

PC GAMER

Solo Edition

To find out how you can get free game demos, including *Daggerfall*, turn to page 9.

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ULTIMATE STRATEGY GUIDE '97

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Cover Story

ULTIMATE STRATEGY GUIDE '97

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After the phenomenal response to last year's Ultimate Strategy Guide, we've decided to do it all again — this time, more than double the size! In our catch-all survivor's guide to the hottest games, we've got hints, cheats, solutions, strategies, and tactics for dozens of titles — everything from the definitive *Duke Nukem* codes to *Red Alert* battle tactics, and a complete *Star*

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Scoops!

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Hey, Happy New Year!

It's scary the way new years creep up on you. There I was, just settling into 1996, when BLAM! The old year is outta here, and we're ringing in a new one. I've always believed that you should start the new year in style, and we've certainly managed it this month with our second annual Ultimate Strategy Guide, nearly three times the size of the original and packed with enough hints and tips to see you safely through all the new games that Santa brought you. This, of course, is only the beginning. 1997 promises some of the most exciting developments in PC gaming yet, not least the explosion of multi-player and online gaming, and developers finally getting to grips with the proliferation of 3D acceleration technology in recent months. Some of the 3D-accelerated games we've seen have blown us away — but as is often the norm in the PC world, things will have to settle down, and some kind of standard emerge before gamers can really take the plunge and reap the benefits of these amazing new technologies. But it's going to happen, and *PC Gamer* will be there every step of the way to tell you about it. In the meantime, get stuck into this latest whopping issue while we get busy concocting some nice surprises for the next one...

Disc Pages

The PC Gamer CD

How to load, play, and get the most out of the hot games and other cool stuff on this month's demo-packed CD.



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Let the Coconuts Fall

Well, a new year is beginning, and the *PC Gamer* staff is welcoming it in with style. With so many new games coming out, we've been busier than, well—a coconut receptionist with no hands. It's been quite a chore deciding which demos should go on *The CD* and which ones would have to wait until next month. But as Coconut Monkey always says, "Don't cut the coconuts 'til you've tasted the milk." We don't fully understand it, either, but it sounds vaguely obscene coming from him, so we just smile and nod.

This month on *The CD*, you'll find plenty to whet your appetite for some serious Gaming Goodness™. Not only do we have the all-new, full-featured demo of *The Elder Scrolls: Daggerfall*, but we've got playable demos of *Syndicate Wars* and *Crusader: No Regret*. As if that weren't enough, check out the opposite page for all the other fantastic playable demos you've got access to. And don't forget the patches, add-ons, and cheats mentioned in our Ultimate Strategy Guide '97 and Tom McDonald's Extended Play column. One thing's for sure: if this lineup is any indication, 1997 is going to be a very good year.

Entering Our World

You begin in the secluded alley that leads to the hidden *PC Gamer* elevator. Move

your mouse pointer around the screen until it turns into an arrow. Click, and you'll move in the direction of the arrow.

Click on the door handle to open the elevator, then click forward to step inside. Turn around until you're facing the front of the elevator and click on the button. Connect the two loose wires.

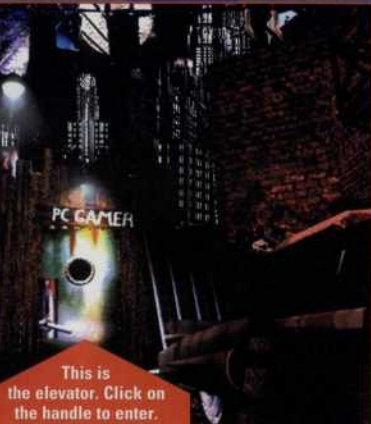
Once you're in our offices, you can move around using the mouse. To check out the game demos, click on the jukebox. When you're ready to leave, move your mouse to the top of the screen, and a menu will appear with an exit option.

Quick Start for The CD

Our front end is Windows-based, so setup couldn't be easier:

1. Insert the CD and load Windows.
2. From the RUN option (found under the File menu in Windows 3.1 or under Windows 95's Start menu) type X:SETUP (where X is the letter of your CD-ROM drive).
3. This will create the *PC Gamer* icon group. Click on the icon, and *The CD* will launch.

After you've visited our offices, this jukebox will appear in the alley. It's a shortcut that'll let you bypass the elevator and go directly to the game demos in future sessions.



This is the elevator. Click on the handle to enter.

Using the Jukebox

System Requirements

486/33; 4MB RAM; 8MB hard-drive space; Mouse (Win 3.1 users will need to be sure they've got the SHARE.EXE utility loaded)

These requirements are for loading our front end program only. Each game demo will have its own additional requirements, so be sure to read them carefully.

Click on one of the six category buttons, and the demos in that category will appear on the monitor.



Click on the name of the demo you're interested in, and you'll receive installation info.

Attention Win95 Users

The PC Gamer front end should work fine with Windows 95. To install and run some DOS game demos, you may need to reboot into a DOS session. If the videos appear as full-screen sequences, you should enter the Control Panel's Multimedia option and set it to View in Window.

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 a couple of different ways:

1. You can download demos and check out PC Gamer's new look at our World Wide Web site at <http://www.pcgamer.com> on the Internet. Our Web site also features a special Strategy Plus section, links to other hot Web pages, and gaming news.
2. You can call our Customer Service department at (415) 468-4869 (between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. PST) to have *The CD* mailed to you for only \$7.95 shipping and handling.

Disc Editors' Note

The realm of DOS commands can be tricky, so for our DOS demos, we've added a menu system that will install them for you. Simply switch to the root of the CD-ROM drive, and type "MENU." It's as simple as that. If you have any other suggestions, drop us a line at: PC Gamer CD Editors, 150 North Hill Dr., Brisbane, CA 94005 or cdhelp@pcgamer.com.

Installation Shortcuts

In the event our front end doesn't load or run properly on your machine, you can still install each demo, bypassing our front end altogether.

To manually install a demo, take a look at the Command Box located to the right. 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 your CD-ROM drive and 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 *Daggerfall* demo:

Type **CD:DFDEMO** and press Enter

Type **INSTALL.EXE** and press Enter

The demo of *Daggerfall* will then be installed on your computer.

* on chart at right = requires Windows 95. *Skullcracker*, *3D Ultra Pinball: Creep Night*, and *Monkey Command* will also run in Windows 3.1.

Contents/Manual Installation Commands

Demo	Directory	Installation Command	Disc Page
Daggerfall	DFDEMO	INSTALL.EXE	10
Syndicate Wars	SWARS	INSTALL.BAT	13
Crusader: No Regret	CRUSADER	Copy to hard drive and type RUN1ST.BAT	13
Steel Panthers 2	STEEL2	INSTALL.EXE	14
Skullcracker*	SKULL	SKULL.EXE	14
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FX Fighter Turbo*	FXDEMO	SETUP.EXE	25
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G-Nome*	GNOME	SETUP.EXE	29
Obsidian*	\	INSTALL.EXE	31
3D Ultra Pinball: Creep Night*	CNDEMO	SETUP.EXE	31
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Mplayer Software*	WPLAYER	SETUP.EXE	32
America Online*	\	AOLEXE	32

The Elder Scrolls: Daggerfall

Company: Bethesda Softworks
 Tech Support: (301) 963-2002
 Release Date: Available Now
 Category: Roleplaying Game
 Required: 486DX2/66, 8MB RAM, 40MB hard-drive
 space; VGA; Mouse
 Install: \D\FDEM\INSTALL.EXE

Many moons ago, long before the game was finished, the creators of *Daggerfall* released a tiny demo that barely hinted at the size and scope of the full game. Now, with this new demo, you can experience all the fantasy that is the world of Tamriel, from dungeon to town hall.

JUST FOR FUN

The game of *Daggerfall* is completely non-linear, which means you're not constrained to doing any one thing if you don't want to. Just for kicks, you can become a thief in the city of Betony. Wait for nightfall, then break into houses and stores either by picking the lock on the door, or simply beating it down with your fists or weapons. If you're caught, you'll have to serve time, but that's the price thieves must pay.

The demo lets you explore one island out of the entire game. On this island, you'll find a city to explore, as well as several dungeons populated by unsuspecting adventurers to wander into their lair. You can speak to the citizens of the island, steal from them, and even kill them if you wish. The world of *Daggerfall* is completely non-linear, and the demo reflects this. Do anything you like — as long as you're willing to face the consequences.

When you start the demo, you can choose to start



The default characters created for you provide a simple and easy way to get into the demo quickly.



The town of Betony has a lot to offer, including a couple nice taverns where you can quench your thirst and put your feet up.

a new game and create a new character or load one of six pre-created characters that wait for action outside Betony's city walls. The character creation system will show you how you can create the exact player you want, and even create a custom character class.

Whether you create a character or load a pre-made one, you will start on the outskirts of Betony. Start wandering by using the mouse — the default mode is Cursor Mode; the mouse cursor changes shape to indicate the direction in which you'll travel when you press the left button. By hitting the Escape key and choosing Options, you can switch from Cursor Mode to View Mode, where moving the mouse adjusts the direction you're facing, and the arrow keys move you forward and back. If neither of these modes suits you perfectly, you'll find that all the game's controls are fully configurable under the options menu.



The island of Betony is yours to explore. Go wherever you like, either by fast-traveling, or by walking (although walking will take a while).

To cast a spell, click the Spell Icon on the view bar, or hit the Backspace key. If you want to recast the same spell as last time, all you have to do is hit Q. To use a weapon, make sure your character is armed (hit the F6 key to quickly access your inventory) and press the A key to ready the weapon. Swing the weapon by holding down the right mouse button and moving the mouse. The way you move the mouse determines what kind of swing you'll execute on-screen — jab, slash, hack, etc. — so experiment for a while to find out what moves are most effective. The demo will provide you with a tutorial when you begin; follow it until you get the hang of



The dungeons you'll explore are filled with malevolent creatures, like this nasty skeleton warrior. Several swipes with your sword should take care of him.

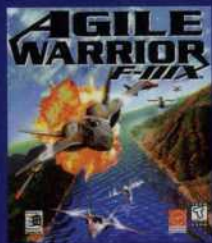


Betony is filled with townsfolk you can converse with. They'll tell you where the good shops are.

the game — there are a lot of intricacies you may miss on your own. Also, check out the *Daggerfall* section (page 126) in our Ultimate Strategy Guide feature; you'll find some tips that should serve you well during your perilous journey.



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Product Information Number 223



Crusader: No Regret

Company: Origin Systems
Tech Support: (512) 434-4357
Release Date: Available Now

Category: Action
Required: 486DX2/66; 8MB RAM; 54MB hard-drive space; SVGA; Mouse
Install: Directory must be copied to hard-drive. Then type RUN1ST.BAT. See Below.

Here's a taste of Origin's cool sequel to *Crusader: No Remorse*. An action-packed shoot-'em-up set in the future, with crisp graphics, tough opponents and tricky traps, this is a



From the game's isometric perspective, you can see all the glorious carnage and destruction in your wake.

refreshing break from the ongoing barrage of first-person titles like *Quake* and *Duke Nukem 3D*.

If you didn't play the first game, here's the rundown: you control a Silencer, a trained killer who has defected from the Consortium. The Consortium, of course, is an evil and oppressive organization that controls the world's population. To gain his freedom, the Silencer has to blast his way through levels and levels of enemy troops, using an assortment of high-powered weaponry.

Unlike in the original release of *No Remorse*, gamepads are supported right from the get-go, so you've got no excuse not to jump right in and start blasting. If you're use the keyboard and mouse, though, *No Regret's* controls vary a bit from the original's. Take a look at the control keys listed above, and be sure to peruse the README.TXT file copied to the \CRUSADER directory on your hard-drive.

FILE CONTROLS
[F2] MAIN MENU KEY
[F3] OPTION SCREEN
[F4] HELP MENU
[F5] QUICK LOAD
[F6] QUICK SAVE
[F8] LONG MENU
[F9] SAVE MENU
[ALT] [M] EXIT TO DOS
[ALT] [C] JOYSTICK CALIBRATION
[ALT] [V] INCREASE MUSIC VOLUME
[ALT] [X] INCREASE MUTE VOLUME

PLAYER INTERFACE
[Esc] FIRE'S CURRENTLY SELECTED WEAPON
[E] USES ENERGY CORE IN INVENTORY
[M] USES MEDKIT IN INVENTORY
[F] CYCLES THROUGH INVENTORY
[I] USES INVENTORY ITEM
[S] SELECTS ANY HEAVY ITEM
[C] GRABS ALL HEAVY ITEMS
[R] USES SELECTED ITEM
[TAB] [M] [2] JUMP
[C] CYCLES WEAPONS
[S] TOGGLES RADIATION SHIELD
[R] REGENERATES GET PACE AND PORTABLE BATTERIES
[V] USES VIB. TRIGGER
[M] USES MIND BOLT
[F] CENTERS SCREEN
[ALT] [V] USES DATALINK

Study up on these keyboard commands, or your Silencer may be silenced too soon.

INSTALLATION NOTES: *Crusader: No Regret* will not install directly from the CD. It's simple to install, though; just follow these steps:

Step 1: Copy the files from the \CRUSADER directory on the CD to a directory on your hard-drive. The simplest way is to use the Windows File Manager or Explorer and drag the \CRUSADER directory from the CD-ROM to your hard-drive.

Step 2: Go to the directory you created on your hard-drive and type **RUN1ST**.

Step 3: Type **REGRET** to play the game.

Syndicate Wars

Company: Electronic Arts
Tech Support: (415) 572-2787
Release Date: Available Now
Category: Action/Strategy
Required: 486DX2/66; 8MB RAM; 25MB hard-drive space; SVGA; Mouse
Install: \SWARS\INSTALL.BAT

Bullfrog returns to familiar ground with their highly anticipated sequel to the classic *Syndicate*, and murder, mayhem, and mass-destruction are all part of a day's work. In the futur-

istic world of *Syndicate Wars*, you're not some wimpy hero trying vainly to stem the tide of evil; you are evil, and you've built a powerful megacorporation by directing a squad of well-trained goons to deal with your rivals.

You'll control four cybernetically enhanced agents through an impressive 3D world you can rotate, tilt, and zoom to get the best view on the action (see control keys for details). In this demo mission, you'll need to make the most of those abilities, because your agents

have the daunting tasks of putting down a rebel uprising, capturing technology from the radical Church of the New Epoch, and persuading a rebel scientist to join your syndicate.



Control Keys

Self-Destruct Agents (ENDS MISSION WITH ALL AGENTS SELECTED)	[Alt]	[D]
Exit at Mission Failed Screen	[Esc]	[F10]
Turns Buildings Off When Held	[B]	
Zoom Out	[Page Up]	
Zoom In	[Page Down]	
Tilt Up	[Up Arrow]	
Tilt Down	[Down Arrow]	
Rotate Left	[Left Arrow]	
Rotate Right	[Right Arrow]	
Rotate Views	[F4]	[F5]
Change Resolution	[F8]	

To move your selected agents, simply point the mouse cursor where you want them go and left-click the mouse. To fire weapons, place the cursor over your target and right-click the mouse button.

Enjoy your success while it lasts; to exit this demo version, you'll have to self-destruct all of your agents and press Escape at the "Mission Failed" prompt. Good luck, and happy hunting.

Skullcracker

Company: GTE Entertainment
 Tech Support: (619) 431-4264
 Release Date: Available Now
 Category: Platform Shooter
 Required: Windows 95; Pentium; 8MB RAM; SVGA
 Install: 'SKULL\SKULL.EXE

When the dead become undead, there's nothing to do but call in specialists to take care of the situation. Such is the case with your character in *Skullcracker*. The title tells you all you need to know — the dead are starting to infest the city, and you've



You'll have to take elevators to get to the top of the building. And yes, you'll leave a trail of dead undead behind you.

got to go crack some skulls.

This one-level demo takes place on a city skyscraper that's still under construction. You'll have to watch out for

swinging I-beams and wobbly planks as well as the usual dangers from the walking dead. Some of the crows will attack, too — make sure they don't take you by surprise. Somewhere on the level is a flame-thrower that could come in really handy, but you'll have to stray from the beaten path to find it.

The demo ends when you get to the top of the building and reach the contact station. Stay alert along the way, though, or your next step could be a doozy. It may be easy to get to the top, but to do so while fending off a pack of howling werewolves is something else entirely.

When you start the demo, take a good look at the Options menu to see how the keyboard controls are set up. If you have a joystick or gamepad, the game will automatically use it as the controller.

Steel Panthers 2

Company: Strategic Simulations Inc. (SSI)
 Tech Support: (408) 737-6950
 Release Date: Available Now
 Category: Wargame
 Required: 486DX2/66; 8MB RAM; 35MB hard-drive space; VGA; Mouse
 Install: 'STEEL2\INSTALLEXE

Steel Panthers 2 looks ready to build on the success of the original *Steel Panthers*. It's a good, old-fashioned tactical wargame with lots of armored units and loads of scenarios to keep you happy. Four full scenarios are available in our demo, one of which is a tutorial that will guide you through the game's basics — especially handy if you

didn't play *Steel Panthers*.

The tutorial scenario puts you in the middle of the Gulf War. The remaining three scenarios cover some pretty varied topics: there's a Vietnam battle from 1966; an encounter between Israel and Egypt in 1967; and a speculative engagement between the Ukraine and Russia in 1998. The game is turn-based and can be played by one or two players.

The differences from the original *Steel Panthers* are many, since the sequel deals with modern military hard-



The crucial battle over Highway 1 in Vietnam is one of the scenarios included with the demo.

ware. The effects of technological superiority are much greater than in *World War Two*; the helicopter, cluster munitions, and the chain gun also provide new challenges to the modern commander. Overall, firepower is much deadlier, and lethality is extended to very long ranges, which means you'll need a whole new strategy to come out on top.

You can expect many more features in the full version of *Steel Panthers II: Modern Battles*. Since this is a demo, you cannot save games, create scenarios, generate battles, or edit scenarios.



Although concentrating mainly on the art of tank warfare, *Steel Panthers 2* spans different time periods and different forms of war.

Control Keys

IMPORTANT: If you use the hot keys during the computer opponent's turn, the scenario will end and the program will return to the main menu. Only use these during your turn (this only occurs in the demo version of *SP2*).

Next Unit		Fire at Targeted Unit	
Previous Unit		Fire at Targeted Hex	
All-Formation Command Mode		Fire Smoke at Targeted Hex	
Go to Next Formation HQ		Remove/Replace Smoke & Darkness	
Load/Unload Unit		Zoom In	
Set Range		Zoom Out	
Go to Bombardment Menu		Headquarters Menu	
Rally Active Unit		Encyclopedia	
Targeting Menu		Save Game Menu	
Weapons Control Menu		Toggle Fast Artillery On (DOES NOT TOGGLE OFF)	



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there are those who may not be so understanding.

So, if your dog suddenly makes your

keyboard his favorite chew toy or your girlfriend decides your computer looks even better at the bottom of your pool than it did on your desk, don't say we didn't warn you.

In fact, you're likely to be so captivated by the gameplay and remarkable technology of our current and

upcoming only-for-Pentium®, only-for-Windows 95™ releases, you may need to hire a bodyguard for your computer.



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- Anti-aliasing
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- Sub-pixel correction
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Product Information Number 126

Birthright

Company: Sierra
 Tech Support: (206) 644-4343
 Release Date: Available Now
 Category: Adventure
 Required: 486DX/66; 8MB RAM; 37MB hard-disk space; SVGA; Mouse; Windows 3.1 or higher
 Install: \BIRDEMO\SETUP.EXE

This demo of Sierra's latest graphic adventure is designed to give you a quick peek at the massive scale of the full game. Many of the game play features of the game could not be included in this demo. The full *Birthright* has more than 20 adventures that take place in lavishly detailed, high-res castles, temples, ruins, dungeons, and forest settings. There are hundreds of game characters with uniquely detailed, high-res animation. The battles take place in a fully immersive, 3D environment, allowing the camera to view all the action from any angle and at any distance. And the full game will even include multi-player support.

The full game also includes more than 300 megabytes of animation and texture art to present the world of Cerilia in all its medieval glory. While exploring



The full game will offer real-time battles with huge creatures of evil.

the interactive elements of the demo, be sure to left- and right-click on anything that looks like an icon or a button. The demos include a wide range of help windows that pop up to instruct you on the use of the game controls. Be sure to

click on the Force and Location icons on the game map itself. In the game, they will lead to battles and adventures; in the demo, they'll run a short battle movie and an adventure slide show, providing a brief glimpse of the full product.

Baku Baku



Company: Sega Entertainment
 Tech Support: (800) USA-SEGA (872-7342)
 Release Date: Available Now
 Category: Arcade
 Required: Windows 95; 486DX/66; 8MB RAM;
 Windows 3.1 or higher
 Install: \CNDEMO\BAKU.EXE (see Installation Notes)

Everybody's familiar with *Tetris*, right? Well, here's a game in that same vein, and it's just as addictive. *Baku Baku* started life as a very popular console game for the Sega Saturn, and it's making its debut on the PC — it's a direct port with no changes from its console incarnation.

Control Keys

PLAYER ONE

Up
 Down
 Left
 Right
 Left Rotation
 Right Rotation



As in *Tetris*, the game presents you with a series of falling blocks that you must fit into a limited vertical. But each of these blocks represents an animal or a type of food; the idea is to get match the animals up with their favorite food — the dog with the bone, the panda with the bamboo, etc. — so they'll munch away and open up space for more falling blocks. If your opponent's space fills up with blocks before yours does, you win. Pretty simple, no?

Obviously, it's best to group food blocks of the same type. When the right animal touches any one of the blocks in the group, all of them will be eliminated. The greater the number of blocks you eliminate in a single shot, the more



The Tetris-style gameplay is so simple, you may find yourself saying "just one more game."

extra blocks will drop down on your opponent's side.

INSTALLATION NOTE: For *Baku Baku* to run properly, you must have the **DMIX.DLL** and **DINO2D.DLL** files copied to the **WINDOWSSYSTEM** directory on your hard drive. These two DLL files are in the **BAKU** directory on *The CD*.

Assassin

2015



Company: Inscape
Tech Support: (800) 741-3043
Release Date: Available Now
Category: First-person shooter
Required: Windows 95; 486DX2/66; 16MB RAM;
 10MB hard-drive space; VGA; Mouse
Install: ASSASSIN\INSTALL\INSTALL.EXE

Here's a unique first-person shooter from Inscape, who have brought us *The Residents: Bad Day on the Midway* and other odd multimedia treats. This new venue for shooting up evil-doers presents a futuristic, *Blade Runner*-style society — dark, but technologically advanced. You have one goal: locate and kill the leaders of a project that threatens the world.

Along with a battle-suit to protect your sensitive skin, you have one weapon, the CV-227 Accelerated Neutron Rifle, equipped with a Plasma Grenade Launcher. This is a heavy-duty weapon capable of taking out any obstacle you might encounter. All of this equipment automatically recharges, so you don't have to run around searching for weapons, ammo, or medi-kits. Don't be afraid to use your weapon constantly — it's the only thing keeping you from a quick and painful death.

You get around in the game by taking directions from your assistant (who's hovering around in nearby craft). The assistant's voice comes from none other than actress Adrienne Barbeau; you might remember her from top-notch B-movies like *Escape From New York* and *Swamp Thing*. Pay attention to her instructions, or risk getting lost and taking unnecessary damage.



Your assistant, Jett Jones, is constantly updating you with directions. Lots of 3D animation scenes like this convey the link between you and your assistant.

Mpath Mplayer



Tech Support: (408) 342-8844
Required: Windows 95; 486/100MHz; 8MB RAM;
 3MB hard-drive space; SVGA; Mouse; 14.4Kbps or
 higher modem; Internet service provider account
Install: \MPATHSETUP.EXE

Although still in its testing stages, Mpath's Mplayer promises online gaming at its best. With features like real voice transmission between players in chat rooms — and some of today's hottest games, like *Warcraft*, *MechWarrior 2*, and *Quake*, it'll blow your modem apart if you're not careful.

To connect to the service, you'll have to have an existing Internet provider; because of the way they access the Internet, providers such as America Online, GNN, and Prodigy will not work with Mplayer. If you don't have a direct Internet service provider (ISP), you might choose to sign up with PSINet — the introductory software is provided with Mplayer on *The CD*. Install the software, use your ISP to download the programs that make your games compatible with

Mplayer, and then set up a new account with the Mplayer service.

Because the service is still in its beta testing stage, Mpath is not charging any fees. The drawback is that huge updates to the software will occasionally have to be downloaded, and there will be times when the service isn't available. But a sneak preview of all this gaming goodness is worth a little extra hassle.



After you install the Mplayer software, it will launch your web browser and surf to the Mpath site, where you can complete your sign-up.

Chessmaster Network

Company: Mindscape
Tech Support: (415) 898-5157
Release Date: Available Now
Category: Chess Sim
Required: 486DX/66; 8MB RAM; 4MB hard-drive
 space; SVGA; Mouse; 14.4Kbps modem or faster
Install: \CMASTERC\MINSTALEXE

Mindscape is currently supporting a web site called *The Chessmaster Network* (www.chessmaster-network.com). The site contains some chess news, a calendar of upcoming events, and info on *Chessmaster 5000* (commonly referred to as *CM 5000*). But the coolest thing about this site is that it lets you play head-to-head over the Internet with a graphic chess board display.

To use this software, you must have Windows 95 and a 32-bit TCP/IP stack for your Internet connection. You barely have to do more than click on a button, and you'll be online and ready to play. Even more amazing, you don't need the *CM 5000* program! We've supplied you with the latest version of the program at press time on *The CD* (but you may want to check the web site for an updated version).

Once connected, the software can be used to chat with other players. You can even do this while you play. You can input information about yourself and

where you feel your chess abilities lie (between Novice or Grandmaster), and it'll be displayed online. This information determines what kind of competition you'll get, so if you want a challenge — but don't want to be blown out of the water — be honest. You can select from a wide range of time limits for the game, and you can even watch other players' games in progress.

Playing the game requires only that you know the basic rules of chess. Use the mouse to make your moves — click and drag a unit to place it on the board. If it's an illegal move, the computer won't let you do it. It's as simple as that. If you enjoy chess and meet the minimum system requirements, you owe it to yourself to check this site out!



The Chessmaster Online software is incredibly simple to use.

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EMPIRE'S
DARKEST
HOUR

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Product Information Number 160

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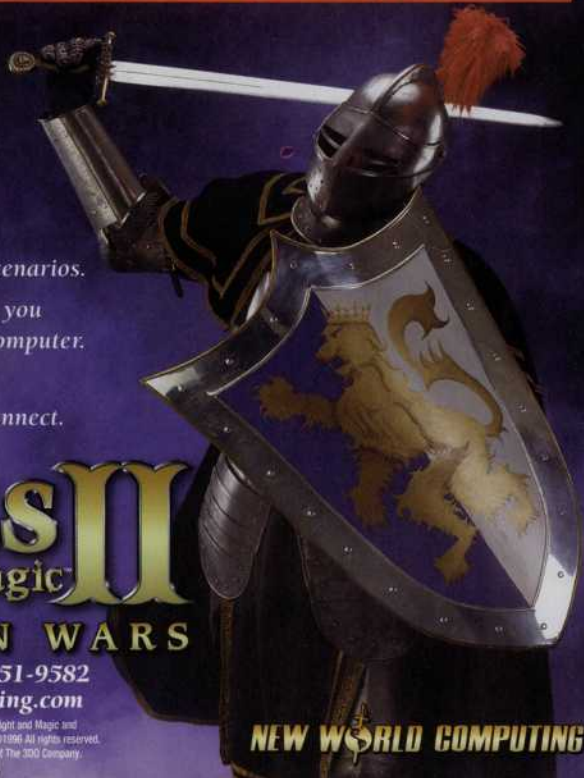
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Product Information Number 251



NEW WORLD COMPUTING®

SWIV 3D

Company: Sales Curve Interactive
 Tech Support: techsupport@sci.co.uk
 Release Date: Available Now
 Category: Action
 Required: Pentium, 8MB RAM, 13MB HD, SVGA
 Install: 'SWIV-DOS\INST.BAT (For DOS)' or
 INSTALL.EXE (for Windows 95)

Years ago, *SWIV* was a popular arcade shoot-em-up. Regarded by many as a classic, it has now been redone in a completely 3D environment, and players can now trounce the enemy in helicopter, buggy, skidoo, and hover ship.

The demo contains a taste of the 3D mayhem promised in the full version. Only the helicopter is available, but there are so many things to blow up, you'll have your hands full. Take a look at the box to get a grip on the controls. They are very similar to those in other shooters, but we've found that *SWIV* takes a bit more precision. Keep an eye on your radar — it'll warn you of any incoming enemy ships and let you know if you're about to wander over a hill into a nest of missile silos. When you start the demo, you'll only have your main gun, but you'll find other weapons on the battlefield, and you can pick them up by simply flying over them. Even during pickup, you can move, so keep your eyes peeled in case you need to make a quick get-away. You'll also come across health packs and stronger shields to help you stay airborne. Needless to say, your objective is to destroy the enemy. Be warned — it's a lot harder than it sounds.

While you're playing, be sure to keep an eye on the compass at the top left corner of the screen. It will point you in the direction of your next objective, so you'll always know when you've still got some work to do. The demo contains two levels using just the helicopter. The full version will have a jeep, skidoo, and hover ship as well. Good luck.

Control Keys

Fly Forward



Fly Back



Turn Right



Turn Left



Bank Right



Bank Left



Fire Standard Weapon



Fire Special Weapons



Lock Strafe



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Product Information Number 306

GEX

Company: Microsoft Inc.
 Tech Support: (206) 637-9306
 Release Date: Available Now
 Category: Action
 Required: Windows 95; Pentium 75; 8MB RAM;
 10MB hard-drive space; SVGA
 Install: \GEX\LOADER.EXE

Every good platform game has to have a lovable mascot who saves the day. Microsoft knows this, and that's why its new action hero is a cute little gecko with attitude.

Because of his special nature, GEX can do some amazing things. His main focus, however, is the recovery of the remote control unit hidden in each level. You see, he's been trapped in the Media Dimension by the evil Raz. Raz wants GEX to become the new network mascot. GEX has other ideas, though, and he needs those remote controls to turn off the TVs that are holding him captive. Okay, it's a far-fetched story, but aren't those the best?

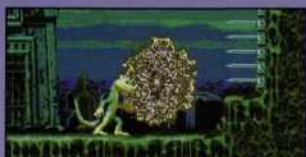
GEX will have to battle all sorts of opposition, from walking zombies to floating TV bombs. A flip of his tail should be enough to ward most of them off. GEX can also climb walls and ceiling,



GEX will have to face these gecko Frankenstein's Monster wanna-bes if he's going to get out of the Media Dimension.

ings, and in some areas you'll find yourself crawling around the background wall. Watch for pools of acid and spiked walls, though — they'll take a whole life from you in one go!

You can play the game with the keyboard, but we recommend using a gamepad if you've got one. It is an arcade game, after all. The controls are completely configurable — simply pull down the Options menu to change them (or to find out what the current settings are).



These secret portals will lead you to bonus levels. They aren't easy to find, though, so keep your eyes open.

Screamer 2

Company: Virgin Interactive Entertainment
 Tech Support: (714) 833-1999
 Release Date: Available Now
 Category: Arcade Racing
 Required: Pentium; 8MB RAM; 13MB hard-drive space; VGA
 Install: \VINSTALL.BAT

In 1995, Virgin gave us *Screamer*, an entertaining little arcade racer that didn't take itself too seriously. Now, its sequel finally arrives with the same light-hearted attitude, and it does an even better job of bringing the feeling of breakneck speed to your PC screen.

The demo gives you a tempting taste of the full game. Racing in England



Your car, the Condor, has a lot of power. Don't keep your foot in the go-juice, or you'll lose control.

with the Condor car at your disposal, you'll soon see where the game has changed for the better. The world has become fully three-dimensional, and the

car you drive can easily catch some big air over those sharp bumps. Making corners cleanly will be tricky — you've got to power-slide through them the way the real racers do — so make sure you know how to use the gas and the brake in combination. You certainly won't get anywhere fast by flooring it the whole time.

We recommend using a joystick with this one — or a steering controller, if you've got one. The analog input of a joystick gives you a better degree of control than you'll get from a keyboard or gamepad. Whatever option you choose, you can configure the controls to suit your tastes when you set up the game. Take a look at the box for some of the other keyboard commands that effect the game. You can expect a whole lot more action in the final version, such as championship races, bigger and better tracks, and some of the most stupendous high-resolution graphics around. Of course, it wouldn't be complete without one of the keys to Gaming Goodness:™ network and modem play.

Control Keys

Full Screen View

F1

Inside Cockpit/Dashboard View

F2

Outside Car/Hood View

F3

Elevated Chase View

F4

Toggle Rear View Mirror On/Off

M

"In Game" Options Menu

ESC



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Product Information Number 97

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Product Information Number 122

Rex Blade

Company: Simon and Schuster
 Tech Support: (303) 339-7114
 Release Date: Available Now
 Category: First-Person Shooter
 Required: Pentium 75, 16MB RAM; 15MB
 hard-drive space; VGA
 Install: VREXBLADE\INSTALL.BAT

First-person shooters have come a long way since *Doom*, incorporating not only lots of bloodshed and firepower, but new tricks, traps, and puzzles to solve. *Rex Blade* takes the first-person shooter formula and adds dozens of its own inventions.

The story is never terribly important



Find one of these terminals, and you can hack into the Cyborg computer system.



The Cyborgs are vicious creatures, but they blow up really well when you fill 'em full of lead.



The computers aren't as easy to use as your PC; you'll have to figure out some passwords.

in games like this, but at least *Rex Blade's* is interesting. The time is the 31st century, and after a long and bloody war between the human race and a race of Cyborgs, peace is reached by exiling the Cyborgs to a galaxy far away via a trans-dimensional device. Now, 500 years after their exile, human scientists have discovered that the Cyborgs want to come back. To thwart their evil plan, the humans send Rex Blade, a mechanical monstrosity that fought on the human side in the old war, to destroy the Cyborgs completely.

You, of course, play *Rex Blade*. Take a look at the control keys to learn how to use your mechanical shell and fight those Cyborgs. You'll probably want to get rid of the heads-up displays (HUDs) as soon as possible—they can take up valuable screen real estate, and the information they convey is always available at the press of a button. To shut them off, press F6 for all of them, or press F1-F5 to toggle them off individually.

As you wander the Cyborg complex, keep an eye out for any computer terminals. By hacking into the system, you can learn about the Cyborgs. If you can figure out the terminal's passwords, you can play mini-games on them as well. The full version of the game will come with its own programming language, called REX++, that will allow you to program your own games for the terminals in *Rex Blade*. Talk about original!

Control Keys

Display Control Panel



Rotate Left



Rotate Right



Move Forward



Move Backward



Enable Strafing



Inspect/Use Object



Fire Weapon



Jump Up



Crouch Down



Select Previous Weapon in Arsenal



Select Next Weapon in Arsenal



Toggle System HUD



Toggle Bio-Stats HUD



Toggle WETWARE HUD



Toggle Weapon Display HUD



Toggle Ammunition stores HUD



Toggle All HUDS



Scroll Down WETWARE



Scroll Up WETWARE



Toggle Current WETWARE



Goodness
 reflects
 the light; and
 evil, bears the
 seed of all
 darkness





Koala Lumpur: Journey to the Edge™
The fur files 2/97



Using the remote controlled missiles is a good way to get a bead on the enemy, but it's also a good way to scout the area around him.

G-Nome



Company: 7th Level
 Tech Support: (214) 498-8060
 Release Date: Available Now
 Category: Action
 Required: Windows 95; Pentium 90; 16MB RAM;
 25MB hard-drive space; SVGA
 Install: \GNOMESETUP.EXE

Stompin' around in a giant mechanized machine is simply too good to pass up. So 7th Level has created a fearsome game that puts you in the commander's seat of a powerful machine of death.

The vehicles in this game are known as HAWCs, which stands for Heavily Armored Weapons Chassis. The name fits beautifully — these machines carry enough firepower to take out a few city blocks, not to mention enough armor to

Control Keys

Fire Weapons on Mounts 1-6	1-6
Increase Speed	↑
Decrease Speed	↓
Turn Left	←
Turn Right	→
Look Up	↑
Look Down	↓
Center Torso	↑ ↓
Target Next HAWC	Tab
Eject From HAWC	Esc

make them nearly impenetrable.

The demo contains a training mission as well as a full-fledged battle mission. Expect quite a few differences from anything you might have seen before: for example, you can actually leave your HAWC in the middle of battle, use your Gas Assault Shock Rifle (GASHER) to force the enemy out of his own HAWC, and take it over. And don't forget to try out the multi-player options available!

Take a look below for some of the important controls necessary to pilot your HAWC. For more detailed information, read the README.TXT file in the \7THLEVEL\GNOME directory created on your hard-drive when the demo is installed.

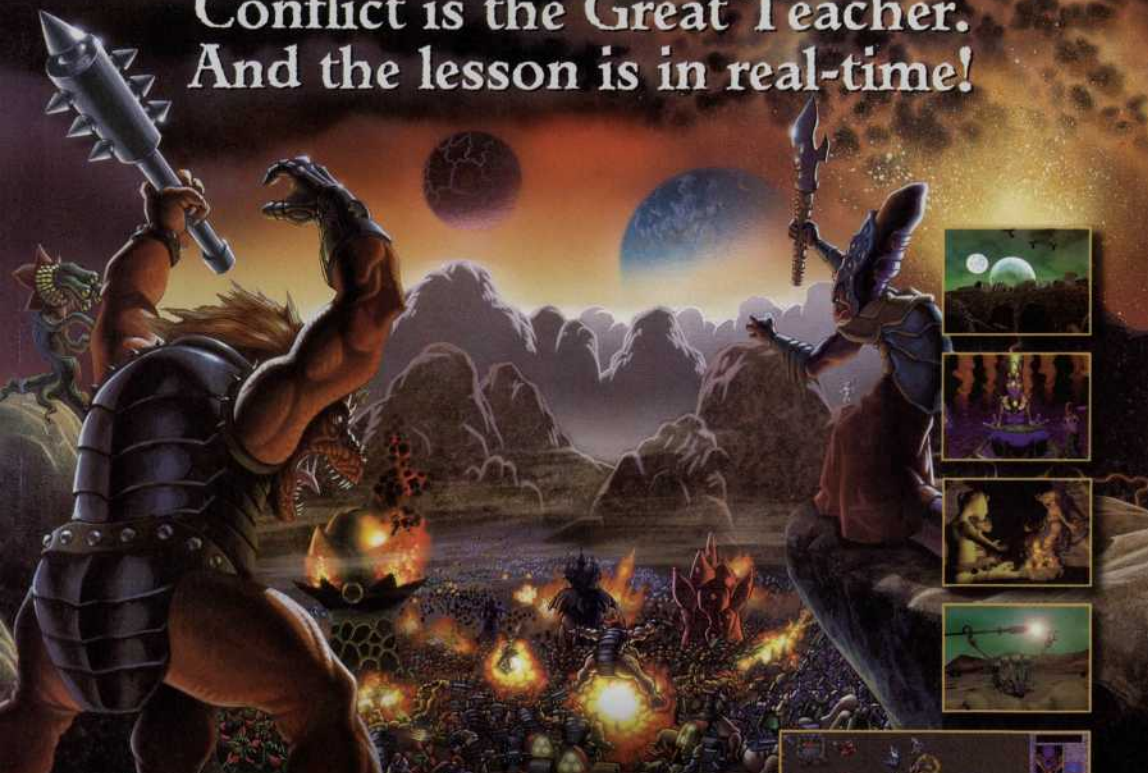


When you eject from your HAWC, you'll see the world from a completely different perspective. Use your GASHER to get into another HAWC, quick!

Look to the spirit, for there lies the battleground...

WAR WIND™

Conflict is the Great Teacher.
And the lesson is in real-time!



The ancient, alien world of Yavaun teeters on the brink of anarchy. For centuries, 4 diverse races have tolerated a precarious balance of power. But a new order is in the wind... one born of blood and fire!



This real-time strategy game lets you carry your 8 favorite units from scenario to scenario.



Advanced combat options include stealth movement and bio-mechanically enhanced units.



Play solitaire or choose multi-player and head-to-head play via network and modem.



Online tutorial and pop-up windows help you learn the game quickly.



256-COLOR SVGA DISPLAYS. WINDOWS® 95 CD-ROM



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www.warwind.com



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Obsidian



Company: SegaSoft
 Tech Support: (916) 939-1008
 Release Date: Available Now
 Category: Graphic Adventure/Puzzle
 Required: Windows 95; Pentium; 8MB RAM; 16-bit SVGA; Mouse
 Install: \UNSTALL.EXE



Solving the clock puzzle is as simple as making sure the sun, moon, and Earth don't collide.

In the future, when mankind's hope rests in the ability of science to solve the problems he has created, two scientists discover nanotechnology that would eliminate the world's pollution. After the successful launch of the Ceres probe that will distribute the tiny micro-machines, the two scientists, Lilah and Max, take a vacation in one of the world's last known wildernesses. When a small obsidian rock turns into a giant monolith, it's only the beginning of the strangeness.

The player takes the role of Lilah, working to save her friend and partner Max from something unknown and very dangerous. It could be that the fate of humanity rests in Lilah's ability to uncover the secrets of Obsidian — which means thus the responsibility's on *your* shoulders.

Anyone familiar with graphic adventures should have no problem figuring out how to play *Obsidian*. Using the mouse to control your actions, simply click when the arrow points where you want to go, and use the cursor to manipulate objects you come across. If you can move an object, the diamond-shaped cursor will be solid white. When an object cannot be moved, it will appear hollow.

This demo introduces you to the world of *Obsidian* with a single puzzle. When you start the demo, click on the television to see a sample of the game's full-motion video. Then move behind the booth, and you'll discover the clock puzzle you must solve. We'll leave it to you to figure out how to get the clocks running again.

3D Ultra Pinball: Creep Night

Company: Sierra
 Tech Support: (206) 644-6343
 Release Date: Available Now
 Category: Pinball
 Required: 486/33; 8MB RAM; VGA; Windows 3.1 or higher
 Install: \CNDEMO\SETUP.EXE

Sierra's sequel to the best-selling *3D Ultra Pinball* takes you into a world of spooky horrors on three new tables. Our CD features a five-minute playable demo of the game.

As the name suggests, *3D Ultra Pinball: Creep Night* has a creepy theme with haunted-castle trappings. To give you an idea of how large the table is, there are seven flippers and two mini-tables on either side of the main table. Ghosts will pop up now and then to guide the ball to different places; there are goblins, too, and even a wraith who might steal the ball. There are enough bells and whistles on the table to keep any pinball wizard happy.

The flipper control and ball physics

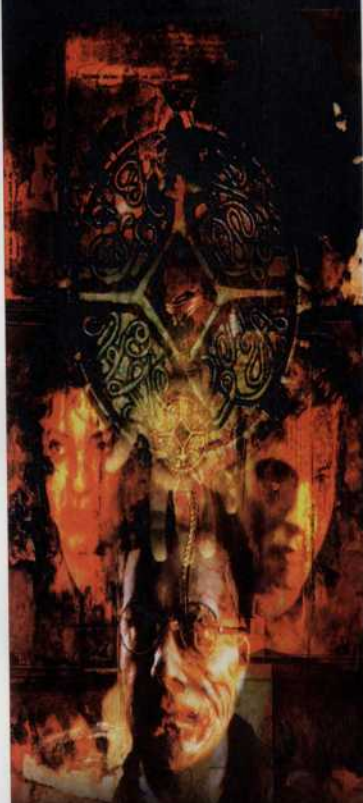


The wide table design gives you plenty of action while allowing you to see the entire table without having to scroll up and down.

are excellent. After five minutes of play, you may find yourself restarting this demo over and over.

The system requirements are very easy to meet. If you are using Windows 3.1 however, you will need to copy a couple of additional files onto your hard drive. Copy the DSOUND.DLL and DSOUND.INI files from the \CNDEMO\UPB2DEMO\WIN31 directory on *The CD* to your WINDOWS\SYSTEM directory, and the demo should work just fine.

CHOOSE WELL.



Realms of the Haunting

Coming February for PC CD-ROM

Interplay
BY GAMERS. FOR GAMERS.™



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FX Fighter Turbo



Company: GTE Entertainment
 Tech Support: (619) 431-4264
 Release Date: Available Now
 Category: Arcade/Action
 Required: Windows 95; Pentium; 8MB RAM;
 10MB hard-drive space; SVGA
 Install: \FXDEMO\SETUP.EXE

It was one of the first really good fighting games to make it to the PC — certainly the first 3D fighter. Now, after a facelift and a few new characters, it's back, and *FX Fighter Turbo* has all the

Control Keys

PLAYER ONE:

Attack



Jump



Punch



Retreat



Duck



Kick



action and thrills that made the original so great.

The demo lets you play as Jake or Kwondo. Each has his own special abilities and moves. For details on some of the special moves, take a look at the file *MOVEDEMO.DOC* in the *FXDEMO* directory on *The CD*. Also, take a quick gander at the keyboard commands in the box to the left, so you'll know what to expect when you play — but keep in mind that if you have a gamepad or joystick plugged into your computer, the demo will use it as the default control device.

For slower machines, it's possible to adjust the speed of the game by turning off some of the visual details. Choose Options from the main menu, and you'll be able to adjust the graphics. Speeding the game up could be as easy as turning



The whole cast of *FX Fighter* is back, with two new additions to rock the fight.

off some of the textures or eliminating the background of the arena. You may not see as much as if you had a high-end Pentium machine, but it'll be more fun.

The full version of *FX Fighter Turbo* contains two new characters; plus new combo and bloodlust moves for all the fighters. And you can expect network and modem play, too, so you can battle your buddy in the office or on the other side of town.

Ecstatica 2



Company: Psygnosis
 Tech Support: (415) 655-5683
 Release Date: Available Now
 Category: Adventure/Action
 Required: Windows 95; Pentium; 8MB RAM;
 15MB hard-drive space; SVGA
 Install: \E2DEMO\ECSTATIC.EXE

After defeating the demonic horde in *Ecstatica*, you go return to your home castle only to find it infested with more of the evil you've already fought. Not only are you defending the innocent in the sequel; this time around, you're protecting your loved ones!

Continuing the exciting three-

dimensional action gaming experience, Psygnosis brings us their follow-up to one of the most underrated graphic adventures in PC gaming. With its unique 3D characters, built from ellipsoids rather than the traditional polygons, *Ecstatica 2* has enough smooth action and fighting excitement to appeal to the most discerning gamer.

To play the game, use the cursor keys to direct movement — the up arrow



Adding a ton more ellipsoids to *Ecstatica 2* means much sharper detail in the game.

moves forward, the down key backward, and the side keys rotate your character. To perform actions, use the cursor keys in conjunction with the Alt and Control keys. To attack, hold down the Control key and press an arrow key. The Alt key

performs other actions; for example, to roll backwards, press the Alt key and the down arrow key. Experiment a little, and you'll figure out exactly which key combinations yield each of your character's many actions. To examine or pick up an object, press the spacebar. Press the Shift key to jump long distances.

Ecstatica 2 puts many more ellipsoids on the screen than the first game did, and you can see the difference in detail on-screen. With the eerie surroundings, the dead and broken bodies strewn about the palace, and the sheer viciousness of the monsters you'll face, it might be a good idea to play this game in the safety of full daylight.

Having Problems?

We cannot provide technical support for problems you may encounter with the demos on *The CD*. Please use the tech support numbers listed with the demos. *The CD* is rigorously tested by the *PC Gamer* staff and certified virus-free. *PC Gamer* cannot be held responsible for any incompatibility problems caused by the use of *The CD*. However, should your copy fail to run, with error messages that indicate your CD drive cannot read the disc, return it to the following address: PC Gamer Customer Service, The Jan. CD 2.12 Replacement, 150 North Hill Dr., Brisbane, CA 94005. Please indicate any error message you receive.



Evil demons have taken over your home castle. It's time to clean house!

HINT

At one point in the demo, several creatures will gang up on you. When it happens, try to get your back against a wall. You'll be harder to kill if they can't surround you.

**DO OVERWEIGHT MEN IN LITTLE
PINK TUTUS EXCITE YOU?
ARE SADISTIC CLOWNS YOUR
IDEA OF A GOOD TIME?**

?

**DO YOU THINK SHEEP ARE
KINDA SEXY? ESPECIALLY WHEN
THEY'RE DOLLED UP IN HEELS
AND FORM-FITTING LATEX?**

Toonstruck is a new twist on twisted. No computer gamer will want to be deprived of this depravity. Not when they can watch Spike the Clown torture balloon animals. See Seedy, the tu-tu clad bartender, do a little butt bowling. And



prevent an all-out war between the cartoon forces of good and evil.

Toonstruck blends live action (starring Christopher Lloyd) with wild animation for some of the most bizarre puzzle-



based adventure gameplay ever. Toonstruck is dark, weird and has more twists and turns than your lower intestine. So go ahead. Punch out a clown. Flush fish.

**HEY W
YOUR GAME H
TOONS**



WEIRD.
AS ARRIVED.
TRUCK.



TOONSTRUCK

"...hilarious cartoon quality animation and an absolutely bizarre world make Toonstruck



an adventure game unlike any we've seen. The all-over-the-board humor is delicious," says COMPUTER GAMING WORLD. "The twisted realms of this adult cartoon adventure (has)...all the elements of a great game: beautiful graphics, challenging puzzles, outrageous humor and good ol' star power," says PC GAMES. Finally, "A must see" from COMPUTER GAME REVIEW. We are sure you'll agree.

Weirdo.



Product Information Number 345

www.vie.com

PC CD-ROM

Hexen II

The Serpent Riders shall return...

Take the impressive Quake engine and give it to those fantasy fanatics over at Raven Software, and what do you get? Well, just take a look...

—Jason Bates

Raven Software was founded in 1988 by brothers Brian and Steve Raffen, and the company has made a name for itself not only for its first-person action games *Heretic* and *Hexen*, but also for its early RPGs, *Black Crypt* and *Shadowcaster*. Raven's close partnership with id Software has also been fruitful, and now that *Quake* is out there, it's only natural that Raven Software would be the first to license the engine and create its own game around it.

Hexen II will use the *Quake* engine, and everything that was in *Quake* will show up in *Hexen II*: built-in TCP/IP play, 16-player network games, true 3D architecture, and deadly quick frame rates. But *Hexen II* will not be just *Quake* with *Orcs*: there will be different character classes, characters will have stats and go up in levels, and Raven's striving for a real world, interactive type of environment. And just look at the screen shots...



The warrior from *Hexen* becomes a paladin in the sequel.

Though Raven's been planning a *Quake* engine game ever since *Hexen*, it took the team a while to get the code from id, as John Carmack continued to polish and perfect the engine. "So we've really only been developing since May [of 1996]," says Brian Raffen.

"We've been kind of hindered a bit by the length of time it has taken to get the code from id, so we don't have as much time as we did with *Hexen* to change the code too much. Plus, Carmack's done such a great job with the engine, there's not as much room for change — although we are changing a lot of things," he says.

"We changed the editor quite a bit, and the way we're doing creatures is different — we're texture mapping them differently, hopefully more effectively," Raffen says. "Also our palette is going to be different, not everything so brown and grey." You'll also be able to crouch and fly.

F.Y.I. FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Game: *Hexen II*
Developer: Raven Software
Publisher: To be determined
Projected Price: To be announced
Percentage Complete: 50%

In a nutshell:

Four character classes, ten character levels, a host of new weapons, monsters, and four distinct worlds will make this the richest Raven game yet.

What's so special?

Raven has always worked closely with id Software, modifying the *Doom* engine to create its own style of fantasy action games with *Heretic* and *Hexen*. Now Raven has done the same with *Hexen II*, this time using the *Quake* engine. And you can see the difference — just look at these early screen shots.

Why should I care?

Fans of games such as *Quake* and *Duke* as well as RPGs like *Daggerfall* should pay attention to this one, as the two genres continue to blur.

And when's it coming out?

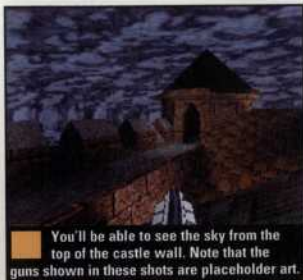
Summer 1997



A torture rack! If the rest of the game is this cool, waiting for it will be agony.



Besides a medieval region, there will also be Egyptian, Roman, and Meso-American hubs.



You'll be able to see the sky from the top of the castle wall. Note that the guns shown in these shots are placeholder art.

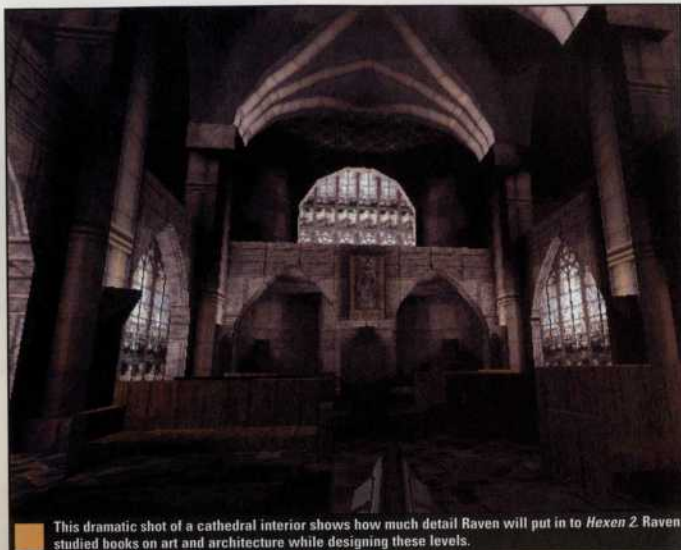
None of the creatures have been rendered yet, and there are only some early concept sketches of the characters at this point. But the creatures will be fantasy-oriented, tied to some of the game's specific environments, including another Serpent Rider. "We really want to concentrate on creature AI," adds Raffel, "Even more so than before."

Players will be able to choose from four classes: Paladin, Cleric, Necromancer, and Assassin. Each class will have five different weapons, different spells, and different attack rates, and each will have two to three special abilities. The Tome of Power from *Heretic* will also return, giving added attacks to all the weapons.

Clerics and Paladins will be able to heal themselves, though the Paladin is more of a warrior, and the Cleric is more magic-oriented. The Necromancer will be able to kill certain creatures and siphon their souls, gaining mana and health. And the Assassin will be able to do things like backstab creatures, hide in shadows, or deliver critical hits, and may even have some poison to use. But he won't be able to pick locks on doors. "We thought about that," says Raffel, "But we felt that the Assassin would rather hide in shadows, back stab, move silently, etc., and it would be hard to interface, and could create some game design issues."

But classes aren't the only element borrowed from RPGs; ability scores and character levels will be added as well. By going up in levels, you'll be able to attack more frequently and are more likely to hit your opponent. You'll get more proficient with your abilities as well. "We're also trying to add a stat page, so you can look at what your character's wearing, and what their current abilities are, and what level they are," says Raffel. You can go up to ten levels. Your hit points increase along with your speed, armor ability, and the amount of damage you can do.

All this sounds reminiscent of a roleplaying game, but *Hexen II* is primarily an action title. So why is Raven adding RPG elements at all? "It makes it a lot more rewarding for the player, instead of just finishing a level and moving on, you gain other benefits as well," says Raffel. "We're trying not to make it too cumbersome where you're stopping and looking at your stats for every little detail, but it's definitely



This dramatic shot of a cathedral interior shows how much detail Raven will put in to *Hexen 2*. Raven studied books on art and architecture while designing these levels.



A concept sketch for a character in *Hexen II*. No monsters have been rendered yet.

something you'll notice as you're playing: that you're getting stronger, and things like that."

But there will be no conversations with NPCs or shopping for weapons, as was done in *Strife* and Raven's other RPGs. "We're going to stay away from that," says Raffel. "There will be a town, but it's not a place where you buy weapons or things like that."

Instead, the lands are deserted because the inhabitants were victims of the wrath of the Serpent Kings.

"Adding RPG elements will make it a lot more rewarding for the player. Instead of just finishing a level, you gain other benefits."

— BRAIN RAFFEL,
GAME DESIGNER

The levels look fantastic. The colors are bright and varied, and the architecture is based on real buildings. "We've been doing a lot of research," says Raffel, "We went out and bought about 50 books on different areas that we're going to have exploring in." Besides the medieval castle environment, there will be an Egyptian, Roman, and Meso-American area. The architecture is all going to reflect that era as well, so you can definitely tell you're in a different area, not just a place with different textures.

"We're also trying to make the environment as rich as possible and as real possible, so if you're in a castle, you're actually seeing a blacksmith's shop, an inn, or a tailor shop." Brian Raffel's cathedral (pictured on these pages) is one of the most impressive structures we've yet seen in a game. "It was the first one I did," he says. "It was something I always wanted to do. I also did that first level of *Hexen*; I just kind



In the deserted towns, you will find market stalls and other evidence of daily life.

of have a thing for church-type things."

You'll also be able to do a lot more to interact with your environment: breaking the stained glass, pushing chairs and barrels around, climbing on tables, and chopping down doors.

"We're trying to make the puzzles more visual," says Raffel, "and less 'Hit this button here and this door opens over there' — we want to get away from that. More logical puzzles. Some of the ones we liked from *Hexen* were the random ones we could set up, where it would be different for everybody — we're going to try to do more of that."

Action games like *Doom* once had nothing in common with roleplaying games. But RPGs have been beginning to look ever more like *Doom* games;

A RAVEN DISCOGRAPHY

BLACK CRYPT

Raven's first release was a roleplaying game published by Electronic Arts in 1992. You had a party of four characters in this *Eye of the Beholder*-style fantasy game.

SHADOWCASTER

This was another roleplaying game, but in the first-person point of view, combining action and RPG elements. Published by Origin, players were able to morph into a number of different creatures as they played.

CYCLONES

A first-person shooter in a science fiction setting, *CyClones* was published by SSI. One of the few good *Doom* clones in the early days, it earned an 81% in the March '95 *PC Gamer*.

HERETIC

Released first as shareware, it was an impressive use of the *Doom* engine, adding flying and other



elements. It chronicles the adventures of a sidhe elf as he avenges the destruction of his people by the serpent rider D'Sparil. *Heretic* was later released by GT in retail form as *Heretic: Shadow of the Serpent Riders*, with five full episodes and more than 45 levels of play.

HEXEN

A follow-up to the shareware hit *Heretic*, *Hexen* beat its predecessor to the retail shelf. *Hexen* let you pick from three character classes, as you followed the adventures of three human adventures opposing in a new dimension, challenging one of D'Sparil's Rider brethren. A sequel, *Death Kings of the Dark Citadel*, took the battle to the underground cities of the Death Kings.

NECRODOME

To be published by SSI, *Necrodome* is a car combat game, and a return to a science-fiction setting. It's not in retail yet, but a demo has been out on the Internet for a while.



This fiery area is reminiscent of *Quake*. *Hexen 2* uses the *Quake* engine, and is one of the first products to license the engine from id Software.



This scene resembles a roleplaying game, in which Raven has deep roots.



This pencil sketch of a warrior reveals many details, including the skulls on his shoulders.

perhaps the best example of this is the recent *Daggerfall*, which looked and moved like a first-person shooter, without sacrificing its heavy RPG core. On the other end, some action games have tried to get away from the purely shoot 'em up model of gaming, as titles like *Strife* incorporate interaction into the game. *Hexen II* will walk a fine line between both.

"Personally, I would love to go further into roleplaying," says Raffel. "Our

very first game we did, *Black Crypt*, was like a *Dungeon Master* — *Eye of the Beholder* roleplaying game. That's where our roots are, in D&D.

"When we did *Shadowcaster*, it had both action and roleplaying elements, but it didn't have enough action for the action players, and it didn't have enough roleplaying for the roleplaying players. So we want to make it where we're heavily into the action with a good flavor of roleplaying. But I think it should still be pretty fast-paced," says Raffel.

"What we did with *Heretic* and *Hexen* was stick more closely to the action. With *Hexen II* we're taking a big step closer to roleplaying, without crossing that invisible line into it," he says. But will Raven ever do a full-blown roleplaying game? "I really want to do that badly," says Raffel. "I would love to do a roleplaying MUD [Multi-user dungeon], and I've been playing *Meridian 59* — it's a good first start into the genre. There's been lots of MUDs but this is the first real full-scale one. But I think it's cool to do a real unique world, and take it further. So there's definitely some roleplaying plans in our future."

WICKEDLY FAST 3D, WINDOWS & VIDEO

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*Retail version only

All Direct 3D tests conducted on Intel® 4, 1996 by Matrox Graphics Inc. on a Gateway P1 100 configured with Intel P1 100/66MHz, 16 MB of RAM with 256K cache, Matrox Mystique, Diamond Stealth 3D 2000XL, and ATI 3D APPRESSION were configured with 2 MB of memory for the PCI bus using those referenced 3.14.4.02.00.2100 and 3.22.00.00.00.00. All test results were obtained from 3D views for the 3D Appresion demo shown presented on the Microsoft DirectX 1.0 SDK demo tool. Direct 3D tests show using System bus on the Diamond 3.2.0.00, Diamond Stealth 3D 2000XL, and ATI 3D APPRESSION. Tests were conducted at 512 x 384 x 16-bit color. Matrox Mystique tests were conducted at 640 x 480 x 16-bit. Results on Diamond Stealth, Appresion demo (control), game control, 16-bit per pixel mode, 8750000 (limited playback).




✦ FREE SOFTWARE BUNDLE ✦



This is not a game.



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Is it a game when your stomach lurches in the course of performing a Cuban eight?
Is it a game when beads of sweat appear on your forehead while flying under London's Tower Bridge to digitally sampled sound? No. This is not a game. This is Microsoft® Flight Simulator for Windows® 95, the latest upgrade to the most realistic PC flight simulation available anywhere.

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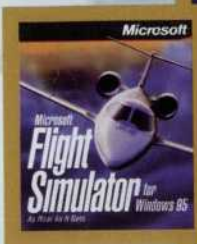
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Microsoft®

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Expansion Pack with southern California scenery, challenges and adventures available soon.



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Product Information Number 374

Dark Reign



The Spiderbike is one of *Dark Reign's* unique military units.

Activision ushers in the next generation of real-time strategy games

Yes, it's more real-time strategy in the tradition of *WarCraft II* and *Command & Conquer*. But don't turn the page yet — this one could be something special.

—Dan Bennett



The Activision team is turning its own scenario development tool into the most amazingly versatile map editor you'll find in a real-time strategy game.

than just equal the earlier games. Borrrund and the development team paid close attention to gamers' complaints about *C&C* and *WarCraft II* — including their own, of course.

One of the most common gripes about both games centered on their artificial intelligence; the computerized opponents were occasionally tough, but they were pretty predictable. Winning a single-player scenario generally meant figuring out the actions the AI-controlled enemy would take every time and finding a way around them. Not quite as satisfying as a multi-player game, in which your opponents might never do the same thing twice.

Borrrund decided one of the team's primary tasks would be to come up with an AI that made the single-player game almost as unpredictable and intense as a multi-player session.

"People are going to be expecting the next level of AI from all the new strategy games," Borrrund says. "It's very difficult to do; we're spending a lot of our resources on AI. First of all, we're trying to create an AI that responds in different ways to different situations. It's not necessarily going to do the exact same thing every single time you play the mission.

"If the player's going to build up an incredible air force, the computer's going to respond to that," he explains. "It's going to detect that you have an air presence, and it's going to build the appropriate buildings."

All the time and effort being lavished on the game's AI is having an exciting side-effect: units under the player's control are going to be pretty smart, too. One of the few tedious elements of previous real-time strategy games was the need to keep track of all your military units as your army grew, making sure they were going where you wanted them to go and doing what you wanted them to do.

In *Dark Reign*, Borrrund says, you'll be able to give soldiers and vehicles pretty specific orders — and they'll carry them out whether or not you keep popping in to click on their little heads.

"At the very beginning of a game, I can assign certain key units with AI," Borrrund says. "For example, I can ask them to go through the map and find key buildings for me — and they'll do this all on their own, so I don't have to constantly move them around the map."

It's also possible to determine how

It was inevitable, really. Blizzard's *WarCraft II* was the best-selling PC game of 1996, and Westwood's *Command & Conquer* had to be a close second. So, just as a slew of first-person 3D shoot-'em-ups naturally followed the successes of id Software's *Castle Wolfenstein 3D* and

Doom, a crowd of real-time, top-down strategy games is poised to pull at our purse-strings this year.

You may remember that most of the *Doom* clones didn't come close to the original in addictive playability. But there were exceptions to that rule, like *Dark Forces* and id's own *Heretic*; games that had so much personality they rose above the status of knock-offs. Then there were the next-generation games, like *Duke Nukem 3D* and *Quake*, which brought the old formula to life with the latest technology.

The same is bound to happen with real-time strategy games, and Activision's *Dark Reign* looks like it has plenty of both qualities needed to rise above the crowd of me-too games: plenty of personality and new technology.

Dark Reign's producer, Greg Borrrund, doesn't pretend his game is entirely original, but he's determined to make it better than its predecessors.

"We really started out with *C&C* and *WarCraft II* as a basis for our game," Borrrund says, "and everyone is going to assume that we're going to have at least that level of functionality."

To ensure that *Dark Reign* does more

F.Y.I.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Game: *Dark Reign*

Category: Strategy

Developer: Activision and Australis

Publisher: Activision, 11601 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1000, Los Angeles, CA 90025 (310) 473-9200

Projected Price: \$49.95

Percent Complete: 50%

In a nutshell:

A strong computer opponent, units that think for themselves, and terrain effects are just some of the ingredients it brings to the traditional real-time strategy recipe.

What's so special?

The game's graphics are very nice, but the design team is spending most of its resources on creating good artificial intelligence for friendly and enemy units and tweaking the game until play balance is perfect.

Why should I care?

Dune II and *WarCraft* made up the first generation of real-time strategy games; *Command & Conquer* and *WarCraft II* dominated the second; and *Dark Reign* joins games like *Red Alert* and *StarCraft* in the third, upping the ante with smarter AI and a wider array of options.

And when's it coming out?

Late February 1997



Friendly units have their own AI, and can be assigned general tasks to carry out, like harrassing the enemy or escorting other units across the map.

your units will react when they're attacked, or when they spot the enemy. Two values in the game, autonomy and tenacity, can be adjusted to suit any tactical situation. A unit with high autonomy will automatically retreat from battle and find a medic when its damage reaches a certain level. Once it's repaired, it will return to the fight — all without any input from the player. Tenacity is the other side of the equation: a unit with high tenacity will wade into the fray and destroy the enemy at all costs.

A waypoint system complements your soldiers' intelligence. In *Dark Reign*, you won't have to play sheepdog to your units, herding them along a specific path with one mouse-click after another. Instead, you'll just define the path with a series of waypoints and tell your troops to follow it.

Two types of waypoints will be available. Global waypoints can be created,

then assigned at any time to any units under your control. For example:

"As I uncover portions of the map, I'll find weak points for the enemy," Borrund says, "and I can lay down a waypoint that might lead from my base to the enemy's base. Any time I want to take a unit or a group of units to the enemy base, I can just send them to that waypoint."

Paths can be altered on-the-fly; if you decide to build a new structure in the middle of a vital route to the enemy, you can just grab any waypoint on the path and drag it to another position. You can also insert new waypoints along an existing path.

Then there are local waypoints, which can be assigned to a single unit; you might want to put a hovertank on a repeating patrol circuit, for instance. The unit will follow the path until you tell it differently — or until its autonomy/tenacity settings make it detour to go after an enemy unit. Local waypoints can be complex, too, including actions as well as movement orders: Go to point A, then to point B, fire at an enemy structure, pull back to point C, and repeat. Artillery pieces could follow classic fire-and-move tactics without constant mouse-clicking from the player. The possibilities are just about endless.

