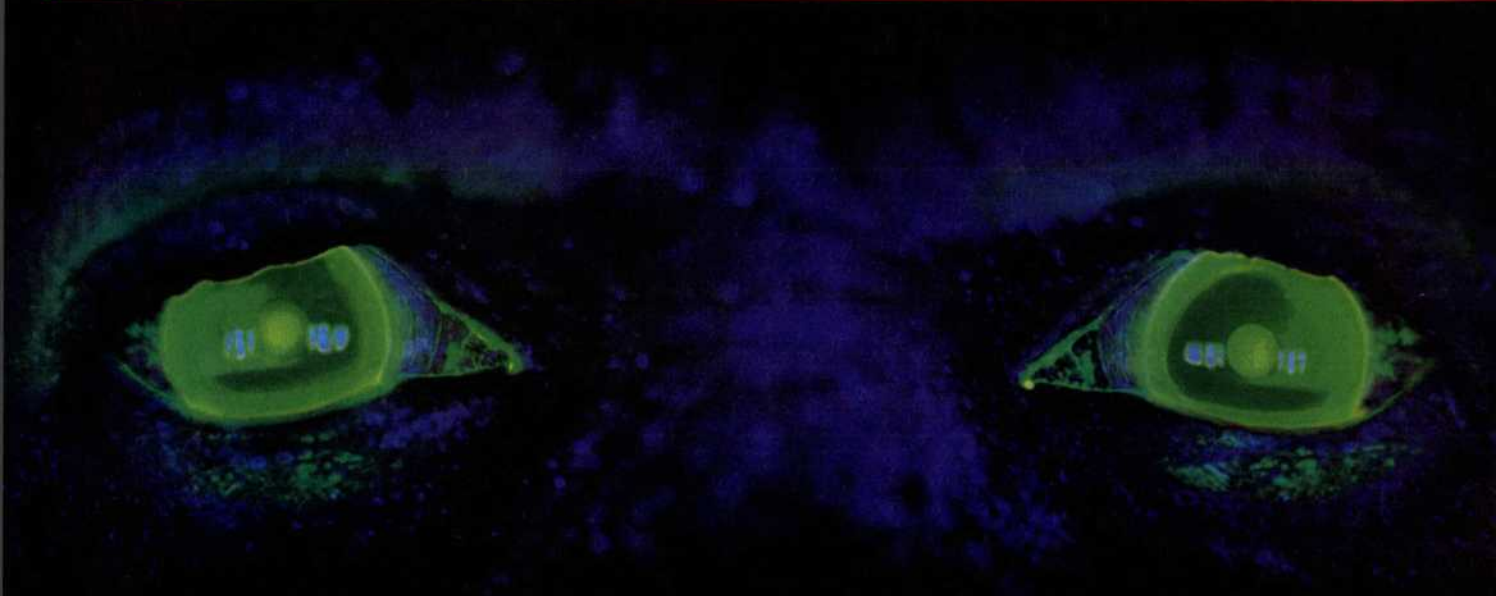

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Wetlands

Category: Arcade

Developer: New World Computing

Publisher: New World Computing, P.O. Box 4302, Hollywood, CA 90078 (818) 889-5650

Required	We Recommend
Double-speed CD-ROM drive; 486DX2/66; 8MB RAM; VESA-compatible SVGA card; Mouse	Pentium; 16MB RAM; Supported sound card; Joystick

M.S.R.P.: $59.95

New World Computing tries its hand at creating a gritty *Cyberia*-style shooter, but *Wetlands* fails to deliver the goods.

Chalk it up to a sign of the times or just a shortage of creative ideas, but ever since LucasArts' *Rebel Assault* shot to the top of the charts with its blend of arcade-style gameplay and cinematic storytelling, developers have been scrambling to create their own blockbuster using these same elements.

Cyberia, *Chaos Control*, and *Wingnuts* are just a few recent attempts to lure arcade fans with flashy graphics and finger-twitching action, but more often than not, most of these games have suffered from an overemphasis on visual style and not enough focus on the underlying gameplay.

Enter *Wetlands*, New World Computing's stab at creating an interactive shooter. Unfortunately for gamers, it fails to avoid many of the pitfalls that plague its predecessors.

Wetlands does deliver on the narrative element, with a gritty, futuristic plot that places you in the shoes of a bounty hunter-investigator named Cole, hot on the trail of an escaped prisoner.

Cole is your classic hard-nosed action hero, with a flair for destruction and a rough-and-tumble attitude.

Your objective is to locate this fugitive by entering a secretive underwater world. Along the way, you find that a ruthless madman has put in motion a diabolical plan that could destroy the world (as ruthless madmen are wont to do).

It's pretty effective storytelling, brought to life by blending the stylized, two-dimensional look and feel of an adult-oriented comic book with sharply rendered 3D objects and environments. This gives the narrative element a lot of bang for the buck, but once you enter the game's action sequences you'll soon realize that an attractive style and interesting setting isn't enough to make up for average and sometimes frustrating gameplay.

Much of the arcade element in *Wetlands* revolves around directing a remote craft *Rebel Assault*-style against stationary targets.

Part of the problem lies in the setting itself. Much of the game takes place in dark corridors or on the ocean floor, and the game screens during these sequences are often terribly dark, giving you little opportunity to identify targets until it's too late. While this *could* be seen as part of the challenge, it seems more an oversight by the designers than an intentional element of the game. You do get some help identifying targets from your onboard computer, but during the more demanding levels it's frequently too little, too late.

Then there's the nature of the sequences themselves, which offer the player only minimal control during gameplay. Basically, you're set on a predetermined path that bobs and weaves through each environment as wave after wave of enemy ships, soldiers or other targets of opportunity pass by. While most of these sequences are great to look at, the lack of any control over where you're going leaves you just pointing and shooting at everything that moves, and hoping you won't have to replay the level more than once. Add to that the sluggish response time with either mouse or joystick, and *Wetlands* begins to drag to a halt. Even if the story line of *Wetlands* manages to keep you coming back for more, you'll find this style of gaming gets old pretty quickly — once you've seen and done it all, you probably won't give this one a second look.

During an early arcade sequence in *Wetlands*, Cole needs to battle incoming starfighters from the turret of his dropship.

Wetlands could've been a much more interesting game if the arcade sequences had been better planned and less restrictive. Like many gamers, I don't mind a good shooter accompanied by a slick adventure tale, but when the action doesn't live up to its potential, it's ultimately a disappointment.

—Todd Vaughn

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

73%

HIGHS: Gritty animation and graphic novel-style storytelling.

LOWS: Touchy controls and action sequences that could've used some work.

BOTTOM LINE: If you really want arcade action with a story line, wait for *Rebel Assault II*.

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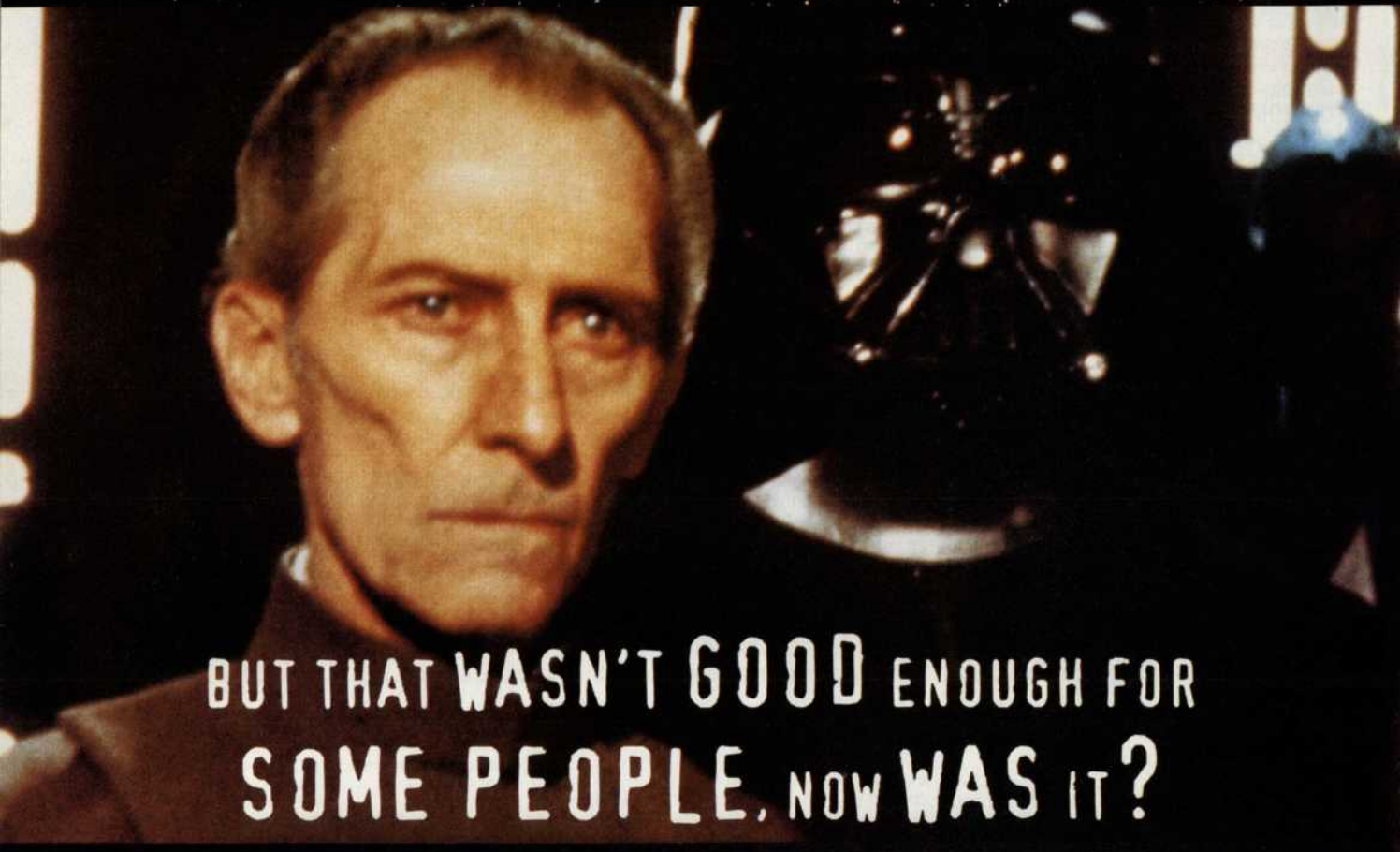

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Product Information Number 151

Entomorph

Category: Roleplaying Game

Developer: Cyberlore Studios

Publisher: SSI, 675 Almanor Ave., Suite 201, Sunnyvale, CA 94086-2901 (408) 737-6800

Required	We Recommend
Double-speed CD-ROM drive; 486/66; 8MB RAM; 25MB hard-drive space; SVGA; Windows 3.1 or better; Mouse	Pentium; Windows 95; Local bus SVGA; Windows compatible sound card

M.S.R.P.: $59.99

SSI's latest foray into the World of Aden is an attractive, innovative break from the usual roleplaying fare.

In SSI's rush to bring us new worlds to replace those lost with the termination of their licensing agreement with the creators of Advanced Dungeons & Dragons, the company has managed to create several new worlds based entirely on the imagination of their developers, with results that are both good and bad.

On the positive side, game developers are no longer hindered by the time and content restrictions placed on them by another company. On the down-side, many of the flights of fancy that may sound interesting in a planning meeting don't really work out too well in reality — wrinkles that, in an established RPG system, have long since been ironed out by extended playtesting and editing. In *Entomorph*, the second game to take place in their new World of Aden universe, SSI delivers an exciting new world with an easy-to-use interface, and solid (if uninspired) graphics and sound, but does so in a way that lacks the smooth polish of most of their earlier products.

***Entomorph*'s mysterious feel is heightened by the fact that you can never quite figure out whose side you're on. Is this a friend or an enemy?**

Entomorph's story is both novel and intriguing, a far cry from the mass-produced, grab-the-treasure-and-kill-the-wizard stories of past CRPGs. The World of Aden is portrayed just as it was in the first game — a universe where Victorian science (steam engines mostly) and magic coexist in relative harmony. After an unexplained cataclysm involving a solar eclipse, the world is slowly being populated by twisted monsters straight out of the pages of folklore. The Darkfall, as the mysterious catastrophe was called, left the entire planet covered with evil beings known as the nocturnals.

Entomorph tells the story of Squire Warrick, an adventurer searching the land in an attempt to find his lost sister — and gradually discovering that life in Aden is changing. The major beasts of burden and food source for the villagers, the jagtera (really big, ugly bugs) are disappearing. Now these once-docile creatures are attacking villagers, destroying towns, and generally making a nuisance out of themselves. Various factions are blaming each other for the strange behavior of the beasts, forming weird religions and underground movements in hopes of returning the world to a livable norm.

As you move through the game, you'll encounter all of these groups — some friendly, some not so friendly — in forms as diverse as giant man-eating

Conversational skills are a must for anyone who wishes to complete the game. Tact is a much valued trait that will carry you a long way.

Once you find your little brother, you'll begin the quest to reunite your family.

Entomorph's magic system is actually pretty easy to use and allows players to choose which spells they have at their fingertips.

Entomorph's nebulous plot may be a little disorienting at first, but most players will quickly warm up to it.

bugs or political powerhouses looking to keep an iron grip on the local village. Although the story never really gets boring, the hectic pace of the game can become pretty confusing after a while. There are so many half-revealed subplots that it can be a real challenge just keeping up with it all.

Entomorph's controls are pretty smooth and straightforward, and the game works well with the mouse alone. Most of the your time will be spent wandering around various islands, looking for your sister, picking up items, and fighting big bugs. Combat is pretty simple, but it doesn't really offer enough options to make either strategy fans or action fans happy. Enemies you encounter later in the game require a subtle touch with the mouse, and can be quite frustrating if you aren't a real arcade ace. In the end, though, it's the puzzles, not the action sequences, that matter in this game.

Puzzles in *Entomorph* can take several different forms, from the obvious use-this-item-here brain-teasers to more intelligent sequences that require a thorough awareness of your surroundings and careful diplomacy. The game's unusual setting and story line make for some truly abstract challenges; as your character moves through the game, he'll also get a chance to wander around in the form of various giant insects, learning to use new powers and compensate for the loss of others. As puzzle design goes, this game contains some of the best, and it's obvious that SSI put a lot of time and thought into developing a setup that would appeal to gaming veterans and newbies alike.

Combat, *Entomorph*'s weakest point, is frustrating and sluggish, detracting from the excitement of the game.

The graphics in *Entomorph* are genuinely impressive, especially considering the genre. First there are the mandatory, 3D-rendered cutscenes that say "Look! It's a game on CD-ROM!" They aren't really necessary, but they *are* very pretty, featuring high-res images and some of the best computer animation we've seen in a game of this type. Of course, if you don't have a high tolerance for giant insects buzzing around the countryside, you'll probably want to skip them. What really matters are the graphics in the game itself, and here again, SSI has done a very nice job. The color scheme really fits the style of play well, and the high-res images let you know you're playing the game in 1995, not 1987. More than just technically proficient, the art in the game just looks and feels right. SSI knows a lot about this type of game, and they know how to do it well.

In the end, there have probably been better RPGs, but there haven't been many that have the kind of unique atmosphere *Entomorph* boasts. As the developers continue to flesh out their new game world and polish its overarching story line, the team should be able to create even better chapters in this series. Meanwhile, if you're looking for your standard wizards-and-warriors adventuring, you're probably going to walk away from this game disappointed — but if you're willing to try something new, there's definitely a lot here worth a long look.

—Trent Ward

How to Be a BEE

One of the most unusual things about *Entomorph* is that it offers gamers the chance to play not only as a human hero, but also as different insects. The first time you find yourself controlling one of these monsters, it's pretty easy to get disoriented, so we've included a quick walk-through of the bee sequence to get you on your way.

Shortly after answering the riddles of the magic altar, you'll find yourself in control of a brave champion bee flying around in a hive surrounded by worker drones. Fly to the north as far as you can, and talk to the queen bee through the hole in the wall. She'll give you a mission to carry out.

Head back to the south and speak with the guard drone, who'll let you into the Alpha chamber. Once inside, you must fight and kill the old champion.

Return to the queen and tell her of your victory. She'll give you your next quest, the recovery of the blood. Talk to the guard again, then take the blood (from the back of the room) to the incubator and fill it up. Return to the guard and fight him.

Once you've won, you must use the pattern you saw the guard use to open the doors to the egg chamber and then the wax chamber. Use the wax to seal up the incubator, then return to the queen. With all of this done, you will be accepted by the queen and ready to start your life as a champion!

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

81%

HIGHS: Both the cutscene animations and gameplay graphics look great. Puzzles are also terrific.

LOWS: As original as it is, the plot tends toward chaos, and often leaves the player confused. Combat can be more frustrating than rewarding.

BOTTOM LINE: *Entomorph* is an attractive, innovative break from the usual RPG fare.

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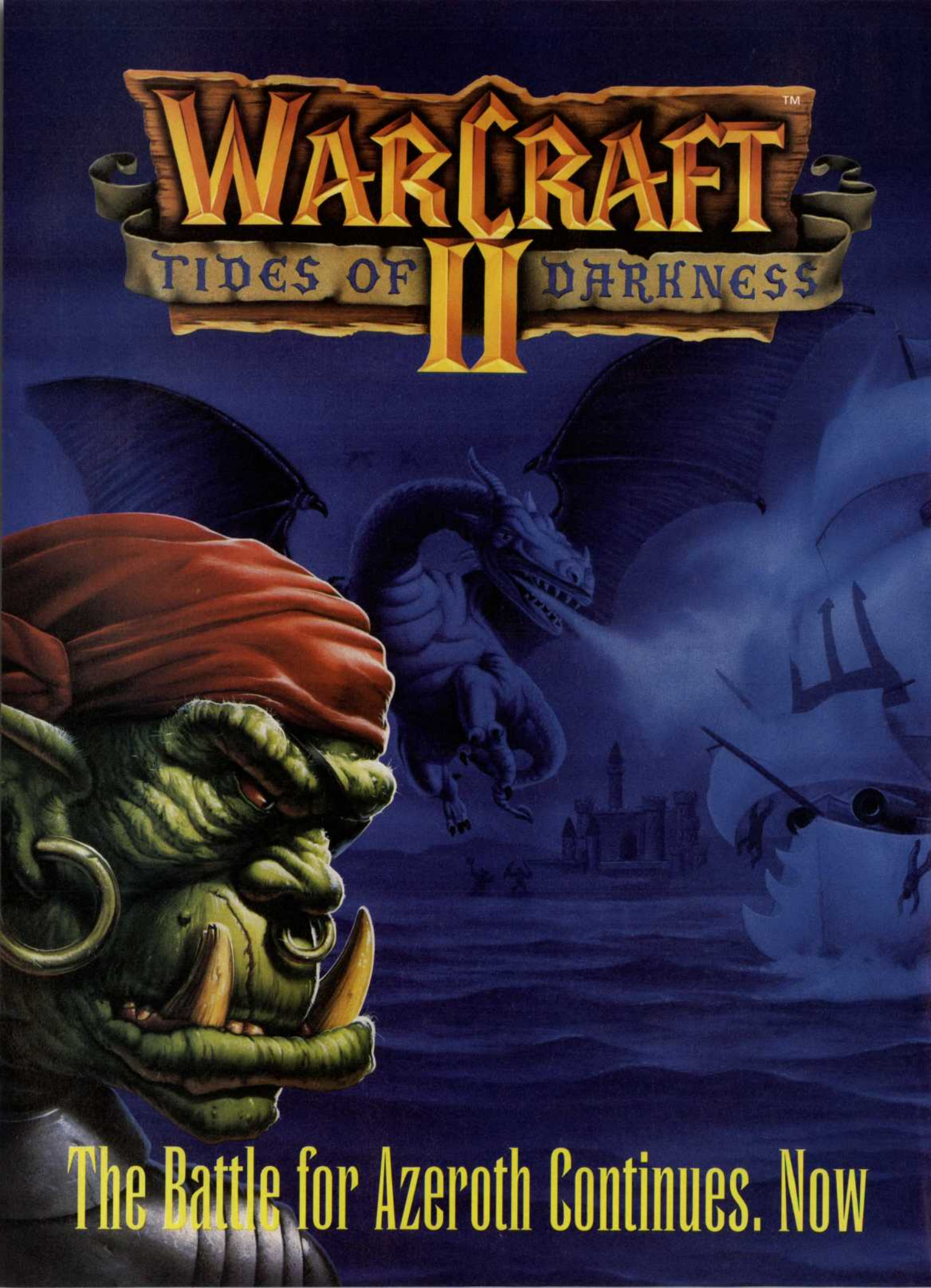
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Product Information Number 98

Battles In Time

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE

Category: Strategy

Developer: QQP

Publisher: American Laser Games, 495 Highway 202, Flemington, NJ 08822 (800) 880-1718

Required	We Recommend
CD-ROM drive; 386/25; 4MB RAM; Mouse	486; 8MB RAM; Supported sound card

M.S.R.P.: $59.95

QQP gives us a fun, weird twist on traditional wargames, while keeping the classic elements in place.

Having put aside its warlike ways for the sake of global peace, humanity has created a utopian Earth that knows only peace and prosperity. All the tools of war have long since been destroyed, and all knowledge of how to wage war been lost. What humanity didn't bank on, however, was an invasion by aliens hell-bent on grinding our perfect society into a fine powder.

As a member of the imperiled human race, what you need to save your peaceful world are the tools of war and the knowledge of how to wage it, and you need 'em fast.

Fortunately, you have a mostly functional time machine that can send you into Earth's past, where the weapons of war are plentiful and you can practice using them. The time machine isn't perfect, however; you can't determine where and when to go, and never quite know where you'll wind up, except that it will be one of four time periods: prehistory, the Roman era, World War Two, or the year 2025.

That's the premise of *Battles in Time*, a new strategic-tactical wargame from QQP. This strange scenario makes *BIT* a wholly different kind of wargame, at once deep and complex, yet immensely playable. The design is an old one for QQP President Bruce Williams, who's been playing a table-top version for years, just as he had with *The Perfect General*. While *BIT*'s most distinctive quality is its mix of units from different time periods with unique characteristics, what makes it a truly fine piece of gaming is the strategic-to-tactical warfare, which can be very hard to pull off.

The basic gameplay of *BIT* is handled through the use of a campaign mode, which sends you to each of the four time periods to acquire military units and fight a battle. The order in which you'll visit each time period will be random, but you *will* fight a full scenario in each era before you travel back to the future for a fifth major battle. Here, you'll mass the armies you've gathered in the previous eras in a confrontation with the aliens.

This random acquisition of troops makes for consistently diverse play, as the forces you take from period to period will always be different, depending on how you fought each battle in time. For people who don't want to commit to a full campaign game, there are a couple of scenarios for each time period (except the climactic battle against the aliens).

