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THE GAMECUBE LAUNCH ISSUE - free to readers of dualgamer and partner sites - Issue 03 - October 2001



The official Fangen Games Magazine

GAMECUBE LAUNCH
EVERYTHING FROM THE LAUNCH,
PLUS THE LATEST FROM
SPACEWORLD AND NINTENDO.



ALSO INSIDE...

Issue 03

Tekken 4
Mario Kart Tips
Jet Set Radio 2
James Bond
Bomberman
Twisted Metal
Code Veronica
PSO v2

Welcome to another blockbuster issue of Dualgamer, we hope you enjoy the line up this month. Remember to email comments to us!

[12] You haven't lived until you've read out unbeatable GameCube coverage. Turn to it now!

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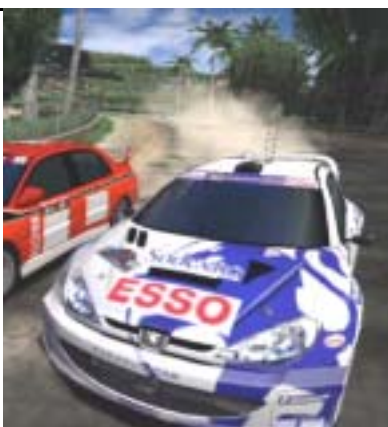
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WELCOME TO ISSUE 03

Chris Zardis | SENIOR EDITOR

This month, the editor went to sunny Cyprus for 2 weeks, before rushing back to finish off the magazine. Apparently, Agia Napa was a bit too nice for him, as he now walks around the streets in a bikini. This is, of course, a load of rubbish, although we wouldn't be surprised...

Game of the Month: Gran Turismo 3



David Allan | DEPUTY EDITOR

Dave didn't stop talking about his holiday to the USA, so we locked him up in a cupboard and made him work harder.

Game of the Month: Outtrigger



Ben Matthew | STAFF WRITER

This month Ben went to the Nintendo Show in London, but got chucked out after they found out he had snuck in.

Game of the Month: Pikmin



Michael Bickley | STAFF WRITER

Mike laughed out loud at the Zelda cartoon at Spaceworld. He stopped after he found out it was the actual game.

Game of the Month: Tekken 4



Cruzn15 | STAFF WRITER

Refusing to release his real name, he keeps his identity as "Cruzn15" while he plays his lame, old-school games.

Game of the Month: Mario Kart



Rob Ratcliff | STAFF WRITER

I have just returned from the planet of Ragol to discover 'real life'. An odd thing, lot's of real people and far too much sun!

Game of the Month: Alien Front Online



Editor's Corner

What a month! The Nintendo Spaceworld show has always been one of the most important events of the gaming calendar, but this year's blows everything previous away. Although everyone thought that Mr. Miyamoto would only be showing either of the new Mario or Zelda games, the mighty game guru has gone and unveiled both to the gaming world, and we're very impressed, at least by one of the two. Also, our very own Ben has gone up to London to play some of the best GameCube launch titles, we envy him greatly.

The PS2 isn't running away, however, we've got reviews of all the latest games, plus massive pre-views of Tekken 4 and Simpsons Road Rage. An X Box fan? Watch out for our Jet Set Radio preview and all the latest news from Uncle Bill's powerhouse.

Enjoy,

Chris - CHRIS ZARDIS - MAGAZINE ED

Next Issue release date
23rd October 2001

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Amin Hasan - Contributor | Brian Vienneau - PR Manager
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DG Newscentre

24 Hour
Gaming



Wow, I didn't realise how expensive GBA's were.

What? They're still releasing games?

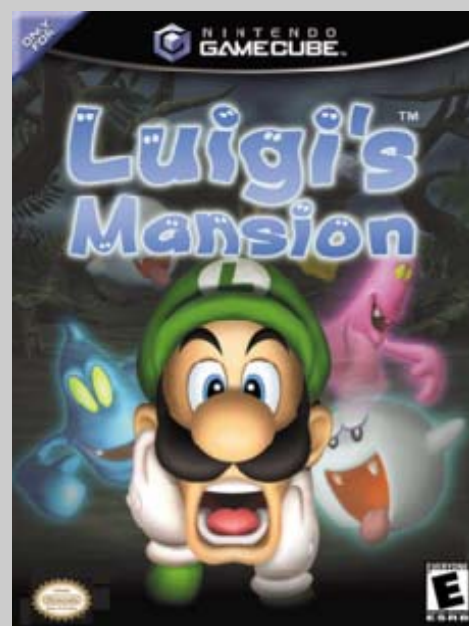
Sega have confirmed what is thought to be their last 7 Dreamcast releases. Shenmue 2, Virtua Tennis 2, Headhunter, Floigan Brothers and 90 Minutes, will all be released this side of the new year. The recently delayed Propeller Arena and Rez have all been confirmed for an early 2002 release, with Phantasy Star Online v2 sketched in for February. For those who don't know much about these games, here is a short summary. Rez is a music making game where you shoot things to make music. Headhunter should be a real treat and could be a worthy adversary for Metal Gear Solid 2 when it materialises. Floigan Brothers, a platformer from Sega Sports maestros, Visual Creations, looks, to be honest, a bit on the average side, with mixed reviews from the US. Propeller Arena is a plane sim, and yet another one of those usual stories for DC owners in Europe where we get left out of online play. Virtua Tennis 2, will be brilliant (I can say that because I've played it) and should bring joy to the face of everyone, especially with the introduction of the fairer sex! PSO v2, reviewed in this issue, is a semi sequel to the fabulous original, and probably the last online Dreamcast game. Finally, Shenmue 2 is a game that needs no introduction, and Dualgamer has full coverage in Issue 2 which contains a massive preview of the game. This line up isn't the most fruity ever, but it isn't bad for a 'dead' console. We'll bring you reviews of all new releases as they come and keep you updated on this situation.

Spaceworld!