"The waypoints are really exciting," Borrund says. "In fact, we're using them quite a bit in our gameplay right now."

Terrain effects are another of *Dark Reign's* innovations. Borrund says the game will have eight different types of terrain, and each type will affect units' movement across it; troops slogging



Each of the units and structures in *Dark Reign* was carefully sketched, then 3D-rendered for the game.

through a mud bog will be much slower than troops moving across a paved road.

Elevation will also come into play. Any patch of terrain will have one of eight levels of elevation, so a *Dark Reign* map can have valleys, hills, and mountains. This will affect movement, but it will also limit players' knowledge of the enemy's position.

"You're not going to be able to see around hills," Borrund says. "It gives meaning to having to gain the high ground in each mission."

The designers even plan to let certain weapons deform the terrain; artillery and rocket hits will create craters, lowering the elevation and further affecting movement.

Of course, even as they pay all this attention to — gasp! — gameplay details, the *Dark Reign* team hasn't completely neglected the bells and whistles. Borrund says the game will feature at least 35 different units divided between the Imperium and the Freedom Guards, the two sides of *Dark Reign's* science-fictional conflict. In addition to the basic, meat-and-potatoes troops you'll find in any real-time strategy game, there are some pretty unusual units.

A particularly nasty one is the Hostage-Taker, Borrund says. It's a vehicle that plows into enemy infantry, grabs a hapless soldier, lobotomizes him, straps a bomb on his back, and sends him back to blow his comrades to bits. Then there's the Spy, who can sabotage enemy facilities or steal vital information; as in *Command & Conquer*, each side has its own unique military units — but in *Dark Reign*, if the enemy has something you like, your Spy can pilfer the plans for it so you can build your own.

Other units have the ability to "morph," altering their appearance so they look like enemy units or terrain features, like trees or rocks. Picture a large stand of innocent-looking trees suddenly moving toward your base; it's a scenario straight out of *Macbeth*, as Birnam Wood comes to Dunsinane all over again. Pretty nifty.

Add to all this the most versatile map editor yet, plus multi-player action — including Internet play without the need for a dedicated gaming service — and *Dark Reign* stacks up as a pretty strong contender for the next real-time strategy crown. We can't wait to play it.



Between *Dark Reign's* two warring factions, the Imperium and the Freedom Guard, the game will have more than 35 different military units.

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Product Information Number 194

Jack Nicklaus Four

Can you hold your own with the Golden Bear?

This golf sim series is finally back in business — and a course editor and greater control over your shots help this game stand out from the crowd.

—T. Liam McDonald



While Jack himself is in the game, you won't be able to play as him — only against him. Hey, there's only one Jack.

follow-up to the first computer golf game, *Mean 18* (from British Open creator Rex Bradford).

An improved edition followed as *Jack Nicklaus Unlimited*, with the added innovation of a course creation utility. An improved version, *Jack Nicklaus Signature Edition*, followed in early 1994, but then there was nothing new for a long time. *Jack Nicklaus at Muirfield Village* was to be the next incarnation, featuring hundreds of on-site photographs stitched together into a game. But the result, which was overly similar to the lackluster *Picture Perfect Golf* in approach, was scrapped as unacceptable after months of development time. A new team called Cinematronics was brought in, along with a new producer, former touring player Michael Franco. They started from scratch, creating the sharp new engine at the heart of *Jack Nicklaus Four*, and the results are impressive.

Graphically, *JN4* for Windows 95 looks very good, with excellent water effects and smooth terrain. Though it's not the visual show-stopper *Links LS* is, it also won't stop mid-range systems cold as you wait for redraw, and it plays smoothly on those machines as well. But where do you begin when designing a new sim in such a crowded market? As Mike Franco says, you start with the basics:

"Like everyone else, we want to create the visual experience you get on the real golf course, so you have to make something high-res and beautiful," Franco says. "It has to make you

I t's in the Bible, if you read carefully. We shall be visited by plagues of locusts, frogs, gnats, and, yep, right there: golf simulations. Swarming over the land. Darkening the sky.

Do we really need another? Isn't *Links LS* the most gorgeous? Doesn't *PGA Tour* have good tournament play? Doesn't *British Open* have crowds and announcers? Not to mention *Front Page Sports: Golf* (formerly known as *The Golf Club*), *Greg Norman Ultimate Golf*, *Picture Perfect Golf*, *MS Golf*, and possibly *QuakeC Golf*, for all I know (if none of the *QuakeC* hackers were working on that, someone surely will now).

Well, there may be one more golf sim you need after all: *Jack Nicklaus Four: Golden Bear Edition*. It has some things the others don't: a few new features and play mechanics, a knockout course designer, and — of course — the Golden Bear himself.

Arnie may have his Army, but Jack is the best player the game has ever known (and if you have to ask who are Arnie and Jack are, you probably won't care about this game anyway). He's won more tournaments, made more money, and played better in his prime than just about anyone who ever picked up a club. Accolade began its relationship with Nicklaus with *Jack Nicklaus's Greatest 18 Holes*, the



The course designer lets you make changes to the course, place objects, change the viewing angle, and see it all take shape in a 3D-view window.



Game: Jack Nicklaus Four
Developer: Cinematronics
Publisher: Accolade, 5300 Stevens Creek Blvd., Suite 500, San Jose, CA 95129 (800) 245-7744
Projected Price: n/a
Percentage Complete: 80%

In a nutshell:

After some false starts and delays, Accolade's Jack Nicklaus golf series is finally back in business, featuring some excellent new features and — naturally — the coveted course designer.

What's so special?

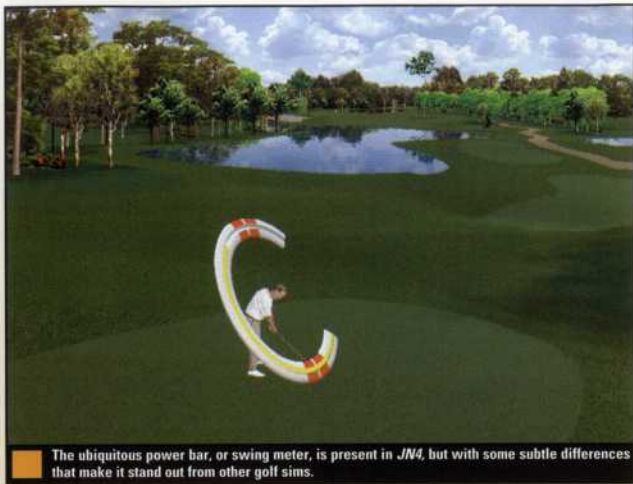
The Jack Nicklaus series is best known for one thing: the ability to create your own courses from scratch. With a powerful new course designer, *Jack Nicklaus Four* has one major feature lacking in *Links LS*, making it the one other golf game you will have to own.

Why should I care?

Even though older JN games are woefully out of date, they still have a large following with golfers and online gamers, thanks to the course designer. Course design is big, and *JN4* is the only game in town.

And when's it coming out?

March 1997



The ubiquitous power bar, or swing meter, is present in *JN4*, but with some subtle differences that make it stand out from other golf sims.

feel — with the sounds and everything you see on-screen — like you're on a golf course. The second goal was to recreate the experience of playing golf. That has always been my pet peeve with some games, since I can't play the way an experienced player does. I can't read the course and build my swing the way I would on a real course."

The solution was twofold: more viewing angles than other games offer, and more control over the swing profile. When you're out on a course and your ball lands in the rough or behind a tree, you walk around and look at the lie from different angles. You check out different lines of sight. Often — especially when reading a green while putting — you get down on your hands and knees and take in a worm's-eye view.

The fast screen redraws help make this more feasible, but *JN4* also offers the widest range of viewing angles of any game on the market. The "camera" can be moved virtually anywhere and pointed at anything on the course. It can also be adjusted for height and zoom level, so you can go from ground level to crane level, in close or out wide. On the green, you can turn on the traditional grid overlay to see the undulations and read the break, or you can just get down low and eyeball it. As Franco points out, "The mental way you play is to visualize your shot and then to implement your shot through your swing. That's what we're trying to get."

By adding some new twists on shot mechanics, *JN4* also gives you a different degree of control than you'll find in most other golf sims. The power bar and aiming arrow are still there, but they can be subtly adjusted for each shot. You set up each shot first by choosing where you want it to be hit. Then you can essentially "bend" the aiming arrow in different ways to adjust for draws and fades, whether the shot has a high or low trajectory, and how intense the shot will be. By



You can watch a shot from a reverse angle if you like (either live or in replay), and leaves on the ball trail to watch the flight, bounce, and roll physics.

bending the arrow, you can shape each shot more effectively. When you're ready to take your shot via the power bar, the shot profile you've created will effect how the meter works: if you're looking to get a lot of distance out your club, the power bar will move much faster than it will if you're going for a shorter, more gentle shot. That level of control should help when you go up against Jack himself, who's included in the game.

All this makes *JN4*'s gameplay slightly different when compared to other titles, but that's not what's going to sell it. That task falls to its very powerful course builder. Hundreds, if not thousands, of Jack Nicklaus Signature Edition courses are already in circulation online, and dozens of web and FTP sites are still around for the fans. Not many five-year-old games still have such an active following. (Check out <http://users.aol.com/td4729/jnse.htm> for some choice *JNSE* stuff.)

JN4 takes the complex task of course building and makes it accessible. For those who want to ease into course creation, "wizards" guide you through the task, letting you take a score card from any club, enter the yardage and par for each hole, designate direction,

"We want to create the visual experience you get on the real golf course."

— MICHAEL FRANCO,
GAME PRODUCER

doglegs, breaks, and so on, and watch the program create the course automatically. For those who want to jump in and create a whole course from scratch, *JN4* makes it easy. You begin by setting the yardage and shape of each hole from an overhead view of the course. This creates the basic outline you'll work with, devoid of hazards and geographical features.

You can then edit each hole separately. The fairways, roughs, greens, and other incidental geographical features like hills and lakes each have numerous "handles" that allow you to move and shape them. As with any good graphics rendering program, you can shorten, lengthen, twist, and warp shapes any way you like. Another set of tools then allows you to raise and lower terrain in various degrees, creating hills, valleys, and undulations. As I watched Franco work, he created a hole with a volcano in the center in about five minutes as an example of just how much *JN4*'s editor can do and how easy it is to use.

Once you shape your course, you can drop in different features from a wide selection of 150-200 objects. Trees, bushes, rocks, ball washers, carts, the clubhouse, and other objects can be dropped just about anywhere. Whole swatches of forest can be created in a few seconds, and you can make and place brooks, rivers, and bunkers just as easily. A selection of traditional green shapes and bunker designs (created with the help of the Jack Nicklaus Design Company) will also be included to help speed course creation. You can even watch the course take shape from any angle by opening a 3D viewing window that updates the view of the course as you build it.

JN4 will ship with five Nicklaus courses: Cabo del Sol, The Country Club of the South, Colleton River Plantation, Hilton Head, and Muirfield Village. A sixth "fantasy" course is being specially built by the Nicklaus design firm using the course designer itself, which should be interesting. Add to that all the new courses that will certainly follow from fans — and the fact that old courses can be brought forward to the new game — an you have a wider variety of courses than any other golf game can hope to offer. With course design and course architects more popular than at any time in the history of the game, *JN4* will hit a fertile market waiting to test their talents against Jones, Hills, Dye, Ross, and the Bear himself.

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Jazz Jackrabbit 2

Epic MegaGames brings its buck-toothed hero out of retirement

Forget Mario, Sonic, and Crash — the PC's very own platform hero is back in a big way, and he's got more attitude than ever.

—Gary Whitta



Jazz's deranged brother Spaz makes his debut in *Jazz Jackrabbit 2*. Playing as this second character allows you access to a different set of secret areas not accessible as Jazz.

F.Y.I. FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Game: Jazz Jackrabbit 2

Category: Platform

Developer: Epic MegaGames

Publisher: Epic MegaGames, 3204 Tower Oaks Blvd.,

Suite 410, Rockville, Maryland 20852 (800) 972-7434

Projected Price: TBA

Percentage Complete: 90%

In a nutshell:

Epic's super-swish and attitude-filled platform hero is back to prove that the PC can do 2D arcade games as well as any of those namby-pamby 32-bit consoles.

What's so special?

A whole slew of new features, including a great hires mode with MMX support, innovative multi-player modes, a whole host of new characters and weaponry, and the ability to build your own Jazz games with the MLLÉ software.

Why should I care?

Jazz is the closest thing the PC has to a real platform hero, and this new game should prove that the PC doesn't need to be behind the consoles in terms of fast 2D action games.

And when's it coming out?

January 1997

More than any other game machine, the PC has always been the proverbial jack of all trades. You name it — roleplaying, flight simulations, strategy games, 3D blasters, military sims, graphic adventures, puzzles, driving games — there's not much the old warhorse can't (or at least doesn't) turn its hand to. Well... except maybe good old-fashioned arcade games. The 2D action genre, and in particular the platform game, has for years been the almost exclusive territory of those pesky videogame consoles and their dedicated sprite-based hardware. The poor old PC was never really designed with shifting sprites around the screen at speed, and so while leading the way in most genres, has historically been left eating the dust of Mario's plumber boots and Sonic's running shoes.



Spaz goes a-swinging around Jazz Jackrabbit 2's jungle level — note the ubiquitous banana-throwing monkeys.

But not always. Epic MegaGames, shareware heroes and masters of the much-neglected 2D action genre (their latest effort, *Fire Fight*, was a 90% winner recently) have never been satisfied with the console's dominance of the platform scene, so in August of 1994 created a character to rival Nintendo and Sega's bouncy brand champions. The result was Jazz Jackrabbit, a brave bunny battling cosmic injustice with his



Dangerous precipices and tricky ledges were part and parcel of the original *Jazz Jackrabbit*, and they're back in abundance in the sequel.



There's a whole host of new weaponry for Jazz to collect and brandish, like this nifty ray gun — but ammunition is limited.

ray gun, level-leaping skills, and cocky attitude — kind of a cross between Sonic and Bugs. Making a splash in a much-neglected genre on the PC, *Jazz* was an instant hit. In fact, according to the game's producer Robert Allen, it was a milestone for the genre. "I think the original *Jazz* was a necessary step, not only for Epic, but for the PC gaming community as well," he says. "I remember thinking, 'My God! This thing is running at 70 frames per second on a 33Mhz 486!' In 1994 a 70fps game was virtually unheard of. I think it went a long way in proving the technical prowess of the PC, and helped push PC developers to strive for higher standards in their development and design."

Now, just over two years on, he's back in an even more elaborate adventure.

Jazz Jackrabbit 2 (obviously, minimal brainpower was used in the creation of the game's title, so that it could all be saved for the game design) picks up where the original left off, offering a more high-tech and fast-paced continuation of the first game. "We didn't have the time or resources during the original *Jazz* to do the game as well as we wanted to," explains *Jazz 2*'s designer and co-producer, Cliff Bleszinski. "We wanted to expand upon the characters' personalities by adding hundreds of frames of animation, and expand the game universe by adding characters like *Jazz*'s deranged brother Spaz."

Here's the deal: the evil tortoise king Devan Shell has swiped Eva Earlong's 14 carrot (geddit???) wedding diamond for his time machine. Eva's fiancée *Jazz* chases Devan to his laboratory, but promptly gets sucked into a time warp

where he must prevent Devan Shell from knocking off his hippie parents, thereby wiping out *Jazz*'s existence.

Confused? Don't worry, it's all just

an excuse for 24 levels of frantic level-leaping and enemy-bashing as *Jazz* battles through the game's four time zones.

Bleszinski isn't surprised that there haven't been more games like *Jazz* on the PC before. "Almost every platform-style game that's been on the PC has been a translation of an older console title," he says. "By nature, the PC gamer is somewhat elitist when it comes to comparisons between his PC and a console system. So, when the average PC gamer sees a translation of a console game his first reaction tends to be 'Oh, more old console trash ported poorly to the PC.' But *Jazz* is a PC exclusive who already has an established fan base, and he's hard to dislike. *Jazz* just takes advantage of too many PC features that cannot be done on consoles to be ignored."

These features include a new high-res mode that allows for a large-scale view of the play area (Epic says this will help players find secrets and bonuses); multiple two-player modes, including a race against the clock; and a battle mode that sees rival bunnies head-butting each other; dynamic lighting; particle effects; 8-layer parallax

"I think the original *Jazz* was a necessary step, not only for Epic, but for the PC gaming community as well. I think it went a long way in proving the technical prowess of the PC."

— ROBERT ALLEN,
GAME PRODUCER

scrolling and more. All most importantly, while maintaining the smooth framerate normally missing from PC platformers. "With the development of Windows 95, the task of hardware support has been eased, but it still takes a very talented programmer to squeeze out the performance necessary for fast and furious gameplay," says Allen. "But if you're a good programmer like Arjan (Brussee, the lead programmer), you can make the PC jump through flaming hoops with scrolling games." And like Epic's much-awaited 3D game *Unreal*, *Jazz Jackrabbit 2* will come with full



Jazz Jackrabbit 2's high-res mode allows for some great-looking visuals, as well as a wider field of vision, so you can get a better idea of the layout of the level.



End of level bosses are never easy to deal with, but Jazz is as cool as the proverbial cucumber. Look out for his "idle" moves; if he's left alone without player input for too long...

7TH LEGION

Epic Enters The Real-Time Strategy War

Also in the works right now at Epic MegaGames is *7th Legion*, the company's ambitious entry into the ever-growing real-time strategy genre. With monster games like *WarCraft II* and *Red Alert* currently ruling the roost, it's not advisable to enter the genre lightly. But Epic is willing to take up the fight with its futuristic strategy game.

7th Legion is actually being developed in New Zealand by Vision Software (Epic will publish it in the US). *7th Legion* looks like a cross between *Red Alert* and *MechWarrior*, as armies of hulking robots battle it out across a post-apocalyptic wasteland.

The emphasis in *7th Legion* will be on battle, not resource management — each player has a budget, but there is no harvesting or mining to worry about. At regular time intervals, the computer gives each player credits for them to spend on creating and advancing units. You can earn extra credits by wiping out enemy units, like a traditional shoot-em-up scoring system. Stealth units, promotion, and fierce creatures that can be hidden into battle, are among some of *7th Legion's* original gameplay elements, but Epic is reluctant to reveal much more about a game that won't be out until later in the year. We've played an early demo that looks and feels great, and this screenshot should give fans of the genre plenty to get excited about.



The cool graphics and innovative gameplay in Epic's *7th Legion* should give *Command & Conquer* some competition.

MMX support, so gamers with MMX-powered PCs will get an even more arcade-like experience.

The guys at Epic profess to be big fans of the Mario and Sonic games, and take some of their inspiration from these classic titles when developing a game like *Jazz 2*. Says Bleszinski, "We're attempting to capture the mystery of Mario with the speed and excitement of Sonic." But Epic is also aware that to appeal to the more mature demographic of PC gamers, they need to steer away from the out-and-out cutesy approach of those console favorites. "Sure, on the surface, the game looks like a kid's game," says Bleszinski, "but there is a lot of subtle adult humour peppered throughout. For instance, there is a level called 'Purple Haze Maze,' which will give ex-hippies serious flashbacks. We've also got a level called 'A Cold Day In Heck'

where Hell actually freezes over, as well as some creative foes that are bordering on bad taste. Nick Stadler, our animator, is a truly twisted individual."

Style points aside, look out for plenty of classic platform game elements that the *Jazz 2* team owes to those console golden oldies. There are secret coins around each level that can be collected to open up warp gates to bonus rounds, floors that can be stomped through, blastable walls, and plenty of other surprises. Bleszinski's best advice for gamers is to "keep your eyes peeled." Jazz has been beefed up with some new moves, too — he can now climb along ropes with his ears, as well as using them to "helicopter" to safety, and there's a new move called the "butt-stomp," which pretty much speaks for itself. There's even an all-new character to play in form of *Jazz's* deranged brother, Spaz — depending on who you decide to control, there will be different sets of bonuses, secret rooms and warps to be found on each level.

Another neat bonus for *Jazz 2* players is the game editor software that will allow players to make their own levels and exchange them amongst their friends. Called MLE (Multi-Layer Level Editor), the program, which will be released for users to tinker with, is the very same Windows 95 application that Epic is using to build the levels in the game, so you can be sure it's a full-featured program. The Internet is sure to be bulging with user-created *Jazz 2* worlds not long after MLE becomes available.

PCG



Levels like this cool dungeon show off some of the game's dynamic lighting, but other effects, like the eight-layer parallax scrolling, can only be appreciated if you see the game in motion.

Sierra makes stuff for all kinds of game players.



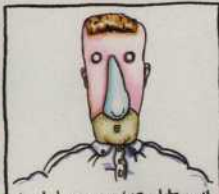
the entire manual memorizer



the perpetually perplexed



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the bleary-eyed night owl



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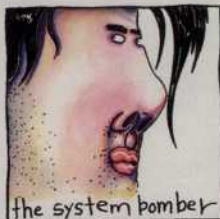
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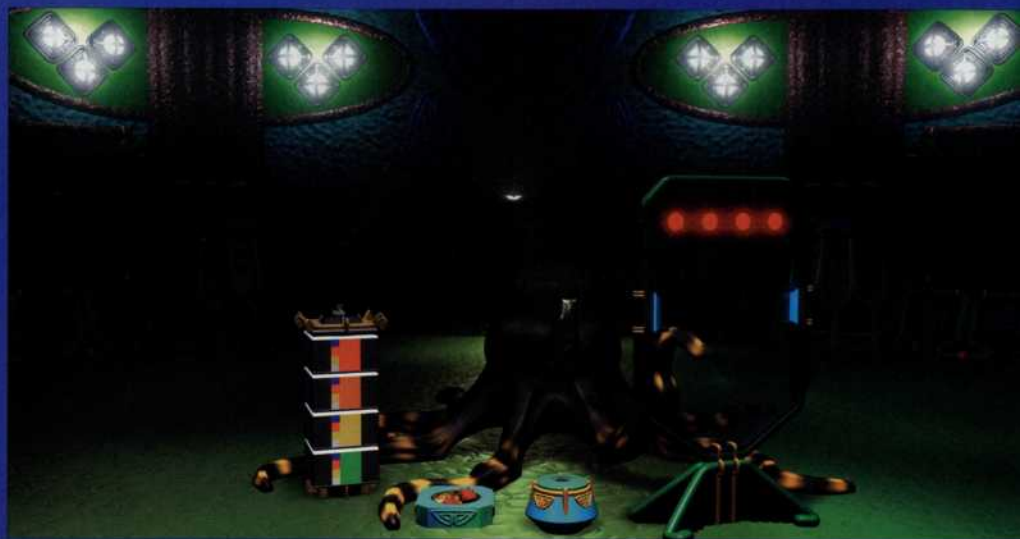


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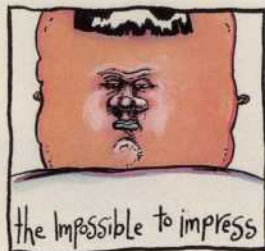
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Steel-Nerved, this richly woven tapestry of psychological horror pulls no punches. The scenes are often all too graphic, the fear you'll feel will be all too real. Fortunately, the designers have thoughtfully provided a password-protected way to set the level of intensity, should this game be a little too much for some members of your family. Or, perhaps, even you.

WIN 95 DOS MAC



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WIN 95



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WIN 95



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Take 3 points damage!



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Your swing misses

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Mplayer Goes Commercial

Second online games service joins the fray

Mpath Interactive's multi-player online gaming service, Mplayer, officially went commercial this fall. This move follows shortly after The Total Entertainment Network's official commercial launch. Now both commercial networks will be competing head-to-head in the brand new online games market.

Mplayer members who sign up before January 31st, 1997 are eligible for charter member pricing — \$7.95 a month for five hours, and \$1 for each additional hour. Alternately, they can pay a flat rate of \$19.95 a month for unlimited usage. After January 31st, a new pricing plan will come into effect for members who join after that time. (Those who took part in the beta test program will be allowed to play for free until December 31st of this year.)

Mpath uses a variety of cutting-edge technologies to enhance the online gaming experience, including voice communications,



One of the most popular games on Mplayer is Westwood's classic *Command & Conquer*. Other titles include *Quake*, *MechWarrior 2*, and *WarCraft*.

chat, and virtual scribble boards that allow members to communicate. They also pride themselves on the speed of their network.

"There is absolutely no other experience on the Internet like Mplayer," says Paul Matteucci, CEO of Mpath. "Its fast performance makes Mplayer the Ferrari of Internet game services. In addition, Mplayer offers great games, the best technology for player interaction and communications, and a dynamic and friendly community — all at an affordable price."

Among the games currently available on Mplayer are *Quake*, *MechWarrior 2*, *Command & Conquer*, *WarCraft*, and *Terminal Velocity*. Upcoming games include *Diablo*, *Deadlock*, *Panzer General*, *War Wind*, *Havoc*, *Big Red Racing*, *Chaos Overlords*, and *SimCity 2000*. Mpath also recently signed a deal with Hasbro Interactive to bring some of their classic boardgames to the service.

Check out Mplayer for yourself by using the software provided on *The CD* this month.



It's a medieval bloodbath: *Myth*, an upcoming fantasy game from Bungie Software.

Myth Looks Great!

Blood and guts from Bungie

One of the most successful gaming genres over the last year or so has been real-time strategy, with games like *Command & Conquer* and *WarCraft II* topping best-seller lists for months on end. With such success, a large number of companies have been developing their own real-time games, but there have been few that we've seen look as original as *Myth*.

Myth — a working title — is from Bungie Software, a major

**Continued on page 66:
See Myth**



After several setbacks, 3D Realms' *Prey* seems to be back on track.

Prey Update

MechWarrior 3 designer joins 3D Realms

Earlier this year, several key programmers left the *Prey* project, a highly-anticipated 3D action title being developed by 3D Realms, creators of *Duke Nukem 3D*. But 3D Realms' President George Broussard promised his company

would rebound from the defections, and he seems to have made good on his promise. It's just been announced that Paul Schuytma, former designer on FASA Interactive's *MechWarrior 3*, will join 3D Realms to head up the *Prey* project.

"I couldn't be more excited about joining the *Prey* team," said Schuytma. "I took one look at the *Prey* engine and knew immediately that *Prey* was a force to be reckoned with. It was the only project in the industry that could have pulled me away from *MechWarrior 3*."

Timothy Gerritsen, producer for *MechWarrior 3*, says that Schuytma's departure will not affect the *MechWarrior 3* project.

250,000 Try for Diablo Beta



Blizzard's *Diablo* will be beta-tested on battle.net.

Only 1,000 openings available

More than 250,000 gamers tried to sign up as beta-testers for the online version of Blizzard's upcoming roleplaying game, *Diablo*. The game will be the first to be tested on Blizzard's free Internet game service, battle.net, and the beta testers will be the first to get to play *Diablo* online. You can find battle.net at www.battle.net.

Only 1,000 slots were available, and these filled up in the first three minutes. Still, the requests kept pouring in all night, until more than 250,000 had been logged.

"We were shocked by the tremendous response to our beta-

testing registration," said Blizzard president Allen Adham. "But it reaffirmed our belief that gamers want to share their ideas and experiences with game developers."

Blizzard is the creator of the immensely successful *WarCraft II*, *PC Gamer's* Game of the Year for 1995. The upcoming *Diablo* is one of the most eagerly anticipated RPGs of the season; a demo of the game is available on the November *PC Gamer* CD-ROM.

In other Blizzard news, *WarCraft II* remains the best-selling computer game of 1996. According to PC Data, it has sold more than 1.2 million copies already.

Myth

Continued from page 65

developer of Macintosh games, including the very popular *Marathon* series. Until now, Bungie has developed primarily for the Macintosh, but with the advent of Windows 95, the team has embraced the new operating system and has begun to develop concurrently for the PC as well.

Myth is a real-time strategy game set in a fantasy world, but there are significant differences from *WarCraft II*.

The world of *Myth* is a fully-realized 3D world, with elevations, slopes, gullies, hills, and other realistic terrain features. The units are also larger and more detailed, as you can see from the screen shots, but you control them as in *WarCraft*—group them with a mouse and send them to a location or into the attack. But there are no town halls or resource gathering, and with the zoomed-in, isometric view of the units, it may be better to call it a real-time tactical game.

Armies of knights, archers, and dwarves battle the forces of darkness, including skeletons and orcs, over battlegrounds of forest,

hills, snow, and deserts. The dwarves hurl explosive bottles of chemicals at the foe, which detonate and take out whole ranks of the enemy. Terrain is a key factor—you must get your archers up on the slopes if they are going to be effective, as units shoot farther when they are higher up, boulders and trees provide cover, and movement increases or decreases as you change elevation.

The battlefield becomes quite gory as bloodstains and corpses litter the ground, not disappearing after a while. Particle effects will portray

snow, ash, and rain, and they will have the effect of putting out fires and reducing the effectiveness of fiery missiles. Seasons will change as the game's campaign progresses, and all the units, structure, terrain, and other features cast dynamic shadows on the ground, while light from explosions and volcanoes illuminates the landscape.

Finally, flexible scripting will allow users to reprogram monsters, change game variables, and even modify network game rules.

The game is being developed for Win 95 and will be available late in the second quarter of 1997.



Real terrain and physics are among a few of the powerful features in *Myth*.

Bill Gates Hooked on Tetris?

Microsoft hires Pajitnov

Alexey Pajitnov, creator of the world-famous *Tetris*, has joined Microsoft's growing entertainment software division. Pajitnov previously worked with Spectrum HoloByte on a line of puzzle games, and he will be heading up a similar effort at Microsoft.

Tetris was one of the most popular and addictive games in recent memory. Developed by Pajitnov in Russia during the 1980s, it gained a worldwide following, appearing in innumerable incarnations on PCs, consoles, and even in the arcades. Tragically, Pajitnov never



Spectrum HoloByte's *Tetris Gold* collected together the original MS-DOS *Tetris* and five sequels.

received much money for his game design, as the Russian government at the time retained the rights to the game.

Tetris was first developed in 1985 in Moscow and hit the American arcades in 1987, the first commercial software product from the Soviet Union.

In 1989, the Nintendo Gameboy version of *Tetris* was an instant success.

Tetris lives on today in innumerable shareware clones and java-based applets on the World Wide Web.



The Monster Board

Diamond ships new accelerator

The Monster 3D is Diamond Multimedia's new 3D accelerator board. Powered by the 3Dfx Voodoo Graphics engine and bundled with ten top games, it's Diamond's latest high-end graphics add-on card.

Featuring four megabytes of EDO DRAM, the Monster 3D is a 3D-only card, meaning you'll still also need a 2D Windows graphics card. Two megabytes of the DRAM is devoted to texture mapping, while the other two megs are used for frame buffer memory. Among the advanced 3D features supported by the card are Gouraud shading, full-speed Z-buffering,



A specially accelerated version of Activision's *HyperBlade* is one of the ten games to come bundled with the new Diamond accelerator.

bi-linear and tri-linear MIP-mapping, and transparent and translucent effects.

The ten games bundled with the accelerator include Activision's *HyperBlade* and *MechWarrior 2*, as well as *Tomb Raider*, *Descent II*, *VR Soccer '96*, *Whiplash*, and *EF2000*. In addition, Diamond says that a large number of game companies are working on titles using the Voodoo Graphics technology, including Psygnosis, Virgin, and Playmates Interactive. More than 50 Voodoo-ready titles should be available by early 1997.

The 3Dfx chip will support Microsoft's Direct3D API as a matter of course. In fact, "Diamond's Monster 3D takes maximum advantage of Direct3D to deliver compatibility and perfor-

S3 Makes New ViRGE Chipset

Another major player in the PC graphics game is S3, whose ViRGE series of 3D chipsets have been well-received in the marketplace. Recently S3 announced its latest rev of this popular chip, with some significant enhancements over the older versions.

The ViRGE/DX and ViRGE/GX include improvements in texture-mapping, tri-linear filtering, depth cueing and other important 3D graphics tasks. The ViRGE/DX is based on DRAM and the ViRGE/GX uses SDRAM. (SDRAM is short for synchronous DRAM, a more efficient variety of ordinary DRAM, with faster access times).

mance for the new Direct3D-based titles," says Kevin Dallas, Microsoft's group product manager for DirectX.

For more information on 3D accelerators, be sure to check out our Peripheral Visions hardware section, on page 266.

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Forgotten Realms

Interplay is working on an as-yet unnamed roleplaying game, set in TSR's *Forgotten Realms* campaign world. Set for Winter 1997, the game is to be more of a traditional computer roleplaying game than *Descent to Undermountain*, as it will use a three-quarter isometric view. It's being put together by BioWare, the doctors-turned-programmers that did *Shattered Steel*.



This concept art is from Interplay's upcoming *Forgotten Realms* roleplaying game.

Modem Speeds to Double

U.S. Robotics, others, break the 28.8 barrier

Exciting news for PC gamers everywhere, major modem manufacturers have announced a breakthrough technology that will allow modem speeds to effectively double.

The new technology, called x2, brings top modem speeds to 56Kbps (Kilobytes per second), nearly as fast as a single 64Kbps ISDN channel, but the 56Kbps modem will operate over standard phone lines without special equipment on the user's end, which ISDN requires.

U.S. Robotics has submitted a proposal for 56Kbps modems to ITU, the industry body that regulates standards in communication speeds.

But the process of getting a new speed standard approved can be a lengthy one, and in the meantime U.S. Robotics will introduce the proprietary technology, x2, into the market as soon as possible.

The new modem standards work by boosting downstream data transmission at the higher rate of 56 Kbps

U.S. Robotics is not the only company to have developed this technology. Rockwell, another leading modem manufacturer, has also announced 56Kbps technology, and others will likely follow suit.

For a while, each company's solution will probably be proprietary, until the ITU sets an international standard for the 56Kbps modems.

The new 56Kbps technology works by boosting downstream data transmission — data sent from the network to your computer — at the higher rate of 56 Kbps, while the smaller signals

the user sends "upstream" to the network — requests for new documents and the like — are sent at the older rate of 28.8 or 33.6Kbps.

However, these new, faster modems will depend on a digital phone network existing in your local area; otherwise older, noisier phone lines will limit you to current speeds of 33.6Kbps or less.

Furthermore, your data carrier, whether it's America Online or a local ISP, must be digitally connected to the network. The first 56Kbps modems will be available in the first quarter of 1997.



U.S. Robotics is developing a new 56Kbps modem.

Elder Scrolls: Tribunal

Daggerfall is still making waves, but we've got some inside information on the series' future. The third chapter of the *Elder Scrolls* series is tentatively titled *Tribunal*. It will basically use the *Daggerfall* engine, but with some enhancements that Bethesda tried to work into *Daggerfall* but didn't finish in time, primarily a new fractal terrain generator. Also, expect it to add Super VGA graphics, and to take place in *Morrowind*, where the Dark Elves dwell. It should be about a year in development.

Even further out on the horizon is the fourth chapter, tentatively called *Elder Scrolls: Oblivion*. It will reportedly take place on Summerset Island, although since

..... Continued on page 68

Continued from page 67

it's years away, anything is possible at this time.



This early art is from *Fallout*, which will use Steve Jackson Games' GURPS rules.

Fallout

Roleplaying fans take note: Interplay has the computer games license to *GURPS*, or the Generic Universal Role-Playing System, Steve Jackson Games' most popular paper roleplaying system. The first Interplay title to use the GURPS license will be *Fallout: A GURPS Post-Nuclear Adventure*. It's a third-person POV roleplaying game, set in a world of nuclear aftermath. The player must venture forth from a centuries-old fallout shelter into a world twisted beyond recognition. The character creation rules and the turn-based tactical combat system are both drawn directly from the rulebooks. The game will probably be released for both Windows 95 and DOS around April.



Hipnotic's *The Rift* will add a slew of new components to *Quake*.

The Rift

Hipnotic Interactive, the new company founded by two

Continued on page 71

Much to Do Online

Game weaving on the Web

The growth of the World Wide Web has opened up a whole new avenue for ambitious game designers as online games proliferate. While some of these efforts have been less than overwhelming, there are quite a few worth that are worth your while.

Virgin's *SubSpace* is one of the most impressive online games around at the moment: professionally designed, good graphics, very light bandwidth requirements, and very popular. Not only that, but it's free, too.

Too play, you simply download a 1.3 megabyte file from the Virgin site, set it up, and run. The game plays a lot like *Asteroids*, but

instead of shooting up a bunch of rocks, you're fighting against dozens of other players on the same map. Power-ups abound, adding such things as improved weaponry, shield-

ing, and cloaks. When you first sign onto the service, the game scans the running servers, finding which has the least latency.

Virgin's also provided a rookie zone, where newbie players can go to learn the game without being completely destroyed. To see for yourself, visit www.vie.com/subspace.

For those who prefer the clutter and clamor of Wall Street to silent death in deep space, there's *Final Bell*, a new web-based stock market sim. With weekly and monthly prizes and using real stock market prices from NASDAQ and other exchanges, it's a great way to play the market without losing your shirt. Try it at www.finalbell.com.



The bulls and bears are on the Web in Sandbox Entertainment's *Final Bell*.



Chess and backgammon are among the Java games available on www.playsite.com.

Mystery fans take note: SouthPeak Interactive is hosting web-based mysteries on its website at www.lightfiles.com. Written by Lee Sheldon, whose credits include *The Riddle of Master Lu* and television scripts for a number of shows, it's sure to intrigue even the most jaded armchair Sherlocks. And with a \$5,000 cash prize, there's plenty at stake.

Another interesting site is PlaySite, found at www.playsite.com, a web page that uses Java and JavaScript entirely to let users play games of chess, checkers, Othello, and backgammon, with poker games to come.

AOL Announces Flat Rate

Response to local internet providers

America Online has just made flat-rate pricing available on its popular online commercial service.

There are two new plans: one costs \$9.95 a month and allows unlimited access to AOL, while the other is \$19.95 a month, allowing unlimited access to both AOL and the Internet.

The pricing reduction is seen as a response to the growth of local Internet providers, whose flat-rate pricing plans have drawn many customers

from the larger, pay-by-the-hour commercial services.

"America Online has grown rapidly in recent years, and is now the global leader in interactive services," says Steve Case, chairman

and CEO of America Online. "Through new competitive 'unlimited' pricing and a superior consumer offering enhanced by new programming and design advances, we are further strengthening the position of our flagship America Online brand as the undisputed leader in value and service and the clear choice for millions of consumers worldwide."

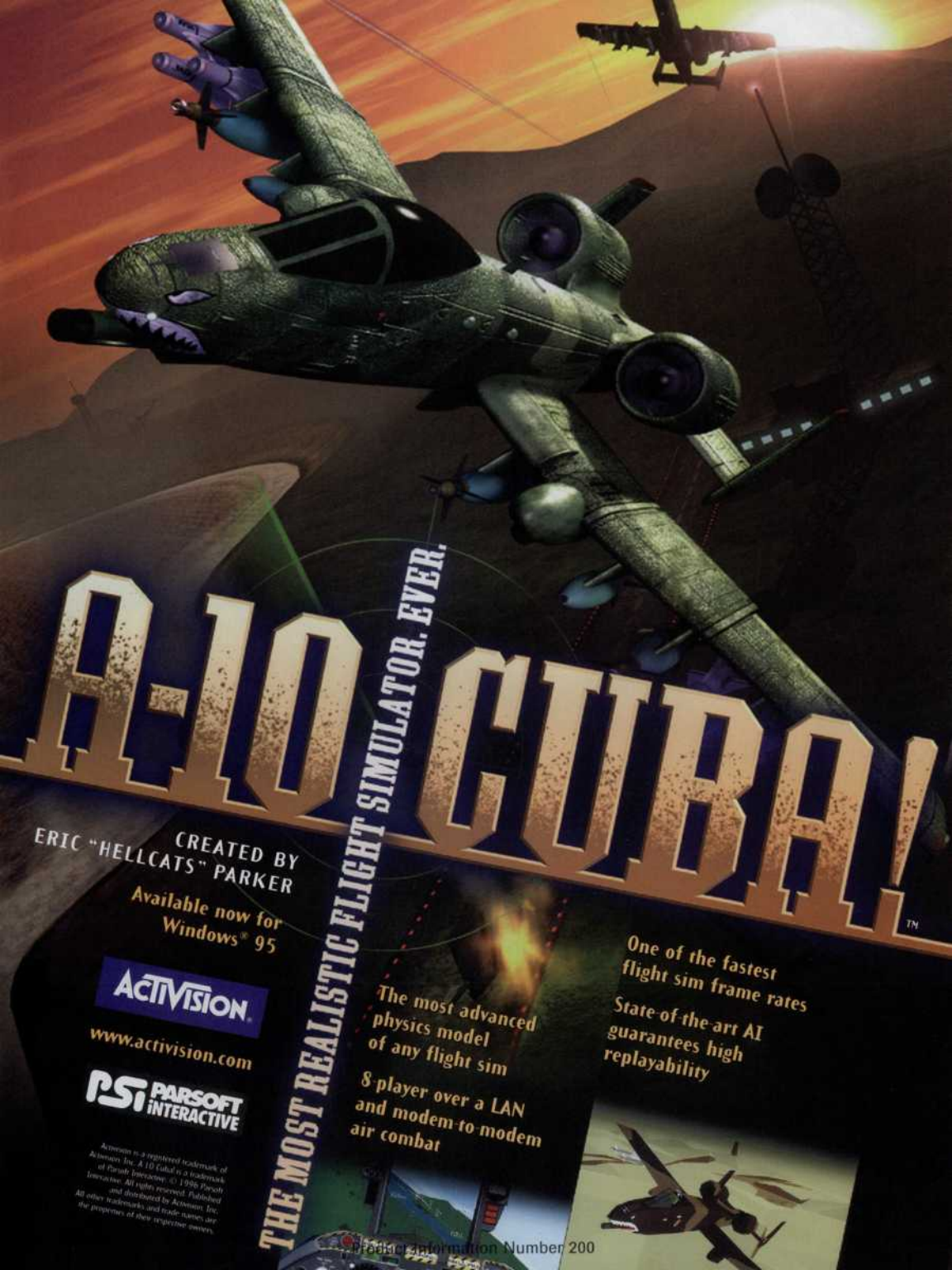
Along with the new pricing plans, AOL has reorganized its corporate structure into three divisions.

AOL Networks will continue to run the company's flagship commercial online service, while AOL Studios will concentrate on developing new content for the services.

Finally, ANS Communications will develop the global infrastructure of the communications network.



America Online maintains a presence on the web, at www.aol.com. You don't have to be a member to explore the website.



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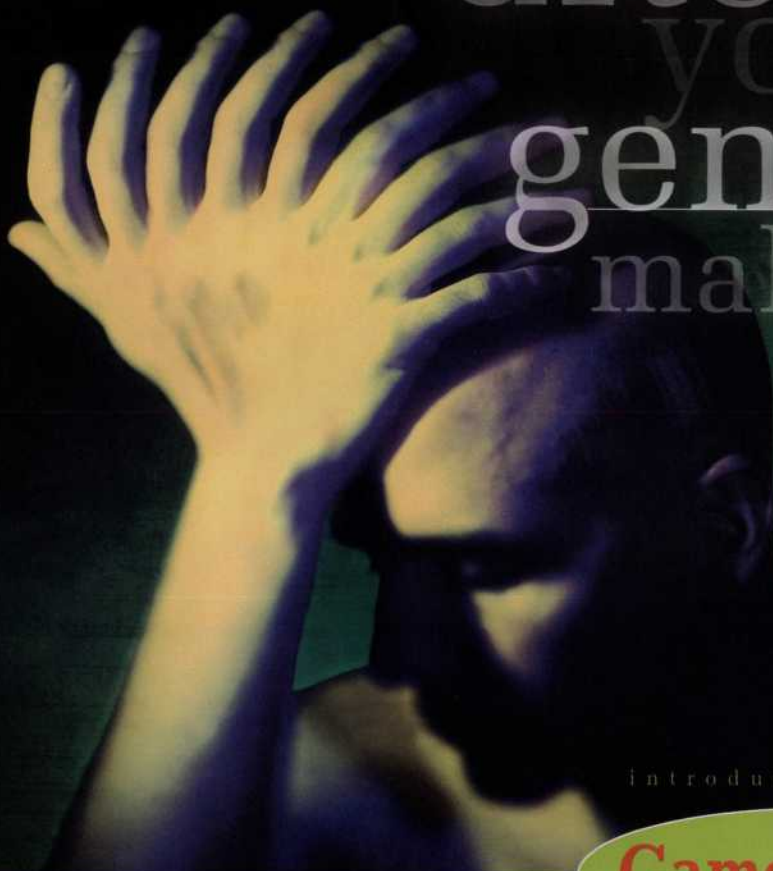
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Heads up!

QuickShot MasterPilot

The MasterPilot takes all those myriad flight sim keyboard commands that are so hard to keep track of and puts them in one, easy-to-use multi-function display. The unit uses an upgradeable cartridge that comes pre-programmed with 32 games, and even has a program set full of Windows 95 shortcut keys. It's not programmable itself — you have to insert a cartridge to load up the pre-programmed keys, but QuickShot promises to create modules for new flight sims as they hit the market. In order to keep track of what the buttons do, it has shortcut cards that label each of them and give you quick reference to what you need to press.

Don't expect to get a lot of use from it in games that have simple to remember keyboard commands, like *Quake* or *WarCraft II*. This peripheral shines in more complex games, like *EF2000* or *Falcon 3.0*. Rather



than looking up the keyboard command in the manual, then punching it into the keyboard, the MasterPilot puts it all at your fingertips. It certainly isn't necessary, but if you've got a killer joystick and want a bit more control over that flight sim, it's a neat little toy.

The MasterPilot is available from Quickshot Technologies, and has a suggested retail price of \$99.95. For more information, call Quickshot at (408) 263-4163, or visit their website at www.quickshot.com.

Space Modems

The New Quicktel II

The new Quicktel II 28.8Kbps modem belongs on the bridge of the U.S.S. *Enterprise*; its science fiction design and banks of pulsing red lights will quickly put anyone in a spacefaring mood.

Built out of anodized aluminum and lined with sixteen red, pulsing LED lights that keep you up to date on your connection's status, the Quicktel II is an imposing presence on any desktop.

It's an external modem; the power switch is quite accessible, and a handy, pull-down LCD status display adds another panel of information to help you track your modem session. A built-in



microphone and an ergonomic design round out the design.

The Quicktel retails for a suggested price of \$229. For more information, contact Logiccode at (800) 735-6442, or visit their website at www.logiccode.com.



Continued from page 68.....
ex-3D Realms programmers, is hard at work on their first project, an add-on package for *Quake* called *The Rift*. There will be 15 new levels and three new weapons, two new monsters, and a new boss. Look for it in the early part of 1997.



RACER
2.711
BADGE
34.4
Psygnosis is bringing some of its hot console racing games to the PC.

Formula 1

Psygnosis' PlayStation blockbuster is being converted to the PC for early 1997. With overhead views, multi-player options, and 30 frames-per-second graphics, this one looks like it'll be a contender. Tracks range from 3.3 km to 7 km in length, and have between 60 and 90,000 polygons and 256 color backdrops. 26 different Formula 1 cars make up the race. Also en route from Psygnosis is another hot console title, *Wipeout XL*, which is being put together for 3dfx-based cards, and *Destruction Derby 2*.

Phoenix Armada

Internet game development continues at a breakneck pace. One of the most ambitious projects we've heard about is *The Phoenix Armada*, being developed by AlterNet Realities. This is a real-time 3D game, being developed exclusively for the Internet, and it will take advantage of Direct3D and MMX technology — so it will most probably require Windows 95, a P100 and 16 megabytes of RAM. The

Continued on page 73

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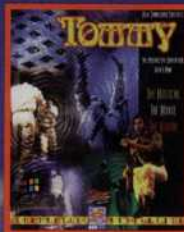
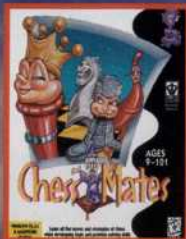
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Product Information Number 193

TV On Your PC

ATI technologies launches ATI-TV

The ATI-TV tuner card is a special add-in card that acts as a TV tuner for your PC. It allows users to keep watch on what's happening on television, right on their Windows desktop, so you can catch your favorite sports team or keep up with the news even as you work.

The card sports a number of interesting features: video wallpaper allows you to slap a live video image onto your desktop as wallpaper, while the various closed-captioning options allow you to set the program up to scan the close-caption feed for pre-selected words (such as your favorite sports team or a NYSE listing), so that new information will become available immediately.

You'll also be able to use the zoom, video, and frame capture utilities to grab video stills or movie clips and save them to your PC, adding close-ups and zooms as you go. "ATI is committed to enabling mainstream users to enjoy the advantage of the convergence of the PC and TV,"



Windows controls allow you to select your channel and other options.

says Henry Quan, ATI's vice president of marketing. "Users will discover really useful apps with the intelligence of the computer combined with the resources available through TV."

The ATI-TV card fits in an ISA slot and connects to one of ATI's graphic cards, such as the 3D Xpression or 3D Pro Turbo PC2TV. The card has a suggested retail price of \$129. For more information, visit their web site at www.atitech.ca or call (905) 882-2600.

Electronic Arts Launches Matchmaker Service

Gamers Can Link Up for Free

Electronic Arts has just announced a new matchmaker service for EA customers.

The new online service will allow gamers to find potential opponents in their area code, so they can meet and play head-to-head over the modem with their favorite EA games. The service is free.

To register on EA's Multi-player Matchup Service, visit their website at www.ea.com, and fill out the registration form. This form asks for basic informa-

tion such as the player's location, the games they want to play, and so on. Once they are registered, players can then search the database to find other players in their areas with the same games.

Games covered by the service include *Madden NFL 97*, *NHL 97*, *PGA Tour 97*, *NATO Fighters*, *Space Hulk*, *Syndicate Wars*, *Hi-Octane*, and *Magic Carpet*.

Upcoming titles will be added as they become available, including *NBA Live 97* and *FIFA Soccer 97*.

Continued from page 71..... plot is science fiction, depicting the flight of humanity, escaping a dying planet on a huge armada of starships for a new world. Thousands of users will be able to play simultaneously. AfterNet hopes to have the game out no later than Winter 1997.



The clans of Horus and Set clash in *Sand Warriors*.

Sand Warriors

From Gremlin Interactive comes *Sand Warriors*, a 3D arcade flight sim set in the distant future. Two powerful houses of warlords — the House of Set and the House of Horus — are struggling for control of the desert planet Tawny. Twenty different ships, ground units, up to 15 wingmen and many other features will give gamers plenty to shoot at, and the blend of ancient Egyptian imagery with that of high-tech sci-fi should offer a refreshing change of pace. *Sand Warriors* should be out in the January of 1997, published by Interplay.



The Lost Vikings are coming back in *Norse by Norsewest*.

Norse by Norsewest

The Lost Vikings are coming back, after three long years. Erik the Swift, Baleog the Fierce, and Olaf the Stout have been kidnapped yet again by

Continued on page 75
PC GAMER January 1997 73

S3d and GTE make FX Fighter Turbo scream.



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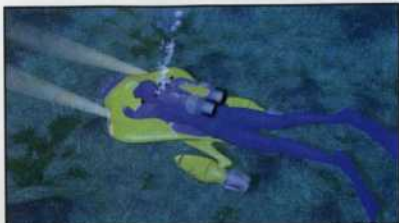
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GAMER'S LEDGE

9
NUMBER NINE

Product Information Number 136



Jean-Michel Cousteau is your guide in *The Sacred Mirror of Kofun*.

The Making of Kofun

One of the most interesting things about the new undersea adventure game, *The Sacred Mirror of Kofun*, is the involvement of Jean-Michel Cousteau, son of famed undersea explorer Jacques Cousteau and a noted diving expert in his own right. Prior to his work on *Kofun*, he and Interactive created an educational CD-ROM called *Cities Under the Sea: Coral Reefs*. Developed by Future Concept, the game is being published in the United States by Enteractive. Recently, he took time out from sleeping with the fishes to talk to the landlubbers at *PC Gamer*.

PC Gamer: How did you first get involved with this project?

Jean-Michel Cousteau: "An old friend, Patrice Chereau, introduced me to the concept of using the CD-ROM technology to create educational and entertaining adventure games. We worked out a relationship with Future Concept/DIP and decided our first project should focus on two of the most exciting dive areas I have ever explored - Truk Lagoon and Palau, both in Micronesia."

PCG: What was your involvement in the project?

Cousteau: "My colleagues and I participated in the development of the storyline and the acquisition of all imagery for presenting the story. I must say it was a wonderfully creative process to come up from a dive and show the Future Concept people video images of what we had just seen, discuss how these images could help us tell the story and then adapt the story, as new scenes and ideas presented themselves to us on the boat. From my point of view, these between-dive creative sessions were as exciting as the dives themselves."

PCG: How much input did you have into designing the adventure?

Cousteau: "We had extensive input in developing the adventure, although I must give credit to Patrice Chereau, who really understood computers and games. Our expertise was in diving, staying alive underwater,

*Continued on page 76:
See Kofun*



Besides Cousteau, you'll work with several other crewmates on your ship.



Continued from page 73

Tomator, the mad alien overlord, and are lost in time. Armed with new rocket boots, light sabers and other gizmos, they have a number of encounters and explore strange worlds, and along the way encounter two new characters: Fang, a werewolf, and Scorch, a dragon.



Look for Interplay's *Fragile Allegiance* early in 1997.

Fragile Allegiance

A new space strategy game is *Fragile Allegiance*, licensed from Gremfin by Interplay. An MS-DOS game, it will feature SVGA graphics, six different alien races, and real-time planetary development. Different micro and macro-management options will let players fiddle as much or as little as they like, and as many as four players can compete in network mode.



Alien oddities abound in *The Realms of the Haunting*.

The Realms of the Haunting

Coming in February from Interplay is *The Realms of the Haunting*, a mix of action and adventure with a horror motif, set in an English village.

PCG

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Jay Wilbur Leaves id

Jay Wilbur, celebrated "biz guy" at id Software, is leaving the company to spend more time with his children. Wilbur is the second senior id staffer to leave in recent months, after the departure of John Romero. "I truly believe I have had one of the coolest jobs available to mankind, and I want to thank you all of you for making my work here a fun-filled adventure," said Wilbur.

Wilbur's chosen successor, Todd Hollenshead, has



been appointed chief executive officer of id Software. Hollenshead's background is as a tax manager at several different firms. "We hand-picked Todd because of his awesome background, his experience at some of the best financial institutions, and his history working with id."

Mike Wilson remains as "biz guy" and director of marketing and distribution. He and Hollenshead will run the business side of the company.

Kofun

Continued from page 75

how a ship functions, marine biology and coral reef ecology. Future Concept knew how to use the power of the computer to create an adventure with all the complexity involved in life and death experiences and a search for the unknown. It was a good blend of non-diving computer and creative types with our divers, marine biologists, and film makers."

PCG: What do you hope people will take from the adventure?

Cousteau: "First of all, we want people to enjoy themselves in a totally foreign environment where they have to face many challenges just to stay alive, as well as solve some mysteries. We believe that you can learn and have fun at the same time, and have created an adventure full of incredible experiences that ensures all who participate will learn something. We have infused the adventure with many interesting elements, focusing on geology, oceanography, marine biology, diving, and naval architecture, but these are not

presented in the normal boring manner, they are part of the real adventure of living and working in the ocean. It is much more like the true-life world of our real expeditions, where we must overcome challenges to explore and solve problems in the sea. It is what keeps us going, and it is always exciting."

PCG: Can a computer game recapture the feeling of the undersea experience?

Cousteau: "For me, no computer can replace the real experience, but how many people will ever get the chance to dive to 150 feet and explore sunken Japanese war vessels? For most people, this adventure will be as close as they could ever get to diving, and I am proud to say this experience will be more realistic than any other medium could offer."

PCG: Do you have plans to do future adventure games?

Cousteau: "Absolutely! We consider this just the beginning and are presently considering a number of other approaches as well as a continuation of the *The Sacred Mirror of Kofun*-type program already produced. We

believe that adventure games are one of the best vehicles to educate young people about the issues confronting the environment and the oceans. Important concepts can be learned while participants in these games have fun being an adventurer and mystery-solver in some of the greatest adventure settings possible."



The plot of *Kofun* revolves around a kidnapped scientist and a mysterious Japanese mirror.

Randomize Warcraft II

New shareware creates random scenarios

The SpiderweBB has just released *CraftGen*, a new utility for *WarCraft II* that will randomly generate scenarios for you. You can insert values such as land-to-water ratio and attack values for units, or add special options such as hidden mountain passes and the use of sea units on land.

"We originally designed *CraftGen* for network play," says Howard Abraham, co-designer of the program. "The chance that

your opponent has seen the map before has been eliminated, because each map is generated randomly."

"We both love the game," adds Jim Siegienski, the other designer. "Blizzard did a great job. *CraftGen* helps you to relieve the feeling you had when you first cracked the shrinkwrap, because everything is new again."

It's a shareware product that's only \$15; the registered version will let you work on all map sizes. You can download it from www.pcgamer.com, or visit the *CraftGen* site at www.cris.com/~Jimware/.

The PC Gamer Playlist

We're often asked by curious readers how the different games make it onto the Playlist. Well, it's an inexact science, but we've come up with some sure signs to tell if a game's an office hit. If copies of the game continue to disappear from our desks and our office shelves, wandering off to be borrowed again and again by ad staffers, salesfolks, and miscreants from other magazines, then surely it's a hit. And if our Man-

aging Editor has to hide all the copies of the game in a time-locked vault, just to get some work out of us, that's another solid clue. But perhaps the most telling indication is when the software companies themselves only send us one copy of their hottest title. We don't why this is, but there seems to be a law that the better the game, the fewer copies we receive. Perhaps the software companies are having the same problems with disappearing games as we are...



One of the current favorites of the PCG staff is Westwood's *Red Alert*.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. <i>C&C: Red Alert</i> | Everyone |
| 2. <i>Daggerfall</i> | Mike, Dan, Jason |
| 3. <i>Syndicate Wars</i> | Todd, Dan |
| 4. <i>NHL 97</i> | Quintin, Todd, Jason |
| 5. <i>MechWarrior 2: Mercenaries</i> | Dan, Mike |
| 6. <i>War Wind</i> | Joe, Dean |
| 7. <i>NASCAR 2</i> | Dan, Todd |
| 8. <i>Quake</i> | Gary, Joe |
| 9. <i>Madden NFL 97</i> | Quintin, Joe, Gary |
| 10. <i>Circle of Blood</i> | Mike, Lisa |



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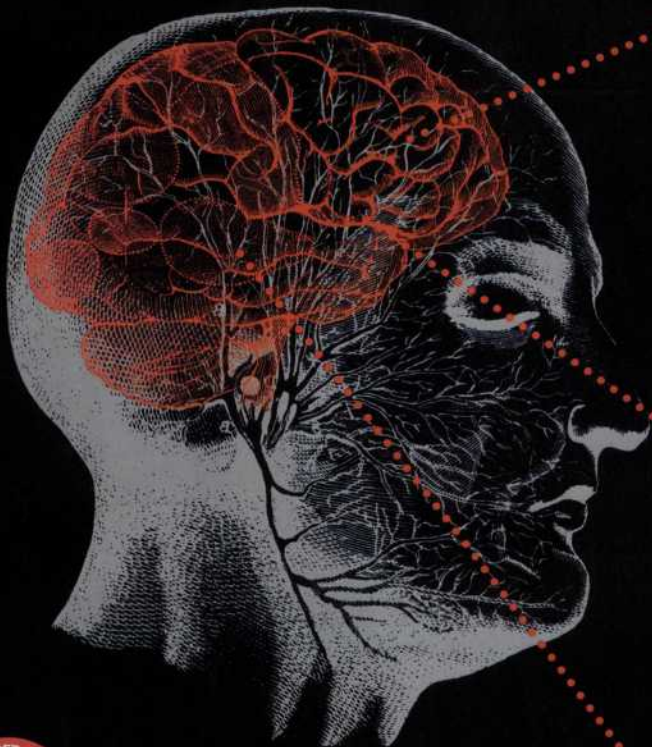


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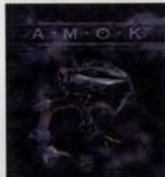
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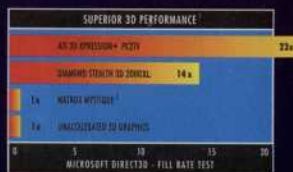
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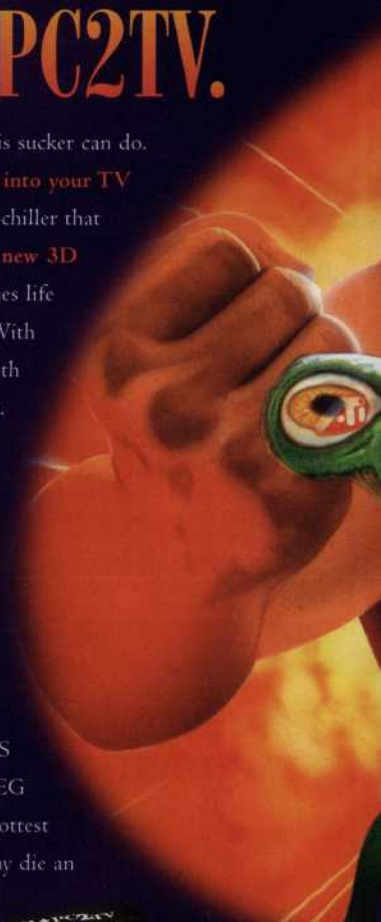
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Product Information Number 208

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ULTIMATE STRATEGY GUIDE '97

One thing's for sure about PC games — they ain't getting any easier. Fortunately, help is at hand in the form of our second annual Ultimate Strategy Guide, so don't be a game victim any longer — it's payback time!

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STAR CONTROL 3

Accolade's *Star Control 3* could take years to work through. Here's a quick rundown of what you need to finish the game.

LOST IN SPACE

When you start *Star Control 3*, all of the League races are strewn across the Kessari Quadrant, and your first job will be to find them all. ICOM (Inter-conferring and Monitoring system) will tell you where the next one is, but here's the list:

Human: Helios 3
Spathi: Goshen 4
VUX: Salacia 2
Pkunk: Arcadia 6
Ur-Quan: Velpunia 6
Syreen: Astarte 1
Mycon: Janus 8
Chmmr: Hypnus 2
Utwig: Fomalhaut 5

DAKTAKLAKPAK SHIPS

You'll run into Daktaklakpak ships as you find the League races. Destroy them all, and once you've cleaned them out of League space, you'll find that their gibberish is actually a language, and you'll have a translator that'll let you communicate with them. Speak carefully, because you'll have to be on at least civil ground with them later in the game.



When the Daktaklakpak try to use the True Name of the Eternal Ones, their ships tend to go out the same way they do — with a pop.

MYCON RAIDS

The Mycon are continuously raided before war with the Hegemonic Crux begins. The raids (from the VUX) happen every 30 days, so be around when this occurs three times in a row to stop them, and you'll have more ships later in the game.

STARS COLLAPSE

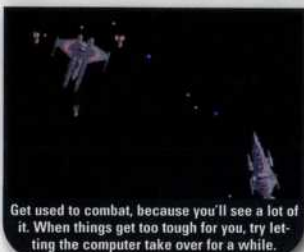
During the course of the game, several star systems will collapse. Make sure you go to the location of the star system and investigate the area as soon as possible. You'll uncover vital clues and possibly meet other races.

ARILOU, SUPOX, AND ORZ

The Arilou will appear after you've been exploring for some time. When they do,



Star systems begin to mysteriously collapse on themselves. Can you stop it before the entire galaxy gives way?



Get used to combat, because you'll see a lot of it. When things get too tough for you, try letting the computer take over for a while.

they'll tell you about the Supox and Quasi Space Portal M (Nyx 1). Go to Portal M, and you'll discover the Orz and a destroyed Supox ship. When you leave the portal, you'll be at Muhlifain 7, where you can find the Orz colony.

THE OTHER RACES

At this point, you can start searching out other life forms in the quadrant. Here's where they are:

Dooq: Adapa 1
Clairconctlar: Cronos 7, Enkidu 7
Harika: Gienah 1, Typhon 3, Eltanin 5
K'tang: Argus 5

OH, THOSE SPATHI

The Spathi never claimed to be brave. After you find the first five Crux races, the Spathi will be threatened, and then will defect to the Crux. If you go to them and threaten them after they've left, they'll be willing spies, telling you all sorts of good dirt on the actions of the Crux.

THAT DARN ULTRON

When the Utwig's Ultron is stolen, you'll have to find it for them. Of course, the first race you suspect is the VUX, but they won't help you out. The Arilou will tell you that the Pkunk are sensitive to the Ultron, so you should talk to them. The Pkunk will direct you to Erato 6, where you'll have to wrestle the Ultron from some VUX Renegades. The Ultron is broken, however, and when you try to give it back to the Utwig, they'll refuse it. Promise to fix it, and take it to Arcadia 6. The Pkunk will tell you to find the Ebon Hinge, the Marble Flange, and the Plate Crystal located on Nebusta 1. However, you really need the Ivory Sheath on Caduceus 4 rather than the Ebon Hinge.



The Xchaggers are unwitting instruments in the plague that affects the Harika and the Yorn.

Get the Ivory Sheath and the Plate Crystal. The Spathi will give you the Marble Flange. Use those three items to repair the Ultron, but since the repair isn't quite right, the Ultwig will still refuse to accept it. The last item you'll need to fix the Ultron will be found later.

THE MYCON'S INNER TURMOIL

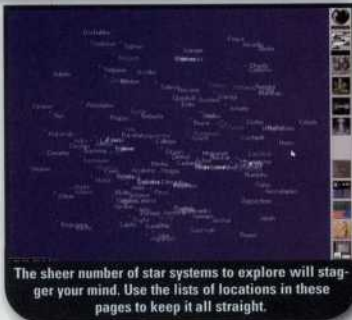
When you find out that the Mycon's Deep Children could be sentient beings wiped out by the Mycon's forced memory implants, League rules compel you to save them. Talk to the Mycon and ask about their Deep Children, and then ask to speak to a Deep Child. Several days later, you'll be able to converse with a Deep Child around Janus 1, and you will then discover that they're sentient. Ask them to join your battlegroup and talk to the Mycon again. They'll get rather angry at you, and defect to the Crux. That's okay.

WHAT'S BIFURCATION?

The Dak will try to convince you that the Chmmr are actually an Eternal One summoning device. They'll want you to bifurcate them, or split them back into the Mmrrmhrm and the Chenjesu. Don't take the bifurcator back to the Chmmr homeworld — nevertheless, the Chmmr will still be bifurcated. Get the sleeping Chenjesu and the damaged Mmrrmhrm parts for safekeeping.

THOSE SILLY PHUNK

After the third star system is destroyed, the Syreen will tell you that the Pkunk are feeling unhappy. Since you can't have the hippie aliens feeling sad, go talk to the Exquivan. Even though they will say they don't know what's going on, you'll find several days later that the



The sheer number of star systems to explore will stagger your mind. Use the lists of locations in these pages to keep it all straight.

mental emanations are coming from Anshar 3. The Exquivan won't let anyone on their planet who doesn't have nothingness of mind, so you'll have to go talk to the Syreen to make a tech team temporarily mindless. The mindless tech team will be able to successfully land on the planet, and remove a Precursor Data Pack from a wrecked ship. It contains the True Name of the Eternal Ones, so don't even think about examining it with your ship's computer.