To understand *BIT*, you have to realize that it's fought on two levels. The first is a large-scale, division-level strategic game in which two opponents (red

Units from 2025 are arrayed on the battlefield of a tactical map, awaiting the opening salvos.

The red and blue armies meet at the strategic level in a World War Two scenario.

The game zooms in to a tactical level as the war rages on.

and blue) move large armies across a wide area, trying to capture all the cities on the map and destroy the enemy HQ. When armies meet on this level, the game then zooms down to a close-up view of the battlefield, where the individual units of each army fight a close, tactical-level battle. At the strategic level, *BIT* most resembles *Empire*, as you vie for possession of cities over a large space. Few games are done at this level, since they often don't involve the tight, action-oriented play of more tactical games.

What distinguishes *BIT* at this level is the structure of gameplay itself. Each turn is divided into several rounds, beginning with a replenishment phase, then continuing with movement and, if necessary, battle. During replenishment, you use buy points to build armies comprised of a variety of individual units (see the sidebar below). The composition of these armies is up to you, as long as it is kept to twelve units or fewer. Some pre-generated army types are offered for convenience: the SDU is a strategic defense unit, specially weighted for city defense; Recon is a light, fast-moving army that can scout a battlefield; and Camouflage is a non-army, meant to be used for decoy purposes and feints.

Armies take on different characteristics depending on the units in them. Using only light, fast-moving units means you'll get an army than can move further each turn (for blitzes) but is weaker, while a powerful twelve-unit force is ponderously slow, yet can take on all comers with few casualties. As you capture and hold cities, you get more buy points to build more armies, with an additional time bonus for ending your turn quickly. When you hold a map and have defeated an enemy, you move on to the next time period, keeping any units you have left and carrying them over for the grand showdown.

A Roman catapult lobs a fireball at the enemy in a tactical-level conflict.

When opposing armies meet within a four-square block on this level, the game drops to a tactical map, showing a zoomed-in version of the battlefield. You place each unit of your army on this battlefield, and then fight tight little battles, much like mini-*Perfect General* scenarios. These maps are always sized to fit on a single screen, and can be skipped if you want to concentrate purely on the strategic game. This is where a lot of the fun is, however, as all these little units come to life in a fast-paced, and inevitably bloody, brawl. Dinosaurs and cavemen, Roman legions, WWII grunts, and futuristic hovertanks all fight their tiny battles across literally thousands of possible maps.

The variety and flexibility of *Battles in Time* seems almost infinite, with such diverse levels of gameplay and so many different arenas for gaming. While it certainly won't be to everyone's tastes, this is a unique game, mixing a quirky sense of humor with a solid wargame design. It's a remarkably accessible game for novices, but has every bit of depth a seasoned wargamer could want.

—T. Liam McDonald

Warriors Out Of Time

Battles in Time's most unique feature is its mixture of different types of units from different time periods. Obviously, a time period like the prehistoric era is done with tongue firmly in cheek, but it adds the kind of strange, fun twists that make the game something really different. Here is just some of what you can expect to find on the battlefields. The icons are below, along with the values representing movement rate, short-range attack, and long-range attack (if applicable).

PREHISTORIC

Prehistoric armies have their air units (Pterodactyls), artillery (Brontosaurus), armor and cavalry (T-Rex, Raptor, Triceratops) and infantry (Cavemen equipped with Slingshots and Spears).

- Brontosaurus 3/9
- Tyrannosaurus Rex 5/4/8
- Raptor 6/5
- Spearman 4/4/6
- Pterodactyl 5/6
- Triceratops 6/4/8
- Slingshot 4/4/6

WORLD WAR TWO

Thanks to the number of WWII games made, we're all familiar by now with the units and tactics of armored warfare. Fast armored thrusts work just as well here as they worked in Poland in '39.

- Heavy Artillery 0/12
- Heavy Tank 4/5/11
- Armored Car 10/4/8
- Mortar 2/4/6
- Light Artillery 0/9
- Light Tank 6/4/10
- Bazooka 3/4/8

ROMAN

Anyone familiar with Roman warfare will recognize the combination of siege and ranged warriors, and mounted and unmounted infantry that comprise the battles.

- Flaming Catapult 1/8
- Cavalry 7/4
- Archer 5/4/6
- Ballista 3/4/9
- Crossbow 4/5/7
- Centurion 6/4

2025

A future of hovertanks and rocket launchers, 2025 scenarios will prepare you to face the alien invaders in the final fight.

- Rocket Launcher 3/13
- Hover Tank 5/4/10
- Gravity Pad 4/4/8
- Gunship 6/4/8
- Chain Gun 6/4/9

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

89%

HIGHS: Good strategic-tactical gaming with lots of unique twists; the usual thorough QQP head-to-head support.

LOWS: Larger armies tend to move woefully slowly in the strategic section.

BOTTOM LINE: Lots of replay value and an innovative design make this a truly entertaining wargame.

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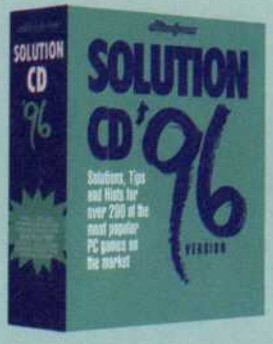

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Ecco The Dolphin

Category: Arcade Adventure

Developer: Sega of America

Publisher: Sega of America, 255 Shoreline Dr., Redwood City, CA 94065 (800) USA-SEGA

Required	We Recommend
CD-ROM drive; 486/33; Windows 3.1 or later; Mouse	Double-speed CD-ROM drive; 486/66; Windows 95; Game pad; Supported Sound Card

M.S.R.P.: $59.95

Sega of America, the company behind the once-mighty Genesis 16-bit game machine, is getting into PC publishing. Now that the Genesis has been surpassed by new, more powerful game machines — and since Sega's own next-generation Saturn machine probably won't be the success the Genesis was — Sega is looking to hedge its bets by bringing some its more popular videogame software to the PC. And in the case of *Ecco*, that's pretty good news for us computer gamers.

Ecco is noteworthy on a number of levels, but most obviously for its unique subject matter and main character. You play as Ecco, a dolphin who finds himself alone and facing a great mystery after a strange storm sucks the other members of his pod up into the sky. His family and friends gone and in possible danger, Ecco begins a search of the ocean's secret places that ultimately leads to a journey through time itself.

The game story is told in little snippets of dialog, elicited when Ecco uses his sonar on the other dolphins, whales, and strange crystals he finds during his journey. Ecco's sonar has other uses, too; if he launches a blast of sound and then waits for it to return to him, you get an area map of your surroundings. If Ecco blasts some crystals with sound, they fall away to let you pass on to new areas in the game.

It really is fun to play as a dolphin, if for no other reason than novelty. But actually *controlling* a dolphin can take getting used to. For example, there are a number of puzzles in the game that require you to use rocks or giant shells to smash barriers; since you don't have hands, you'll have to nudge these around with your snout, and getting used to the precise motions required can be *very* frustrating.

Ecco's ability to leap high out of the water is handy while exploring your surroundings.

One other problem is that the game's graphics aren't anything to write home about. No attempt was made at sprucing them up for Windows, and as a result the game just *looks* dated.

Still, *Ecco* is entertaining and novel, and once you do get the hang of playing as a dolphin you'll be rewarded with good, solid arcade gaming. It's not ground-breaking stuff, but it is a lot of fun.

—Ned Gaskins

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

75%

HIGHS: A welcome departure from the usual platform game.

LOWS: The controls can take some getting used to, and the graphics aren't great.

BOTTOM LINE: A solid, unusual bit of videogaming.

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Product Information Number 135

SimIsle

Category: Simulation

Developer: Intelligent Games

Publisher: Maxis, 2 Theatre Square, Orinda, CA 94563-3345 (510) 254-9700

Required	We Recommend
Double-speed CD-ROM drive; 486/33; 8MB RAM; Mouse; SVGA	486/66 or better; Supported sound card

M.S.R.P.: $59.95

The latest Sim title from Maxis lives up to the company's reputation for challenging gaming, but it's a far cry from *SimCity 2000*.

Since the original *SimCity* came along in the dark ages of computer gaming (the 1980s), Maxis has been full of surprises. *SimAnt*, *SimEarth*, *SimLife*, *SimFarm*, *SimTower*: heck, these guys have created a sim based on just about everything. And they almost always make it interesting. *SimIsle* doesn't top the list of my Maxis favorites, but it's still an engaging simulation with an intriguing premise.

In *SimIsle* you're in charge of an island, with a crew of trained agents in the field to do your bidding. Into this fragile environment you bring your bulldozers, jeeps, scientists, and your fancy American ways. Your goals vary according to the scenario. In one, you might be charged with establishing a tourism industry on a pristine but impoverished island. Or you might be ordered to build a smoking, churning industrial complex, and to hell with the environment.

Armed with a team of experts and a fat bank account, you set out to meet the objective. The first order of business is to bolster the local economy, locate raw materials, create jobs, and keep your business humming. But be warned, everything you do upsets the balance of nature in the rain forests that dominate the islands.

Sounds too politically correct to be fun, right? Think again. You can go about your job and work toward your goals by any means you like. Hack down the rain forests to develop your paradise, double the output of mines and refineries to fill your bank accounts. But make no mistake: your decisions definitely have an impact on the islands. Pollution levels rise, wildlife suffers, and yes, the natives get restless.

In fact, the game is downright insensitive at times. Don't worry about dislocating that fishing village to make room for a new hotel, the manual tells you. The natives all moved to the city, where they now wear funny-looking costumes and entertain the tourists.

The open-ended nature of this sim makes it an intriguing challenge. You can pretty much do what you want, like dislocate the natives or wreak havoc on the local ecology in pursuit of the almighty dollar. Or if you're feeling generous, you can take a different path and try to develop the island so that economy and ecology are not necessarily enemies.

The economic model used in *SimIsle* is surprisingly complex. Here you can build a warehouse, hotel, production site, or a host of other facilities.

The overhead view, with its data filters, provides a wealth of information about the health and wealth of your island.

From the long-range perspective, you can survey your island's topography. The different-colored pins mark various points of interest, including industrial sites, hotels, and tourist attractions.

When you get your new and improved island up and running, you can always count on an untimely disaster to wreck your best-laid plans. A shark attack can keep tourists away from your beaches, or a hurricane can wreak havoc all over the island.

The game provides enough variety in objectives and strategy to keep things interesting, but the graphics don't add much life to these islands. Sure, you can see cruise ships calling on your ports, and logging trucks pop up in the forests, but that's about it. More varied animations would make for a more engaging sim. Maybe a dinosaur or two would liven things up.

Despite its mundane graphics, *SimIsle* is still a challenging and addictive simulation. It's not for everyone — but then again, Maxis games never are.

—Lee Buchanan

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

82%

HIGHS: Challenging mix of economic and environmental concerns.

LOWS: Graphics and animations are dated; not enough action to keep the game engaging.

BOTTOM LINE: If you're a fan of Maxis sims, this is worth adding to your collection.

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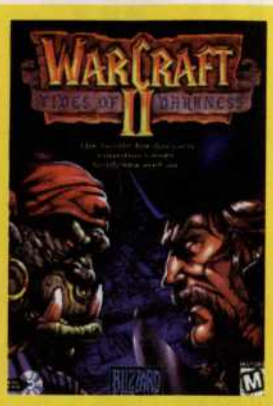

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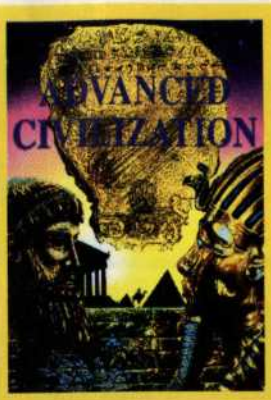

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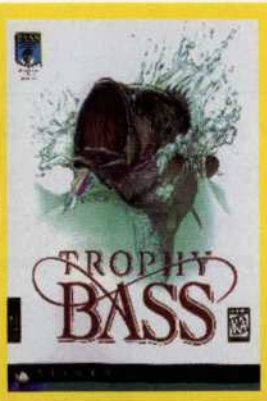

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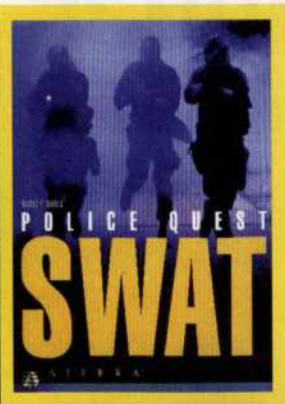

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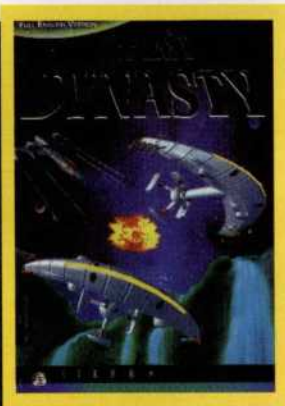

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Product Information Number 109

PCGR196P2

Abuse

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE

Here's proof that a game doesn't have to come from one of the big publishers to be good.

Category: Arcade Action

Developer: Crack dot Com

Publisher: Crack dot Com, Austin, TX
(800) 810-0022
http://www.crack.com

Required	We Recommend
CD-ROM drive; 386; 4MB RAM; 10MB hard-drive space; Mouse	486; SVGA; Supported sound cards

M.S.R.P.: $49.95

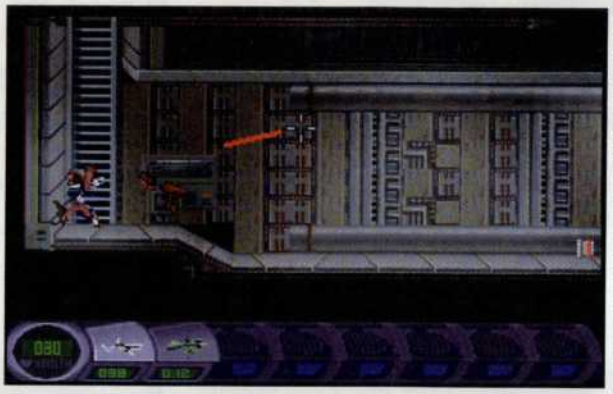
Abuse, from the relatively new shareware company Crack Dot Com, is one of those insidious titles that grows on you, that becomes increasingly engaging and even addictive the longer you play. And that's important to know, because at first *Abuse* might not really grab you — and if you don't stick with it, you'll be missing a hell of a lot of fun.

You play this side-scrolling shooter using a combination of the mouse and keyboard, an interface that can take some getting used to. You run your little character back and forth, make him jump, and activate special devices with your cursor keys; the mouse is used to aim and fire weapons, as well as to activate certain power-ups like super-speed and flight.

While this seems awkward at first, the combination mouse/keyboard interface actually gives you considerably more control over exactly what your on-screen character is doing than would be possible with just, say, a joypad. Once you get used to it, you'll find yourself relying on the ability to run away from enemies while firing back at them, or using the targeting cursor to lob bombs over obstacles and onto the bad guys. In fact, the game's 15 levels are designed to make the unusual control setup a vital part of gameplay; there are times when you simply couldn't survive without the added control the *Abuse* interface provides.

These save-game stations sure do come in handy! You can save anytime you find one of these consoles.

As you get used to the interface and begin to depend on it, you'll start to notice how well-designed the rest of the game is. Although the graphics won't knock you out, they're certainly good enough. The sound throughout the game — and especially the levels themselves — probably *will* knock you out, though. Once you get into the game, you'll find that the levels are full of alternate paths, hidden rooms, and exploding floors that can either wipe out all the enemies around you, or drop you into even more trouble. You have to throw switches to open certain doors, but be ready in case that switch also triggers a dozen laser cannons or lets loose a horde of missile-toting monsters. You have to use your head as well as your reflexes, and just surviving some of the dangerous situations you'll find yourself in is an exhilarating reward, and will keep you playing for hours.



In the early stages of the game, you won't have many weapons. But if you use it right, even the lowly laser rifle can blow your foes to bits.

With the built-in level editor, you can customize any level in the game or build your own from scratch.

Another bit of strategy comes in as you gather the very different weapons available throughout the game. They range from laser rifles to powerful missile launchers, and using the right weapon for the job can be the difference between life and death. Getting into the right position to use the weapons is important, too; if you find yourself in a high-ceilinged room full of enemies, you'd better get out of their and into a nice, tight passageway. In a big room, you'll be attacked from every angle, whereas a hallway will force the enemies to come at you one (or at least three) at a time.

An added bonus to *Abuse* is its built-in level editor, allowing would-be game designers to alter levels, and even design their own from scratch. These can be passed around among other *Abuse* owners, just like *Doom* WADs or *Descent* HOGs.

Abuse supports high-res SVGA modes of up to 1024x768, but these higher resolutions are really meant to aid in level design more than game-play. In even 640x480, your character and his surroundings are pretty tiny, and what you actually gain is a greater view of the architecture around you. For this reason, the game's designers recommend that you play the game in standard VGA; SVGA lets you see things that would normally be hidden, and so is a bit like cheating.

That bit about playing in VGA really is good advice, because you don't want to cheat your way through *Abuse*. This is a great shooter, with enough action and strategy to hook anyone who invests the time required to get familiar with the interface.

—Ned Gaskins

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

88%

HIGHS: Great design, lots of hidden goodies, and built-in level editor.

LOWS: The interface takes some getting used to, so you won't be hooked right at first.

BOTTOM LINE: One of the most enjoyable shooters of the year.

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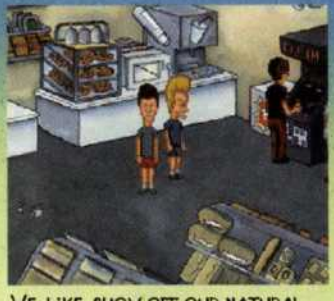

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Product Information Number 208

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THE LOGIC FACTORY

Product Information Number 104

Battleground: Ardennes

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE

Category: Wargame

Developer: TalonSoft

Publisher: Empire Interactive, 13220 Wisteria Dr., Germantown, MD 20874 (800) 216-9706

Required	We Recommend
Double-speed CD-ROM drive; 386/33; Windows 3.1 or later; 5MB hard-drive space; 4MB RAM; SVGA; Mouse	486; 8MB RAM

M.S.R.P.: $59.95

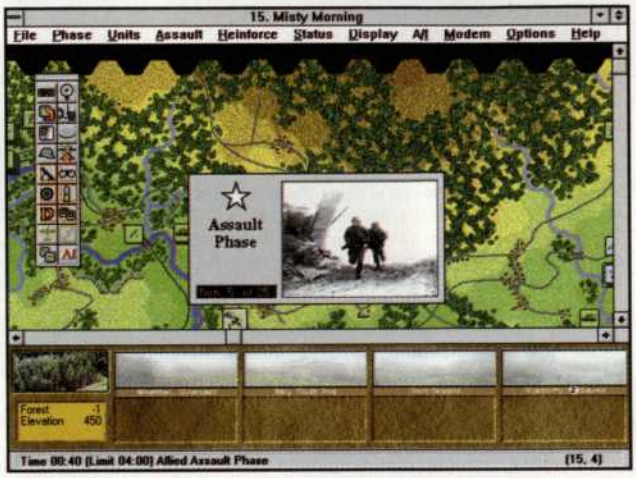
Grognards take heed: Here's a wargame made by veteran war-gamers for veteran wargamers *and* newbies.

TalonSoft, founded and led by long-time gamer Jim Rose — the man who brought Avalon Hill's PC games back from the dead — makes an auspicious debut with this first installment of their Battleground Series.

The first thing you'll notice is that *Battleground: Ardennes* doesn't *look* like any other wargame on the market. In the zoomed-in mode, which is where players will spend most of their combat time, the battlefield is depicted from an oblique, north-to-south angle. The traditional hexagon system is used, but the hexes are quite large (each one represents 250 meters and each turn represents ten minutes of game time), and the hex sides are incorporated into the landscape itself, shaded and textured, so that hills, valleys, and other important tactical features look very much like contour lines on a large-scale map.

Roads, villages, and forests are realistic and detailed, so that the overall effect is a panoramic, yet exceptionally clean, playing arena — rather like one of those elaborate tabletop set-ups with balsa wood hills and model-train-set buildings.

As units deploy and become visible, they each appear mounted on a small, circular base, just like real miniatures. You can turn these off if you want, but then you lose the delightful and nostalgic sensation of actually pushing model soldiers around; besides, the bases sometimes change color to give information about the units standing on them.



Each turn is divided into logical phases — another board game convention that grognards will appreciate.

In short, TalonSoft has achieved something remarkable: a game that *looks* like a tabletop gamer's dream come true, but that *plays* like a great hex-based board game. In so doing, I think, they have revitalized the hoary old hexgrid system, and created a powerful engine that can be used for wargames from any era.

Once you've chosen the desired scenario and set the AI level, gameplay begins. Each turn is divided into phases, and in between each completed turn, a dialogue box pops up briefly to give you a chance to save. Each of these phases allows you to deploy your troops and develop your strategies logically and quickly.

Prep Fire Phase: Click on the field-radio icon in the toolbar and you're presented with a fire-support dialogue box showing all the batteries at your disposal. Highlight a battery, then right-click on its target. Barrages are shown with lots of nifty animated explosions and loud, crunchy sound effects.

Movement Phase: Left click to select, right click to move. Couldn't be simpler. This is a good time to check the pull-down menu on Reinforcements, to see if any new units have arrived.

Defensive Fire Phase: The enemy gets to shoot back. After any phase involving combat, a dialogue box pops up showing which units were disrupted or eliminated, if any.

Offensive Fire Phase: Units in contact with the enemy get to return fire.

Assault Phase: Undisrupted units may attempt to overrun any enemy unit adjacent to their hexes. Odds are displayed, so you can calculate the chance of success before giving the order to attack.

Mechanized Phase: Any undisrupted units still capable of movement may do so now.

The toolbar icons are all logical, the total interface package is tight and smooth. There's a good tutorial, and after playing through it once, you'll be ready to take command.

Every combat action is shown with a brief video clip — there's nothing new in this, of course, but in all too many games these enhancements are overused or added as filler to mask some hole in the game. Nobody's ever done it better than TalonSoft: if a

Taking the Field

A conventional 2D map is available and is useful for planning, but the dynamic 3D Battle View map is where you'll do most of your fighting.

How did the Germans do it?

By late September, 1944, the German Army in Western Europe had virtually ceased to exist. In Berlin, the *Wehrmacht* high command was in disarray — many of its best leaders had been executed for their real, or presumed, roles in the failed plot to assassinate Hitler, and those that remained had to function in an atmosphere of chaos and paranoia.

But the advancing Allies were hampered by supply problems and incessant squabbling among Bradley, Patton, and Montgomery, and their troops were stopped cold at the German border by deep mud, lack of gasoline, and the fortifications of the West Wall.