If you think that the above phrase is related to an astrology show, then you've either had your head in a bucket for the last, err, 2 years since they changed the name, or you've downloaded the wrong type of magazine. Anyway, Nintendo held their annual show in Japan this month, and we have all you'll ever need to know about it and the latest games on the Nintendo GameCube. For more, and news from Nintendo's London show. see the feature later in the mag.

GameCube Box Art

Yep, what you see below is the final box art for Luigi's Mansion, released in the States later in Autumn. The UK version will likely be slightly different as always, but you can see that Nintendo has gone for the 'DVD' style case (even though the games actually come on high density GD disks which contain about 1.5GB of data, as opposed to DVD's 4.7GB). Tasty...





US tragedy effects Metal Gear Solid 2

Konami of America has issued an official statement regarding the release status of Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty for the Sony PlayStation 2. Currently, the company is re-evaluating the game's content and release date in light of this week's tragedies. "Konami of America is still in shock over the recent tragic events," the statement reads. "Metal Gear Solid 2 is about the desire to end violence on a global scale, as the previous games in the series have been. Like everyone in America, Konami is evaluating the impact of these events. In the meantime, all of our thoughts are with New York City and Washington, DC and all of the people whose lives have been touched by this tragedy. There are no words to adequately express our sorrow, but we firmly believe that the people of America will come through this trial stronger than ever."

The company's comments follow similar statements released by its parent firm Konami Computer Entertainment Japan, which said that currently it is evaluating the situation and doesn't know what the effects of this week's events will have on Metal Gear Solid 2. There have been reports, however, suggesting that the game's North American release, which was planned for November, could be delayed until at least next year, and there is the chance that MGS2 will not be released at all (a lot of the game could be offending). After you get off the ship (as seen in the MGS2 demo), the remainder of the game is set in New York, with the last level involving terrorist attacks on the city. Although the game was made prior to the recent events it is wise to re-evaluate it's content. Everyone at Dualgamer feels for the people who perished and their friends and families. The game would probably offend if it was released in it's current form, so it is likely that the last scene will be cut out and replaced for Western release. It seems that the effects of this tragedy have not only hit the people, but the games industry as well.

Release Dates

Dreamcast

Conflict Zone 28/9/2001
90 Minutes 26/10/2001

Playstation 2

F1 2001 28/9/2001
G-Surfers 28/9/2001
Project Eden 28/9/2001
Thunderhawk 28/9/2001
Snooker 2002 28/9/2001
Atlantis 3 5/10/2001
Dave Mirra Freestyle 2 5/10/2001
NHL 2002 5/10/2001
Spy Hunter 5/10/2001
MXrider 19/10/2001
Cricket 2002 26/10/2001
Herdy Gerdy 26/10/2001
Jimmy White's 26/10/2001

Gameboy Adv

Earthworm Jim 21/9/2001
Fortress 21/9/2001
Iridion 3D 21/9/2001
Pitfall 21/9/2001
Spider-Man 21/9/2001
X-Men 21/9/2001
Lucky Luke: Wanted 28/9/2001
Men in Black 28/9/2001
ESPN Final Round Golf 5/10/2001
Advance Wars 26/10/2001



^Spy Hunter is nearly here...

GTC Africa

Publisher: Rage | By Chris Zardis

News In Focus



Just when you thought that there were already enough car games on the market, then Rage are about to do the unthinkable and, yep, release another one!

Rage has confirmed that all of the game's 19 tracks are spanned across various countries in Africa, including Morocco, South Africa and Kenya. But what will make the game stand out? Thank goodness for PR contacts...

Q: It's a crowded genre. What makes GTC Africa different from any other driving game out there?

A: 'Principally, the team knew that to make any impact, GTC Africa had to look like a next-generation title. When you pay good money for new technology, you want software that supports that decision. It was also clear that a great many people would be investing in GT3, so any product had to complement

that experience in some way; i.e. provide driving fun was not necessarily present in GT3 and which was immediate. The team chose an unusual blend of circuit based racing with an all-terrain challenge. The cars are rally-prepared, yet they compete directly against one another... not just the clock! In addition, all 19 circuits are quite short but with very demanding features.'

The game will feature fully licensed vehicles from such companies as Ford, Mitsubishi, Subaru and Renault.

As you can see from the images, GTC Africa looks very next-gen, and the landscapes seem to span for miles in a very impressive way. Watch out for more on this potentially great rally game in future issues of Dualgamer, and the final release of GTC Africa later this year.



Whatever happened to...

DINOSAUR PLANET (N64)

This game was shown off at E3 2000 to be Rare's last Nintendo 64 game. However, there was still a lot of development to go, and the game would probably not have hit shelves until around now, if it was still being released. Nintendo decided to put a halt to the game later in the year as the N64 was in it's last moments. Instead, it was later unveiled that much of the engine and some of the ideas (even the boss shown on the left) had been used to form the basis of a new GameCube game, Star Fox: Dinosaur Planet. This new game keeps the 3rd person action gameplay of Dinosaur Planet and will be released shortly after the GameCube next year.



Nintendo Show UK: Barcode fun for all

The card-e-reader for Game Boy Advance is a rather bulky piece of equipment that slots in the top of the console just like a regular game pack, although it sticks out the back quite a lot. Once in it makes it able for the GBA to read barcodes off special Pokémon cards, which will probably be sold in packs, as they are now. Each of these cards have a set of two barcodes, that can hold a lot more information than regular barcodes like you get on food packaging. The lower shorter one holds data on the Pokémon (images, sounds, moves, stats, etc) and has up to 1296 bytes worth of information, while the other one can hold information for much more interesting things, with 2064 bytes (quite a bit). So far we've seen that one single card can hold a small animation or an image, or when two or more cards are used a mini game can be played depending on which cards are used. So far we've been able to see only a few of these, including a short cartoon featuring a Gloom and some Beedrills.