THE DOOG CAN BE BOUGHT

The Doog are only working for the Crux because they owe them money (something the Spathi will tell you). Go to them and steer the conversation toward buying them out of their debt, and they'll agree. After you buy a colony, ask for their Anti-Matter Containment Grid. After you buy all the Doog colonies, they're officially a League race. The colonies are at:

- Adapa 1
- Melpomene 4
- Proserpina 1
- Chloris 1
- Cerberus 2
- Izanami 2

THE SICK HARIKA

The Harika are sick, and they'll tell you that the Dak are working to cure them. Ask the Dak about the sickness the next chance you get, and they'll tell you don't really want to cure the plague. If you tell the Harika this, they won't believe you. The Spathi will tell you, however, that the Dak actually created the plague. The Dak will mention a microbial war started by the K'tang. Naturally, your next step is to confront the K'tang about this war, and the K'tang will mention Zosma 6. Go there and meet the Xchaggers. Ask these cute little guys to join the League, and they will. Keep asking the Xchaggers about the plague until a tech team is allowed to examine them, and you'll find out that they are indeed the cause of the plague, and the tech team can cure the Harika with an Xchagger Eradicator Serum that will kill all the Xchaggers in the host. However, if the tech team can examine a sick Harika, a cure could be found to save both races. Press the Harika for one of their sick members while refusing to kill the Xchaggers with your current serum. Once you get a sick Harika, you'll need to find something to carry the Xchaggers in. Go back to the Zosma 6 and get a hive ship from the Xchaggers. Several days later, you'll have an Xchagger Absorber. Go to the Harika, tell them you have a cure, and use the Absorber from the orbital screen. Do the same at the other Harika colony (The two colonies are at Gienah 1 and Typhon 3). Now you can convince the Harika to join the League.

CLAIRCONCTLAR SHAME

The Spathi will tell you that the Clairconctlar are a part of the Crux due to a debt of honor. Ask the Clair about their debt, and they'll have no idea what you're talking about. Talk to the K'tang, and they'll tell you the Dak have mind-controlled the Clairconctlar Queen at Warp Station Klashog. Visit the Exquivan, ask about the Clairconctlar, and they'll tell you about the Paloozer Palavar. Tell all this information to the Clairconctlar, and they'll tell you Warp Station Klashog is at Enkido 4C. Go there and create a dig to get the Conc Rock. Eventually, the tech team will uncover Quasi-Space Portal G at Azazel. Enter the portal and destroy the Crux fleet you encounter. Then



Re-evolve a Precursor to uncover information that paints a whole new picture of reality.

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destroy the following LK fleet. Go to the LK homeworld, and they'll demand the Red Spiral Rail to prove you're not Crux. Get the rail from Anteaus 1 and give it to the LK, and they'll give you a Sun Device. Ask them about the Conc Rock, and they'll tell you the Clairconctlar will destroy anyone who breaks one. Go tell the Clairconctlar that you're going to destroy the Conc Rock, and they'll pursue you. Go to Enkido 4C, and wait for the Clairconctlar to arrive. They'll spot their Queen, and then you can ask them to join the League. They'll accept.

AVOID THE PLOXIS

When the Ploxis CEO calls for a meeting, be civil. He'll try to convince you to join the Crux, but as you may already know, it's not a good idea. Refuse his offer.

RAINBOW WORLDS AND THE MMRNMHRM MOTHER ARC

The Clairconctlar will tell you about the Mmrmhrm Mother Arc. Go to the Spathi, and they'll tell you that the Dak probably dumped it on a Rainbow World, where they do most of their dumping. The Rainbow Worlds are at:

- Alula 1
- Calypso 1
- Euterupe 1
- Ganesha 1
- Indra 1
- Kentaraus 1
- Moria 1
- Penates 1
- Rudra 1

If you go to one of these worlds, you'll discover an abandoned Owa fleet. Promise to carry a message to their homeworld, then defeat them in honorable battle. You'll find you can't explore the Rainbow Worlds because of the anti-matter waste. Talk to the Harika, and they'll tell you the Owa homeworld is Mnemosyne 1. Talk to the Owa respectfully, and they'll give you the Anti-Matter Explorer Vessel and the Anti-Matter Scoop. Go to Alula 1 and find the Data Pack that gives the secret origin of the Dak and information on the Celestial Un-



The Daktaklakpak overload when they learn of the True Name of the Eternal Ones. Use it to get information and other items from them.



You K'tang are really teeny tiny little pathetic little meal worms! You only looked big when you wore power armor! You're not only stupid, you're puny too! Do you surrender, K'tang King?

It figures that the K'tang are really slimy little worms. Convince the king of your power, and you'll have all the tools you'll need to overthrow the Hegemonic Crux.

Devolver (CUD). Then go to Calypso 1 and find the Mmrmhrm Mother Arc.

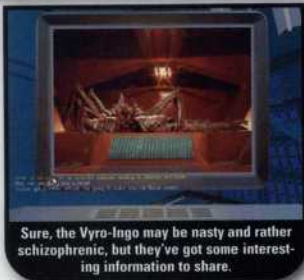
Go to the Syreen and ask them to wake up the sleeping Chenjesu. Then talk to the Xchaggers and ask them to perform micro-surgery on the Mmrmhrm Mother Arc. Go back to Janus 2 (Chmmr colony) and activate the Sun Device, and you'll rejoin the Chmmr. You will then find out that the Ploxis Precursor vessel is at Highpoint.

INTRODUCING... THE PRECURSORS!

Once you have the data pack with the True Name of the Eternal Ones and the secret of the Dak, find a Dak fleet and ask them about the Celestial Un-Devolver (CUD). You'll find out, after repeated conversations, that the CUD is on Begregron 2, and you'll need a Variance Key to use it. Trade the True Name of the Eternal Ones for a Variance Key. Your tech team will discover the identity of the devolved Precursors. Get one from Zosma 6, take it to Begregron 2 and use the Variance Key to activate the CUD and re-evolve a Precursor. Talk carefully to the Precursor, and you'll get a Signal Deflector and Sentience Notation Device. They'll also tell you how to use the Plasma Regroover, which you can then use to free all the Deep Children from Mycon colonies.

CLEANING UP THE GALAXY

At this point, it's a good idea to use the Anti-Matter Scoop, the Owa Explorer Vessel, and the Anti-Matter Containment Grid to clean up the Rainbow Worlds. Refer to the list mentioned previously for their location. Once cleaned, the potential for hyper-space travel will return, as will



Sure, the Vyro-Ingo may be nasty and rather schizophrenic, but they've got some interesting information to share.

the Rainbow Worlds' smoothing effect on the time-space continuum.

SUBDUCE THE MIGHTY-THEWED KING

Since you'll still have the Variance Key and the True Name of the Eternal Ones after the Dak self-destruction, find another Daktaklakpak fleet and ask them about destroying the K'tang. Trade them the True Name of the Eternal Ones for the Overlord-Seeking Larvicide Missile the Dak built. Launch the missile from the orbital screen on Argus 5, and the K'tang King will tell you the secret of the K'tang, secrets about the Crux and the Ploxis, and the code to reinitialize the Daktaklakpak. You can then reinitialize the Dak from the orbital screen using the data pack recovered from Alula 1, and orbit Pauguk 4 to recover a fleet of empty Ploxis ships.

THE VUX AND VYRO-INGO

After a while, the Arilou will tell you about a race called the Vyro-Ingo on

Izanagi 5. Go there and tell them the Ploxis called them genetically flawed, and they'll be enraged enough to join the League. A few days later, when the tech team discovers the Vyro-Ingo Encrustation matrix, talk to the LK about it. Then talk to the LK about the VUX Encrustation Matrix when it's discovered. You'll learn how to join the two matrices. Join them, and go to Salacia 2 with a Vyro-Ingo ship. Split the Vyro-Ingo ship into its own fleet, and send it to meet a VUX fleet. Talk to the VUX, and they'll give you the Brass Ratchet that will fix the Ultron. Give the fixed Ultron to the Utwig.

PLOXIS REBELS

When the tech team discovers another Quasi-Space Portal, F, at Xipe 1, go through the portal and create a dig site to recover some frozen Ploxis. Put them in the empty Ploxis ships, and you'll learn quite a bit about the Ploxis society. A few days after the discovery of Portal F, the tech team will discover the Sentience Collator.



The Ploxis Rebels are instrumental in destroying the Ploxis hold on the Crux, and soon after finding them, you can end the war.

ENDING THE WAR

With the Anti-Matter Containment Grid at 100% capacity, the coordinates to Highpoint, and the crewed Ploxis ship, the war can end. Go to Highpoint and use the Anti-Matter Containment Grid to blow the Ploxis Shield. Even though the Ploxis will threaten to use the Eternal One bomb, don't give in. Battle and defeat the Ploxis CEO in his Precursor ship, and the Crux will surrender to you.



Once you make it to the system of Highpoint, using the Ploxis Rebels to aid you, the war will soon be over.



Gather the sentience you need, and you can fill the Sentience Silo, allowing the Eternal Ones to feed so the galaxy will be safe for a few more eons.

THOSE DARN ORZ

After the Crux is defeated, the Orz will try to take over the League using mental powers. If you didn't tell the Syreen to stop protecting League members, they will be defeated. The Orz will then announce the coming of the Heralds.

WELCOME THE HERALDS

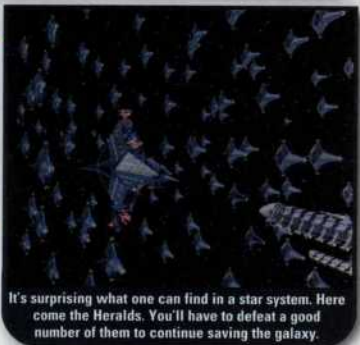
The Heralds will soon arrive and start destroying colonies. Intercept and destroy them, and you'll discover they're announcing the coming of the Eternal Ones. You'll learn a lot from your tech team sent to investigate their ships. The Heralds will give you a Sentience Thresher, and your tech team will discover it is highly inefficient. Use the Sentience Thresher with the Sentience Collator, Sentience Notation Device, and the Ebon Hinge to create a Sentience Collector.

PASS THE COLLECTION TRAY

Start collecting sentient energy from every race you can by going to their homeworlds. The Arilou will ask you to flee the quadrant, but you should stay. Once you've collected enough sentient energy, deposit it in the Sentience Silo on Highpoint 7. The Eternal Ones will feed from the silo and leave peacefully. With the war over and the Eternal Ones safely dealt with, the game is over, and you have won. Congratulations!

RACES THAT WILL DONATE:

Human: Helios 3
Spathi: Goshen 4
Plunk: Arcadia 6
Chmr: Hypnus 2
Ur-Quan: Velpunia 6
Syreen: Astarte 1



It's surprising what one can find in a star system. Here come the Heralds. You'll have to defeat a good number of them to continue saving the galaxy.

Doog: Adapa 1
Clairconctlar: Cronos 7 or Enkido 7
Harika: Giengah 1 or Typhon 3
Exquivan: Anshar 3
Xchagger: Zosma 6

RACES THAT WILL DONATE IF YOU COMPLETE THEIR STORY:

VUX: Salacia 2
Mycn Deep Children: Janus 8
Utwig: Fomalhaut 5
LK: Quasi-Space Portal G 2
Owa: Mnemosyne 1

RACES THAT WILL NOT OR CANNOT DONATE:

Arilou
Dak
Heralds
Orz
Vyro-Ingo
Mycn
K'tang
Ploxis Rebels

BY MICHAEL WOLF

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STUNNED

EVEN US

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— *PC Games*

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— *Computer Games Strategy Plus*

"...Timelapse's carefully crafted story line makes it a game worth completing."

— *Newsweek*



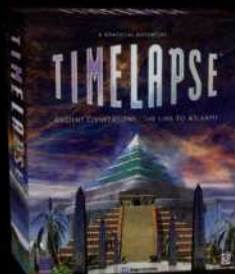
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GTE Entertainment

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before 90 tons of ice stops you.*

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— Computer Gaming World

"Nothing short of awesome."
— Next Generation

"Incredibly detailed re-creation."
— Newsweek

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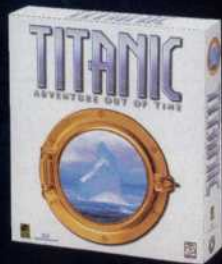
It's the Titanic's fateful night and you play a British agent – the key figure entangled in a race against time to change the course of 20th century history.



Advanced 360° movement puts you on board an historically accurate SGI rendition of the Titanic as you search for clues and secret documents in fully explorable 3D environments.



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Extensive recruiting feature lets you rebuild your team after each season of play.

64 Division I Teams

Extensive Recruiting

3D SGI Graphics

Network and Modem - to - Modem Play

March Madnesssm

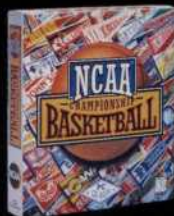
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— Computer Game Review

"...NCAA Championship Basketball combines arcade style 5-on-5 hoops play with a sophisticated sim of Division I coaching life."

— PC Games



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GTE Entertainment

Product Information Number 157

HARVESTER

If you've got the stomach for it, we've got the complete solution to Merit Studios' supernatural adventure.

DAY ONE

Open the dresser and get the quarter and the pen. Head into the living room and talk to your brother. Enter the kitchen and talk to Mom. Go back to the living room, pick up the newspaper, and go outside. Give the newspaper to the paperboy and talk to him about his job. Head down to the burned-out newspaper building. Take the shovel, then use it on the ashes. Get the flyer for the bake sale, then get the button. Go to the Post Office and give the button to the postman. Choose the second response, "Cut the crap..." Go to the General Store, give Mrs. Phelps a quarter, and take the porno magazine. Go back to the police station, and give the porno magazine to Loomis. Open the desk drawer and get the checkbook and the key. Unlock the evidence room and



Watch out — Mr. Pottsdam's hungry for some meat, and he has a bone to pick with you.

go inside. Take the gas can, the sneakers, and the camera. Go back to the post office and give the gas can to the postmaster. This will convince him to give you the lodge application, so fill it out with the pen and take it to the lodge.

DAY TWO

Take the newspaper and give it to the boy outside. Talk to him, give him the sneakers, and accept the key to the high school broom closet. Go to the school, use the key on the lock, and take a picture of the principal and the teacher. Tell them that they're busted and accept the baseball bat in trade for the photo. Go to the lodge and talk to the hooded guy to get your first assignment. Travel to the Pottsdam's house and ask Mrs. Pottsdam's permission to see Stephanie. Head upstairs and enter the bathroom. Open up the medicine chest and take the Ora-Lube. Go into Stephanie's bedroom and talk to her. Go back to the Post Office, use the Ora-Lube on the manhole key, and take it.

NIGHT TWO

Go to the Johnson's house, and use the manhole key on the manhole cover. Go down into the sewer and use the shovel to bust a hole in the wall. Go through it, and emerge into the garage. Take the furniture dolly. Look at the tool table and take the screwdriver. Scratch the Tucker



Tsk, tsk, tsk. When you acquire the key to the broom closet, you'll get a good photograph of the principal improving teacher-faculty relations.

with the screwdriver, and exit. Head to the lodge, where the hooded guy will give you your second assignment.

DAY THREE

Once again, take the newspaper, and give it to the boy outside. Go to the school and trigger the fire alarm. Now go to the fire station and steal the ladder. Travel to the meat plant and ask O'Reilly for some meat. Get the slip and head back to your house. In the living room, use the dolly on the cabinet to reveal the alarm switch. Turn it off and exit outside. Use the screwdriver on the window bars and enter the room. Talk to Dad and give him the permission slip to sign. Head back to the meat plant, give the slip to O'Reilly, and take your meat.

CHEAT

CODES

The world of *Harvester* can be a nasty, unforgiving place — especially for mere mortals such as yourself. So, just whip out a couple of these cheat codes, and those evil critters will topple over like dominoes.

Type these in during gameplay:

- MURDERER: All weapons
- SON OF SAM: Useful objects
- BRUCE: God mode
- NICK: Replenished hit points
- DUSTIN: Warp to Lodge, level one
- BOSTON STRANGLER: Warp to Lodge, level two
- HELTER SKELTER: Warp to Lodge, level three
- CHARLES MANSON: Warp to the end of the game

NIGHT THREE

Go to the fire station and go inside. Give the meat to the dog (this puzzle is required in every adventure game) and look at the sheet. Talk to the male model, then use the ladder on the wall to get the cloth.

DAY FOUR

Take the newspaper and give it to the kid outside. Travel to the lodge and give the cloth to the hooded guy. Go to the school and talk to Mrs. Whaley. Go to the cemetery, go to the picnic area, and take the matches. Move the table and then use the shovel on the grave. Take the girl's purse, then head over to Edna's Diner. Take the cake cover. Open up the drawer and take the screwdriver. Give Edna the purse and take the reward money. Go to the General Store, give the reward to Mrs. Phelps, and take the tape and the wrench.

NIGHT FOUR

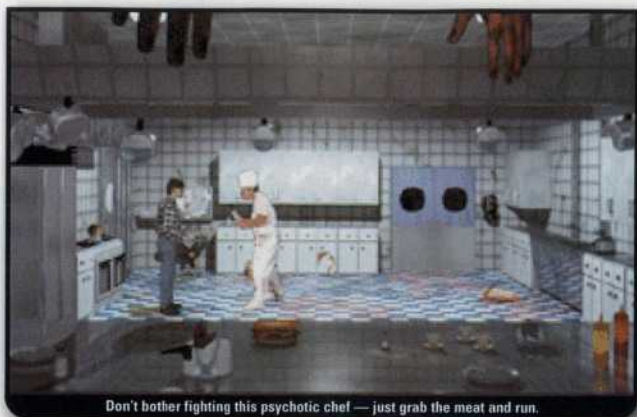
Go to the barber shop. Tape up the door and break the glass with the shovel. Deactivate the alarm by turning off the switch on the wall. Use the flathead screwdriver on the barber pole.

DAY FIVE

Take the newspaper and give it to the kid outside. Take the barber pole back to the hooded guy at the lodge. Go to the mortuary, open the casket, and use the camera on it. Go back to the mortuary lobby and go through the door on the left to the embalming room. Threaten Mr. Moynahan and accept his gift of glue.



That's Colonel Buster Monroe, in charge of Harvest's nuclear arsenal. Whatever you do, don't talk to him about Communism.



Don't bother fighting this psychotic chef — just grab the meat and run.



Blow away the wasp woman in the abandoned house, and you're treated to this grisly scene.

NIGHT FIVE

Head on over to Edna's diner. Tape up the door and smash it with the shovel. Use the glue on the cake cover and seal up the smoke detector with it. Turn on the grill and use the matches to start the fire. Exit.

DAY SIX

Take the newspaper and give it to the

newspaper kid. Go to the lodge and talk to the hooded guy. Go to the Pottsdam's house and go upstairs. After conversing with Mr. Pottsdam, take the lodge invitation. Go to the lodge, where the hooded guy will instruct you to get the skull and spinal cord. Go to the cemetery crypt, use the ladder on the crypt, and use the shovel to break in through the glass roof. Descend into the crypt and proceed to kill the devil dog. Open the casket and take the skull and spinal cord. Leave the cemetery and go to the lodge, then present the skull and spinal cord to the hooded guy.

LODGE ONE

Talk to the man. Walk south and fall down the slide. Explore the bowels, and kill any creatures that stand in your way with the baseball bat or wrench. Find the room with the eyeballs, and destroy the eye monster. Use the ceremonial knife on the large eyeball and step through. Go to the dining room and kill the monsters, then go right to the bar. Drink the beer and destroy your evil mirror image. Open the cash register to get some money. Go back to the main hall, hang a left, and give the attendant \$5 to clean your clothes. Kill him. On the toga rack, move the toga to the second peg, which will open up a secret doorway. Step through and grab the scythe and shotgun shells. Go back to the dining room and enter the kitchen. Talk to the chef and take the two chunks



The sheriff won't be much help — but boy, does he sure enjoy his apple pie.

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Product Information Number 272



The Evil Clown is easily dispatched with a scythe — don't let the little bugger get close, or he'll put his chainsaw to good use.

of meat. Go back to the cloak room, hit the switch, and go through the door. Throw the meat in the water and walk to the left. In the bathroom, grab the weed killer. Walk back to the bridge and throw the other chunk of meat in the water. Walk to the right and return to the bar. Go through the swinging doors on the right to the room with the fountain. Use the weed killer on the Venus Fly Trap, then open the fountain. Pick up the key inside (it's hidden near the reflection of your left shoulder), then use the key on the hole on the east wall. Enter the room and kill the monster inside. Climb the rope.

LODGE TWO

Interrogate the art patron, then kill him. Go to the left and kill the statue creature, who will give you a key. Moving two more screens to the left, kill the second statue. Unlock the door with the key and enter. Go through the doors in the center of the screen into the library and talk to the librarian. Exit the library. Walk south and go through the doors. In the ballroom, kill the janitor and take his nailgun. Exit to the hallway and walk to the left. From this screen, walk north and go through the door with the two ashtrays on each side. Talk to the Chessmaster, kill the big wooden chess piece, and pick the key out of the Chessmaster's brain. Exit back to the



Don't waste your ammo — a few well-placed whacks with a baseball bat will put this arachnid to rest.



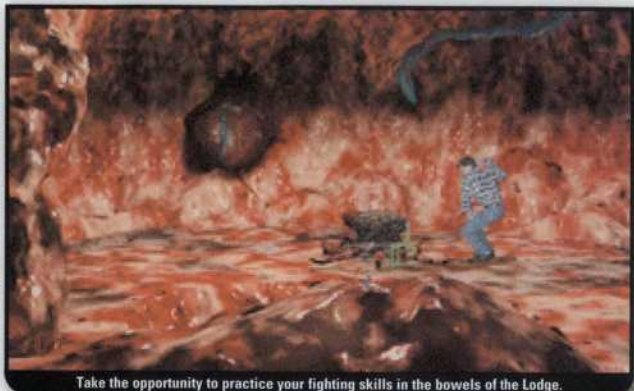
After Ceril the coat-boy cleans your clothes for you, feel free to pump him full of lead.

hallway. Go left, go through the door, and kill Mr. Cain. Go back to the library and give the librarian the book. Go back into the ballroom and use the Chessmaster's key on the locked door. Go inside and blow away the evil clown. From here, go back to the hallway and locate the theater doors. Use the clown's key on the doors and enter the auditorium. Take both flags at the side of the stage and slip through the curtains. Grab the three wooden planks. Go through the door at the right into the lounge. Kill the zombie and take the lighter fluid. At the mask puzzle, angle

the left mask so that it is upside down and point the mask on the right to the upper-left hand corner. Enter through the secret door into the laundry room. Exit south, then through the door, into the boiler room. Go to the left, turn off the valve, and remove the rusted pipe with the wrench. Get the piece of pipe on the ground and get the two curved pieces from the screen to the left. Combine the three pieces of pipe in your inventory, use it on the boiler, and turn on the valve. Get the boiler room key and unlock the door to the left. Dispatch the zombie and walk through the door. Use the two wooden planks on the lava to form a bridge and walk left into the cave. When the roof starts lowering, place both flags on the two stalagmites. Walk through the door to the right. Kill the security guy and go upstairs.

LODGE THREE

Get the pack of nails and exit to the left. Kill Elvis and the suit. Go through the door. Kill the three zombies who attack you. Go through the door. When you talk to the pastor, tell him that you believe in God, he resides in Heaven, he frolics with the Wombats, uses his Staff, and is an all-expense paid trip to Brazil. Exit through the door on the left. Eat the sea rations and exit the hut. Kill the soldier, and go through the door on the right. Blow away Mr. Pottsdam. Exit to the north. Tell the prostitutes that they're skanky, and take out the one who attacks you. Exit to the left. Talk to Mrs. Vain and kill her. Exit to the left. Whack the guy on the table three times, and go through the north door. Blast the beggar and go through the door on the left. In the arena, kill the Centurion and let the old folks live. Exit to the right. Kill the black and white gunslinger and Robby the Robot. Enter the television. In the Inner Sanctum, kill the Grand Poobah. Watch the cinematic sequence and choose your destiny — stay with Stephanie or return to the real world.



Take the opportunity to practice your fighting skills in the bowels of the Lodge.

BY COLIN WILLIAMSON

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have invaded.**

**And our only defense
is you.**



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THE LOST FILES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES: CASE OF THE ROSE TATTOO

EA's adventure has as many twists as one of Sir Doyle's books. Here's our guide to some of the more perplexing mysteries.

This graphic adventure mystery can get pretty tough, so we put the PC Gamer strategy crew on the job to get some answers. The solutions here are for the most difficult problems you'll encounter.

Let's start off with some general tips. As with any graphic adventure, be sure to ask every question available to you and talk to every character you can interact with. You never know who may have some valuable information. When you're playing as Dr. Watson, be sure to talk to Wiggins, the friendly street urchin outside 221B Baker Street. He'll start you off in the right direction. When you're playing as Holmes, stop and ask Dr. Watson questions while you're visiting with other characters. Watson will often say something to help the conversation along or take it down a different path.

Be sure to pick up everything you can and keep it in your inventory. Also, periodically check on your inventory and see if the status of an item has changed. It could help your progress. For example, you start off with Holmes'

business card, but all you can do is look at it. However, at the right moment in the game, you'll be able to give it to some one. You won't know this unless you check on the inventory items from time to time and notice that the business card has two options ("look" and "give") instead of one ("look").

Another useful item is Watson's journal. This is a record of every conversation you have during the game. The journal can be saved as a text file and printed out. It's also a good idea to keep your own "journal" of observations and descriptions of characters and places, which are not recorded in Watson's journal.

Now that we've covered the easy stuff, let's dive into puzzle solutions, listed here in sequential order. Space prevents us from listing every solution, so we've narrowed it down to just the hard stuff that you'll probably have the most trouble with. Remember, the case starts off with you playing as Watson. Holmes' brother, Mycroft, has been injured in an explosion



After your first visit to the Diogenes Club, use the lab table at 221B Baker Street to analyze the residue you found on the clock face at the club.

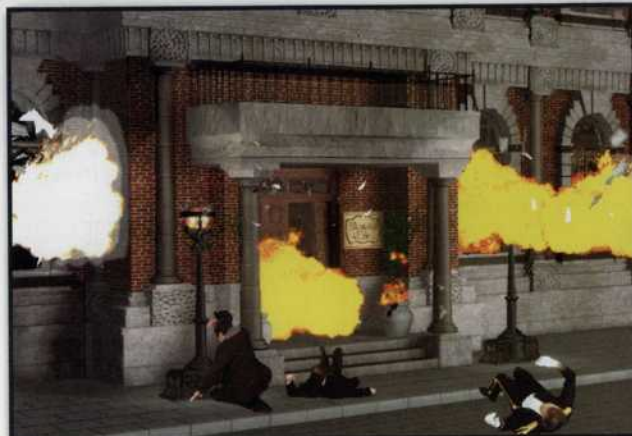
at his club, and Holmes is too despondent to investigate the incident.

ENTICING HOLMES

Your first task is to gather enough evidence to prove to Holmes that the investigation is a worthy cause, so Holmes will join you in solving the case. Your trip to Scotland Yard won't prove very useful except for some suspicious tidbits about the explosion (from the guard posted out front). The same thing happens when you visit the Diogenes Club to take a look at the scene of the crime; the guard won't let you inside. What to do? Go visit Mycroft in the hospital. The Matron there is pretty unfriendly and won't let you see him, so tell her you're going to visit your old pal in the morgue. Dr. McCabe, the coroner. You'll have access to the new patient ward from the morgue. Go talk to Mycroft. His ramblings aren't too helpful, so distract the Nurse by having her go get Mycroft a glass of water so you can search Mycroft's belongings. Take Mycroft's ring — it's a membership ring for the Diogenes Club and will get you in the front door.

At the club, search everything. You'll notice a small clock face covered with a suspicious residue. Gather some of the residue and analyze it back at the lab table at 221B Baker Street. Use the sulfide to test the residue, and a small explosion should be the result.

Now you finally have the evidence you need to lure Holmes out of his bedroom and out onto the London streets.



When the Diogenes Club explodes, Holmes' brother Mycroft is seriously injured. Holmes is too upset about his brother to investigate, so it's up to you, as Watson, to start the inquiries.

GETTING INSIDE SCOTLAND YARD

Now playing as Holmes, you'll want to see Inspector Lestrade at Scotland Yard. The guard still won't let you in. Go talk to Augie, the street gambler that the guard has lost a lot of money to playing the game "3-card Monte." Play a game with Augie, and you'll soon discover that Augie's cheating by palming the card. Let the guard know that Augie's been cheating, and he'll be grateful enough to let you in to the Yard. Once inside, Inspector Lestrade won't talk to you until you discover that the man in the holding cell is not drunk, he's actually suffering from epilepsy. Have Watson say that the man is epileptic and confirm it by looking it up in the medical book. The Inspector will then respect you and talk to you about the Diogenes Club case.

INSPECTING THE DIOGENES CLUB

Search everything again. Ignore Officer's Forbes' rules about not touching anything. You'll eventually have to get rid of him by having Watson distract him. Once he's gone, you can go to the lounge and shift the beam in the right corner with a chain you find near the fireplace in the middle of the room. With the beam out of the way, you'll find a steel spring that you need.

GETTING INFORMATION FROM MYCROFT

Next, go visit Mycroft again and get new information from him. In order to get to the new patient ward, you'll have to distract the Matron by rolling the patient in the hallway down the hall. She'll follow him and you can go to the morgue. While you're in the morgue, examine the body. It's from the explosion and contains useful clues. Once in the ward,



A visit with Professor Dewar is a good idea. Be sure to give him the silver spring you found at the Diogenes Club so he can analyze it.

Mycroft's ramblings will make more sense to you. Mycroft reveals that there is an account of the situation hidden at his flat. Take the receipt from Mycroft (it's on his medical chart) and give it to the Matron so she will give you Mycroft's effects. You'll need them to get inside the flat.

At the flat, the doorman won't let you in until you talk to the cab driver, who turns out to be an ex-constable and will vouch for you and tell the doorman to let you in. Inspect everything. You'll find a foolscap that you can't figure out. Here's the solution: the letters in the first line stand for the letter that precedes it in the alphabet; for example, "B" means "A". The second line is a play on words and translates into H₂O and BTU — water and heat. Take the foolscap to the bedroom and heat it with the candle and dunk it in water. The following words appear: "See Books in Greek." Bible is the Greek word for book, so go look in Mycroft's Bible in his living room. You'll find another piece of paper that appears to be blank. Go to Mycroft's desk and pick up the pen. You'll figure out that he

used invisible ink on the paper.

Back at 221B Baker Street, take the paper to the lab table and use iodine on it. Words will appear, and the whole situation will be explained. It seems that a chemical formula for a military bomb was stolen from the Ministry, and some of Mycroft's club members were less than concerned about the crime. Mycroft was suspicious of these blokes, and suspicious of just about everybody, so you can't go to the police. There are a few suspects listed, and a mention of a Professor Dewar, so you need to go visit them.

TALKING TO THE SUSPECTS

You'll find the suspect's addresses in the London Directory over at your desk at 221B Baker Street. When you visit them, talk to every one and go every where you can. At Lord Lawton's house, be sure to go up the stairs. At the Silverbridge's, notice that a young boy lives at the house but is nowhere to be found. At Pratt's, talk to the land lady and find out that Pratt is a shady character.

When you visit Professor Dewar, have him look at the spring you found at the Diogenes Club. He won't have immediate results, but be sure to look inside the stove in the back corner. You'll find what looks like a copy of the chemical formula that's lost.

IDENTIFYING THE CORPSE

Upon your return to 221B Baker Street, you'll receive a telegram from Inspector Lestrade. He needs your help in identifying a John Doe corpse. Let Watson talk you in to going to investigate. Talk to Needhem, the river man who found the body; talk to Lestrade; go to the morgue to see the body and clothes. Go back and talk to Needhem. Give him the watch from the body, and he'll tell you that he saw the murder take place. Examine the site of the crime with your bulls-eye lantern. Use the gaff hook to retrieve a



On the way to see Mycroft at the hospital, stop by the morgue. This body, recovered from the scene of the crime at the Diogenes Club, will give you some valuable clues.



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watch fob and a button. Take the fob to the lab table at 221B Baker Street and use the "Royal Water" on it. The inscription will tell you the victim's age, which is essential to know. Since you know that the victim's tie was an "old school" tie, and you've seen the Rose Tattoo on the victim, it leads you to believe that the victim was connected with Cambridge University. Talk to Fleming, a Maudlin College porter, and have Watson give him a potent potable. He'll tell you that the victim was one of Mycroft's suspects, Thomas Pratt.

INVESTIGATING PRATT

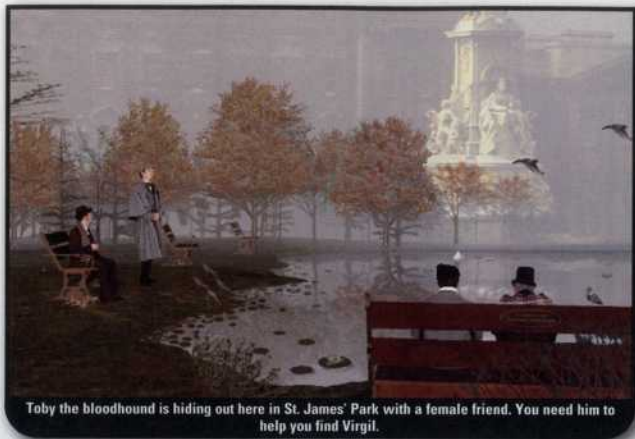
Back at Pratt's apartment, go ahead and check out the fireplace in the bedroom, but don't forget to search the work desk in the studio. Be sure to take the hat pin you find there. You'll find evidence of Pratt's involvement with the stolen chemical formula document. He definitely stole the document, but you don't know why or for whom yet. Go talk to Pratt's friends and acquaintances. You won't find anything too useful at the Weary Punt gin mill, so concentrate on Neville's Bathhouse. You'll run in to Eldridge Whitney, one of Mycroft's suspects. He yields only minor information.

Go to Lord Lawton's house and question him. He'll admit to knowing Pratt, but that's about it. But Lawton will give up Avery Fanshawe. Talk to Jenkins, Lawton's butler. He's a much more friendly bloke. Once at Fanshawe's, use Fred to distract Hodgkins and then give some birdseed to Fanshawe. He'll tell you about Agnes Ratchet, who works at the Ministry, from which the chemical formula document was stolen.

You'll find Ratchet while exploring the Spitalfields in the East End. Go to the grocer's and distract the security guard by buying something from the top shelf. Look in the copybook for Ratchet's whereabouts. When you find her, you'll have to prove that you're Mycroft's brother before anyone will talk. Also,



At 66 Devereaux, you'll find Virgil and a mysterious dead woman. Take the woman's bracelet and analyze it at the lab table at 221B Baker Street.



Toby the bloodhound is hiding out here in St. James' Park with a female friend. You need him to help you find Virgil.

buy some coffee from the store and brew her husband a nice cuppa by the fire. He'll be more friendly to you and let you talk to Ratchet. She'll tell you that Pratt admitted to her that he stole the document and that he asked her to return it to the Ministry.

DISCOVERING THE DOCUMENT

Whitney at the Ministry is none too friendly. Show him the note that Mycroft sent you summoning you to the Diogenes Club before it blew up. This helps soften Whitney up, but not enough for him to let you see the returned document. Start a fire in the mountain of paper refuse to distract him. Take the document back to 221B Baker Street and analyze it at the lab table. After some thorough checking, you'll discover that this document has been photographically reproduced.

RESCUING THE BOY

Go visit Silverbridge. His reaction to

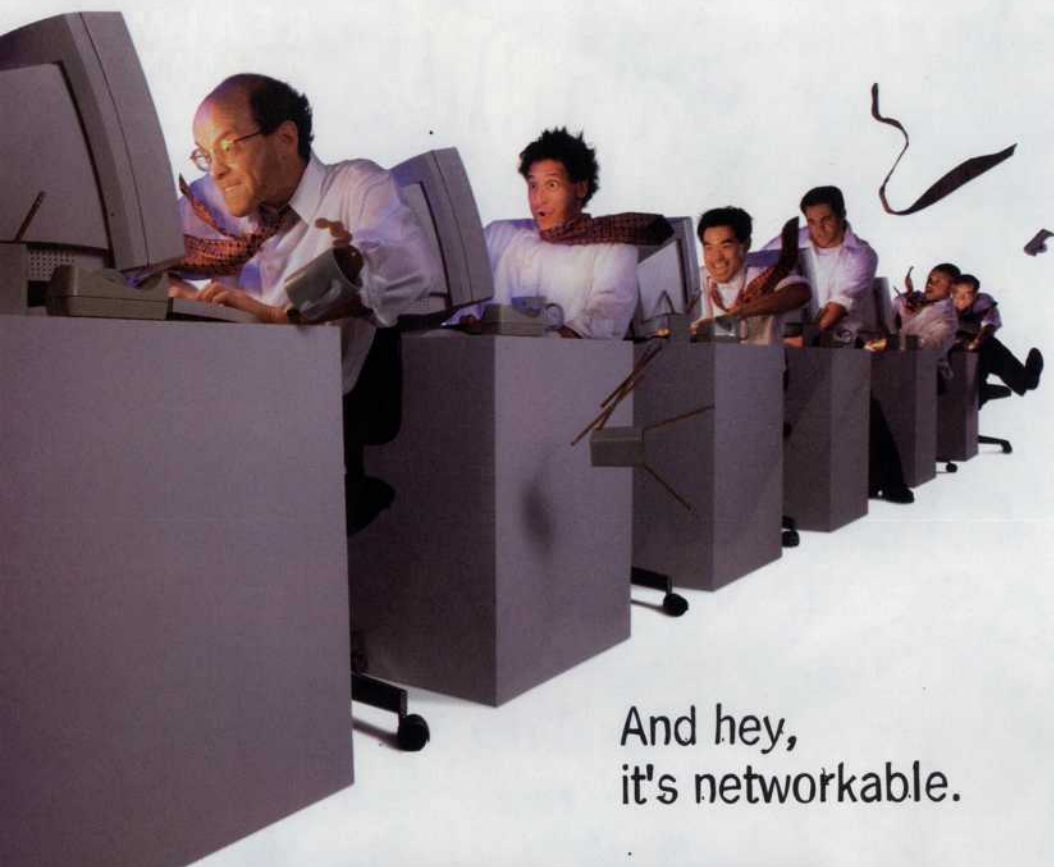
Pratt's death is strange. Remark upon Silverbridge's son and notice the chess set. Use your lead pencil to get a rubbing from an inscription off the table. Go ahead and make a move on the chess table to open a secret chamber in the desk. You'll find a ransom note explaining that Silverbridge's son has been kidnapped. The note threatens Silverbridge, preventing him from helping Holmes with the Ministry incident. Take a piece of cloth that belonged to the boy, Virgil, and go to Sherman's Animal Emporium. You'll want to retrieve Toby, a blood hound, to help you in your search. Lure the mongoose at St. Sherman's with a biscuit, and then go to St. James' Park and get Toby. Go to Windsor School, from which Virgil was taken, and have Toby go over the grounds. Have him sniff the piece of cloth — but when that doesn't work, give him the ransom note.

Toby will take you to 66 Devereaux, where you can get in the door using the hat pin from Pratt's flat with the mail slot. You'll find Virgil and a dead woman. Examine her; look at her bracelet. Analyze the bracelet at the lab table at 221B Baker Street, and leave Virgil in Wiggins' capable hands. Talking to the jeweler will connect the bracelet to Lawton.

IDENTIFYING THE THIRD MAN

Turn your attention back to the third man that Needham saw at the river when Pratt was murdered. After trying to figure out who he is and having Wiggins do a little snooping, you'll come up empty-handed. Go see Charles Freedman at the newspaper. He'll tell you to talk to Nigel Hemmings, a young artist. Have Hemmings talk to Needham and do a sketch of the third man. Take the sketch back to Freedman at the newspaper. He'll recognize the man as a Prussian intelligence officer named Moellendorf. Now you'll be able to tie him to the rest of the characters and continue your investigation.

BY LISA M. HOWIE



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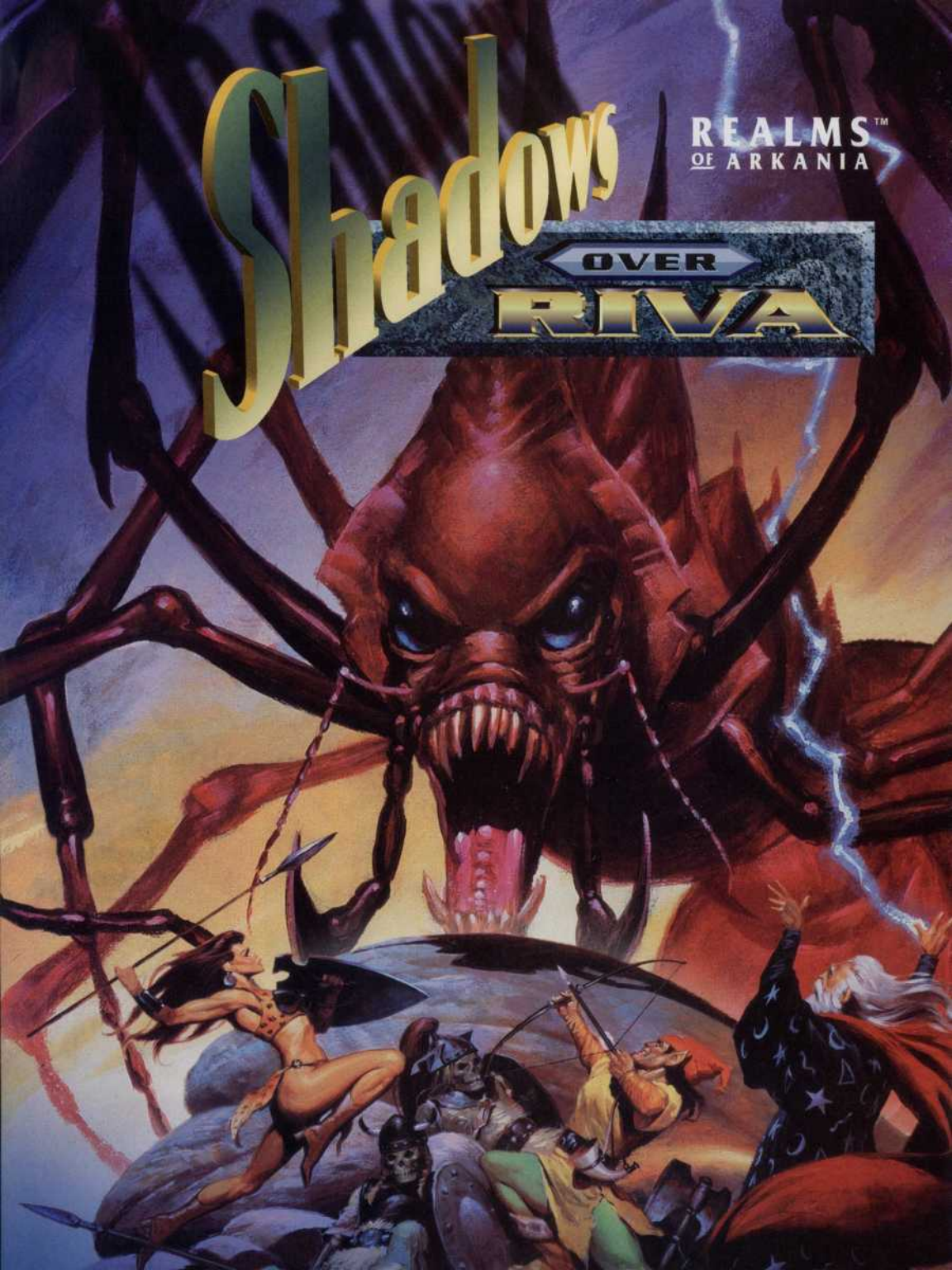
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MECHWARRIOR 2: MERCENARIES

If you're finding Activision's mercenary biz is a little too much like work, study these tips from the game's lead designer.

CHOOSING A 'MECH®

When buying a BattleMech, you should always consider what value it will add to your unit. Does your unit need some long-range support or close-assault firepower? Would a BattleMech that can absorb a large amount of damage be a useful distraction for enemy 'Mechs?

You should also be wary of some BattleMechs that have design flaws. As you fight enemies in the field, you will discover that many 'Mechs have weaknesses you can exploit. The Catapult and the Jenner are the two most obvious examples; both have their cockpit placed in a forward, easily targeted location. These are 'Mechs you want to consider carefully before purchasing.

Customizing your BattleMech will cost you a good deal of money. In many cases, the cost of customizing your 'Mech can run into a million C-Bills, but the price is well worth it. Moving weapons from the vulnerable arms to the better-protected torso section of your 'Mech will give you fire power that



Don't just buy the first 'Mech you can afford; make sure it'll serve a real purpose as part of your unit. If you've already got a Jenner, you might want something slower but heavier to complement it.

can last through a long battle.

When purchasing a BattleMech, consider how you want to customize it. Every time you have to move something around inside your new 'Mech, it'll cost you money. If your new BattleMech is already very close to your final design, it will cost you less to finish the customization.

HIRING MECHWARRIORS

The best lance-mates can usually be found after you complete long campaigns. Your reputation in the mercenary community soars after you complete these long and difficult campaigns, and many MechWarriors will want to join your unit.

Most MechWarriors are highly skilled; their Comstar evaluations can give you a good indication of who is worth hiring. Remember that while you can save a few thousand C-Bills by hiring a cheaper MechWarrior, these pilots are in charge of several million C-Bills of your hardware. It's always worth the extra few thousand to get a good pilot who will not destroy your BattleMechs.

Many MechWarriors have special skills. Some will group their weapons and fire at enemy legs; some have trained themselves as expert marksmen who are able to effectively lead an enemy attack by hitting their target with almost every shot. Some simply prefer to group all their

weapons and blast away. Check out the table at left to see the specialties of the best MechWarriors-for-hire.

CHOOSING A MISSION

For your first mission, you have a choice. If you're new to the MechWarrior universe, you may wish to choose the training campaign. You will support Hanson's Roughriders in the field against a group of pirates. You'll be trained in targeting and piloting by an experienced MechWarrior, and you will be paid — not much, but enough to keep you in repairs throughout your first serious campaign.

The war on Galedon V is also a campaign that will be available early in the game. This campaign puts you in a support role for the Draconis Combine against a group of poorly equipped rebels. After training, this contract will give you enough money to keep your unit in business.

Campaign contracts are not easy to fill. They require significant resources for mercenary units to complete, and the Houses who hire units for campaign contracts want to make sure they get the best talent for as little money as possible. Campaign contracts will not be filled immediately. You may go on one or two missions to find that the campaign contract has been filled by another mercenary

THE BEST OF THE BEST

NAME	CALL-SIGN	SPECIAL SKILLS
John Brown	Tea-Cup	Leg-Shooter
Saburo Mitsu	She-Devil	Marksman
Mark Everson	Head Shot	Group Fire
Jake Ives	Lobo	Marksman
Jennifer Brockton	Dark Angel	Leg-Shooter
Kenshiki Yabu	Kobiyashi	Group Fire
Rolf Hassenfeld	Daemon	Marksman
Daniel Wilks	Reaper	Group Fire
Edmond Ferren	Rockjaw	Marksman
Keith Schaefer	Undertaker	Group Fire
Sally Kent	Shredder	Marksman



unit and is no longer available to you. However, there will almost always be at least one campaign contract available.

When choosing contracts for single missions or campaigns, read the contract carefully. If it seems too good to be true, it probably is. Watch out for Houses that are prone to underestimating the strength of their enemies. Consider the kind of resistance you will be facing. Missions against House troops are almost always more dangerous than missions against pirates. Behind-the-lines raids are also dangerous and could result in the death of your entire unit if you fail.

At any one moment, you may be able to choose between a campaign contract and several single-mission contracts. In this case, you need to evaluate the strength of your own unit and determine if you are ready for the campaign or not. If you do not think you're ready, then take a few single missions to build up your unit's strength before taking the campaign mission.

ON CAMPAIGN

In *Mercenaries*, you can lose, and it's O.K. In fact, if you win every mission in the game, you will miss 15+ additional missions that are only available if you lose some missions. Occasionally, the losing path is actually easier and more profitable than the winning path.

How will you know when the losing path is better? Read the News and the briefings carefully. They often have clues about what is going on in the battle or hot-spots around the Inner Sphere. For instance, the battle for Gravenhague has some cool stuff you'll only see if you lose one of the missions.

Also remember that you can hit the "Abort Campaign" button if you do not like how things are going. Do not do it often, because you won't get paid, but if you find yourself in a losing situation, you might as well lose and live.

GENERAL COMBAT

These tips will come in handy in just about any combat situation.

- Lance-mates are cool. Get some.
- Aim first for an enemy's arms. They often contain weapons, and they tend not to be very well armored. In some cases, you may be able to ignore an enemy after his arms are blown off simply because he does not have enough firepower in his torso or leg sections to

be much of a threat.

- Learn the configurations of as many BattleMechs as you can. When you know where an enemy keeps his most dangerous weapons, you can target those locations.

- When shooting for the legs, remember that they are specially reinforced to take the weight of a hundred-ton BattleMech. The legs of a BattleMech are very difficult to destroy. If you are able to shoot out the legs, you will be rewarded by watching your opponent fall and wiggle helplessly on the ground. Weapons that can cause a series of small injuries have a better chance of destroying the structural integrity of a leg than a single powerful shot. Missiles and machine guns are good weapons for finishing off a leg.

CAMPAIGNS

Here are some hints that should help you out in specific campaigns.

LIETZEN

Background: The water-poor world of Lietzen is about to receive several million tons of water in the form of a large block of ice from space. The huge chunk of ice has two large engines strapped to the sides, and the whole mass is being transported over several months to reach Lietzen's orbit. The Free Rasalhague Republic, the sponsors of this expensive mission, need a mercenary unit to guard and protect the ice-ship from any hostiles.

Hints: Space is a very challenging environment. As it is difficult to move safely, you should keep your speed down. You will almost certainly want jump-jets

for this campaign in case you accidentally fall off the Ice-Ship. Missiles are also very useful for firing at quickly moving aerotech fighters.

Lance-mates are probably not very useful, since they rarely have the patience to keep their speed down and often end up careening off the Ice Ship into space. You can knock enemies off the Ice Ship if you hit them hard enough in a charge. Your radar is less than perfect in space; sometimes the enemy will jam it, and as every MechWarrior knows, Mech radar display is only designed for two dimensions.

WOLCOTT

Background: The Clans have arrived and are smashing their way into the Inner Sphere. The Draconis Combine has

CHEAT CODES

These handy cheats will give you the leg-up you need. Simply hold down the **SHIFT**, **CONTROL**, and **ALT** keys together while typing in the following lines to activate the appropriate cheat mode.

Superfunktionalifragisexy: invulnerability toggle

iseentfireandiseenrain: unlimited ammo toggle

ooohhhllllaaallaa: heat tracking toggle

imnybeautifullballoon: acquire jump jets

crazysexycool: infinite jump jet fuel

bubbleboy: bouncing spheres toggle

likethecomstarbaby: ends mission successfully

CONTRACTS

DRACONIS COMBINE COUNTER-INSURGENCY CAMPAIGN

The Draconis Combine is looking for a few fresh faces to assist in a counter-insurgency campaign on Galedon V. Resistance is expected to be light. City-fighting experience a plus. The Combine pays for all travel expenses and will provide you with a DropShip. Pays 1,500,000 C-Bills for entire campaign, partial payment for partial completion. Pay is already deposited in a Comstar account. The Combine will pay for all reasonable ammunition expenses.

COMSTAR CONTRACT EVALUATION

World:	Galedon V
Duty:	Riot Duty - Search and Destroy
Begin Date:	April 1, 3044
End Date:	December 15, 3044
Maximum Pay:	1,500,000 C-Bills plus bounty and bonus
Minimum Pay:	Bounty
Salvage Rights:	Excellent



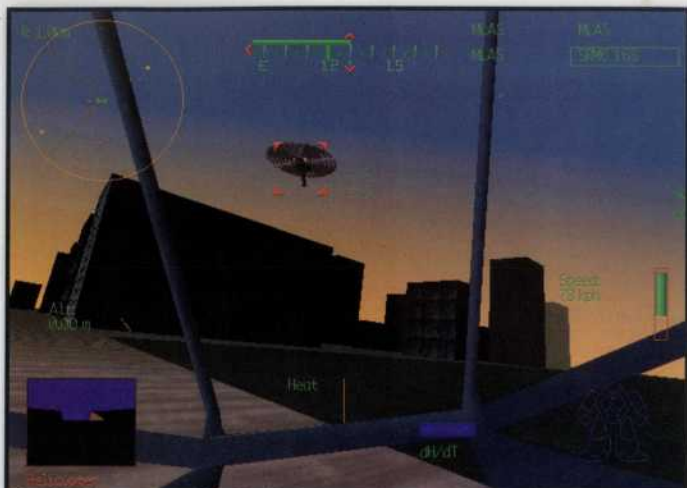
PREV

NEXT

ACCEPT

EXIT

Be careful when accepting a campaign contract. You'll be carrying out a series of missions with no chance to buy new Mechs or spare parts in between, so make sure you've got what you need.



One of the first contracts you'll be offered is for a counter-insurgency campaign on Galedon V. It's not easy, but you should be able to handle it, and it'll give you new enterprise a nice injection of cash.

decided to make a firm stand at Wolcott. They desperately need mercenary support.

Hints: Lance-mates are the key to success in this (and later) campaigns. It's a good idea to outfit your BattleMech with at least one large Autocannon. Order the other members of your unit to destroy key enemies while you save yourself for the really dangerous opponents. An Autocannon can be emptied quickly onto a single target, usually earning you a quick kill.

Elementals (infantry-sized power-suits) will be among your opponents on Wolcott. LRMs and SRMs are the best way to destroy them, since they are difficult to hit with regular laser fire. The "splash-damage" from a missile system will usually hurt the Elementals even if you don't hit them dead on.

LAST FRONTIER

Background: The Draconis Combine has a plan to steal a Clan Ghost Bear BattleMech. As more and more of the Draconis Combine world comes under heavy fire from the Clans, additional Combine units are required at the front. Only a mercenary unit is expendable enough for this kind of mission.

Hints: Last Frontier is a campaign of deception. Try to keep the enemy confused. Hit-and-run is your key to success. In the first mission, once you destroy a facility, keep moving. Once you destroy one of the enemy areas, the other areas will be alerted to your presence, and guards will be immediately dispatched to defend against your raids.

In later missions, your goal is to capture the Clan BattleMech, not to fight Ghost Bear 'Mechs. Avoid enemies and enemy-guarded installations whenever possible. Get to your target and get out. You will be outnumbered and outgunned. If you are forced to fight, make it quick.



Shooting for the legs can be useful in these missions (or any mission where you are running), because if an enemy's legs are damaged badly enough, he will slow down to a fraction of his normal speed.

MERCNET

There are several theories about how to best battle in the multi-player action of MercNet: most of them center on how you customize your BattleMech. How each individual customizes his BattleMech and how these custom 'Mechs support one another is crucial in team play. A BattleMech that works well as part of an integrated team may not work well in a free-for-all or in a one-on-one duel.

ONE-ONE-ONE AND FREE-FOR-ALL

In one-on-one and free-for-all battles, Autocannons are definitely very powerful weapons. They can take down an opponent quickly, which prevents your opponent from returning much fire before he's dead. The problem is that once your

Autocannon is dry, your 'Mech has several tons of useless hardware. A nice mix is usually one AC20 supported by several lasers or PPCs that give you staying power in battle. Do not be afraid to strap on lots of armor. Your BattleMech can only support so many weapons before heat becomes a problem, so do not waste tonnage on weapons you cannot really afford to use.

A favored tactic used by Bear Khan (watch for him in Internet games — he's the Mercenaries director, Jack Mamais) is to put a Narc Missile system on his 'Mech and then load up on the Infernos and the Arrow IVs. First, he tags you with the Narc, and then he can hit you with all of his tracking missiles, no matter which way he is facing. Then the Infernos and the Arrow IVs start to fly in. If you're not shut down by the heat from the Infernos, you're taking severe damage from the Arrow IVs.

Obviously, missile systems can be very destructive (as Bear Khan demonstrates on a nightly basis). An Anti-Missile System is a must for most BattleMech designs. Remember that in a non-team battle, you will have to fight until you are dead. You don't get points for living; you only get points for killing. So, if you want a high kill-ratio, you will have to kill several enemies before they drag you down. Bring plenty of ammo for your Anti-Missile System and any other ammo weapon you want to have throughout the battle.

TEAM PLAY

For team play, you should coordinate your customizations with the rest of your team. There are several schools of thought on the best team tactics, but here are some basic roles that different team BattleMechs can fulfill.

Assault: Kill people. That's all these guys need to do. In some missions, they may need to get to the enemy quickly, so size is not the only requirement for these BattleMechs. Anti-Missile Systems are usually a plus, since these BattleMechs will receive the most fire. Generally, Assault 'Mechs look similar to one-on-one designs.

Support: LRMs, Arrow IVs, and PPCs are for Support 'Mechs. Support 'Mechs should look for fire positions that give them a commanding view of the field. Support 'Mechs should also assist other MechWarriors by suggesting different courses of action, or by warning the Assault 'Mechs if they are about to come under heavy fire. Support MechWarriors are usually in a less stressful position that gives them time to analyze the battle and help the team make intelligent decisions.

Scout: Scouts need to find the enemies and tell everybody else where they are. Scout 'Mechs are also very useful to the Support 'Mechs, if the Scout guys carry a Narc Missile System. If the Scout 'Mech tags an enemy with a Narc, all other friendly 'Mechs will get an auto-lock with all of their missiles.

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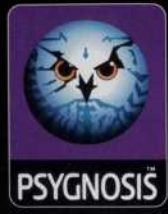


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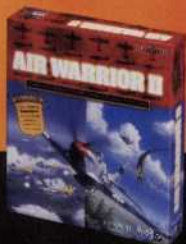
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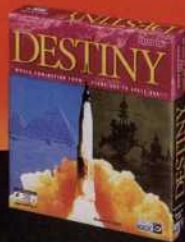
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INTERGRAPH

COMMAND & CONQUER: RED ALERT

Here's help for the opening Soviet missions in Westwood's classy *Command & Conquer* sequel.

MISSION 1

Comrade, this first mission allows you to sample the awesome air power of the People's Army, as you'll command three of our fearsome Yaks against the pitiful Allied forces. With careful planning and quick response, our overwhelming forces can wipe the Allies off the map with ease. At the start of the mission, grab the planes just as they enter the battlefield and redirect them to take out the barrels near enemy troops. Moments later, reinforcements will be dispatched to assist in the battle. Once the paratroops arrive, move them safely back from danger, and re-launch your fighters until all visible barrels have been detonated. Now move the ground troops to the north bridge to reveal more terrain, and use your fighters once again to detonate all the barrels. If you're successful in doing this, you'll win the day.



MISSION 2A: In this more difficult variation of Mission 2, you'll need to hold your troops in a defensive posture until you've built adequate units for an all-out assault.

MISSION 2A

Based on your success with your previous mission, Soviet Command has decided to place you in charge of a small garrison adjacent to a small Allied base. You'll start with a construction yard, power station, and a few meager units to attack our enemies. Build up your facility quickly and add



MISSION 1: To use your air power advantage to knock out the Allies without sacrificing your ground troops, shoot the explosive barrels surrounding their positions.

guard dogs and barracks as your first resources. Once the ore truck has brought back its first few shipments, all you really need to do is crank out ground troops and purchase airplanes for your airfields, then mount a crushing attack. Be certain to explore as much of the map as possible, because the terrain allows for a variety of hiding places for the Allied forces.

MISSION 2B

This variation on mission 2A proves to be a lot easier than the alternate mission, and doesn't require the same quick response — but don't take the reduced Allied threat too lightly. Upon entering the mission, enemy troops will try to infiltrate your base or attack your ore truck, so you'll need to quickly build a defensive force. Don't explore the map until you're confident you've built an overwhelming ground force (30 or so troops) to avoid additional Allied attack, then wipe out their northern base with a coordinated land and air assault.

MISSION 3

In this timed mission, you're in a race



MISSION 2B: After fending off the initial allied attacks on your base, you'll want to sit tight and build up your fighting force until you're confident you can overwhelm the base in a massed assault.

against the clock as you try to track down an Allied spy who has just destroyed your base. You'll begin the mission with only guard dog units to chase down the spy, but instead of following him into the deadly fire of a pillbox, you'll want to go to the civilian settlement at the right of the screen to liberate captured troops. Once you've got these newly-acquired troops in hand, head south to follow the traitor. However, don't rush blindly into battle. On your way, you'll encounter an Allied pillbox surrounded by barbed wire. Use your human troops to detonate the barrels surrounding the allied pillbox. From this point, you won't get any reinforcements during this mission, so try



MISSION 3: Tracking down this traitorous baddie isn't as easy as it looks, but with carefully planned maneuvers, you'll have those Allied generals by the short and curries!

to use the unique abilities of each unit to overcome the meager forces you'll encounter (i.e. use your troops to distract enemy troops, and send the dogs to finish them off). If you're successful in routing the handful of guards that block your way, head west and destroy the traitor before he can make his escape on a sea transport.

MISSION 4

Superior technology gives the Allied command a definite advantage in this tough building mission, where you must overcome phenomenal odds to win the day. Once you've settled in with your initial complement of tanks and a construction site, build units and buildings at a reckless pace, while fending off relentless onslaughts from enemy engineers. The first order of business is to stay near your initial drop point and build a large main force at the base to launch the first leg of a two-tiered attack.

In the interim, build several air units to launch air attacks against those Allied shipyards (shipyards can repair damaged ships as well as create new ones) and use your spy plane to scope out the upper left-hand and upper right-hand corners of the screen. The spy plane should reveal important data about your Allied foe — they're using gap generators to hide their positions! Continue to build until your base is bursting at the seams with troops, tanks, planes, and buildings, and split your forces into two distinct groups: one to head left through the lightly

defended ore fields, and the other to head north through the strongest concentration of Allied forces. Use air power to soften up key Allied defenses or buildings as your troops close in for the kill. Continue to reinforce your team with additional units as the battles rage on, and you'll quickly bring this Allied stronghold to its knees.

MISSION 5

In this battle for control of a small island, you'll have to build two bases in order to capture Allied technology and rout a powerful contingent of Allied forces. The key to winning this battle is



MISSION 5: Build one base, then build another. You'll need to set up shop along the shore of this calm river to establish a sub pen where you can build troop transports that will carry you to the Allies' secret island.



MISSION 4: To defeat the vast army of the Allied forces, you need to build a sprawling base with a full complement of air and land units.

location, location, location. When you enter the mission, it's important to build your construction yard near the shoreline and place your power plant nearby. You'll need to get close enough to the shore to build a subpen, and the power plant location is vital. The next step is to crank out a barracks so you assign troops (grenadiers) to defend the shoreline against a sea assault by the Allied navy. Once sea transports are available build two of them — one for troops, and one for your construction vehicle and ore truck.

The island you seek is in the cool uncharted waters at the right of the screen (don't head north; head straight to the right), where you'll find a suitable landing spot for your new base. Ample ore is available on the island, so don't be shy about expanding your base; just be certain to watch for roving patrols of Allied troops who are sure to sound the alarm for their copatriots.

BY TODD VAUGHN & JASON BATES

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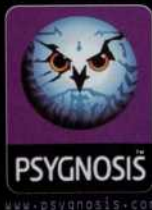
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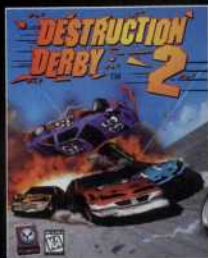
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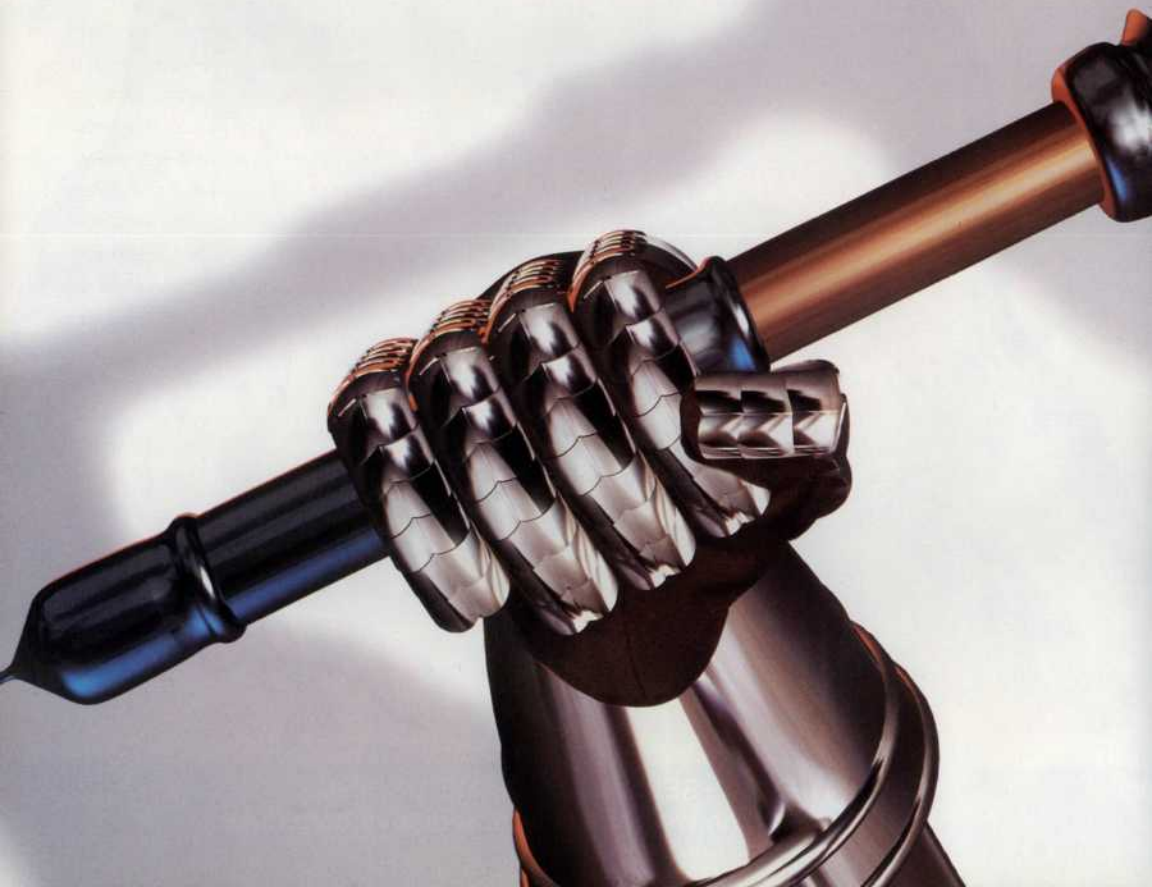
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Product Information Number 255

THE ELDER SCROLLS:

DAGGERFALL

These tips for Bethesda Software's long awaited roleplaying epic will help you get the most from the game.

Tamriel is a land filled with danger and intrigue, friends and enemies. Not only will you battle fierce monsters, killer creatures, and anti-social humans, but you'll have to walk a fine line between the political intrigues of the regions you'll travel, and the ramifications of your actions could greatly affect the entire empire.

But the core of *Daggerfall* is its non-linear gameplay. If you so choose, you don't have to follow the story line at all. The world is open for exploration, battle, thievery, and trade. Whatever way you go, however, you'll have to learn the ways of *Daggerfall*, and finding the key elements to building your character to Goliath level can be challenging. So here's some tips from the masters, the creators, and the players. Keep each of them in mind as you travel about the world — they could save your life.

THE VIEW MODE

It's official: Even though the default view mode of the game is cursor-based, where you move around by pressing the left mouse button when the cursor is pointing in the direction you want to travel, the creators have fully embraced using the View Mode. In View Mode, the mouse controls the direction you face, and the arrow keys move you forward and back. Change the controls in the Options menu, and you won't be sorry. Also, you can change the keyboard commands to fit your own desires — no matter what your preference, you can set

CREATOR'S TIP

Keeping in mind that the more you practice skills, the quicker you rise in ability, Bruce Nesmith, co-creator of *Daggerfall*, suggests for you to "sneak through dungeons and run through town." In other words, hold down the run key whenever exploring town, since traveling on horseback does not increase your running skill. Then, sneak around dungeons to increase your sneaking skill. You'll move slower, but move up levels faster.