As winter descended, the German nation rallied; knowledge that the enemy was battering the gates of the Fatherland stiffened the spine of every soldier. Hitler believed that a stubborn West Wall defense, coupled with a massive surprise attack through the Ardennes, aimed at splitting the British and American commands long enough to recapture the vital port of Antwerp, would result in a stalemate, at least, on the Western Front.

To amass troops for the attack, code-named Autumn Mist, Hitler raised a whole new army of *Volksturm* divisions, made up of aging World War One vets and men with non-crippling medical problems. Between September 1 and November 1, the Wehrmacht thus fielded a new army of 240,000 men — roughly the same number as it had lost since D-Day.

Some of these 25 new divisions manned the West Wall, thus freeing up thousands of experienced troops for the Ardennes operation. Others fleshed out the infantry divisions assigned to the attack. The U.S. Army's newspaper, *The Stars and Stripes*, made fun of the *Volksturmers*, calling them, "ulcer cases, cripples with wooden legs, and men with glass eyes."

A First Army soldier fighting against *Volksturm* units at the West Wall, wrote a more realistic assessment: "I don't care if the guy behind the machine gun is a syphilitic prick who's a hundred years old. He's still sitting behind eight feet of concrete and he's still got enough fingers to press a trigger...."

Elite armored formations, some withdrawn from Russia and some outfitted from scratch with factory-fresh Tigers and Panthers, enabled Hitler to give his surprise attack an armored spearpoint more than adequate to crush the tired, second-rate American divisions standing in the way.

As long as the weather kept Allied air power grounded, the plan actually had an outside chance of success. But even his most loyal generals knew it was a desperate long-shot. Just before the attack, Sepp Dietrich, a dedicated Nazi now in command of the powerful Sixth SS Panzer Army, confided to a close friend:

Even with Allied air support grounded, the Germans knew the surprise attack was risky.

"All Hitler wants me to do is to cross a few rivers, capture Brusells, then go on and take Antwerp. All this in the worst time of the year for the Ardennes, when the snow is waist-deep and there isn't enough room to deploy four tanks abreast, never mind whole armored divisions, when it doesn't get light until eight o'clock and it's dark again by four. I am supposed to accomplish this with reformed divisions made up of kids and sick old men — and at Christmas!"

The Germans' recovery was a tremendous feat of military organization and logistics, and when the blow fell, the Allies were stunned. Had the weather stayed bad for another week, had Patton not reacted with incredible speed to smash the southern edge of "The Bulge," Dietrich and company might actually have pulled it off.

Results of each firefight are immediately visible on the battle map.

German machine gun is firing, you *see* a German machine gun spitting tracers; if a Tiger tank is firing, you see a Tiger tank spout flame and rock back from the recoil. Nor do the same clips run over and over again. This is one of the most creative uses of video I've ever seen, in any game genre, and it greatly enhances the atmosphere of *Battleground: Ardennes*.

Also pleasing are the photo-realistic images of forests, fields, and villages shown at the bottom of the screen. Just click on any unoccupied hex, and these show you exactly what the real terrain at that spot would look like in all four directions. If there's fog, you'll see fog (weather effects are well modeled throughout and have a realistic effect on combat, just as they did in the real campaign).

I must confess, I was not terrifically turned on by the prospect of yet another Battle of the Bulge game — I've played dozens of them, and, let's face it, the Germans *always* lose. But here again, TalonSoft has revitalized the subject by breaking the campaign into two dozen tactical scenarios of great variety, so there is no been-there-done-that malaise; it's like discovering the campaign for the first time. And besides, using the scenario editor, you can customize things so the Germans have a better chance.

There are also three large campaign modules with several linked scenarios, in case you're in the mood for a longer, more complex game. "Kampfgruppe Peiper" depicts the initial German onslaught, "Bastogne" recreates the epic stand of the 101st Airborne, and "Roadblock at Clervaux" focuses on the desperate holding action that left three American divisions mauled, but that permitted the 101st to reach Bastogne in time to save the day.

You also have the option to print out detailed campaign maps, either for your own satisfaction or to swap with your friends.

Prep fire is conducted from an artillery dialogue box that makes it easy to assign targets.

Veteran wargamers will delight in the "feel" of the game — it delivers a full measure of the sense of control and detail of a great board game, it is scrupulously faithful to history, and it offers a fresh, creative approach to the time-honored hexgrid format.

But newcomers need have no fear: *Battleground: Ardennes* is a sweetheart when it comes to the learning curve. If the subject interests you, you'll not find a better Battle of the Bulge game on the market.

All in all, a most auspicious debut. I eagerly await future releases in the Battleground Series.

—William R. Trotter

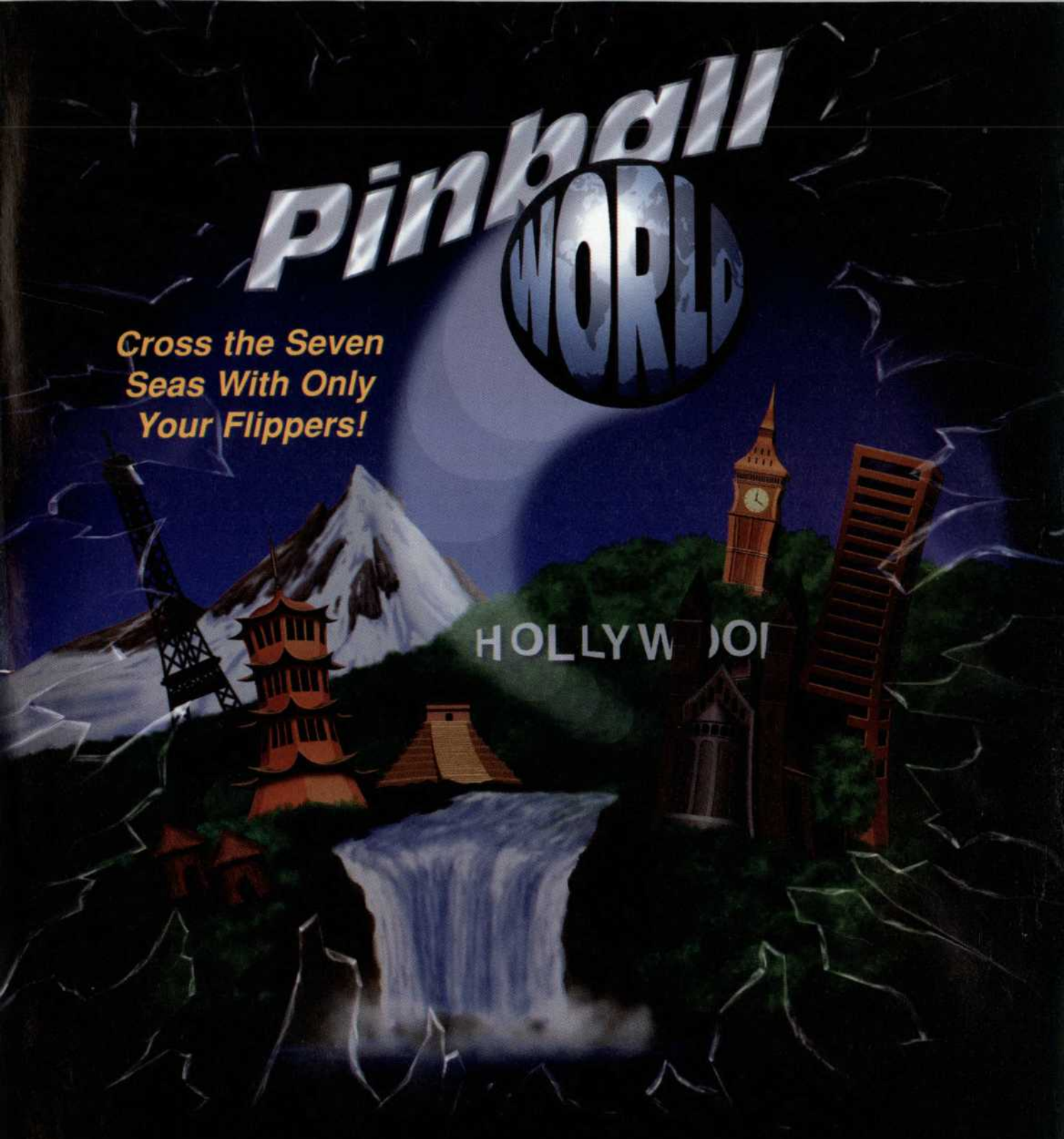
PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Colorful and dynamic gameplay, first-rate interface, excellent use of video enhancements.

97%

LOWS: Some players simply won't want another Battle of the Bulge game, no matter how well done.

BOTTOM LINE: A remarkably fresh and original design, executed with real flair.



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PC Gamer Statement of Ownership

Post Office Notice: Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation for second class privileges as required by 39 USC3685:
1. Title of Publication: PC Gamer
2. Publication No.: 10592180
3. Date of Filing: October 1, 1995
4. Frequency of Issue: Monthly
5. No. of issues published annually: 12
6. Annual subscription price: $55.95
7. Complete mailing address of known office of publication: 1350 Old Bayshore Hwy., Suite 210, Burlingame, CA 94010
8/9. Complete address of the headquarters of general business offices of the publisher, editor, and managing editor: Publisher: Matthew A. Firme, 1350 Old Bayshore Hwy., Suite 210, Burlingame, CA 94010; Editor: Dan Bennett, 1350 Old Bayshore Hwy., Suite 210, Burlingame, CA 94010; Managing Editor: Lisa M. Howie, 1350 Old Bayshore Hwy., Suite 210, Burlingame, CA 94010 10. Owner: Imagine Publishing 1350 Old Bayshore Hwy., Suite 210, Burlingame, CA 94010 Technology Funding Secured Inv. II & III, 2000 Alameda de las Pulgas, San Mateo, CA 94403
11/12. N/A
13. Publication Name: PC Gamer
14. Issue Date for Circulation below: September '95
15. Extent and nature of circulation given in this order, number of average copies each issue during preceding 12 months followed by actual number of issues published nearest filing date:

A. Total no. of copies 325,716 451,862
B. Paid and/or requested circulation (1) Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales: 110,951 145,980; (2) Mail subscription 38,849 62,419
C. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation 149,800; 208,399
D. Free distribution by mail. 1,270 2,088
E. Free Distribution Outside the Mail 1,525 0
F. Total Free Distribution 2,795 2,088
G. Total distribution 152,595 210487
H. Copies not distributed (1) Office use, left over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing 11,175 17,166; (2) returns from News Agents 161,946 224,209; Total: 325,716 451,862 17.
I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete: Tom Valentino, VP/Operations & CEO.

Fighter Duel

Category: Flight Simulation

Developer: Jaeger Software

Publisher: Philips Media, Inc. 10960 Wilshire Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90024 (800) 340-7888

Required	We Recommend
CD-ROM drive; 486/33; 8MB RAM; SVGA with 1 MB VRAM	486/66; Supported sound card; Joystick; Modem

M.S.R.P.: $49.95

As a stand-alone game, *Fighter Duel* doesn't have much offer, but the modem play makes it worth a look.

I've been flying flight sims for quite a long time now and have played everything from *Flight Unlimited* to *Chuck Yeager's Air Combat*, but I have to admit I'm a loyal fan of World War Two air-combat sims.

Today's jets are flashy and fast, but they have little of the romance that we (naively, I know) attach to the prop-driven fighters of WWII. My favorite flight sims have always been set in that era, including *Aces of the Pacific*, *Aces Over Europe*, and *Pacific Air War*. But if you've flown those sims, you know that going up against computer-controlled planes can become pretty tedious. Even in the best of them, you'll eventually figure out the habits of the computerized pilots and learn to send them all down in flames. The answer, of course, is head-to-head modem play, where you can match wits with another human pilot. Of the WWII sims, only *Pacific Air War* has offered that option, until now.

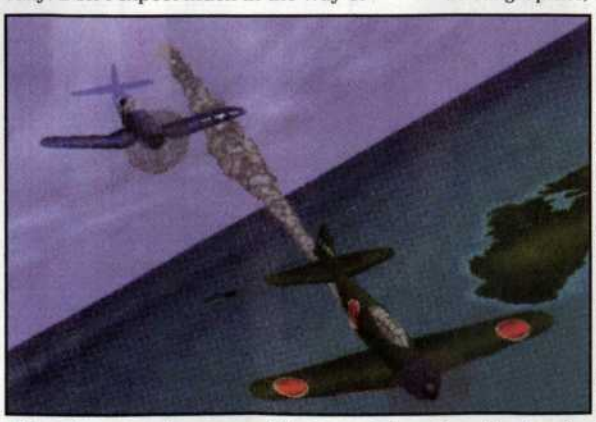
Fighter Duel fills the void beautifully. Don't expect much in the way of strategy; there's no campaign here, no tours of duty, no war, and no promotions. But *Fighter Duel*'s pure and simple dogfighting can be a blast.

You get 13 planes, all of them vintage fighters: the P-51D Mustang, the F6F Hellcat, four versions of the British Spitfire, two Corsairs, the FW-190, a couple of versions of the Me-109, and the Japanese Zero. The designers say the flight models are the most realistic in any sim, and I'm willing to take their word for it. They're tough enough, at any rate — with all the realism options switched on, these babies are tough to fly. In fact, they fly a bit like tanks, and I was constantly guarding against stalls.

The texture-mapped, 640x480 graphics are superb, and the designers have managed to build in enough options and automatic graphics adjustments to provide an outstanding frame rate, even on a 486 machine. Because the focus is on what happens in the air, you'll see nothing below but a tiny island and a ship or two. That lack of ground detail helps maintain a high frame rate for what really counts — blasting your rivals out of the sky.

The planes themselves are gorgeous, and they blow up real good. The explosions are spectacular, with planes breaking apart in tremendous fireballs. The view is just as good from inside the cockpit, with tracers bending away from your angle of attack just the way they do in real WWII gun-camera footage. The sound effects keep pace with the wonderful graphics, from the throaty growl of the engine to the thumping action of the machine guns.

The computer controlled planes in *Fighter Duel* lack the intelligence most sim fans demand.



From the external camera, you'll get a great view of your handywork as you bring down enemy planes.

In modem play, the game tracks kills and losses for each player — sort of like an dogfight tournament. You can choose any plane or have the computer assign a random fighter for each player.

As a head-to-head modem game, *Fighter Duel* is the ace of aces. As a single-player sim, however, it leaves a lot to be desired. You get seven scenarios to choose from, including combat air patrol, and a carrier catapult launch. It's just you against as many as eight computer opponents. You set their skill levels and choose their planes, or let the computer surprise you with random selections. It's very simple to set up, similar to the mission builder in the classic *Chuck Yeager* game.

But despite the ease of mission construction, *Fighter Duel* is disappointing as a solo game. At the lower skill settings, the computer planes just don't seem to want to fight. I found myself spending most of my air time trying to chase down the bogeys. At the highest settings, they're aggressive enough, but they don't seem to work together as a team. Once you get an enemy in your sights, though, his plane will explode with just a few hits.

Forget about the single-player complaints, though. As its title suggests, *Fighter Duel* was clearly designed as a head-to-head dogfighting sim, and on that level it soars. If you're looking to win the war, you'll want to look elsewhere for complex campaigns and strategy. But if you just want to send your modem buddy down in flames, this is the sim you've been waiting for.

—Lee Buchanan

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

84%

HIGHS: Outstanding two-player dogfighting, excellent frame rate on modest systems.

LOWS: Weak single-player game; no real campaign mode.

BOTTOM LINE: Modem dogfighters are in for a treat, but solo players should stick to in-depth sims.

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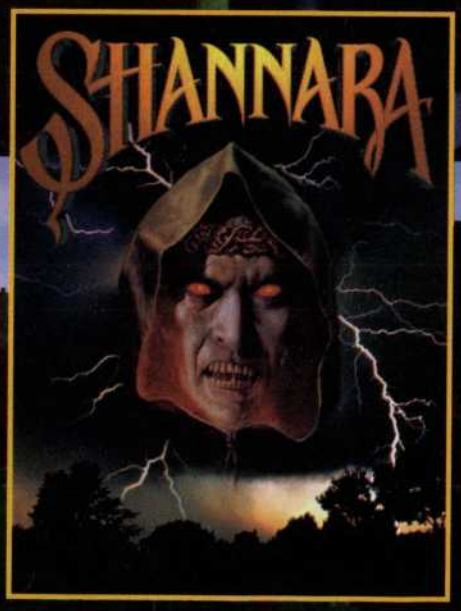

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Product Information Number 144

CyberBykes: Shadow Racer VR

Category: Action

Developer: Artificial Software

Publisher: GameTek, 2999 Northeast 191st St., Suite 500, Aventura, FL 33180 (800) 439-3995

Required	We Recommend
Double-speed CD-ROM drive; 486SX/33MHz; 8MB RAM; 15MB hard-drive space; VGA; Mouse	Pentium; VLB or PCI Super VGA card; 9600-bps or faster modem; Supported sound card; Gamepad

M.S.R.P.: $59.95

It's 2037, and the World Treaty Organization has used its troops and high-tech weapons to seize power from the Central World Government. Because the WTO is the official military branch of the Central World Government, there's little that organization can do except to condemn the takeover. The only hope of defeating WTO lies in the hands of a single person — you — controlling a futuristic motorcycle bristling with weapons and armor. But you don't actually *ride* the motorcycle; you control it remotely by means of a virtual reality setup.

CyberBykes may not have the most original story line in the world — it's basically one of those "mad dictator takes over the world and only you can stop him" plots so prevalent in videogames — but that's not what drags it down into mediocrity. That honor goes to the graphics, which do absolutely nothing to convince you that you're watching a motorcycle zip around the countryside and through cities. Polygons are used for every object — even explosions — with no texturing or shading to give them a more realistic appearance. The game supports resolutions up to 1280 x 1024, and while that makes the polygons look better, there's a major tradeoff in frame rate.

I could accept the outdated graphics if the game played well, but it doesn't. Images on radar are superimposed over the entire screen, creating a disorienting "snowfall" effect that is more confusing than anything else. By the time you move close enough to an enemy's cyberbyke to shoot, he zips away at warp speed — I spent a good five or ten minutes turning and weaving before I finally made a kill. It's a real drag.

***CyberBykes'* dated graphics drag an uninspired game into the mediocrity zone.**

CyberBykes does support modem and network play, and it might be more fun to spend a lot of time cruising through ho-hum scenery in order to waste a friend. I have my doubts, though, and the truth is that if you're into head-to-head play, there are a lot better games that provide it than this one.

—Steve Poole

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

57%

HIGHS: head-to-head play via modem or a network; built-in editor.

LOWS: Unconvincing graphics, irritating soundtrack, frustrating gameplay.

BOTTOM LINE: The single-player game is a bust, and there are plenty of games with network support that are more fun than this.

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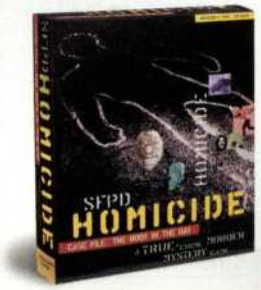


Product Information Number 138

Burn Cycle

Category: Action Adventure

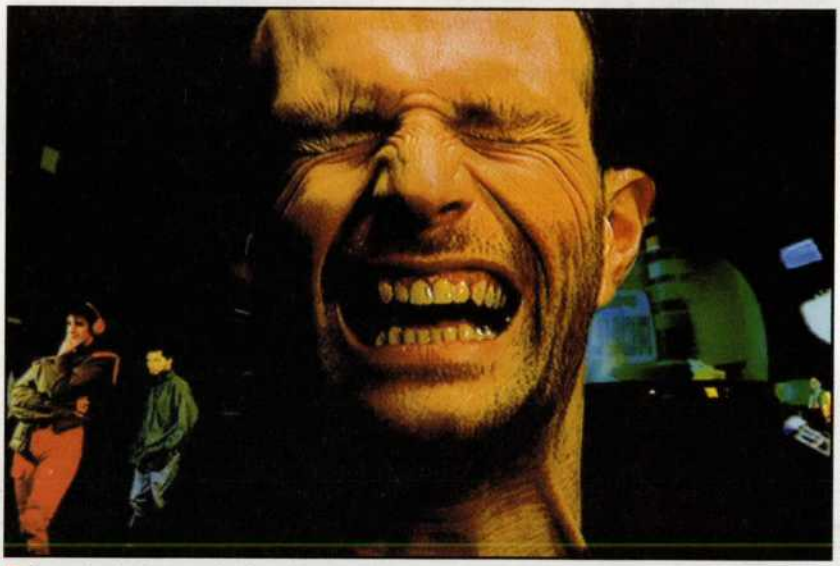
Developer: Trip Media

Publisher: Philips Media, Inc., 10960 Wilshire Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90024 (800) 340-7888

Required	We Recommend
Double-speed CD-ROM drive; 486/33; 8MB RAM; Windows 3.1 or later; Windows compatible sound card; Mouse	486/66 or better; Windows 95

M.S.R.P.: $49.99

Burn Cycle is the latest cyberpunk thriller to muscle its way onto the PC, but like so many others, it has more style than content.



As you begin the game Sol Cutter has just downloaded a data packet into his brain, only to find that a deadly computer virus has begun a countdown to end his life.

If this cyberpunk title from Philips sounds a little familiar, it's probably because this title originally appeared on Philips' CD-I machine. But unlike most games that make the transition from a dedicated console machine to the PC, *Burn Cycle* isn't your typical thumb-twitching action game.

The sci-fi story that drives *Burn Cycle* bears a striking resemblance to that of *Johnny Mnemonic*, but it's one of the few games to take advantage of the cyberpunk genre and run with it in a way that would do William Gibson proud. You play the game as Sol Cutter, an information courier who downloads a piece of stolen data to his brain, only to discover that it contains a virus so dangerous that it will kill him in two hours. As if that isn't enough, the data that Cutter has intercepted is so important, assassins from corporations and terrorist organizations are after him as well. The game starts just after you pick up the tainted data and the virus starts its countdown on your life.

Just like *Johnny Mnemonic*, *Burn Cycle* is filled with full-motion video sequences. Unlike *Johnny*, which led you through portions of the game without giving you control of your character, *Burn Cycle* serves up elements of classic adventure games — where you get item A to give to character B, so he will give you the key to C — along with arcade sequences and *Myst*-style puzzles. This diversity is both a blessing and a curse; at times, it all becomes an unwelcome distraction from the story at hand.

For the most part, you'll navigate the world using a *Myst*-like interface, moving from rendered still-screen to rendered still-screen. That would seem to be the preferred interface for this type of game, but there are many detours and distractions along the way,

The graphic quality of *Burn Cycle* ranges from colorfully rendered screens like these to dark, moody full-motion video sequences.

which take the form of narrative elements and arcade sequences. The narrative elements basically hand you the solutions to certain problems, eliminating the need to solve some puzzles, and the arcade sequences seem out of place for what should be a fairly straightforward adventure.

You only have 2 hours of real time to complete *Burn Cycle* before the virus in your head kills you, but the game takes much longer to complete, as you'll have to try many differing paths and pick up items that extend your time.