On the left is Pichu's mini game, which involves tugging on the tails of Hoppips to stop them from flying off the screen. On the right is the super-rare 251st Pokémon, Celebi. If you load the mini game up, you have to fly around grabbing as many apples as you can.

One game that took three separate cards was a pretty simple affair, which had you controlling a Machop smashing boulders that came from each side of the screen, very similar to the old Game and Watch games. These cards can also be mixed and matched, so different cards can be used to get alternate endings on cartoons for example. As far as graphics are concerned they're not near as good as we know the GBA can do, but this is surely due to the limitations of information that can be held on the card. It's also important to note that the information on the GBA is lost when you quit the game or whatever, so this means that if you choose to swap the cards you cannot keep the data. At the moment we've seen the cards available as promo cards (free at special events, etc) but the cards will probably keep the rarity system meaning that some data may be harder to get than others, maybe even not all of the new cards will have the barcodes. Only time will tell, but expect a 2002 launch.

Pokémon Mini surprises London audience

This year, at the Nintendo Show in London, we were promised a "Major Pokémon Announcement", so naturally we all expected to catch a glimpse of the next Pokémon game for GBA. What we got was something very different, in fact technically a brand new console. What we have here is ladies and gentlemen is 'the worlds smallest cartridge based console, ever!' the Pokémon mini. There are currently four different cartridges; Pokémon party mini, Pokémon pinball mini, Pokémon zany cards, and Pokémon puzzle collection. These games are all pretty simple, but some carts contain a great variety of games. Whereas some of the games may get dull after a small while, others will keep you occupied for hours on end. The system is a bit bigger than the Pocket Pikachu virtual pet (74mm height x 58mm width x 23mm depth to be exact), and has a black and white LCD screen unlike the Pocket Pikachu 2, which had a colour screen. The button layout is very good for a small console such as this. On the face of the machine, under the screen is a D-pad, an A and B button and a small rubber start button, and on top right side is the C button, which is a bit like the R trigger on the N64 controller, that your index finger curves around. The machine also includes a built in infrared link (that can work from up to 1.5m away), rumble, and a shock sensor, so it can detect shakes like a pedometer. Also some cartridges will make other features available such as a real time clock or stop-watch. This little gizmo should be out in 2002.





Worms crawl their way to the small screen...

Today, Eon Digital showed off Worms World Party images on the Game Boy Advance. Whilst it is obvious that the game will not offer Dreamcast-style online play, there will be link up capabilities for you to play against up to four of your friends. All of the weapons from the console version will be available, including the Sheep Launcher, Air Strike and the notoriously destructive Armageddon weapon.



After Mario Kart and Doom both showing that the GBA is capable of creating mind blowing 3D (or stretching 2D in Mario Kart's case) environments, Worms proves that the GBA is capable of replicating cut down console games. We can't wait to play the game, and it will be interesting how the single player mode is re created, as it will be more important than in other versions, with link up games being some what of a luxurious rarity. We'll keep you updated on this game in future issues, here at Dualgamer.

Colin McRae evolves on PS2 and Xbox

Codemasters have announced that they will be bringing a brand new Collin McRae Rally game to Xbox, PC, and PS2 next year. We have little information on the game, not even a solid screenshot. But what we do know is, this time the guys at Codemasters are trying create some thing a bit more special than your average racing game. Rick Nath, Associate Producer for the game said "We're aiming for a very personal experience, the previous games were all about the cars and the tracks. We want the player to really connect with the feeling of being McRae, not the car, and work with co-driver Nicky Grist, and the Ford team as a whole." So are we going to get interaction with the rest of your team during the race (why does Lylat Wars spring to mind?). Or maybe we'll get an RPG mode, where you must organise the rest of your team, to make sure they know what's going on during the next competition. We will also be treated to some of the most complete car models ever created, cars will have fully moving working parts, such as suspension. And the "enhanced damage engine" will mean you can smash your vehicle around and actually see realistic damage afterwards, e.g. you'll be able to dent, puncture, and completely rip off panels from your car! Code masters have been working extremely closely with Ford Racing to create a game that's very, very close to the real thing, just without having to wear a big helmet!



How to sell a videogame Part 2

Many people believe that the only way to get a videogame is to actually create a good game. This, it seems, is total rubbish, as Infogrames, publishers of the new PS2 water ski 'em up, have proven, with the help of some rather tasty advertising stunts (soon to be aired) courtesy of Page 3. Pity this article's on page 7, really.



< This is as close we have to a screenshot at the moment, a zoom in on a teaser image of Colin's trademark Focus rally car. We'll bring you more, naturally, as soon as we get it.

News Writers: **Chris Zardis** | **Rob Ratcliff** | **Michael Bickley** | **Ben Matthew**

GameCube is Here

Well, in Japan, anyway. Welcome to Dualgamer's exclusive GameCube launch and Spaceworld coverage (before any other magazine, you know). We've played the GameCube and we are impressed, as you will see over the next batch of pages, filled to the brim with all the Nintendo GameCube information you will ever need. Enjoy!



**Luigi | Monkey Ball | SA2 | Bomberman | Wave Race
Mario Sunshine | SSX Tricky | Soul Calibur 2 | Zelda**

LUIGI'S MANSION

Luigi's Mansion is one of the most impressive games on GameCube, at least, graphically. The latest version we saw includes some of the most impressive lighting effects ever in a videogame and some very innovative gameplay, and an interesting 'Game Boy Horror' display in the corner. We have heard reports that some people have grown tired of the repetitive style of the game, with the 'enter room, suck up ghosts with vacuum cleaner, enter next room' routine getting tedious quite quickly. However, we'd come back to it any time just to experience the sheer quality of the graphics. More very soon. [By Chris Zardis]



SUPER MONKEY BALL

This is the first fruit of Sega's GameCube antics and it looks pretty impressive to say the least. Like Chu Chu Rocket on the Dreamcast, Monkey Ball is pretty original gameplay wise. You have to tilt the floor to make the monkey roll from the beginning to the end of the stage as quickly as possible. Controls only use the analogue stick and the A button to keep things simple. A multiplayer mode is also included and includes some very cool power ups to hinder your opponent's progress, such as making their ball smaller or tilting their board. [By Chris Zardis]



SONIC ADVENTURE 2

SONIC ADVENTURE 2

PUBLISHER: Sega

WRITTEN BY: Cruzn15



It's still early stages, but this is actually a shot of Sonic Adventure 2 on GameCube.