Using your horse in town may be efficient, but you won't build up your speed skills on horseback.

CLASS NAME: Snally Bastard

STR 52	0	PRIMARY SKILLS	SKILL ADVANCEMENT FOR CLASS	MAX HIT POINTS PER LEVEL
INT 48		Critical Strike	DIFFICULT	4
WIL 47		Hand-to-Hand		
AGI 51		Long Blade		
END 49		MAJOR SKILLS	5.0	HELP
PER 47		Running	AVERAGE	EDIT SPECIAL ADVANTAGES
SFD 57		Dodging		EDIT SPECIAL DISADVANTAGES
LUC 49		Mercantile		EDIT REPUTATIONS
		MINOR SKILLS	0.5	EXIT
		Climbing	EASY	
		Destruction		
		Archery		
		Etiquette		
		Backstabbing		
		Stealth		

If you create your own class of character, make sure you balance your attributes so that you can increase levels more quickly.

things up quickly and easily. This is recommended, because you'll be using the controls for hours on end.

MOVIN' UP IN THE WORLD

The first thing you'll have to face is moving up in levels. In order for the story line quests to start, you'll have to attain at least level three. To this end, here are some tips to use while creating a character:

Your level is determined not by your experience, but by a complicated formula summing up the percentages in your Primary, Major, and Minor skills. Therefore, the faster you build up your skills, the quicker you'll rise in levels. If you create a custom character, you can ensure a quick rise in levels by making sure the Primary and Major attributes are ones that can be raised quickly. For example, if your Primary attributes are



These zombies can be hard to kill at the beginning of gameplay. It helps to run in, slash, and run out again. Just don't let them back you against a wall.

Critical Strike, Long Blade, and Dodging, then you'll be practicing those skills each time you swing a sword in battle. And the more you practice, the quicker you'll rise in ability.

CLOSE COMBAT TIPS

To say you'll see lots of combat in *Daggerfall* is like saying it rains in Seattle. Learning how best to fight takes time and practice. However, here are some ideas to get you started.

Use obstacles: Sometimes you'll enter a room with a chair or a table. If you can manage to get the object between you and your foe, you'll stand a much better chance of surviving the conflict, especially if you can nail the creature with a bow from a distance, or wear it down with spells.

Keep moving: It's always a good idea

to keep moving around. Many creatures take a few seconds to prepare to strike you when you're in range. If you dash in, hit with your blade once or twice, and then move quickly out, you can sometimes get away with out a hit from the enemy.

Use doorways: Many creatures have a hard time negotiating doors. Sometimes you can lead a monster to the door, and then move over to the side, and the creature will stay in the door frame. Then you can either pick it off with arrows and spells, or strafe from side to side, hitting it as you go by. Sometimes your enemy will come through the door and start hunting you, though, so make sure you've got an eye on it at all times.

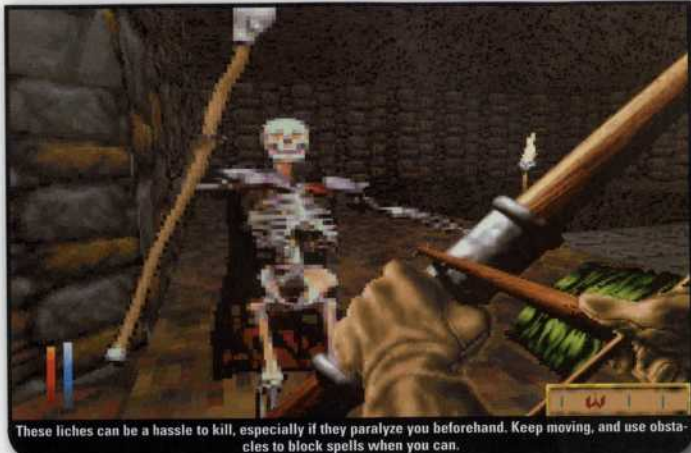
The secret of clipping: Part of the programming of *Daggerfall* deals specifically with how to hit a creature with arrows. There is a certain radius around the monster where an arrow strike will count as a hit. Sometimes, this radius will even extend outside of a wall if the creature is close enough to it. So, if you open a door and move to the side, it's possible for a monster to move right next to the wall on the other side. Firing the bow at the monster will then count hits against the creature, even though you're actually shooting through a wall. It may not be in line with the realism of the game, but it's a handy way to kill creatures safely.

Use heights and walls: Sometimes you will battle a monster right next to a ledge or cliff. Hitting a monster and throwing it backward over the side will often kill it on the way down. The drawback to this is that any treasure it might have will be at the bottom of the drop. Also, if you're battling a light creature, such as a rat or a skeleton, you can knock it into a wall behind it. The hit against the wall will count as another hit, so don't be surprised if the knock against the wall kills the beast for you.

Pay attention to your swings: When you make an attack, each swing should be planned and thought out. The different swings do different amounts of damage and have different chances to hit. Sometimes, you might have to sacrifice a powerful overhand swing, which has a

CREATOR'S TIP

In keeping with the fact that the more you use a skill, the more you'll advance, it will sometimes help you to intentionally *not* use powerful swings against weak creatures. Each swing, whether it lands or not, counts toward your fighting skills. So killing a creature in five hits will give you more experience than killing it in one. Another way to increase this is to intentionally use a powerless weapon against a creature for a while. For example, using anything less than a steel blade against an imp is pointless. So, if you're strong enough, use that handy iron sword and start swinging at the creature. You may not hit it, but your skills will increase. If you put a more powerful weapon in your other hand, you can switch over and finish the imp quickly when it looks like the imp is getting the better of you.



These liches can be a hassle to kill, especially if they paralyze you beforehand. Keep moving, and use obstacles to block spells when you can.

CREATOR'S TIP

There are a lot of battles you'll have to face in *Daggerfall*, and you won't be able to win them all. So, in the words of Bruce Nesmith, "running away is a perfectly valid strategy." Heroes may be brave, but they're not stupid. Don't tackle that zombie when you only have an iron dagger and half your health left.

smaller chance of landing, for a forward jab that will more than likely land, but will do only a little bit of damage.

The special circle strafe: If you are using View Mode, and you have a setup where you can easily move sideways to the left and right, you can try using the circle strafe maneuver on the monsters you face. To circle strafe, move to the left or right while keeping your view centered on the monster in front of you. You'll move in a circle around it. Some creatures don't have a fast turning time, so if you're quick enough, you can circle around the monster and strike at it from the back. It's a tricky move, because whenever you start swinging, your sideways movement stops. But, with practice, it's one of the more effective moves.

Some monsters have no hands: It's rather obvious when you think about it, but many creatures you'll face have no hands. Therefore, they can't open doors. If you find yourself in trouble, and there's a giant spider bearing down on you from around the corner, run into a room and shut the door. If you manage to keep from locking yourself in with a wereboar, you'll at least have room to breathe.

Be patient: You won't become the world's greatest warrior overnight. Some creatures will take time and effort to destroy, and you will always have to think about how to kill the toughest ones. Don't expect a walk in the park, because as your skills increase, so do the skills of the creatures you'll face. Keep working toward your goal, and keep learning the tricks of each new monster you face. And, above all, save your game often, especially when you're in a dungeon.

EXPLORE THE CITIES

With more than 16,000 places to find in *Daggerfall*, there are lots of areas to explore. Since the major cities are Daggerfall, Wayrest, and Sentinel, take your time exploring them. When you enter a city, you'll have a map of where each of the buildings are, and they're color coded to match the purpose they serve. You can fill in the names of the buildings on your map by walking to them and using the Look function to find out the name. Or some of the townsfolk wandering the streets will tell you where certain buildings are located. A trick you can use is to talk to a citizen and ask about all of the buildings you might be interested in. If they know the direction, continuous questions will eventually lead to the NPC pointing the place out on your map. Using this method, you can fill in all the names on your map by asking a few characters some questions, rather than wandering all around town. However, the views some of the cities have to offer are well worth a walk.



Take some time to explore the beautiful towns you encounter. Get to know them inside and out — it gives you an advantage.

JUST SAY NO

Sometimes, you might talk to someone who wants you to perform a quest that is either too trying, or simply too boring. Don't be afraid to say no — your reputation is not truly at stake for refusing a simple quest. However, make sure

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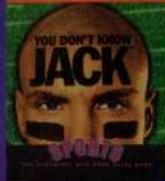
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AND AGAIN
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NHL 97

Grab your sticks and hit the ice; it's time to rough up the opposition in EA Sports' terrific hockey sim.

MULTI-PLAYER SETTINGS

Obviously, if you're playing against the AI, choosing the Rookie setting makes the game easier. But if you're playing in head-to-head mode with a friend, make sure to turn the AI up to All-Star. The reason is simple — the AI of players you're not controlling will be a lot better, and the result is a more exciting game.

SCORING

Shoot early, shoot often, and follow-up that shot in order to shoot again. You remember every coach you ever had yelling, "Follow up on the play, follow up!" Well, they were right. After you shoot, rush the goalie, swing your stick, and hope for a rebound or another shot. Keep tabs on how you're doing by checking the shots-on-goal statistics after each period, and keep the pressure on from start to finish.

ICING ON THE CAKE

If you've turned off all of the rules and penalties in *NHL 97*, you're missing out on some of the juiciest scoring opportunities this side of open net. Favorable icing calls and two-line pass calls put you in the opposing team's zone, with a killer view of the goal. On icing calls, keep hammering the pass key before the referee drops the puck.



Always check the in-game stats to see how your team stacks up against your rival.



When approaching the net along the wing, watch for centering opportunities to catch the goalie off guard.

and aim toward your outer defenseman. If you've won the drop, this defenseman will have a clean shot at the goal. You may not make these tricky goals on your first attempt, but keep the pressure on — there are always a couple of rebound opportunities just after the shot is made.

MAKE IT A TEAM THANG!

One of the first things novice hockey fans tend to forget is that there are four other guys out on the ice, and they're all working for you.

While it's fun to think you're the only person on the ice, passing to your teammates is supremely important (especially on the higher difficulty settings) for winning the game. Consistent passing will also help you learn the subtle offensive and defensive formation changes that occur during a rousing game of hockey. Watch your passing stats following each period to see how you stack up to the opposing team.

Once you're acting like a team, it's time to employ the old hockey trick of "centering-up" when attacking the goal. This simple-yet-effective strategy relies on confusing the goalie and putting the puck where it's most needed — in front of the goal. In hockey, there's always someone at center (even if that's not their position) to pick up rebounds and take quick passes from wingers.

This constant presence in front of the goal is a good fallback whenever you don't have a clear shot, or you've distracted the goalie enough that the center of the net is left undefended.



You can't have a well-rounded hockey team if you're always hogging the puck. Give your teammates a shot at scoring, and victory is yours.

GOAL!

Learning how to shoot for those elusive "five holes" that the pros seem to find so well may seem like one of the great mysteries of the ages, but in *NHL 97*, it's merely a matter of having the right frame of mind during the windup. During a windup or wristshot, think of the directional pad of your gamepad as the face of the goal, and move the pad accordingly. For example, if you want to hit the top-left shelf of the goal, windup the player controlling the puck, and move the directional pad where you want the puck to go inside the net. It's an imprecise science, to be sure, and it does take a fair amount of practice, but if you're tired of having last-place teams hammer your net while you're hitting their goalie in the pads, try thinking like a hockey puck in order to find the net.

BY TODD VAUGHN & JASON BATES

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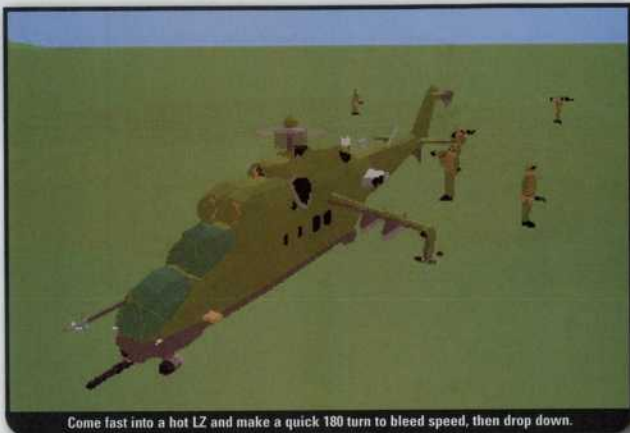
HIND

We've got the inside dope on Interactive Magic's Russian helo sim as Tom McDonald talks to an Apache pilot.

Last year, Warrant Officer Rex Swetnam gave us some inside tips on the Interactive Magic's hot helo sim, *Apache*. Officer Swetnam logged a lot of hours on *Apache*, but that wasn't too tough, since he's spent a lot of time in the real thing.

But *Hind* was a different matter. It's a unique type of flying experience, and it took Swetnam a while to adapt his Apache-flying skills to the low-tech Russian chopper. He was helped along with a little inside advice from a friend (we'll call him "Colonel X"), who logged about 50 hours in Hinds after the Gulf War, ferrying them back from Iraq, test flying, and evaluating their weapons systems.

Colonel X thinks *Hind* is smack on in realism, replicating the sluggish and non-responsive Russian helo to a "T". As he points out: "If you put a collective and a cyclic on the front porch of your house, with a lawn chair to sit in, you'll have the *Hind*. It's an M1 tank with rotor blades." It's essentially a troop transport that they equipped with guns so it could go into a hot landing



Come fast into a hot LZ and make a quick 180 turn to bleed speed, then drop down.

zone, clear it out, then drop off the infantry. They just kept piling more and more weapons on it until it became an attack helicopter.

If an Apache and a *Hind* get in a scrap, the Apache will outmaneuver it any time, anywhere. But one thing Apache pilots learned in flight tests was not to go at the *Hind* with guns: They're useless against its thick armor. It's something to keep in mind during those

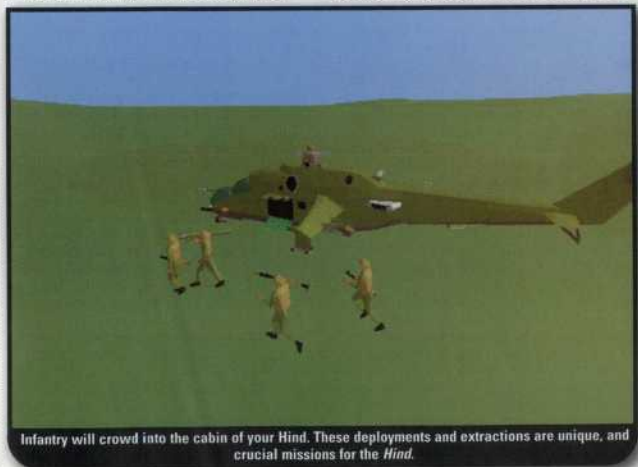
head-to-head *Apache* versus *Hind* games. If you're flying the Apache and are out of missiles or can't get off a missile shot, there is one trick for taking out a *Hind* with guns: Get above it and shoot down through the rotors. It's the only way to log a gun kill against a *Hind*.

FLYING

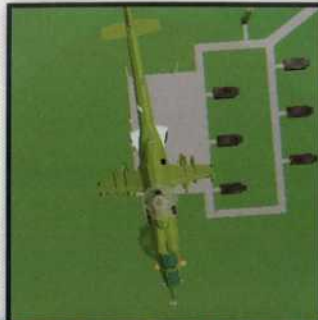
Pilots moving from *Apache* to *Hind* are noticing how tough the *Hind* is to fly in realistic mode. It's a chore just to keep it flying straight, and many sim pilots (myself included) kept looking for joystick calibration problems or other technical glitches to account for the flight behavior.

Turns out this aggravating tendency is precisely how the *Hind* flies, according to Colonel X. Officer Swetnam explains it as a result of "translating tendency." Translating tendency is an effect that occurs when the tail rotor gives thrust in one direction and opposite thrust in the other direction. It's a simple law of physics: for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. These reactions make the *Hind* drift. Most American helicopters compensate for this problem with servos and special rigging that automatically compensates, so you don't have to worry about it.

In the low-tech *Hind*, they didn't deal with this, so it needs to be handled with inputs from the controls. "Think



Infantry will crowd into the cabin of your *Hind*. These deployments and extractions are unique, and crucial missions for the *Hind*.



The fuel bombs are lethal, but must be released at altitudes over 300 and speeds over 300, or you risk getting caught in the blast. Using dumb munitions is one of the only instances when you'll want to fly high.

about driving a car down a highway with the front-end alignment off," Swetnam points out, "and how you have to steer off-center to maintain a straight line. That's what you have to do in *Hind*."

"You need to compensate with all your inputs yourself, since there's no computer to do it for you. It gets tricky, since you're drifting sideways, not yawing. It's not doing anything with the nose, so you have compensate for that with your cyclic and your rudders, and most people are just trying to fix it with rudders."

The Apache is all computerized: you can take your hands off the controls and it will fly practically itself. *Hind* is not: you have to fly it. There are no hover-hold buttons. That's why so many people are having trouble coming in for landings, especially on missions with troop deployment and extraction in hot landing zones.

There isn't a lot you can do to get a good *Hind* landing other than practicing correlating the power with cyclic.

Work them together for the smoothest results, over and over again, and you'll get the feel.

Many people make the mistake of coming in hot and heavy, then trying to yank back to slow her down. Big mistake, since you lose sight of the ground: you're blind.

Swetnam has a maneuver he uses going into a hot LZ, but it takes some practice: "If you have the room to do it, go in fast, then do a 180 into your LZ, pulling back on the cyclic to reduce power to slow you down at the same time. You don't want to go in slow and pitter around in the trees, but you also don't want to overshoot or come in so fast you need to do some radical maneuver that'll compromise you," he says. "So fly fast, do that hard 180, reduce collective (power), and pull back on cyclic. This lets you come in fast, while the physics of the hard turning will slow you down without putting your nose in the air."

As Colonel X points out: "The *Hind* will wear you out. You have to fly it the

full two hours you're in the aircraft." Not like the Apache, where a lot of the burden falls to computers.

GOING INTO THE HEAT

First, and most important, spend time in the mission planner. Study the route, the known threats, the mission, and the loadout. If you have a waypoint that takes you right over the top of a mountain, change it. Go around. The enemy has all its weapons pointed at that hill, and they're expecting you. Don't give them the pleasure. Plot a path around it and fly nap of the earth at all

times. Route around areas bristling with air threats.

Study the mission requirements, and use the mission specs to tweak the loadout. Not every default loadout is perfect. Sometimes an extra rocket pod is more necessary than two points packed with Saggars. Do the hard work before you take off. Fly the mission using the 3D mode to get an idea of what's in store. Plan ahead!

Also, spend a lot of time in the training missions. Know the capabilities and the limits of your aircraft before you go out into the "real world." Get a strong feel for fuel consumption, so you know when planning if you're taking yourself too far out of the way to avoid a hill or enemy concentration. As a very rough rule of thumb, assume you have maybe 15 minutes worth of fire-time in the location, the rest being in transit. Get the battlefield picture in advance so this time isn't wasted while you burn fuel dopping out terrain and threats.

When you're flying, stay between 25 and 50 feet. Concealment is the name

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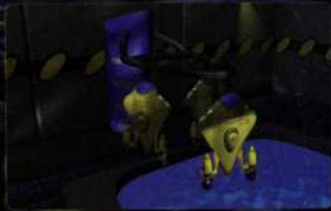


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of the game. Use terrain to mask your position. Do a vertical pop-up or "lateral masking" to get the battlefield pictures. That is, lift yourself above the crest of a hill in a hover, get a feel for who's on the other side, and duck back down before you're seen or shot at. You can do the same thing "laterally" by skipping out to the left or right from behind terrain masking to get the battlefield picture, and then dodging back behind the hills. Since they expect you to come over the top, the lateral skip is a better bet.

Pop-ups are harder to do in *Hind* than in *Apache* since there is no computer to track and organize threats. Your "silicon WSO" can help, but consider jotting a couple of quick notes about the location of SAM and AAA sites. They are priority number one. They are worth a Sagger every time (use Sagger's like Hellfires), and you should clear them out before you turn to the mission objective, because they put you in a world of hurt. Keep an eye out for shoulder-launched missiles, too, but don't worry about small arms ground fire; it's meaningless against the *Hind*. Don't waste your precision munitions on widely scattered or soft targets, either; clean them up with rockets or guns. And, unless you're sitting on the trees, don't worry about tanks. The M1 can put a shell through you if you're



When you get an enemy missile launch, turn into it, drop chaff and flare, and then turn hard away at the last second.

stock still, but only then. Remember, when coming in on tanks, every column of tanks may have one or two ZSUs. Take them out first.

Okay, so, despite all this, you manage to get locked up by a Stinger. This is bad, since once shot it's sure to follow quickly. Again, avoid the lock with concealment; if they can't see you, they can't lock you. If they do lock, duck down behind some terrain or other masking to try to break it. If there's a missile fired, try to lose it behind the terrain. If you're in the open, there's a technique Swetnam heard about that's a little weird but can work.

First, since the *Hind* has no missile tracking display (just a light-up schematic), you'll have to turn towards the direction of the incoming missile to be able to see and track it. The Russian technique is allegedly to point your air-



When flying with wingmen, let them take the brunt of the hard shots while you clean up.

craft at the missile, fly directly at it full speed, and just prior to impact do a hard 90-degree turn, dropping chaff and flare. Chaff and flare are your best bet to lose it, but the quick move will help. "A SAM is only gonna pull so many Gs in a turn," Swetnam observes. "The whole secret is minimizing the distance between the front of your aircraft and the missile before you dodge. Wait as long as possible, then move out of the way so it can't follow."

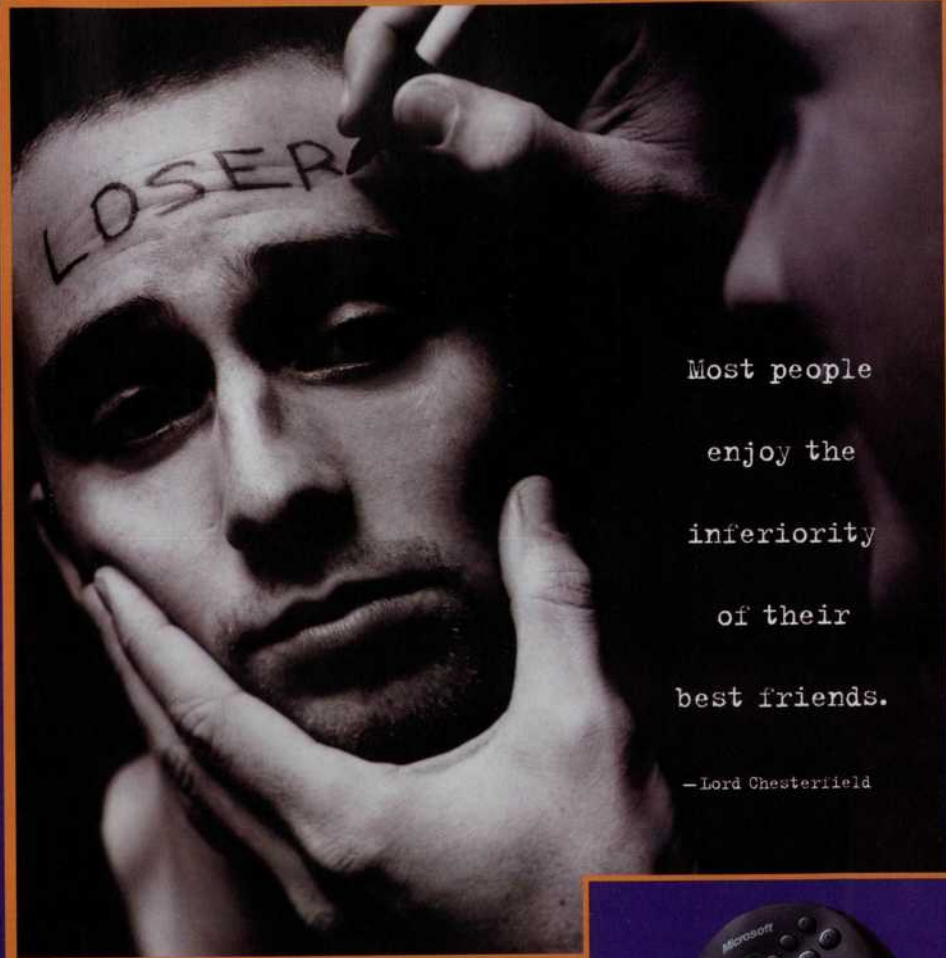
There's one other way to handle a hot area, since *Hind* now has wingman controls. Swetnam admits it's a bit of cheat, but as he found out, "There is nothing saying all four wingman have to land with you. I have the other guys bust out all the most difficult targets, so I can save my missiles. Let them take the brunt of it, then come in behind and rake up what's left."

Missile for missile, the Americans have the advantage, so know the range and limits of your weapons. Read the sections on them in the manual, and learn how far off you can be, how lethal they are, and so on. A good dose of foreknowledge will save your ass in the thick of fire every time.



The machine gun in the nose locks up a target and tracks it. When that target's dead, it goes onto the next.

BY T. LIAM McDONALD



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HELLBENDER

Microsoft's fast-paced 3D shooter is no walk in park, but it's a helluva lot easier once you've collected all eight pieces of the Vortex.

FIRST PIECE: MORBOS

LOCATION: 19,60 (CHAMBER)

In the underground tunnels, go to 115,26; face south (on the Map display) and shoot the wall to open a hidden door. Inside you'll find a switch at 115,23. Shooting it opens a door at 19,55, near the area where you entered the underground complex (it's a recessed spot with an eagle symbol on the wall and orange bands on the ceiling and floor). Go through the door, and you'll find the first Vortex piece in a weapons bunker at 19,60.

SECOND PIECE: EYRIE

LOCATION: 60,83 (CHAMBER)

On the ground, go to 65,50 and shoot the switch you see there, then head to 63,91 — you'll notice that a large, enclosed pool of water has drained substantially. Shoot the switch next to the pool at 65,84 to open a door at 62,88. Go through the door, and you'll see a weapons bunker at 60,83 — it contains the second Vortex piece.

THIRD PIECE: IOWAH

LOCATION: 112,65 (CHAMBER)

There's a set of three switches in a little alcove at 91,98; shooting the one at 90,97 will cause a wall to open and reveal a switch at 88,97. Shooting this switch opens the walls around the Vortex piece (the other two switches open chambers with other powerups). Shoot the switches at 105,61 or 105,64 to cause a wall to open; enter and you'll see a weapons bunker at 112,65 — it contains the third Vortex piece. Note: Don't shoot any of the walls around the weapons bunker! Doing so causes the ceiling to crush you.

FOURTH PIECE: HRESH

LOCATION: 58,99 (GROUND)

In the underground chamber containing the Kraaken and Death Ankh, go to the intersection at 93,102 and face west on the Map display, then travel to 52,99 and look up. You'll see the weapons

bunker containing the next piece of the Vortex on a ledge high above you.

FIFTH PIECE: CHIMERA

LOCATION: 43,65 (CHAMBER)

Enter the hidden tunnel entrance at 68,66, go into the underground chamber found there, and shoot the switch at 48,71. Leave the underground chamber and go to the building door at 53,59; head inside and into a little chamber containing four switches at 54,53; 54,58; 49,58; and 49,53. Shoot them all, then enter the underground chamber through the tunnel entrance at 68,66 and shoot the wall in the underground chamber at 48,66; the wall will open to reveal a roomful of weapons bunkers. The bunker in the middle of the room contains a Vortex piece.

SIXTH PIECE: TRICERIUS

LOCATION: 16,98 (CHAMBER)

There are switches located at 8,107 and 10,111. Shoot the one at 8,107, and the ground to the east of the switch will rise to reveal a chamber. Now shoot the other one, fly into the chamber, and go through the small entrance at 16,108 (it only stays open for eight seconds, so hurry). Four guards are waiting for you inside, so be ready to start firing as soon as you enter — but be extremely cautious about what you shoot! If you hit any switches besides the one at 19,109, the ceiling will crush you. Shoot it and pass through the doors at 16,104; here you'll spot one of Nyx's fighters, and the weapons bunker containing the Vortex piece next to it at 16,98. To leave, shoot the boxes marked with an X — they explode and open up an exit.

WINNEBAGO

WARRIOR!

When you're setting up a Multi-player game and you reach the ship selection screen, select Deathbringer twice, then Sunfire, and lastly Sand Tiger. You'll see a new ship appear for you to fly — a recreational vehicle! It might only get two miles to the gallon on the ground, but in the air it's just as nimble and maneuverable as any of the other ships — and the microwave and stereo system make it far more comfortable!

CHEAT

CODES

TYPE THIS	TO GET THIS
FRAMEIT	Displays a frames-per-second counter
TOTLPOWR	Restores Main Energy to 100 percent
MAXMEUP	Restores Hull Integrity to 100 percent
URDEAD#	One weapon powerup; replace the # with the default keyboard number of the weapon you wish to receive (URDEAD6 adds 20 Viper missiles to your supply, for instance)
IMPUMPD	One powerup of each weapon type
AUNTEM#	Warp to the first mission of any planet; replace the # with the number corresponding to the planet (Morbos = 1, Eyrie = 2, etc.)
IMSTUCK STERIOD	Warp to the next mission Invincibility!

SEVENTH PIECE: SNOW CITY

LOCATION: 109,81 (CHAMBER)

Shoot the door jamb at 33,30 to open a wall at 102,81 and expose the entrance to the chamber housing the Vortex piece. Inside you'll see four switches; shoot the one at 105,78 to open the walls surrounding the Vortex piece located at 109,81.

EIGHTH PIECE: SHIVA

LOCATION: 41,108 (GROUND)

Shoot the switch at 64,103 and enter the chamber that's revealed, then shoot the switch at 60,103 to open a door. (Both chambers contain guns, so be careful.) Move through the door and shoot the switch at 54,108 and head east until you reach 48,108, then shoot the orange and gray wall — it's a hidden door to a room with several weapons bunkers. The one at 41,108 contains the final Vortex piece.

BY STEPHEN POOLE

In 2096 Having a Bomb Strapped to You is a Sport...Want to Play?



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Product Information Number 91

GRAND PRIX II

The most realistic racing game yet is also one of the toughest. Fortunately, *PC Gamer's* pit crew is here with some expert hints.

You can get endless advice on driving technique and car setups, but the most critical factor to your racing success is all yours: Practice. Endless practice. Tedious practice. Boring, this-isn't-a-game-anymore practice. The only way to get really good at *Grand Prix II* from MicroProse — or any good racing sim — is to get as much seat time as you can. With that out of the way, let's see how we can make you faster so you can get up front and run with the big dogs.

DON'T RELY ON THE DRIVING AIDS

A word about driving aids: Turn 'em off. They make the game unrealistically easy, and they just slow you down. Besides, you'll never run up front if the computer's doing the braking and shifting for you. The computer is far too conservative, shifting and braking way too early. To test this, turn on the automatic braking and shifting and set your opponents to the rookie level. You'll blow past the other cars on the straights, but they'll catch you in most corners because they'll be braking so much more aggressively.

Leave the driving aids on to have some fun and impress your friends, but don't use them for too long. They're just



Get ready for some high-speed action at Hockenheim in the German Grand Prix. Speed is king here, so you'll want the lowest wing settings you can get.



A major crash at Hockenheim. You can gain some positions on the start, but make sure you survive the first turn.

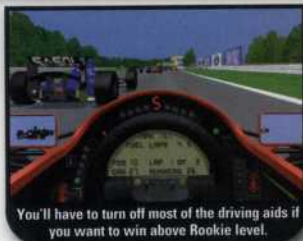
slowing you down, and the longer you use them, the harder it will be to drive without them. You're allowed a couple of exceptions to this rule: Despite putting in grueling hours of tests and races, I'm not familiar enough yet with the tracks to turn off the Ideal Line (F5). The Throttle Help (F7), which limits acceleration to maintain traction to the rear tires, is also helpful. Practice with this option turned off, and you'll get a real feel for what a powerful beast you're driving. Like the other aids, though, you'll eventually be quicker if you can learn to drive with Throttle Help turned off.

FRAME RATE IS YOUR FRIEND

Grand Prix II is the best-looking racing sim around, but those pretty graphics will just slow you down if you've got anything but the fastest computer in town. Use the frame-rate estimation in the Graphics Options to configure the game to run at least 20 frames per second, or higher if possible. Turn off as many of the graphics and textures necessary to get a decent frame rate, or you'll have a helluva time getting a feel for driving.

YOUR ROOKIE SEASON

You'll never win the championship above the Rookie level



with the driving aids on, but they are a useful tool when you're learning the tracks. Here's my schedule for learning the game: When you first climb into the cockpit, leave all the driving aids on, including invulnerability. Run a championship season, with race length set under 50%. You'll have some fun and probably win some races, but more importantly, you'll get acquainted with each of the very different and very demanding circuits.

Okay, you kicked some butt and won a few races in your first season, but that was just a game. Now you're ready for the simulation. Start another season, and this time turn off all the driving aids, except for the Ideal Line (F5) and Throttle Help (F7). Set the opponent level to Amateur or Semi-Pro. It doesn't matter; you're most likely going to get your doors blown off either way. But now you're racing.

So you've visited each track before, but they're just a blur. Now you've got

CAR SETUPS

First, you should forget about fine-tuning setups until you get to know each track like your own backyard. If you jump right in and try to tweak the chassis before you're familiar with a circuit, you're just wasting your time. A Formula One driver is like a bobsledder — to be fast, you have to memorize every corner, every entry point and exit point. When you're learning the tracks, come up with a basic setup (see the setup guide for some tips) and concentrate on the track itself. After you get to the point where you can get around Aida in your sleep, then you can worry about shaving off a few tenths of a second by tweaking the setup.

Still, you need a basic, neutral setup for each track, and the designers weren't thoughtful enough to provide them. If you have Internet access, you'll find several good Web sites where you can download dozens of setups. If you're starting from scratch, read the track descriptions in the manual to get an idea about gearing. Choose initial gear ratios, or go with the default setting, then go out for a couple of laps and check the RPMs at the end of the fastest straightaway. Adjust the top-end gearing so that the rev indicator reaches the red light just before you begin braking to enter the corner.

Next, adjust the front and rear wings. Changing the downforce will probably affect your straightaway speed and RPMs, so you'll have to go back and tweak the gear ratios after changing wing settings. In general, a higher wing setting creates more downforce, which makes the car drive better through tight corners. The downside to downforce, though, is that it robs you of speed on the straightaways.

The manual tells you to keep the rear wing setting two points above the front wing. That works on some tracks, but it's by no means an absolute rule. On most tracks, you'll have too much relative downforce on the rear, creating severe understeer, meaning that your car is reluctant to turn into a corner. Since the front wing has much less impact on speed than the rear wing, you can afford to set the front wing much higher. That will help the car turn into corners without sacrificing much straightaway speed.

For most tracks, an initial setting of 20/10 is a good starting point. Try to find a comfortable setting for the front wing, then adjust the rear wing to get the speed and handling to your liking. For the super-fast tracks like Monza and Hockenheim, start out with a setting of 6/1. On the tightest track, Monaco, you'll need all the downforce you can get, front and rear. Set it to 20/20.

to learn every corner and every bump like it was your own driveway. Don't try to do all this work during a race weekend. Follow the season schedule, but allow yourself the luxury of stopping time and doing some pre-season testing between races. Before the season-opener in Brazil, for example, visit the track for some extensive testing. For now, leave the Indestructible setting on, because you're going to smack the wall quite a bit if this is your first time doing your own braking.

To get an idea of how fast the competition will be, go to the next race on the schedule and straight to qualifying to check out the pole-winning time. That's the time to shoot for. Of course, you'll want to abandon the season without saving it, so you can resume your testing.

You can try to tweak the setup a bit, but don't get carried away. Your driving ability and knowledge of the track are still far more important than brake bias or shock stiffness. Take it easy, braking a little earlier than you have to for each corner. Strive for consistency, and try to keep all four tires on the asphalt. As you get more comfortable, pick up the pace a bit, driving a little deeper into the corner before hitting the brakes.

After you've learned the track fairly well, resume the season and get out there with the big boys. You'll probably be as a shock as Damon Hill and Gerhard Berger chew your butt up getting into the corners, but that's okay. Hell, you're a rookie. Use the Friday practice session to get comfortable dri-



Whoa, Nelly! This isn't NASCAR. Either clear these guys quickly or let them go for now.

ving in traffic, and to get more familiar with the circuit.

It's less nerve-wracking to start from the back of the field, but you shouldn't skip the qualifying session just 'cause you're scared to start in the middle of the pack. Passing can be extremely difficult, so each car you can put behind you on the start will save precious time on the track.

PIT STRATEGY

Let your speed and your position in the championship standings determine your pit strategy. If you're the fastest car on the track, starting on the pole, maybe you can afford to make two or three stops. If you're an also-ran, you might want to make the race on just one stop and try to gain some positions.

Your pit strategy will also dictate, in part, your driving style during a particular race. If you're trying to go the distance on fewer stops, you'll want to adopt a more conservative style, keep-



Plan your pit strategy carefully. If you're outclassed on the race track, maybe you can make one fewer pit stop and gain some positions.

ing tire wear to a minimum so you won't be sliding all over the track on bald tires as you wait for your next pit stop. If you're fast and you've decided to make two or three stops, then go for it to take advantage of the fresh rubber.

RACE STRATEGY

It's a maxim in road racing, and it should be your approach as a rookie Formula One racer: Race the track, not the other drivers. Side-by-side racing is risky stuff, so your strategy — at least until you're an experienced racer — should be to avoid it. That doesn't mean you should back off when a car gets alongside you going into a corner. Just hold your line and don't move to block the other car. You might hold him off, but if he gets by, don't worry. You'll probably pass him back later on.

Take it easy when you find yourself in heavy traffic. You can't bang fenders as if you were in a stock car — hell, these things don't even have fenders. The slightest contact with the guy beside you can send your car airborne. Your focus on the track must be consistency. Sure, you should try to experiment to improve your line, but your top priority is to run smooth, consistent laps.

THE START

If you're starting in the first few rows, you can often gain a few positions on the start without taking dangerous risks. If you're in the middle or further back in the pack on the starting grid, take it easy when the green light comes on. You might be able to pass half the field in a bold maneuver, but more likely you'll crash and you'll have to head for the pits.

PASSING

For the first few laps after the start, your focus should be on survival. After the cars get separated on the track, then you can start planning your passes. At the lower skill levels — Rookie or Semi-Pro — passing is a breeze. Your car is much faster than the



The curbing in the corners can save your butt, but take it easy. Hitting them too hard or at the wrong angle will turn your car around in a split second.



The most dangerous moment in auto racing: the start of a Formula One race. If you're fast enough to start up front, go for it. If you're in the middle of the pack, take it easy until the field gets sorted out.

competition, so just wait for a straight-away and blow on by, then try to hold the other guy off getting through the next corner.

When you graduate to the higher skill levels, passing becomes much more challenging. You might be able to overtake on the straights, but the other guy might be just as fast. You'll have to plan your pass more carefully, and it usually involves outbraking your opponent getting into a corner. If you can pull alongside the lead car on a straight, try to line up your car on the preferred line approaching the next turn. If you're beside him and on the preferred line as you enter the turn, your opponent will be forced to give way.



Pulling off the pass at Monaco. If you can get alongside the lead car, take the preferred line, and outbrake him getting into the turn — he'll have to back off.

CORNERING

Another road-racing rule applies: Slow down to go fast. Driving too deep into a corner will ruin your exit to that turn and cut your speed headed down the next straight. Braking a bit earlier approaching the turns will save tires and help ensure a smooth exit. When you're racing for a position late in the event, of course, you can go for it, driving deeper and braking harder. The corner markers are critical for getting into the turns at the proper angle and knowing when to brake. Most turns are marked at 300 and 100 feet, with the signs on the side of the track that represents the outside of the turn. As you approach a corner, line up alongside the signs and get ready to brake. In general, try to begin braking as the car reaches the 100-foot sign.

Braking, obviously, is a critical element to how fast you get around a track. Your entry into a corner determines how hard you'll be able to accelerate out of the corner, and how much speed you'll be able to carry into the next one. One botched corner entry can screw you up for half a lap. When you first apply the brakes, slam them hard, then try to ease up as you begin to turn into the corner. Get back on the throttle as hard and as quickly as you can, as long as you're able to maintain the line through the corner.

IN CONTROL

If you're serious about the game, you deserve to reward yourself with a wheel-and-pedals set. You can drive with the keyboard, sort of, and a joystick works okay, but you won't really get a feel for Formula One racing until you're working the wheel and slamming on the brakes. More important than the realistic feel you get with a wheel and pedals is the more precise control they offer. Pedals allow you to ease off the brakes a bit or feather the throttle as you exit a turn. Using joystick buttons or the keyboard, the gas and brakes are either all the way on or all the way off.

BY LEE BUCHANAN

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Z

It's time to put a hurt on those bad old blue 'Bots, with these helpful hints from General Zod's headquarters.

It's our final installment of Z strategy, and what better way to finish off this extensive level guide than right here in the Ultimate Strategy Guide '97. Now we're winding up the Bitmap Brothers' strategy melee with the final five levels — the hardest ones in the entire game, naturally enough. So now you have no more excuses; get off your tin butt and finish the game!

LEVEL 15

SWAMP FEVER

The forts are very close together, but the bridge between the two is destroyed. Players should take control of either the left or right side of the map. The player should maintain a good defense in front of the fort, as the CPU will repair the connecting bridge and launch a direct attack across the river.

Start Units: 3 Psychos / 1 Heavy Tank / 1 Med. Tank / 1 Jeep



Right at the beginning of this level, pick off any CPU units which come close to the water's edge using your heavy tank **1**.

Take the island territory flag to the right and below your fort. Move the robots to the right to capture the adjacent territory. Then move the remaining robots back to defend the island.

Capture the territories in the bottom left of the map **2**, and bring the crane back to repair the bridge to the left of your fort **3**.

Use robots to sneak up and capture the two flags to the right of the CPU fort **4** **5**.

LEVEL 16

LIGHT BRIGADE

There is a heavily defended direct road between the forts. Access is possible, although difficult, up either side of map. Whichever route is chosen, the player must remove defenses on the roads. The CPU often launches a direct assault down the central road with a Heavy tank, and it is vital to eliminate this unit as soon as possible.

Start Units: 2 Psychos / 1 Tough / 1 Sniper / 1 Heavy Tank / 1 Med. Tank



Move your heavy tank up to take the territory in front of your fort and to deter the CPU from pressing an attack down the central road **1**. After taking your "home" territories, try to take the territory on the right which contains the 5" robot factory **2**. Use snipers / lasers to take out the Gatling gun protecting the flag on the island at the left **3**.

LEVEL 17

CAR PARK

A river runs from north to south, splitting the map into two halves. On a large island to the south lies a very large parking lot. This contains lots of valuable hardware (mobile missile launchers, tanks etc.). The player starts the level with very few robots and so is, initially, unable to capture all the hardware. The player needs to get control of the two robot factories the bottom of the map as soon as possible in order to manufacture robots to occupy the hardware. Once captured, the hardware must be moved north to defend against CPU attacks in the center of the map.

Start Units: 1 Sniper / 2 Med. Tanks / 2 Lt. Tanks / 1 Jeep



Use your fast moving units (Jeep, Snipers) to get down to the parking lot and capture some hardware.

Get all your robot factories going. Don't wait for lasers — get something built and get them to the parking lot ASAP. This is a race against time.

Use your tanks to defend the two routes across the central river **1** **2**. When you have captured the heavy tank and mobile missile launcher in the parking lot, bring them up to reinforce these two points, and then to drive across onto the CPU side of the map.

Do not leave the bridges in the parking lot undefended. Watch out for raiding robots stealing the hardware on your side of the map.

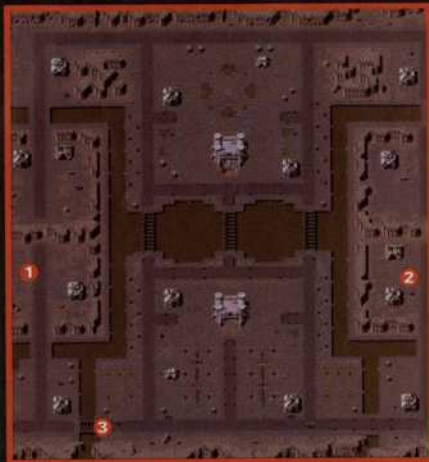
Once all vehicles in the parking lot have been occupied, build Toughs in the southern robot factories to put into the APCs.

LEVEL 18

BRIDGE GAME

The forts are relatively close together, connected by three (initially destroyed) bridges. To the left and right are large enclosed areas containing 5* factories and heavy unmanned hardware. Both forts are vulnerable from attack in all directions. Beware of the CPU sending robots across the river and vehicles across the bridges to attack your fort.

Start Units: 1 Psycho / 1 Tough / 1 Sniper / 1 Pyro / 1 Laser / 1 Heavy Tank / 1 Med. Tank / 1 Lt. Tank



Leave at least one artillery unit in front of your fort to keep the bridges

destroyed until you want them repaired. Build other units which can keep the bridges destroyed as soon as possible (e.g. Toughs) so that you keep control.

Split your forces evenly and move around to capture the territories to the left and right of your fort

2, capturing the territories behind your fort on the way. Use the crane (bottom left) to repair the bridge in that territory

3 and then bring it back to your fort. Build powerful units and reinforce your

forces on either side until you can make an assault. A few guerrilla operations in the center will draw some of his forces back to defend his fort.

LEVEL 19

MAYHEM

The large open battlefield is surrounded by buildings and territories which are divided between the two sides. The only way the player can reach the CPU fort is through the central territories. This causes a massive battle as both players compete for resources in the central territory. Raiding missions across the river from the top left and bottom right territories to capture the adjacent territories will give an advantage.

Start Units: 1 Tough / 3 Sniper / 1 Laser / 1 Heavy Tank / 1 Med. Tank / 1 Lt. Tank

Move robots and your medium tank up the left-hand road 1 to take all the territories on the left-hand side. Position your medium tanks at the road junction below the top left territory 2 to repel CPU heavy tank assaults. Send troops along the bottom to pick up the light tank and use your heavy tank to defend the 3* tank factory territory flag 3. Send troops into the bottom left central territory to collect hardware. 4 Send heavy tank into the bottom right central territory 5 with support from the left and try to hold the 5* tank factory there while a powerful unit is built. Alternatively, try to take the other 5* tank factory (top left center) 5. Once established, you can try the following: Send Robots to try and steal the territories above 6 and to the right of 3. You will need to use snipers to take the gun emplacements which protect these territories. Taking the territory to the right of 3 will enable you to push up the right-hand side of the map. This assault can be supported by units manufactured in territory 5.



LEVEL 20

Z

Being the last level of the game, everything is thrown at the player. The initial layout is unusual in that many of the buildings are close to the CPU and HCP forts. The player must capture as many territories as possible to make these factories effective. It is crucial that the player captures the Mobile Missile Launcher and Heavy Tank in either the top left or bottom right of the map in order to have any chance of winning.

Start Units: 2 Psychos / 1 Tough / 1 Sniper / 2 Med. Tanks / 2 Lt. Tanks



There is no room for error here — You must...

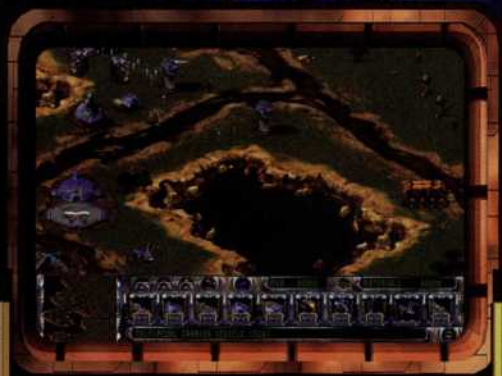
Drive hard up the left hand side of the map, blasting through the racks to capture these territories and the uncaptured heavy tank 1, and mobile missile launcher 2. Move the Tank and Mobile Launcher across to defend the road to the right.

Move robots swiftly into the two territories to the right of your fort, using the crane to repair the two bridges closest to your fort 3 4.

Use a tank to destroy the bridge in the bottom right corner so that the CPU heavy tank has to take a long route around 5.

The CPU concentrates attacks in the area to the north of 3, so it is important to establish a strong defense at this location. Try to prevent the bridge on the small island from being repaired, or destroy it as CPU tanks come across 6.

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Product Information Number 241

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JAGGED ALLIANCE:

DEADLY GAMES

This sequel from Sir-tech giving you trouble? Not any more, thanks to these top tips for beginners, experts, and multi-players.

NOVICE TIPS

1. Play the Tutorial Campaign. It will introduce you to the basics of the game in a less-deadly environment than the main campaign. (Plus, you get to play around with mortars in the next-to-last mission!) If you're still having trouble, read the Tutorial Campaign walkthrough in the manual.
2. If you can afford it, hire Scope or Ivan. In certain situations, having just one good merc is better than having eight so-so ones. This is especially true in the first snow mission in the main campaign.
3. When firing, spend the extra points to refine your aim. It doesn't do any good to fire more often if all your shots miss their targets!
4. In the solo campaign, hire Pops for the first mission. Give his equipment to other mercs, and have him go out in the field armed just with a .38. He will probably go down fighting (which is how he would have wanted it...) This



Picking a good Mercenary is like picking a car, you want one with as many options as you can get.

strategy may not be approved by the AARP, but it is a very cheap and easy way to get a shotgun early on.

5. The experience level of your mercs is vitally important to detecting and disarming mines and traps. Don't have level-one mercs explore minefields or pick up suspicious objects.
6. Try to avoid swimming or wading whenever possible. You're a sitting duck in the water because you can't fire back.

7. Often the best way into a building is not through a door. Make your own entrances with explosives: you'll give the enemy a shock and avoid ambushes.

8. In the campaign, collect every medical kit you can find. If a merc is seriously injured, have him be a patient during the next mission. (Or, if you think you can get away with it, fire him.) If all your mercs are seriously injured, either heal most of them and count on losing the next mission, or restore to an earlier save. The walking wounded don't win battles.

9. If you find a chunk of steel, have a merc with a good mechanical skill merge it with a weapon. The result will be a much more powerful gun.

10. Don't forget the basics of infantry combat. Have your mercs cover each other. Use the natural cover. Don't bunch up. Don't let the enemy sneak up behind you.

EXPERT TIPS

1. Unlike in *Jagged Alliance*, you can crouch and fire at the same time in *Deadly Games*. Don't fire while standing up unless you have to, or if the enemy is running away.

2. The computer-controlled enemy has learned some new tricks since *JA*. You'll have to adjust your tactics to counteract



A.I.M.		TEAM	
	Murray 'Pops' McGillicutty		
SALARY : 210	MEDICAL : 18		
HEALTH : 38	ENDURANCE : 6		
AGILITY : 14	INTEGRITY : 0		
MENTALITY : 4	MARKSMANSHIP : 85		
RISKOR : 88	EXP. CLASS : 9		

Pops

A member in good standing, Murray McGillicutty has been with A.I.M. since it was founded. As one of the oldest fighting men alive, his cock-and-bull stories about prehistoric warfare and his ability to cheat death are mythical amongst the younger members.

← → GEAR EXIT FUNDING 15000

Cheap, expendable, and well-equipped are the three virtues you'll want in your mercenary squad.

them. Staying under cover and long-distance fire is more important than it was in *JA*. (The snipers — Lynx, Sidney, and Scope — are excellent for picking off the enemy at a distance.)

Often the computer opponent will pull the trick of walking into view, taking a shot, then walking out of your view. Plant some decent mercs under cover nearby and have them reserve some Action Points. With luck, the next time

the hit-and-run enemy walks into view, your mercs will get an interrupt and wipe him out.

3. Dealing with Micky can be a pain, but it's worth it in the long run. Micky saves all his best stuff for his regular customers, so deal with him often. You may buy a package of junk once in a while, but you won't mind when Micky starts selling your mustard gas grenades and M-14s!

In later missions, don't forget to grab as many extras as you can carry. Those weapons and tools can benefit your team!

4. Check out the new mercs. Buzz and Malice are excellent bargains for the price, Leon has decent equipment, and Scope is a killing machine (look out, Ivan!). Postie and Dyno aren't much as mercs, but are extremely entertaining nonetheless.

5. Don't forget: The solo campaign is just one small course in the banquet that is *Deadly Games*. If you get stuck in the main campaign,

If it's necessary to bunch up your team when crossing open ground, be sure to keep your guard up.

take a break and try playing a single mission, or a computer-generated mission. Fool around with the Game Options, changing the difficulty, the equipment, or the APs.

6. You may have gotten away with using two or three mercs in the field in *JA*, but that's unlikely to work in *Deadly* unless one of those mercs is Mike. Count on needing at least four mercs in the field for a mission. You will probably want multiple medics at the start of the campaign.

7. In the main campaign, don't assume that the mission goal is always in or near a building. Read the mission briefing carefully before you start. If you forget your mission while you are playing, click on the turn indicator in the upper left corner of the screen. That lets you review your mission objective.

8. Chainsaws and machetes can be used as weapons, but that's not what they're really for. Their main use is to clear away trees and bushes (imagine that!). There are no situations where you have to have a chainsaw, but there are a few where clearing away a tree will open up a shortcut or give you a better angle on the enemy.

9. You can now detonate explosives by shooting at them. This can save tons of time in crucial situations. It also means you're less dependent on explosives experts.

10. Some mercs, like Fidel, won't stop shooting at an opponent until he's dead. In *JA*, you could make a persistent merc stop firing at an opponent just by taking the gun out of his hand. That trick doesn't work in *Deadly*, but a different one does: place a knife (or other cutting implement) in the merc's main hand instead of the gun. The merc will be under your control again.

MULTI-PLAYER TIPS

1. Use Increased Action Points for multi-player missions. This allows a merc to move further in a turn, but reduces the total number of turns in a mission. The net effect is to speed up play.

It's good to stay undercover and use long-distance fire.



To avoid the mission failure screen, make sure to follow our tips and suggestions.

- As a rule, *don't* use unlimited turn time in multi-player (unless all the players have requested it beforehand). Having all the time in the world to move is great when it's your turn, but it's pretty tedious when it's not!
- Use the right number of mercs. A four-player game with eight mercs on each team leads to long waits between turns, so use smaller teams. Four to six mercs per team is best. One or two mercs per team and Very Short turn time is fun for blitzkrieg games.
- Vary your tactics. Don't always attack by the same route, and don't always use the same mercs. Computers may not be smart enough to figure out your patterns, but humans definitely are.
- Boobytrap your best equipment. This will stop your opponent from using your own stuff against you if he kills one of your mercs.
- Psych out your opponent. Here are ways to turn the other guy into jello:
 - If you have Mike or Scully (the best mercs in the game) on your team, don't let the other teams know it until midway through the mission. Then, at the critical psychological moment, send a taunt from your super-merc to the other team. (I suggest Mike's "Here's the deal: I have to live up to my reputation, and you have to die.") Watch them cower in fear as they realize they are doomed!



There are two rules for total victory. One is: grenades, grenades, grenades. (Or, if you have them, mortars, mortars, mortars.) One well-placed grenade can take out an entire team if that team is bunched up.



Keeping your mercenaries healthy is key for unit cohesion and morale. Don't skimp on medics!

- Have a disposable merc (say, Biff) walk up to a tree near some enemies. Then have Biff search the tree using the hand cursor. Watch your opponent scatter because they think Biff's planted an explosive there! If your opponent is too dim-witted to even think of this possibility, have Biff go ahead and plant a *real* explosive. Have him use a short fuse. It may kill Biff as well as your opponent, but what the hey — it's only Biff!
- If your opponent always hires the same merc (say, Ivan) get into a furious bidding war over the merc. When the

price is nice and high, click on CANCEL instead of OFFER, and chortle with glee as your opponent pays through the nose.

- There are two rules for total victory. One is: grenades, grenades, grenades. (Or, if you have them, mortars, mortars, mortars.) One well-placed grenade can take out an entire team if that team is bunched up. The second rule is: *never bunch up your mercs.*

- Use the Random Hire feature to speed up the pre-mission section of the game.

Also, use Random Hire/Use Poor Mercs every so often. It's more of a challenge to win if your mercs can't shoot straight. Plus, the worst mercs usually have the best taunts! (Try Biff, Rueban, Postie, Skitz, or Sparky.)



Use the buildings and terrain wisely. Windows, doors, and furnishings make excellent obstacles and obstruct lines of fire.

- Suppose you and your pal eagerly start playing *Deadly Games* via modem — but then you find your friend is just *terrible* at the game. Playing him is like shooting ducks in the barrel. (Or worse, *you're* the duck in the barrel, and get wiped out on a regular basis.) What can you do to make multiplayer *Deadly Games* fun again?

Easy: play the cooperative campaign, COOP2.CPN. It was designed for this sort of problem. Unlike cooperative play in many games, you'll find plenty of challenge to keep you both entertained as you work together to do in those fiendishly clever redshirts.

Another trick to even the scales is to use handicapping of some kind — one player gets 8 mercs while the other gets 4, and so on.

- Taunt early and often. You'll get hours of enjoyment from the taunts. In 3 or 4 player games, though, the proper etiquette is to only taunt players when it's not their turn (otherwise, you're just slowing the game down).

BY SIR-TECH

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Product Information Number 180

HUNT.



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SYNDICATE WARS

Here's a comprehensive walkthrough, direct from Bullfrog, for the missions facing the Eurocorp Syndicate. We'll have more help next month.

MISSION 1: LONDON

Take at least one minigun and buy some body mods for your agents. Head through the portcullis, then turn left toward the Unguided. This area has a few Unguided in it, which should be easy kills unless you attract them all at once. Don't worry about civilians getting caught up in the crossfire; they are expendable. Once the objectives are dead, collect as many Uzis as possible and head home, but be on the lookout for more Unguided. If you are overpowered, run back to base where the lackeys defending it will assist you if you are followed. The bank in London does not contain any cash.



The first mission, set in London, is designed to be easy and help the player get into the swing of things with some choice kills.

MISSION 2: DETROIT

It's best to enter this mission carrying just two miniguns, because you can pick up four Uzis on the level and sell them afterward to make 8,000 credits. There are a number of Punks (7) that have to be killed. One of these, the woman trying to destroy a tall building at the bottom of the map, is carrying a number of pieces of high explosive. As you get near her, she will drop some and run off toward an area of office buildings to place some more. In total, she drops five pieces, all of which — if you are quick — can be picked up before they go off. Inside the base at the top of the map, look out for the two enemy Syndicate agents with



Big explosions like this one in Detroit will be easy if you follow our walkthrough.

knockout gas. One of these agents will be dead when you get into the base, and his unused gas will be sitting next to him, ready to be picked up.

Be careful when you enter the base because there is a gun turret inside that will fire at you if you get too close. Seeing as it is very early in the game, you won't have many mods, if any, so the laser fired by the turret will make mincemeat of your agents. Fortunately, a Zealot (one of your objectives to kill) has placed some high explosive down by the turret, so hold back by the gate, and the turret will be blown apart. One of the Zealots in the base also has some explosive and is willing to use it! Watch out for him as he walks around the side of the biggest building in the base and puts down the explosive. Once again, this explosive can be picked up if you are quick. If you don't kill him, he will get into a car and drive out of the base and try to persuade all of the civilians in the city, aided by another two Zealots who were waiting for him in the car. Kill them before they persuade everyone. Once you've done that, get back to the station and you've completed the mission.

MISSION 3: HONG HONG

Start the mission with at least two miniguns and a persuadertron. The first thing you will come across after leaving the IML link is a small group of enemy agents battling some Unguided. The best move is to try and go left up the road, avoiding them until you have persuaded

a small army of civilians and cops. You can now persuade the agents as your persuadertron gives your persuadertron extra power. If this fails, start shooting. Keep your guns concentrated on one enemy until he drops before turning to the next target. Try not to destroy the green vehicle, as you will need this to get through the gates to the Yamaguchi compound. Once the agents are neutralized, get in the vehicle and drive across the bridge to the Yamaguchi compound, where their security will attack you. Persuade or kill them. Next, persuade the scientists and get back in your car, waiting until they are in too. Drive back to the IML link.

MISSION 3: BEIJING

Start the mission with a persuadertron and at least two miniguns. There are four executives to be persuaded, but remember that the security forces



A big building goes boom in Beijing as your Syndicate agents create more carnage.

guarding them will attack anyone with a weapon drawn. There is also an Unguided presence in the city center, so keep your eye on anyone you persuade, as they will be very prone to attack if you run off ahead of them. Persuading a crowd of civilians, then persuading the security forces and any hostile Unguided is probably the safest tactic, but not the easiest. This will also give you the persuadertron power needed to persuade the agents at the end of the mission. When using the persuadertron, you will find it tough to get close to the enemy sometimes, as their bullets will be pushing you back. The solution is to run at them, and if they start firing, just put on your super shield until they are persuaded.

Keep your eye out for Unguided carrying explosives and collect them so you can destroy the bank. Blow up the bank and pick up the briefcases that are scattered in the blast.

MISSION 4: GENEVA

Start the mission with a persuadertron and as many miniguns as you can afford. The main concern on this city drop is keeping the scientists alive, so shoot anyone else you see who might have a gun. The scientists are in the most danger once you have persuaded them, so ensure the area is clear before you do. Look out for an executive being escorted by security men; he is carrying some cash, so mug him if you see him. Avoid the Church enclosure; it is trapped.

MISSION 4: MATOCHIN SHAR

Equip your men with miniguns, KO gas, and a persuadertron. You will be jumped at the bank as soon as you arrive, so be ready. The Bluesky Laboratories are defended by security forces, which you would be better off persuading, as they will help against the Unguided onslaught that attacks you from all sides after you persuade the scientists. Watch out for



In these early missions, it's best to keep your agents grouped so they can cover each other.

someone shooting the scientists in a crossfire. Once the Unguided have been dealt with, head back to the IML where a Zealot ambush awaits. They will be using ion mines, so be sure to clear the area before your persuaded people catch up. At some point in this city drop, a Zealot convoy will enter the city and be ambushed by the Unguided forces. This convoy is in the possession of a large sum of cash, which the Unguided are trying to steal.

MISSION 4: VANCOUVER

Start the mission with a persuadertron. Head straight through the city to the elevated parking lot and kill the Unguided. A Syndicate vehicle will arrive, and two agents will get out. Kill them and steal their car. If you attack the larger of the two compounds first, you will gain access to a flying vehicle. Do not start persuading scientists yet, as you will not want them to follow you into the church grounds. Now that you can fly, try attacking the Zealots, and rummage through their corpses for money and

GENERAL HINTS

- During the early missions, keep your agents together. This will bring more fire-power to bear on each enemy.
- Try to collect spare weapons during a mission and sell them at the end for much needed cash.
- Research high explosive as soon as you can. You will need it to blow up the banks.
- Blow up any banks you come across. They hold money in underground vaults, which can only be accessed when the building is destroyed. Watch out for a police response to bank-robbing.
- Try to get a variety of weapons spread across your agents, and always carry high explosive for the banks.
- The long-range rifle is the most efficient weapon, but it takes a long time to reload. Learn to snipe the first couple of adversaries, then switch to another weapon for the rest of the gunfight. If the enemy outnumbered you, then try KO gas or sniping from a distance.
- Razor wire is effective when used as part of an ambush. It will injure the enemy, and perhaps even slow them long enough to snipe more of them.
- Beware of people carrying explosives, because when they die, their explosives are primed and will blow up unless you pick them up first. Shooting the bomb will detonate it earlier.
- Flying vehicles that attack you cannot shoot you if you hide under a building.
- Always have healing kits with you and remember to use them if the action gets to be too much, then put on your super shield and run.



Blood and fire rain down in Vancouver during one of the game's tougher missions.

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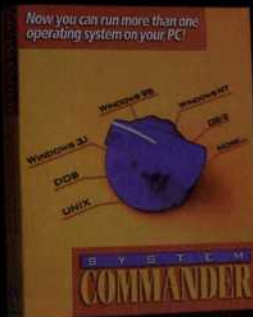


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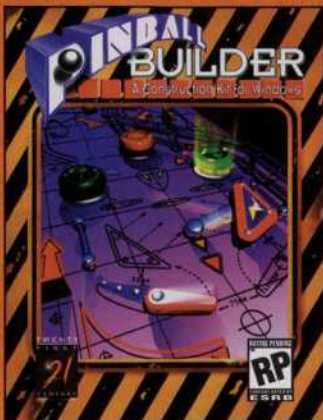
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anything else of interest. Once this is done, it is safe to start persuading scientists. Kill all enemy syndicate presence, then take the persuaded scientists back to the IML link.

MISSION 5: SINGAPORE

Equip your agents with KO gas. This mission takes tactics. All you have to do is get the center vehicle to the rendezvous point. Unfortunately, the enemy syndicate has deployed a lot of forces there, so you will need to use the long-range rifles carried by the IML guards. Take out one Guard at a time with the LR rifle, then run back to the rest of your agents and minigun any retaliation strike. If they respond in force, use KO gas to buy some time. As soon as one of the enemy has entered the objective vehicle, there is little you can do, so when the guards are dealt with, run into the bank courtyard and jump straight into the truck, and shoot the remaining guards from inside. If the truck is destroyed, the mission will be a failure.

MISSION 6: PHOENIX

This mission is broken down into two problems; the Unguided saturation of the city, and the Zealot stronghold. The Punks will be everywhere, but you will be better off later if you take them out at the beginning. Your first target should be the Punks robbing the bank next to the station. Use KO gas and miniguns to take out the bank guards and any Punks near the back of the bank. There will be money lying on the ground now, so grab it. The Unguided will probably be swarming all over you by now, so use short bursts of minigun fire and a generous spread of KO gas. When your weapon energy is depleted, run, picking off those who pursue you. Hide and recharge. The Zealot stronghold has outer and inner guards. Take out the



There will be slaughter on the streets of Phoenix as your Syndicate agents get into a heated battle with rival gun-toters. Eurocorp's minigun formation should eventually win this fight.



Fighting flying vehicles like this one in Rome can be tough work for ill-prepared agents.

Zealots at the entrance and enter the temple area. The inner guards will call for flying-car backup when they start losing, and if the situation gets beyond hope for them, the temple security systems will activate, releasing crazy gas everywhere. Your best bet is to draw the Zealots out of the stronghold and hide around a corner for toe-to-toe gunfighting. Once the Zealots are dead, grab the objective item and run for the IML.

MISSION 7: ROME

There are four main areas that need clearing in Rome. The first objective area is a Punk stronghold, which the enemy syndicate will hit with satellite rain as soon as you enter the area. The best tactic is to run your agents into the area, kill a couple of Unguided, and flee before the explosions start. Stand across the street and snipe any Punks that make it clear of the devastation zone. Behind you is another, smaller stronghold that can easily be stormed. Take out this area after you have sniped the spider droids the Zealots have sent.



Rome sure ain't what it used to be. Blow up the banks and collect the suitcases in the rubble for extra cash.

These machines are pretty tough, so use the rifles and keep a distance from them. After the two strongholds, there is another Unguided area, which is over on the other side of the city. If you run in there, one of them will drop KO gas on you, so when you do enter, get off ground-level as quickly as possible. Once this zone is cleared, you will need a vehicle to get into the syndicate base (unless you destroy the gates). There are several cop cars behind the station on the opposite side of the city, but be careful, as there are some flamethrowing syndicate guards who will attack the police station. Let them. Clear up any survivors and steal a car. The syndicate base has two big patrols and several men near the entrance. When you drive into the base, stay in your car as long as possible, using it as cover. This should be enough to clear the first wave. Now ambush the patrols one at a time, using KO gas. Your last objective is to get an agent who has holed up in the corner of the compound. The best tactic is to blow up the bank (and collect their money), then attack from that side. Watch out for the Cerberus IFFs. Once you have killed him, there will be a Cerberus IFF that you can pick up.