While the puzzles in *Burn Cycle* are better than those in *Johnny Mnemonic*, they aren't exactly enough to keep the game afloat. Still, the game does provide enough ambient atmosphere to keep you chugging along. When you enter a bar and the music changes to dance music, or when you climb into your hovercar and hear the narrator explaining the situation as you sail between the buildings, you really feel immersed in the game. This involvement is offset, though, by the moments when it's obvious that the game is doing the thinking for you (and there are a plenty). Then there's the first time you exit the game, and you have to watch several *minutes* of credits, with no way of escaping them short of restarting your computer.

For all its confusing gameplay elements and linear plot, there's enough atmosphere and variety in *Burn Cycle* to warrant a look from gamers seeking a diversion from the traditional adventure.

—John Robertson

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

71%

HIGHS: Cool cyberpunk atmosphere, great soundtrack, complex story line.

LOWS: Graphics are sometimes chunky; the plot is too linear.

BOTTOM LINE: The blend of puzzles, arcade action, and cyberspace won't be enough for die-hard adventure fans, but it should interest the casual gamer.

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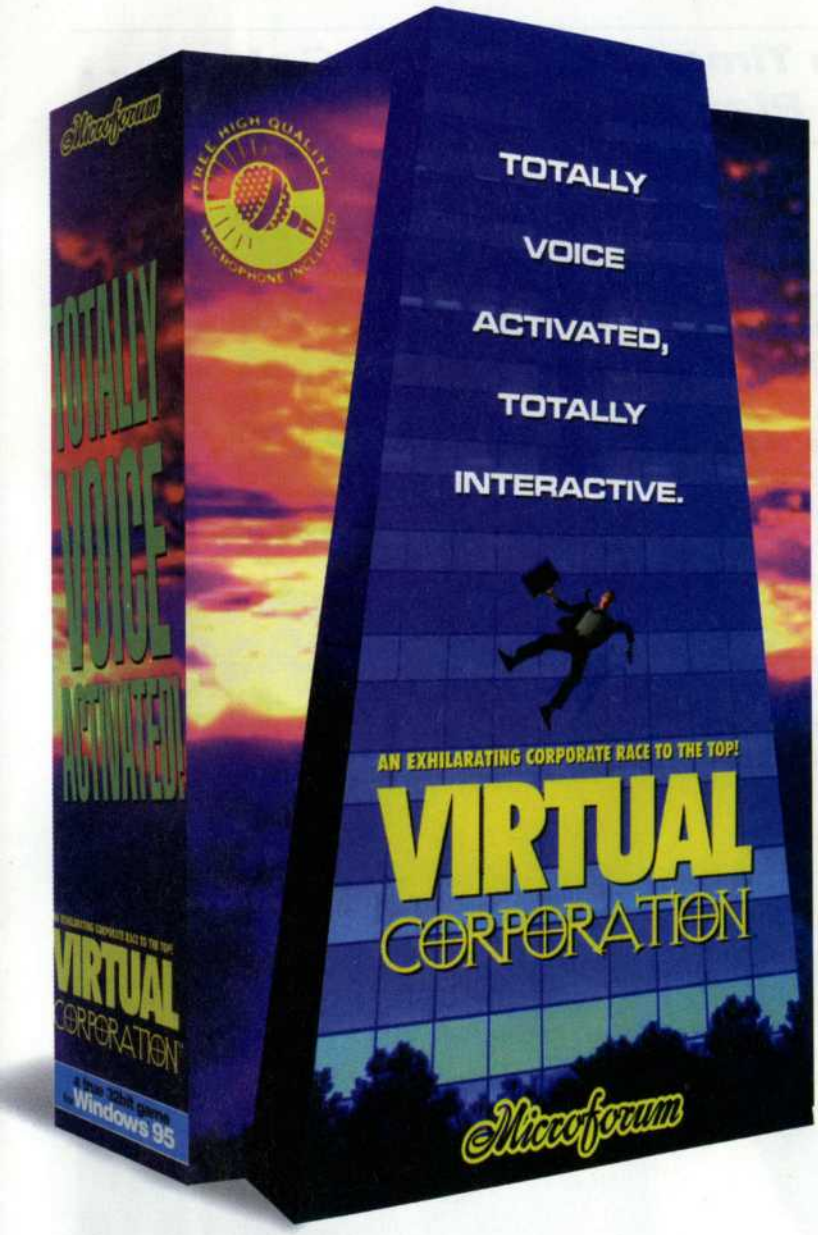

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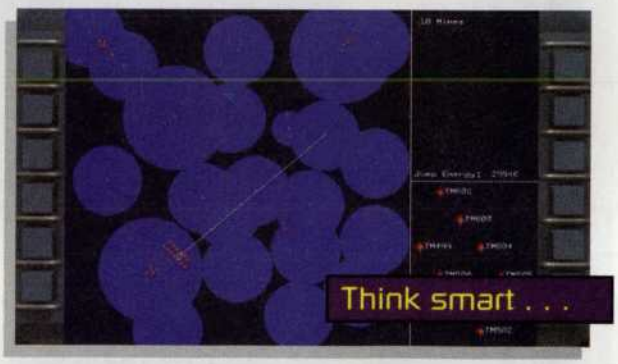

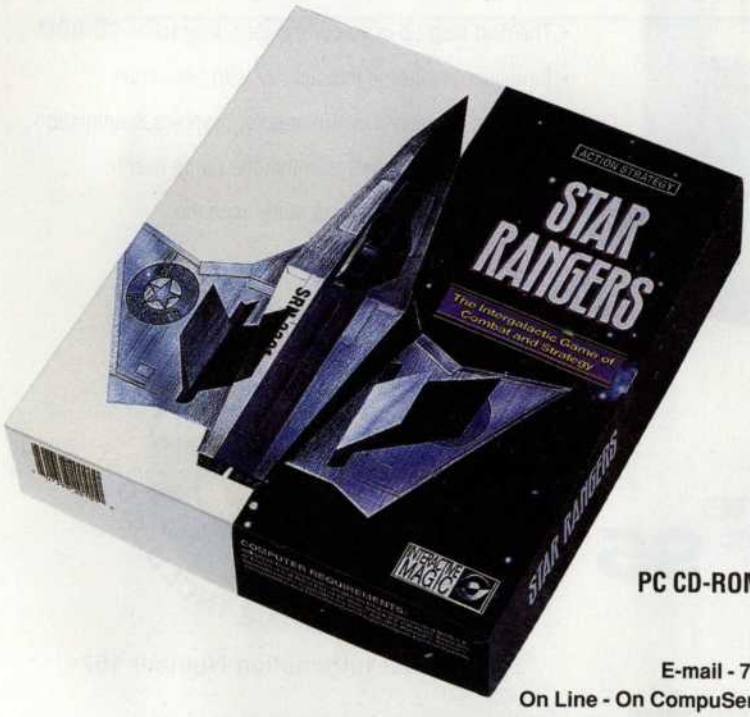

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Product Information Number 146

HardBall 5

Category: Sports simulation

Developer: Mindspan

Publisher: Accolade, 5300 Stevens Creek Blvd., #500, San Jose, CA 95129 (408) 985-1700

Required	We Recommend
Double-speed CD-ROM drive; 486/33; 8MB RAM; SVGA; Mouse	486/66 or better; Supported sound card; Joystick or gamepad

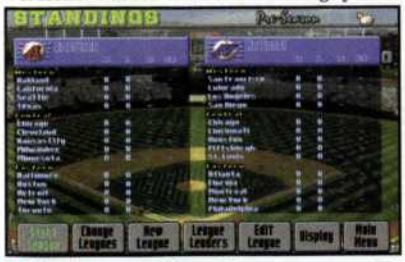
M.S.R.P.: $59.95

The HardBall series has its strongest outing to date, with plenty of arcade action, but its stats are still too unrealistic for hard-core fans.

Accolade's HardBall series of baseball simulations has been around forever, and with good reason. They are probably the best-known line of PC baseball games, and that success is due to several factors: gorgeous graphics, action-packed arcade play, and — maybe the most important reason — strong marketing from Accolade.

I've been excited and hopeful every time I've ripped into the new HardBall game, and I've played them all. But they've always disappointed me with their wild statistics and otherwise unrealistic results and replays that don't bear any resemblance to real Major League Baseball. To their credit, thought, Accolade has listened to gamers' complaints and suggestions over the years, making each version just a bit better than the previous one. So it's no surprise that *HardBall 5* is the best one yet, with much deeper stats, improved audio commentary, and more detailed team management options.

But is this new HardBall finally the answer to my baseball prayers? Hardly. The best aspects of the series are even better this time around, and its shortcomings have been softened from previous versions. But for a hard-core sim guy like me, it's still a glorified arcade game. Of course, there's nothing necessarily wrong with that, and Accolade has built enough stats and management tools into *HardBall 5* to satisfy less demanding gamers.



Choose your team for a little pre-season exhibition play or start a league for a full season.

HardBall 5's strength has always been on the arcade-action side of the fence, and that hasn't changed, despite the beefier stats and manager's options. If hitting home runs and stealing bases is your game, and accurate replay stats aren't a concern, then *HardBall 5* is your best bet. It's fun, fast, and friendly. Throw in modem play and a home run hitting contest, and you have one fine action game.

While the statistics in the game don't seem to match what would happen in the real world, the action of *HB5* is first-rate.

The graphics, as usual, are beautiful. You get 40 stadiums, including 12 old-time fields. As in other baseball games, you don't actually get to see much of the stadiums, but you'll enjoy getting glimpses of the new Jacobs Field or the old Polo Grounds. The players, too, are beautifully rendered and are accompanied by trading-card portraits.

The graphics look fantastic at first glance, but once the ump yelled "play ball," they quickly left me cold. The players look like they're about 12 feet tall, and the action looks cartoonish, canned, and predictable. *HardBall 5* isn't alone; *Tony La Russa 3* suffers from the same problem. Both games look great until the action begins.

Al Michaels returns with the play-by-play audio, and Accolade has done it right this time. Al's delivery is smooth as silk, with none of the halting speech that has ruined other efforts at audio commentary. And Al's a bright guy, so he can tell you the player's current average and what he did in his last plate appearance.

Other sound effects aren't nearly as impressive. There's little ambient crowd noise, and the baseball hitting the turf sounds more like a basketball being dribbled on a hard court.

Stats nuts will appreciate the much stronger statistical package in *HardBall 5*; the game tracks about any stat you can think of, and they're all available for sorting and printing with the click of a mouse. You can check league leaders in dozens of categories, and sort the list by position. You couldn't ask for a better variety of stats.

League play, a weakness in earlier versions, becomes a strength in *HardBall 5*. You get more than 800 Major League players in 40-man rosters, including minor leaguers. Other league functions are there, too, including free agents, disabled lists, and trades. There's also an old-timers' league, with 12 classic teams from the past.

So what's wrong with *HardBall 5*? Not a thing, unless you're as hung up on realistic stats as I am. It's a curse, I know, but I want the 1995 version of Greg Maddux to be virtually unbeatable. And that's just not the way it works in *HardBall 5*. Players are rated in plenty of categories, and their performance on the field is tied to their skill ratings and real-life stats. But it just doesn't play out on the field. The background games — those played by the computer — produce believable results, but there's still far too much offense in the players' games.

That statistical failing is fundamental to the HardBall series, it seems, and it points to the fact that no matter how hard Accolade tries, *HardBall 5* is still an action game at heart. If you want to make the pitch, swing the bat, and field the grounders, you'll love this game. If you want to manage a Major League team and expect realistic results, you probably won't be happy.

—Lee Buchanan

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

86%

HIGHS: Excellent arcade play; improved league play and modem options make this the best HardBall yet.

LOWS: Unrealistic replay statistics.

BOTTOM LINE: It's still weak on realism, but *HardBall 5*'s the best action baseball game available.

I Have No Mouth, and I Must Scream

Category: Adventure

Developer: CyberDreams

Publisher: CyberDreams, 23586 Calabasas Rd., Ste. 102, Calabasas, CA 91302 (818) 223-9990

Required	We Recommend
CD-ROM drive; 486/66; 4MB RAM; 20MB hard-drive space; Mouse; SVGA; Supported sound card	8MB RAM, Supported sound card

M.S.R.P.: $59.95

Critically acclaimed science-fiction writer Harlan Ellison and CyberDreams bring us the most disturbing and unique adventure yet.

With an impressive list of credits that range from television scripts to countless award-winning short stories, Harlan Ellison has built a reputation for delving into the dark side of science fiction with tales of unspeakable evil and technological nightmares.

"I Have No Mouth, and I Must Scream" is certainly the most famous of those stories. In it, a massive computer buried deep in the earth has become self-aware, godlike, and insane. The computer is called AM, which stands for Allied Mastercomputer — but it's also a Cartesian reference to its self-awareness: "I think, therefore I AM." Problem is, AM has developed a diabolical awareness. He despises humanity, so he destroys all but five people, and these five he brings deep down to the center of the earth to amuse him.

AM gives these remnants of humanity eternal life, but only so he can devise endless torments for them, warping their bodies and fragile psyches to provide himself with entertainment. These five are Ellen, a kind but phobic woman with a dark secret in her past; Nimdok, a Nazi doctor who assisted Mengele in his experiments; Ted, an average guy whom AM has made paranoid; Benny, a simpleton who has been turned into a beast; and Gorrister, a sadistic loner.

Benny finds a primitive culture that AM has created to torment him with, complete with human sacrifice.

As the player, you must guide each character through his or her own path in *I Have No Mouth*, using a familiar graphic-adventure interface with commands like Look, Take, Walk, Talk, Swallow, Push, and Use. Each of these character paths stands on its own, with success in all five linked to the ultimate goal of defeating AM. All the characters must explore places AM has designed to force them to confront their dark secrets and personal terrors. For example, Ellen has to face an (at first) obscure terror of the color yellow in a strange Egyptian crypt. Benny confronts cannibalism and human sacrifice in a primitive culture. And in what is bound to be the most controversial path, Nimdok explores the killing grounds of the Nazi death camps in an attempt to redeem himself for what he did there.

Throughout *I Have No Mouth*, characters not only have to solve the usual (and only modestly challenging) object puzzles, but also make difficult moral decisions; these will determine their success or failure. For instance, Nimdok has an opportunity to experiment on a child or kill a Nazi lab assistant so the child may escape. While some of the dialogue and situations are decidedly silly, there are moments that challenge and disturb, and this gives the characters and setting much more psychological depth than we've seen in any computer game to date.

I Have No Mouth is a grim, adults-only game — and it's not the sort of *fun* you've come to expect from, say, *Sam & Max Hit the Road*. *Schindler's List* isn't exactly fun, either, but try to find someone who wasn't impressed by it.

From the disturbing story line to the difficult decisions you face, *I Have No Mouth* isn't intended as a comfortable afternoon of gaming. It'd be hard to recommend, if not for those moments of depth that nag at the subconscious and resonate long after the game is finished.

Ultimately, *I Have No Mouth* isn't for everyone. But if you've been searching for an adventure that's both thoughtful and entertaining, and if you're fond of Ellison's disturbing fiction, it's a must.

—T. Liam McDonald

Nimdok returns to face his demons in the Nazi death camps.

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

87%

HIGHS: Narrative elements that go deeper than any previous adventure game.

LOWS: Extremely grim subject matter means the game isn't exactly *fun*.

BOTTOM LINE: An intriguing adult game that definitely won't be everyone's cup of entertainment.

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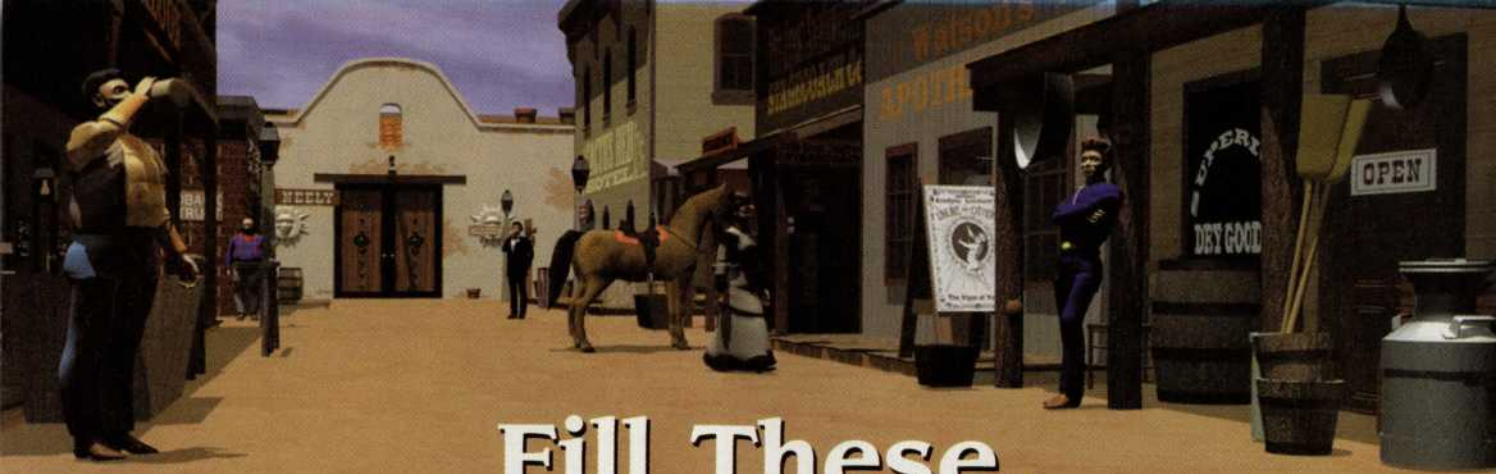

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— CD-ROM Today

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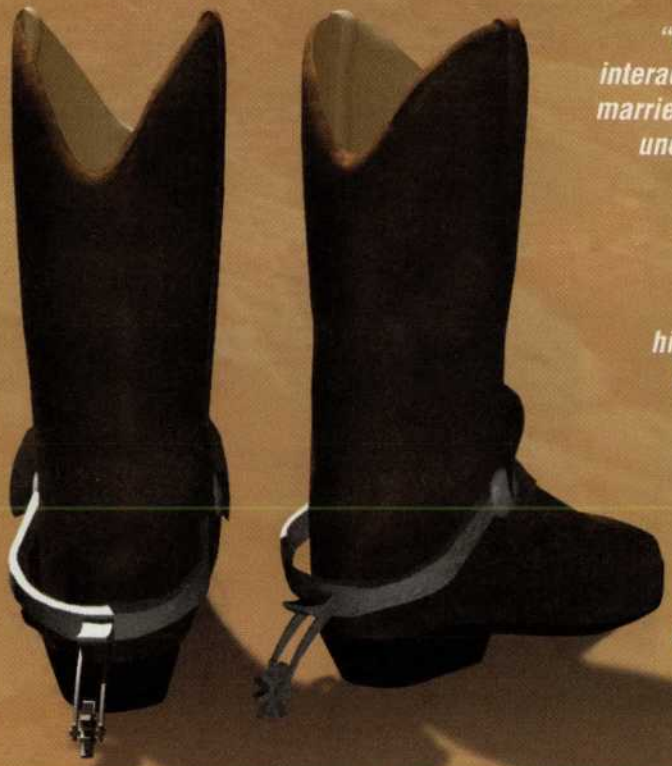

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Product Information Number 115

Pinball Illusions

Category: Arcade

Developer: 21st Century

Publisher: 21st Century Entertainment, Inc., P.O. Box 415 Webster, NY 14580 (716) 872-1200

Required	We Recommend
CD-ROM drive; 386/33; 1MB RAM	486; SVGA; Supported sound card

M.S.R.P.: $39.95

If you've played a pinball game on the PC in the past couple of years, chances are it was from 21st Century. This small but determined company has been responsible for some of the most critically acclaimed pinball games on the market, and has accumulated a legion of loyal followers who eagerly await their next collection. And if *Pinball Illusions* is any indication, those fans will come away satisfied, because 21st Century has done themselves one better, with four challenging tables, and a host of new options that bring the art of pinball to the PC like never before.

Like previous 21st Century games, there's nothing terribly fancy about *Pinball Illusions*. There's no full-motion video, no long animated sequences — just simple pinball action that's as close to the real thing as you'll find on a PC. And while it's easy enough to recommend *Pinball Illusions* based on the gameplay alone — simple controls, smooth scrolling, and realistic ball motion — 21st Century brings some much-needed variety to the way you view the action with two new display options that improve on standard VGA mode.

Instead of the up-and-down scrolling view that has been the trademark of 21st Century's previous games, you can choose from 640x480 or 800x600 high-resolution modes that get most or all of the pinball table on a single screen for little or no scrolling. And with the designers' flair for creating innovative and attractive tables, this adds the graphic punch that was lacking in previous efforts.

If there's any complaint about *Pinball Illusions*, it's the fact that you can't select these resolution options during a game or even at the main menu. You'll have to exit to a DOS prompt and issue a special command in order change to a new resolution.

Aside from that, though, *Pinball Illusions* is hard to beat for sheer entertainment value. The four tables may not be enough variety for some gamers, but this is as good as pinball gets on the PC — and you don't need quarters, so you won't even have to take a hammer to your piggy bank.

—Todd Vaughn

***Pinball Illusions* sports four new tables, ranging from the surf-and-sun theme of "Babewatch" to the futuristic cyborgs of "Law 'N' Justice" (above).**

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

87%

HIGHS: New display options; great pinball action and controls; authentic sights and sounds.

LOWS: You can't change display options during gameplay; four tables may not be enough for some.

BOTTOM LINE: If pinball is your thing, you can't go wrong with *Pinball Illusions*.

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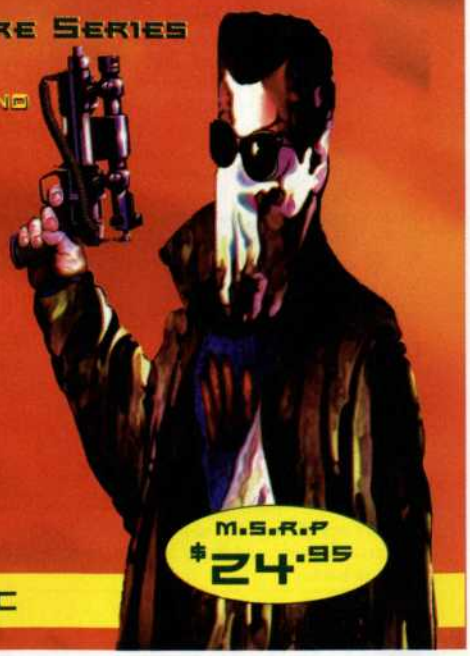

M.S.R.P $24.95

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Product Information Number 117

Breach 3

Category: Strategy

Developer: Omnitrend

Publisher: Impressions, 222 Third St., Suite 234, Cambridge, MA 02142 (800) 757-7707

Required	We Recommend
CD-ROM drive; 386; 4MB RAM; 8MB hard-drive space; Mouse	Double-speed CD-ROM drive; 386DX/40; 8MB RAM; Supported sound card.