If anyone had told you just a few years ago that you'd be able to play a Sonic the Hedgehog game on a Nintendo system, you'd laugh in their face. However, with Sega's shock announcement of becoming a third-party publisher/developer, all old-school gamer's dreams are coming true with Sonic Adventure 2 on the GameCube. As of currently released information from Sega and Sonic Team, Sonic Adventure 2 on the GameCube will be a port of the previously released title under the same name for the Dreamcast. Polished graphics and perhaps a couple extra modes or levels can be expected from the title however it is still the speed, mech-shooting and treasure hunting title that many were so accustomed to on the Sega Dreamcast. Of the new characters introduced in the

sequel, you'll be able to play as Shadow the Hedgehog, a cool, dark hedgehog who becomes Sonic's arch rival (sorry Dr. Robotnik), and Rogue the Bat, looking for the captivating Chaos Emeralds before Sonic & Co can get them. Sonic Adventure 2 is based around the Hero vs. Dark rivalry aspect. You can choose to be either the Hero Side or the Dark Side in your quests. If you chose the Hero Side, you'll find yourself racing through fast-paced levels as Sonic the Hedgehog (or Shadow if you chose Dark), blasting your way through enemies in your powerful mech as Tails (or Dr. Robotnik if you chose Dark) and looking for Chaos Emeralds in large levels in a treasure hunt-type game as Knuckles (or Rogue for Dark). Besides the competitive single-player, Sonic Adventure 2 also comes packed with a two-player competition mode and a waiting-to-be-unlocked Go-Kart level. It seems there will be more to come as well, Sonic Team may very likely choose the Nintendo GameCube as their console of choice for future titles so we can look forward a new Sonic game, Chu Chu Rocket, Phantasy Star Online and, may we be blessed with enough luck, a NIGHTS sequel.

BOMBERMAN GENERATION

Hudson are hard at work at a brand new Bomberman Generation. The game, which seems to be in the same 'platforming' style of the Nintendo 64 games, looks like one of the most impressive showcases for Nintendo's Cube-shaped baby yet. The N64 games weren't that impressive, so we hope that Hudson get it right this time. Also, unlike Bomberman Hero (the 2nd Nintendo 64 Bomberman outing), we really hope that there will be a multiplayer mode in this version, preferably in the form of the original games. We'll bring you more on this game as more information is leaked. Expect to see it released in Japan early next year and in Europe around Summer 2002. [By Chris Zardis]



CAPTION: BOMBERMAN GENERATION

The Gamecube's ability to create almost perfect cartoon style graphics is very impressive.



Looking at what Sony has done in the past and what Microsoft is promising for the future, you look at an old-school videogame company like Nintendo and at that point, you realize how much innovation this company displays. Throughout the years, you see such names as Donkey Kong, Mario, Zelda, 1080 Snowboarding, Mario Party, Mario Kart and, although not properly credited, Wave Race. Nintendo wanted to do a sports title but they weren't looking to copy what everyone else was doing at the time. They wanted something different. So they began work on a sports title based on water jet-skis and the result was something very impressive. Now, Nintendo can easily slap improved graphics and water effects and call it a sequel but they're planning to completely surpass what was done with Wave Race

WAVE RACE

WAVE RACE

PUBLISHER: Nintendo

WRITTEN BY: Cruzn15

64 and create the next generation of water sports on the GameCube. Nintendo had the 100% complete Japanese version of Wave Race: Blue Storm on display and in playable form at Space World although there were only five tracks available in the version on display. Three of the tracks are only slightly altered versions of tracks available in Wave Race 64 such as Dolphin Park and Southern Island. The two new tracks in the demo version are City Harbor, a track that takes place during the night with tons of junks and obstacles to make your journey much more difficult, and Ethnic Lagoon, revolving around a group of islands which is very detailed (you can notice various ocean-dwellers swimming through the water).

There are eight riders in Blue Storm, doubling Wave Race 64's skimpy lineup, with all eight competing in each race. This is a much-appreciated addition, as races in WR64 seemed a lot lonelier. A nice addition in BS is lineup of 1080 Snowboarding characters being carried over into the list of available characters such as Ricky Winterborn and Rob Haywood. Wave Race: Blue Storm is, as expected, a visual masterpiece.

The water is one of the most visually amazing aspects in the game. The realism stretches between track-to-track with the water clouding, changing colors slightly with the respective territory and time of day, the reflections coming from over the water and the distorted view of objects beneath the water's surface. But don't think the beauty and detail ends at the bodies of water. The environments are all fully colorful and detailed as the awesome character models and detailed sprays of water. Although the

game does play considerably fast, it doesn't quite reach a 60 FPS frame rate and there are some minor glitches in crashes and physical player interaction although they don't really interfere with gameplay.



CAPTION: WAVE RACE: BLUE STORM

The GameCube may have an advantage over the PS2 in that it is capable of 4 people playing simultaneously without the need of extra hardware (par the controllers, of course). Also, Nintendo are well known for making a good selection of multiplayer games, an area that even the 4 player compatible Microsoft Xbox may have trouble competing with.