MISSION 8, PART 1: HONG HONG

Tips for this level, and indeed the other two parts, depend on how you choose to play it. You have the choice of either killing or persuading the target agent.



The streets of Hong Kong light up — but not with firecrackers — as the Eurocorp agents meet a heavily-armed guard during this particularly thorny mission.



More blood and guts spill everywhere in Hong Kong — pretty it ain't.

We will concentrate on the persuading option, as it is the harder of the two, and the option that is better for you, as you gain a new agent for your Cryovats. The key to the mission is to persuade people before you enter the base to persuade the main target. The main problem here is keeping a persuaded force alive. The police won't think twice about gunning down any persuadees that you may have — something it's very hard to stop them from doing, as your persuaded civilians walk so much slower than you do. So, you can either try to kill the cops or persuade them, the latter being recommended, as it helps you get to the level of persuaded people required to persuade the agent at the end. Once you have persuaded a certain number of civilians, a bunch of cops will come after you, and a police car will start patrolling all over the city. The cops on foot aren't really a problem; persuade or kill them. However, you may find your persuaded force being seriously reduced by the cop in the car who is driving past and shooting at anyone you have persuaded. There is also a car being driven around by a guard who will do the same as the cop. You need to get rid of these two as soon as possible. LR Rifles work best, as you will be out of his range when you shoot at the car. Once you have built a big enough persuaded force, it is time to get that agent. As he is in a base, you need to get a car to drive in. Don't try to blow open the gate to the base, because chances are

you will blow up the bridge leading to the gate as well, killing yourself. You can find a car, guarded, at the east side of the city. Drive this into the base, persuade the agent, and get out of there as soon as you can because there is an airstrike on the way. If you are unlucky enough to get stranded in the base because the bridge has been blown up in the airstrike, don't despair, a flying ambulance will fly in and the driver will get out and look for anyone injured by the blast. Steal the ambulance and fly out to safety.

MISSION 8, PART 2: PHOENIX

The best way to complete this mission is not to start to build a persuading force until later in the level. It is best to start off by taking out the Zealot presence in the city, as you will find that any persuaded force you have amassed will be taken out by the Electron maces employed by these Zealots. Once they are out of the way, you can think about building an army of persuaded civilians

and cops. To get into the base where the agent you want to persuade is located, you need a vehicle. The only vehicle you can use is situated in the south of the city, but unfortunately it is in an area overrun by the Unguided. It is possible to persuade them all, but it is extremely difficult to do so. Watch out for Punks with high explosive intent on stopping you. With your force of persuaded people amassed, go for the agent. He is patrolling in the walled-off area to the east of the IML with a number of guards. Beware of Zealots flying in once you have persuaded the agent; they won't take any prisoners. Kill them and head for the station to complete the level.

MISSION 8, PART 3: BEIJING

At the beginning of the level, you will be set upon by a group of enemy agents. Don't even think about trying to persuade them; you won't be able to get enough civilians persuaded in time. A few blasts of laser or minigun fire should sort them out. Move into the main part of the city and start to build that persuaded force, watching out for any enemy guards who could blow away your newly acquired civvies. Watch the roads, too, as they aren't all on foot. Once you've got enough people, go for the area where your target is situated, making sure to take out the IFFs and looking out for razor wire. Once that is done, get to the station, but stay vigilant for any attacks from the air and ground. There is a bank that can be robbed on this mission, so going into the mission with explosive is a very good idea, as it is a bit of a waste self-destructing a modded-up and fully-equipped agent to blow the bank. Look out for a police reaction.

MISSION 9: ROME

The agent you need to persuade is in the walled area in the North. Unfortunately



Hot electric death gives our agents something to think about during this Phoenix mission. Check out our step-by-step guide to see how to deal with this little problem.



The Rome mission can be really tough if you don't know what to expect — but thanks to this guide, you won't have any problems.

for him, he is locked into the base. He does have a vehicle, but he can't get into it. You must get into the base and kill him before he finds the keys he is frantically running around looking for. If he finds them, he will run for the vehicle and fly away, and you will fail the mission. Lucky for you, he doesn't seem to find them until you have blown open the base gate, which, by the way, is the only way in. Explosive is a very good idea again. The city is crawling with police, so watch out for them. There is an opportunity for financial gain in this city because there is a Punk hideout in this city. As you get near it, the Punks see you and come out to welcome you with guns blazing. Look out for the Punk running away; maybe he doesn't want you to get your hands on the cash that he has just stolen. On your way back to the station with your newly acquired agent, look out for any Punks intent on hindering your progress.

MISSION 10: NEW YORK

Group all agents together and equip with LR Rifles. Go east and pick off the small group of five syndicate guards with LR Rifles and miniguns, then quickly equip RAPs to take out the two flying vehicles



More trouble in The Big Apple as our agents come up against this heavily-armed flying attack craft. Either take it down, or get the hell out of there — fast.



Don't cross the streams! A flamethrower battle heats up in the New York mission.

that will then attack. Don't be afraid to use medikits at this point if they are required. If the flying taxi lands and four syndicate guards emerge, kill them with LR Rifles or RAPs, but on no account should the taxi be approached. It is best to attack the taxi (now grounded) with LR Rifles or RAPs, then wait until the High Explosive in the taxi explodes. Now is a good time to obtain some Lazars to sell at the end of the level to get some extra money. With this small war finished, run east, but only until you see a large number of enemies appear on the scanner. Then back off a bit and take out as many of the enemy as you can with LR Rifles, then switch to RAPs. Four of these enemies have High Explosives on them, and you should not get too close to them. If the attack is handled properly, one of the first enemies that is killed should drop a High Explosive, which will take out the main body of the enemy. But remember that there are still three more Explosives somewhere around the corpses, so wait until these explode before continuing. The next stage involves running toward

the armored syndicate car that lies just to the East of the previous battle. IMPORTANT: You will see a male civilian walking directly towards the car from the South. Take him out with LR Rifles, then run and pick up both of the weapons he drops. The civilian is in fact an enemy syndicate agent with a clone shield on, and if he is not killed and his weapons picked up quickly, the mine that he is carrying will explode next to the target vehicle, and you will find it very hard to complete the level. Next, persuade the nearby target, and then enter the vehicle and scan the map for the next target. Then move to a point that is just inside the door of the compound that houses the target. En-route, equip the agents with LR Rifles and be ready to switch to RAPs when these are used once. You will be attacked by flying vehicles when the ground troops are destroyed in the raised compound. Take out the flying enemy with RAPs, as this the most efficient way to disable a flying target. When the two flying enemies are destroyed, persuade Miss Taks, the target, and get into the waiting Police car (which conveniently has the ability to fly) and click directly on the evacuation point (the IML station). This will enable you to finish the level if you wish. You can, of course, now choose to attack the bank and retrieve a large amount of money if you want to, but bear in mind that there is a small possibility that Miss Taks will get killed by the enemy. This bank, as the netscan says, has increased security, and this is not that obvious when you are only confronted with a small force of five police. However, when the police are killed and the bank is demolished with the High Explosive, you will be attacked by four flying police cars. These are easy to deal with if you equip RAPs to take them out quickly. If you are not ready for the attack, it's possible that you will lose an agent before you know what is happening — this is tantamount to suicide. Four agents can take the Police cars down quite easily, but three will really struggle.

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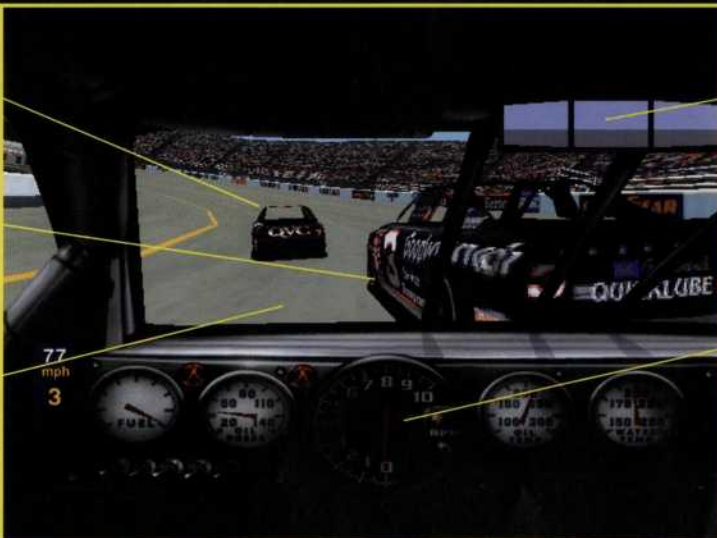
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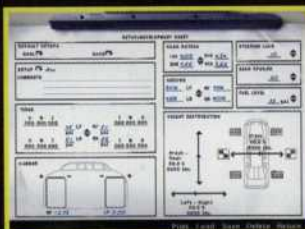
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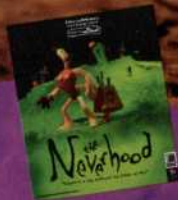
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CHOICE CHEATS

All these clever strategies and tactics are very well and good, but there comes a time when you've just got to cheat!

ABUSE

(CRACK DOT COM)

Use the command line parameter `-edit` to get into the game in Edit ("God") mode. Hold down **SHIFT** and hit **Z** and then **TAB** to start the game.



Sam and Max make a guest appearance in LucasArts' *Alterlife* — if you know the code.

AFTERLIFE

(LUCASARTS)

To see Sam & Max on the map, type **SAMMAX**. To get 10,000,000 pennies type **\$@!** (but only three times per game).

BETRAYAL AT KRONDOR

(SIERRA)

Here are the chapter passwords, options, and everything else you'll need to beat the game: On the overhead map, hold down the **ALT**, **Right-SHIFT**, and **-** (the tilde) for about three seconds, and a chest will appear. Each chest contains the items needed to finish that chapter, and an option to heal all characters. Just use the cheat trick, in conjunction with these level codes, and you can beat every chapter:

Chapter 1: 6478
Chapter 3: 7702
Chapter 5: 5052
Chapter 7: 0194
Chapter 9: 9995

Chapter 2: 9216
Chapter 4: 2132
Chapter 6: 0680
Chapter 8: 4743



Our naughty-but-nice cheats should give gamers the multi-player edge in *Sid Meier's CivNet*.

CIVNET

(MICROPROSE)

To activate the cheat menu, type **CTRL A O D B A M F** in order — don't hold down the control button while doing so. The menu enables these cheats:

TYPE THIS

ScaleIt
ArmyInfo

MoneyAndPower
AllSeeingEye
GetRichQuick
GetSmartQuick

MissileCrisis

SettlersHo!

NukeStorms
Automode
Armageddon

TO GET THIS

Increases production
See information on other races
Gives money and power
Reveals the whole map
Gives you 1,000 coins
Gives you a Civilization advance
Creates a nuclear missile in each city
Creates a settlers unit in each city
Causes global warming
Computer moves for you
Nukes every city

ters **W**, **A**, and **X** at the same time.

NOTE: Your score is set back to zero every time you use this code. You can also gain access to individual cheats by typing **C7 LEVEL1 DIAGNOSTIC** at the DOS prompt when you begin the game. Then, during play, try these key combinations:

HIT THIS

BackspaceG
BackspaceW
BackspaceN

BackspaceR

Backspaceal

TO GET THIS

Toggles God mode
Warps between levels
Lets you walk through walls
Puts a skull image in front of your character
Increases your score



Make blasting those alien muthas a little easier with our classy cheat codes for *Corridor 7*.

CORRIDOR 7

(GAMETEK)

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Invisibility in *Crusader: No Remorse* is just a cheat code away - see below.

CRUSADER: NO REMORSE

(ORIGIN SYSTEMS)

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, or press **F10** to gain all the items and weapons.

DARK FORCES

(LUCASARTS)

Just type the following codes during any mission.

- Lbug (Bug Mode):** This cheat lets you squeeze through narrow passages and greatly reduces your size when crouching (very helpful in the garbage crusher).
- Lacds (Reveal Map):** Get a full map of your current level and locations of all enemies, objects, and doors.
- Ladata (Reveal Navigation Counter):** Useful in marking the exact coordinate of items and important corridors.
- Laimlamo (Invisibility Toggle)**
- Lamaxout:** Full ammo, shields, and weapons
- Lantft:** Allows you to teleport to the current map position one level above or below your current location.
- Lapogo:** Disable height checking; allows you to reach those high precipices and ledges.
- Lapostal:** Get all weapons and ammo.



This Gamorrean Guard will be toast once you type in those *Dark Forces* weapon cheats.

- Larandy:** Produces the same effect as the weapon super charge power-up, giving you an increase in rate of fire from all weapons for 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 effect.
- Laskip:** Completes the current level.
- Launlock:** Get all keys, code cards, the broken Dark Trooper gun, data tape, ice cleats and Phrink metal.

LEVEL CODES:

The following cheats will transport you to any level you want. Just type in the cheat during the game, and you're on your way.

- Lasecbase:** Secret Base
- Latalay:** Tac Base
- Lasewers:** Anoot City
- Latetbase:** Imperial Weapons Research Facility
- Lagromas:** Gromas Mines
- Ladntention:** Imperial Detention Center
- Laramshed:** Ramsees Hed Docking Port
- Larobotics:** Robotics Construction Facility
- Lanarshada:** Nar Shaddaa
- Lajabship:** Jabba's Ship
- Laimpcity:** Imperial City
- Lafuelstat:** Fuel Station
- Laexecutor:** The Executor
- Laarc:** The Arc Hammer

DEADLOCK

(ACCOLADE)

This fine turn-based strategy game just got a hell of a lot easier, thanks to these handy cheat codes. Please note, however, that these cheats only work in version 1.0 of the game. So, if you have a later version, don't bother trying the codes; you'll just have to win honestly. To activate cheats, hold down CTRL and hit F1, then type the code into the mes-



Accolade's *Deadlock* has no shortage of hidden codes, covering a wide variety of cheats.

sage line. Oh, and these cheats do not apply to multi-player, so you can't use them to trick your friends.

TYPE THIS MAKE IT SO

TO GET THIS

- 5,000 credits and 100 of each resource in each territory
- FRODO** Completes research on current technology project
- GHOTI** Maximum population in all territories
- TOUCHE** Allows you to view any video sequence

DESCENT

(INTERPLAY)

Type these in during play. In order to get the most out of these cheats, you'll probably want to reconfigure your keyboard settings so you don't set off any bombs when you're typing (that deadly "b" key) or move yourself into danger.



TYPE THIS

- GABBAGABBAHEY**
- SCOURGE**
- MITZI**
- RACERX**
- GUILE**
- TWILIGHT**
- FARMERJOE**

TO GET THIS

- Cheats enabled
- WowieZowie weapons**
- All keys
- Invulnerability on/off**
- Cloak On/Off**
- Shields recharged**
- Warp to any non-secret level**
- BUGGIN** Turbo mode; everything (including enemies) speeds up
- BRUIN** Extra Life
- BIGRED** SuperWowieZowie weapons (includes all weapons)
- FLASH** Shows the path to the exit
- AHIMSA** Keeps enemy ships from firing
- POBOYS** Destroys the reactor (version 1.4 only)
- PORGYS** MegaWowieZowie weapons! (v.1.4 only)
- LUNACY** The robots speed up (version 1.4 only)



Loads o' codes for Interplay's excellent *Descent II* give you everything from level warps and infinite weapons to a "touch of death" mode and quirky screen effects. Check out the cheats below.

DESCENT II

(INTERPLAY)

Same deal as *Descent*, different cheats...

TYPE THIS

WHAMMAZOOM
ERICAANNE
MOTHERLODE
CURRYGOAT
EATANGELOS
JOSHUAAKIRA
ZINGERMANS
ALIFALAFEL

GOWINGNUT

HELPVISHNU
PIGFARMER

BITTERSWEET

GODZILLA

FREESPACE
SPANIARD

ALMIGHTY
ROCKGRL
LPNLIZARD

TO GET THIS

Level warp
Bouncing weapons
All weapons, full ammo
All keys
Homing weapons
Full map
Invulnerability
Gives you all accessories
Makes the Guidebot attack enemies
Makes more Guidebots
If you use a reduced window, strange heads appear in the border
Makes the screen warp kind of strangely
You can kill robots just by bumping into them
Level warp
Kills all robots (kills boss robot second time you use it)
Invulnerability
Full autopap
Gives you homing weapons

idspispopd

idchoppers

iddt
idbehold
idbeholdv

idbeholdi

idbeholda
idbeholdr
idbeholdl

idclew

idmypos

Walk through walls

(*Doom II*)
Get the chainsaw (and a cryptic message)

Reveals map
Get berserker pack
Get temporary invulnerability
Get temporary invisibility
Get full AutoMap
Get antiradiation suit
Get light-amplification visor

Followed by episode and level number, warps to that level
Display coordinates and heading

DUKE NUKEM 3D

(3D REALMS)

If we print all the *Duke Nukem* codes in full here and now, will you guys finally



Come get some — we've got the full list of definitive cheat codes for *Duke Nukem 3D*.

stop calling us and asking for them? Okay, it's a deal. Here they come...

TYPE THIS

dncornholio
dnstuff

dnitems

dnweapons
dnclip

dnscotty###

dnskill#

dnview

dnhyper
dncashman

dnmonster
dnshowmap

dnrate

dnbeta

dnallon

dncosmo

TO GET THIS

God mode
All weapons, items, and full ammo
All non-weapon items
All weapons
Walk through walls, ceilings, etc.
Warp to level
Change skill level (# is 1 to 5)
Chase mode
Steroids
Hit SPACE to throw cash
Erases all monsters
Reveals complete mission map
Shows the current frame rate
Displays secret message
Displays secret message
Displays secret message

NOTE: Using the *dnscotty* warp mode, the first # is the episode number, the second two are the mission number. For example, to warp to Episode 2, level 6 type *dnscotty206*.

EARTHWORM JIM

(ACTIVISION)

Some handy hints here, to be typed in during gameplay... (continued on next page).



Those baddies will be eating Earthworm Jim's justice with the aid of our cheats.

DOOM I & II

(ID SOFTWARE)

Without further ado...

TYPE THIS

iddqd
idfa
idkfa
idclip

TO GET THIS

God mode
Ammo & weapons
Ammo, keys & weapons
Walk through walls (*Doom II*)

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Product Information Number 164

TYPE THIS
ITSAWONDERFUL
HATMAN

TO GET THIS
An extra life
Turns Jim into Hatman,
just like in *Pitfall*

ONANDONANDON

Maximum number of
game continues

POPQUIZHOTSHOT
SLAUGHTERHOUSE

Gives you 1,000 bullets
Access the first five
levels of the game



Our comprehensive cheats for *Fury 3* should help liven up this shooter.

FURY 3

(MICROSOFT)

These cheats will breathe new life in to *Fury 3*. Type them in during play.

TYPE THIS

TRYMEON
GIVITIUP
URDUSTD
JUMPNT
WORMITx
TUFENUF
PACKIN1
PACKIN2
PACKIN3
PACKIN4
PACKIN5
PACKIN6
PACKIN7

TO GET THIS

God mode
All weapons
Turbo
Warp to next level
warp to level x
Shields
Servo ammo
Isokinetic ammo
Rapidfire laser ammo
DDM ammo
Viper ammo
Baryon ammo
Superbombs



A 3D killing game needs plenty of cheat codes, and *Heretic* is no exception.

HERETIC

(GT INTERACTIVE)

Type these during play to activate some cool cheats.

TYPE THIS

Quicken
Massacre

Skol
Rambo

Engage#

Kitty
Cockadoodledoo

TO GET THIS

God mode
Kills everything on
the level
Get keys
Get full health, armor,
and weapons recharge
Level warp (# is the
level number)
Walk through walls
Try it and see...



You've got nothing to fear from enemies like this with our nifty *Hexen* codes.

HEXEN

(GT INTERACTIVE)

Use these mystic formulae to deliver some punishment to the monsters.

TYPE THIS

satan
deliverance
butcher
clubmed
NRA

TO GET THIS

Invulnerability
Turns you into a pig
Kills all the monsters
Maximum health
Full weapons, mana,
and armor
Full inventory
Gives you all the keys
Gives you all the puzzle
items
Walk through walls
Gives map coordinates
Displays frame rate
Toggles map detail
in map mode
Warps to level 01-31
or level 41

indiana
locksmith
sherlock

casper
where
ticker
mapsco

visit##

WINDY if you're playing *Magic Carpet 2*. Having typed in the cheat word, hit **ENTER** to activate cheat mode. The cheats are as follows:

HIT THIS

SHIFT 1
SHIFT 2
SHIFT 3
SHIFT 4
SHIFT 5
SHIFT 6
SHIFT 7
SHIFT 8
SHIFT 9

TO GET THIS

Access all spells
More mana
Destroy all rival wizards
Destroy castles
Destroy balloons
Full health and mana
Kill all creatures
Completes current world
Saves current screen as
.GIF file in game
directory

NOTE: Constantly using the **SHIFT2** cheat for more mana can cause the game to become unstable and crash.

QUAKE

(ID SOFTWARE)

Here are all the cheats you'll ever need for id's awesome 3D blaster. We've printed the codes in capital letters for easy recognition, but *Quake* doesn't recognize case, so don't worry about using upper or lower — either will do fine. But remember to put the spaces in. Hit the **tilde key (~)** during play to activate the *Quake* console. Type in your chosen cheat and hit **ENTER**. Now hit the **tilde key (~)** or **ESC** to resume play with the cheat activated. To deactivate the cheat, go back to the console and type it in again.

GENERAL CHEATS:**TYPE THIS**

GOD
KILL

FLY

MAP ExMy

SKILL x

TO GET THIS

Invulnerability
Restarts current
mission
Fly mode: use D key to
ascend, C to descend
Warp to new level (x is
episode number, y
mission number)
Change skill level (x is
keys 0-3 for varying
skill)

MAGIC CARPET 1 & 2

(BULLFROG PRODUCTIONS)

Here's some cool cheats for both of Bullfrog's *Magic Carpet* games. Both sets of cheats work the same for each game, but the activation code is different. Press the **I** key during play to bring up a text prompt. Now, type the word **RATTY** if you're playing the original *Magic Carpet*, **QUICK** if you're playing *Hidden Worlds* or *Magic Carpet Plus*, or



Pump that mana, baby! Just don't over-use the mana cheat in *Magic Carpet*.



No cheat section would be complete without a listing of cool *Quake* codes.

NOTARGET	Monsters can't see you until you attack them
NOCLIP	Walk through walls and ceilings

NOTES: When you use the **MAP** cheat to warp, you lose all extra weapons, health, and armor. The code for the final mission is **END**.

WEAPON CHEATS:

TYPE THIS	TO GET THIS
GIVE 1	Axe
GIVE 2	Shotgun
GIVE 3	Double-barrelled shotgun
GIVE 4	Nailgun
GIVE 5	Super Nailgun
GIVE 6	Grenade Launcher
GIVE 7	Rocket Launcher
GIVE 8	Thunderbolt

NOTES: These cheats give you the weapons, but without ammo. Which is why you need this next set of codes...

AMMO AND HEALTH CHEATS:

TYPE THIS	TO GET THIS
GIVE S 255	Maximum shotgun shells
GIVE N 255	Maximum nails
GIVE R 255	Maximum rockets/grenades
GIVE C 255	Maximum Thunderbolt cells
GIVE H 1000	Maximum Health

SUPER CHEATS:

TYPE THIS	TO GET THIS
IMPULSE 9	All the weapons, fully loaded
IMPULSE 11	Gives you a Rune
IMPULSE 255	Gives you Quad Damage

REBEL ASSAULT

(LUCASARTS)

After the animated LucasArts logo, move your joystick **UP** and press **FIRE**, then move the joystick **DOWN** and press **FIRE**, then move the joystick **LEFT** and press **FIRE**, then move the joystick **RIGHT** and press **FIRE**. You'll hear a telephone ringing and a voice answering "LucasArts," which lets you know that the cheat mode is active. To go anywhere in the game, type the number of the chapter you want to play. The chapters are number 1-9 for chapters 1-9, and **A-F** for chapters 10-15. Also, by pressing the **+** key on the numeric keypad, you'll reset your damage to zero, and pressing **ESC** will let you move to the next cutscene.



Simply type **JOHNWO** in *Rise Of The Triad* for instant Double Pistol action!

RISE OF THE TRIAD

(GT INTERACTIVE)

ROTT is our winner for game with the most cheat codes (not counting level codes). To use these codes, just type them in during a game (remember to type the first code, **Dipstick**, to enable the cheats).

TYPE THIS
Dipstick

Sixtoys

TO GET THIS
Enable/Disable cheat codes
Items aplenty

Huntpack

Johnwo
Plugme
Vanilla
Firebomb
Hottimes
Seeya

Shootme
Burmme
Chojin

Booze
Bones
Toosad

Flyboy
Badtrip
Boing
Speed
Panic

Whack
86me
Dimon

Dimoff
Goto
Goobers
Gogates
Gearch
London
Nodmol
Shineon
Shineoff
Lungdung
Ride
Where

Outfit player
(Bulletproof Armor,
Keys, HeatSeeker)
Double Pistols
MP40 Machine Gun
Bazooka
Firebomb
Heatseeker
Hand of god (permanent
god mode)
Bulletproof Armor
Asbestos Armor
Woundless with
Weapons
Drunk Missile
FlameWall
God mode (temporary
invulnerability)
Mercury mode
Shrooms mode
Elasto mode
Enable autorun
Restart to normal, full
health, no modes,
keys or guns
Whack yourself
Kill character
Light diminishing on
Light diminishing off
Go to another level
Restart current level
Exit to DOS
Exit current level
Fog on
Fog off
Light sourcing on
Light sourcing off
Gas Mask
Missile Camera on/off
Toggles Coordinate
Display on/off

SCREAMER

(VIRGIN)

Type these in at the menu screens to enhance your racing fun.

VTELO: All normal tracks available
INVER: Reversed tracks available
MONTY: Obstacle graphics are changed
JOINT: More obstacle graphics
CLOCK: Turn off that clock
TAZOR: Makes the bullet car available
UPDOWN: Turns graphics upside down
MIRRO: Mirror mode
ABURN: Other cars become Bullet Cars
(NOTE: You can't undo this without a reinstallation or backing up the choice.dat file.)



Screamer's a cool game, and our cheats make it even easier to lap your opponents.

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Product Information Number 358



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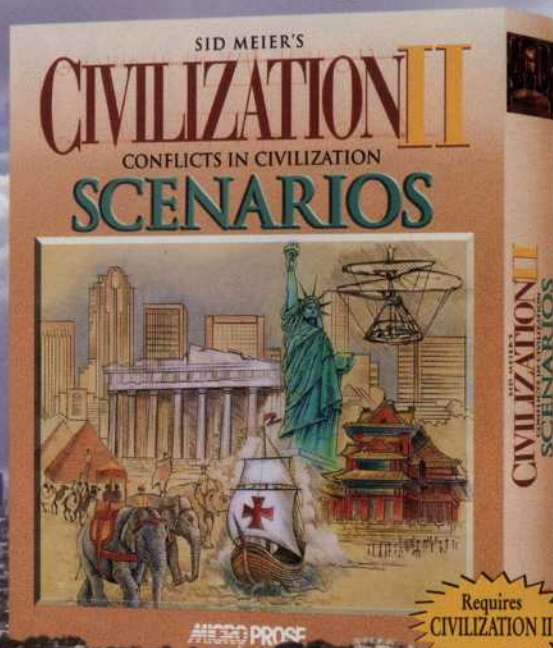
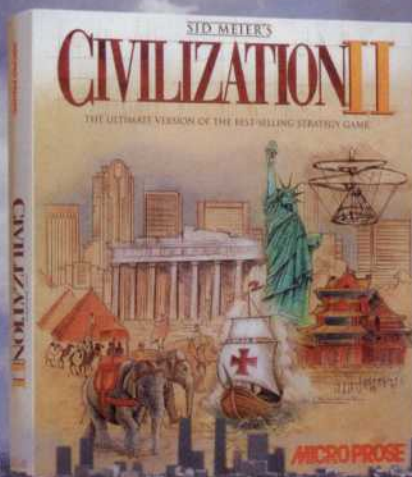
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MICROPROSE

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Product Information Number 235

STRIFE

(VELOCITY)

Here are the cheats for the registered version. Type them in on screen.

TYPE THIS

GPS
SPIN##
OMNIPOTENT
BOOMSTIX
JIMMY
PUMPUP
GRIPPER
ELVIS
RIFT##
STONECOLD

TO GET THIS

Shows position
Changes music
God mode
All weapons
Gets you some keys
No sliding
Walk through walls
Level Warp 01-32
Kills all monsters on a level
Gives you 300 gold
Gives you another sigil piece
Full map toggle (use when looking at map)
Framerate ticker
Teleport to map spot

DONNYTRUMP
LEGO

TOPO

DOTS
SCOOT#



SUPER STARDUST

(GAMETEK)

The following codes should be entered as passwords on the title screen.

NOBRAKES: Full engine power
HARDGAME: Makes the game tougher
DNUMUAHCS: Ten times more energy, but only one life
DIEALIENDIE: All weapons on full power
JJRVLES: 35 lives, all weapons on full power
WARHEAD: Makes missiles detonate when they hit a target
ELJEMASTER: Weapons are ten times more powerful
PETSKUMODE: Enables reverse gear

SYNDICATE

(BULLFROG PRODUCTIONS)

Rename your team one of the following names to activate the corresponding cheat mode.

Nuk Them: Select any country on the map
Rob a Bank: Gives money
Cooper Team: Get money and items
Watch the Clock: Speeds up the clock allowing for faster research completion

To the Top: Try it and see what happens!



TERMINAL VELOCITY

(APOGEE)

To access the cheats, simply type in the code during gameplay.

TYPE THIS

TRIFIR0
TRIFIR1
TRIFIR
TRIFIR3
TRIFIR4
TRIFIR5
TRIFIR6
TRIFIR7
TRIFIR8

TO GET THIS

Temporary invincibility
Reloads PAC
Reloads ION
Reloads RTL
Reloads MAM
Reloads SAD
Reloads SWT
Reloads DAM
Recharges afterburner fuel
Invisibility
Full invincibility
God mode plus weapons powerup
Jumps to the next level
Restores shields to full strength
Oscilloscope
Combat hovering
Frames-per-second
Warp to level number you type in at #
Super afterburner booster
Weapon power-ups

TRIFIR9
TRIFIR10
TRIGODS

TRINEXT
TRISHLD

TRSCOPE
TRIH0VR
TRFRAME
TRWARP#

TRIBURN

3DREALM

TERMINATOR: FUTURE SHOCK

(BETHESDA SOFTWARES)

"You'll be back" in this game if you use



Those evil T-800s definitely won't be back, once you've activated our Terminator: Future Shock codes.

these nifty cheats.

BANDAID: Replenishes power and armor
FIREPOWER: Gives you all the game's weapons

SUPERUZI: Gives you a super uzi with 9999 ammo

NEXTMISSION: Transports you to next mission

TURBO: Activates turbo mode

ICANTSEE: infrared sight

GARBLE: Lets you see the cheats as you type them

WHOAMI: Displays your coordinates

WARCRAFT

(BLIZZARD ENTERTAINMENT)

To enable these cheat codes, hit **ENTER**, type one of the codes, and then hit **ENTER** again. First use the Corwin Master code to enable the others. **CORWIN OF AMBER** enables the use of the codes below:

THERE CAN ONLY BE 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. Works the same way the human cheat works.

HURRY UP GUYS: Speeds up construction and research

EYE OF NEWT: Gets all magic spells available to your team

IRON FORGE: Get the best weapon and shield strength

SALLY SHEARS: Reveal entire map
POT OF GOLD: Get 10,000 more gold and 5,000 more lumber

IDES OF MARCH: Takes you to the final sequence

YOURS TRULY: Takes you to the victory sequence

CRUSHING DEFEAT: Takes you to the failure sequence



Warcraft II: PC Gamer's 1995 Game Of The Year has some of the coolest cheats of the year, too.

WARCRAFT II: TIDES OF DARKNESS

(BLIZZARD ENTERTAINMENT)

We get more requests for these handy cheats than any other, so here they are in their entirety. Hit ENTER to bring up the message bar, type in the appropriate cheat message and hit ENTER again — a dialog box will appear to tell you the cheat has been activated. To switch the cheat back off, simply type it in again.

TYPE THIS

Unite the clans
You pitiful worm
It is a good day to die

Glittering prizes

Valdez

Every little thing
she does

Hatchet, axe and saw

Never a winner
Deck me out

Make it so

Tigerlily
Orc xx / Human xx

On screen

FOR THIS CHEAT

Instant victory
Instant loss
Troops invulnerable to
everything except
magic

Extra gold (use as often
as you like)
Extra oil (use as often
as you like)

Extra magic points (use
as often as you like)
Extra lumber (use as
often as you like)

No victory possible
Upgrades shield
and armor

Faster building, training,
and upgrading
Enables mission jumping

Jump to mission (where
xx is mission number)

Reveals the entire map

WHIPLASH

(INTERPLAY)

Use these codes as your player name.

SUPERMAN: Makes your car invulnerable
CUPWON: See the end of championship
sequence
CINEMA: Play in widescreen
FORMULAI: Access alternate cars

MREPRISE: Access to the bonus set of
tracks
MRFROSTY: Tracks become very slippery
WARGATE: Cars warp

WING COMMANDER I & II

(ORIGIN)

When you type in the startup command for either game, add a space, then type **Origin -k**. Make sure you use a capital "O," or the cheat won't work. You'll be able to fly against wave after wave of Kiltrathi without taking damage, and destroy any targeted ship (including the big capital ships!) at will by pressing **CTRL** and **DEL** at the same time.



Kick some Kiltrathi butt by running *Wing Commander III* with a special command.

WING COMMANDER III

(ORIGIN)

You use the command line **wc3 -mitchell**, and then while in combat, **CTRL-W** will kill a locked on enemy, and **CTRL-ALT-W** will destroy all enemies in the radar map.

WING COMMANDER IV

(ORIGIN)

Use the command line **wc4 -chicken**.

Then: **CTRL+W** to destroy targeted enemy, **CTRL-ALT+W** to destroy all enemies on radar, and **ALT+0** to become invulnerable.

WITCHHAVEN II

(INTRACO)

First type backspace to activate cheat mode. Then type these codes for the following cheats.

marketing: God mode
weapons: All weapons
health: Restores health
armor: Restores armor
strength: Gets you the STR powerup
potions: Gives all potions
spells: Get all spells
keys: Gets all keys
invis: Invisibility
level##: Level warping

WOLFENSTEIN 3D

(ID SOFTWARE)

Sigh. Those were the days, eh? Here's the definitive cheats for this golden oldie.

You need to start the game with a command line parameter:
for version 1.0 type **wolf3d -next**
for version 1.1 type **wolf3d -goobers**

Once in the game, you need to activate the cheats:
for version 1.0 press **CTRL+ALT+ENTER**
for version 1.1 press **LSHIFT+ALT+8SPACE**



Now you can use these cheat codes:
TabG: God mode
TabI: Add item
TabH: Self-mutilation
TabN: No clipping mode
TabP: Pauses game
TabQ: Exits
TabW: Turbo mode
TabX: Adds extra stuff
TabE: Finishes level
M+L+t: Weapons, ammo and invulnerable

WORMS

(OCEAN)

Type **BAABAA** at the weapons options screen and have access to new, devastating super-weapons.

**Fight your way
through time.
Or you're history.**



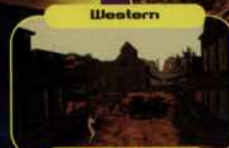
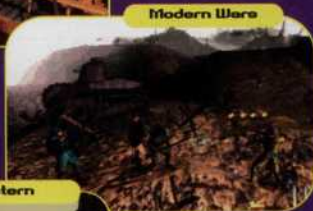
Nine Distinct Worlds
Battle through nine time eras: Prehistoric, Roman Times, Feudal Japan, Medieval, Conquistador, Western, Modern Wars, The future and the ultimate showdown against The Virus itself.



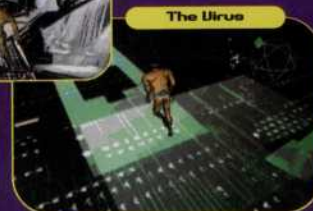
45 Deadly Weapons
Master dozens of lethal weapons – from Prehistoric clubs to Wild West guns to futuristic lasers.



Over 80 Fierce Enemies
Defeat more than 80 real-time polygonal 3-D enemies from past and future battlefields.



Incredible Environments
Journey through stunning realms as characters are seamlessly integrated with gorgeous pre-rendered backgrounds.



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Check out the demo at <http://www.activision.com> or <http://www.mcafee.com/forhome/> or visit us on America Online at Keyword "Activision" or on CompuServe at Keyword "Go Activision". Now available on MS-DOS/Windows 95 CD-ROM and Sony PlayStation.



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ACTIVISION

READERS' REQUESTS

What's the Ultimate Strategy Guide without Readers' Requests? Nothing! So, now, we turn the floor over to you....

KING'S QUEST V

Please help me! I am so desperate. I recently purchased *King's Quest V*, and I cannot get anywhere that will actually help me in the game. There are so many different things. I know that this is an old game, but maybe you can help. I need a lot of answers, so here are some questions.

- 1) How do you get past the snake?
- 2) How do you get in to the witches house?
- 3) How do you get the door unlocked inside the Innkeeper's cellar?
- 4) How do you get inside of the temple in the desert?

—**Lil Bizzy**, via the Internet

Well we're glad you're enjoying one of those classic adventures from yesteryear.

- 1) To get past the snake, shake the tambourine that the gypsies left behind him. That'll scare him off.
- 2) To get into the Witch's house, walk west, east, and then north. Once you're there, talk to the witch and give her the brass bottle. Soon she'll be in no condition to keep you out of the house.
- 3) If you've been knocked unconscious and tossed in the cellar, there's not much you can do about it. On the other hand, if you threw a shoe at the mangy cat chasing the rat, you may have won a friend for life. The rat will now come in and gnaw off your binds. Use the rope and the shoemaker's hammer to knock the lock off the cellar door.
- 4) To get inside the desert temple, knock on the door with the Staff you received from the bandits.

TERMINATOR: FUTURE SHOCK

I'm hopelessly stuck with *Terminator: Future Shock* from Bethesda Softworks. My problem is on the sixth mission. On this mission, the objectives are:

- 1) Retrieve satchel charges from Corporal Willis.

- 2) Disable control substation.
- 3) Destroy satellite nodes.
- 4) Eliminate robots at the camp.

I've retrieved the satchel charges, disabled the control substation, and blown away the three satellite nodes. After I blow the last node, I receive the message: "Come in HQ. The satellite nodes have been destroyed." Well after this, nothing happens. I've eliminated all the robots (even the ones inside the buildings), but after destroying the nodes, nothing happens. Hope someone can help me. Thanks in advance.

—**Aitor Gonzalez**, Bilbao, Spain

Well Aitor, you're almost there... but not quite. Even after you've destroyed the satellite nodes and killed off all of the terminators, you've still got one objective left before you can finish the mission — Destroy the Control Substation. The terminator control substation is located in the control center near the satellite complex. Once you've entered this building, you should come across a half-opened door that blocks your path to the substation control panel. Place the satchel charge just outside of this room to disable the panel, and the mission will end.

WARCRAFT II

I have many questions to ask and only a few helpful hints. My first question is about *WarCraft II's* expansion set. Every time I put in the cheat code "It is a good day to die," I'm supposed to be invincible. But Death Knights can still kill me. Is there another code I have to put in, or is it designed that way? My second question is also about the expansion set. What is the reveal map code? I've searched high and low for it, but it can't be found.



A gauntlet of archers and knights can stop the enemy from stealing your gold.

Here's my hint: If you're tired of other peasants or peons trying to come and take your money from your mine, the answer you're looking for is the "Gauntlet" (see illustration). It worked for me, and I hope it works for you.

—**Trevor Buxton**, Bellefontaine, Ohio

Well Trevor, we're afraid that the invincibility cheat doesn't work when the characters who have magical abilities attack you in the *WarCraft II* expansion set. The cheat code for the map feature is **ON SCREEN**.



The freezer can be a powerful weapon when used properly in *Duke Nukem 3D*.

DUKE NUKEM 3D

I am a 13 year old gamer, and I would like to congratulate you on a very excellent magazine. I would also like to contribute a tip for *Duke Nukem 3D*. Ok, first you need to have lots of freezer ammo (whoever uses that weapon anyway?). Second, you need to be on a level that has a pig cop. Now comes the easy part: Go up to a pig and shoot him with the freezer — eventually he freezes, and he may or may not drop a shotgun or used armor. Anyway, wait for him to unfreeze, and then shoot one more iceball at him, and again he may drop weapons. Just keep doing this until you have loads of shotguns and armor lying around. Then kill him. You can now go around the rest of that level using that ammo, and when you run low, you just go back and pick up some more.

—**Ryan Horrisberger**, White Bear Lake, MN

That's a pretty cool strategy Ryan, but a little chilling. In fact, you might say it's downright coldblooded!

WARCRAFT II

When playing a multi-player game of *WarCraft II*, everyone's first step is to build a town hall — don't! Before you

build any structure, take your peasant/peon to the forest and have him swing his axe at the trees once, then pull him away immediately. Then build your town hall. When it's done, you'll get an extra 100 lumber as if you had completed chopping the trees. This may seem like an insignificant advantage, but believe me, the extra 100 lumber has given me the edge I needed in more than one heated game.

—**Jake Forbes**, via the Internet

Right you are Jake, a lot of readers have pointed out that little trick. Now that the cat's out of the bag, Joe will have to find some other way to win.

KINGDOM O' MAGIC

Ever notice how there aren't many hints for SCI's *Kingdom "O" Magic*? That's because there's already a hint file on the CD. From DOS, go to the CD-ROM drive. In the directory KOMEXTRAS, there is a help.bin file. Type *look help.bin*, and you will find some hints. I hope this will help many stuck KOM players as desperate as I was for a clue.

—**Danny DeWolf**, Fullerton, CA

JAGGED ALLIANCE

In the game *Jagged Alliance*, I have found a way to move as far as you want. The way to do it is first turn on Reserve Movement. Second, do any action, except walk or turn, until the movement portrait turns red. You should now be able to move that merc onto any square in a single move. I don't know if this is a cheat or a bug, but it is really useful for finding that last enemy in a sector. Hope this helps anyone who found this game wicked hard.

—**David Li**, Vancouver, BC, Canada

A bug it is, David, and thanks for pointing it out. Of course by now we're sure you're busy with the sequel, *Deadly Games*. Check out our *Deadly Games* hints on page 155.

QUAKE

I have a neat little activity to try on id's *Quake*. I call it *Quake Basketball*. To play, start the game at the difficulty selection phase and select the grenade launcher (6). Find one of those weird looking cauldrons at either side of the room, and try to aim the grenade to arc inside of the bowl. If done right, the grenade will bounce around inside the bowl and explode. It's a fun little game to play over the modem. Hook up with a friend and have a blast playing Horse. With enough practice, you can jump off the stairway, spin 360, and fire the grenade into the cauldron. Imagine your opponent's facial expression when it's their turn!

—**Erik Laymon**, via the Internet

Sounds like fun, Eric; there may be a guest shot for you in *Hoop Squad!*



For extra cash in *CyberStorm*, one clever reader suggests choosing a "Destroy Base" mission and not destroying the Kamikaze Herc generator, so you can rack up a lot of easy kills.

MISSIONFORCE: CYBERSTORM



I am a big fan of your magazine, and I religiously pick it up the day it hits the shelves. But after reading your strategy tips for *Mission Force: CyberStorm*, I felt compelled to write you and save all those Herc Commanders before they follow your advice.

Upgrading units is a good thing. The further down the line you get, the better weapons you have. I held onto two "Giants" throughout the entire game, and it was worth it when you find out the weapons they can carry. The best strategy is to use the bigger Hercs to tear down the Cybrids shields with your lasers, then use the Giants' guns to punch holes in the armor, or use missiles to tear them apart once you have destroyed their shields.

Here's another tip you overlooked: Once you have a mid-size force, say eight or ten Hercs, and you don't have enough energy weapons to take down shields, use those missiles on the smaller Cybrids. You can usually take out the smaller Cybrids with a nice volley of missiles even when their shields are at maximum.

Your tips suggested leaving the little mining Hercs at the base when going on military missions. Take them with you! The Shadow has the best sensors you can get, and being able to see those extra few spaces will make the difference between getting to the base and having those turrets chew you to pieces. I equip the shadows with mining equipment and sensor upgrades; then they serve a dual purpose, and you don't have to slow down your big Hercs with mining equipment. Well, you might say, what qualifies me to make these tips? Well, I finished the game, I gained three ranks immediately, and did it with only 14 Hercs when you can command 28 when you reach the highest rank.

If you are low on money during the second sector missions of *Cyber-*

Storm, pick a "Destroy Base" Mission. Then when you reach the base area, don't destroy the Herc generator (the one that generates Kamikaze Cybrids with ELF weapons), but do destroy everything else. Then at the beginning of the next turn, two or three Cybrids will pop up, but have to wait until next turn to move. You then shoot them with a missile or whatever you prefer. Then end the turn. Repeat this cycle for as long as you have patience, and at the end of the mission, you will be awarded 1,000 bucks for every little Cybrid you killed. Thirty turns of duck shooting can buy you a whole new Herc or do some serious upgrading on your current ones.

—**Joe Szupiany**, Rock Springs, WY

Congratulations Joe! You're this month's Gaming Genius winner. Expect a few new games and a bold and beautiful PC Gamer T-shirt real soon. Thanks to everyone who sent in tips, and keep 'em coming! **PCG**

TIP OF THE MONTH

Are you a Gaming genius? Do you know the tips and hints for every PC game ever made? Want to share your love of gaming with the world? Well Strategy Central wants to hear it.

Every month we'll select a letter which gives the best advice or puzzle solution to a current PC game, and the lucky winner will receive a boxful of prizes, including a PC Gamer t-shirt, a free strategy guide to inspire you, and a brand new PC game pulled randomly from our mysterious Box 'O' Prizes. So send in your letters to:

Tip of the Month Club/PC Gamer
Imagine Publishing, 150 North Hill
Drive, Brisbane, CA 94005
or E-mail them to:
editor@pcgamer.com

Keep in mind, we've seen plenty of cheat codes and all the old tricks (The C&C sandbags and the multiplayer *Doom* map cheat, for example), so be sure to keep your ideas novel and fresh.

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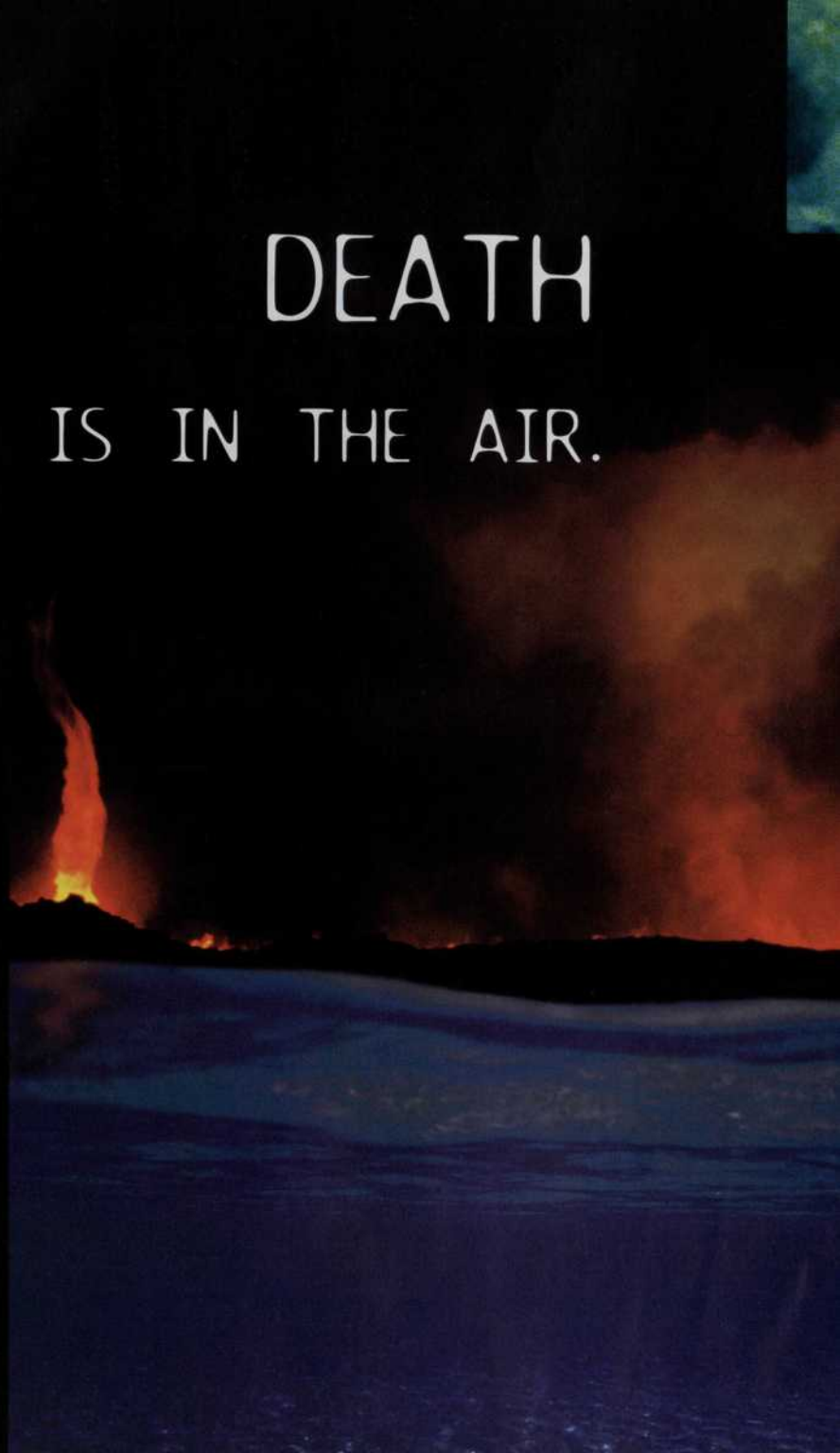
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A

DEATH

IS IN THE AIR.





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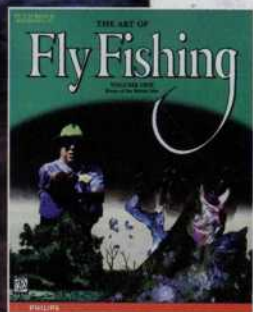
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PHILIPS

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The Q-Files

Hard-core **QUAKE GAMERS'** devotion to their favorite game has spawned a series of **ADD-ONS**, **UTILITIES** and fun **FEATURES** that take *Quake* to a whole new level — and you can join in the fun



By Colin Williamson

FROM THE BEGINNING,

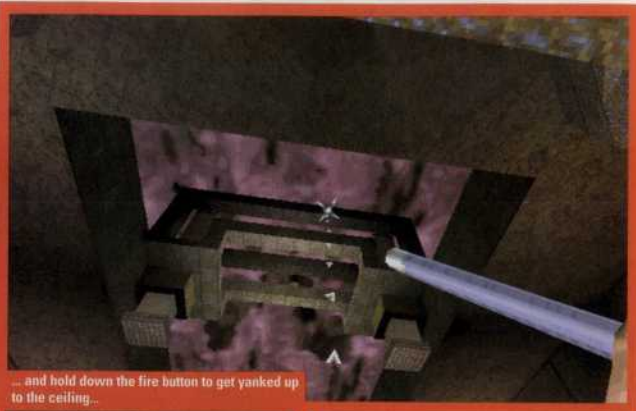
there was little doubt that *Quake* would spawn a cult following that would dwarf even that inspired by its predecessor, *Doom*. From Usenet to IRC to the Web, *Quake* discussion groups, home pages, and chat lines popped up faster than shotgunned zombies in Episode One. *Quake* is more than a game, it's a phenomenon

— even a way of life. “Not only can I play against the same old people all the time, I can connect to a server in another state or even another country, and kill people I’ll never meet... and say that I did it for my country,” states “Gnowknaym,” a denizen of the ever-growing #quake channel on IRC. From the sheer number of add-ons to the

GRAPPLERS



First off, to use the grapplers, you wanna aim for the ceiling. Aim carefully ...



... and hold down the fire button to get yanked up to the ceiling...

uncountable web sites. *Quake's* playability and customizability is taking the nation by storm — and there's little sign of it slowing down.

But what keeps people coming back for more? "Really, it's the brotherhood that all *Quake* players have," says 'Monolith', another IRC dweller. "We're one big, bitchy family." This "family" is a group of *Quake* "clans," collections of avid Deathmatchers who get together with rival clans to wipe the floor with each other.

So what are you waiting for? Read up on some of the *Quake* developments here, then surf the 'net to find what you want — there's a nailgun with your name on it.

Even though some shunned *Quake* due to its all-too-familiar gameplay (the heathens!), many people gazed upon its mind-blowingly versatile programming language — *QuakeC* — and saw that it was good. id Software had left the door wide open for programmers and artists to tinker with the inner mechanics of *Quake*,



... now you're suspended above, away from enemies.

and, very shortly, everyone was learning the ropes.

QuakeC programmer Steven Polge states, "*QuakeC* is really the next generation game modification tool, and this modifiability and flexibility makes id's games so successful — along with their great playability and inherent technology." Coder Jonathan Wright agrees. "With *QuakeC*, id has essentially given every registered user the ability to cre-

ate their own game based on the *Quake* engine." The result is the epitome of gaming goodness, fresh from the creative (a.k.a. sick and twisted) minds of hackers. From multi-player Deathmatch to single-player mayhem, there's bound to be an add-on that will appeal to your own quirky appetite for destruction. Do note that all of the patches mentioned here require the commercial version of *Quake* to run — as always, it pays to be a good little camper and register your shareware.

For each of your *QuakeC* add-ons, you'll need to create a subdirectory in your *Quake* directory. For example, let's make one called *newpatch*. After unzipping your add-on into *newpatch*, be sure to check the readme file, and make sure you're familiar with how the patch works. Finally, simply type: "*quake - game newpatch*" — the patch will load, and you should be in business.

While some add-ons replace a weapon, and make the change automatically, you may need to activate some patches with an *impulse* command. To do this, hit the tilde (~) key at the top left of your keyboard to pull down the *Quake* command line. From here, punch in "impulse," plus the three numbers that will be mentioned in the readme, hit Enter, and then hit the tilde again to remove the console. Let's give a few of these a try...

WEAPONRY

Since *Quake's* original weapons weren't all that terribly engrossing, it's not surprising that there have been numerous patches that introduce the coolest instruments of destruction seen outside of a Schwarzenegger movie. One of the slickest new weapons is the grappling hook — aim up, press fire, and your "morning star" flies up and connects to the ceiling above you. Hold down on the fire key, and you'll pull up and latch on to the ceiling, giving you ample opportunity to rain down death from above. Fire the grappling hook at another



It's the Fourth of July! Exploding firewalls always look cooler than those wimpy sparklers, anyway.

Top 10 reasons
to play

Con Summer

#1. She Ain't No Grass-Munchin' Vegetarian

#2 Has removable teeth

#3 Not the kinda girl you can take home for dinner

#4 Flesh-seeking missiles cook victims to perfection

#5 Every Kill: finger-lickin' good

#6 "Jaws of Death" sheer right through bone

#7 Does regular power lunch, with Jeffrey Dahmer & Hannibal Lecter

#8 First date could cost you an arm and a leg

#9 Can spit a ligament over 30 feet

#10 Likes her take-out extra crispy

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Hexen 2

RAVEN TAKES ON QUAKE



The fact that they're on fire doesn't seem to bother these zombies too much.

player, and you can yank 'em into close range, and administer a few hacks from your trusty axe.

For the pyromaniac in all of us is the flamethrower patch — and finally, it's been done right. Simply let loose a quick burst of flame on a bad guy, and he ignites. While troopers usually die after a few seconds, some of the stronger villains can actually sustain several minutes of being turned into a human torch. Curiously enough, zombies (being the undead minions that they are) appear to stay lit forever, and refuse to die — but at least you can see them coming.

As absurd as it sounds, there's actually a patch that adds an aircraft to Quake. That's right, it's a fully-functional little Descent-style vehicle, complete with Stinger missiles and a Vulcan cannon. Granted, you need a large area to fly around in, but few things touch the bliss of perforating some pathetic schmuck armed only with a shotgun from the comfort of your air-conditioned cockpit. Of course, that schmuck can fight back — a shoulder-mounted missile launcher is provided for earthbound players. I can't wait for the author's next creation, "Quake Kart."

Is there a group of nasty critters coming your way? Fear not — just pull out the firewall from the "Bombs9" pack. A grenade pops out of your launcher, flies into the air, and breaks up into ten more grenades, producing a destructive fireworks display of explosives and flying giblets. Not only that, but the missile launcher is modified to accommodate a flashbomb that temporarily blinds your Deathmatch opponents. Also included in "Bombs9" is a very handy proximity mine like the one used in *Dark Forces* — drop a couple of 'em during Deathmatch, and listen for the results as your enemies peel their colons off the wall with a spatula. Other custom rocket modes include a rapid-fire launcher and homing missiles that follow their targets around corners.

For the canine lover, we have the "Dog Launcher," which fires a live



"Let them out caka!" You may want to avoid this guillotine during deathmatch play in *Hexen 2*, a new fantasy-style shooter from Raven Software.

The relationship between id Software and Raven Software has been a long and fruitful one. Using id's 3D engines in *Shadowcaster*, *Cyclones*, *Heretic*, and *Hexen*, they're now using the *Quake* engine to develop *Hexen 2*, a unique fantasy-style shooter that just might blow its competition out of the water.

Hexen 2 will feature four types of classes for players to choose from: an assassin, a paladin, a necromancer, and a cleric. Each will have five distinct weapons, plus powered-up versions of each, and level advancement and special abilities will increase the roleplaying game feel.

"There's going to be a lot more interactivity with the engine," says Brian Raffle, Raven's vice-president. "We'll have things like blowing doors and tables apart; you'll be able to push over chairs to jump up on

things, and we're adding crouching. We want to lean more towards roleplaying with all the interactivity, but without slowing down the action too much. We're aiming to please the action players, but we want to give the D&D players the feeling that they're playing a D&D module without all the cumbersome stats."

Even at this early point, *Hexen 2* is looking absolutely gor-

geous. Raven has basically restructured the *Quake* engine to its own specifications, meaning an increase in level complexity and speed. According to Raffle, a lot of inspiration came from id's rivals at 3D Realms.

"We're trying to follow more of the *Duke3D* model — in *Hexen*, we had smashing glass, and people loved that. Duke took it a step further, so our goal is to take *Hexen 2* much further than *Quake*." And yes, Raven plans to keep *Hexen 2* as open-ended as *Quake* in terms of levels and add-ons. "We definitely do want people doing their own thing," insists Raffle.

Right now, Raven is projecting *Hexen 2*'s release date as March '97, and it should be worth the wait. If *Hexen 2* is to *Quake* what *Heretic* was to *Doom*, we may all be in for some sleepless nights. [Ed. Note: For more information on *Hexen 2*, check out our Scoop this month on page 36.]



Here's one thing that you'll see in *Hexen 2*, but never see in *Quake*: sunshine.



It's your faithful canine companion, Cujo, ready to kick ass and eat Milk-Bones.

Doberman out of the missile launcher. And yes, they do whimper when they explode. Just don't let your friends from the SPCA see you playing.

If you're sick of slicing and dicing with that wimpy axe, and would rather turn it into what can be the most powerful weapon in the game, just look to the "Axe of Command." Pull out your trusty old axe and whack a nearby enemy with it, and the baddy will turn against the evil forces of *Quake*, to fight at your side. This means you have the ability to create your own personal army — quite useful when playing on "Nightmare" mode.

Speaking of axes, the "Throwing Axe" patch turns your axe into, well, a throwing axe. Just whip it across the room and cleave a few limbs, but be sure to pick it up afterwards so you can use it again — you only have one axe per game.

GRAPHICAL PATCHES

When compared to such companies as Apogee, id Software has been relatively conserva-



Cujo takes on a fiend. Sic-uu, boy! After Cujo makes short work of this fiend, he can eat the monster in order to increase his health points.

tive when it comes to flying body parts. *Quake* hackers were quick to fix this airborne plasma deficiency, and there are plenty of patches available to make the red stuff flow like a porcupine at a blood bank. For the truly unredeemable, we have the "Gibbin' 3" patch, that includes the ability to stack up — and explode —



Whoops, hit a Victim Bot. Oh well, he was annoying me anyway.

bodies after death, and finally blow away those moaning crucified zombies on the first level.

That's not enough for you? Then check out the "More Violence" patch, which makes the grenade launcher shoot monster heads, the nail gun shoot human viscera, and increases threefold the number of bloody chunks that fly out of monsters.

If you're bored with looking at the standard "Quake Guy" during Deathmatches, the answer is a new add-on entitled "Multi-skin Pro." This graphical patch maps brand-new textures onto player characters. So far, I've seen textures for the Predator, Jason from *Friday the 13th*, the Terminator, Judge Dredd, the Crow, and Patrick Stewart as Jean-Luc Picard. Though I wasn't able to find a "Barney" texture (what a shame), something considerably more terrifying exists: a grunt in a "Sailor Moon" schoolgirl outfit. Truly scary stuff.

DEATHMATCH FOR ONE: BOTS

You know the scenario — you're feeling feisty and want a bit of Deathmatch-style competition, but you just don't want to bother with dialing in to your Internet provider and going through the hassle of finding a good server with a low ping time. The remedy is something called a *Quake bot* — a clever piece of *QuakeC* that simulates an intelligent human Deathmatch opponent.

Bot programmer Cameron Newham says, "The hardest thing is trying to make them act like human players. Anyone can make an invincible bot, but getting a bot to run around and make decisions based on knowledge of the maps is another thing." He certainly succeeded in this goal with his *Eliminator Bot*, as did Steven Polge with



A dozen BG Bots take on three zombies. These Bots come in handy when you feel like you need some back-up as you take on the monsters of *Quake*. Gosh, I wonder who will win this battle?

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Product Information Number 338

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CIRCLE OF BLOOD

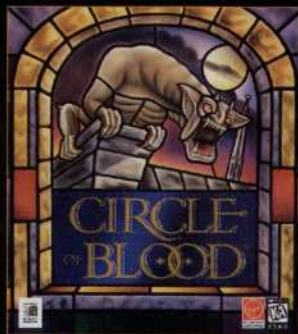
"With its lush, detailed animation, *Circle Of Blood* resembles the classic arcade game *Dragon's Lair*. But it seems this time the game will play as good as it looks."

— CD-ROM TODAY



- ◆ High resolution animations hand drawn with painstaking detail by Don Bluth Studios alumni (*All Dogs Go To Heaven* and *An American Tail*)
- ◆ Features a cinematic musical score from the talents of soundtrack producer Barrington Pheloung (*Truly, Madly, Deeply* and *Nostradamus*)
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American George Stobbart happens into a Parisian cafe one afternoon because he wants a cup of coffee. But after a clown delivers a plastic explosive that blows the place to smithereens, all George Stobbart wants are some answers.



Buried deep beneath the bodies and the rubble of that explosion lies a fourteenth century medieval order called The Knights Templar. Only you can unlock the secret of this intriguing historical adventure and stop the vicious conspiracy that threatens to reshape the world.



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Product Information Number 354



My big buddy Zeus takes out the trash. He can attack the enemies before they've even had a chance to fire their weapons.

the fuzzy logic-using *Reaper Bot*.

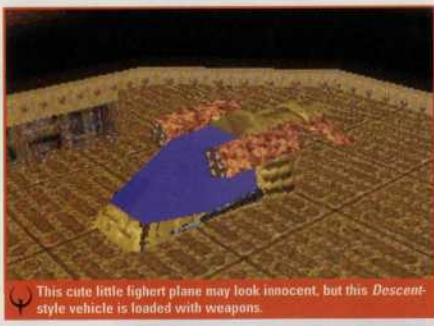
All you have to do is fire up *Quake*, spawn the bot, and get ready for some fierce competition — or “*Quake-sturbating*,” as some people on IRC like to call it. With complex AI routines that understand doorways, switches, and swimming, one-on-one combat with these bots can have even jaded *Deathmatch* players in a cold sweat.

However, the real fun comes when you spawn more than one of them. Playing *Deathmatch* with ten free-thinking bots is a total blast, and comes very close to the experience of mowing down real-life opponents over a network. For real fun, try spawning two dozen bots on the low-gravity “*Ziggurat Vertigo*” level, and sit back and watch bullets, bodies, and brains hurtle gracefully through the air, as all Hell breaks loose.

HELPER BOTS

Not all bots are nasty little chunks of AI hell-bent on your destruction. No sir — in fact, there are plenty of bots who *help* you as well. These friendly bots are put to good use in Jonathan Wright’s delightful “*Cujo*” patch. Press a key, and in teleports man’s best friend — a blood-stained, foaming-at-the-mouth, attack dog. *Cujo* will follow you around and go for the throat of anyone who dares to get in your way, barking hysterically the whole time. If *Cujo*’s running low on health, just splatter an enemy with your missile launcher — he’ll gobble up the leftovers to recover health. “Man’s best friend,” indeed.

On the less animalistic side of things, we have “*Zeus*,” also from Wright. The Zeus patch creates a large lightning-gun toting *Eliminator*, who follows you and makes short work of enemies before they can even start shooting. Best of all, Zeus spouts corny dialogue



This cute little fight plane may look innocent, but this *Descent*-style vehicle is loaded with weapons.



When you take to the skies in your plane, it can cause some spectacular destruction. Just watch out for the enemies equipped with missile launchers — they can take you down!

(“Eat me, tin man!”) whenever he dispatches an opponent. Amusing stuff — and helpful, too.

If you’ve really had enough of being on the receiving end of a shotgun barrel and want to launch your own personal army, try out the “*BG Bot*” add-on from “*Punisher*.” *BG Bots* double as helper and *Deathmatch* bots, and, just like *Cujo* and *Zeus*, do a great job of running with you and fighting on your side — especially when you spawn a whole pack of them. Though they’re still a little buggy, you can take on any level with confidence knowing that two dozen friendly, shotgun-packin’ bots are right behind you.

QuakeC programmer Tony Tang says, “Most of the shooting games in the arcades have little victims that run around and go ‘Help me!’ and stuff like that. They’re really annoying, so I figured that they’d be fun to have around in a *Quake Deathmatch*.” Hence, we have Tony’s twisted “*Victim Bot*” — a character dressed in white waving a “*Peace*” flag, who runs erratically through your line of fire screaming like mad. Not only is he a pain in the ass, but if you accidentally nail him, you’ve subtracted a kill from the *Deathmatch* board. Funny stuff.

EDITORS

One of id Software’s big pluses has been the customizability of its games. There are literally thousands of maps available for *Doom* — and there will probably be even more for *Quake*. However, bear in mind that *Quake* levels are exponentially more difficult to develop than its “two-and-a-half-D” predecessor, since the ability to do just about anything in 3D requires a lot more work. *Quake* level design is not for the weak of heart — Duke3D’s *Build*



"No one steals our chicks — and lives!" Hey what's he doing here?



Jalous of Duke3D's nifty chase camera? You don't have to be with Quake's patches.

program is childishly simple in comparison. "Quake is more a form of artwork than *Doom* ever was," says Mike Wardwell, creator of the visually stunning "Giggler" maps. "So far it's kinda like *Doom*'s early days. We've seen some good stuff in terms of *Quake* effects, but most maps lack professionalism and the polished look that id has mastered."