M.S.R.P.: $59.95

The latest *Breach* serves up plenty of fun squad-level combat, but it doesn't stretch the envelope too far.

It's been a long time since I first saw *Breach 2*, and as I played through campaigns in *Breach 3*, I realized that this series was never quite given its due. Before there was *X-COM* or *Jagged Alliance*, *Breach* offered squad-level combat, a top-down perspective, and elements of roleplaying games. It was, and remains, a good game, and the latest, long-promised installment is also a good game. Unfortunately, not enough has been done to make it competitive in the mid-1990s marketplace of graphic bells and whistles, leaving *Breach 3* full of good intentions but still falling just shy of the mark.

In *Breach 3* you command a small, elite squad in the Federated Worlds Special Forces as they take on their enemies in the United Democratic Planets. As in other games of this type, the gameplay consists of a series of campaign missions ranging from data retrieval and hostage rescue to search-and-destroy and assault missions. Since the objectives are of a wide variety, through the course of any mission, you'll run across an odd mixture of aliens, robots, monsters, and soldiers. The goal is to keep your squad leader — and, hopefully, most of your squad — alive long enough to meet all the objectives of any one mission and reach the extraction point. It's rarely easy.

Each squad member has unique skills, qualities, and personal traits, and these determine how well they'll do in battle.

You begin by creating a squad leader who will follow you through missions and rise in rank with each success (at least, that's the plan). A number of squad members are available for any mission, with various levels and areas of expertise and experience. Some missions will call for small forces of specially picked experts (sharp-shooters, hackers, medics), while others require you to mass the full possible force of eight soldiers. You equip these soldiers from a limited well of supplies, then beam down to your start point.

Breach 3 uses a fairly complex interface to control the members of a squad. Toggle buttons make soldiers or groups of solders active, allowing you to give a variety of orders, from speed of march and rules of engagement to using special equipment. At the start of a mission, you have to choose each solider's primary weapon, but this a cumbersome detail that could have been automated, or at least handled in something closer to *X-COM* fashion. Once they're armed, you set a destination and start the clock; the squad will move across the terrain and engage enemies in real time, using their own unique skills in battle (or turn tail and run at the first sign of trouble, depending on their personality profiles).

Your squad leader beams down to the mission starting point, with team in tow. You'll want to make sure the leader survives to complete a mission, since you'll need him next time.

Your squad engages some enemy forces in close quarters, and the real-time gameplay forces players to react quickly with command decisions.

The mission clock can be stopped at any time to appraise the situation or give new orders, and you'll be able to monitor the health and stamina of your entire team with colored bars and an EKG readout. Given the dangers that exist in every mission, you'll keep a close watch on these readouts, applying first aid kits when needed.

The missions are a diverse lot, and so are the squad members, which makes for entertaining and diverse gameplay. Finding the right people, deployment, and approach is fun and at times challenging, as you toss grenades, launch rockets, lay mines, and generally cause trouble. Lovers of sci-fi strategy titles will probably find this more than enough reason to check out *Breach 3*. Unfortunately, the graphics look to be about two years old and don't quite measure up, and the interface may be a bit too frustrating when equipping the squad. This drags *Breach 3* down a bit, as does the absence of stand-alone scenarios, but it's still an entertaining return to the days when this was groundbreaking gameplay.

—T. Liam McDonald

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

77%

HIGHS: Entertaining squad-level combat. Good mission builder.

LOWS: Retro graphics, lack of narrative thrust.

BOTTOM LINE: An entertaining squad-level game that doesn't quite measure up to the current crop.

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Product Information Number 214

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Product Information Number 123

Millennia: Altered Destinies

PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE

Category: Strategy

Developer: Take 2 Interactive, Ian Bird

Publisher: Take 2 Interactive, 1004 Ligonier St., Latrobe, PA 15650 (412) 539-3077

Required	We Recommend
Double-speed CD-ROM drive; 386SX/33; 8MB RAM; 5MB hard-drive space; Mouse	486DX/33, 16MB RAM; Supported sound card

M.S.R.P.: $59.95

***Millennia* offers an unusual, ambitious twist on the traditional space-strategy formula.**

Science fiction strategy games usually involve exploring planets, building colonies, exploiting resources, waging war and/or all of the above, with titles like *Star Control 2* lacing these elements together with an involving narrative framework.

Millennia: Altered Destinies takes *Star Control 2*'s narrative approach as a starting point, ditches the hardcore strategy and military aspects, throws in time-travel and arcade play, and emerges with a game that intrigues at almost every turn.

The plot that powers *Millennia* is a somewhat unique twist on the standard sci-fi strategy game, and offers a wonderfully rich environment in which to play the game. The Echelon Galaxy is in crisis; its precious equilibrium has been upset, meaning the balance of power is disturbed enough so that rampaging Microids (a vicious strain of alien virus directed by an unseen presence) can speed across the universe and conquer it at leisure.

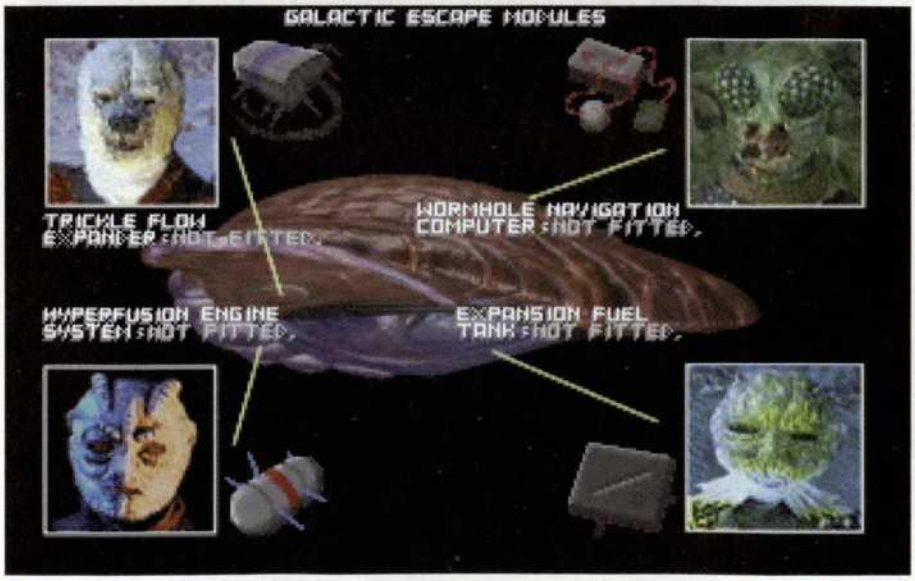
None of this is known to you as you pilot an interstellar freighter on a simple cargo run, and for no discernable reason (at first, at least) you are whisked away by a powerful entity who tells you of the crisis and orders you to fix it. The primary tool at your disposal (and where you'll spend the better part of the game) is the XTM Trans-Time Machine, which can traverse both space and time.

On board this ship are four seeds containing emissaries for the four distinct races that evolve in this universe: the Slothoids (philosophical, polar-bear types), Reptoids (violent reptilians, Piscines (clever fish), and Entomons (hard-working, communal bugs). The other tool you have is ANGUS, your ship-board computer, who helps out a bit with some decisions, and translates when you speak with the different life forms. A lot of his dialog, however, seems to be beside the point, and some more straightforward online guidance would have certainly helped at times.

You are placed at Year Zero in a largely uninhabited universe. Each species that will evolve needs a different type of environment: tundra, desert, oceanic, or tropical. To help along this evolution, you pick a planet and seed it by sending down your emissary. This emissary will be your contact with this species, informing you of important developments, and helping them on the right path through your instructions. You begin by picking planets which can support each of the four life-forms. These should also have a gas giant in the vicinity to provide fuel for your XTM.

Once a planet is seeded, you then carefully observe a time wheel that

The time wheel charts the progress of each of the four races. Watch these closely for indications of trouble in the given time.



Each of the races you oversee must become advanced enough to build a component to fix your ship so you can leave the system.

The star map is used to help you find suitable planets for your species and travel around the system.

charts the path of this life-form over the centuries. This wheel shows the progress of all the species, with little icons denoting advancements (icons with a green border) or crises (icons with a red border). For example, a wagon-wheel with a green border means this race has invented the wheel and is doing okay. However, a few centuries down the road you see a volcano with a red border, and then in the following centuries there's nothing. This means that the race was destroyed, and you must travel to that planet in the crisis time and talk with your emissary.

Almost all major decision-making is done through these discussions, which are executed with jumping, fuzzy video of actors in mediocre alien costumes. With ANGUS translating, your emissary tells you of the problems. As you question him through dialog trees, you get the facts necessary to make decisions that will avert this crisis, allowing time to continue for this race. For example, the Reptoids divide into two factions: one a ruthless dictatorship, the other a peaceful theocracy. They go to war, and the war eventually destroys them. When you arrive at the crisis point, you have two options: kill either the leader of the theocracy or the dictator. One would think it right and moral to kill the dictator, and when you order your emissary to assassinate him, it does indeed create a temporal storm.

Well, hombre, if that's the path you've chosen, you've made a major mistake. Checking the time wheel shows you that the peaceful theocracy that remained after the death of the dictator descended into a stagnant agrarian society: never evolving enough to expand or thwart the Microids. When you go back and decide to kill the peaceful religious leader, time changes again, and this time the Reptoids proceed with their evolution. In another few centuries, there is another crisis of leadership which must be dealt with, and so on. Each decision effects gameplay down the road.

The intertwining lines of time and evolution consistently fascinate, and this is made all the more engaging by several more levels of complexity. First, you have another race called the Hood, which are probably responsible for the temporal problems in the first place, and who go around trying to upset your careful balance. The solution to the Hood problem is the weakest part of this game: clunky first-person arcade sequences in which you fight it out with Hood armadas in a space duel. These descents into action gaming really mar gameplay that is otherwise thoughtful and complex, and they're a major downer early in the game, when your ship is poorly armed.

But there's enough depth here to keep you fighting through these arcade sequences. For example, there's the possibility of meeting yourself in a fifth dimension, creating all kinds of interesting scenarios. And then there's the entire issue of repairing your ship, which was damaged as you entered the universe. To fix the ship, you need four essential components, and each can only be built by one race, and only after they've reached a high level of evolution. But races that evolve this far technologically might not be able to expand enough to achieve equilibrium — and that balance is the key the game.

The Microids must be destroyed, the Hood thwarted, each species must control one fourth of the universe, and they must reach a level where they can build your crucial ship components, all by the year 10,000. That's a lot of gaming, and it's all very, very complex. At times dialog grows repetitious as you try different tactics, and the proper use of your landing craft, which can survey a limited portion of the planet surface, is mystifying at first. The largest problem is the lack of a "kill" feature for dead-end games, which was promised in the manual but not implemented. This means you can continue playing a no-win path for *hours* before realizing it.

Despite these flaws, however, *Millennia* is truly unique and entertaining. Its twisting, increasingly complex lines of time and plot developments provide a wealth of gameplay. There are some hard decisions to make and no easy answers, which gives *Millennia* a rare depth.

—T. Liam McDonald

Arcade-style combat is how you'll deal with Millennia's other no-goodnik — the Hood.

The landing craft is equipped with a laser, which can take out structures that are causing problems in a given timeline.

RAISING RACES

Each of the four races in *Millenia* needs your tender loving care if it's going to evolve to the point where it can withstand the Microid threat — and each race has different characteristics that mean you'll have to deal with them in different ways.

REPTOIDS

Violent, militant reptiles who can only live on desert planets. They are powerful and emotional, valuing honor over reason. They are ill at ease in times of peace.

ENTOMONS

An insectoid species that inhabits warm, tropical planets. They have a hive mentality, working diligently within a rigid hierarchy.

PISCINES

These intelligent fish live only on oceanic planets, and are friendly, individualistic, and democratic. They excel at farming, technology, and invention.

SLOTHOIDS

Mystical, Zen-like polar bears living in the frozen tundra. Will meditate while their worlds collapses, and so take some special prodding to get things done.

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Innovative approach combining time-travel, strategy, and narrative elements.

88%

LOWS: Some sense of frustration over how to deal with certain problems or dead ends. Awkward and unnecessary combat sequences.

BOTTOM LINE: A refreshingly different type of narrative science-fiction game.

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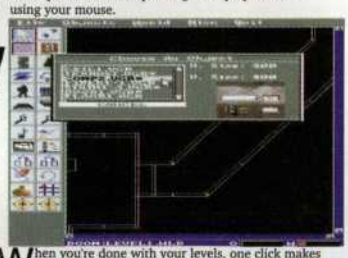

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SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS: 386 PC compatible (486 rec.), DOS, 4 megs RAM, VGA, hard disk, 3.5" drive, SB optional.

Do it Yourself

Using the Perfect General II Scenario and Campaign Editor

You start map-building by creating terrain elevation.

The next step is to add natural features such as rivers, trees, farms, and swamps.

Usually, only the most hardcore wargamers create their own scenarios, going through all the trouble to make the map, create units, and so on. Leave it to QQP to create a scenario editor that — once you figure it out — is as easy to use as that in *Empire*. The *Perfect General II Scenario and Campaign Editor* is a spiffy little addition to an entertaining and playable game.

PG II is unquestionably an improvement on the original *Perfect General*: not only technically, but it just seems to *play* better. The ability to buy and place your units, as well as a wide range of scenarios and campaigns, makes it a flexible, open game: easy to play, but with lots of tactical possibilities open to the desktop general.

The new *Scenario Editor* gives this game even more life. First off, it comes with ten new scenarios featuring a nice mix of terrains and battle types. There are large-scale operations and small, down-and-dirty brawls, with various force dispositions and tactical challenges.

But the real reason to buy this disk is to get the scenario and campaign builder. Like any such tool, it requires time and patience to learn, but it's pretty easy to use once you get into it. Unfortunately, this one takes a little *more* time and patience than usual, since the documentation is, sadly, completely impenetrable: not a single illustration in sight, and text that reads like it was written by dyslectic engineers. This really only becomes a problem when you're trying to understand reinforcements and campaigns, and an hour spent fussing with the system will make it come clear (at least, it did for me).

Each scenario has a number of elements which you have to create. First, of course, you start with terrain, the primary element when creating a battle. The ground on which the combatants fight determines how the battle unfolds, what tactics are employed, and what the victory requirements will be. The *PG II* editor has one of the easiest-to-use terrain editors I've seen, with separate terrain sets such as desert, grassland, or ocean giving you starting points. You begin by setting the elevation levels, from sea-level to steeply mountainous. Terrain features such as swamps, roads, rail, cities, trees, and others are easily "painted" with the mouse.

Once the terrain is locked down, you determine the victory hexes and give them point values. These hexes are usually cities, or possibly forts, airports, or high ground that attackers need to capture and defenders need to protect. This is probably the most important part of scenario building, since it determines just what the combatants are fighting for and what they need to do to win. Game length is another factor linked to determining victory: players need enough turns to achieve the victory requirements, yet not so much that the battle just swings from side to side or becomes a "bug hunt." Look at previous *PG II* scenarios and see what kind of victory requirements the designers consider important. Try to find a "pace" for your game, so that it unfolds logically.

In juxtaposition to victory hexes, you have reinforcement areas. These are the areas set aside on your map for the opponents to mass their forces at the beginning of the game. You do this by assigning different numbers to various areas on the map. Since this determines the starting points of the two sides, they should obviously be clearly separated. When you've set aside parts of the map for reinforcement, you can then set the force allotments, giving either a fixed set of units or a certain amount of buy points to each side, and designating where they can place these units. The reinforcement menu is a little awkward at first, but just remember that each "event" is a separate action for each side: Event 1 is Player 1's startup allotment, Event 2 is Player 2's startup allotment, Event 3 is Player 1's fifth turn reinforcement allotment, and so on.

And that's pretty much it: map, victory requirements, reinforcement regions and schedule. A Validate option checks each scenario to see if it's actually playable, and if not, it tells you what's missing. The scenario is saved to disk as two files, one with an .RCN and one with an .SCN extension. Remember this when sending scenarios to friends or uploading them to

T. Liam McDonald

Scenario editors can be complicated and frustrating, but QQP's *Perfect General II* editor is a gem; invest a little time in figuring it out, and you'll be creating cool new battles in no time.

Using the Perfect General II Scenario and Campaign Editor (Continued)

When the ground looks right, you can begin building the cities, forts, and airports that will be your victory requirements.

The little "1's" show the places where one player can deploy reinforcements, while the "2's" are for the other player.

You can set buy points and allowable units when creating the reinforcement events. You'll find Tom's finished scenario in the BEACH.ZIP file on The CD.

Bug Patches

Patches are available on the CD-ROM edition of *PC Gamer* in the X:\PATCHES directory, in online sources such as the Internet, CompuServe, and America Online, and through game publishers.

Buried in Time v1.04: Includes new 16-bit Windows executables, fixes the exploding wall problem in Chateau Galliard and the Alien Hallway lockup. Various other portions of the code have been enhanced for better performance.

Flight Commander 2 v.1.04: General maintenance patch.

Heroes of Might and Magic v.1.1: Improves compatability with some sound cards and memory configurations, and also resolves a dialing problem with some modems.

Mechwarrior 2: Joystick Drivers Update provides non-interrupt-based drivers that clear up many joystick problems.

Warlords II Deluxe v.2.2.3: General maintenance patch.

the online services.

I went ahead and threw together a beach assault on a trio of well-defended hills in about two hours (one hour of that spent trying to understand the manual). I haven't play-tested it extensively, but if you have the CD version of *PC Gamer*, it's on the disk in the BEACH.ZIP file, and is called "Beach Party Bingo" in your *PGII* menu. If you wind up creating any scenarios, feel free to send them along at *mcdon@ix. netcom.com*. Maybe we can include them in a future version of The CD.

New Cheats and Editors

Here's a new batch of shareware and freeware cheats and hex editors. I haven't tried all of these extensively, and as with any cheat program, you're advised to use extreme caution. They may crash or corrupt save games, so make backups. Developers and publishers do *not* support these programs, and neither do we! *Caveat Emptor.*

Armored Fist Editor: Modifies campaigns to unlock missions so you can overcome the hard ones and move on. (WEASEL20.ZIP)

Command & Conquer Money Editor: Gives you the parameters needed to increase your money. (UGE10.ZIP)

Descent: Devil Level Editor: This is version 1.02 of *Devil*, a level editor requiring the registered version of *Descent* and a math co-processor. (DEVIL102.ZIP)

Jagged Alliance Editor: Lets you increase the abilities of your mercs up to 125, get all available weapons, repair all items in the general inventory, change the names of your soldiers, get more money, etc. (JAEDIT.ZIP)

> **"The *PG II* editor has one of the easiest-to-use terrain editors I've ever seen."**

The *Descent Devil Level Editor* lets you create new *Descent* levels.

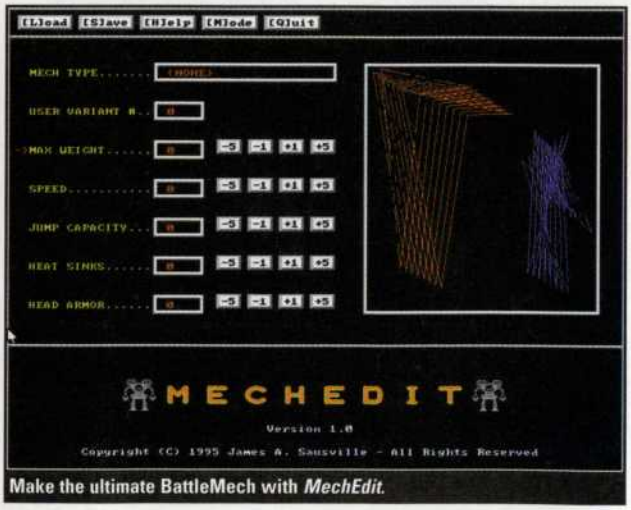
Master of Magic Editor: Allows you to modify known/learnable spells for human and computer players, and edit cities, gold, mana, heroes, items, and other stuff. (EDMOM.ZIP)

Mechwarrior 2 MechEditor: Improve and modify Mech specs. (MCHEDT10.ZIP)

Panzer General Map Editor: Allows you to update maps, startup troops and more. (PANZSEDT.ZIP)

TowerCheat V1.00: A Windows 3.1 program for *SimTower* lets you modify saved-game files for more money and stars. (TOWERCHT.ZIP)

PCG



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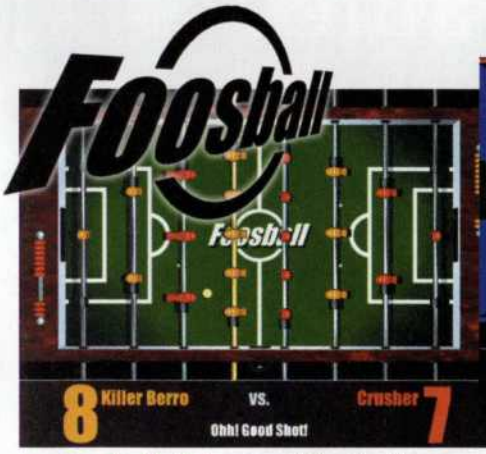

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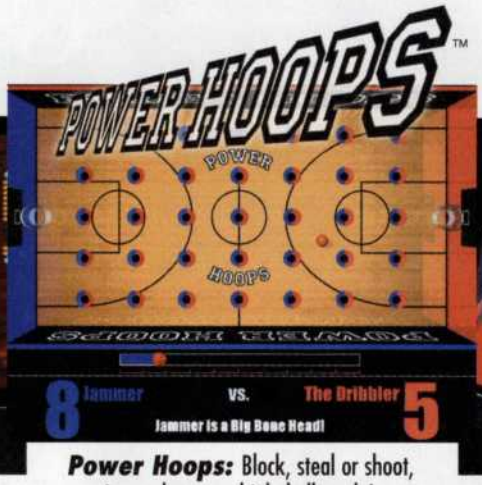
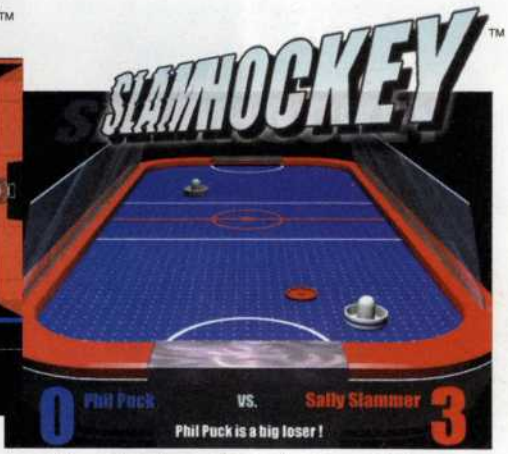
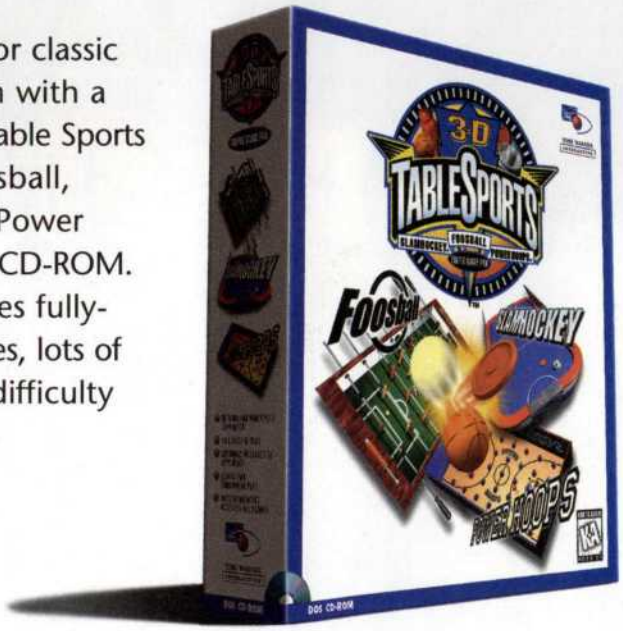


Power Hoops: Block, steal or shoot, in regular or multiple ball mode!