The controls are just as easy to pickup and become easily familiar with as the Nintendo 64 version although you will eventually learn many techniques to aid you through the harder challenges in the game. New to the Wave Race series is the Turbo feature. Pressing X will give you a nice little speed boost although it is considerably more difficult to maneuver your vehicle during this short period of time so make sure it's on a straight-away (best if used on the home stretch to the Finish Line). All of the familiar tricks from Wave Race 64 are returning accompanied by all new ones too. Of the new tricks, most of them involve your character

performing gymnastic tricks while riding the Jet Ski such as spins and flips, not many where the Jet Ski actually performs an action. Tricks are performed with the C-stick or, as in the previous title, with the B button. One of the gladly welcomed additions is the four-player support. This game is something you'll want to pickup and play with all your friends and you can rest assured that it's a truly stunning experience. Although Blue Storm hasn't added anything groundbreaking to Wave Race 64, you can happily enjoy WR64's great gameplay with improved graphics, more levels, characters and many new additions that made one of the best extreme sports games even better. Look out for Wave Race at NGC launch.



[above: Wave Race: Blue Storm Preview continued...]

MARIO SUNSHINE

SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE
PUBLISHER: Nintendo
WRITTEN BY: Ben Matthew

At this years Space World we got our first looks the proper sequel to Super Mario 64, known at the moment as Mario Sunshine. So not surprisingly the game play has stayed very similar to that of Mario 64 with many of the same moves including the famous 'butt stomp' move. Graphically the game has evolved to give Mario a much smoother and more rounded appearance. We were told that Mario would be given a much more mature look this time round, but I could not spot that much change in his general appearance, apart from the massive boiler type thing that's been strapped to his back. At the moment we have no idea what this back-pack is for, but it's probably going to be a big part of the game. But Shigeru Miyamoto has said he picked the bits of the game shown carefully, as he is trying to keep the reason for the pack secret, and it will remain so for some time. We are also intrigued the sun like object which was always in the top right corner of the screen (which would probably explain the sunshine). The surroundings have also changed quite a bit, now looking more realistic (at least on the level we saw) and quite a bit larger. At the moments all the sound effects

are taken straight from Mario 64, but these will almost definitely be changed by the time it's released. As far as characters go, we did not see any of the famous faces we would have expected, no princess, no Luigi, no Bowser, not even Toad (who's seems to have got in any and every game he can). What does this mean? Probably that they just weren't involved in the bit of the game we saw. But it is very possible that we will see a new enemy (Waliugi?) or the game may for once have a different goal than the traditional baddie to be defeated. Whatever there is in store for us, we probably won't be sure for a quite while, as the game is said to still be very early in development.



Written by Cruzn15



SSX TRICKY

SSX was the Electronic Art's debut title on the Playstation 2 introducing a brand new EA division, EA Sports Big, which will go on to create NBA Street. In SSX, you race your snowboarder down from the top of the mountain to the finish line by optimizing each course's shortcuts and jumps to perform tricks, which will raise your turbo meter. SSX conceived as a racing game at heart with tricks as a side option, however the sick air and the awesome trick variations gave many players a different way to enjoy the game. EA Sports Big hears your cry for more tricks and their prayers have been answered. In fact, that's exactly where the "Tricky" comes from in the name SSX Tricky. This is more of a Director's Cut than it is a sequel. It contains all the same courses as the first, although they're all revamped to include more shortcuts and different areas of the mountain to board down, six of the first SSX's eight characters return (Hiro and Jurgen have been sacked) along with six new riders and some brand new tricks too. Although, the courses may definitely be reminiscent if you've played SSX on the PS2, many show big differences from the first and you'll be able ride down a different route depending if you're racing or going for a stunt run. Also, there are two new tracks, Garibaldi, located in British Columbia, Canada with tons of jumps and different routes to make it one to appeal to newcomers, and Alaska, set in a crazy mountain in Alaska with steep slopes and plenty of drop-off's. The soundtrack will be music to your ears with big names from rock and hip-hop ranging from Mix Master Mike from the Beastie Boys, Aphrodite, to the Plump DJ's along with many others. Thanks to the GameCube's powerful hardware, sound effects and adrenaline-stopping music will accompany tense moments before, after, or during they occur. If you're tearing it up on the slopes, you can expect some rocking, fast-beat music to accompany your great run but when you start eating too much snow, the

music will get duller and slow down. All of this great musical environment will be possible in Dolby Surround Sound. Sound like a nice listen? Well, Network Records seems to think so as they will be releasing a CD soundtrack of the music throughout SSX Tricky. Another nice welcome to Tricky's sound scheme is introduction of celebrity voice talents to accompany your awesome trick or painful fall. The trick system is seeing a huge addition. With many more tricks like being able to move the board around your body and twirl it on the end of your foot, the trick system is more complex and much deeper. How is this all possible? Well, EA Sports Big has decide to tweak the physics engine so you can keep more control in the air and when riding on the snow to maintain more and longer airtime. The new addition of tricks include the Uber-tricks, which require more speed, momentum and air to pull off which have your character performing flips and handstands while on the board. The grudge and personality aspects will play a huge role in Tricky. Each character will have extremely detailed player emotion, a detailed character bio and their own unique personality. Some characters who have short tempers or are spiteful may find themselves in a grudge to take you down the rest of a race because of that innocent bump at the beginning. In the same aspect, rivalries will be thrown into the mix where a character could take five hits from one character and still honor their friendship while another could bump into them and send them into a rage. This is detailed through cut-scenes and sound clips before, during, and after a race. SSX Tricky is a worthy follow-up to the Playstation 2's huge blockbuster hit however, be warned that this is no full sequel, although very close. For anyone who hasn't played the first in the series on the PS2, Tricky will look to be a whole new experience that'll make any gamer's eyes light up. SSX Tricky will accompany the GameCube at its launch.