It's a legitimate criticism — while id Software has had many months to work on maps, decent level editors are just coming to market, and there hasn't been much time for mappers to simulate id's distinct style. An interesting aspect of *Quake* is the fact that there are far fewer custom textures present than in *Doom*, so mappers have to concentrate more on architectural style. Unfortunately, there are a lot of user maps out there that have stunning architecture and lighting effects, but leave a lot to be desired when it comes to playability. A good level requires a delicate balance between how much fun it is to play, and graphical finesse.

If you'd like to try your hand at *Quake* editing, there are several editors available, and one of the best is — believe it or not — the commercial release of *3D Studio*, thanks to a handy utility that converts .3DS files into functional *Quake* maps.

If, for some strange reason, you don't have access to this \$4,000 program, there

Quake Comix



I thought that I had seen it all until I stumbled upon *The Adventures of Dank and Scud*. From the creative mind of Michael Houston, *Dank and Scud* is a web-based *Quake* comic book, featuring the exploits of two hard-assed loners from the Earth realm thrown into the world of *Quake*. "It popped into my head one day when I was in the shower," says Houston. "I pictured two *Quake* guys on the edge of a cliff, one pulling the other to safety using his axe. Then I thought — hey, I can actually create this scene! From there the ideas for the comic just kept coming."

Using *Adobe Photoshop* and a *Quake* model editor, Houston has created two episodes with great layouts and hilarious writing. The response so far has been outstanding. "I was really surprised by how much Quakers love these guys," says Houston. "Some people have even said it was the best thing they've seen on the 'net." But

what's the appeal of two smelly guys who like killing shamblers and reminiscing about IKEA furniture? "My guess is that *Dank and Scud* give *Quake* that missing character element that was so popular with *Duke3D*."

The next time you're taking a break between Deathmatches and need a good laugh, check out *Dank and Scud* at <http://mercury.webframes.com/quakecomics/> or at the Australian mirror site at <http://quake.bluesky.net.au/quakecomics/index.html>.



are plenty of shareware and freeware solutions. Available for your Quaking pleasure are *Thred*, *Worldcraft*, and *Quest* — powerful Windows 95 and DOS-based map editors with plenty of features. Each have their own strengths and limitations, and at this early point in the game, it's difficult to determine a clear winner — so your personal preference may vary.

No matter what editor you use, be sure to set aside a good amount of time when you start creating maps. Once you've finished editing, light-sourcing and

level compiling can take many hours, even running on a Pentium 200, giving you an opportunity to do something else with your spare time — like visiting your mom and explaining that your phone line is always busy because you're playing *Quake*.

Network Utilities

With the proliferation of the Internet, combined with *Quake*'s ability to link up over a



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weapons like hand grenades, a flame thrower, an M60 machine gun and a magical cobra staff. **Dynamic lighting** allows for stunning visual effects. Cross bridges, crawl through tunnels and swim through underwater grottos. Your only salvation is the guiding Spirit of the Great Pharaoh Ramses. He's the only one in this god-forsaken neighborhood who wants to help you get a forwarding address.

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Product Information Number 273



I'm not sure why this grunt is wearing a Sailor Moon costume. Alas, he's dead.

TCP/IP connection, there's always the guarantee of hundreds of shotgun-totin' fools blasting away at each other, twenty-four hours a day. Unfortunately, Internet play is always prone to lag times, so finding a good game to join can be a problem. The last thing you want is someone with a low-ping connection running rings around you.

Hence, we have *QSpy* — a slick little utility for Windows 95/NT that pings a huge list of servers and returns a mammoth list with suggestions for servers with optimum ping time. It also brings up vital information on the game — who's playing, what color they're wearing, the amount of gravity, and so on. By far, it's the easiest to use and most comprehensive of all the utilities out there — and even John Carmack succinctly states "*QSpy* is cool" — high praise, coming from id.

You also might want to take a look at *Rift*, another excellent utility that pings servers and retrieves a list of currently running games. *Rift* also has the convenient ability to bring up a list of games in *Quake* itself, by hitting the "R" hotkey.

If you're into Quaking on the 'net, these two utilities can be a godsend. Give both a look — they'll save you hours of searching for a good game.

STAY TUNED, TRUE BELIEVERS

So what's the future for *Quake* and *QuakeC*? Groups of people are banding together to create "total conversions," entirely new 3D games using the *Quake* engine, featuring new monsters, weapons, levels, scenery, and even physics. The number of *Quake* clans is growing daily, and more people are getting involved in Internet Deathmatches, thanks to the ease of use of *Rift* and *QSpy*. New levels are slowly but surely being released, and looking better and better. From the Aircraft patch to the soon-to-be released *Quake Kart*, the *Quake* engine is being taken to creative new levels, and it doesn't look like *Quake* mania is going to stop for a long, long time. Now if you'll excuse me, the bots are calling, and I don't want them to get lonely...

PCG

Where Can I Get This Stuff?

There are dozens of *Quake* sites on the World Wide Web, and many of them include the patches and add-ons mentioned here. Try www.stamped.com, www.quakehole.com, or fp.cdrom.com/pub/quake to get started.

WEAPONS

Name	Filename	Description	Author
Grappling Hook	GRAPV111.ZIP	Used to attack enemies and hang from walls	amichael (Fattere D)
Flamethrower	FLAME.ZIP	Adds a flamethrower that can ignite any enemy	Steve Bond
Throwing Axe	THROWAXE.ZIP	An axe that may be thrown at monsters, then retrieved	Steve Bond
Dog Launcher	DOGGIE.ZIP	Missile launcher shoots live Dobermans	adam4@ripco.com
Axe of Command	AXE_C001.ZIP	When enemies are hit with axe, they fight alongside you	"Sto" / Francois Bedard
Multi-skin Pro		Adds different player textures during Deathmatch	Demis Noorsid/PiGBOY/BUKE
Bombs 9	BOMBS9.ZIP	Adds a firewall, gib gun, and light bomb	Oleg Pestovsky (PVP)
Aircraft	ACBETA1.ZIP	Aircraft with Vulcan cannons and Stinger missiles	Steve Bond and John Guthrie
Gibbin 3	GIBBIN3.ZIP	Monster bodies are solid, tons more giblets	Jason Carter
More Violence	VIOLENCE.ZIP	Nail gun shoots body parts, lots of bloody chunks	Neil Klopfenstein
Sailor Moon Quake	DRESS.ZIP	Standard grunts wear sailor suits (yuck)	Dementor

BOTS

Name	Filename	Description	Author
Cujo 11	CUJ011.ZIP	Cujo, attack dog, follows you around, and fights for you	Jonathan E. Wright
Eliminator Bot	ELIM4.ZIP	Excellent Deathmatch bot	Cameron Newham
BG Bots	BG00720A.ZIP	Good Deathmatch bot, good co-op play	"Punisher"
Eliminator Bot	ELIM4.ZIP	Excellent Deathmatch bot	Cameron Newham
Reaper Bot	REAPR006.ZIP	Excellent Deathmatch bot	Steven Polge
Zeus Bot	ZEUS10.ZIP	Zeus kicks ass for you while spouting witty repartee	Jonathan E. Wright

UTILITIES

Name	Filename	Description	Author
QSpy	QSPY302.ZIP	Pings a list of servers and returns a list of games	Joe Powell and Tim Cook
Rift	RIFT064.ZIP	Pings a list of servers and returns a list of games	Bob Jamison
Worldcraft	WC0820.ZIP	Win 95-based editor	Ben Morris
Quest	QUEST041.ZIP	DOS-based editor	Chris Carollo and Trey Harrison
Thred	THRED06B.ZIP	Win 95-based editor, uses custom format for saved files	Jonathan Mavor
3D Studio to Map	3DS2MAP.ZIP	Converts 3DS files into Quake .MAP files	twb@wsu.edu

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This underwater mission is possible only with windows® 95.



www.microsoft.com/games/deadlytide/



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OBSIDIAN.

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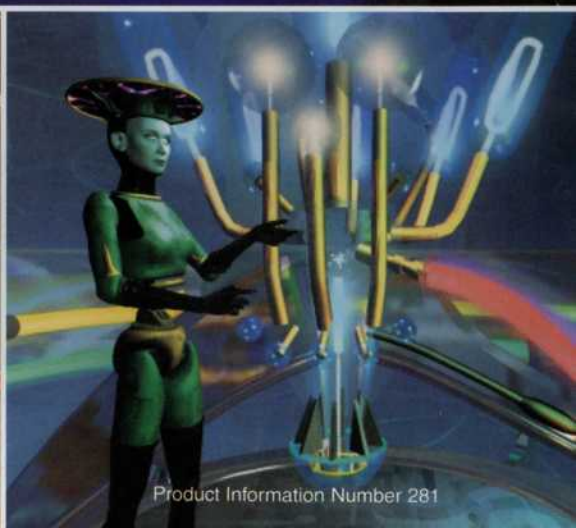
Product Information Number 281





YOU ARRIVE. A STRANGER. HERE. A STRANGER. DO NOT APPLY. YOUR RULES DO NOT APPLY. IN A STRANGE LAND. CONFUSED, DISORIENTED, YOU MAKE YOUR WAY THROUGH THE TWISTED, SURREAL WORLD IN SEARCH OF YOUR PARTNER, MAX. ALL YOU CARRY WITH YOU IS THE KNOWLEDGE YOU'VE GROWN TO ACCEPT AS THE TRUTH, BUT YOU'RE ABOUT TO DISCOVER THAT WHAT THE TRUTH IS DEPENDS ON WHAT WORLD YOU'RE IN. AND IN THIS WORLD, THINGS DON'T NECESSARILY WORK THE WAY YOU MIGHT EXPECT THEM TO. THE CHARACTERS DON'T EXACTLY ACT THE WAY THEY'RE SUPPOSED TO. THE LAWS OF PHYSICS HAVE SOMEHOW BECOME WARPED. WHAT IS UP AND WHAT IS DOWN IS MERELY A MATTER OF OPINION. HERE, AFTER EVERY PERPLEXING PUZZLE YOU SOLVE, ANOTHER LURKS AROUND THE CORNER. AND AS YOU UNRAVEL EACH ELUSIVE MYSTERY, AN EVEN BIGGER ONE BEGINS TO UNFOLD. THE QUESTION IS, WILL YOU BE ABLE TO PUT THE PUZZLE TOGETHER AND MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICE WHEN THE TIME COMES?

OBSIDIAN.



Coconut Monkey's Ultimate Strategy Guide

You can't work at *PC Gamer*, the World's Best-Selling PC and CD-ROM Games Magazine, and not take part in some of our network games. It simply isn't done. But, let's face it: no one likes to lose.

Over the years, we've heard every conceivable excuse for losing and seen every devious trick and cheat, but no one has quite mastered these arts like our own Coconut Monkey.

As a distraction, he's set his phone to speed dial the other staffers in the middle of a frantic fragfest. He's also been known to bribe the office assistant to accidentally "trip" over someone's power cord, unplugging their PC.

He's a master at subtle alterations of an opponent's keyboard setup in *Duke*, so that key weapons are switched and the strafe keys are reversed. And while a tiny bit of bubble gum hidden on the mouse ball won't be noticed during normal Windows usage, it'll play



havoc during a frantic *Quake*-fest.

It's strange how every time CM is losing, he mysteriously gets "disconnected" from the game. Or the way our RAM ends up on his PC's motherboard. We've even caught him rigging the "Turbo" switch on everyone else's computer, cutting our CPU speeds in half just before a big *Descent* tournament.

He's also full of excuses for his constant losing. "I didn't know this level" or "I was trying out a new keyboard configuration" are quite common.

Then there's the ever-popular "I was letting you win, so as not to embarrass you." One of his all-time classic dodges goes like this: "All these *Duke* Matches have given me a Repetitive Stress Injury, so you must handicap my score by 50, which means I win!"

But no matter what other gambits CM uses, it always ends the same way. *CM* just never wins, and when it's all over, he goes after the team's pity, bouncing along on the floor, crying: "You must let me win — I have no hands!"

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



Every month, we honor the best games we see — those earning 88% or above — with our Editors' Choice award. It's not easy to earn, and there are a lot of excellent games that fall just short of the honor. So when you see the *PCG* Editors' Choice logo on a game at a local software shop, you can bet it's among the best.

SCREAMER 2



p.256

SYNDICATE WARS



p.221

WAR WIND



p.230

Battlecruiser 3000 AD

Category: Space Combat

Developer: 3000 AD

Publisher: Take 2 Interactive, 1004 Ligonier St., Latrobe, PA 15650 (412) 472-2000

Required

Double-speed CD-ROM drive; Pentium 60; 8MB RAM; 20MB hard-drive space; Super VGA; Mouse

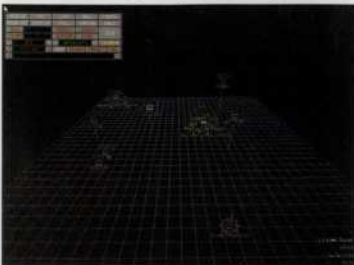
We Recommend

Pentium 133; 16MB RAM; 180MB hard-drive space; Localbus Super VGA; Joystick; Supported sound card

It's always a shame when a game developer takes longer than expected to release a product. But when a developer takes seven years to release a highly anticipated game — and it's still nowhere near finished — it's a damned tragedy.

That's what happened with *Battlecruiser 3000 AD*. The game and its creator, Derek Smart, have become legends in PC gaming circles, going through seven years of development and at least three different game publishers before winding up at Take 2 Interactive. Only *Quake* received more advance hype than *BC3K*. And now that the game is finally on the shelves, it's destined to become even more notorious.

Only Smart and Take 2 know the real story behind this one, but it's not hard to believe that one or both parties simply got tired of working on *BC3K* and shoved it out the door just to get it out of their sight. Unfortunately for the legion of gamers who've been dying to play this game since word of it first hit the Internet and online services years ago, the result is a product that's unprofessional on just about every level you can imagine.



The tactical screen is your "war room" view, where you can zoom in on units under your command and issue orders.

Never has a PC game been guiltier of using gamers as unwilling beta-testers; after seven years, *BC3K* is still far from finished.

One glance at the game's manual, and you know something went badly wrong somewhere. A 30-page pamphlet containing not one screen shot or illustration is hardly adequate documentation for a game that puts you in command of a starship, 125 crew members, 40 marines, 25 weapons systems, four fighters, four shuttles, and four surface vehicles in space combat and planetary invasions. Assuming all of those things actually worked — and we'll get to that issue shortly — you'd want a whale of a manual, with tutorials, charts, diagrams, and all the other things gamers have come to expect with a complex simulation. As it is, the manual that comes with *BC3K* is virtually useless, glossing over most of the game's systems and ignoring others entirely. (Designer Smart says he delivered a 100-page manual to Take 2, but



Once you've launched an interceptor, you can jump into its cockpit for some *Wing Commander*/TIE Fighter-style combat.

there's no clear word yet on why it wasn't included with the game — or how *BC3K* owners can get their hands on it when and if it becomes available.)

LIVING WITH BC3K

The smartest strategy to use with the current release of *Battlecruiser 3000 AD* is to leave it on the shelf at the software store. If you're one of the many gamers who've already bought it, sight unseen — and if you're as disappointed with it as we were — do the right thing and take it back.

That's called voting with your dollars, and it goes for any PC game that doesn't work as advertised on the box or in the manual. Game publishers aren't going to stop putting out unfinished, bug-ridden products until gamers let them know this practice will put them out of business just as surely as if they were a fast-food chain selling uncooked burgers.

Of course, there are bound to be a handful of gamers who are so in love with what this game *could be* that they're willing to put up with all its flaws, and to gamble that Derek Smart and Take 2 can fix it soon. For those stout hearts, we offer a handful of tips for keeping the frustration level as low as possible:

- Turn off the MIDI music — it can make some systems crash. You won't be able to turn it off from within the game, so switch to the *BC3000AD* directory and run *SETUP.EXE*. Under the "Select MIDI" option, choose "No MIDI Device."

- In the Configuration menu, turn "Collisions" off. This'll save you from the horror of smashing a smaller ship to smithereens against your hull when what you really wanted to do was pull it in with your tractor beam. It'll also keep you from accidentally bashing enemy fighters into oblivion before you can destroy them with your weapons



If you've played any games that use the DOS/4GW extender, you've probably seen this crash screen before — but *BC3K* is the first game that should include this as one of the screen shots on the box.

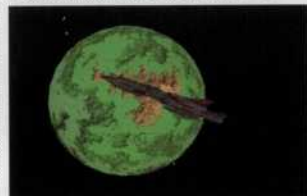
(you don't get points for bashing).

- Save the game very frequently — every five minutes or less, regardless of whether or not anything major has happened in the game. At the very least, five minutes have passed, and you're that much closer to being able to request a new mission. Otherwise, you may find yourself playing the same few minutes of the game over and over again as the game crashes repeatedly.

- Make sure you've got as much base memory free as possible. At the DOS prompt, type *MEM /C /P* to see what programs you have loaded and how much memory is left over. If you're running any drivers or utilities you don't absolutely need for *BC3K*, get rid of them. The higher your "Largest executable program size" is, the less frequently the game will crash with the dreaded "Exception 0Eh" error (that's been our experience, anyway).

Of course, many gamers never crack the manual for even the most complex simulation, preferring to fiddle with the controls and learn by experimentation. *BC3K* doesn't really lend itself to this kind of self-driven tutorial, though, since its interface is so incredibly haphazard and counter-intuitive. For example, to select a destination on the Navigation screen, you move the mouse cursor over your target, then hit the S key. Why can't you just click the mouse button? Only Derek Smart can answer that one. And there are other arcane combinations: Alt-E brings up the Logistics screen (Alt-L was already taken: it's the command that turns the Computer Video Display on and off. Go figure). And to request a new mission, you hit Ctrl-Alt-C. Yes, dear friends, this is the WordStar of gaming.

Even if you can get your mind around the countless keyboard commands, you'll still wonder if you're doing something wrong, because so many of the game's systems just don't work. Smart has said as much in posts on the Internet: in the released version of *BC3K*, the FATAL weapons system described in the manual doesn't work. Neither does orbital flight. Ditto the system that tracks your fighter pilots' victories and skills. Even at a slim 30 pages, the manual is



Like an air combat sim, *Battlecruiser 3000 AD* lets you choose from lots of external views.



Like all good battlecruisers, this one has gun turrets you can hop into. The planet in the background is Mars — must've been terraformed, since it looks just like Earth.



The bridge is the heart of your battlecruiser. From here, you can launch interceptors and shuttles, target enemies, and fire the big, main gun.

more a "wish list" than documentation of the game's actual features.

It's difficult to believe *BC3K* went through any playtesting at all — before the first patch was released, it was impossible to complete the second mission. Surely if anyone had been paying attention, they would've noticed that little flaw. The proof-readers were clearly asleep at the wheel, too, or they would've spotted all the errors in the manual and text screens (certainly somebody at Take 2 knows the plural of "craft" is "craft" — not "crafts"). Either no one caught these mistakes, or someone at Take 2 decided not to fix them before shipping the game. Neither of those explanations is very pretty.

As we go to press, Take 2 has already released two patches for the game (available on the "net" at www.take2games.com, where you can also download an expanded, five-page keyboard reference to replace the inadequate two-sided card that shipped with the game, and a Frequently Asked Questions document in which Smart details which features are still broken and offers some troubleshooting tips). The FATAL system now works, and rather neatly at that. But the patches seem to create as many problems as they solve. The first patch, for instance, slowed down all the fighters and

starships in the game in an attempt to make the combat portions remotely playable. Unfortunately, that change introduced a whole new set of problems, so a second patch was issued to increase the ships' speeds to a new figure just below the original. Unfortunately, this latest patch apparently disables the time-acceleration feature — which means that if you finish a mission with 20 minutes to spare, you'll have to sit through 20 minutes of real time before you can move on to the next mission.

And these first patches certainly haven't fixed everything. Orbital flight still doesn't work, for instance, and the game still crashes, locking up or dumping you into DOS every ten minutes or so. Smart has said he plans to release a new patch "every two weeks until the game settles down." That's admirable, I suppose — but it would've been infinitely better if Take 2 had waited for the game to "settle down" before boxing it up and selling it at fifty bucks a pop, give or take.

Instead, what was hyped as the ultimate space simulation (Derek Smart calls it "THE game") turns out to be a badly flawed mix of uncontrolled ambition, unfulfilled potential, and unsound judgment. If you're smart, you won't buy *BC3K* until — and unless — Take 2 proves they can and will fix it.

— Dan Bennett

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: The intro animation is very cool.

LOWS: Annoying bugs; frequent crashes; features that don't work; a pathetically inadequate manual. This game simply wasn't finished when it shipped.

BOTTOM LINE: Maybe Take 2 can still fix this game. Until then, don't buy it.

15%



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TOMB RAIDER

Eradicator

Category: First-person Shooter

Developer: Accolade

Publisher: Accolade, 5300 Stevens Creek Blvd., Suite 500, San Jose, CA 95129 (800) 245-7744

Required

486DX2/66; Double-speed CD-ROM drive; 8MB RAM; 45MB hard-drive space

We Recommend

Pentium; Quad-speed CD-ROM drive; 16MB RAM; 85MB hard-drive space

With all the talk about which is better — *Duke* or *Quake* — you may have missed the release of Accolade's first-person/third-person shooter, *Eradicator*. It won't blow you away with killer technology or stylish humor, but it will feed your appetite for killing. It's a good thing too, because killing is the only way to survive on Ioxia. An alien power has taken control of the Citadel and has established an ion field around Ioxia and its three moons.

Unfortunately, those moons hold the galaxy's only supply of a vital element that all the beings in the galaxy must have. Your job: Penetrate the ion shield, enter

the Citadel, and destroy the enemy force that has taken control.

Before you begin, you must choose which character you want to play. In an unusual move, *Eradicator* lets you play as one of three characters, all with different motives: Dan Blaze, a mining engineer trying to shut down the Citadel so he can escape; Eleena Brynstaar, a mercenary catwoman who will retire on the reward she will get for destroying the Citadel; or Kamchak, a Treydan reptilian warrior who will do anything to bring honor to his planet, including taking on a suicide mission to disable the Citadel. While different characters could add a

little spice to the usual key-hunt and shoot-'em-up action, the reality is that each character has basically the same abilities. You start off with a different weapon with each character, but these weapons all have the same basic firepower, and the characters have nothing new in terms of speed, agility, or health.

Eradicator tries a few other new ideas that work with mixed results. Number one, of course, is new weapons. Ever since *Doom*, game companies have been trying to add new life to the first-person shooter genre by creating more ways to kill the enemy. *Eradicator* is no exception. There are some new weapons that are fun for their novelty, but how effective is a boomerang in a fight? Not very. But there are some effective weapons that wreak havoc on unsuspecting enemies. For example, fire one weapon, and it sends a hovering, rotating missile

While *Eradicator* may not break new ground, Accolade brings a few new twists to the 3D shooter genre that make it worth a look.



The PIP technology lets you "be" (and control) the missile you are firing.

launcher out into the enemy area to kill everything in sight. It's a good way to turn the odds to your favor.

The most interesting new features in *Eradicator* are its third-person views, which allows you to control your character from an over-the-shoulder perspective, and picture-in-picture (PIP) technology. The PIP is a small screen that pops up every time you activate a camera or fire a controllable mine or missile, to show you what the object sees. You can either watch the action in the small window or switch screens so you "become" the object. For example, you can launch a roving mine, switch screens so you "are" the mine, and then control what the mine does. This can be quite useful when trying to stake out a room. The PIP even lets you take control of enemy robots if you are at certain watch stations. This lets you have the fun of playing the enemy, and you can use the robot you are controlling to kill enemy units.

Even with these new features, *Eradicator* falls prey to a typical 3D shooter fault: There is no freedom in exploring each level. You have to do things in a certain way to find a new room or complete a level. In most cases this is fine, when you are just wandering around opening doors, finding keys, and the like, but *Eradicator* is needlessly aggravating by forcing you to hit switches in three different rooms to make it through a door in a certain amount of time. It's all too contrived.

Like most 3D shooters these days, *Eradicator* lets you face your friends in multi-player action. You can play against each other deathmatch style or as teams with modem, serial, or IPX network connections.

Despite its flaws, *Eradicator* will give you hours of gaming action. So if you are hungry for some more killing (or if you're tired of *Duke* and *Quake*), sink your gaming teeth into *Eradicator*.

—Dean H. Renninger



Eradicator lets you play in first or third-person perspectives.



The death dart gun will make mincemeat of enemies pretty quickly.

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: PIP, new enemies to kill; a few good weapons.

78%

LOWS: A few bad weapons; aggravating levels; repetitive, uninspired music.

BOTTOM LINE: It's a decent shoot-'em-up, but *Eradicator* needed to do more to take on *Quake* or *Duke* on their home turf.



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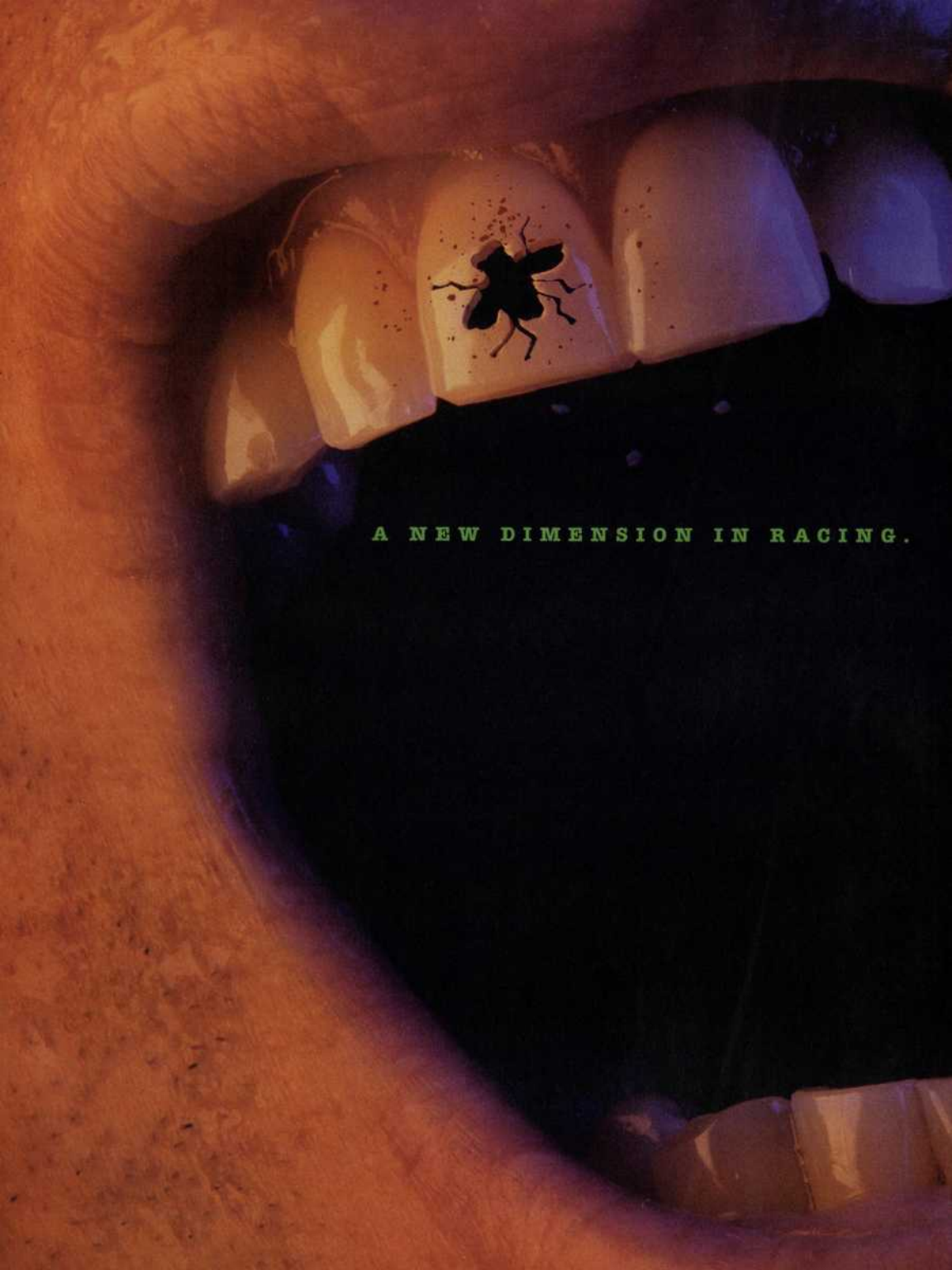


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Scorcher



PC CD-ROM



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Madden NFL 97

Category: Sports

Developer: EA Sports

Publisher: Electronic Arts, 1450 Fashion Island Blvd., San Mateo, CA 94404 (415) 571-7171

Required	We Recommend
Double-speed CD-ROM drive; Pentium; 8MB RAM; 40MB HD space; 1MB SVGA card (VESA compliant); MS-DOS 5.0 or higher; Mouse	Quad-speed CD-ROM drive; Pentium 133MHz or higher; 16MB RAM; 2MB SVGA card; 54MB HD space; 9600 Modem; Gamepad/joystick

The name Madden means different things to different people. To some he's that likable blowhard who calls the play-by-plays during the Sunday and Monday night games; to others he's the guy that takes a bus everywhere he goes. To console fans, he's the guy who's signed his name to football games that delivered statistical depth, great controls, and hard-hitting action from start to finish. While this long-awaited (and delayed) PC version exhibits a lot of these attractive qualities, a number of niggling little problems chip away at what could've been the best football game around.

Don't get the wrong idea: Whether you choose to play a single exhibition game or guide a team through a 17-game season, there's a lot of satisfying gridiron action in *Madden NFL 97*. All 30 current NFL teams are here, and the

While it's far from the ultimate gridiron game many had hoped for, EA's legendary Madden license still delivers where it counts.

inclusion of more than 70 historical and hypothetical teams is a wonderful surprise. Being a longtime (and long-suffering) Minnesota Vikings fan, I was elated to find four classic Vikes squads — and the chance to exact some sweet revenge against the lineups that had beaten them in the Super Bowl.

Play-calling is another pleasant surprise, with simple and intuitive controls: Pick an offensive or defensive set, choose a specific formation from one of several sub-sets (offense only), then select a specific play or defensive formation.

Naturally, you can call an audible at the line of scrimmage (each team has four offensive and defensive audibles), and you can also change the primary receiver (on offense) and select a player to control



Even from the Sideline view, you can see all your receivers on a passing play — crucial if you hope to spot the open man and make the completion.

(on defense) before the ball is snapped.

On the field, *Madden NFL 97* really shines. Unlike many football games, it's easy to find a hole to guide a running back through — assuming your offensive line made one, of course — and regardless of the viewing perspective you've selected, you're able to see all your receivers at any given time. Player animations, created with motion-capture technology, are outstanding: kick returners bow down slightly as they catch the ball, receivers dive to make catches, runners spin and juke, defensive linemen smash the quarterback to the ground, and players dance and strut when they score a touchdown.

A coach-only option lets you call the plays and watch the action unfold, and the General Manager feature allows you to create and trade players in order to keep all your rosters current with their real-life NFL counterparts. Stats in several important categories are kept throughout the season for both teams and individual players, and these can be sorted in a variety of ways to suit your needs.

There's also a Custom Playbook feature, which means that once you've settled on a roster, you can pick the plays best suited to the talent you have on hand (unfortunately, you can't draw up your own plays). Nearly all the results of games simulated by the computer are completely legit, though the program seems to rate the Raiders, Rams, Saints, and Bears a little higher than I'd expect (out of ten simulated seasons, the Raiders made it to the playoffs eight times and the Super Bowl four, winning one) and the Packers lower (out of ten simulated seasons, they turned in a .500 season or worse seven times, with no injuries to key players).

You'll get a kick out of the game's Custom League feature, which allows you to rebuild the league as you see fit by



Madden NFL 97 offers up a lot of high-powered action, but only at a cost in terms of realism. When was the last time you saw two teams combine for nearly 1,700 yards in rushing and passing yardage?



The animations in *Madden NFL 97* are outstanding, especially when you use the Instant Replay feature to check them out in detail.

renaming teams, altering schedules, and so forth. Want to make the AFC conferences more geographically correct? Then move the Indianapolis Colts to the AFC Central and the Baltimore Ravens to the AFC East. Want to relive the days before the AFL/NFL merger? Change the Ravens back to the Browns, move the Colts back to Indianapolis, and put both teams and the Steelers in the NFL, then create East, West, Central, and Century divisions for the NFL.

There's no denying there's a lot to really like about *Madden NFL 97*, and I'll be the first to admit that I'm ready to play a game anytime I can find time. But it's after you've gone a few quarters that you start seeing numerous problems in the game — some big, some small — that keep it from being the definitive football sim that many were hoping it would be.

For starters, there's simply too much scoring in games you play from start to finish (rather than letting the computer simulate the final score), especially if you control the players yourself. Playing as the Minnesota Vikings, I took on the Green Bay Packers — arguably the best team in the league when healthy. I lost two of the three games, but I sure couldn't blame it on my offense: the losses were 73-63 and 87-69, while my victory — in which I ran the ball more frequently in an effort to use up time and keep the score down — was a mere 63-53. Warren Moon threw for over 800 yards in all three games, and once broke the 1,000-yard barrier (in the same game, Chris Carter chalked up 870 yards in receptions).

Now, it could be argued that by passing as much as I did, I "artificially" lengthened the game, which in turn allowed for more scoring. But that doesn't explain why the Packers passed so much, nor does it matter: No football sim should allow you to pass for 1,000 yards in a game, regardless of how many times you put the ball in the air.

There are other problems in the artificial intelligence routines as well. Given a decent quarterback, you can rest assured of making a first down on fourth-and-long about nine times out of ten — just pass the ball to your hot receiver. Computer-controlled defenses are much too vulnerable to certain plays, such as a pass to a running back breaking up the middle. Wide receivers are always caught by defensive backs, even if they catch the ball on the run and the DB is ten yards behind him. The box copy boasts of "10 Real NFL penalties," but in the many hours I spent with the game, all I ever saw were pass interference calls — and they were few and very far between.

But wait — there's more. When playing an NFL season, it appears you must adjust the weather manually to reflect reality, because in three season-ending games at Green Bay the temperature was 75, 85, and in the mid-sixties



There's plenty of attention to little details in *Madden*, from the endzone emblems and the jersey colors to the accurate player numbers and names.



The inclusion of more than 70 historical and hypothetical teams gives *Madden NFL 97* excellent replay value. Too bad there apparently wasn't enough room to include the names of the players on the historical teams — or the All-Time All-Madden Team, for that matter.

— hardly what you'd expect from one of the most brutal cold-weather stadiums in the league. Statistics are tracked throughout the season, but dedicated fans will notice the omission of key stats such as yards per pass attempt, yards per completion (both made on offense and allowed on defense), red-zone scoring efficiency, QB ratings, points off turnovers, and yards per rush allowed on defense, to name a few.

You can't pause the game unless the ball is dead; the program has problems recognizing the All-Madden Team (Pat Summerall kept calling them Green Bay when I played them as the Vikings); the play-by-play commentary is plagued with long pauses ("pass thrown by... Favre"); the video clips at the start of season games are too generic to offer any real insight; Leslie Visser's injury reports sometimes conflict with the text report you see onscreen; and created players are all the same height (six feet).

Last but not least is the question of joystick/gamepad support. The game

only supports two joystick/gamepad buttons; the same button is used for speed burst, spins and jukes, and high-stepping into the endzone — and I once had the ball stripped as I tried to get a burst of speed to reach the endzone because the player began high-stepping instead. And the button that's supposed to switch you to the player closest to the intended receiver switches you to the player closest to the spot where the ball will land — which in turn usually leads you to guiding a safety away from the receiver because you were pushing up on the directional pad in an effort to make the play as cornerback.

None of these problems in and of itself is devastating, and even taken together they're not enough to drag an exciting game like *Madden NFL 97* into the mediocrity zone. Still, they do make what could have been an Editors' Choice winner merely a good game. As I said before, I'll play a game of *Madden NFL 97* just about any time I can get a chance, even if I do have to score 63 points to win against a good team. But whether or not *Madden NFL 97* will leave you happy depends on how much realism you expect in a game — and this is one instance where only you can make the call.

— Stephen Poole

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Excellent graphics and animation; smooth interface; more than 100 teams.

LOWS: The AI is suspect; questionable season simulation results; mediocre play-by-play commentary; numerous gameplay quirks.

BOTTOM LINE: There's a lot of fun to be had with *Madden NFL 97*, but not a lot of realism.

74%

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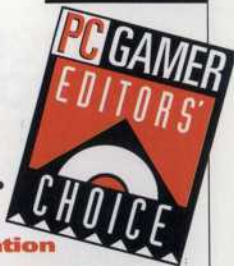
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Syndicate Wars

Category: Action/Strategy

Developer: Bullfrog

Publisher: Electronic Arts, 1450 Fashion Island Blvd., San Mateo, CA 94404 (415) 571-7171

Required

Double-speed CD-ROM drive; 486DX2/66; 8MB RAM; MS-DOS 6.2 or higher; Super VGA; 55MB hard-drive space; Mouse

We Recommend

Quad-speed CD-ROM drive; Pentium; 16MB RAM; Supported sound card; 14.4Kbps modem

Bullfrog reinvents its world of futuristic ganstas bent on domination with this highly charged sequel to *Syndicate*.



With their freewheeling doctrine and complete disregard for authority, these acolytes from the Church of the Epoch prepare to stick it to The Man by blasting a police hovercar into a million pieces.

After being plagued by doubtful release dates and numerous development setbacks, it almost appeared that this day would never come. But *Syndicate Wars* has arrived, and computer gamers can finally lay their hands on an honest-to-God sequel to the classic *Syndicate*, one of the cornerstone titles (along with *Populous*) that pushed Bullfrog into the ranks of gamedom's superstar developers. And while this sequel isn't the earth-shattering tour-de-force that many may have hoped for, it's a worthy addition to the PC's most notorious crime family, delivering even more of the wonderfully bloody, violent, and sinister real-time strategy action of the original.

Set in a grim future where evil cor-

porations have usurped control from world governments — and market share is determined by brute force — *Syndicate Wars* appeals to the dark side of gamers. It puts you in control of a team of cybernetic henchmen who blast, burn, and shoot their way through futuristic cities to crush your rivals, terrorize the general populace, and achieve a new world order.

The story picks up just after the EuroCorp syndicate from the original game has achieved a stranglehold on the world's economy. As you enter the game, rival corporations are virtually nonexistent, and minor uprisings amid the world's population seem to be the only threat to a long and prosperous reign of terror for EuroCorp. But a new adversary — The Church of the New Epoch — threatens to throw a monkey wrench into EuroCorp's totalitarian designs by



In standard 320x200 resolution, *Syndicate Wars*' graphics may not appeal to fans of the original game's high-res beauty. But don't let looks deceive you; it's a blast to play.

destroying the Utopia chip (a computer implant that keeps citizens in line) and overthrowing regional syndicate forces. As the game progresses, the EuroCorp syndicate finds itself embroiled in an all-out struggle for survival as the Church successfully lays waste to the syndicate's technology centers and develops new weaponry of its own.

While this new theme makes for a more dynamic plot, there's some real benefit to gameplay as well. In an interesting twist on the original game's bad-guy formula, you'll be able to play out the



Purple-haired punks and wild-eyed radicals are just some of the new enemies you'll face as you take to the streets in your quest for world domination.



A new nemesis has arisen in the dark, futuristic world of *Syndicate*; The Church of the New Epoch is a radical organization dedicated to annihilating the control of the syndicates.

FEROCIOUS FIREPOWER

Where the original *Syndicate* gave us all the tools a modern day terrorist could ever want, *Syndicate Wars* reaches for new heights in personal destruction with an array of weapons that explore the deadly art of global conquest. Here are a few of our favorites:

RAZOR WIRE

Old-fashioned razor-wire finds a place in *Syndicate Wars* as a nearly invisible anti-personnel device that can slice and dice unsuspecting adversaries. Great for laying traps in heated multi-player battles and against throngs of misguided miscreants. It's not just for correctional facilities and junkyards anymore!

ELECTRON MACE

This devastating weapon emits a highly charged field of electricity that wraps its victim in 10,000-volt fingers of death.

CERBERUS IFF

In the search for a no-fuss, no-muss localized defense system, syndicate scientists have developed the Cerberus IFF, a lightweight, portable sentry system equipped with a powerful laser turret. Simply drop the IFF outside an enemy's headquarters and watch the fur fly!

CLONE SHIELD

With this handy personal shield, your agents can enjoy complete anonymity among the nameless, faceless masses by assuming the identity of the general populace. Only your barber knows for sure!

NUCLEAR GRENADE

Syndicate tech labs have tapped into the power of the atom for this localized nuclear device. When properly placed, this highly explosive toy can level entire buildings, sweep vast stretches of cityscape clean of rival interference, or provide a blinding flash in one swift strike.

PLASMA LANCE

Ah, the plasma lance! With this devastating weapon, you'll be able to roast your victims in a blinding flash of white-hot plasma from half a block away as you grip its cool-to-the-touch exterior and marvel at its sleek design. It's what all the best-dressed cyborgs are carrying.

game as either the EuroCorp syndicate or The Church of the New Epoch in two separate campaigns with different weapons, objectives, and motives. And with the game's built-in multi-player options, you'll be able to challenge human rivals via modem or local-area network.

Whether you choose to play as the evil corporate empire or the radical Church, fans of the original will find there's a lot to like — and a few things to grumble about — in this revamp of the



■ **Destructive goodness abounds in *Syndicate Wars*, thanks to a wide range of weapons, and buildings that can come tumbling down like a house of cards.**

old master. For starters, Bullfrog has shifted from the fixed isometric perspective and clean, Super VGA bit-mapped cities and units of the original, opting instead for a fully polygonal 3D world where the player is free to zoom in, rotate, and tilt the environment to get the best view on the action. In comparison to the original's crisp character sprites and brightly-lighted cities, this new environment is downright ugly — especially in standard 320x200 mode, with jagged, unrefined polygonal characters, grainy textures, and an extremely dark look that makes *Blade Runner* look like a cheerful Disney flick. The graphics improve substantially when you crank up the resolution to the optional 640x480 Super VGA mode, but on anything less than a 166MHz Pentium, the game is simply too sluggish to be playable.

Still, as initially uninspiring as these new graphics are, the game plays the same thing, and despite grumbles over the new look, this new environment proves to be more interactive and fluid than the original's, with dynamic lighting and environmental effects, fully interactive structures (you can blow up entire buildings, and everything you shoot shows damage), and sprawling mission areas that require real strategy to navigate.

The original game's simple, mouse-driven interface returns with few changes (it didn't really need any) aside from the new keyboard commands that control the screen, tilt, and rotation of the environment. Once you've warmed to the concept of rotating the environment and zooming in and out of the action, *Syndicate Wars* delivers a bone-crunching, lead-slinging good time. With an array of new weapons that includes nuclear grenades and high-explosive charges, you'll be treated to screen-filling explosions, collapsing buildings and chaos in the streets as your agents run amok. And while the new gadgets are a treat (see sidebar), fans of the original game will be happy to hear that their old favorites have made the transition to this new environment as well. The awe-inspiring flammers, mini-guns, and long range-



■ **Your agents don't always have to hoof it; they can commander vehicles to use for their deadly purposes.**

rifles still demand the lion's share of respect on this high-tech battlefield.

If there is a gripe to be made about *Syndicate Wars* (other than the chunky graphics, of course) it's the lack of any real mission variety. Throughout the game, you'll perform essentially the same three missions: kill everything, capture someone, or kill everything and capture someone. While the difficulty is stepped up to a frantic pace early on, the limited nature of the missions makes an otherwise thrilling experience a bit repetitive.

Whether you intend to delve deeply into the plot or just want to live vicariously through your agents as you blast your way through every mission, *Syndicate Wars* is top-notch entertainment that delivers an exciting mix of down-and-dirty, real-time action and cyberpunk-style thrills. It may not be pretty, and it may not be nice, but it's a bloody good time.

—Todd Vaughn

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Demanding real-time action; wonderfully dark and moody feel.

88%

LOWS: Dark graphics occasionally make details hard to spot; missions could use more variety.

BOTTOM LINE: If you liked the destruction and carnage of the original *Syndicate*, prepare to create a new world order all over again.

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Product Information Number 103



Bedlam

Category: Action

Developer: Mirage Technologies

Publisher: GT Interactive, 16 East 40th Street, New York, NY 10016 (212) 679-6850

Required

486/66; Double-speed CD-ROM drive; 8MB RAM; SVGA; Mouse

We Recommend

Pentium; 16MB RAM; Supported sound card

Thanks to the success of games like *Crusader: No Remorse* and *Syndicate*, pure action games are beginning to show signs of a resurgence, with levels of gameplay and challenge comparable to the current crop of first-person shooters. *Bedlam* is the latest title to shake the shadow of *Quake* and *Duke* and strive out on its own with an isometric perspective, action-packed violence, and explosions galore. But a number of minor flaws show that the despite the advances, the genre still has a way to go before it can claim the action crown.

Sometime in the future, horrible monsters called Biomex have taken over human installations, and it's your job to clear them out. You're in command of a three-man R.A.T. (Remote Assault Tank) team, and you're dropped into each of the game's 25 missions where you must fight your way through danger-filled levels, destroy your target objectives, and then find your way to the extraction point.



In order to advance beyond the electric fences, you must find the deactivation switch.

There's plenty of action and lots of explosions in *Bedlam*, but not enough variety to create a substantial action game.

Controlling your units is easy: use the left mouse button to run to a spot on the screen and the right button to shoot, similar to *Syndicate*. You choose different weapons with the number keys (and in a nice touch, you can select more than one weapon to fire off at a time), and use the first three function keys to switch between your R.A.T. units.

Like *Crusader: No Remorse*, almost everything on the screen will blow up, and the explosions and destruction are quite satisfying. Your R.A.T. is about the size of a small truck, and the map is refreshingly large, so there's plenty of space to wander about and explore.

To get extracted, you must find a reddish beacon somewhere on the base, where the dropship can retrieve you. It's unclear why a ship that can drop you off in a different part of the base can only pick you up at the beacon, or why the Biomex have conveniently left these beacons in each of their bases.

To get to a beacon, as well as to your various destinations, you must activate a large number of entrance switches and elevators to find the objects that deactivate the electric fences. These various triggers are scattered all over the map, so you'll be forced to wander to one side, set off a switch, then go all the way back to the other side of the map and see if you can find the lowered platform, deactivated fence, or whatever. When you do trigger a new fence or platform, a brief box will display the event, but it doesn't mark it on your map, and it can often be hard to find that location. And sometimes it still won't be accessible, as there may be another switch or trigger pad you need to activate to get there.

And this is the biggest problem with the game. This sort of aimless wandering back and forth looking for switches and doors is no fun. To make matters worse, the monsters respawn at an alarming rate, even on the easiest difficulty setting. Although this was probably done to maintain a continuous challenge while you're going back and forth looking for switches, it's really quite annoying to have to clear a pack of bad



Multi-layered structures create the illusion of a 3D environment.



The destroyed aliens are a gruesome sight.

guy you have already destroyed.

The enemies are really easy to kill, most of them going down in a shot or two, and your own R.A.T. troops require a lot of damage to destroy. So killing the bad guys is not as much of a challenge as is conserving your ammo or finding the trigger switches. This unbalances the game, putting less emphasis on the action and more on searches. This imbalance, combined with the sprawling key-hunt levels, makes *Bedlam* less fun than it should be.

— Jason Bates

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Easy to control, lots of explosions.

LOWS: No multi-player mode, questionable level design, tedious switch-hunts, enemies too easy to kill.

BOTTOM LINE: A reasonably workmanlike effort with some drawbacks.

68%

Virtua Squad



Category: Arcade

Developer: Sega

Publisher: Sega, 150 Shoreline Drive,
Redwood City, CA 94065
(415) 802-4400

Required

486DX; Windows 95;
Double-speed
CD-ROM drive; 8MB
RAM; Mouse

We Recommend

Pentium 100 or
higher; Quad-speed
CD-ROM drive;
16MB RAM; SVGA

Sega's latest coin-op conversion provides plenty of fast thrills for trigger-happy gamers, but not much in the way of lasting value.

Known to arcade fans as *Virtua Cop* but re-named *Virtua Squad* for the PC release due to internal wrangling at Sega, this is nothing new on the face of it — another by-the-numbers gun game makes the transition from coin gobbler to home system. Like gun-based coin-ops, this port was already going to suffer in the translation by losing the control method that made it fun in the arcades (well, do you know anyone who has a lightgun for their PC?), leaving home players to struggle with joystick, keyboard or mouse — the latter being the best of the three, but still no match for a gun. But unscalable problems aside, Sega has done a surprisingly impressive job of converting *Virtua Cop* — it's as fast, fluid, and frenetic as it ever was in the arcades, and technically it's virtually arcade-perfect if you have a machine fast enough to run it at the top detail level.

The action breaks down into three zones of varying difficulty, with you given the task of blasting your way through the armies of Tarantino-dressed



Automatic crosshairs point out your targets as they draw a bead on you, but it's up to you to do the aiming. With so much frantic gunfire, you'll have to get into the habit of reloading often.

baddies who pop up along your predefined path. There's nothing here to surprise anyone who's played this type of game before, with the obligatory array of baddies, rocket-toting end-of-level bosses, collectible weapons, and innocent bystanders who mustn't be shot — no matter what the temptation. Ammunition is unlimited (a double jab of button two replaces shooting off the screen to reload) but health is not, and you'll find yourself going through lives real quick on the tougher levels — thankfully, you can pump yourself full of extra credits on the options screen.

Despite the high body count, there's no blood — baddies just flicker away gorelessly when shot (although there's a "bullseye" bonus for scoring a head shot) so this is fine for kids — a good thing, too since something tells me this title is likely to attract far more younger gamers than adults. And there are plenty of neat touches — the high-tech automatic crosshairs give you an at-a-glance display of which baddies are the most immediate threats to help you prioritize targets (that said, if you're like me, you'll just blast anything that moves). The path you take sometimes takes surprising deviations to catch the player off guard. You'll have fun and be on the edge of your seat for as long as you play it, and of course simultaneous two player action (either on one com-

puter or with two linked) enhances the fun. But ultimately, this game isn't going to last long unless your entertainment threshold is spectacularly shallow and you never get bored of blowing away the same bad guys. There's a separate target range section that sets progressively tougher time trials against moving cardboard targets and provides some extra longevity, particularly if you've got a friend around to play against.

A damn fine conversion, then, of a game that wasn't really crying out for conversion — the whole thing is somewhat sanitized and the fun diluted without that vibrating plastic pistol in your hand. That said, the graphics really are remarkable, and if you're flush enough to treat yourself to a luxury purchase, this can be a great way to let off a bit of steam after you've been staring at your spreadsheet for too long. Works for me.

— Gary Whitta



The second level takes place in this baddie-infested junkyard, and there's no shortage of assassins and other unsavory gun-toting types to consign to the great scrap heap in the sky.

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Spectacular to look at, and intense fun to play in the early stages.

LOWS: Only three levels, which are over all too quickly.

BOTTOM LINE: An entertaining diversion and competent "twitch" game, but one that will likely be gathering dust a few weeks after purchase.

70%

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War Wind



Category: Strategy

Developer: DreamForge

Publisher: S.S.I., 675 Almanor Ave., Suite 201, Sunnyvale, CA 94086-2901 (800) 601-7529

Required

Pentium; Win95; Double-speed CD-ROM drive; 16MB RAM; 5MB hard-drive space; mouse; 2MB Super VGA video card

We Recommend

Supported sound card; 100MB hard-drive space; Modem

Let's get this out of the way right now: *War Wind* is, quite obviously, inspired by *WarCraft II*. Some might call it a rip-off, but it's no more a rip-off of *WarCraft* than *WarCraft* is of *Warhammer*, so...

Having said that, I risk heresy by also saying I personally like *War Wind* better than any of the other real-time strategy games, *WarCraft II* included. It

has many of the same elements that made those titles fun, but it also has deeper strategy gameplay and different

SSI takes on Blizzard with a game that drives real-time fantasy strategy to an exciting new level.

pacing that lifts it above an action title and presents a game world that is substantially more fleshed out and interesting than any yet seen.

War Wind is set on the world of Yavaun, ruled by the imperialistic Tha'Roan for 1,000 years. Two other races, the Eaggra and the Obblinox, are under Tha'Roan control, while a third, the Shama'Li, remain unconquered. The Eaggra are a plant-like race characterized by their large numbers and good building skills, while the Obblinox are a tough warrior race that functions as the strong arm of the Tha'Roan empire. The mystical Shama'Li remains an unconquered race, keeping their distance and cultivating their ancient runes and magical knowledge.

The Tha'Roan soon find themselves challenged by a revolt of the Eaggra. These industrious plants begin by striking at the Obblinox, who at first fight



The right mouse button opens the multiple menus that control the functions of each unit, as with this scrub, who should be fighting rather than building.

back, but eventually also decide to revolt. The Shama'Li try to remain neutral, but are inevitably drawn into the war.

You can start *War Wind* as any of the four races in four distinct campaigns, each with seven scenarios linked by some intrigue and plot twists. Each race faces different challenges that exploit the special abilities and weakness of their kind. The Obblinox try to suppress the budding revolt but eventually join it, while the Eaggra need to gain their independence. The Tha'Roan have to fight all the races for themselves, and the Shama'Li just try to protect their ancient sites from destruction and even save members of another race. Four-way brawls are completely possible.

War Wind has familiar controls: select a unit or units, tell them where to go, and tell them to fight, all in real-time and much like *WarCraft II*. Where it's different is in the diversity of units and structures and the pacing. The variety of buildings you can construct is greater, and many of these buildings may be used to study different technology classes in order to upgrade units and create new units. You can build a better army by studying in areas related to war, magic, and "bio-upgrades."

The resources for these projects come from worker units that harvest resources from trees and other sources, such as the "slag" left behind when an enemy dies. These resources can be used to create buildings; build, upgrade, and repair units; study new bio-upgrades and spells; or raise the general "influence" or the leader in order to help sol-



Several heroes join the battle against the plantlike Eaggra, who have sealed off their walled enclave.

THE RACES OF WAR WIND

THA'ROON



The overlords of Yavaun, they are in danger of losing control of their servitor races through revolution. This reptilian race has

many of the advantages, such as strong units, wealth, and good villages. But they also must consume more to build their units and structures, and since they are unaccustomed to doing things for themselves, are slow to build.

SPECIAL UNITS:

- Jump Troops can fly short distances and have good arm and combat ratings.
- Psionics have excellent spells and mind control, which is essential for some missions.
- Assassins rate highest in stealth and are strong fighters.

OBBLINOX



The military arm of the Tha'roon, these strong, well-equipped soldiers start the game helping put down the revolution. Soon they

have dreams of their own independence.

SPECIAL UNITS:

- Colossus is part Obblinox, part tank, and is an unstoppable force.
- Bikers are light calvary, fast but vulnerable on their motorcycles.
- Agents are invisible, resilient spies.

ishes are also included in *War Wind*: map and scenario creator, head-to-head play, attractive cut scenes, and a good score and sound effects. A number of other elements also raise the level of *War Wind* above that of a *WarCraft II* knock-off. The countless "neutral" monsters roaming the country side can be a huge factor in play, as they chip at your army and wreck buildings, adding a new twist to the challenge. A complex spell-set can be developed, and indeed must be for victory in certain missions. Plus, the world itself is very alive and well-developed, with an interplay between the races that works like a charm.

There are a few complaints to temper the raves. Army AI is sometimes spotty, with some units not striking enemies in clear range. Mission goals are sometimes multi-layered and complex (which is good), but not always explained clearly (which is bad). The pacing is much more deliberate than the furious blood-letting of *WCII* or *C&C*, and can often stop dead as you regroup and research a crucial spell or perform a non-combat mission requirement. I found this a plus. Others might not.

War Wind is, simply, a lot of fun, but at a more

EAGGRA



For years, the Eaggra were the ignorant worker drones of Yavaun. They are not strong, but are plentiful, have the fastest

construction, and can move on any terrain without penalties. They must overwhelm with numbers.

SPECIAL UNITS:

- Grenadiers are essentially long range artillery units.
- Druids cast their spells by manipulating the powerful forces of nature.
- Scrubs are incredible workers: fast and versatile.

SHAMA'LI



Mystics from another place, the Shama'Li act to serve those who need protection and help.

They will use their awesome magical attacks to zealously protect their sacred sites.

SPECIAL UNITS:

- Elementals not only have the greatest magical attacks, but also the best armor of any Shama'Li.
- Shamans are cast crucial healing spells.
- Disciples are moderate magic users with good stealth and attack ratings.



This Shama'Li complex is protected by offensive fencing, which takes a bite out of anyone who attempts to pass through.

diers fight better and researchers study new topics. Managing these resources is a little trickier than with similar games, since in several scenarios they're finite: you must make a choice between more units or better upgrades.

The unit types, levels, and bio-upgrades all set *War Wind* apart from the competition. Rather than having disposable grunts, *War Wind* encourages you to invest time and money in "improved" units, with new skills or spells, and better efficiency in battle. Each unit can be equipped with a number of bio-upgrades to enhance such abilities as stealth, armor, speed, strength, and vision. For example, you can upgrade the stealth of a unit until it's invisible, but an opponent could also upgrade their units' vision to the point where they can see an invisible army. There are a lot of nuances to creating a good army, and it means more since you can save prized units in a "Hall of Heroes," carrying a core army from scenario to scenario. Choosing the right units for the Hall and then the right ones for each battle (sometimes you can only bring a few prize units into a given scenario) is crucial to winning.

All the rest of the expected flour-



One of the four-way free-for-all that makes *War Wind* unique: all the races are throwing everything they have at each other.



In between games you can view the next missions, save and load, and view The Hall of Heroes using the icons at the bottom that represents your core army.

sophisticated level than the usual real-time brain splatting. It's clearly working within the well-established genre set forth by *WarCraft II* and *Command & Conquer*, but instead of merely disappearing into the fray as a carbon copy, *War Wind* takes it to the next step, with style, playability, and depth.

— T. Liam McDonald

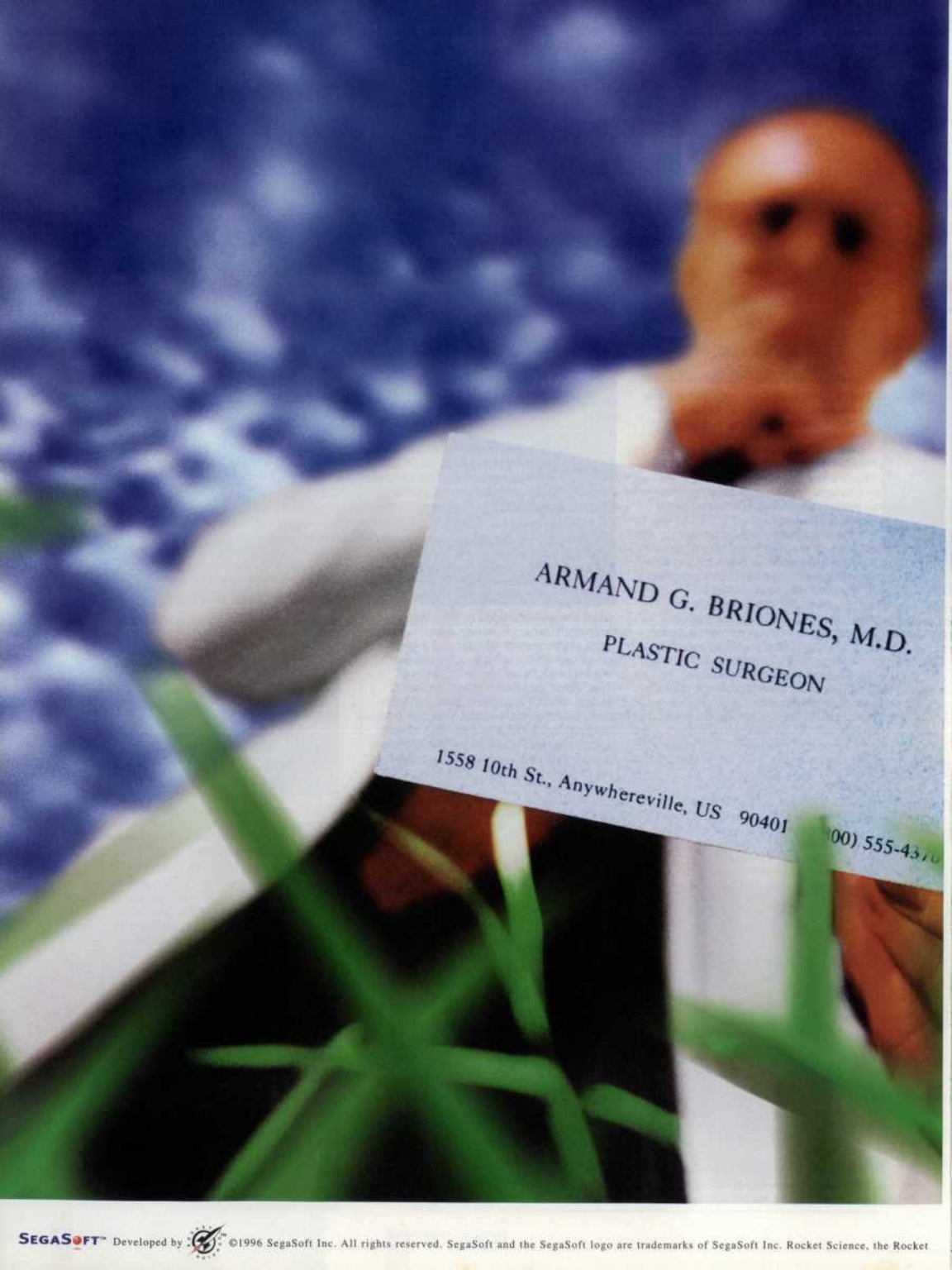
PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: A detailed approach to real-time strategy gaming, with complex units and a rich background.

LOWS: Some goals are not clearly defined.

BOTTOM LINE: A strong, fulfilling strategy title; a good bet for people who want to move on to more complex gaming than *WarCraft II*.

90%



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Product Information Number 282



Circle of Blood

Category: Graphic Adventure

Developer: Revolution Software

Publisher: Virgin Interactive, 18061 Fitch Ave., Irvine, CA 92714
(800) 874-4607

Required

486DX2/66; Double-speed CD-ROM drive; 8MB RAM; 30MB hard-drive space; SVGA; Mouse

We Recommend

Pentium; Quad-speed CD-ROM drive; Supported sound card

Just when it seemed traditional graphic adventures were going the way of the afro and bell-bottom jeans, we've see a recent resurgence in the genre with *Toonstruck*, *Sherlock Holmes*, and even *Leisure Suit Larry*, bringing back the excitement of narrow escapes, gathering unrelated objects to solve puzzles, and studio quality animation to the PC screen. Virgin's *Circle of Blood* is among the best of this renaissance, with its thrilling blend of quality puzzling, sumptuous graphics, and intelligent story line.

Like classic adventures of the past, *Circle of Blood* builds a convincing story from diverse elements and lays interesting groundwork for exploration, puzzling, and surprise. The game starts with a scene of a quaint Parisian cafe as the



Here's our hero, George Stobbart, wearing the expression that crosses his face most often.

In a time of eerie silence in the graphic adventure genre, Virgin's *Circle of Blood* carries the torch for a new generation.



When you run into the assassin for the first time, it'll take some quick thinking to get out of your predicament. And to think you got into all this mess because of a clown...

main character, George Stobbart, flirts harmlessly with an attractive waitress, and an old man walks in with a briefcase. An obnoxious clown saunters into the cafe with an accordion, snags the briefcase, and leaves his accordion behind, which explodes, killing the old man and destroying the cafe. George, unharmed but shaken by the explosion, starts looking for clues to the bombing, the death of the old man, and the identity of the clown. The trail leads him to the mysterious Knights Templar — a medieval sect believed to be the protectors of the Holy Grail — and the location of their secret treasure, still missing after centuries.

As you progress through the game you'll grow ever-closer to this mysterious sect and face countless dangers as you talk to deceitful characters, test your wits against ingenious puzzles and explore strange new locations. Thankfully, getting around in *Circle of Blood* is a breeze because of the fairly standard graphic adventure interface. The mouse icon changes to indicate any hotspots or areas of interest, and a right-click of the mouse will deliver information, while a left-click performs an appropriate action. Even with the no-fault nature of the interface, the puzzles are surprisingly inventive and challenging.



This is an example of a "mine-sweep" puzzle. You'll need to find that hole right in front of George that looks just like all the other holes on the wall.

However, some require a specific location to activate, and thus some puzzles become a mine-sweeping exercise as you have to move the cursor everywhere to make sure you're not missing a hot-spot only a few pixels wide.

Conversations with other characters are carried out by selecting topics or choosing an item to ask about. The method is simple enough, but some-



The clown that brings George into the mystery doesn't really seem the type to frequent the circus.



The accordion the clown leaves behind is not funny, nor is the sound it makes pleasing.



George meets all sorts of interesting characters during his travels — even a goat with a bad attitude.

what limiting. Although you can always ask about any object you're carrying, you can only ask about topics presented to you, rather than choosing exactly what you want to say. You may not need to ask the assassin hunting you about an old lady you met in a hotel, but it would be nice if you *could*.

Visually, the game is stunning. The animated graphics are crisp and clear, and the artwork is simply beautiful. At the highest setting, the background and foreground scroll separately, delivering a sense of depth you don't see in many graphic adventures. For slower machines, you can turn this off, but it won't make a huge difference in speed. Even the atmosphere of each of the areas you explore, such as Spain, Paris, Ireland, and Syria, fit the locale: in Paris you hear the constant noise of the roads and highways, whereas Syria is draped in carpets and merchandise, with vendors constantly clamoring in the background.

But despite all the wonderful touches that make the game look and feel like a big-budget

Disney epic, the weakest part of the game is the voice acting, which saps some of the excitement. Although the actor portraying the main character does a good job, the other characters are a bit lacking. Some of the accents are just plain awful, as is the case with Sergeant Moue. It wouldn't be so bad if it was infrequent in the game, but many of the characters are so completely off



Syria is full of vendors, clever children, and tacky tourists.

ACT ONE REVEALED

Just because George is a tourist in Paris doesn't mean he'll always get what he wants. To start exploring outside the confines of the Parisian paradise, follow the steps below:

After the explosion, pick up the newspaper near the lamp post. Start walking down the street, and you'll be stopped by the police. Answer the Inspector's questions, and talk to the tall brunette (Nico) outside of the cafe. Walk back down the street and give the workman the newspaper. After he leaves, take the manhole key from his toolbox, walk back to the cafe, and walk into the alley to the right. Use the manhole key on the manhole, and enter the sewer. Pick up the red nose and the tissue and scrap of material before heading out of the sewer. Show the concierge Rosso's card, show him the material, and ask about the jacket. Walk back to the construction site, and use the mobile phone to call Nico. Go to her apartment. You'll have to talk to the flower vendor to get into the building. While talking to Nico, show her the material, and take the photograph she gives you. Show her the nose, and then go and show the photograph to the man in the costume shop. Ask him about the clown, and make sure you get the hand buzzer as you leave. Call the tailor and ask him about Khan.

Go to the Hotel and talk to the lady playing the piano. Show her the picture. Try to get the key near the front desk, and then talk to the woman at the piano again (Lady Piermount). After she distracts the receptionist, grab the key and go upstairs. Enter the first room, go out the window, and enter the second room. Open the door and hide from the assassin. After he leaves, search the pants on the bed and take the matchbook and identification card. Ask the receptionist about the safe, then show him the ID card. Go show Lady Piermount the card, and she'll help you get the manuscript from the safe. Go back upstairs and drop the manuscript from the window to avoid having it found on you when you're searched as you leave the hotel. Get the manuscript and go back to Nico's apartment. Ask her about it, and then go to the museum. Examine the tripod, leave the museum, and then you can catch the flight to Ireland. From here on in, you're on your own.

the mark — and, at times, so annoying — that you'll probably switch the text subtitles on and turn the speech off.