SlamHockey: Chip it, chop it, cut it! Even go over the line in "super battle mode!"

If you're looking for classic table game action with a digital twist, 3-D Table Sports is it! You get Foosball, SlamHockey and Power Hoops, all on one CD-ROM. Each game features fully-rendered 3-D tables, lots of play options, 10 difficulty levels, and network and modem support for tournament and league play. In fact, 3-D Table Sports gives you everything you could ever expect in a table game...*except a place to put your quarters!*



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Product Information Number 101

Educational Illusions

Illusion is nine-tenths of the law in software. Illusion turns a drill-and-practice program into an adventure, a lecture into a sweeping epic, and a computer into a portal to another world. Without illusion, educational software can be like cough medicine hidden in applesauce — one kid will still taste the medicine and continue to fight taking it; another kid will just assume that he doesn't like applesauce any more.

Three new programs weave illusions around various dry topics to create some notable offerings in the software market. Two of these illusions work, but one still bears more than a hint of nasty cough syrup.

Let's Start Learning

The Learning Company has been working backwards in its Reader Rabbit Series. Newly released, *Let's Start Learning* introduces the youngest computer users to one of the most popular characters in educational software. The program builds various early skill areas, from letters and numbers to patterns and shapes, and it is hosted by Reader Rabbit and Mat the Mouse.

These two animals invite children to explore four learning activities. By completing four levels of these activities, children earn keys to a magical carousel. Activities include ABC Diner, in which children match letters with words, and The Shape Shack, which challenges kids to sort shapes and other objects into groups.

My four-year-old son was strongly motivated by the quest to free the horse held in the magical carousel. Whether it was the horse's pleas to be let loose or simply curiosity that did the trick, my son felt an urgency to complete the activities.

With a multi-sensory, multi-level approach, The Learning Company transforms what could have been a dry program into something that's lively and engaging. Underneath all the ballyhoo of singing cats and twisting snakes, *Let's Start Learning* is a drill-and-practice program. But The Learning Company has used its immense experience in educational design to make the program activities seem more like free exploration; children feel they are manipulating objects rather than choosing a preset answer.

As an enlightened extra, The Learning Company even included a module that encourages large motor activities. Clicking on a boom box on the main screen, children activate The Movement Spot. The Movement Spot plays a song that directs kids to march, turn, stomp, clap, and doodle in the air. On my computer, the dancing mouse is out of sync with the words — she claps about the time the singer directs her to stomp her feet. However, by addressing the importance of gross motor development to fine motor development and other skills, the program designers aim high with this feature. I'm not sure it's well enough integrated with the plot, nor appropriate in the setting of a computer learning experience, but I applaud The Learning Company for starting down this road. I'll be interested to see how the idea of motor development evolves in future software.

Heidi E. H. Aycock

A spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down — and hiding the educational content in a kids' program is half the battle. But some programs are better at that trick than others.

LET'S START LEARNING

To partake of such delectable dishes as Peanut Butter Quince Ice Cream Surprise, kids help Ed the Dog match letter sounds with words they begin with.

In the Shape Shack portion of *Let's Start Learning*, children help Mit the Monkey sort objects according to various attributes, such as color, shape, or sound.

SNOOTZ MATH TREK

Strange little Snootians shop for just the right outfits in just the right order at Frumptz Department Store.

Finally, a new way to build memory skills: The Street Music section challenges children to remember and play an ever-increasing list of sounds in the correct order.

Snootz and Bumptz

Newer than Reader Rabbit's creators, Theatrix offers two new programs for older kids: *Snootz Math Trek* and *Bumptz Science Carnival*, for children 6 to 10 years old, inject more fun into math and science than any other packages I've seen yet.

Both story lines begin in a far off galaxy where Snootians frolic through their days. Their major industry is an amusement park, so you can imagine the flavor of the software — playful and goofy.

In *Math Trek*, two young Snootians , Flarn and Foozle, set off on the annual Great Trek to Earth. They are guided through the small town of Seaviewz by Al's Dog, a streetwise pup who seems to know everything. At each stop, the young aliens must solve logic problems cleverly disguised as games.

In *Bumptz Science Carnival*, small spherical creatures called the Bumptz take a field trip to the Great Galaxies Amusement Park on the planet Snoot. The midway features three different tents — the Magnet-O-Whirl, the Bubblearium and the Photon-O-Tron. Each tent features three levels of play, from learning the basics, to solving the puzzles, to building new puzzles from scratch. Deep underground, in the Grumptz cavern, kids find a complex strategy game.

Besides the charming setting, both programs present information attractively. *Science Carnival* faces the biggest risk in this area, taking on such topics as magnetic fields, density, and prisms. But the program deftly sidesteps the pitfalls with its cartoon-style discussions of many scientific concepts, concepts that sounded far more complex and indecipherable in my college-level physics course. The program also suggests offline experiments with well-illustrated instructions.

Both programs feature engaging puzzles that build reasoning skills while imparting some canned content, and this is the central source of Theatrix's success. *Math Trek*, for example, develops logic, map-reading, deduction, sequencing, geometry, and memory. All of these skills will make better calculators and proof-producers out of most kids. Children don't need to know that educational content is hiding behind the games, but Theatrix has included brightly written explanations of what's being learned and how to explore the concepts further offline.

While *Math Trek* offers five different kinds of puzzles, *Science Carnival* offers one basic game with different details, depending on what aspect of science is being covered. The basic game echoes the style of *The Incredible Machine* from Sierra or Maxis' *Widget Workshop*. However, to illustrate the properties of light and color, for example, *Science Carnival* offers a Photon-O-Tron tent with such tools as a Bouncer, which reflects things; a Black Wall, which absorbs things; and convex and concave lenses, which make things big and small.

Either program would be a wonderful addition to any software library. Like *Let's Start Learning*, each Theatrix package gives children a sense that they are manipulating information rather than simply absorbing it. Both of Theatrix's packages tell fine stories, and each one truly teaches its content and skills with as much wit as beauty.

BUMPTZ SCIENCE CARNIVAL

At the Bubblearium, kids ponder the concepts of floating, density, and gravity as they try to solve Rube Goldberg-style puzzles.

Explore the colorful midway of the Great Galaxies Amusement Park with the ball-shaped Bumptz.

At Bat

Once in a while, a new program offers something truly novel to the software industry. Sometimes that new thing works beautifully at its debut, like a fairy tale princess making a perfect entrance at her first big ball. Other times, that new thing stumbles down the stairs. Stumbling, however, doesn't dim the new thing's significance.

At Bat is such a debutante. It offers something new and exciting, but it trips as it enters the software ballroom. If we're lucky, Crystal Vision will continue to refine their product and release a smoother, more graceful one in the future.

AT BAT

Although *At Bat*'s story wanders aimlessly, the authors impart some concrete instructions on how to play better baseball, including this segment on proper position at the plate.

Most of Crystal Vision's interactive comic book is presented in panels, and children click on individual speech balloons to progress through the story.

So what's exciting and new about *At Bat*? The program is, for the most part, an interactive comic book. Like interactive storybooks, children can follow a plot by turning pages and listening to the words read aloud. There are also occasional hot-spots in the illustrations. But from these basic elements, the program designers built something far more interesting.

Like most comic books, the program tells the story of *At Bat* primarily through dialogue. The scenes are presented as panels, and one page can hold six of these panels. Flashing arrows direct children from one panel to the next. Within a panel, characters express themselves through speech balloons. After a character talks, kids click on the speech balloon to activate the next part of the dialogue. At the end of each panel, children see all of the speech balloons laid out comic-book style.

This technique artfully suggests the atmosphere of a paper-based comic book, a style new to electronic storybooks, which may draw children who haven't been engaged by the ubiquitous picture-book style. It also highlights the give and take rules of conversation, and somehow, this aspect of the storytelling style grabbed my interest more than anything else about the program.

However, style isn't supposed to be the star of a story. The plot and characters should stand out, and in *At Bat*, they sit on the sidelines. The story takes a long, meandering path through a little league team's summer season. Along the way, big sister Rudy — who never fails to smack a ball out of the park — teaches little brother Joey to hit. Her instructions are so concrete and clear that the point of the story seems to be to teach real kids how to play baseball. Also along the way, brainy little brother Joey tells a story about the 17-year-old woman who struck out Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig in an exhibition game. The point being — I suppose — that even wimpy Joey could develop into a baseball player to be reckoned with. Then there are other themes: minor conflicts between players, a dog who wants his driver's license (where does he fit in?), and a winning season. Any one of these themes could have driven the story, but so many of them dilute it. Neither the conflict nor the quest was developed well enough to carry the rest of the plot.

So, poor storytelling is one problem with *At Bat*. Another problem is poor technical transitions. In such a rambling story, it's hard enough to keep everyone's peculiarities and problems straight without the program inserting long pauses. On my 486/66 with 16 megabytes of RAM, *At Bat* took a full 40 seconds to move from one page to the next. Some transitions were faster; others slower. Overall, these long pauses undermined whatever illusion of coherence the graphics created.

Implemented more smoothly and written more artfully, interactive comic books promise an interesting kind of electronic storytelling. First, however, Crystal Vision needs to find a faster way to load graphics and sounds and a storyteller who can weave a more unified and focused tale.

PCG

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Product Information Number 207

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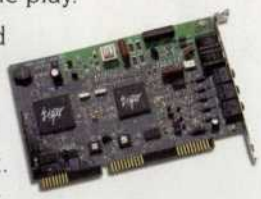

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Product Information Number 120

The Wolf Goes Off His Medication

Happy New Year. Yeah, right. Are you kidding me? If 1996 turns out to be anything like its predecessor, we might as well eat a bullet right now. [*Editor's Note:* Looks like Scott's been listening to his Leonard Cohen albums again. This seems like a good time to point out that the opinions of our columnists are not necessarily those of *PC Gamer*.]

So rather than make a pointless and futile list of resolutions for the new year, I thought I'd list some of the things that pissed me off about the old one.

Number One is the agonizingly slow — and yet wondrously rapid — advance of computer technology. As the really astonishing breakthroughs linger maddeningly on the horizon, we're nevertheless seeing hardware less than a year old becoming obsolescent and incapable of running the newest applications and games the way they ought to be run.

So you bought a DX2/66? Too bad — that adventure sequel you've been waiting for will only run on a Pentium. You played it safe and got a P90? Bummer — that exciting new flight sim will probably choke on anything less than a P120, unless you turn off the sky and clouds and water and run it in 16 colors with no sound.

That's why I'm calling for a two-year moratorium on Progress. That's right — no new developments or upgrades for two whole years. Give us time to relax and enjoy what we have now, without constantly looking over our shoulders with anticipation and fear.

Let those poor engineers and programmers out into the sunlight; show those weasels in marketing how to leave well enough alone, and then make it a capital offense to issue press releases or announce happenin' new Web sites.

Besides, don't all of those splashy new ads for upcoming CD-ROM extravaganzas drive you crazy? Each one more spectacular than the next — promising miraculous new implementation of video and animation, and heralding nothing less than a total redefinition of computer gaming as we know it. And you just know half of 'em are gonna suck a million miles a minute or end up in the Vaporware Hall of Fame.

It's pretty obvious that the public has reached its saturation point with techno-tainment anyway. Witness the flash-in-the-pan popularity of movies like *Hackers*, *Virtuosity* and *The Net*. Hollywood just can't seem to crank out cybercrap fast enough, and yet the makers of *Hackers* were so desperate for publicity that they left their Web site up even after some disgusted *real* hackers broke in and wreaked havoc on it and were even accused of hacking the site themselves to generate interest!

Speaking of hacking, I recently had the opportunity to check out *AOHell* — that notorious program that takes diabolical advantage of loopholes in America Online's programming. It's an intelligent and frightening piece of work — and using it is, of course, very illegal. You should *not* mess with it, no matter how tempting it is. [*Editor's Note:* O.K., we're still not crazy about that bullet-eating thing, but we agree with Scott completely on this one. *AOHell* is Bad Juju.]

But the fact that it lets you reclaim a busy cursor when AOL goes into one of its file-access purgatories makes me wonder why AOL doesn't implement this feature themselves, especially since they're flooding the lines with users with 10-hour free trial accounts.

Still, I am enjoying the hospitality of America Online, not to mention CompuServe, Delphi, Genie, INN, StarNet, NovaLink, and now the Microsoft Network (where I can be reached as *WolfOnline @msn.com*).

Am I the only one who gets nauseous watching TV shows like "Beyond 2000" and "Next Step" when their unmercifully know-it-all reporters (who all seem to be from Australia) yammer on and on about whatever high-tech tidbit got them a free plane trip to wherever the hell they're reporting from? I swear, if I see one more Discovery Channel reporter driving a HUMVEE and explaining to me how it works, I'm gonna load up my AR-15 and start taking potshots at Quantas jets flying in and out of O'Hare International Airport.

Ahem ... is that it? Is Evil Scott through? All right, then. While I go take my medication, here are some cool Web sites to check out:

- *http://airspacemag.com/ac/ac_home.html* — This is the site for Air Combat U.S.A. — the brave folks who'll take you up in a real plane, hand over the controls and let you test your dogfighting skills.
- *http://travelassist.com/tcd/fighter* — This is an outfit very similar to Air Combat USA, called Fighter Pilots U.S.A. They use the same Marchetti aircraft, but create a more squadron-like atmosphere.
- *http://www.pbs.org* — Yep, it's *that* PBS — the Public Broadcasting System. Don't turn up your nose until you check out the "Frontline" piece on what really went down between the F.B.I. and the Branch Davidians at Waco. Scary stuff....
- *http://www.valvoline. com* — Do you like motor oil? Do you like automobile racing? It's like a dream come true....
- *http://www.troma.com/ home* — This is the place for fans of Troma's films. *Home of The Toxic Avenger* and *Femme Fontaine: Killer Babe For The C.I.A.* That's Troma-tainment!
- *http://www.ScottLand. com* — No — it's not my own personal Web site. It's Scott Thompson from "The Kids in the Hall" and "The Larry Sanders Show," complete with his entourage of outrageous characters. Check your attitude at the door....
- *http://www.fungame. com* — Yes, it's Pop Software, and *Return of the Mutant Space Bats* is finally here!
- *http://www.paranoia. com/anton/simpsons/* — A hilarious library of Homer Simpson's "Mmm..." wave files. "Mmm...beer." "Mmm ... pizza." "Mmm ... snouts."

Ahh, I feel much better now. See ya next month. PCG

Scott Wolf

Was 1995 a bleak and miserable year, filled with endless techno-hype and gridlocks on the Information Cattlepath? Judge for yourself....

What's a Multima?

OK, I know I've gone on at length in the past about the importance of online gaming as it applies to roleplaying games, but the addition of the human element to the computer fantasy game may be one of the last hopes for the often overlooked genre. Recently, I had the opportunity to talk with Origin's Richard Garriott (a k a Lord British) about the future of roleplaying, and as it turns out, the crown prince of RPGs has once again managed to stay a step ahead of the game.

Although the title is as of yet still undetermined (the developers are flipping back and forth between *Ultima Online* and *Multima*), Garriott did confirm that Origin is currently working on what stands to be the biggest step forward for computer roleplaying in years. What Garriott hopes to do is to build an online world based on the hugely popular Ultima series, throw in about a thousand users at once, and then stand back and let the interaction begin. In fact, this freeform universe is one of the biggest challenges facing the programming team.

"The game is coming together quickly," says Garriott, "but we don't really know how the interpersonal aspect is going to work. Beyond being a freeform social environment, we want it to be an Ultima game in the classic sense, complete with grand quests, social subtext, and more. We're looking very hard for ways to introduce new quests and new events and new problems, and that's pretty much the biggest problem we face. What we're trying to create is a permanent, persistent online world."

Putting together this kind of project meant bringing in a lot of new people, experts in both roleplaying design and telecommunications. But according to Garriott, it was never too much trouble to find programmers willing to sign up.

"It's interesting," Garriott says. "Once we began to debate on whether or not to do the project, we were all of a sudden swamped by people, from both inside and outside of the company, who wanted to work on the project. The first thing we did was to quickly hack together a prototype and then put it up on the Internet for testing. We very quickly found out that there were many technology issues that we needed to overcome, but we also got a taste of how popular the game was going to be. After that first test, we built a team, 50 percent from the classical Origin old school, and 50 percent from the best that the [Internet's] MUD and MOO worlds had to offer, to help us bring the Ultima property online."

Fans of Origin's Ultima series will soon be able to play online against real, live opponents.

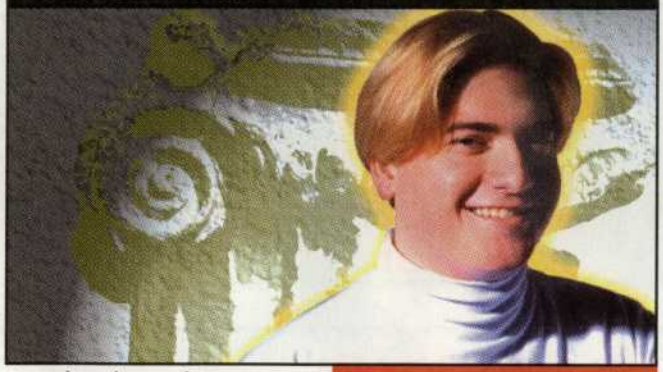
Being online has its advantages and disadvantages, though, and this is something that the Origin team is fully aware of. One of the biggest problems with having an open fantasy world that lets everyone do their own thing is that people can sometimes be real bastards. There have been problems with other online roleplaying games, in which experienced characters hung around and waited for new characters to join the game, then pounded the bejeezus out of them over and over again to gain gold and equipment. Garriott wants to handle this problem, but intends to do it in a way that works within the rules of the fantasy world so as not to affect the suspension of disbelief that is so important in RPGs. The current answer is to have armed guards in the game patrolling the cities and towns to quickly dispense a little street justice to these types of thugs. Major roads outside of the town would also be patrolled, though not as often. In this way, a player could choose to act as a cutthroat, but would have to accept the same sets of realities that face real criminals, i.e. to attack a weak character in broad daylight in the middle of town is almost certain suicide. There are a host of social problems alone that have to be ironed out, in addition to the mammoth task of finding an interface that is both visually appealing and easy to master.

To do this, the team has adopted an interface that is very similar in scale to the one used in *Ultima VI*, but with all of the benefits of an extra few years of development and research. Garriott explains, "We've already got the technology basis well underway. The new game will be as technologically advanced as *Ultima VIII*, but the point of view will be zoomed out a bit more. In the end, it'll be a lot like *Ultima VI*, but with SVGA 16-bit color."

So what does all this technology mean for us poor saps at home? First off, it means a bit of a wait. Field tests are just getting underway right now, so the final release isn't planned until the fall, and matters of cost and billing still have to be ironed out. More than that, though, it means a whole new experience for roleplayers who have dreamed about a fantasy world that is different each time you enter it. This really could be the future of fantasy roleplaying — not as an online adaptation of yet another license, but in the addition of living, breathing opponents who have the potential to be trustworthy and brave or deceptive and cruel (or, more likely, just looking for a chance to put themselves in the top spot). All hail Lord British!

PCG

Trent C. Ward



The idea of a multiplayer, online roleplaying game isn't exactly new, but so far none of the big names in RPGs have tried it. Fortunately, Origin is out to change that.

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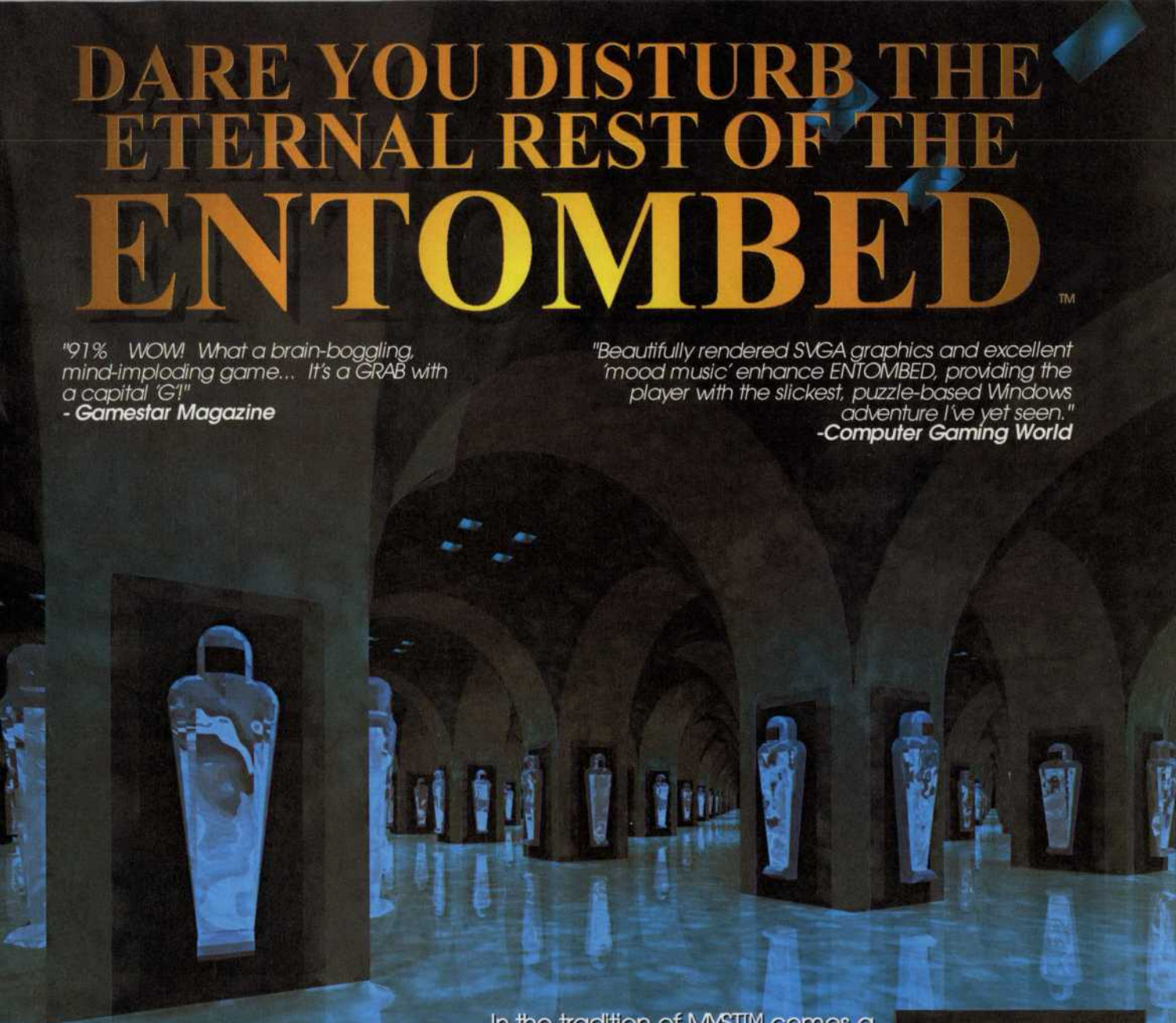

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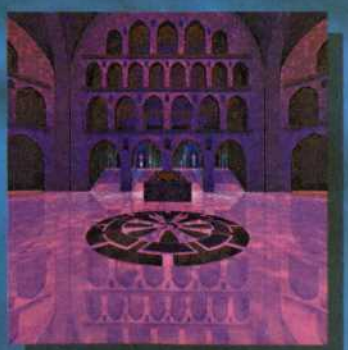

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Product Information Number 95

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Product Information Number 197

Blue and Gray Pros and Cons

What makes a great Civil War game? Having published three books about the subject (*The Civil War in North Carolina*, a trilogy, published by John F. Blair) and having played just about every game on the subject since Avalon Hill's pioneering *Gettysburg* in 1958, I've had ample time to reflect on this ever-fascinating subject.