SOUL CALIBUR 2

The original Soul Calibur on the Dreamcast was heralded as the best beat 'em up ever. Combining blistering speed, incredible weapons and amazing graphics, it was definitely one of the Dreamcast's best achievements. Now the sequel has been announced by Namco, and will be available on GameCube as well as other formats. Soul Calibur 2 looks incredibly similar to its predecessor as you can see from these screenshots, but that is no bad thing as fans will know if you've played it. Expect new characters, gameplay modes and a new single player game to be included for Soul Calibur 2's release next year. [By David Allan]



ZELDA: CUBED

The Zelda series is only second to Mario when it comes to describing Nintendo's greatest hits. Every game has seen an improvement on the one before, culminating with Ocarina of Time on the N64 which was one of the best games on the system. The unveiling of the latest game in the series was always going to be a huge and surprising event for Nintendo fans, but none of us could have predicted the game would look like this. Cel-shaded graphics have been used in a similar way to Jet Set Radio to give the game a cartoony feel. This is quite a contrast to the tech demo shown at last year's Spaceworld that looked much more realistic. Link's age has also been reduced to give the game a fresh feeling. It's difficult to tell what the gameplay will involve but so far it seems to be very similar to the N64 games. Whether the cell-shaded graphics suit the game or not, we can expect Zelda on GameCube to be a huge title for the system and a boost for sales on its release next year. [By David Allan]



CAPTION: ZELDA CUBED

The graphics featured in the new Zelda game have caused quite a mixed reaction. Whilst the game looks beautiful in motion, some people argue that the game looks far too 'cartoony' and a huge let down after the eye dropping 'mature' graphics on show at the last Spaceworld. We have more faith in Miyamoto than that though, expect a lot more very soon.

Well, that was Spaceworld 2001!

The GameCube part anyway. Later in the magazine, we have Game Boy Advance previews of Wario Land 4 and also coverage of the Pokémon E-card Reader and the Pokémon Mini direct from our reporter at this year's Nintendo Show in London.

Adios, Spaceworld. See you next year.



Written by David Allan

DUALGAMER - FIRST PREVIEW - NEW IMAGES



TEKKEN 4

PUBLISHER: Sony
PLATFORM: PS2

DEVELOPER: Namco
GENRE: Fighter

Many years ago there was a fierce battle between two 2D fighting games, Street Fighter and Mortal Kombat. Each game had its own loyal fans and it seemed neither would win. Then Sega launched Virtua Fighter into the arcades, the world's first 3D fighting game. Namco saw this and decided to launch its own 3D fighting game, Tekken.

Since then the Tekken series has become the most well known fighting game series, although most hardcore fans of the genre will admit that Tekken was never the best. It seemed to lag behind Virtua Fighter, and now with the launch of Virtua Fighter 4, Namco have developed Tekken 4. It's the ultimate battle for the fighting game genre.

Next generation Tekken got off to a bad start with the release of Tekken Tag Tournament as a Western PS2 launch title. It was practically the exact same game as Tekken 3, with the exception of an added Tag Battle mode and various extra characters. The game still wasn't properly 3D, the background didn't join up with the floor resulting in a strange 'sliding' sensation giving the game an unrealistic look. Tekken 4 is set to change all this with some large changes to the series. The game is now set in fully 3D environments, such as car parks and shopping malls. The levels are quite big and have uneven surfaces, with additions such as steps and plat-

The backgrounds stretch on for miles with some incredible detail. Helicopters fly by, crowds cheer and Skyscrapers with shiny windows reach up all around, the levels really do look spectacular.



CAPTION: TEKKEN 4

For the first time in a Tekken game, the backgrounds are fully merged in with the foreground. This means that the independently moving backdrops are a thing of the past and that the whole game looks a lot more tidy. Let's just say that we're not complaining over this latest change to the series, even if it is breaking tradition.



Try these levels for size



[Above: The levels in Tekken 4 are simply amazing.]

The new 3D environments also bring whole new possibilities to fights meaning hardened players will need to change tactics. For example, if you are losing a fight, you could run around your opponent and get them against the wall. Here they cannot escape, giving you the chance to batter them into submission. Another neat move is that due to the low ceilings in some areas, if you kick an opponent into the air he'll hit the ceiling, bounce off and land on the floor, causing more damage.

There are a huge range of characters, 34 in total. Some need to be unlocked by playing through the game whilst others are on a time delay meaning you need to play the game for a certain amount of time before they become available. Most of the characters are returning from previous games, although they all have changed appearance slightly, for example Marshall Law has a moustache. There are 3 new characters too - Craig Marduk is a fierce looking tough guy, Steve Fox is a British kick boxer who hardly uses his hands and Christie Montiero is a Brazilian trying to avenge her father's death.

All in all, the arcade version of Tekken 4 is an immense improvement on previous games in the series and is truly worthy of the Tekken name. Whether or not its better than Virtua Fighter 4 is quite a controversial decision. VF4 seems to slightly have the edge in the graphics and technique department but for sheer fun it looks as though Tekken 4 can square up to all its rivals.

Namco have not yet announced what extras the PS2 version released next year will include but we can be sure they'll spend more time on it than with Tekken Tag Tournament. Expect new mini-games, easier ways to unlock characters and maybe some new environments. Stick with Dual-gamer for more news on the home version in the coming months, and a full review early next year when the game is expected to hit the shelves of your local games emporium.



Written by Chris Zardis



All of the Xbox images seem to have a dark sky, where as it's painted blue in the PS2 version. A message from the developers?

PS2 (above) Vs Xbox



THE SIMPSONS: ROAD RAGE

PUBLISHER: EA
PLATFORM: Xbox / PS2

For a TV success as big as The Simpsons, you may expect more videogame spoofs to be released. Before the god awful Simpsons Wrestling, the only game to note was Virtual Springfield. But, it seems, Fox (the developers of the game and makers of the show) are beginning to release that they have a cash cow on their hands, and have recently shown off the surprisingly good looking 'Simpsons: Road Rage' to the world. Featuring a gameplay style similar to Sega's Crazy Taxi, Road Rage will feature at least 25 characters from the TV show, all of whom interact differently with each other when you take them for a ride (if they don't use the phrase 'shut up, Flanders' in the game, we'll eat our collection of hats).