As a whole, though, *Circle of Blood* is a fun graphic adventure. The story is compelling, the puzzles are varied, and the interface becomes second nature very quickly. Aside from only a few shortcomings, it's an entertaining game that may not blow everyone away, but if you're a traditional adventure fan that yearns for the days of old, it's an adventure you can rely on.

— Mike Wolf

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Simple interface; beautiful, crisp graphics; challenging puzzles; intriguing story line.

80%

LOWS: Voice acting isn't exactly professional; some puzzles require too much pixel-hunting.

BOTTOM LINE: It's entertaining, challenging, and worth playing, but it's not a graphic adventure that will blow you away.

Assassin 2015



Category: First-person Shooter

Developer: Blue Sky Software

Publisher: Inscape, P.O. Box 251829,
Los Angeles, CA 90025
(800) 741-3043

Required

Windows 95; Quad-speed CD-ROM drive; 486DX/66; 16MB RAM; 50MB hard-drive space; Mouse

We Recommend

Pentium; Supported sound card

There are few things more disappointing than suffering through a game only to realize you've been here and done that so many times before, only better — much, much, better.

That's the case with Inscape's *Assassin 2015*, another in a long line of first-person shooters that leaves fun and innovation behind in the blind rush to jump on the bandwagon. In comparison to today's kings of the first-person genre, *Assassin* is a dinosaur of prehistoric proportions, with dated graphics, limiting controls, and lethargic gameplay. Instead of the wealth of control options you'd find in *Terminator: Future Shock*, *Duke Nukem 3D*, or *Quake*, you



Most of the action takes place in narrow hallways and catwalks where you do pretty much the same song and dance to move on to the next scene.



Assassin relies heavily on the 3D animated cut-scenes, which, as you can see here, are quite stunning.

With first-person games back in fashion, me-too games are coming out of the woodwork — and *Assassin* leads the charge of mediocrity.



Your final opponent, The Stalker, is too much of a badass to take head-on. You have to find a different solution to getting past him, and no, you can't outsmart him like Captain Kirk.



You get constant updates on your position from your partner, Jett Jones, whose voice is provided by actress Adrienne Barbeau.

won't be able to look up or down, crouch, or jump in *Assassin*. As you explore the drab environments, there are no goodies to pick up, no secret areas to explore, and none of the nail-biting excitement that good first-person games are known for.

The game begins the basic way: You're at a starting point, you have a weapon, and you must get to the end level. But instead of a thrilling array of weapons to deal death on your enemies, the only weapon you have is a machine gun equipped with a rocket launcher. You don't need ammo, you don't need to aim (targeting is handled for you), and the gun will always fire unless it gets too hot from over-use — it just needs to cool down for a few seconds.

During your mission you receive radio messages from your partner, Jett Jones, who's waiting for you at the end point in a helicopter. Adrienne Barbeau, veteran actress of such films as *Swamp Thing* and *Escape from New York*, provides Jett's voice. She guides you through your mission, telling you which direction to turn and what to look out for. Even if you don't need to know where you've been, or where you're going, or how to get there, you're led by the nose from the start of the game to the end level.

Instead of picking up armor bonuses or health kits, you have a shield that depletes when you're being hit and regenerates when you're not. If you take enough hits to wear down the shield, you have a main health meter that begins to chip away but doesn't regenerate. I thought this was a decent way of handling health without the need to scavenge armor and health kits. The odd thing about it was, you don't really have much fear of getting killed. If you die, you can hit a continue button and start off at (or close to) your last location, with full health and shields.

Throughout the mission, you're faced with enemy units that come in the form of armor-clad warriors, hovering drones, or mechanized robots. The most pesky unit is the hovering drone, which seems to pop out of nowhere at times. The other units are pretty easy to avoid if your shields get depleted and need time to recharge. While the regular cast of bad-guys is a breeze to blow through, the most infuriating portion is during the final confrontation with the end-level baddy, where you can shoot all you want but you can't inflict any damage. Instead of blasting this boss robot until you've destroyed it, you have to solve a lame puzzle and escape without even firing a shot.

But the most troubling aspect of the entire game is how quickly it's over. A couple of straight hours of should see you through it. Maybe it's because of the ability to continue the game right around the point where you die. Maybe it's the not-so-tough enemies. Maybe it's because you don't have to spend time pushing walls in search of secret places, or maybe it's because the game really isn't fun, so you rush through it. Maybe it's because Adrienne Barbeau guides you so well. Whatever it is, it's not much of a game.

— Joseph Novicki

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Adrienne Barbeau's husky voice-overs are nicely done.

LOWS: The game is very short, not very challenging, and, aside from the cut-scenes, looks very dated.

BOTTOM LINE: *Assassin* seems to miss the point of what first-person shootin' fun is all about.

35%

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Product Information Number 362



Williams
WILLIAMS ENTERTAINMENT, INC.

Shattered Steel

Category: Action

Developer: Bioware

Publisher: Interplay, 16815 Von Karman Avenue, Irvine, CA 92606 (800) 969-4263

Required

Double-speed CD-ROM drive; 486/66; 8MB RAM; 25MB hard-drive space; Mouse

We Recommend

Quad-speed CD-ROM drive; Pentium; 16MB RAM; Supported sound card; Joystick

EarthSiege II by cutting straight to the chase. Pure action dominates every twist and turn in the game, and movement is best handled by a mouse/keyboard combination; the arrow

keys control the movement of your mech, while the mouse rotates the turret. Your primary weapon is fired with the left mouse button; your secondary (most often a missile rack) is fired with the right. In order to get you up and running as quickly as possible, Interplay has included a keyboard layer that explains the function keys — it's a great help for those of us who want to spend more time shooting than struggling through the manual, looking for those F-key functions.

The graphics consist of attractive voxel-style landscapes like NovaLogic's *Armored Fist* or *Comanche*, and feature beautiful terrain light-sourcing and slick polygon robots. Clouds cast moving shadows on the ground, and missile attacks leave realistic blackened craters. Surprisingly enough, *Shattered Steel* runs smoothly on lower-end systems. The redbook audio tracks are moody and dark, and the ambient sound is top-notch.

But the real treat here is the action. In *Shattered Steel*, combat is fast and furious from the moment you leave the dropship. The weapons get increasingly powerful as you work your way through the fifty missions, and later in the game you even get your very own tactical nuke, which wipes out an impressive percentage of the landscape. Simply launch it and run like hell, since a terrain-ripping aftershock will be hot on your heels. Another one of *Shattered Steel*'s unique features is the backup patrol that occasionally accompanies your mission and helps in the destruction of the alien Hun. Though the first

The complexity and depth of typical 'Mech sims takes a back seat to down-and-dirty 'bot blasting action in this enjoyable action game.



There are more of these spider-type mechs running around in *Shattered Steel* than street mimes in New York City.



Dispatching a tactical nuke into a squad of alien scum equals pure Gaming Goodness.

few levels may seem like a piece of cake, you'll be sweating like two rats mating in a wool sock by the final missions.

Shattered Steel also boasts comprehensive multi-player features. Modern and LAN are supported, with plenty of network options and fifteen network mis-

sions to keep arch-rivals busy nuking each other for months. Interplay is even setting up a ladder of competition on the Internet, where the best players can meet and beat each other.

All in all, *Shattered Steel* may not have the hulking complexity of *MechWarrior 2* or *EarthSiege II*, but the action is just as inviting. So, if you've already blasted through those games, it's certainly worth a look — just be careful with those nukes, okay?

— Colin Williamson



Check out the "Shiva" bot — this is one bad mother that you'll want to have on your side.

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Nice, fast graphics; great network play; more big-robot action than you can shake a joystick at.

87%

LOWS: A bit lacking on the strategy side.

BOTTOM LINE: For no-fault mech combat, *Shattered Steel* is a blast.

Jonny Quest: Cover-Up At Roswell

Category: Adventure/Puzzle Game

Developer: Virgin Sound and Vision

Publisher: Virgin Sound and Vision, 122 S. Robertson Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90048 (310) 246-4666

Required

Double-speed CD-ROM drive;
486/66; 8MB RAM;
Windows 3.1;
Mouse

We Recommend

Pentium; Supported sound card

You may remember Jonny Quest from the animated series of the 1960s starring the eponymous boy wonder, but this new adventure game from Virgin Sound and Vision draws upon the updated 1990s version of JQ as he tries to uncover an alien conspiracy. Fans of this new cartoon series or curious nostalgia buffs might get a kick out of all the animation supplied with the game, but even for the young adventure fans this game is aimed at, *Jonny Quest* leaves much to be desired.

Young novice gamers won't find any of the tricky puzzles adventure games are typically known for — or even



Here's the whole Quest team: Hadji, Race, Dr. Quest, Jesse, Jonny, and Bandit. The animation is every bit as good as the TV show.

The animated world of Jonny Quest comes to the PC in a lightweight dreadfully easy adventure game for kids.

find the game hard to play. Quite the contrary, it's unbelievably easy. The game is comprised of static scenes where you have to step through a series of very simple puzzles. Throughout the entire game, the voice acting gives you clues on where you need to go, and often provides answers to the puzzles.

The game is divided into a series of missions to uncover alien artifacts that have been jettisoned from a UFO that crashes in — where else — Roswell, New Mexico. The missions are interspersed with a generous portion of fully animated sequences; maybe even more than would be in a regular Jonny Quest cartoon. In fact, if you were to piece it all together, it might make a good episode.

The game starts with a computer system crash at the Quest home. Of course, you have to trouble-shoot the problem. This brings you to the first series of puzzles in the form of basic shape-recognition tests. After fixing the computer system, you get to read an E-mail about the crash and see a video of the UFO ejecting five artifacts. Each artifact lands in a different part of the world, so off the Quest team goes to such sites as the Bermuda Triangle, a rainforest, Africa, the Southwest, and Manhattan.

There is an abundance of dialog that provides helpful clues to nearly every puzzle, with lines like "check out that door to the right," "check the blackboard for the password," or "I wish I had a slingshot." While these dialog clips are well done and fit in nicely with the style of the hip new cartoon show, these overly obvious tips typically ruin any chance of solving a particular puzzle on your own.

The production value and animations are very good, but the simplicity is overwhelming. Each mission is very linear, with few opportunities to step outside the lines and make a mistake — and even if you do happen to get off course, you're nudged back on track by the dialog hints.



It all boils down to this final puzzle — the standard move through the maze and open doors. The red glasses next to the ? means it can be viewed in 3D.

The puzzles themselves seem out of place with the adventure. They either take the form of some type of pattern recognition involving colors, shapes, or numbers; or simple movement puzzles where you must guide an object along a path or through a maze. The only real challenge in the puzzles is fighting off the tedium of clicking your way through them.

The colorful animations and easy puzzles don't add up to a great adventure game. While these elements may appeal to kids, the easy puzzles and limited interaction can only hold their attention for so long, and while the box does say for ages 8 and up, I'd put the age ceiling around 10 or 11.

— Joseph Novicki

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Excellent production value for animation and sound.

LOWS: Entirely too easy. The puzzles are very childish in nature.

BOTTOM LINE: The colorful animations of the "Jonny Quest" universe aren't enough to propel this breeze of an adventure.

60%

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Product Information Number 289

Destiny



Category: Strategy

Developer: Dagger Interactive

Publisher: Interactive Magic, P.O. Box 13491, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709 (919) 461-0722

Required

Windows 95;
Double-speed
CD-ROM drive;
486DX/66; 8MB
RAM; Mouse

We Recommend

Quad-speed
CD-ROM drive;
Pentium; 16MB
RAM; Supported
sound cards

It is rare for a PC game to be hailed as "a classic" within days of its release, but that's what happened when MicroProse released the original version of Sid Meier's *Civilization* in 1991. Deep, rich, and fiercely addictive, it combined the best elements of global-conquest strategy with complex, exquisitely balanced resource-management to recreate mankind's march from the Stone Age to the stars. In its new incarnations, *Civ II* and *CivNet*, the classic balance of resource management and combat is still going strong.

Champions exist so that challengers may aspire to dethrone them. To stretch the boxing analogy, Interactive Magic has mounted the most serious challenge to *Civilization* yet; let it be said at the outset that this challenger has trained hard, perfected a style all its own, studied its opponent thoroughly, and comes out swinging, with admirable power and energy. But it's still outmatched.

Destiny's chief weakness is in fact derived from its designers' determined effort to analyze *Civilization* and fill their game with all the things Sid Meier either left out or short-changed. The

Interactive Magic makes a mighty attempt to overthrow *Civilization* in the Stone-Age-to-Space-Age genre.



Graphics in the "battle" scenes are scandalously retro — that's a mortar, by the way, in the foreground.

problem is that there may well have been good reasons why Meier made those omissions.

First, the good things: *Destiny* is more detailed, more fine-grained in its data-base, than the game it tries to overthrow; the online encyclopedia of historical inventions and discoveries is massive and fascinating — almost a stand-alone reference source in itself. *Destiny* does a fine job of simulating the epic sweep of human history, and its interface is elegant — all the facts and stats and reports you could possibly want are laid out in logical, comprehensive patterns.

Second, *Destiny* gives its players unparalleled flexibility: you can play an enormous game that lasts for millennia, or you can play shorter games starting

at critical watersheds in human history: the Age of Gunpowder, the Age of Steam, the Bronze Age, etc. Events and their consequences unfold in real time (at slow, medium, or fast speed), or you can adopt a more sedate, turn-based style of play. You can play against as many as eight computer opponents, or enjoy network contests against human rivals.

Victory can be based either

on military supremacy or scientific superiority, or a randomized mixture of both elements. There is a multitude of useful "difficulty" tweaks, and you can customize the terrain and resources available in each new game.

Most gamers, if time permits, will probably opt for the full Stone-Age-to-Space-Age game. Starting out as a nomadic tribe, you must make the basic discoveries of any civilization — domestication of livestock, brick-making, primitive agriculture, etc. — by investing "New Idea" points in specific categories of research.

You do this in the discovery window by highlighting research topics and assigning points to them. As important as this process is, its explanation in both manual and tutorial is

KNOWLEDGE IS GOOD

How to keep your education level high enough to compete

One of the most distressing moments possible in a game of *Destiny* is when your Discovery Window suddenly goes blank, indicating that all available research progress has been made. This happens when your culture's educational level fails to stay ahead of the technology curve. To reach the Bronze Age, for example, your cities must have at least one Athenaeum facility for every 20-30 people in their population. To reach a Renaissance level, you must have enough

Monasteries to advance your overall education to Level Three.

The challenge is to second-guess the built-in bell curve that governs the Educational Level. Think of the research infrastructure as a constantly-expanding pyramid. It is not enough to attain Level Three by building one Monastery for every 15-20 people in your population, you must support that level with enough Athenaeums and Academies to maintain more elementary levels of learning.

So when you reach Level Three, keep one Athenaeum, one Academy, and at least one Monastery under construction in every COH you govern, until you reach Level Four (when the game stabilizes the educational requirements). If you do not, if even one COH falls below its previous level of educational progress, your entire culture could regress and become stuck in the Bronze Age for centuries, while you feverishly build remedial facilities in a (usually) hopeless effort to play catch-up, and your computerized opponents leap ahead to the Age of Steam.

STOP THE PRESSES!

As this issue of *PCG* was being "put to bed," Interactive Magic announced some major overhauls of *Destiny*, based on feedback from gamers who purchased copies of the game's first edition. Based on my many hours with the game, I would say that these refinements, when fully implemented by I-Magic, will enhance playability significantly.

The changes announced as of press time included the following:

Facility Autostart: Constructed facilities that can only produce one item, or that only perform one task, will begin producing automatically.

Hire-a-Gov: You will now be able to hire a Governor (when playing on the easy, medium, and hard levels; no dice on the "extreme" level) who will manage for you the more mundane projects such as feeding, housing, health, and education level. In other words, when you need "X" number of Academies, the

Gov. will automatically put things in motion. On the easy level, the Governor will be hired as a matter of course; on the harder levels, you must build a suitable administration facility first, and, of course, pay his salary. This frees you to concentrate on exploration and conquest, and eliminates Micro-Management Overload when you have more than three cities to keep track of.

The Destiny Academy: This feature, accessible on I-Magic's website (www.imagicgames.com), will contain both a message board and an update of all new Destiny developments. The company is recruiting, ranking, and training players who are so deep into the game that they want to become "Destiny Scholars." This will be an excellent place to search for tips and customized strategies.

And finally, the *Destiny* design team is now available for direct, personal, phone conversations with players who need coaching, or who would like enlightenment about any aspect of the game that has proven elusive.



A Stone Age scout rolling through the so-called 3D terrain. Big deal.

somewhat murky. You can assign dozens, even hundreds of points, to a single research project ("flint-knapping" or "timber construction," to name two crucial building-blocks), but not only does this not accelerate research, it acts as an anthropological bottleneck.

Points are allocated in a first-come, first-served manner; assigning extra points does not necessarily speed things up, it just tinkers with the queue. I generally obtained the most efficient results by assigning half-again as many points as the number showing in the New Ideas window; if there were 8 Ideas floating around, I assigned 12-13 points and *no more*. The game will notify you when a new discovery comes online, and you can readjust your points at that time, sort of like setting a research budget that is slightly ahead of the actual curve of your civilization's accomplishments.

It's easy to found new cities — called "Centers of Habitation," or "COHs" in the game — by sending out an army and ordering it to create a settlement. Do not be tempted to create too many cities — micro-managing their administration becomes exponentially more complex as population increases and technologies become more advanced, to the extent that it can be overwhelming. I usually obtained good, manageable, results by founding three COHs, one inland and two coastal, early in the game — this lets all your cities develop more or less equally.

If you start a game in, say, 3650 B.C., and impulsively found a new city 2,000 years later, it will be much harder to get that new city up to par. And since you nation's scientific and educational

rating is based on the average data of all cities, one backward provincial outpost can drag your entire culture back to the Iron Age while your rivals are busy inventing artillery.

With expansion comes both commerce and conflict, and it is in the latter area that *Destiny* falls short of its own best intentions. Determined to go

Civilization one better, the designers have included a detailed tactical combat module as well as an optional 3D view that lets you follow your forces across the rolling terrain and the high seas.

In theory, this should add a whole new dimension to things — the idea being that it's really dramatic to follow your scouts through a forest and suddenly see another culture's city spread out before you. And it's a feature no other game in this genre has offered.

Well, okay; the first two or three times this happens, it does add a nice diversion. But it's easy to get distracted in the 3D mode and neglect to keep track of the big, strategic picture. And to be blunt about it, the graphics in the 3D mode really suck: terrain is spotty and boring, the animated armies are little more than crude stick-figures that don't even stride realistically, but appear to be gliding along on roller skates. Ditto the fleets.

As for the battle-fighting module, it adds *nothing* to the game, rather it forms



A thriving mid-game COH; why doesn't the rest of the game look this good?

a huge club-footed appendage that makes *Destiny* hobble when it should soar. The battlefields are too small, the armies and tanks are too big, it's all-but-impossible to tell friend from foe, and even on the slowest speed, combat develops so quickly that it amounts to little more than a lot of annoying arcade sequences.

Most players, I suspect, will experiment with the battles a few times, then just switch them off in favor of the wide-scale top-down strategic view, moving their forces into contact with the enemy and letting the computer adjudicate the results.

If you play *Destiny* strictly as a strategic-level, resource-management simulation, it has great merit; in that regard, I found it every bit as fascinating and addictive as *Civilization*, and damned hard to win. But by trying to make it a tactical wargame as well, the designers have shot themselves in the foot.

With that caveat, however, I recommend the game. Its virtues outweigh its flaws, but those flaws are not minor.

— William R. Trotter



The all-important Discovery Screen. Be guided here by the number of New Ideas, not the multitude of possible points you can allocate.

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Strategic level play has great detail and epic sweep.

75%

LOWS: Tactical combat and 3-D modes just don't work; Discovery system is poorly explained.

BOTTOM LINE: An admirable contender, but it won't replace *Civilization* in the hearts of many gamers.

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NBA Full Court Press



Category: Sports

Developer: Beam Software

Publisher: Microsoft Corporation, One Microsoft Way, Redmond, WA 98052-6399 (206) 637-9308

Required	We Recommend
486/66MHz; Windows 95; 8MB RAM; Double-speed CD-ROM drive; SVGA	Pentium 75 or higher; 16MB RAM; Quad-speed CD-ROM drive

Bill Gates meets Dennis Rodman in Microsoft's big-money NBA license. This game reminds you more of the former than the latter.

Microsoft's in-at-the-deep-end entry into the PC games market has yielded both good and not-so-good so far, and judging by this latest addition to their line-up, they still have some way to go before the company's reputation in the games arena matches up to its flashy marketing campaigns. *NBA Full Court Press* boasts the official league license, all the player names (except Jordan and Shaq, natch), logos, courts, and the obligatory rappy soundtrack you'd expect from a game with the ever-lucrative NBA tag. Problem is, somebody forgot to supply the attitude.

This is a formulaic simulation, boasting little of the flash gimmickry exuded by the likes of EA Sports' *NBA Live* series, which in itself is no bad thing — although

so many basketball games have that in-your-face presentation we've come to expect it, so it's a little disappointing when we don't get it. What we do get here is a relatively original presentation: a fixed isometric viewpoint with sprite-based characters. The upside of this approach, particularly at high resolution, is that you get to see almost all of the of the court almost all of the time so you're rarely passing the ball into dark territory and can get a good sense for the tactical situation across the whole court. The downside is that it really doesn't look that impressive. The lack of a moving camera and in particular the look of the players themselves is underwhelming. When a player goes through a set-piece animation, like a reverse slam-dunk or lay-up, they look like basketball players, but the rest of the time they're just sprites — and not particularly well-drawn ones at that.

Gameplay uses the traditional two buttons to pass, and shoot, and block, and steal, with a turbo control thrown in for extra bursts of speed (can't say it helped me much, though). On offense, you have to hold a button down to pass or shoot, since tapping it produces a fake of either move — a nice idea, but again, in the games I played I was rarely able to use it to my advantage. There are pre-defined plays, too, a hundred of them, if you're serious enough to research and use them. Personally, I prefer my video basketball to have that think-on-your-feet arcade



Orlando's Dennis Scott goes for the two points. Shooting, even from this distance, is somewhat dodgy.

"twitch" feel, and *NBA Full Court Press* doesn't cut it in this regard. Perhaps the game's best feature is the play-by-play commentary called by Kevin Calabro, the colorful voice of the Seattle Sonics. His fun comments liven proceedings up considerably, but turn it off and you realize just how much the game relies on it to keep you interested.

Practice, single game, playoff, and season modes round out the usual play options, and there's modem and LAN support for up to four players that should add some longevity, but ultimately *NBA Full Court Press*'s sterile action, bland graphics and lack of any real sense of fun keep this title out of serious contention. This is a competent, workable game from start to finish, but gamers used to playing basketball on their computer have come to expect something that packs a hell of a bigger punch than this. If you're seriously jonesing for some NBA action as the new season gets underway, you could do worse than take a look, but it's difficult to justify a recommendation for this with EA Sports' '97 edition of *NBA Live* just around the corner.

— Gary Whitta



There are no visible referees, so at tip-off time, the ball is suspended magically in the air before being dropped into play.

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Slick presentation; great commentary; what you'd expect from an NBA license.

60%

LOWS: Bland graphics; unsatisfying feel; doesn't pack the kind of attitude an NBA license suggests.

BOTTOM LINE: There have been better basketball games; there's better to come. Why buy this?

Mode

Category: Adventure

Developer: Animatics

Publisher: Corel, The Corel Building, 1600 Carling Ave., Ottawa, Ontario Canada K1Z 8R7 (800) 772-6735

Required

Double-speed CD-ROM drive; 486/66; 8MB RAM; 5MB hard-drive space; Mouse; DOS 5.0 or later

We Recommend

Pentium; 16MB RAM; Supported sound card

.....

performance art."

It's a phrase that sends chills up my spine. I went to an arts college in Greenwich Village in the 1980s. It was a great collective spawning ground for more types of self-indulgent, pseudo-intellectual, pretentious, irritating yahoos passing themselves off as "artists" than one should ever have to experience in a lifetime.

When someone created something that wasn't funny enough to be stand-up comedy or structured enough to be drama or fun enough to be a good striptease, they called it "performance art." The half-caring, half-sneering, and half-conceived performances of these so-called artists was brought back in horrifying detail when I booted up *Mode*, one of the early "entertainment" offerings from Corel.



■ This reporter introduces you to the world of *Mode* when she asks you to become her mole.

.....

Even the tragically hip would gag on this droning new-age adventure that tries to address the emotional side of interactive entertainment.

.....

Corel may be publisher of some of the best productivity applications around, but whoever is overseeing their game line needs to be taken outside and slapped silly.

Mode comes on four CDs crammed full of video, and we all know that more video means better gaming, right? From the opening sequences to the final credits, *Mode* is filled with the flashy, mod, hip, fast, jump-cut video that's our cue to think, "Ah, this is art."

Upon entering the game world, you find yourself in the middle of a party given by performance artist Vito Brevi. The guests are the sort of "beautiful people" who vomit between dinner courses and get their inspiration from Peruvian marching powder. The environment is rendered in flat, still photos, which you "navigate" using arrows. These party photos are positively boring, with little rhyme or reason except on occasion, when you click on some and watch a video sequence. But — get this — you usually don't get the "whole person;" their bodies are still photos while only their heads are video. It's like a high-tech "Clutch Cargo."

These people talk to you, and you respond using a "mood bar" that allows for negative, neutral, or positive responses. How you respond is what leads you to other clips and what drives the "game." Of course, in any given situation the proper response is so obvious that this weak stab at "interactive content" is pointless.

There's supposed to be some sort of plot in this muddle, having to do with a dome that you wear on your head. Everyone tells you that you need to be wearing a dome to be at the party, but no one at the party is wearing them. Guess that prop would have cost too much. Oh, there's also something having to do with a drug investigation by you and a male model who,



■ Only this guy's head is video: the rest is a still photo. And the two don't always line up.

we're supposed to believe, is an undercover cop.

That's it. That's all she wrote. You go through four disks of pointless conversations with utterly unappealing people, looking for some thread of an interesting story, and none is to be found. This is the kind of "game" thought up by ponytailed men who dress all in black and talk about the "art of the medium." I cannot think of a single person who would find this entertaining.

Enough is enough. The big red "10" printed in the little box at the bottom of this page is not a joke, nor is it given lightly. This is a badly shot, badly acted, badly edited movie shoved onto CD-ROM. No one should shell out \$40 for something just because a company that was too bored or disinterested to create a real game hides its lack of interest behind the notion that it's cool, it's hot, it's new, it's different, it's in. This is garbage, and as long it keeps coming it our way, we're going to keep sending it back.

— T. Liam McDonald

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Hitting the escape button gets you out of the game very quickly.

LOWS: It exists. It takes up four CDs that would have been better used for John Tesh music.

BOTTOM LINE: The nadir of non-interactive video junk.

10%



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Baku Baku



Category: Puzzle

Developer: Sega of Japan

Publisher: Sega Entertainment, P.O. Box 8097, Redwood City, CA 94063 (510) 371-3131

Required

Windows 95;
Double-speed
CD-ROM drive;
486/66; 8MB RAM;
SVGA

We Recommend

Quad-speed
CD-ROM drive;
Pentium; 16MB
RAM; Supported
sound card;
Gamepad or
joystick

With loads of cartoon silliness and addictive Tetris-style action, Baku Baku is one of the best two-player puzzle games around.

With gameplay reminiscent of the classic *Tetris* and loads of weird and wonderful animations, Sega's oddly titled *Baku Baku* hails as one of the most addictive and successful puzzle titles on Sega's Saturn home console system. And while console games tend to suffer a bit from translation to the PC, *Baku Baku* is one of those few games that can overcome the difficulties of changing platforms and comes out swinging in rare form on the PC. *Baku Baku* has been faithfully transferred and, a few changes aside, remains one of the best two-player puzzle games available on any platform.

The game is set in a kingdom "once

upon a time," where a spoiled Princess has collected too many pets for her zoo. A contest is held to find a Royal Zookeeper to tend the animals, and that's where you come in. You compete against a whole host of interesting challengers, who're supposedly the royal staff but look more like weird Japanese characters (probably because they are).

Loosely translated from Japanese, "baku baku" means "munch munch." It's what Japanese parents tell their children at the dinner table: "Eat up, munch munch." And munching is exactly what happens. Much like *Tetris*, the playing field is divided into two halves, one for each player (or computer). Squares drop down in pairs, which can be rotated and placed where needed. The panels consist of either animals or food, each animal having its corresponding food. The panda eats bamboo, the dog eats the bone, etc. When the correct food is placed next to its animal, the food is eaten. This is perhaps the most fun part of the game: the animal's head leaps out of the tile in animated 3D and eats away at the food!

It's not just mindless munching, though. A good bit of strategy comes



Stack up your blocks and, with a little luck, you'll send them all crashing onto your opponent's pile.

into play, and it's this element that puts *Baku Baku* above other such puzzle games. Clearing three food blocks of any one kind will send three random blocks crashing onto your opponent's side. The more blocks you clear and the more types of food cleared, the more fall on the other side. With a little planning, and a lot of luck, you can set off huge chain reactions that will send mountains of food and animals crashing onto your opponent's pile. The two-player mode is fantastic, and it also supports Local Area Network and modem play.

Baku Baku's only fault is in the conversion itself. Like Sega's other Saturn port, *Bug!*, *Baku Baku* suffers from being optimized for a 320x200 viewing. It can be enlarged to fill up the whole screen, but expect smudgy graphics and a minor performance hit when running at full size.

But those complaints are minor considering the cheerful presentation and addictive nature of the game. It's so cheerful, in fact, it's sometimes hard to tell if this game wasn't designed specifically for children. In the end, *Baku Baku* may be too saccharine-sweet for some, but for those gamers who enjoy a dash of whimsy with their puzzles, this game delivers.

— Adam Douglas



As you attempt to satisfy the odd menagerie of animals in the Royal Zoo, you'll find that *Baku Baku* has some of the cutest (and weirdest) characters around.

PC GAMER

FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Nicely rendered animals; great two-player mode; extra strategy makes it stand out.

LOWS: May be too "cute" for some; PC conversion loses a little.

BOTTOM LINE: Despite its full-screen failings, *Baku Baku* is a puzzle game not to be missed.

83%



Z
Strategy Game
DOS 496/66, 8mb, M



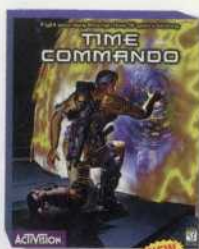
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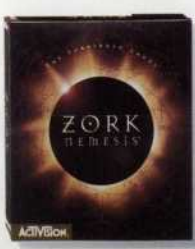
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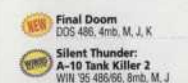
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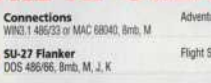
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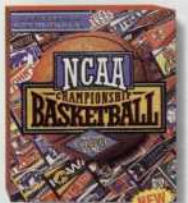
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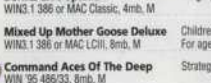
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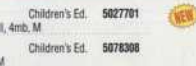
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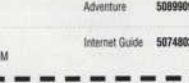
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Toonstruck

Category: Adventure

Developer: Burst

Publisher: Virgin Interactive Entertainment, 18061 Fitch Ave., Irvine, CA 92714 (800) 874-4607

Required

486DX; Double-speed CD-ROM drive; 8MB RAM

We Recommend

Pentium 100, Quad-speed CD-ROM drive; 16MB RAM

Once one of the strongest and most prolific genres on the PC, graphic adventures — quality ones at least — have been in short supply lately. But Virgin has shaken things up with what is surely one of the most lavish and expensive productions the genre has ever seen. A reported \$6 million was spent on *Toonstruck's* development, and it shows — to borrow a movie expression (which seems apt, given the game's obvious cinematic inspirations and aspirations), all the money is right up there on screen. It's just a shame the creative talent behind the game didn't quite match up to the substantial resources poured into it.

Drawing on a rich vein of cartoon history and tradition, but most specifically on *Who Framed Roger Rabbit's* self-referential take on the genre, *Toonstruck* has Christopher Lloyd (who had a big part in *Roger Rabbit* — coincidence?) hamming it up as struggling cartoonist Drew Blanc. Blanc draws cutesy bunnies for his sour-faced studio boss, while dreaming of "making it" with his own outlandish creation, a wisecracking purple blob called Flux



This is BB Wolf, who has the "hilarious" character trait of using the wrong words.

Expensive and epic, Virgin's *Roger Rabbit* wannabe has truckloads of content, but not a whole lot in the way of originality.



Drew and Flux meet the colorful inhabitants of the barnyard, who will later be transformed into S&M bondage freaks by the evil Count Nefarious' Malevolator device.

Wildly. Everything's relatively normal until, for no particular reason, Blanc is sucked through his TV screen and into a cartoon world populated by every animated cliché and stereotype imaginable. It's a predictable spin on a story you've heard countless times before — the evil Count Nefarious (voiced by Tim Curry) is using a secret weapon to transform the lovable inhabitants of Cootopia into malevolent mirror images of themselves, and it's up to Blanc (aided by his ever-loyal cartoon pal, Flux) to set things right.

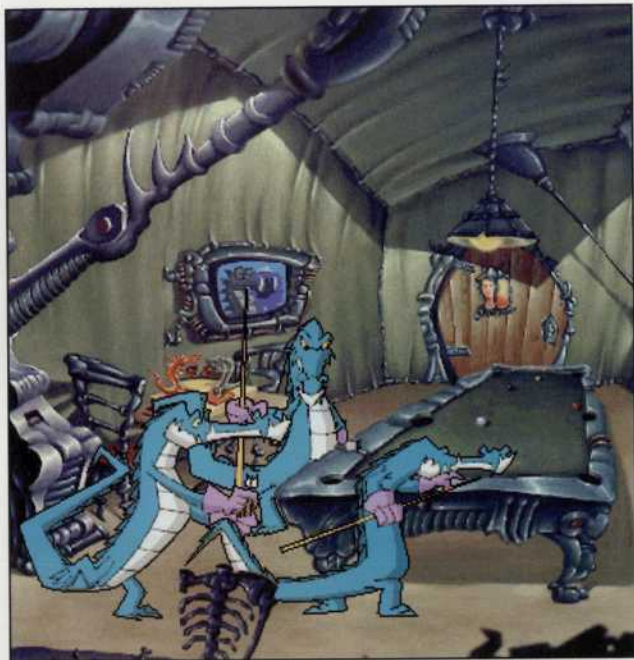
The premise (such as it is) is set out in an elaborate FMV sequence before placing you, as Drew, in a traditional point-and-click graphic adventure world. The story is in two acts, the first requiring Drew to collect eleven items needed to power a malevolence-correcting "Cutlifter" ray gun. This is the standard object-collecting-and-trading drill — a character has something you need, but won't give it up until you complete a task for him, and so on. Act II is cleverer and more fiendish, with less character interaction but more focus on cryptic puzzles. Sub-



Drew needs to figure out what critical component is missing from this elephant-powered transit system in order to make it across the water to the land of Zandydu, where many more puzzles await.

games are sprinkled along the way, including a mini fighting game, some brain-twisting logic problems, and (argh!) a sliding-tile puzzle.

For the most part, the puzzles are clever and intuitive (coat a piece of carrion with poison to get rid of a hungry but annoying vulture, for example), but occasionally the story says bye-bye to



■ Drew will have to get past these pool-playing gator guards if he is to confront Count Nefarious and his feline fortune-teller sidekick. This cut-scene gives clues as to what the player needs to do...



■ Look, it's a butler who's shaped like a foot. So he's a footman. Geddit? Huh? GEDDIT?

logic. There's plenty of stuff to collect (and a bottomless bag to put it all in), but you're often left wondering why you'd want or need, say, two broken piano keys or a large piece of uncooked dough. When you finally figure it out, the solution could hardly be said to fit within the realms of common sense. The character dialog does its best to nudge you in the right direction and give subtle clues, but a lot of the time you're left alone to decipher the game's twisted sense of logic.

Much of the prerelease furor surrounding *Toonstruck* has to do with the game's twisted sense of humor and

unbridled, zany creativity — but unfortunately, it doesn't have a whole lot of either. The developers are obviously big cartoon fans, but faced with the challenge of producing one of their own, they resorted to all the tired cartoon clichés we've seen a thousand times before. Ten ton weights fall on characters and squish them flat, cats and dogs play "Itchy & Scratchy"-style pranks on one another, the evil baddie has a trio of incompetent henchmen, portable holes roll up and fit in your pocket, etc etc. There are hundreds of ideas in this game, sure — but most of them were somebody else's.

As for humor, I played *Toonstruck* right through to the end, and it made me smile a few times, giggle a couple of times, but never really laugh. The game tries far too hard to be funny; it's like a pushy comedian constantly nudging you after every joke and saying "Geddit, geddit?" I got it — it just wasn't that funny. Much is made, for example, of the footman who serves the king of Cutopia. He's a big foot with arms and legs. In just one example of painfully padded dialog, the characters squeeze a series of tired puns out of this hackneyed idea.

Flux Wildly works as an added game element (he can perform tasks Drew can't), but he doesn't bring much to the comedy. He's supposed to be a mischievous wisecracker, but most of his dialog is as cheesy and predictable as the rest of it. The "twisted" theme you've heard so much about manifests



■ This camp "Carecrow" wants a snazzy new outfit, and you'll have to provide it if you want to get that cloak you'll need later in the game.

itself in a couple of scenes involving a cow dressed in bondage and the idea that even the sweetest inhabitants of Cutopia, like the infuriatingly sugary Fluffy Fluffy Bun Bun, are evil and devious underneath.

It's difficult to criticize a game which has obviously had so much care and attention lavished on it, but it's equally frustrating when a promising idea is flattened by mediocre execution. *Toonstruck* is unbelievably slick and polished, with some of the classiest graphics you've ever seen and a sumptuous, rich soundtrack (although this is another steal — the idea of using well-known classical themes and 1950s-style jingles has already been done by "Ren & Stimpy"). The FMV cutscenes and cel animation are impressive and blend seamlessly with the action, and Christopher Lloyd does a passable job. But at the core of it all there's something missing, and that's a true creative spark, the touch of genius that makes things like *Roger Rabbit*, "The Simpsons," and "Animaniacs" stand out from the crowd. It desperately wants to be zany, off-the-wall, and inventive, but *Toonstruck* plays out more like one of those cheap, mass-produced and instantly forgettable Saturday morning cartoons. The devotion, ambition and resources to make this work were there; unfortunately, the raw creative talent was not.

— Gary Whitta

PC GAMER	FINAL VERDICT
HIGHS: Great presentation wrapped around a solid, playable adventure.	70%
LOWS: Tiresome interaction, predictable humor, and neverending clichés grind down the player's will to live.	
BOTTOM LINE: Cartoon freaks will have some fun, but for everyone else, <i>Toonstruck</i> simply tries way too hard to amuse.	

Screamer 2



Category: Arcade Racing

Developer: Milestone

Publisher: Virgin Interactive, 18601 Fitch Avenue, Irvine, CA 92714 (714) 833-8710

Required

Double-speed CD-ROM drive; 486DX2/66; 8MB RAM; DOS 6.2 or higher; Mouse

We Recommend

Quad-speed CD-ROM drive; Pentium; 16MB RAM; Hi-color Super VGA

.....

This time last year, you couldn't shake a stick-shift without slamming into a glut of arcade racing titles such as *Need For Speed*, *Manic Karts*, *Whiplash*, *Al Unser Jr. Racing*, and *Screamer*, as countless publishers tried to resurrect the look and feel of arcade classics for a new generation of PC drivers. Yet of all those titles, Virgin's appropriately titled *Screamer*

delivered the most bang for the buck, with tons of high-octane action, multi-player thrills and chills, and nicely rendered graphics. Now, as we toast goodbye to the past year and ring in the new, Virgin is back with the sequel — *Screamer 2* — an amazing accomplishment in terms of graphics and gameplay that puts most of that console-based racing stuff to shame.

Combining the graphic splendor and raw speed of Sony's *Ridge Racer* with the off-road racing style of *Sega*

Virgin's stunning sequel to *Screamer* gives lead-foot consoles racers a run for their money.

Rally, *Screamer 2* is a real treat. Where the first game boasted nicely rendered Super VGA graphics, *Screamer 2* ups the ante in graphic delights with the ability to run in a mode that displays 65,000 colors simultaneously, offering superb color depth. Though you may have to fiddle with the setup program to select the right graphics mode for your video card, the results are definitely worth it, and after witnessing the game in motion, 256-color VGA seems positively drab.

Once you've got the graphics up and running, prepare to be dazzled. Four visually intense courses are included — England, Colombia, Egypt, and California — with beautiful touches everywhere; from a flock of birds taking off as your car rounds a bend in a quaint European village, to bowling over crates and barrels while rocketing through a lavishly-rendered Cairo marketplace. Even the cars themselves are host to a collection of graphic effects — shadows look realistic, the tires spew mud, and the sky reflects smoothly on the windows.

Fortunately, *Screamer 2* is not just mere eye candy. Borrowing heavily from the gameplay of *Sega Rally*, to win you'll need to master "Power Slides," a technique practiced by pro racers as you round the corners on this backroad selection of courses. To power slide, brake sharply while turning into a curve, and then whack the gas pedal to recover from the resulting skid. This takes a good bit of experimentation, but works beautifully once you've got it down and can pull it off on a regular basis. You'll need this

particular skill when competing against the relentless computer challengers (they drive exceptionally well, even on the easy level), and you may get left in the dust if you make a mistake in your steering.

Of course, if you're sick of continually getting your ass kicked by the computer, you have ample opportunity to practice by using the "Time Attack" or "Free Run" modes that eliminate direct competition as you race solo against the



We're in Egypt! How can you tell? Why, by the animated polygon camels, of course.

clock. And you always have the chance to beat up on an equally pathetic friend, using the built-in multi-player support for a modem or local area network.

Screamer 2 includes four racing teams with four cars each. Unfortunately, these cars are identical across teams, and a little more variety in vehicle types would have been appreciated. Gearheads will get to tinker with these default vehicles by using the "Garage" screen where you can modify handling, tire pressure, and other customizations, but a wider range of pre-built cars should've been provided.

Of course, to bask in the graphical splendor and crisp gameplay of *Screamer 2*, you'll need a pumped-up Pentium system. Even my P200 coughed up blood (a technical term, I assure you) when it tried running in SVGA hi-color. Unless you work for Intel and have some next-generation processor we haven't heard of yet, *Screamer 2* is best played in high-color low-res or low-color high-res. Got that?

All in all, *Screamer 2* is a total blast, and dishes out a PC entree of hi-octane console-style racing action. If you're tired of the intense realism of *Indycar* or *NASCAR*, give this one a try — it delivers more arcade racing thrills than you could ever hope.

— Colin Williamson



Spectacular graphics and fast action make *Screamer 2* a visual treat. Too bad you'll be so busy racing at 100mph that you can't take in the lush locales.

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Astonishing graphics; great arcade driving "feel" puts *Ridge Racer* to shame.

LOWS: Needs more tracks and more cars.

BOTTOM LINE: Pull this out when your Playstation-owning friends come over for tea, and be sure to wipe up the drool afterwards.

88%

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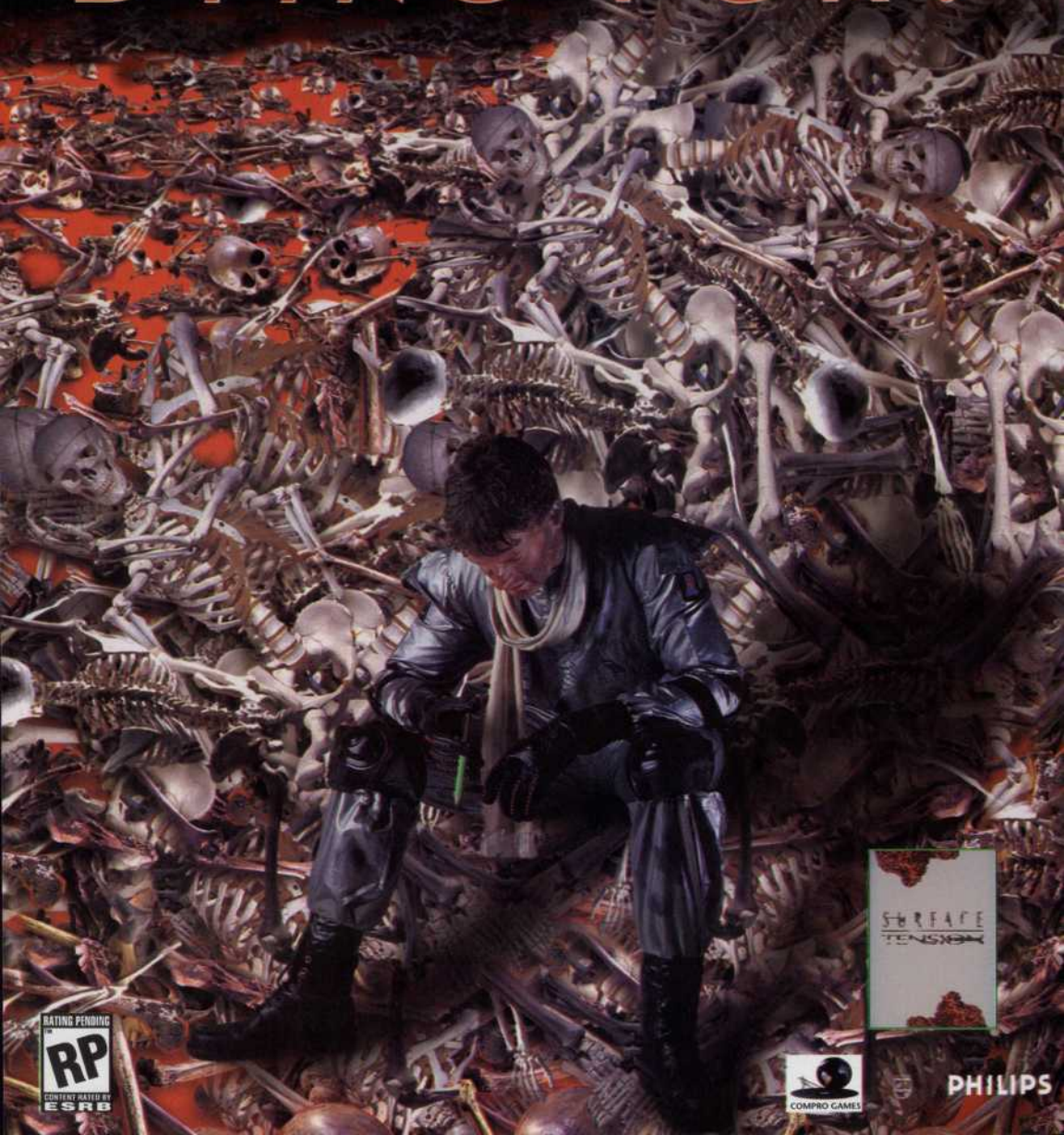
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THE POPULATION IS
DYING FOR?



RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB



PHILIPS

Bug!

Category: Arcade

Developer: Realtime Associates

Publisher: Sega Entertainment, P.O. Box 8097, Redwood City, CA 94063 (510) 371-3131

Required

Double-speed CD-ROM drive; 486/100; 8MB RAM; Windows 3.1 or higher; SVGA

We Recommend

Quad-speed CD-ROM drive; Pentium; Supported sound card; Gamepad or joystick

With a backlog of excellent arcade titles at its disposal, Sega Entertainment — the new publishing branch of the console giant Sega — has begun to branch out into PC territory with new versions of Saturn games. Recent successes include translations of the arcade sensations *Virtua Fighter PC* and *Virtua Squad* (reviewed on page 226), but this latest release is a far cry from those enjoyable games. While *Virtua Fighter* and *Virtua Squad* are hits due to seamless conversions that keep all the original gameplay elements intact, the problem with *Bug!* is that the original game wasn't worth playing on the Saturn, and it's hardly worth playing now.

You're a bug (who'd have guessed?) and all of your insectoid pals have been bug-napped by the evil spider Queen Cadavera. Being the stalwart bug you are, you set out on a quest to rescue your friends and put a stop to all the evil. You travel along a predetermined path, avoiding spikes and jumping on



After you've jumped up and down on a few bugs, you'll have had more than enough of this lame action.

Another console title takes a swing at becoming a PC classic, but *Bug!* is squashed by dull, uninspired gameplay.

other bugs. Along the way, you collect gems, and occasionally get to play a bonus round. It's a fairly standard premise for a fairly standard game. In fact, it pretty much follows the basic platform blueprint to the letter.

To its credit, *Bug!* is one of the first platform games to attempt to move beyond just two dimensions. Instead of the typical left-to-right side-scrolling action you'd find in *Earthworm Jim* or *Rayman*, in *Bug!* you're treated to the illusion of depth as you stroll to the back of the screen and climb vertical paths, even feeling the tug of gravity as you walk along the top the screen upside down. But despite this unique concept, *Bug!* is still the same incredibly dull, uninspired and confusing game it was on the Sega Saturn.

While the multiple axis would seem a great way to add diversity to the standard side-scroller format, the real downfall is the very rigid and linear design. Upon entering a level, you'll trundle along a fixed path bashing evil bugs, collecting crystals and exploring every corner of this predetermined maze with few decision points (usually left or right, up or down) sprinkled throughout to break the monotony. The game itself is incredibly dry and slow, with you doing little more than jumping up and down on other bugs. After you've walked back and forth on those tracks a few times, you'll wonder what the point is. And even though there are a number of different levels to work your way through, they all amount to the same thing. Add to this the already appalling amount of background draw-in, and you've got an infuriating gaming experience, to say the least.

Bug! isn't all pain and frustration, though. The control is decent enough when using a joystick or stick, and those bugs are kinda cute (when you can actually see them). It's really too bad Sega has chosen *Bug!* as one of its



While the cuteness factor is played up to good effect in *Bug!*, the rigid design of the levels and lackluster gameplay drag it to a screeching halt.



In the optional video modes, *Bug!* can support 640x480 but the gameplay suffers with sluggish response.

flagship PC titles, as there are a lot of quality titles for the Saturn. If you're a fan of *Gex* or *Rayman*, you may enjoy *Bug!*'s arcade-style gameplay and irreverent sense of humor. Most gamers will merely find it annoying.

— Adam Douglas

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Cute characters; solid control.

LOWS: The game itself is incredibly dry and uninspired. Not Sega's best title to choose to port over to the PC.

BOTTOM LINE: Unless you're a die-hard platform freak, stay away from *Bug!*

44%

Deadly Tide



Category: Arcade

Developer: Rainbow Studios/TRG3

Publisher: Microsoft Corporation,
One Microsoft Way, Redmond,
WA 98052-6399 (206) 637-9308

Required

Double-speed
CD-ROM drive;
Pentium 75; 8MB
RAM; 25MB hard-
drive space; SVGA;
Mouse

We Recommend

16MB RAM;
Supported sound
card

enjoy rail shooters just like I enjoy the occasional Schwarzenegger flick: It's a welcome opportunity to sit back and take in linear action, minimal plot, and wonderfully grand explosions. Sure, there's not much intellectual stimulation involved, but it's great fun while it lasts. Such is the case with Microsoft's *Deadly Tide*, a title that looks and sounds phenomenal, but will probably be gathering dust after a few playing sessions.

Sometime in the near future, those damn pesky aliens have landed *again* (this time in the oceans) and are depleting the world's natural resources at an alarming rate. They're using their crafty little alien minds to produce large amounts of H₂O with plans to flood the Earth within a matter of years. Of course, you and your untested prototype submarine are all that stand between this alien menace and a watery apocalypse.

After an unnecessarily long-winded opening sequence, you're thrown into the heat of underwater battle, moving down hordes of alien scum who conveniently detonate after one hit (alien engineers have never quite grasped the con-



You'll blast aliens from the cockpit of your custom SGI-rendered Hydra sub and wheel through reel after reel of full-motion video footage.

Underwater exploration and full-motion video splendor is the name of the game in this mildly entertaining hydrophobe's nightmare.

cept of shields). During these scenes, the game plays like *Rebel Assault II* or *Chaos Control*; you don't control the flight path or direction of your craft as you move through the game, instead you simply move a targeting cursor to point and shoot at incoming aliens. When the computer is doing the flying, you can point-and-shoot acceptably with the mouse (don't even bother with a gamepad). But unlike most games of this type, a brief glimmer of real interaction can occur. On occasion, the game will swap into 360 degree rotation mode, giving you the ability to rotate through constant, streaming full-motion video. With critters flying and firing at you from all angles, you'll have to clue in to the stereo sound effects, and master the somewhat flaky control before you can start picking them off. To make matters more difficult, the change into this movement mode often goes undetected, and you may get a few chunks of plasma shot into your back before you realize that you've been able to spin around and counter-attack the whole time.

The generic "fly really fast through rendered full-motion-video" gameplay gets a break in the second stage, in which you clean out a destroyed, sunken hulk while you search for rare materials to aid the human resistance. There's a little bit of interaction when you get to choose which direction you move in — but it still feels like a stripped-down version of *Creature Shock*, and your decisions have little, if any, effect on the game.

Still, as unoriginally dull as the gameplay is, at least *Deadly Tide* is a real looker. Spanning four CDs, the rendering is top-notch and bestows a frightening feeling of claustrophobia. Slick-looking air bubbles are everywhere, along with some of the most impressive explosions and particle effects ever seen on a PC screen. And though the video can get a bit on the pixelicious side, it never stops moving, delivering a nice movie-style feel. Surprisingly, the bad guys are well-integrated on top of the streaming video, avoiding the look of cut-and-pasted sprites. Also worth mentioning are the rich soundtrack and the immersive sound effects and voice-overs.

But as always, pretty graphics from Silicon Graphics workstations do not a good game make, and just like *Rebel Assault* and its countless clones, *Deadly Tide* bites as a real-life



"There's too many of them, Captain!" Be ready to nuke battalions of alien scum from the word go.



Sure, the graphics look great — this game is as pretty as they come.

game. Anyone with the caffeine-assisted reflexes required to beat it probably won't be going back to play it through again. After all, the entire game is full-motion video — you've seen most, if not all, of the game footage, so why bother?

Yeah, *Deadly Tide* looks great, but it isn't anything you haven't played before. It may be good for a quick, no-brainer action fix, but the whole experience is comparable to watching "SeaQuest" while swatting flies that land on your TV screen.

— Colin Williamson

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Damn fine graphics, a semi-playable 360-degree shooting mode, and plenty of cool rendered bubbles.

LOWS: Too bad it's still a cookie-cutter rail-shooter. Gets real boring, real fast.

BOTTOM LINE: The *Waterworld* of gaming.

60%

Wooden Ships and Iron Men

Category: Wargame

Developer: Stanley Associates

Publisher: Avalon Hill, 4517 Hartford Rd.,
Baltimore, MD 21214
(410) 254-9200

Required

Double-speed
CD-ROM drive;
486DX; 8MB RAM;
MS-DOS 5.0 or
higher; SVGA;
Mouse

We Recommend

Quad-speed
CD-ROM drive;
Pentium; 16 MB
RAM; Supported
sound card

There hasn't been a PC game devoted to sail-powered naval combat since Broderbund's 1987 classic *The Ancient Art of War at Sea*. As the technology improved, it was primarily used to showcase jet aircraft, with an occasional nod to armored vehicles and submarines. But the romance and pageantry of the Age of Sail has never lost its widespread appeal (as the continued, and well-deserved, popularity of Patrick O'Brian's novels proves), and Avalon Hill's boardgame of *WSIM* still has a loyal following, even though it's grown pretty long in the tooth by now.

Skipping an 18th or early 19th-Century man-of-war was a complex task that required mastery of a lot of now-arcaic technology (All those sails! All that rigging!), but Stanley Associates' clean, tight design has made

The great Men-o-War sail again, and this game makes it easy, as well as fun, to take the helm.

it easy without fudging on the sense of period authenticity. All necessary functions are point-and-click, logically deployed in an "Orders Sidebar" on the right side of the screen. To increase or decrease sail, click on the masts; to check a target's range, click on the sextant; to change ammo load (solid shot for range, chain-shot for tearing up the enemy's rigging; grapeshot for the nasty close-in stuff), click on the port or starboard gun crews.

In this era of warfare, maneuver was everything: A ship's broadside could only hit a target within a 45-degree radius of the line drawn perpendicular to the hull, and a ship that gained "the weather gauge" — i.e., a ship positioned to windward of its opponent, with the wind at its back or quarter — could move faster, turn tighter, and maximize the amount of firepower it could bring to bear. Plotting a course is easy and intuitive in *WSIM*: Simply click on the spokes of the helm and a dotted line appears on the map, showing where your ship will move during each leg of the next turn. The more men you assign to the rigging, the more maneuverable your ship will be.

The animated vessels are rendered crisply, and the battles are enlivened by splintery explosions, progressively severe holes in the rigging, and lots of waterspouts. Boarding actions can turn defeat into victory, but only if you remember to take a reasonable percentage of your crew off the guns and form them into a proper boarding party.

Fifteen scenarios are included, from both the Napoleonic and Revolutionary periods, ranging from classic two-ship duels that are relatively simple to control, to the Battle of Trafalgar (with 23 ships engaged at once!), which presents quite a challenge. Best of all,



Every screen of *Wooden Ships and Iron Men* adds to the drama of this high-seas adventure with detailed backgrounds and characters providing just the right amount of Imperialistic pomp and devil-may-care arrogance.

there's an easy-to-use scenario creator, which lets you set up any kind of make-believe battle you fancy.

The Campaign game, in which you assume command of a U.S. Navy vessel during the War of 1812 and set out on an extended cruise, is perhaps the only weak element. You cannot navigate on a map of the Atlantic, or choose an enemy port off which to lurk — the computer simply narrates your voyage, by means of sequential log entries that quickly become repetitious, and randomly throws engagements your way. You can usually sail away if you're hugely out-gunned, but not always, which at least gives rise to an occasional heroic last-ditch stand.

In every other respect, though, *WSIM* is a colorful, lively game that is very friendly to novices (the manual is a beauty and contains an excellent essay on period tactics by veteran game-meister Joe Balkoski). If you find this period of naval warfare as blood-stirring as this reviewer, you'll have a grand of' time.

— William R. Trotter

PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

HIGHS: Snappy graphics; marvelously intuitive interface; a good scenario generator.

LOWS: The Campaign element is a bit thin, and those log entries grow tiresome rather quickly.

BOTTOM LINE: This game is easy to like if you have any interest in the subject matter.

80%



The difficulties of high-seas combat have been painstakingly detailed in *Wooden Ships and Iron Men*, where the smallest error can find you in Davy Jones' locker.

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Into the Third Dimension

The scoop on 3D accelerator cards

By BRAD CRAIG

So you're still not convinced that 3D accelerator cards are going to have any impact on PC gaming? If not, you're probably still using Windows 3.1 or — gasp — DOS 5. Whether we like it or not, gaming is the true driving force behind many new technologies, 3D acceleration included. And with the introduction of Microsoft's Direct X API — and the Direct3D standard — Windows 95 may really deliver on its promise to be the best gaming platform.

The problem with many earlier 3D solutions like Diamond Multimedia's Edge 3D and Creative Labs' original 3D Blaster was that they were just too proprietary. Sure, they had some unique features, (the Edge 3D had built-in hardware and even supported Sega Saturn control pads), but they never had the key support of the game development community. As good as the technology may be, if it doesn't have crucial developer support, the product will end up stillborn.

Today however, 3D accelerator cards and new 3D chip technologies are being announced almost daily, and we've just begun to see their migration onto new desktop machines from Compaq, NEC, and Toshiba. And, finally, thanks to the release of the Direct3D API, 3D accelerators are poised to become this year's hottest hardware commodity.

There's still one problem, though — the market is still largely undefined. Each and every chip or video board manufacturer is jockeying for position, and claims to be better than the

rest. Until the market becomes more stabilized and we begin to see a lot of games taking advantage of the new technologies, it's going to be a while before any clear victors emerge. However, games that currently take advantage of 3D acceleration look and play better than their disadvantaged counterparts. Games like the 3D accelerated version of *MechWarrior 2* must be seen to be believed. The future of gaming is here, and it's ready to explode.

This round-up includes five cards that are intended as a 2D and 3D integrated solution — they include both 3D hardware and standard Super VGA hardware. There are other technologies (see sidebar) that offer 3D acceleration only, but you'll still need a 2D card for basic graphics.

We tested all the cards on a generic computer with a 166MHz Pentium processor, 16MB of EDO DRAM, a Sound Blaster 16, and an 8X CD-ROM. We installed the cards under Windows 95 and used a benchmark program that's part of the DirectX 2 software developer's kit to test 3D performance. Since these cards' straight DOS performance will also be very important until all games support 3D acceleration, we played unaccelerated DOS versions of *Quake* and *Descent II*, using three different screen resolutions (320x200, 640x480, and 800x600) to see how fast the games ran. The higher the frame count, the better the video performance.

Terminator 3D

The Hercules Terminator 3D card uses the S3 VIRGE chipset and comes with either 2MB or



The Hercules Terminator 3D comes with a version of *Descent II* designed for its VIRGE chip.

4MB EDO DRAM (we tested the 4MB version). Screen resolutions you're likely to use (depending on your monitor) include 640x480, with 16-bit color depth; 800x600 with 24-bit color; and 1024x768 with 24-bit color. The card also supports additional 8-bit resolutions of 1152x864, 1280x1024, and a whopping 1600x1200. Be warned, though — you'll need a very large monitor (17" to 21") for the super-high resolutions. The maximum refresh rate is 120Hz.

Installation under Windows 95 was a breeze, thanks to the Terminator 3D's compliance with the Plug-And-Play specification. During our tests, the board was a powerhouse. Playing *Quake*, the card delivered 27.32fps at 320x200, 12fps at 640x480 and 8.74fps at 800x600. In *Descent II*, the frame rates were

32.8fps, 23.9fps and 15.1fps respectively.

Terminator 3D

COMPANY: Hercules, (510) 623-6030

PRICE: \$139 (\$119 for 2MB)

BOTTOM LINE: It's got performance, it's got style, and it's got the price to make it a winner.

What Does All This Mean?

3D cards won't mean a thing to you if you don't understand what they're supposed to do. So here's a quick crib sheet: memorize it and impress your friends. One thing to keep in mind: As a gamer, you'll want to be sure the 3D card you buy at least supports Microsoft's Direct3D. If it doesn't, you won't be able to take full advantage of the latest Windows 95 titles.

3D GRAPHIC: An object with three axes of reference: height, width, and depth.

ALPHA BLENDING: Alpha Blending is used to provide various degrees of transparency in objects. Each pixel displayed on the screen is 3 colors — red, blue and green. If the colors on the pixel vary in degrees of transparency, each degree is called an alpha value. The higher

the level of transparency, the lower the alpha value. For example, a glass filled with soda would have a higher alpha value than a glass filled with water. Alpha Blending is a technique used to combine objects on the screen. Adding transparent objects can make a game far more realistic.

ANTI-ALIASING: Smooths out jagged, stair-step edges on polygons.

BILINEAR AND TRILINEAR

TEXTURE FILTERING: Bilinear and trilinear filtering is a technique for rendering smoother, non-jagged images. For example, without filtering, the walls in *Descent II* can get pretty pixelicious close-up; filtering smoothes the pixels out for a more realistic look.

DEPTH CUEING: Used to add distance and perspective to the

tively. Under Direct3D, its 3D acceleration hardware scored a fill rate of 4.75 million pixels per second; a polygon rate of 52.72 thousand per second; and an intersection rate of .42 thousand per second. Not bad. The VIRGE-accelerated version of *Descent II* actually ran slower than the DOS version at 640x480, turning in 18.4fps, but it looked fabulous — much better than the DOS version — thanks to the card's built-in graphics effects.

The Terminator 3D supports trilinear filtering, video texture mapping, depth cueing, fogging, alpha blending, and Z-buffering. In addition to Direct 3D support, the Terminator 3D supports multiple APIs, including RenderWare, Open GL, and Reality Lab drivers for Windows 3.1, NT, and OS/2 Warp.

At press time, Hercules was bundling a full-screen MPEG player and an enhanced media player for Windows 95.

3D Expression + PC2TV

The ATI 3D Expression uses ATI's own 3D Rage II chipset and provides pretty good 2D and 3D acceleration for both Windows and DOS. It supports resolutions up to 1600x1200, but only with the refresh set to 60Hz. For traditional modes of 640x480 or 800x600, the card will support refresh rates up to a rock-solid 200Hz. The card is also equipped with a composite line-out and a S-Video out, making it easy to connect your computer to a VCR or perhaps that big-screen television in your living room (if you do, make sure the resolution on the card is not set any higher than 800x600, or you'll end up with distorted video). Hardware-accelerated features include bilinear texturing, alpha blending, and fog effects.

Under DOS, the 3D Expression managed to deliver 26fps in *Quake* at 320x200, 10.9fps at 640x480, and only 8.1fps at 800x600. In *Descent II*, the 3D Expression pumped out 33.2fps at 320x200, 24.2fps at 640x480 and 14.9fps at 800x600. Under Direct 3D, the ATI board brought in a fill rate of 5.73 million pixels/second; a polygon rate of 94.2 thousand/second; and an intersection rate of .95 thousand/second.

ATI also offers an additional TV tuner/video capture card that works in conjunction with the 3D Expression. The ATI-TV card plugs into a separate 16-bit ISA slot (not



3D Expression + PC2TV

COMPANY: ATI

PRICE: \$219 (ATI-TV card is \$129)

BOTTOM LINE: 3D Expression has some got some good features, and *MechWarrior 2* rocks!

PCI) and attaches to the 3D Expression using an internal connector. Features of the ATI-TV include closed captioning, scheduled viewing, customized close-ups, and channel previews. Still images can be saved as bitmaps, or video can be saved as Windows AVI files. The 3D Rage II chipset also supports full-screen, full-motion MPEG video playback.

The bundled software included with the 3D Expression is great: The special 3D Rage version of *MechWarrior 2* looks fantastic, as does Psynopsis' racing game, *WipeOut*. A copy of Vream's WIRL 3D Interactive VR Browser, and MGI's 3D Modeler are also included.

Intergraph Reactor

The Reactor uses the Rendition VIRGE chipset, and the major accelerated features include perspective correction, bilinear filtering, anti-aliasing, fogging, and 2D/3D acceleration. The Reactor has a maximum resolution

of 1280x1024 at 16-bit color depth. It can

Reactor 3D

COMPANY: Intergraph, (800) 692-8069

PRICE: \$199

BOTTOM LINE: Reactor 3D is a good card with some powerful features and a hard-to-beat price.

also support resolutions of 1024x768 with 16-bit color; 800x600 with 32-bit true color; and 640x480 with 32-bit true color. Refresh rates range from 60Hz to 85 Hz.

We tested the Reactor with 4MB of video DRAM and found it performed merely satisfactorily under DOS. In *Quake*, the card pushed 20.1fps at 320x200; 11.4fps at 640x480; and 7.3fps at 800x600. In *Descent II*, the Reactor managed 26.5fps at 640x480; and 16.2fps at 800x600. To be fair, the card is optimized to perform best at higher, SVGA resolutions, but the paltry 5.7fps it pushed out playing *Descent II* at standard 320x200 was a little hard to bear. Under Direct3D,

however, the Reactor did well enough, scoring 5.12 million pixels/second in the fill rate test; 1.2 thousand intersections per second; and a strikingly high 263.38 thousand polygons per second. Running the Rendition-accelerated version of *Descent II* (complete with 3D hardware effects that make it look as good as anything on those fancy videogame consoles), it cranked out an impressive 30.6 frames per second at 640x480 resolution.