And like so many other wargamers, I've been vexed by the shortcomings of PC games devoted to the subject. Since the market for a great CW game is so large, I wish to make the following proposal:

Gamers should form a centralized pool of ideas open to anyone who's interested, thrash out the input until a rough consensus can be reached, and then simply *offer* it to any game company willing to make the investment.

Here are some *very* preliminary musings, just to start the ball rolling (I am basing these on the assumption that most players will want to play the Confederate side, since that's where the challenge lies):

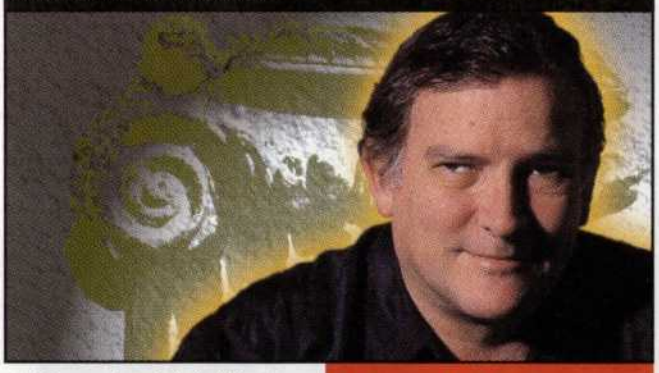
Maps: Our hypothetical game would use four map scales: One showing the entire country, from the Trans-Mississippi western theater to the coast of the Carolinas; one "sectional," showing each major theater; one "regional," showing, say, everything within a hundred-mile radius of Washington, Richmond, Chattanooga, etc.; and one "tactical," on which the actual battles would be waged.

Use a system of colored overlays, like the elegant system used in *Caesar II*, to access information on political sympathies, foraging possibilities, etc., in any given region. Let this information be culled from a computerized network of spies.

Politics: Historically accurate models of the actual squabbling between Richmond and the states can turn a game into mush Who, frankly, gives a rat's ass what gripes the governor of Georgia had with Jefferson Davis? Let the player assume dictatorial control over the leadership role, able to make clear-headed decisions based on strategic realities; able to appoint, transfer, and sack leaders as circumstances warrant. (And, naturally, give him the option to take battlefield command at any time.)

One of the Confederacy's biggest problems was the sheer obstinacy of Jeff Davis.

William R. Trotter



He appointed the brilliant Judah Benjamin as Secretary of War, even though Benjamin knew absolutely nothing about military affairs, and chaos resulted. He insisted on using the dyspeptic and lethargic Braxton Bragg as a field commander — simply because Bragg was a Davis loyalist — and the result was disaster.

But both of these men could have been great assets to the Confederacy. Benjamin was a skilled diplomat, and Bragg was a superb logistician — put them in their proper roles, and the entire Southern cause would have been strengthened.

Diplomacy: Don't waste game time figuring out how to get the British and/or the French to intervene. In a realistic game, they never will. On the *other* hand, both British and French industrialists were eager to manufacture and export the tools of war to the Confederacy.

Resource Allocation: Between November, 1860, and April, 1861, with war almost a certainty, a strong Confederate government could have significantly improved its capacity to make war. Even when the war begins, a system of resource-allocation points would allow the CSA general a chance to prioritize more efficiently than Davis. Let there be a data-pool of available assets; so many points to modernization of forts, so many for transferring heavy coastal guns to North Carolina, etc. The possibilities are enormous, and the program need not be unwieldy.

Resource points would also let the Rebels construct some truly potent ironclads to protect the Mississippi. The one river dreadnought that *did* reach completion performed magnificently. Imagine if there had been a fleet of them....

Tactical Scale: Give us the option to fight *any* battles above the level of a skirmish; or to assign commanders who will fight in the style of their historical components.

I suggest fighting the battles in some variation of the Battleview system Talson Soft uses in its Gettysburg simulation (see the Scoop! on pg. 58) — the results are aesthetically pleasing and really do suggest the look and feel of the real thing. Grand tactical maneuvering might best be rendered by the "animated map" style of graphics featured in Ezra Sidran's *The War College*. Some layered combination of these two systems would surely be more realistic than any of the clunkier formats used in earlier games.

Okay, then. Agree or disagree, those are my suggestions, just to plant the seeds. As always, dear readers, your comments are invited.

And now, I'm afraid it's time for me to chown down on a crow burger....

One thing that has continually surprised me during my three decades as a writer is the way a well-intentioned bit of hyperbole can land back in your lap like a grenade.

Such an unintentional gaffe appeared in the last issue's column, when I referred to SSI's Rick Martinez as "the proud poppa" of *Panzer General*. I guess my word-choice was dictated by the fact that Rick has been my contact about that game and its successors ever since we first previewed it two years ago. But, obviously, a game project of such size and complexity has *many* "proud poppas," and Rick would never claim an unfair share of credit.

Apologies are hereby rendered — and recognition hereby extended — to Bret Berry, Rick White, Joel Billings, Chuck Kroegel, Dave Jensen, Paul Murray, and *everybody* in the Special Projects Group at SSI. You all deserve kudos for giving us a truly great game. PCG

Everybody and his brother keeps kvetching about "why can't anybody design a *really good* Civil War game?" So why don't we all get together and just *do* it?

What's the Deal With Confirmed Kill?

It's no secret that multiplayer gaming — via modem link or online services — is one of the hottest tickets in computer gaming. Once you've gotten a taste of dogfighting your buddy in *Pacific Air War* or blowing the doors off some pro drivers in *NASCAR Racing*, going up against AI opponents can seem pretty bland. There's just nothing like real head-to-head competition.

That competition can be brutal, and so can the rivalry among companies looking to capitalize on multiplayer gaming. Domark's *Confirmed Kill*, one of the more promising prospects, is on hold after some of the project's programmers bailed out to launch their own service.

A group of former *Confirmed Kill* programmers has left the project and are preparing to take off with a multiplayer flight sim of their own. The new company, Interactive Creations Inc., broke from Domark in search of another graphics engine, says ICI's Robert Salinas. "We're going with a faster, cleaner graphics engine," Salinas says. "It's a Mac engine that we ported over."

The ICI team will be familiar to all veterans of GEnie's *Air Warrior* online game: Dale "HiTec" Addink, John "Killer" McQueen, Mark "DoK" Miller, and Bob "Joker" McCarthy.

The new service — it doesn't have a name yet, although there's a possibility it'll still end up being called *Confirmed Kill* — will feature World War Two aerial combat, including dogfighting, dive-bombing, and carrier defense.

There'll be a few different areas in which you can test your aerial expertise. The Arena will be sort of a practice area, where you can earn your wings and score a few kills in a free-for-all atmosphere. The historic scenario area, as clever readers can guess, will be devoted to re-creations of historical battles — including Midway, the Solomon Islands, and the Battle of Britain — with real maps, planes, weapons, and orders of battle. A dueling area will cater to dogfighting fans.

The historical scenarios sound great, with torpedo planes, dive-bombers, heavy bombers, and lots of naval and ground targets for some explosive fun. ICI plans to have gamers control ship movement for an added sense of realism. "Someone will be out there driving the carrier," Salinas says.

"We're out to create real scenarios," he says. "When we have the battle of Midway, there'll be guys in there flanking destroyers using their AA guns to protect the carriers. The carriers will carry the right type and number of planes."

ICI claims frame rates will be out of this world: 1024 x 768 graphics running at 100 frames per second on a Pentium 100, 1024 x 768 at 21 frames on a 486/66, and 640 x 480 graphics cranking out 20 frames on a 486/33. The lowest resolution available will be 640 x 480.

That frame rate "is going to let us add some really nice features," Salinas says. "We can do object-linking, so if I'm going up against somebody who has bombs and rockets loaded, I can just look underneath the plane and see them."

ICI is up and running with open beta-testing and hopes to launch the service officially before the end of the year. The new service will be accessible through the Internet. If you want info, try reaching ICI on the net at http://www.cris.com/~Gunjam.

Exact pricing hasn't been set yet, but ICI is looking at a minimum account at $10 a month, good for five hours' flying time. Rates will be roughly $2 an hour.

ICI may be up and flying soon, but don't scratch Domark's project off your wish list just yet. It may be MIA for awhile, but Domark says the game will fly again. "We'll be coming out with *Confirmed Kill* as an online service and as a standalone game," says Paul Baldwin of Domark.

Domark is talking with a couple of potential financial partners, Baldwin says. "A lot of people are really interested in it, but we want the right fit. We want somebody that's well known and on the level," he says.

The split with ICI hasn't been an amicable one. "They terminated the agreement, but it's a blessing in disguise," Baldwin says.

Now that you've got the latest on multiplayer games, let's turn to baseball. Traditionally, this is the time for me to crank up a new season of football sims, but I'm not ready yet. Whatever the reason, I'm about two months into a baseball sim season. And even *I* am surprised by my choice of games.

Front Page Sports: Baseball is my pick for the best graphical baseball sim on the market. The game's two years old, and it was roundly booed by lots of gamers when it was released. I praised the game in my review, and for a while I thought I'd missed the mark. The action graphics were rather crude, there were some maddening statistical anomalies, and auto-play games took forever to simulate.

When I came down with baseball fever, I tried the newer, cutting-edge baseball sims, including *HardBall 5* and *Tony LaRussa 3*. They looked great, but to me, they still fell flat re-creating the action on the field.

So after spending a few days looking for that fourth disk, I loaded up *Front Page Sports: Baseball*. And I've been playing it for weeks. The graphics are still a little blocky, even with all the detail turned on. And it still takes half an hour or so to play a week's schedule in the background. But damn, the play on the field is as real as it gets. These aren't canned graphics that depict canned results. The batter is actually swinging, and the pitcher is actually pitching. And the on-the-field action is easily the most realistic of any game. The shortstop gets in front of a hard-hit grounder, and the ball bounces off his chest before he recovers to gun down the runner. This is great stuff.

Unfortunately, Sierra seems to have abandoned the game, but it's hard to blame them — gamers abandoned it first. The second patch fixed many of the bugs, and you can find league files in the CompuServe sports sim forum that cure most of the wacky statistics. If *FPSB* is collecting dust on your shelf somewhere, give it another look.

PCG

Lee Buchanan

The fate of multiplayer fighter sims is up in the air after a bit of a shakeup, but the future is still in good hands. And if you're looking for a new, good baseball sim, you may already own it.

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IBM's Power Outage

Ever wonder what happened to IBM's PowerPC computers? Along with Apple and Motorola, IBM spent a boatload of money to develop a new family of CPU chips, and the PowerPC processors were expected to challenge Intel's Pentium for dominance of the PC market. Apple quickly converted the Macintosh product line over to the new architecture, and its Power Macs have sold well, but we're still waiting for IBM. If you look at the lists of requirements on software boxes, most games still call for an IBM-compatible PC, but it's been a long time since IBM held the position of leadership in this business. The saga of its PowerPC says a lot about how this position was lost.

Right now, the real standard for PC software is a CPU chip that's already considered obsolete: the Intel 386 processor. Newer Intel chips like the 486, the Pentium, and the upcoming P6, are faster and more sophisticated devices, but they run the same programs as a 386. All these chips use the same system of operation codes, or opcodes, the binary instructions that tell a CPU when to read and write data, when to add or multiply, and which pieces of data to use in each operation. They can also run programs that use the 16-bit instructions of earlier 8086 and 286 CPUs.

Intel spent millions of dollars last year on advertising to promote Pentium CPUs — an exclusive Intel product — at the expense of its 486 chips, where AMD and Cyrix are competitors. But the differences between these processors are minor if you compare them to a PowerPC CPU. One goal of the PowerPC alliance was to offer chips with twice the performance of a similarly-priced Pentium, and they got pretty close when Apple's first Power Macintoshes hit the market. This level of performance is possible because the PowerPC chip uses a totally different set of opcodes, an instruction set that's ideally suited to the highly pipelined, superscalar designs of modern processor hardware. And a new instruction set requires a lot of new software.

As it turns out, IBM's been quietly selling PowerPC computers for several months now, but the only operating systems being offered are AIX (IBM's version of Unix) and Microsoft's Windows NT. They're great if you're looking for an engineering workstation or a departmental server machine, but not so good for general personal computing — and no good for games.

Writing a totally new operating system with a graphical interface and all the other features we've come to expect is a huge software engineering project. Apple took a brilliant shortcut to get its Power Mac systems on the shelves as quickly as possible—it rewrote only the most critical parts of its MacOS operating system before the initial launch. To handle the rest of the system, Apple used emulation software which lets the PowerPC chip run software written for the 32-bit Motorola CPUs used in prior Macs.

An emulator walks through the program one instruction at a time, looking up each opcode in a table and jumping to a subroutine that performs an equivalent operation to the original opcode. Compared to a system written entirely in PowerPC instructions, there's a big speed penalty for operations that use emulated code, but in competitive terms, Apple's strategy really paid off.

For the launch of its Power Personal computers, IBM wanted to go first class all the way. Even though the system needed to have an Intel CPU emulator to run MS-DOS and Windows programs, IBM decided that the PowerPC version of OS/2 Warp should be written using all-new native Power PC code. IBM wanted to take the high road, but the climb turned out to be much steeper than expected.

The official word is that the operating system would be ready in the fourth quarter of 1995, but IBM'ers are already conceding that they'll miss that date too. Microsoft's Windows 95 was probably just as far behind schedule, but unlike IBM, Microsoft's delays didn't keep a new generation of PCs on ice.

IBM might not dominate the PC world the way it used to, but it's still a huge company with more than enough resources to finish the new operating system. The PowerPC version of OS/2 Warp should be done sometime in the next few months, and then we'll see IBM's first personal PowerPC systems, but there will still be plenty of questions to be answered. No doubt they'll be powerful machines, but how many applications will there be? And of particular interest to us — will there be any games?

Some cool games have already been written for PowerPC-based Mac computers, like Domark's *Flying Nightmares* and *Absolute Zero*, and LucasArts has developed Mac versions of *Full Throttle*, *X-Wing* and *Dark Forces*. But they're written for MacOS, an operating system that won't run on IBM's hardware.

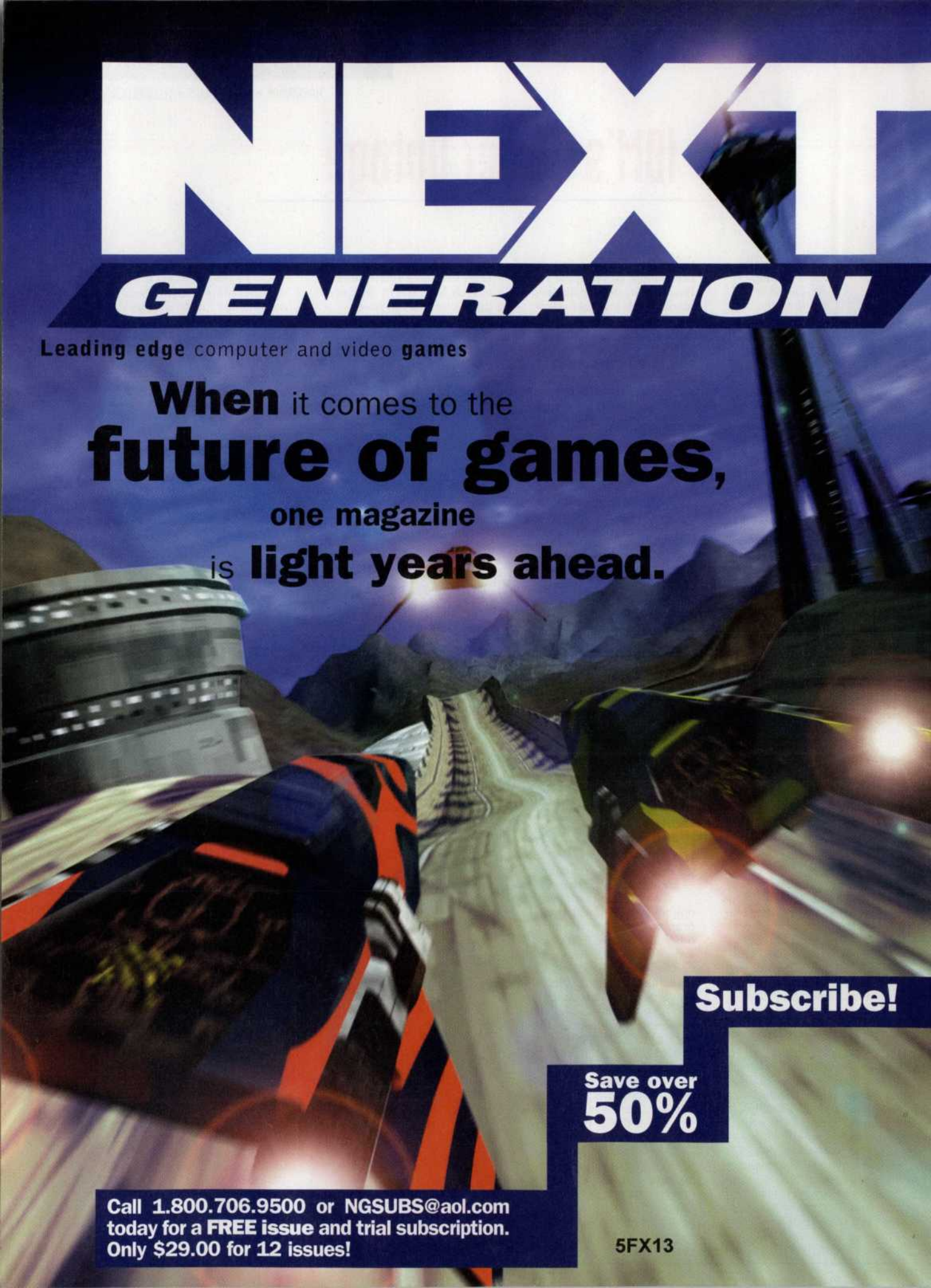
Thanks to emulation, IBM's PowerPC systems will be able to run 16-bit MS-DOS and Windows 3.1 programs, but they won't run anywhere near as quickly as they would on a Pentium. And the emulator won't be able to handle 32-bit programs like games that use a DOS extender or Microsoft's Win32s extensions — in other words, the great majority of new and current PC games. And any new games written for Windows 95 are simply out of the question.

IBM gave Intel more than a year's head start, and with all the Pentium chips that have been sold, economy of scale has already erased most of the PowerPC's price/performance advantage. Microsoft also got six free months to sell us all on Windows 95, and it's tough enough to battle either of those companies on equal terms.

PCG

Tim Victor

IBM created the PC — so why are they letting Apple beat them to the market with computers based on the PowerPC chip? And what does it all mean for gamers?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STRATEGY CENTRAL

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Since we've packed our cover feature with strategies for the latest and greatest computer games, we thought we'd devote this month's *Strategy Central* to providing the answers to those troubling gaming problems that our readers have been asking about. From *Mechwarrior 2* to the Wing Commander series, here's what you've been dying to know.

Write to us at:

PC GAMER

1350 Old Bayshore Hwy., Suite 210, Burlingame, CA 94010
or E-mail:
peeceegee@aol.com
74431,3433@compuserve.com

Accessing the Elemental or Tarantula

First you'll need to select the Trials of Grievance selection screen, then click on either the 'Mech icon or the star configuration icon.

Enter the star configuration screen and left-click the mouse on the name of the primary 'Mech (this is usually named Mechwarrior) and type in the name "Enzo" or "Hobbes".

Now return to the 'Mech lab to view the new 'Mechs available in your arsenal. You'll find the Elemental, the Tarantula, and the Battle Master are now available for use. Unfortunately, you won't be able to play as the Battle Master because of a bug in the game. Activision is aware of the problem and has released a patch that fixes the problem and lets you choose this 'Mech for Trials of Grievance.

Reader's Requests

Three cheats for the best in sci-fi gaming.

Mechwarrior 2 Redux

Help! I can't find my Tarantula!

Dear Strategy Central,

First of all, let me say you've done a great job with the November issue; you guys (and gals) just keep getting better and better. Not only did I enjoy the review index, (it's handy when I can't remember what issue something was reviewed in) the features on Bethesda and Sir-tech got me so excited I ended up digging out my copies of *Realms of Arkania* and *The Elder Scrolls: Arena* and playing them for two weeks straight.

This spidery 'Mech has eluded our readers for months, and now we reveal the path to access it.

What really caught my eye were the cheat codes for *Mechwarrior 2* that you ran in this same issue. I could get all of the cheat codes for things like ammo and invincibility to work, but I'm having trouble with the cheat that's supposed to give you access to the Elemental and Tarantula 'Mechs. Try as I might, I haven't been able to make the "Enzo" or "Hobbes" codes work. Am I doing something wrong?

Jane Buxley
Tacoma, Washington

No, Jane, you're not doing anything wrong. The cheat really does work, but we may not have made it clear enough. So to right the wrongs of the past and get you bashing those 'bots from the cockpit of some new 'Mechs, check out the new, improved instructions to the left (and this time it'll work, we promise).