The principle around the stroyline is that Burns has taken complete control over transit in the city and is charging huge amounts for the use of his buses and trains. Your job is to cater for the transit needs of the people who are all screaming for a good value trip. Fox are boasting 5 different Simpsons neighbourhoods to explore and play in, featuring at least 100 of the most famous landmarks in the show, such as Moe's Tavern, the Kwik-E-Mart, the Duff Brewery and the, err, 'Mad Cow Meat Market'.

Graphically, we aren't complaining. Road Rage looks like a cross between Jet Set Radio, Crazy Taxi, and, of course, the TV show itself, although some of the backgrounds look a tad plain. Thankfully, the game runs smoothly on both consoles, and the cartoon style of the show isn't lost here.



CAPTION: THE SIMPSONS: ROAD RAGE

This month's hidden competition: In the 'soap box race' episode, who designed and built the Honour Roller? Answers to compo@dualgamer.com. The first correct answer wins, and the winner will get their name in DG issue 04.



< If you look like this, please consult your local plastic surgeon.

Unlike Metropolis Street Racer, which is happy to let you loose in a completely empty city, Road Rage provides fully interactive worlds, with a community alive with traffic and, of course, pedestrians (nope, sorry, you can't run 'em over).

Although most of the screens we've shown you depict a city environment (based on, of course, Springfield), the game offers levels in a variety of terrains, including mountains, forest filled valleys and more to be revealed by Fox soon.

We've been told that the story mode will only feature around 60 - unique deliveries, which doesn't really sound that impressive, unless Fox mean that they are unique each time you play (unlikely). The game, overall, looks like it can promise some fun gameplay, but it's also quite a risky genre to release a game in, with Crazy Taxi still holding the trump cards. There's still plenty of time until release, so we hope that they play test it enough to make sure the team is happy with the game before release.



CAPTION: THE SIMPSONS: ROAD RAGE

Krusty decides to take a short cut off the top of a cliff. A good idea? We're not so sure about that one, it's probably best you decide for yourselves.

Modes of Play

The Simpsons Road Rage features several different modes and, get this, the 2 player option that people were demanding to be included in Crazy Taxi 2... and wasn't.

Story Mode

Well, duh, this is the standard game mode where all the action happens. Not sure where the 'story' comes into it, though.

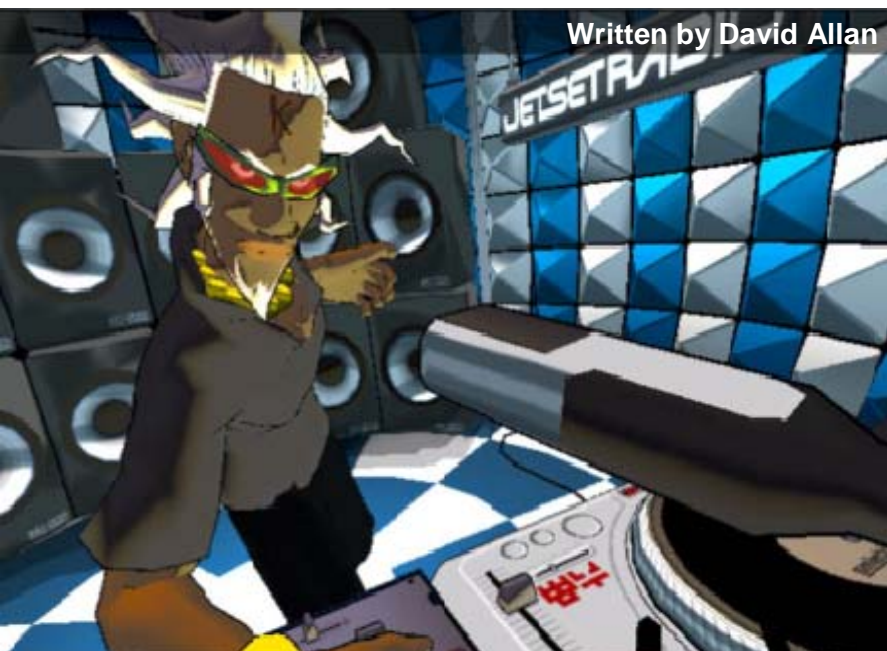
Sunday Driving Mode

Another highly wanted feature for Crazy Taxi 2 to feature, this mode allows you to explore the landscapes and pick up passengers at your own will.

2 Player Split Screen

Possibly the most interesting mode, you have to beat your opponent to picking up the next passenger, and can even steal them en route!





Written by David Allan

'The first game looked great, but for the sequel the graphics have been heavily improved to take advantage of the X Box'

JET SET RADIO FUTURE

PUBLISHER: Sega
PLATFORM: Xbox

DEVELOPER: Sega
GENRE: Misc.

Jet Set Radio on the Dreamcast was one of the best games for the system and one of the most innovative games in history. The mix of vibrant cell shaded graphics and catchy music made the game a hit with players and critics alike. You played as a Roller Blading gang member spraying your tag over many levels, with the police after you. Rival gangs needed to be defeated, levels and new tags unlocked to become the number one skate gang in Tokyo-to, the futuristic city the game is set in. Despite major critical acclaim, Jet Set Radio wasn't a very successful game in terms of sales. To expand on what they've created, the Sega developers Smilebit are making Jet Set Radio Future for X Box. It's a semi-sequel set a few years after the first game with some altered levels from the original and some new ones, combined with better graphics and many new modes.

One of the first things that hits you when you play the game is how amazing it looks. The first game looked great, but for the sequel the graphics have been heavily improved to take advantage of the X Box. The game runs at an incredibly smooth 60 frames per second, twice as fast as on Dreamcast. This means the character's animations are faster allowing for more tricks mid air and better turning and dodging. The environments have much higher polygon counts, with huge crowds of people on screen at once and a draw distance that extends into the distance, so no pop-up here.