The Reactor fully supports Windows 95 and Direct 3D. Windows NT drivers are also in development, but they were not available at press time. Intergraph is also considering developing Open GL and 3D Studio Max drivers, and are planning on early 1997 as their target release date. The Reactor includes a full version of *IndyCar II* and shareware or demo versions of *Quake*, *Helibender*, and *Monster Truck Madness*.

The Reactor fully supports Windows 95 and Direct 3D. Windows NT drivers are also in development, but they were not available at press time. Intergraph is also considering developing Open GL and 3D Studio Max drivers, and are planning on early 1997 as their target release date. The Reactor includes a full version of *IndyCar II* and shareware or demo versions of *Quake*, *Helibender*, and *Monster Truck Madness*.

Diamond Stealth 3D 2000 (4MB)

Like the Hercules Terminator card, the Stealth 3D 2000 uses the VIRGE chipset, so performance of both cards was pretty much identical.

The Stealth 3D 2000 has a wide variety of screen resolutions to choose from. You're

game environment. The closer you get to an object, the brighter and larger it should look. The object should diminish in size and brightness the farther away you get.

DITHERING: Simulates a 24-bit color setting by blending 16-bit images.

FOGGING: Just like the real thing. Not all cards can do fogging in hardware (the Matrox Mystique

can't, for instance), but similar results can be created through inventive shading and lighting techniques. Used generally for environment effects such as steam or smoke.

MIP-MAPPED IMAGING: Loads different texture-maps for the same 3D object, depending on how close you are to it. This ensures that the object always looks good from any distance.

PERSPECTIVE CORRECTION:

Perspective correction prevents the visible distortions you get when a 3D object is rotated and its textures appear to warp or stretch.

SHADING: Many games make use of 3D polygons. Unless you like looking at bare, wire-frame models, you'll want the polygons colored. Flat shading means each polygon is assigned a color, with

no gradients or texture mapping. It's quick, but unrealistic. Gouraud shading (where the polygon is assigned a color hue and gradient) is much more realistic, and can be used for more effective and believable environments.

TEXTURE MAPPING: The process whereby flat digital images are "mapped," or placed, onto 3D polygons to enhance realism.

most apt to choose 640x480 at 24-bit color depth; 800x600 at 24-bit color depth; or 1024x768 at 24-bit color depth, but if your monitor supports higher resolutions, you can also choose from 1152x864, 1280x1025 or 1600x1200, all with 256 colors.

DOS performance was very good. Playing *Quake* at 320x200, the Stealth 3D 2000 produced 27.4fps; at 640x480 it was 12.1fps; and at 800x600 it dropped down to 8.92fps. The Stealth 3D 2000 was also very fast during a game of *Descent II*. At 320x200 it spit out 34.9fps; at 640x480 it was 26.3fps; and at 800x600, a very respectable 14.5fps. The "accelerated" *Descent II* slowed to 19.6fps at



Stealth 3D 2000

COMPANY: Diamond Multimedia (800) 468-5846

PRICE: \$199.00

BOTTOM LINE: The Stealth 3D 2000 is a great card; it has earned a lot of respect from developers, as well as a lot of support.

640x480, but again, it looked terrific.

Some of the more powerful 3D accelerated features include texture mapping, perspective correction, bilinear filtering, alpha blending and fogging. The Stealth 3D 2000 also supports full-screen MPEG video playback. .AVI files also played smoothly, and there was no noticeable deterioration in frame rates when expanded to full screen playback.

Bundled software includes Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia, and VIRGE accelerated versions of *Descent II* and *Thunder Truck Rally*.

The Stealth 3D 2000 is fully compatible with Windows 95 and Win NT (version 3.5). Drivers are also included for DirectX, AutoCAD and Software MPEG. Windows NT 4.0 and Open GL drivers are planned for release in early 1997.

Matrox Mystique

The Mystique features Matrox's own proprietary, 64-bit graphics chip, and ships with either 2MB or 4MB of synchronous graphics RAM (SGRAM). Matrox claims the SGRAM architecture is faster than DRAM and costs less than VRAM (used primarily in high-end video boards). The MGA-1064SG chip integrates acceleration directly into its hardware design, to provide a robust 2D and 3D solution.

Matrox's card supports resolutions up to 1600x1200 (the color depth depends on whether the card has 2MB or 4MB of SGRAM onboard).

The Mystique features a fast 3D texture-mapping engine and supports perspective correction, gouraud shading, alpha blending, and z-buffering. Fogging is not supported.

Our *Quake* and *Descent II* tests were impressive. At 320x200, the Mystique pushed out 28.6fps at 320x200; 11.4fps at 640x480; and 8.8fps at 800x600. In *Descent II*, the frame rates were 36.5fps, 29.2fps and 16fps respectively. Overall, DOS performance was excellent. Direct3D performance was also top-notch; the Mystique scored a fill rate of 9.87 million pixels/second; and it cranked out 95.67 thousand polygons/second and 1.92

thousand intersections/second.

The Mystique can be upgraded with a series of daughter-cards that snap directly onto the board. At press time, pricing information was not available, but Matrox expects to have a hardware video decoder for MPEG and .AVI clips and a TV tuner card available in early 1997.

Matrox claims more than 60 games will support the Mystique directly, including titles from Interactive Magic, Psygnosis, Radical Entertainment, and Activision, but there's never any guarantee. Compatible titles already shipping or in the works include *Helibender*, *Monster Truck Madness*, and *Thunder Truck Rally*.

The Mystique comes with custom versions of *MechWarrior 2*, *Destruction Derby*, and *Scorched Planet*.



Mystique

COMPANY: Matrox, (800) 361-1408

PRICE: \$199 (2MB SGRAM)/\$279 (4MB SGRAM)

BOTTOM LINE: This card's got plenty of speed, and it comes with some great custom games.

The Final Word

Since all of the cards performed well, it can be difficult to choose which card to buy. The problem is compounded by the fact that many different card manufacturers use the same chipset. For instance, Sierra's new *Scream'n' 3D* and Creative Lab's new 3D Blaster PCI use the same chipset as Intargraph's Reactor — the Rendition VIRGE.

And all the cards we've seen have turned in respectable performance numbers; some are slightly faster than others, but they all bring a marked improvement in graphics quality without bogging down your CPU. So if you're ready to take the plunge and buy one of these babies, take a look at three factors: the board's built-in 3D features (bilinear filtering, fogging, etc.), the price (the street costs are bound to drop as the competition heats up), and, finally, the software bundle — it can make the difference between a good card and a great card.

PCG

Playing with Voodoo

Both Orchid and Diamond have alternate 3D acceleration solutions available, and both take advantage of the same technology — the 3Dfx Voodoo Graphics chip.

The Voodoo is a game developer's dream. Its robust features include alpha blending, fogging, perspective correction, mip-mapping, z-buffering, and bilinear filtering. Both cards include 4MB of EDO DRAM — 2MB for frame-buffer memory for resolutions and z-buffering, and 2MB for texture memory. The chip can also support screen resolutions of up to 800x600 with 16-bit color. And since 3Dfx provides an arcade version of the Voodoo chipset to arcade developers, you may be able to play arcade-to-PC ports much sooner, and they may look just like the real thing.

The catch? It's terrific for 3D acceleration, but doesn't have any 2D capability. This means you'll need a 2D card as well (of course, if you haven't been staring at a blank monitor screen when playing games or using windows, you've already got one of those).

The Orchid Righteous 3D and the Diamond Monster 3D cards attach to your current video card using a small, external cable. The 2D card data is passed to the 3D accelerator card, which is then connected to your monitor. Unfortunately, there is no way for you to view output from both cards at once — it's an either-or scenario. If a game has a combined 2D and 3D environment, the Voodoo won't be of any use.

If the Orchid Righteous 3D and the Diamond Monster 3D cards weren't so terrific, this wouldn't be a problem — we'd just ignore them. But both cards feature the very best in 3D acceleration, and games that take advantage of it (such as *HyperBlade* and *Tomb Raider*) look way too good to pass up.

Righteous 3D

COMPANY: Orchid, (800) 577-0977

PRICE: \$299

BOTTOM LINE: You get what you pay for. In this case, fantastic 3D graphics and acceleration.

Monster 3D

COMPANY: Diamond, (800) 468-5846

PRICE: \$299

BOTTOM LINE: It may cost more, and you'll still need a 2D card, but the Monster 3D is phenomenal.



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A Post Warsaw-Pact World

So, you thought NATO had lost all relevance with the end of the Cold War. That no one needed to hold the line against the great evil empire of the Warsaw Pact countries. That a new detente would reign supreme and all the peoples of

Europe would embrace Yankee-style democracy and live happily ever after, eating frozen yogurt and listening to Gianni records.

Silly boy. The Soviets kept the lid on those squabbles-with-borders that have posed as Eastern European countries since World War Two, and now that the Soviets are no more, what do we have? Ukrainians with nuclear weapons and dreams of a Greater Serbian Reich. Lovely.

Obviously, the major European powers are aware that there is still a threat to security, which is why they've pumped millions into the Eurofighter program: creation of an ultra-sophisticated front-line air superiority fighter for the 21st century. Sweden has been working to replace their front-line Viggen since the early 1980s, and the result is the surprisingly well-made, high-

performance JAS-39 Gripen (or 'Griffin'), a multi-role fighter set for export as well as to protect Sweden's vaunted neutrality. With a top speed of Mach 2, as well as advanced avionics, fly-by-wire controls, and a loadout comparable to that of the F-16, it may become a top military export to the struggling democracies of Europe.

Speaking of the F-16...there are still enough complete wings out there to guard just about any U.S. interest in force. The F-16 is the backbone of the U.S. and its many allies, and with so many in service, it will continue to be for some time to come. The Soviets (er,

program to run, and brings four new aircraft — the F-16, Su-35, JAS-39, and EF2000 — into the ATF game. Each aircraft features in a number of missions on both sides. There are new cockpits and plane art for each, as well as unique weapons load-out, performance envelopes, and avionics. The flight mod-



When ATF fans have finished all of that game's original missions, they can jump into *NATO Fighters*, complete with forty new scenarios.

T. Liam McDonald



Russians) haven't been growing moss, either. The Su-35 wasn't even a blip on the radar too long ago (the 1993 Jane's makes no mention of it), but it's hot. Based on the Su-27, this new fighter/ground attack monster is better in every respect than its predecessor: more powerful, better avionics, improved airframe, and so on. This is one sharp piece of hardware, and though it's no F-22, it's damned good nonetheless.

Electronic Arts and Jane's Combat Simulations have gathered this cream of European air fighters and added them into their already excellent action-sim ATF. *NATO Fighters* needs the original

There's still a place for NATO in this post-Warsaw Pact world, and Electronic Arts and Jane's have made a place for NATO's best fighters in an ATF add-on.

els are done in limited detail, with some handling and performance limits that attempt to give each a different feel.

Do not mistake these for more hard-core sims, however. ATF and its predecessor, *U.S. Navy Fighters*, are action-oriented simulation games, and while there is a flight model to each plane, it is not what a sim fanatic would call 'realistic.' If you want to fly a good Eurofighter sim, pick up *EF2000*; for the F-16, check out the admittedly ancient *Falcon 3.0*, or just hold on for *Falcon 4.0* or *F-16 Fighting Falcon*. You're not going to mistake any of NATO *Fighters*' additions for *Su-27*, *EF2000*, or *Falcon 3.0*, but the disk does offer new planes which fit nicely into the ATF game world, adding a fresh mix of weapons, cockpits, and performance characteristics to this already fulsome game. Also added for flight in non-campaign games are the B-1B, F-111F Aardvark, F-15E Strike Eagle, MiG-23 Flogger-B, MiG-29M, Su-25 Frogfoot, and the Tornado. None of these last sims are modeled in any level of detail, but it's nice to be able to take them for a spin.

The new planes are interesting, but wouldn't be worth the price of admission alone. What ATF fans who finished all the original missions will want is the complete set of forty new scenarios found in *NATO Fighters*. These missions complement a campaign set in the Baltics and deal with the fallout from



Jane's has done it again with *NATO Fighters*, a great add-on for ATF.

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Estonian independence. Campaign missions manage to put you in all four new planes for missions running the gamut of modern air combat. Information and briefing papers courtesy of Jane's help flesh out the politics behind all this action and offer a deep military and political context to the progression of events.

Since its initial release, *ATF* has undergone numerous bug and compatibility fixes, as well as more subtle tweaks to the game engine and aircraft and weapons performance. When you install *NATO*, *ATF* is updated automatically to incorporate enhancements to the Pro Mission creator, various flight envelopes, weapons usage and performance, enemy AI and aircraft performance, and more.

The new missions are what really make *NATO Fighters* a good deal, with the four new aircraft being an extra treat. If you've completed all the original missions, then it's a good bet to increase *ATF's* life on your hard drive. But if you're still going through the original campaigns and just looking for some different aircraft, it may not be enough to satisfy.



NATO Fighters offers new planes for you to fly, including the B-1B and F-15 Stike Eagle, but they're not modeled in great detail.

When in Doubt, Cheat

It's Strategy Guide time again, so this column wouldn't be complete without a few entries in the cheats-and-editors category. Look for them in the *GOODJUNK* directory on *The CD*.

So many of you are hacking your way through *Daggerfall*, I decided to cruise the Internet for some goodies that should make things easier. Here are a few:

Teleporter v.1.9: Teleport to anyplace you're visited before, as well as some you haven't. Get out of the void without using 'Recall.' [tele.zip]

Extra Quests from CompUSA: CompUSA buyers

got extra quests in their copies of the game, but you can add these to your version by unzipping this file into your *ARENA2* subdirectory. [addquest.zip]

DaggerForge: For editing characters stats, skills, gold, and reputation. [dforge1.zip]

For players of Sir-tech's *Jagged Alliance: Deadly Games*, there is the first version of the *Deadly Games Editor*, which allows you to give your mercs any weapons, items, or attributes. [dgedit.zip]

Finally, *CCEdit* helps editing values for units and structures in *Command & Conquer*. [ccedit.zip] **PCG**

Bug Patches

Battleground: Shiloh v.1.03 (TalonSoft): Fixes various bugs and play balance issues, as well as unit performance and behavior. *bgs_103.exe*

Battleground: Waterloo v.1.04 (TalonSoft): Fixes various bugs and play balance issues, as well as unit performance and behavior. *bgw_104.exe*

Civilization II v.2.42 (MicroProse): Heralds will now animate if you are using 32-bit video for windows. *civ242.zip*

Command & Conquer v.1.22 (Westwood Studios): Fixes the "Infinite Minigunner" bug (in which you can sell structures and retain the troops). Also contains a shortcut for Windows 95 users. *cc122p.exe*

Daggerfall (Bethesda Softworks): A mess of patches have been issued for this already, but here are the most current at press time. *Sound Drivers v.4.0* updates all sound drivers (*setup40.zip*). *Patch 1.03.179* fixes many, many bugs, including the Cyrix chip problem (*dag179.exe*).

Check the Internet (Bethesda's site is www.bethsoft.com) and online services frequently, since new fixes are being done quickly.

Harpoon Classic 1.58e for Windows (Alliance): Corrects all known errors in the program. *harp158e.zip*

NetMech DOS Beta Patch (Activision): This is mainly for anybody who needs pulse dialing during modem games or has problems with a non-standard IRQ port (like COM3 IR05) or other modem or null modem connection problems. Clicking on "no" when quitting from modem config screen now works properly. Command line parameters help with various dialing and setting options, the M and S hotkeys now work properly, the modem driver no longer locks up when the com port IRQ is wrong and no longer takes so long to abort if it can't reset the modem. *nmpat_b1.exe*

Jagged Alliance: Deadly Games v.1.12 (Sir-Tech): Fixes "No Turn Limit" problems, some single player campaign bugs, the final campaign mission, and other problems. A patch is also available to fix the "abnormal exit" bug. *dg112.zip*

Orion Conspiracy VESA Patch (Domark): For video incompatibility problems. *arivovesa.zip*

Panthers in the Shadows v.1.19 (HPS): Fixes a few small bugs and database errors. *ps-119.exe*

Shattered Steel v.1.03 (Interplay): General update and bug fix. *steel103.zip*

Tigers on the Prowl 2 v.2.03 (HPS): Fixes small bugs and allows use of older scenarios. *top-203.exe*

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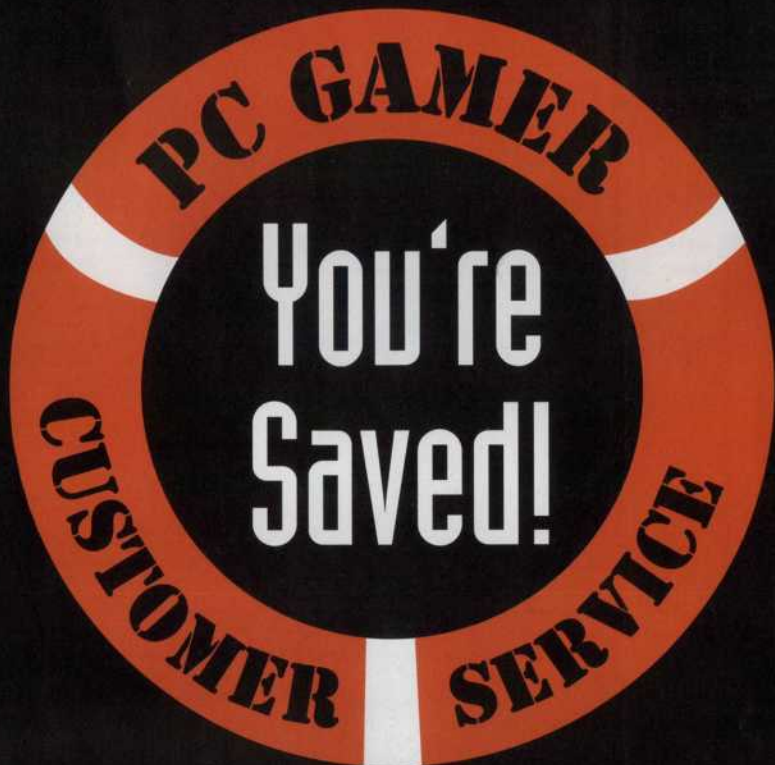
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From Number-Crunching to Nickelodeon

Math Heads

For an upbeat, bizarre romp through math for kids 10 to 14 years old, enter the distorted zone of *Math Heads*. Coming from Theatrix, the program per-

forms the makeover of a lifetime on fractions, percentages, Pre-Algebra, and other computational skills.

To begin the program, you choose a wild persona, selecting a disproportionately large head, a mod outfit, and a few other accessories and personality traits. Then use *Math Heads*' channel-surfing remote control to choose a tutorial, puzzle, or game. The tutorials are disguised as infomercials and Stupid Math Tricks. Consider the Five-a-Vision goggles, for example. To multiply by five, simply put on these glasses and you can multiply by ten instead—then, perform another easy calculation: divide by two. Presto! Five-a-Vision makes you a math genius. Other infomercials teach kids to multiply or divide by two twice to tackle the terrible fours, and to slide decimal points to the right or left when multiplying or dividing by powers of 10. Lots of interesting tricks, presented cleverly.



In Theatrix's *Math Heads*, contestants dance 'til they drop—literally—as they maneuver a shrinking platform over the answer scale.



When you order a pair of Five-A-Vision goggles from *Math Heads*' infomercial channel, you will watch difficult division problems transform into simple ones.

The program's math exercises combine computation with estimation. The games aren't as cut and dried

words they're saying. It's like watching a dubbed foreign film, and because the heads are so much bigger than the bodies, that effect is magnified. Kids may find this quirk funny, but I found it distracting.

Otherwise, the program features an original style, an engaging tutorial, and good exercises that combine creative thought with precision. *Math Heads* dis-

pels the myth that math is straight-arrow boring. It's a wild scribble across a calculated grid.

Heidi E. H. Aycock



as the usual drill-and-practice fare. In *Dance Till You Drop*, for example, your character dances on a platform that shrinks in relation to your correct and incorrect answers. You must solve problems quickly, before the platform disappears. Use tricks from the infomercials and mix in a few educated guesses for good measure. The answer scale over which you slide the platform is divided into parts, each division marked with a series of numbers. But most of the answers fall somewhere near the divisions, not directly on them. You have to figure out where 42 is in relation to the division marked 50, for example. It's tricky and requires more creative thought than typical math drills.

My only complaint about the game is that the characters' lip movements are completely wrong for the

www.anywhere.com

Roam the Internet for a while, and you'll see some pretty awful web-page design—from pages that seem to exist solely for the sake of slowing you down, to ugly, disorganized visual elements that suggest chaos. We've seen this before: Back when the Macintosh first offered a wide variety of fonts and an easy way to insert clip art, people who had never heard of white space or balance were sprinkling 15 different typefaces on a single memo. And the boss wondered why no one could remember how much money to pay for a cup of coffee in the employee lounge. Back then, many people called it MacTacky. Now we can call it the Internet Scrawl.

For a glimpse of some truly beautiful web pages, though, try inserting the name of an educational software company between WWW and .COM. Check out Living Books, for example. After downloading and installing a couple of plug-in programs for your browser, you can partake of some beautiful, animated pages. There are stories and mysteries as well as demos. And these pages look good and work well. They load a little slowly because of their focus on graphics, but they're worth the wait.

Other companies with good sites include Davidson (found at www.david.com), Maxis, and Theatrix. You can find technical support on these sites as well as adult perspectives on how to maximize the educational value of the software. On some sites, there are samples to download and places for you to upload your comments. In some cases, the sites are still gathering content, but over time they should be excellent resources. Each is visually attractive and effectively organized. Some provide special pages just for children.

Of course, these companies have an advantage over most web page authors:

As usual, the holiday season has brought a mountain of new educational titles to check out—here are a few of the best for kids interested in everything from math to movie-making.

interface design and graphic interest are two of the hallmarks of good educational software. These companies are the experts.

Write, Camera, Action (And Other Kid-Run Studios)

Movie-making seems to be one of the hottest new activities for cyberkids. Microsoft, Theatrix, Knowledge Adventure, and Big Top Productions have all released animation or movie software in the last year or so. Broderbund has also released one of these creativity packages, *Write, Camera, Action*. And while its focus is a little different, its execution wins the Oscar in this genre.

In other packages, the projects are more open-ended. Kids develop the stories from scratch, writing dialogue, choosing camera angles, selecting sound effects, and so on. In Theatrix's *Hollywood* and *Hollywood High*, for example, kids select characters to speak, and as they type lines and select actions, the characters react accordingly. In Microsoft's *3D Movie Maker*, children can record the script with their own dramatic interpretation on the lines.

They can also select different perspectives on the setting and varying speeds for the action.

In Broderbund's *Write, Camera, Action*, kids have very little control over the main plot, but lots of control over how the story plays, how it looks, and how the movie is released. In this program, kids are more like the directors than the writers. They hone the mood by choosing sets, line delivery, and props. They sell the film by writing news releases and designing posters. And they manage many other aspects of the production.

Write, Camera, Action has a specific lesson to teach, so it differs from other movie-making tools. It feels a little like an adventure game in which kids choose between several paths, but it uses the cause-and-effect relationship between the choice and the outcome to teach kids how language defines the world. When kids choose to have a cigar fall from a building instead of a handkerchief, they change the course of the plot. When they choose a mood for a



Ms. Frizzle and the kids take another field trip beyond their imagination to explore the prehistoric past in *The Magic School Bus Explores in the Age of Dinosaurs*.

character, the lines sound different. The words they select shape the story even though most of the script is already written. As they publicize their movies, the critics write better reviews. Every writing task affects the environment.

And just in case your kids don't want to stick with Broderbund's story, the program includes a script-writing tool for creating completely new projects. They'll need to find other ways to film the action, but by the time they finish with *Write, Camera, Action*, they'll be ready to borrow your video camera.

If Your Kids Like...

If your kids like Nickelodeon cartoons, check out

Microsoft's newest movie-making software, *Nickelodeon 3D Movie Maker*. The program snags the biggest stars of the popular children's network, including Crum and Oblina from "Real Monsters," Rocko and his pals from "Rocko's Modern Life," and the dynamic duo from "Ren and Stimpy." Improving on the original *3D Movie Maker*, the program offers brighter settings and a nice variety of canned dialogue. Of course, children can record their own scripts with a microphone. Look out for some

obnoxious humor, though; it may be inappropriate for some parents' standards.

If your kids like dinosaurs or the Magic School Bus series, check out Microsoft's fourth Frizzle fandango. In *The Magic Schoolbus Explores in the Age of Dinosaurs*, Ralphie, Phoebe, and the rest of the gang travel back to the Mesozoic Era and continue their educational adventures with their wacky science teacher. It's odd to think the same company that brings PBS to the desktop also drags in Ren and Stimpy.

If your kids like "Sesame Street," check out Creative Wonders' series of early childhood software. In *Elmo's Preschool*, children hang out with the 3-year-old, furry, red monster, sharing his toys and playing his favorite games. Kids practice shape, number, and letter recognition, as well as other early childhood skills. The cheerful muppet makes a wonderful first electronic teacher.

If your kids like Living Books or Dr. Seuss, check out *Green Eggs and Ham* on CD-ROM. So far, the Dr. Seuss books have been the best electronic storybooks ever. First, *Dr. Seuss ABCs* showed how Living Books' incidental animation could be gracefully integrated with the story. Now, *Green Eggs and Ham* shows how the main animation can add energy to the bounciest text in English literature. Grab a serving of this dish for your family's daily requirement of rhyme, rhythm, and rollicking fun.



Although many plot elements have already been determined by the programmers, kids control the ending of "The Maltese Malcolim" in *Write, Camera, Action!*

Amulets & Armor



Amulets & Armor is a role-playing epic featuring 11 character classes, including Mages, Paladins, Knights and Rogues. Its 3D interactive nature combines the best aspects of fast action 3D and total immersion fantasy role-playing. The game has a sophisticated magic system, and hundreds of unique weapons and usable objects. Players develop their characters while solving puzzles, defeating flying dragons, demi-gods, and creatures of the Ancient World. The amazing detail of the game is best seen by playing the shareware version found at our web site.

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Supports modem and IPX network play

United Software Artists: Box 135, Athens, ME, 04912. Suggested retail price \$44.95.
Product Information Number 339

Tanks and Dungeons

Roleplaying fans have probably already heard of the three major online roleplaying games either in development or available today: Sierra's *The Realm* (www.realm-server.com), 3DO's *Meridian 59* (<http://meridian.3do.com/meridian/>) and of course,

Origin's upcoming *Ultima Online* (www.owo.com/uo.html). But one you may not have heard of is *Empiriana*, being developed by Infinite Realms Online Entertainment.

Empiriana has been under development for almost three years, and was originally designed to be a DOS-based game using dial-up numbers. During that time, though, several things happened to affect *Empiriana*'s development: the release of Windows 95 and its DirectX extensions and the meteoric growth of the Internet. And, as we've seen in game after game, DirectPlay and the Internet have done more to fuel interest in online gaming than any other factor.

So, having decided to radically change focus, Infinite Realms has obviously had to rewrite major portions of the game's code, and they are still in closed beta-testing as we go to press. By the time you read this, though, they may well have gotten far enough along to move into open beta-testing.

The game's interface incorporates two views: a point-and-click 3D window in the surface areas — the inns, taverns, and guild buildings — while in the dungeons themselves there is a 3D travel mode and an overhead 2D view of the battlefield that pops up whenever you encounter the enemy.

Empiriana's turn-based, overhead mode of combat will be familiar to veterans of pen-and-paper RPGs like *Advanced*

Dungeons & Dragons; in fact, the early screen shots of the combat mode are reminiscent of a tabletop RPG battle with lead figures.

Parties of as many as six characters can adventure together, and players can join guilds if they wish, gaining access to allies and resources unavailable to loner characters. If you choose to fight another player, there is a challenge arena where characters can go at it one-on-one or in huge free-for-alls of up to ten teams with six characters each. A special Duel to the Death option for players with a real grudge going on will result in the permanent deletion of the loser.

games, actually — everything from *Risk* and *Axis and Allies* to *Squad Leader* and *Gettysburg*. I love the intellectual challenge of the tactical and strategic puzzle — it's a kind of free-form chess — but it's not war. Read actual accounts of war, and you'll see that hex-grid, turn-based gaming has little to do with the real thing.

Flight sim fans have been lucky; since the beginning, air combat games have eschewed the turn-based model and focused on the second-by-second actions and reactions of the pilot, making for very intense, fairly realistic action.

Not so lucky are the grunts. Until recently, ground-

combat games have been trapped in the abstract strategic model of turns, morale checks, and all the rest of it — which, if fun, does not make full use of a computer's power.

All that changed with *Atomic's Close Combat*. Beside all its other innovations — real-time action, changing morale, survival of veterans — this is the first game that allows some identification with your units in the game. Sure, they're only little groups of pixels on the screen, Sgt. Wood or Oberleutnant Stahler, but if they've been with you for several battles, you don't want to send them to their deaths. You want to win each battle with a minimum of casualties. This is the same kind of visceral attachment to characters you find in roleplaying games.

Of course, playing wargames against the computer as opposed to real humans is like comparing solitaire to a game of high-stakes poker. War is still very much a human activity, and to simulate it accurately, you've got to face human opposition. So whether you're playing real-time or turn-based games, playing them online will be preferable to playing the AI.

Speaking of Panzers, SSI has just released an online version of *Panzer General*. It's an online-only game, and SSI should be commended for making it quite clear on the packaging that you've got to get online to play this game. With this package, you get five free hours on TEN as well, and inside the box is the shareware, online-only version of the game, a manual, and one of those ubiquitous TEN drink coasters (they must've gotten a special deal on a billion of those things). I suspect that in a year or so, TEN and Mpath discs will be as abundant as America Online floppies are today.

While we're on the subject, here are some handy wargaming web sites: www.bunt.com/~wargamer/, <http://grogard.com/>, and <http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/POde/pohome.htm>.

PCG

Jason Bates



One problem online RPGs will eventually run into is players having explored everything before the game designers can add new areas. To head off this problem, *Empiriana* has a modular expandability built into, allowing the staff to add new dungeons, monsters, treasures and the like in very short order using very small patch files. The modules can include new art and layouts for the expansion areas, eliminating the need to distribute a new executable file every time the game expands.

Visit the *Empiriana* web site at www.irealms.com/ to find out more.

Going to War

Shifting gears a little, we move from RPGs to wargames. I've played wargames longer than I've been playing computer

Whether you're happier strolling through a dungeon or cruising the battlefield in a Sherman tank, there's plenty for gamers to do online.

Wine, Rants, and Reality

Sometimes, you have to step back and take a look at reality — especially when you spend most of your time delving into the depths of Gaming Goodness™. After completing our December issue — you remember it: that monster that nearly gave you back

trouble? — most of the PC Gamer staff took a five-day weekend to recover. And what did I do during this time? I took my handy Pentium 166MHz computer from work, set it up on my kitchen table at home, and continued to play games.

Of course, using my entire vacation from PC Gamer to play PC games might be considered borderline obsessive. So, in the interest of showing the world (and myself) that I'm really not that unbalanced, I decided to spend the next weekend at the place of my youth, a little town near San Luis Obispo at the heart of California's central coast.

Of course, during the drive between San Francisco and San Luis Obispo, I couldn't help but be reminded of the similarities between Highway 101 and some of the countryside tracks of Electronic Arts' *Need for Speed*. When I caught myself passing cars that were going upwards of 90 miles an hour, it hit me that restarting the game wasn't an option — so I slowed down considerably.

Once I made it to the hills overlooking my sleepy hometown of Cayucos, I was intrigued by the sheer cliffs on the side of the road, and wondered what might lay beyond them (I never found out while living there). Just as I made the decision to do a quick game save and try to find out what was at the bot-

tom of the chasm, I realized that the restore option in real life is severely limited. Pity, that. Needless to say, I'm still curious about those hills.

That evening, as I enjoyed the quiet of my parents' home and the company of my family, I found myself wondering what would happen next to George Stobbart, the intrepid hero of *Circle of Blood* and the guy in whose shoes I'd been spending most of my time until I finally pried myself away from the computer. Since George was sitting on a hard-drive platter on my dining room table some 250 miles away, I had to content myself with playing a few rounds of *Reversi* on my



Mysteries and secret societies abound in *Circle of Blood*. What these conspirators really need is a glass of fine merlot to put things in perspective.

Daggerfall. Just before heading out to find that dungeon I knew was right around the corner, I came to my senses. I didn't have my silver long sword — what if there were

wereboars in the area?

Once the wine started kicking in, I'm afraid I embarrassed my family somewhat. I'm not sure if it was the way I spoke to strangers in Orcish or the fact that I tried to fit everything I could grab in my pockets: wine presses, crowbars, gum wrappers, and even a small gasoline generator. I tried to explain to my folks that you have to search and pick up *everything* not nailed down, or you stand little chance of finishing the game. But they just shook their heads, put me in the back seat of the car, and took me back to the house (stopping along the way to buy a lock for the liquor cabinet).

When the weekend was over and I finally returned to the San Francisco Bay Area, I carried not only enough wine to start my own business as a distributor, but the knowledge that most farmers really don't appreciate it when you try to hot-wire their tractors to open the locked barn that obviously hides the key item necessary to get past that snarling dog barking your way to the haunted mansion on the hill.

So what's the point of this story? It's a message to all those hard-core gamers out there. If you're going to turn your life into a game, make sure no one sees you doing it, and be sure to bring plenty of wine. It's also an indication that I really needed that time off. Now, if you'll excuse me, I need to find out what lies deep in the heart of Aeternis in *Azrael's Tear*. Where did I leave that corkscrew?

Michael Wolf



trusty US Robotics Pilot (check the Eyewitness section for a news story on this handy little PDA). I had been gone only a day, and already I was going through severe gaming withdrawals.

The next day, the family did one of the greatest things you can do on the central coast — we went wine-tasting. Sure, you've heard about the Napa Valley's great vineyards, but if you're ever lucky enough to spend time on Highway 46 between Paso Robles and Highway 1, be sure to stop at Grey Wolf Cellars; not only do they have a fantastic name, but they've got some of the best wine California has to offer. As I sipped their wonderful '94 Zinfandel, I looked out at the rolling hills surrounding the area, and thought about how much they resembled the landscape of Bethesda's

You never know what you'll find when you go on vacation. Sometimes you find peace, and sometimes you find yourself playing a really good version of virtual reality.

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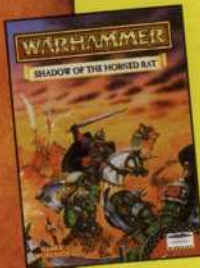
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CHECK OUT THE COMPLETE GAMES WORKSHOP HOBBY AT WWW.GAMES-WORKSHOP.COM

If you played and enjoyed Shadow of the Horned Rat, the PC game based on Warhammer, then we have great news for you. Now you can bring the action off your laptop and onto your tabletop with the hottest new release from Games Workshop - the brand new Warhammer boxed set! With Warhammer you become a fearless commander, painting and collecting mighty fantasy armies to do battle. For only \$69.99, Warhammer provides you with the core regiments for two armies, and all the information needed to start playing right away!

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New [Gaming] Worlds to Conquer!

I first became fascinated by Alexander the Great in junior high school, when I read L. Sprague deCamp's gorgeous tapestry of a novel, *An Elephant for Aristotle*. In that now-obscure tale, Alexander, basking in the glory of his victories along the Indus River (c. 326 B.C.), decides to send a captured war elephant back to Greece for the edification of his old tutor, and the reader gets to follow the journey through the whole of Asia Minor. Though deCamp is best known for his fantasy and science fiction, he was also a superb historical novelist and a brilliant researcher. If he told you there were hot dog vendors in 4th Century B.C. Persepolis, by God there were.

I realized, from reading that delightful novel, just how rich and many-hued were the civilizations Alexander explored, conquered, and incorporated into his short-lived empire. And from subsequent reading, I developed an abiding fascination for Alexander himself. He led his armies on an epic march of 20,000 miles, across portions of three continents, and faced every challenge a general can face. As historian John Mixer said in a recent article in *Command Magazine*:

"His campaigns included every type of warfare: sieges,

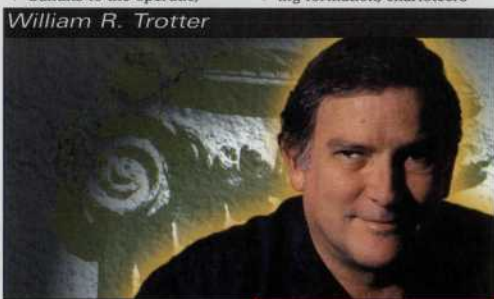
mountain and desert fighting, naval engagements, guerrilla operations, pitched battles, and major river crossings. No other great general in the world's history was ever put to such a diversity of tests, faced more varied opponents or fought in a greater variety of conditions, yet he is the only one who never lost a battle."

And he did it all before he died at the absurdly early age of thirty-three! Amazing.

Given Alexander's genius (for tactics, strategy, and logistics, all) and the extraordinary range of both his battles and his opponents (from wild, hairy, Parthian bandits to the operatic,

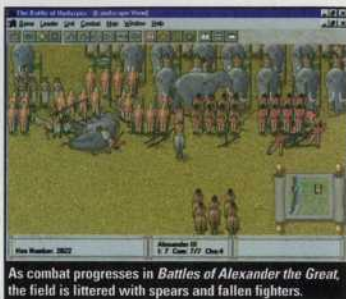
the PC by gamesmeister Gene Billingsley of Erudite Software, and will be marketed, sometime in the first quarter of 1997, by Interactive Magic.

The game sports an impressive "miniatures" look: bristling phalanxes with 16-foot pikes, cavalry on their mounts, archers deployed in skirmishing formation, charioteers



panoplied armies of the Indian moguls), it seems astonishing that there has not hitherto been a PC simulation of his conquests. (Well, okay, old-timers, there was just one: a crude 1985 European game in bilious CGA graphics; but nothing since except for board games.)

This gap in the wargamer's PC library is about to be filled — and right royally, too — by *Battles of Alexander the Great*, a state-of-the-art tactical simulation derived from the classic board game of the same name, published by the venerable GMT house. It's being developed for



As combat progresses in *Battles of Alexander the Great*, the field is littered with spears and fallen fighters.

and war elephants — in all, 13 types of units will be represented. Much effort has gone into the animation of these colorful units, and their movements are pleasingly realistic: infantry marches, runs, and charges; archers draw their bows and unleash clouds of arrows; horses rear and snort; and elephants trumpet. Even better, when opposing units melee, you can actually see individual soldiers thrusting and hacking at each other. You can also see them fall, wounded or dying, and as the battles evolve, the field becomes more and more littered with wrecked chariots, dead soldiers and animals.

"The elephants are really fascinating to watch," says Craig Taylor, who is producing the game for I-Magic.

"They behave just as they did historically. If you can control them, they're enormously powerful units — the ancient equivalent of heavy tanks — but if something spooks them, or they get pricked by arrows or pikes, they can instantly run amok and trample anyone in their path, friend or foe."

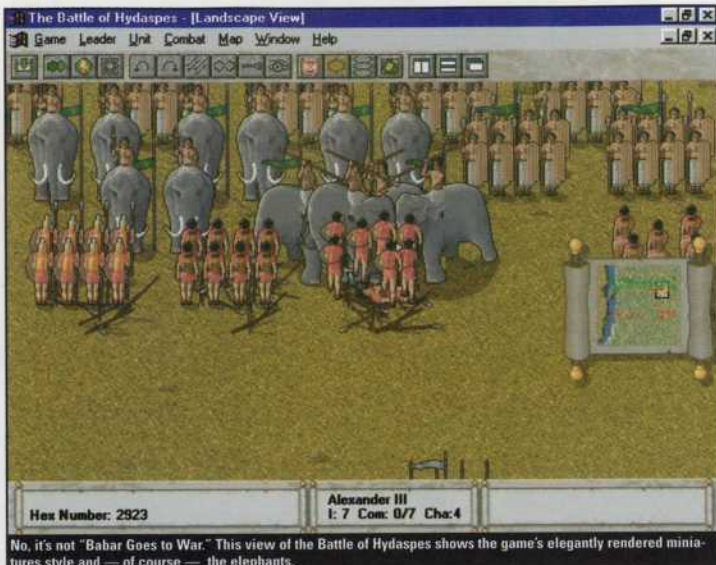
Thomas is especially fond of the game's raucous sound effects.

"Do you remember that great old radio show, hosted by Walter Cronkite, called 'You Are There'?" he asks. "The format was for Walter to travel back in time and interview historical figures. He did one show in which he interviewed Alexander, while the Battle of Arbela was raging in the background. The sound effects

Erudite Software and Interactive Magic join forces to depict the genius of Alexander the Great in an impressive new wargame.



Battles of Alexander the Great promises some crisp, impressive visuals.



No, it's not "Bahar Goes to War." This view of the Battle of Hydaspes shows the game's elegantly rendered miniatures style and — of course — the elephants.

were very realistic, and it struck me at the time that an ancient battle must have sounded something like a really intense football game: grunts and groans, cheers and yells, and people banging on metal objects to add to the general clangor. That's the effect we're striving for in this game."

All ten of Alexander's major battles will be included, as will a campaign variant. Plans included a scenario editor, but it was dropped to avoid compromising the basic game. Modem and network play will definitely be a feature — so will Internet support via the Windows winsock.

As for the artificial intelligence, Erudite is putting a refreshing spin on things. An ancient commander did not have much, if any, control over any unit that could not actually see him or that was beyond the reach of his voice. All Alexander could do was summon his subordinates on the night before a battle and give them The Plan, then hope for the best when the fighting started.

In *Battles of Alexander*, the player has full control over the wing or formation he has chosen to lead personally — over the rest of his army, he can exercise only marginal influence. Detailed control will be under command of a separate tier of the AI, while the main AI controls the enemy's formations.

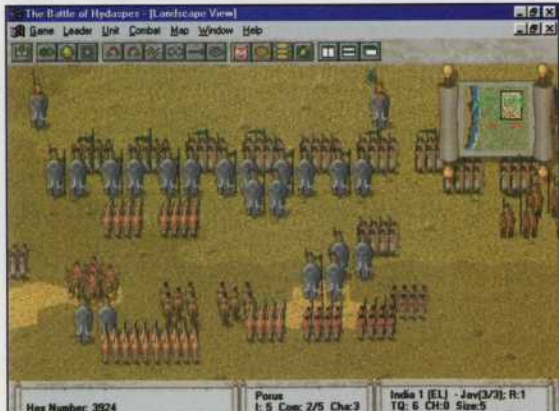
"In order to maximize replay value," Taylor explains, "we've designed things so that the enemy AI will randomly vary its plans. In one game, the enemy's right wing may stand on the defensive, but in the next game, it may attack. You'll never be able to predict what the computer opponent will do from one game to the next."

Although the game is basically turn-based, there will be varying phases within a turn, so that the best commanders may be able to order two actions consecutively. The most mobile units — the mounted archers and charioteers — will execute their turns in three impulses: move, fire, and move. This will make it possible for the player to use these units realistically, to launch feints and harassing attacks, and then dash out of harm's way before the targeted troops can respond.

In addition to its visual elegance, the game will also have a very friendly user interface. As designer Gene Billingsley explains: "We believe very strongly in the *Panzer General* type

of interface, because it was so successful in getting the game to the player. My pet peeve has always been the way previous generations of wargames have put barriers between themselves and any consumer who was not a veteran wargamer.

"We want this game to be so friendly that you can jump right in and enjoy it, even if you don't have any previous knowledge of ancient warfare, or even of Alexander. But we also want this game to be very good history, so that anyone who



In a nod to historical accuracy, the game won't give you direct control over your entire army; you'll control the formation you've chosen and exercise only marginal control over the rest.

"We want this game to be so friendly that you can jump right in and enjoy it. But we also want it to be very good history."

— CRAIG TAYLOR,

I-MAGIC GAME PRODUCER

gets hooked by it will soon learn a great deal about the period, and will learn it effortlessly, while having a really good time."

From what I've seen so far, these laudable design goals are within reach. *Battles of Alexander* looks good, feels right, and is solidly grounded in historical accuracy. Given the dearth of ancient-warfare games, it currently has the field to itself. And if it succeeds, there are at least two more GMT board game classics waiting in the wings, covering the campaigns of Hannibal and Julius Caesar.

Thus is the Gordian Knot untied.

PCG

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The German and Red Army Order of Battle features thousands of units from corps to company-size. An interactive Table of Organization Browser allows easy access to the historically accurate organization of every unit in the game.

HISTORICALLY ACCURATE BATTLEFIELD MAP

The Road to Moscow battlefield is an actual 1:2,000,000 scale, 256-color, topographical map of the Soviet Union and eastern Poland on June 22, 1941. This map shows over 20,000 historically accurate geographic locations. The scrollable campaign map is the equivalent of 18 full computer screens.

HISTORICALLY ACCURATE OPERATIONAL PLANNING

Simply draw your operational plans directly on the game map. Your staff will move troops into position, stockpile supplies, allocate air strikes and artillery support. Watch the progress of your forces on the map and receive a variety of reports from the front as the fighting begins. Road to Moscow includes scenarios based on actual Eastern Front operations by both armies and a 1941-1945 campaign game.

OTHER EXITING FEATURES:

- Generals have individual personalities that affect the performance of the troops under their command.
- Operational plans include phase lines, deception, amphibious and airborne landings, commando raids, and partisan activity.
- An optional political feature that subjects the player's plans to the personal whims of Hitler or Stalin.
- Original CD-quality music and state-of-the-art sound effects.
- Easy-to-use point-and-click interface.

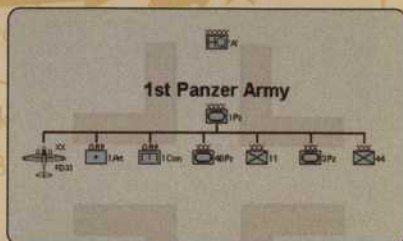


Table of Organization Browser showing 1st Panzer Army



Actual terrain southwest of Stalingrad



Report from 8th Panzer Division, 40th Panzer Corps

Playable Windows 95 Demo game at: <http://www.arsenpub.com>



Yeah, But is it Fun?

If you're a regular reader of this column, there's a pretty good chance you've flown most, if not all, of the flight sims ever made. A real jet-jock. Sierra Hotel. Maverick. Whatever. If you're connected to the great unwashed online community, you've probably read messages specializing in flight sim topics, and maybe even added your own voice to the din concerning what makes a good — or bad — flight sim.

God knows I've done my share of the above, each time swearing never again to let myself get sucked into this most futile, subjective, and dead-end of exchanges. It seems as though nobody's ever 100 percent satisfied — not even with their own current favorite simulation. Either the graphics are good but the realism is lacking, or the realism is dead-on but the graphics suck. It can even be something as trivial as your Apache's rotor not making the sound that you *think* it should make (and let's face it, unless you're Bryan Walker, how the hell would you know?).

Here's a true story: I walked into my friend's software store the other day, where a customer was agonizing over which new flight sim to buy. "Here, ask this guy," my friend said, pointing to me. "He's a famous game reviewer — he knows everything."

"Ooh, I wouldn't want to know *everything*," the customer said. "It'd take all the mystery out of life." Spotting in him the fine taste of another Monty Python fan, I agreed to lend him a hand. He was looking for a game whose graphics lived up to their hype — something that looked *real*. He was sick of being disappointed.

I steered him over to NovaLogic's *F-22 Lightning II*, which at the time (late October, 1995) was the most breathtakingly beautiful flight sim on the market. "People are

beeping and squeaking about the perceived realism," I warned him, "but if, as you say, all you're concerned about is how good it looks, this is the clear choice for you." He smiled broadly, shook my hand, slipped a thousand bucks into my jacket and bought the game.

Next day, I walked into the store, and there was the *F-22* box sitting on the counter.

"What's this doing back here?" I asked. "The guy returned it," my friend said. "He said the sound was terrible and that it was too easy. But he *did* say that the graphics were great." Fargin' weenwapper.

Folks, we've become a nation of consumers who not

just written the strategy guide for it, it's an automatic disqualification). NovaLogic has not only beaten all of the other dedicated *F-22* sims to the market, they've done so with style and flash and — are you ready for this? — *fun!*

I was astonished that the high-res graphics performed so well on my P-100.

Where Back to Baghdad's featureless desert crawled beneath my wings, *F-22*'s detailed terrain slid smoothly by, *without* making any of those eye-candy sacrifices I've become so painfully accustomed to.

Scott Wolf



only want to have their cake and eat it, too, but believe that we're actually *entitled* to do so. And, by god, we'll piss and moan our little heads off if we don't get it. We want the world and we want it now!

The sad truth is that, while we like to think of ourselves as cutting-edge connoisseurs of ultra-hip technology, we're basically still in the Paleolithic period where computing is concerned. You want the perfect game, try taking a cryogenic catnap for, say, 100 years, and if the human race hasn't regulated itself out of existence, someone may have produced a game that will satisfy you by then. Probably not, though.

As for *F-22*, it's damn near my favorite flight sim at the moment (except for *JetFighter III*, but since I've

Where do you stand on the realism-vs.-gameplay question? This month, the air-Wolf tackles this sticky issue, and his conclusion will surprise you.



F-22 Lightning II is the prettiest flight sim to date — and if you aren't a stickler for realism, it can be a blast.

There wasn't any slowdown or halting to be found, even when I got my ass in a fangs-out furball with eight different fighters all trying to kill each other. And over on the ol' P166...Woo-hoo!

Yes, the campaign is pretty linear, the mission editor is limited, and discussion of the flight model's lack of authenticity could keep all of those experts who've never sat in a real fighter, much less flown one, busy well into the next millennium. But the presentation of this sim is simply outstanding, and the suspension-of-disbelief factor is there in spades. I never had any trouble spotting ground targets, and I never lost sight of a bandit because he was pixelated out of view. I know where I am and what my environment is at all times — factors whose importance cannot be overemphasized, in my book.

You say the cockpit is too simple? Hey, the whole purpose of the real *F-22*'s ergonomics is to enhance pilot performance by making his chores easier to manage, and if it steps over your realism line-in-the-sand by giving you a percentage readout of your opponent's hull integrity, well, that's okay with me.

This is what flight sims are all about for me. Screw reality — especially if it gets in the way of my fun. Let the "realism" junkies sit on the tarmac reading up on radar modes, thrust-to-weight ratios, and missile envelopes while burning up their JP4. Me, I'm gonna go kill something

EGG

Getting Your Money's Worth, Part II

Over the past couple of years, more and more motherboards have come equipped with a Flash memory chip to hold the BIOS (short for Basic Input-Output System, the low-level program your PC runs even before DOS or Windows loads). Flash memory acts

just like ROM most of the time, but it can also be rewritten under software control, so you can upgrade your BIOS without having to open up your PC's case and swap a new chip for the old one.

When you're trying to make sure your PC is performing at peak efficiency, it's a good idea to be sure you've got the latest version of the BIOS. Quite a few PC makers have Flash BIOS updates available on their web sites, so check there if you're having problems with compatibility or hardware support (most BIOS manufacturers won't provide Flash upgrades directly, since they have no way of knowing how your system manufacturer may customize the original code).

Once you're sure you've got the latest BIOS for your PC, it's time to access its settings. With most BIOS chips, holding down the Del key (or F1, or Ctrl-Alt-Esc) as the PC boots up will bring you to the BIOS setup menus.

The settings that have the

biggest effects on your PC's performance are usually found in the Advanced Chipset Setup section. The BIOS usually does a pretty fair job of setting up the chipset when Auto Configuration is enabled, so if you aren't in the mood for mucking around at this level, just make sure this is on. If you do want to tinker with the detailed settings, it's still worthwhile to try out Auto Configuration, if only to find out what you have to gain from further tweaking. In any case, remember that changing the other parameters won't have any effect until you've turned Auto Configuration off.

It's hard to be specific

often it happens. Also, if the BIOS settings are lost (usually due to a loss of battery power), your BIOS may default to the safest, simplest options — and that can include turning off the secondary cache.

So before you do anything else, make sure the cache is enabled; this is the one BIOS setting that can have a huge effect on your system's speed — everything else is really about squeezing that last millisecond of performance out of your PC.

Also, look for settings that take advantage of advanced hardware features like Pipeline Burst Cache and Synchronous

Dynamic RAM (SDRAM), and make sure they're enabled if you have them.

Memory timing is another area where you might dig up a little extra speed. You probably have four basic settings to work with: Cache Read Timing, Cache Write Timing, RAM Read Timing, and RAM Write Timing. The specific values to use vary from system to system, but each value should be set to the smallest number that operates reliably. Entering the wrong settings won't cause permanent damage to anything, but you do run a very slim chance of getting the system into a state where it won't boot, so some caution is advised. (In the unlikely event that the BIOS modifications you make cause your PC to lock up this severely, you'll need to reset the BIOS to its defaults. That's generally done by disconnecting the BIOS battery, or by moving a jumper connector or DIP switch on the motherboard before booting up. Before making any changes, check your system manual to be sure you know how to reset the BIOS.)

When doing any kind of fine-tuning, remember a couple of key rules. One is that you can't trust the seat of your pants to tell whether a change helped or hurt. You'll need some kind of a benchmark to objectively measure performance. The frame-rate display in a game like *Quake* (type "timerefresh" at the console) or *Duke Nukem 3D* (use the "DNRATE" cheat) gives the most realistic results with regard to game performance, but hardware benchmarks that directly measure things like CPU speed and memory access rates are generally more sensitive to the kind of small changes you'll be making here.

The other important rule is to *write everything down*. Make only one change at a time, and document each change you make, whether it helped or hurt, and how much. A setting that makes your system faster might also make it more crash-prone, but if you've kept a good paper trail, you can always undo your changes if you need to.

Tim Victor



about what changes to try from here, since the settings available will depend on the brand and version of your BIOS software, the chipset used on your motherboard, and any custom modifications made by the PC's manufacturer. A manual helps, but most PC systems don't come with documentation for the BIOS; check the web sites for downloadable docs if you don't have them.

In general terms, the first order of business is to make sure you're really using the hardware you have. In particular, most PCs have both an internal and an external memory cache to speed up RAM operations. Having one or both of these caches disabled is a big-time performance sapper. Your system dealer probably wasn't so absent-minded as to sell you a PC with the cache disabled, but you'd be surprised how

Last month, you dug into some of Windows 95's more arcane settings to squeeze a bit more speed out of your PC. Now it's time to jump into the BIOS.



If you didn't get BIOS documents with your PC, you can probably find them on the 'net.

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Mystery Word Grid

	H					M Y S T E R Y W O R D
		E				
P	I	N	C	H	W	
	R					
S						

WORD LIST and LETTER CODE chart

PINCHW PRESSK BLASTA WRECKD
BREAKZ PUNCHS SPRAYC TURBOV
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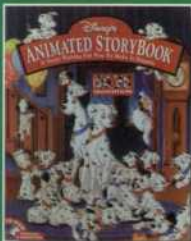
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This month's question is for the old-timers — if you played games like *The Bard's Tale* and *Starfleet I* on your PC, you're more than qualified. We'd like to know what classic PC games you'd

like to see remade with today's technology. Can you picture Origin's *AutoDuel* as a first-person driving game? Or how about those great Civil War games from SSI, redone in high-res Super VGA with multi-player support?

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Big Fun in Small Packages

As a loyal subscriber, I thought I'd pass on some information that you may not be aware of. Activision has come out with a new Infocom collection. They've put every original text adventure they had onto this CD, with the exception of *Shogun* and *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (and the only reason these weren't included was that they were based on copyrighted works and their distribution rights had expired). They even included *Leather Goddesses of Phobos* on this one! Another plus is that these have Acrobat Reader files on the CD; they've scanned in images of the original manuals, documentation, goodies, maps, hints, clue books — anything pertaining to these games! Looks like they took a lesson from Electronic Arts' fine CD-ROM Classics collection.

— Byron Followell, via AOL

Speaking of classics...

Last week I was endlessly wandering at my local computer shop, and what did I bump into? A box called "Origin Pak" that contained full copies of *Wing Commander III* (96% rating in PC Gamer), *System Shock* (96%) and *Bioforge* (92%). The best thing was it was priced at \$30! Through more wandering, I found a "Bullfrog Pak" (Theme Park, High Octane, and Magic Carpet Plus) and a "Rapid Fire Pak" (Crusader: No Remorse, Abuse, and Fade to Black). I just want to encourage more companies to make packs like these. I am a gamer with a very tight budget, and this totally suits my need.

— Mathieu Helie, via the Internet

Byron and Mathieu have stumbled into an exciting trend in PC gaming — one we hope to see continue and grow. Not so long ago, multi-game collections were all referred to as "shovelware," and rightly so — publishers would take several inferior games and slap them on the same CD or in the same box, hoping to sell them to gamers who didn't know any better. Today, some shovelware can



Origin's *Crusader: No Remorse*, a big hit in late 1995, is already available in a \$30 game pack — along with *Abuse* and *Fade to Black*.

still be found on store shelves, but so can a handful of really top-notch collections, like Activision's "Classic Text Adventure Masterpieces" (the Infocom collection) and Electronics Arts' Pak series. With more and more games vying for software dealers' limited shelf space, some of the best PC games of just one or two years ago are nearly impossible to find in stores today — let alone at a bargain price. These packages let us play games we missed (or couldn't afford) when they were new. Activision and Electronic Arts (not to mention SSI, whose Definitive Wargame Collection 2 includes full versions of *Harpoon II*, *Panzer General*, and *Steel Panthers*; and LucasArts, with their Archives series) are to be commended for a clever marketing strategy that also happens to be a great service to us gamers.

Self-Replicating Games

I own two Pentium computers, which I keep permanently networked via a null-modem cable. My son and I play games on them all the time. I like multi-player so much, it is the main thing I look for in games nowadays. This brings me to my point: Why don't all game companies follow the lead of Blizzard, Westwood, and Activision and allow "spawning" for multi-player gaming? *WarCraft II*, *Command & Conquer*, and *MechWarrior 2* all allow two or more players to go head-to-head, even if just one of them has the CD-ROM. I recently picked up two Accolade titles: *Deadlock* and *Star Control 3*, both of which I returned (Thank you, by the way, to CompUSA for your liberal return

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NovaLogic's *F-22 Lightning II* is another game that deserves kudos for allowing multi-player action with a single CD-ROM.

policy!) because in order to play multi-player, I needed two copies of the same game. These games may have been good enough to warrant a \$50 expenditure, but certainly not \$100. My advice to gamers who feel the way I do is to boycott games that don't specifically mention spawning ability right there on the package.

—Kbieb, via AOL

It'd be great if more games had the ability to "spawn" multi-player copies (operating in head-to-head mode without the need to have CD-ROM in each player's PC). Nearly as good are the dual-disc packages some game publishers are putting out — EA's *Fire Fight* and *Sirtech's Jagged Alliance*: Deadly Games are a couple of examples. This kind of feature is going to become an even stronger deciding factor as online gaming becomes more accessible and more gamers experience the joys of multi-player action. As always, the best way to send a message to game publishers is to vote with your dollars.

Consolation Prize

Regarding the "Gates Crashing" letter in the November issue of *PC Gamer*: I say the PC and console should not be in competition. The console is a better arcade gaming platform, but the PC is a better value, because it's a better platform for any software other than arcade-style games. In the issue of cost (\$200 vs. \$2,000), the type of software used must be considered. PC games offer a greater degree of depth than most console games — and allow a greater degree of versatility and func-

tionality. A PC keyboard can be used to perform at least 100 tasks, where a gamepad can only perform ten or so.

and the graphics on a PC monitor are better than the graphics on a television.

But let's not just reference games here; I could not write, edit, or send this e-mail on a console (yet). I could not balance my checkbook or pay bills with my console. I could not store my phone numbers or addresses; create and control a database; create graphics and print them; learn about a foreign country; send corporate memos; control my home security system; maintain a web site; or even catalog my video collection with a console. For that matter, I couldn't even write software for a console with a console — I would need a PC to write, edit, compile, etc., any software. So cost is not the issue — value is the issue. How much would you have to pay to add all the stuff to your console (if it existed) to allow it to do half the things the PC can do?

On Gates' comments about people buying PCs over consoles: Again, it depends on the use. So, let us no longer compare PCs and consoles for anything other than the quality of arcade games — since that's the only thing consoles are good for right now.

—Kent Lefner, via the Internet

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DeathKeep isn't exactly a high point in PC gaming history, but did its designers make a bad game on purpose to hurt TSR's rep? The Magic 8-Ball says "Not Likely."

And You Thought We Were Cynical . . .

I was reading your review on *DeathKeep* from SSI, and it brought to mind some questions. *PC Gamer* gave this dud a 20%, and though I haven't played the game (nor wish to), judging just by the graphics, this game looks pitiful. My question is: Do you folks at *PC Gamer* regard this game as an attempt by SSI to mar the prestige of [Advanced Dungeons and Dragons publisher] TSR by purposely releasing a game that would put TSR in a bad light? I know it sounds kind of counter-productive; ultimately, SSI's name is the one on the box being sold. However, it would be an indication of the soured relationship between the two former partners that brought us the great "Gold Box" series and others. It seems a little too coincidental that this game was so poor from a company that has been making hit after hit for so long.

—Rick Perry, Belcamp, MD

You're too suspicious, Rick. We don't think anyone sets out to make a bad game; even if your ultimate goal is only to make money, you're going to make the most impressive, entertaining game you can manage, because that's what sells and makes gamers remember your name. But you know what they say about mice and men; sometimes your

READERS RESPOND

If you were a game designer for a day, what fascinating topic would you tackle that's never appeared in a game before?

"I'd design a game just for the Internet! It would be a shoot-'em-up/strategy game based in wartime, maybe World War Two or WWI. The players would be assigned to tanks, planes, squads, sniper units, etc. That's where the shoot-'em-up comes in — for the planes or squads, it's an arcade game; for the generals and commanders, it's a strategy game."

—Corey Hoitsma, Boulder, CO

"Personally, I like sea-adventure games like Koei's *New Horizons*, but I would like to see them become more involved: more scenarios to be played, more characters to assume the role of, more ships to be had, and finally, more ports to visit in search of varied treasure.

You could be a Pirate, Merchant, Explorer, or whatever you'd wish. Of course, it would be easy to navigate by using point-and-click controls."

—Gene Parank, via AOL

"I would concentrate on a good super-hero sim. Nothing like your regular dime-a-dozen 'you vs. the super villain' power fest, but one that has the player managing both life as a hero and life in their alter ego.

It would be very soap opera-like, allowing the player to either expose their identity to the world, only to loved ones, or to the super-hero community. There would be other super-heroes in other cities, and they could form a league or go it alone."

—Lee Williams, via the Internet

"How about a real-time strategy game with animals?

Lions, tigers, elephants, monkeys, etc. could fight for domination of the jungle. It's not as easy as it sounds — a monkey's brain power could easily beat a lion's physical power."

—Connie Kitsen, Las Vegas, NV

best efforts aren't enough. Game design is just like any other artistic pursuit; lofty goals can get lost as too many cooks try to season the soup, grand plans are altered as deadlines and budget ceilings approach sooner than expected — and sometimes, people just attempt too much or burn out before the job is done. *Think of movies like Ishtar and Dune. There's no telling what happened with DeathKeep, but you can rest pretty well assured that its designers did their best.*

HyperBlunder

I read with great interest the November issue of *PC Gamer* and the "1996 *PC Gamer* Sports Game Awards." First let me thank you for having the alternative sports section and including *HyperBlade* in the ranks of the best sports games of 1996. As the developer of *HyperBlade*,



HyperBlade is published by Activision, but it's not based on their *MechWarrior 2* engine — it's built on an entirely new 3D engine created by the *HyperBlade* team.

WizBang! Software Productions worked hard with Activision to bring this future sport to the PC game market and are pleased to see it being well received by the press and game players alike. We would, however, like to point out a major error in the description of *HyperBlade* in your article: *HyperBlade* is not based on, nor was it transformed from, the Activision *MechWarrior 2* engine.

HyperBlade is an original game concept from *WizBang!* and is based entirely on code and technology developed and owned by *WizBang!* Software Productions, Inc. This includes all aspects of the game including the 3D graphics engine, the new AI engine — ADLIB (for a description of this new AI engine see the August/September 1996 issue of *Game Developer Magazine*) — and the Motion Captured Animation playback engine.

—Andrew Johnston,
President, *WizBang!* Software
Productions, Inc., Mercer Island, WA

Radio Static

I was amused by Dan Bennett's recent interview article with John Garcia of NovaLogic (Nov. 1996 issue, "The Art of the War Sim"). In the interview, Mr. Garcia states that SSI's *Su-27 Flanker* has "gone overboard" because "you have to do things like set the antenna azimuth before you can do radio transmissions!"

Radio transmissions are not modeled in *Su-27 Flanker* except for the abstraction of wingman commands and the datalinks from the AWACS.

If Mr. Garcia is referring to the air-to-air settings, then yes, we do have a real radar model in our product.

My regards to Major Strader and Captain Dunsel.

—Carl C. Norman,
Senior Producer, SSI
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So, a new year kicks off in earnest, but you need not fear the future so long as you have the latest copy of *PC Gamer* held tight against your bosom to ward off evil spirits and ensure you have all the latest news and most authoritative opinions in the world of PC gaming. Here's a sneak peek at what you can expect from us around 30 days from now...

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In the wake of *WarCraft II* and *Command & Conquer*, real-time strategy games are all the rage — and *PC Gamer* has the definitive round-up of 1997's new wave of wargames, including LucasArts' *Rebellion*, Blizzard's *StarCraft*, 7th *Legion* from Epic MegaGames, Westwood's *C&C* sequel, *Tiberian Sun*, Activision's *Dark Reign*, *Enemy Nations* from Viacom and a whole slew of others. If real-time wargaming is your thing, you can't afford to miss next month's epic feature!



Get the latest news on all the upcoming strategy games, including *Blizzard's StarCraft*, in our February issue!

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The first big batch of games for '97 reviewed and rated, including...

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JANUARY 1997

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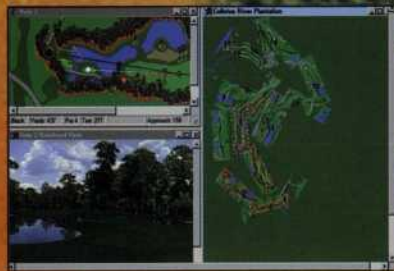
"So as you can see, Sergeant Klanghammer," hooted the evil Doctor Apocalypse, "your feeble efforts to thwart my brilliant plan for world domination have failed. Observe." Klanghammer, manacle'd to the reinforced steel operating table, was powerless as the giant observatory doors heft above him slowly began to open with a deafening mechanical grinding sound. "You should not have gotten involved with matters that neither concern you, nor do you understand. Now, you, and the rest of you pitiful humans will pay the price. The price of DEATH. Once my evil Mergina Ray is calibrated and locked into its laser target, the moon will be sucked out of orbit and into a collision course with Earth, thereby initiating a new ice age. An ice age which I will ride with the help of my army of robot peasant enforcer druids. He he he!" Meanwhile, Klanghammer continued to work stealthily on the loose bolt on his right wrist manacle. Just one more turn...

TO BE CONTINUED...

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Click and drag on its shape

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The result: a new bunker

"Is it live or is it...?" Our Course Designer is so true-to-life, it's hard to tell the difference!

This image is of the 3rd Green at Country Club of the South. The left half of the image is from the Course Designer; the right half of the image is an actual photo.



The Hole View of the new bunker.

From Tee to Green

The Tee Shot



Pop-up displays are optional—leave them off for the purest golfing experience.

24-bit color lets you view your round at resolutions and color depths as high as your system will support.



Replay shots from unlimited camera angles, from ground level, or up to 300 feet in the air!

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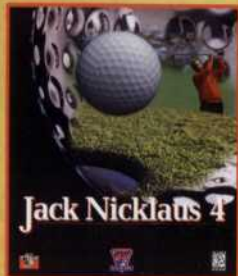
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For enhanced gameplay, this optional grid floats down and drapes itself over the green, clearly showing all high and low spots.



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