Raptor

A host of cheats for an arcade classic!

Dear Strategy Central,

I've been a big fan of arcade games since the days of *Galaxian* and *Asteroids*, and I'm constantly searching high and low for PC games that can help me relive my youth and give me the same kind of arcade action I grew up with. So I was really surprised when a friend showed me the *Raptor* demo on your May '95 CD. This is exactly what I was looking for. After playing around with the demo for a few weeks, I decided to pick up the registered version of *Raptor*, and while I still love the action, the higher levels are beginning to get a bit frustrating. I'm wondering if there are any cheats or tips

...continued on page 251

Raptor's later levels can be really tough, but we've uncovered some cheat codes that'll help.

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Reader's Requests

you can give me to help me get through the final episode.

Max Perry
Rising Sun, Ohio

Yours is not an uncommon affliction, Max. Raptor *has humbled more than a few of* PC Gamer*'s arcade veterans with its tough challenges and fast action. But since even the best of us need help every now and again, we've looked up a few cheats that'll give you the weapons and money you'll need to get back on track.*

To get full shield strength and a death ray, press the Backspace key at any point in the game. One word of warning: this cheat only works in the registered version of Raptor*, and you'll lose all of your money when you use it.*

To skip to any level or episode, type the following at the Sector screen to select the episode you want:

Z for **Bravo Sector**
X for **Tango Sector**
Y for **Other Regions**

Then push the following keys to select the level you want to play:

Q	**Level 1**
W	**Level 2**
E	**Level 3**
R	**Level 4**
T	**Level 5**
Y	**Level 6**
U	**Level 7**
I	**Level 8**
O	**Level 9**

Wing Commander Revisited

Cheat your way through three of a kind!

Dear Strategy Central,

As I was looking through my October edition, I ran across your cheat for *Wing Commander III*, and I was wondering if you guys would know of a similar cheat that could help me get through the first two Wing Commander games. I really enjoy both of these games, but I'm starting to get a little frustrated with some of the missions. Can you help?

Mike Randall
Trenton, NJ

Having trouble with *Wing Commander I* or *II*? Use these cheats and you'll be flying high again.

As our regular readers can tell you, we have run cheats for all three Wing Commander games before, but since they were sprinkled through a couple of issues and might have been missed by some of our new readers, we're putting together the cheats for the entire Wing Commander series in one handy package. Just follow these simple instructions, and you'll be taking out those Kilrathi fighters with newfound confidence.

Wing Commander I & II

To enable the cheats for the first two Wing Commander games, type the startup command for each game, adding a space and "Origin -k" before you smack that Enter key. Once you're in the game you can destroy any targeted ship by pressing the Ctrl and Del keys at the same time.

Wing Commander III

You enable the *Wing Commander III* by typing "WC3 -Mitchell" (we're told it's a "Mystery Science Theater 3000" reference) to run the game. You can destroy any targeted ship by pressing the Ctrl and W at the same time. To destroy all enemy ships on radar, press Ctrl+Del+W.

PCG

***Wing Commander III*'s cheats are as easy to use as those in the first two games.**

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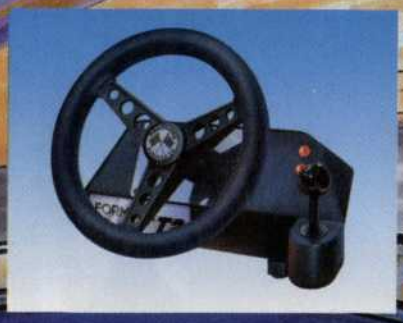

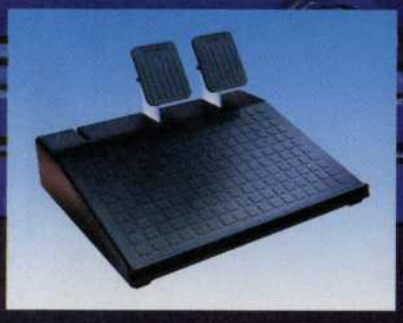

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LETTERS

It's (almost) 1996! We're ushering in the new year by continuing a long-standing *PC Gamer* tradition — we take all the letters from the past year, pile 'em up, and dive in with the same gusto that folks here in California use to crush grapes for wine. The 1995 letter party was a huge success, but we need you to keep those letters coming so 1996 will be even better!

Let's Hear From You!

Write to:

PC Gamer Letters
1350 Old Bayshore Hwy.,
Suite 210,
Burlingame, CA 94010

or E-mail to:

peeceegee@aol.com
74431,3433@compuserve.com

Cheaters Sometimes Win

Dear Editors of PCG,
I am responding to the article in the July 1995 issue that T. Liam McDonald wrote about cheating (in his "If You Can't Win, Cheat" Extended Play column). I think that the world of gaming is pretty pathetic if you have to cheat to win. I am specifically referring to adventure-roleplaying games. The point of these games is to use your mind to advance through troubling puzzles and not to read what to do off of a cheat sheet. Games are more fun when you feel the satisfaction of beating one by using your own wits.

My friends turn *Doom* to the easiest difficulty level and use the God-mode the whole game. I think the problem these days is that people don't realize that challenge is what makes a game fun.

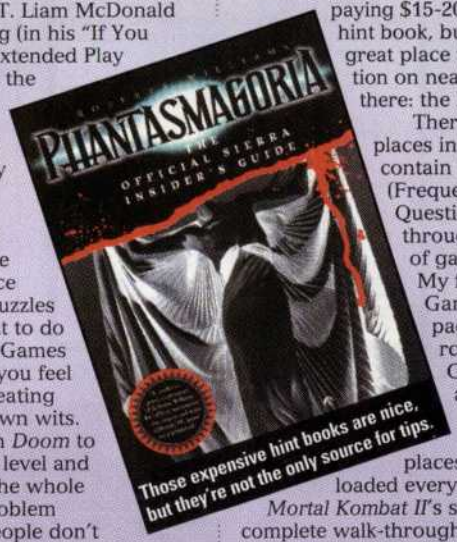
I do realize that sometimes, after you've beaten a game and you get bored of it, it may be fun to use a cheat, but if you want to play a game for what it is (a challenge), do yourself a favor and beat it yourself.

Sincerely,
Jeremy Johnston
Madison, AL

It takes all kinds of people to make up the world of PC gaming, Jeremy. The whole point of playing computer games is to have fun, and hitting a brick wall in a game is no fun at all.

Everyone's going to have different breaking points; our deputy editor, Todd, completed every mission in X-Wing *three times using no cheats and a* mouse *— but not everyone is as patient as he is.*

And while we agree that playing Doom *in full-time God-mode doesn't sound like much of a challenge — or even much fun — we think it's O.K. to bend the rules now and then.*



Those expensive hint books are nice, but they're not the only source for tips.

Dear PC Gamer,
This is in response to James Gibson's letter (in the November 1995 issue of *PC Gamer*), which requested that hint books be included on the disc with CD-ROM games. I also have a problem paying $15-20 dollars for a hint book, but I've found a great place to get information on nearly any game out there: the Internet!

There are all kinds of places in the Internet that contain FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) and Walkthroughs of every type of game imaginable. My favorites are Games Domain Web page (http:// wcl-rcbham.ac.uk/ Games/Domain), and ftp.cdrom.com. At those two places, I've downloaded everything from *Mortal Kombat II*'s secret moves to a complete walk-through of *King's Quest VII*. And it didn't cost me anything, except the fee I have to pay for accessing the Internet.

Sincerely,
Craig Chatterton
Gresham, OR

That's right, Craig. The information superhighway is a terrific place to find all kinds of information — including game hints and cheat codes. And gamers who aren't quite ready to jump into the Internet can find all kinds of useful stuff in the PC gaming forums on online services such as America Online and CompuServe. Next time you're having trouble with a game, don't spring for the hint book until you've taken a stroll down the old Rue d'Info.

What's DOS/4 For?

Dear PCG,
I noticed that all the new games coming out use a file called DOS/4GW. What is DOS/4GW and what does it do? I've heard many people complain about it causing problems, but it's still used in almost all the new games.

Just curious,
Garrett Banuk
via AOL

DOS/4GW, created by Rational Systems, is a DOS extender, a program that lets other programs run in 32-bit "protected" mode instead of DOS's usual 16-bit "real" mode. Because 32-bit mode games run faster and are easier to program, DOS/4GW is used more often than not with today's games — even though some extenders can conflict with some memory management software.

Reviews: Before Their Time?

Dear PC Gamer,
I'm confused. How can you publish reviews of games that aren't out in the stores yet? When *Mechwarrior 2* came out, it already had your Editors' Choice sticker on the box. What's up?

Thanks,
Chuck Reddy
Martinsville, VA

In order to bring you the most up-to-date reviews possible, we often review 'em before they're on the store shelves. But that doesn't mean we're looking at incomplete games; it just means we get our hands on the finished products before they've been boxed, shrink-wrapped, and shipped to your favorite software dealer. In the case of MW2, *the review was finished before the game was shipped to the public, so Activision was able to put our seal of approval on the first copies out the door.*

Frog Follow-Up

Dear PC Gamer,
I was wondering about some games you covered in "The New Bullfrog" story you did in June. When will those games (*Syndicate Wars, Indestructibles, Dungeon Keeper, Gene Wars*) be

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Syndicate Wars, the sequel to Bullfrog's action-strategy hit *Syndicate*, is scheduled for release in March 1996.

available? They looked so great, I can't wait to play them!

Sincerely,
Katherine Andrews
Palmer, IA

Glad you asked that, Katherine! The fine folks at Electronic Arts (Bullfrog's parent company) tell us Dungeon Keeper *will be out in February — turn to this issue's Scoop! section for more info on this one.* Syndicate Wars *is slated for March release;* Gene Wars *and* Indestructibles *are still just over the horizon; they're slated for release in the last quarter of 1996.*

OS Wars, Part II

Dear PC Gamer,
I recently purchased Windows 95 and I will never go back to OS/2. Windows 95 runs all my DOS games (Warp had a few it didn't like), and runs them smoother than Warp ever did. Example: On my 486DX4-100 with 8MB RAM, I can run *U.S. Navy Fighters* with every graphics option on except the textured water (which is ugly anyway!). I am very pleased with Windows 95, and looking forward to the new native Windows 95 games.

A convert,
Bob Nielsen
via AOL

Dear PC Gamer,
Your September issue's article on running DOS games under Windows 95 was pretty useful, but there is one other tactic you can try in case all else fails.

In the DOS manual, there is information on running your computer in multiple memory configurations. What you do with this is create two configurations in your new CONFIG.SYS and AUTOEXEC.BAT files, one for Windows 95, and one for DOS. The Windows 95 configuration will just be default Windows 95 config, but the DOS config should be a newly created configuration, copied from the CONFIG.DOS and AUTOEXEC.DOS files Win 95 created when it was installed (check out your DOS manual for instructions on creating multiple configurations).

To try out your new configuration, reboot the computer. Just after the Win 95 title screen, you should see a menu asking you to choose a configuration. Move the cursor to the DOS configuration, press F8 to turn step-by-step confirmation on, and press ENTER. As you step through your configuration files, choose just the drivers and settings you need to load, and you'll find yourself at a DOS prompt with a setup very close to what you had before Win 95.

You'll have to rename your expanded memory manager and CD-ROM files to the new Win 95 names if you want to use these. I can't seem to get as much memory this way as I did with DOS, but this is the only way I could make some of my favorite games run. Try it!

Sincerely,
Tim E. Vance
via AOL

Sounds like a good last resort for those few unruly games that don't want to work with Win 95. We haven't run across any yet that wouldn't run with its own customized MS-DOS session (set up through Win 95's "Advanced Program Settings" window), but there may be a few out there that need to be tricked into thinking they're back in the days of DOS.

Straddling the Fence

Hey PCG!
I've just received my latest copy of *PC Gamer* and I began immersing myself in your fantastic magazine when I noticed something strange: almost a third of all the ads in the magazine are from SEGA or JVC or 3DO featuring PC versions of some videogames (such as *Thunder Strike* and *Need for Speed*). I couldn't help but wonder if the companies that once mocked the PC (or Mac) gaming industry are "defecting" to the PC. If so, what does it mean to the PC gamers? Will that be the end of PC gaming giants like Origin, MicroProse, Spectrum HoloByte? Or will the growing industry get a significant boost from these video gaming giants?

Sincerely,
Tim B. Wolfe
via AOL

Good eye, Tim. You're right; lots of companies better known for their video games are taking a new interest in the PC. But that's no reason to worry about your old favorites; those complex flight sims, graphic adventures, and strategy games will be around as long as there are gamers who love them. The infusion of new videogames will just mean more choices for us gamers, and that's a good *thing.* PCG

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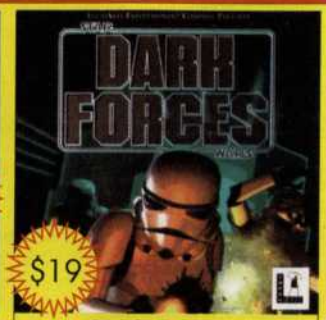

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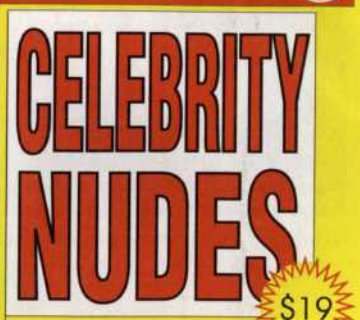

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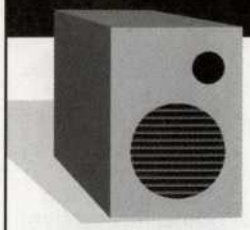

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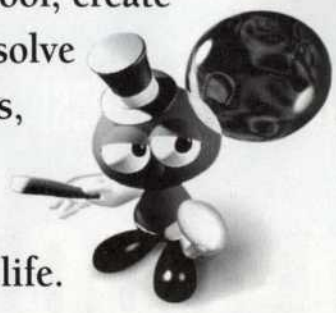

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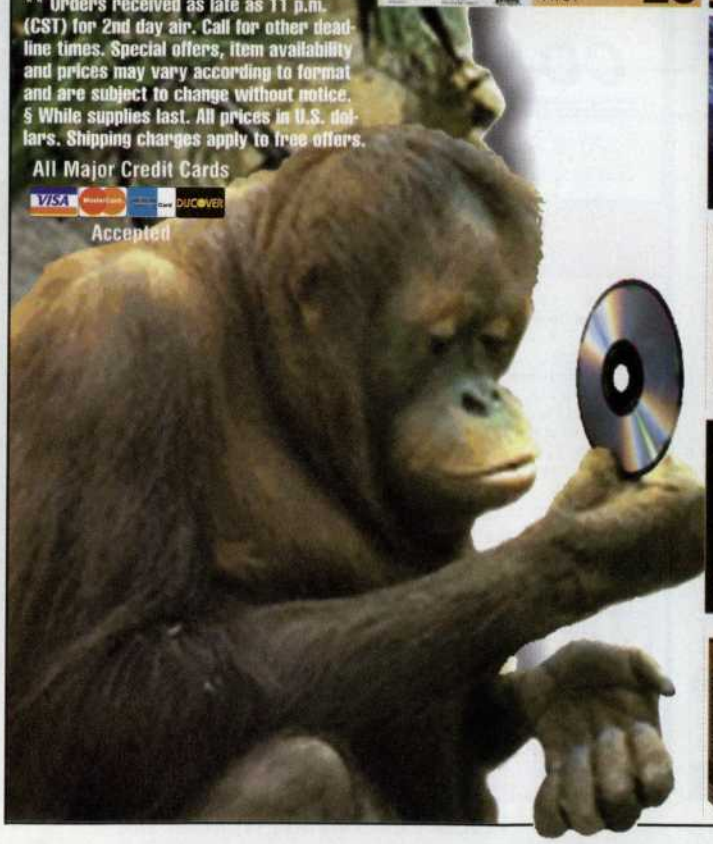

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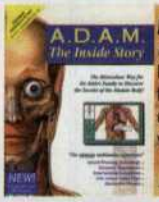

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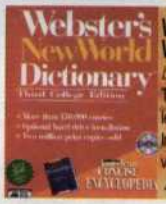

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Vol. 3 No. 2 Goes On Sale Jan. 16 Don't Miss It!

The only problem with being the world's best-selling PC games magazine is that you have to keep putting out new issues filled with new stuff. It's not easy, but we've come up with a great one for next month ...

Get Me DeNiro!

Mark Hamill returns to his role as a veteran fighter pilot in Origin's *Wing Commander IV.*

Sure, the video quality is improving, gameplay is getting better, and more and more bona fide movie stars are hopping onto the PC gaming bandwagon. But are we finally looking at the New Hollywood, or are words like "full-motion video" and "interactive movie" still the kiss of death?

The Racing Game

IndyCar II is one of the new racing sims we'll look at next month.

Not long ago, racing fans didn't have much to choose from on the PC, but times are changing faster than a Lamborghini Diablo can go from 0 to 60. Be here when sim columnist and racing aficionado Lee Buchanan takes a look at the past, present, and future of PC motor sports.

3D Video, Part II

Our coverage of the Next Big Thing in PC gaming continues, with a look at the highs and lows of the top 3D accelerator boards on the market.

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Stearns peeked his head up over the dune. The satellites were right: the terrorist base was there.

One , two ... three ... four guards walking the perimeter. There were another four inside the Army tent guarding what the free world considered the deadliest information to fall into enemy hands in decades: plans to a new satellite so powerful it can take out an entire metropolis with one blast. The Jihad made a mistake to leave the plans so poorly guarded.

And soon, the Jihad would know Stearns was back. Back with that dreaded spoon.

As darkness fell, Stearns slipped over the dune. The first guard was easy. As he sat smoking one of those nasty Cuban cigars, Stearns grabbed him from behind and snapped his neck. As much as Stearns wanted to use his grapefruit spoon, he knew it would have to wait.

The second, third and fourth guards were just as easy. Stearns moved in toward the tent. It would be simple to draw them out. He faked a cry for help, and they came running. Stearns clobbered the first guard with the butt of his CAR-15. The second and third guards went for their guns, but Stearns gunned them down and forced the fourth one to drop his gun.

Then Stearns pulled out the spoon.

TO BE CONTINUED...

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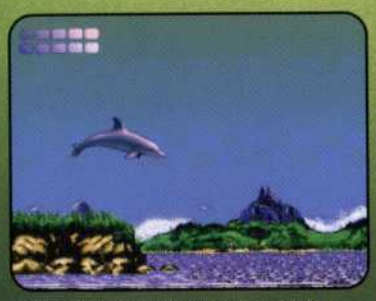

ECCO THE DOLPHIN now offers higher resolution graphics, expanded difficulty levels, added video segments and multiple control modes.

TOMCAT ALLEY has a higher video frame rate (20 frames per second), over an hour of near-VHS quality video, plus full-screen video. And, it's joystick-controllable!

*Yeah, we know "funner" isn't really a word. And "Ecco" and "Comix" aren't spelled that way. But who asked you anyway?

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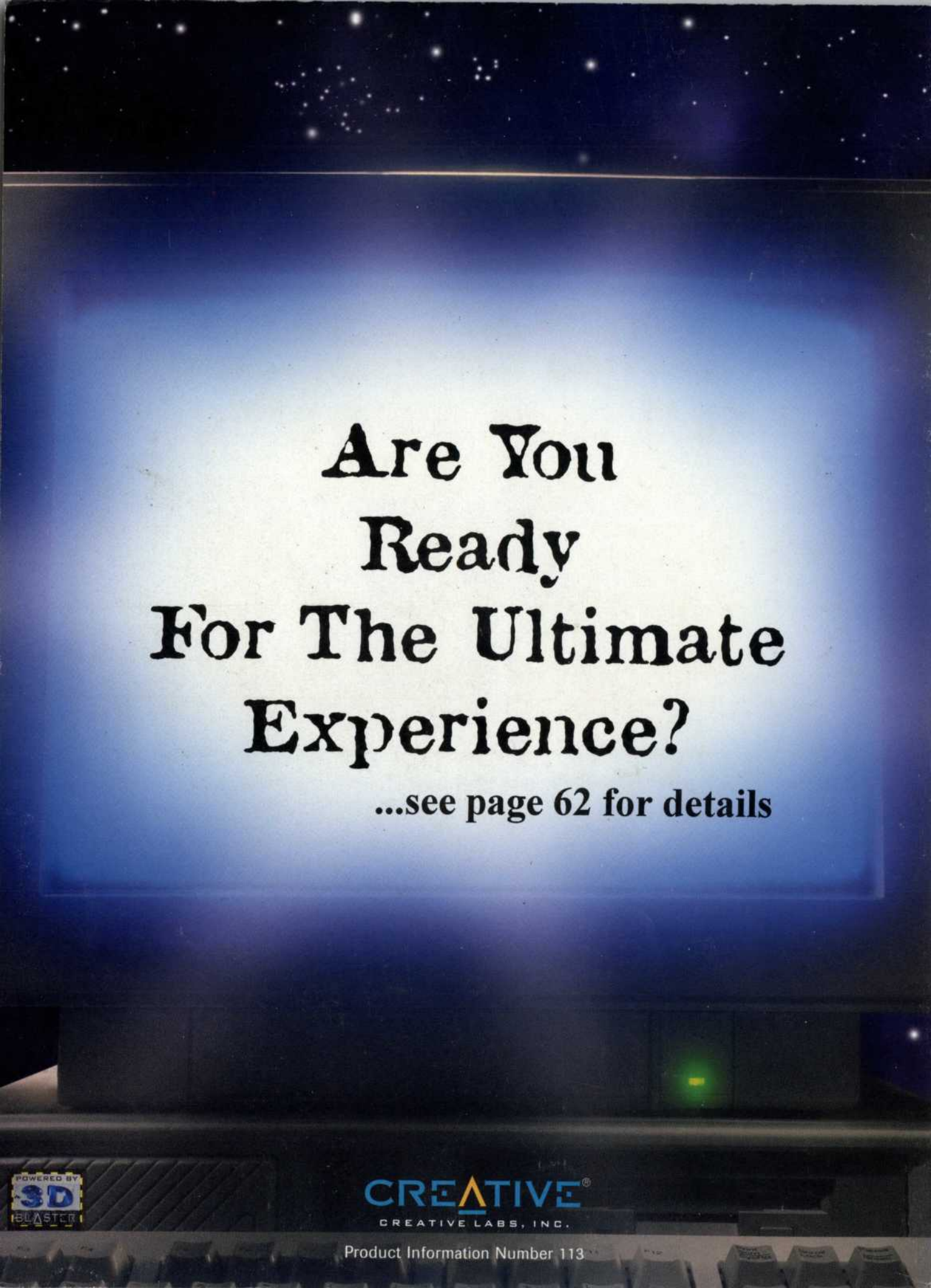
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