This time the game is set in 2024 in Tokyo, with multiple levels set across the city. The only playable level shown so far was an altered version of the Tokyo Bus Station from the original. A lot of the buildings have changed, are taller and the level has been made far more interactive with more opportunities to grind and pull stunts (a good thing).



CAPTION: JET SET RADIO FUTURE

There's a lot more on screen now than ever before in the Dreamcast version of the game. The JSRF banner in the background looks rather too much like Nazi propaganda, though.

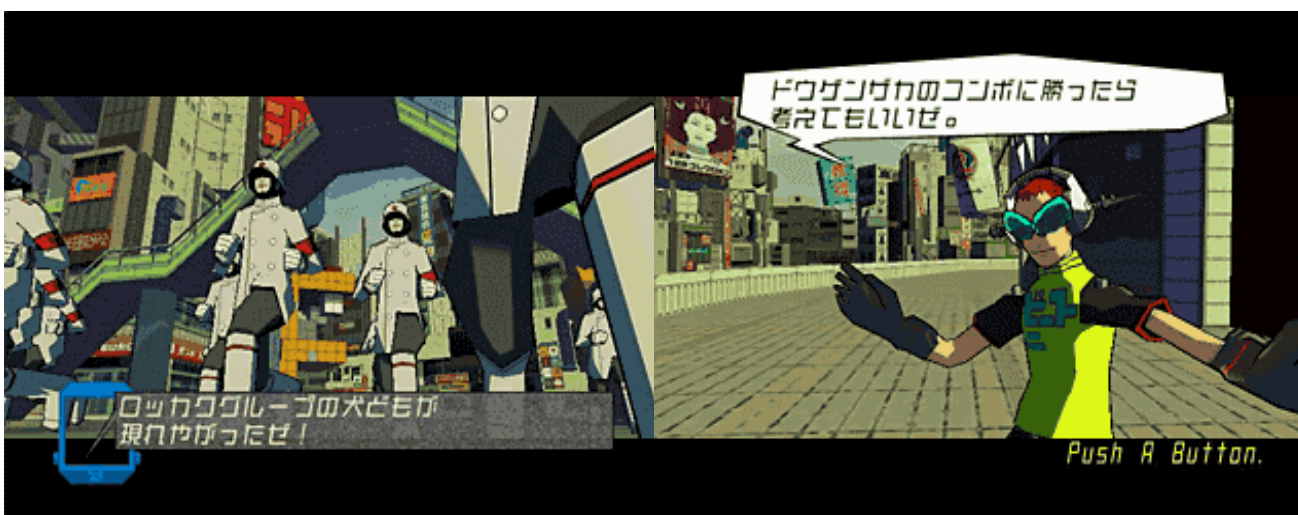
The game isn't just improved in the graphics department, there have been alterations to the gameplay too. A 'speed boost' has been added which causes the screen to blur as your skater shoots along at high speed. The graphical effect is amazing and looks like it's straight out of a Japanese cartoon. New stunts have been added, and along with the increase in speed the game seems to have become a lot more stunt focus than before, reflecting the current popularity in BMX and skateboarding games. Multiplayer modes are also going to be included. It's not yet known whether the game will support online gaming, but it will include split screen games for up to 4 players.



One of the main modes that Smilebit is keen to tell everyone about is the teamwork mode. You and your friends can play together to make larger stunts and get huge scores, whilst trying to defeat a rival gang.

There are also plans to allow console link up gaming in a similar way to Halo, this could mean up to 16 player games with 4 X Box's running 4 player games. There is even the slight possibility that Smilebit will include an online option into the game, which would open up even more doors, although we are unsure of how / how well it would play if this was implanted into the final version. Jet Set Radio Future is a great way for Sega to strengthen its multi-platform strategy and will be one of the best launch games for the X Box, as well as Sega's first Xbox game. Smilebit have learnt from any mistakes in the first game (although there weren't really all that many) to make this a worthwhile update to one of gaming's most innovative titles.

We'll bring you up-to date on all the latest from this game, and other promising looking Xbox launch titles in future issues of Dualgamer. Also, look out for an exclusive insider feature into the Xbox's launch in Issue 05, released in two months time towards the end of November.



< If you understand the text in these images, then the chances are that you don't understand this caption, rendering it pointless.



Written by Chris Zardis

'If you're looking for a real driving simulator, don't buy Arctic Thunder, get Gran Turismo 3 instead'

ARCTIC THUNDER

PUBLISHER: Midway
PLATFORM: PS2 / Xbox

DEVELOPER: Midway
GENRE: Racing

Midway, although obviously not the kings of games, are often known for making some pretty decent arcade 'em ups, Hydro Thunder on the N64 and later, Dreamcast, was just that. It might not have been deadly serious, and some of the levels were badly designed, but the game was good fun to play, and often very fast and entertaining in 2 player.

Midway have confirmed that their latest game in the 'thunder' series, Arctic Thunder, a snow sled game which has been in arcades for some time now, will be coming to the Playstation 2 very soon, September in the US (and Xbox at a later date). If you're looking for a real driving simulator, don't buy Arctic Thunder. It's about as over the top as you can get, with speed boosts, huge jumps, and hugely powerful weapons such as the Atomic Snowball all dotting the tracks.

Now, you can also punch and kick players off the track from the safety of your snowmobile, something that's sure to rise arguments in multiplayer matches. A unique aspect of the game is the ability to hit special power ups that make you pull off a stunt, the harder the power up is to get, the better it turns out. Unfortunately, button-bashing moves are often hard to pull off in a racing game, so Midway have probably found the best compromise here. Some people will be very relieved with the news that Arctic Thunder follows the path of it's predecessors by the majority of courses being start to finish (with no laps), other than circuit. With Hydro Thunder, I often found that these circuits were better, and more freely designed, with more going on in the background than in any of the circuit levels. Even though you'd think the game is based on snow, it still offers a wide variety of levels, including a Lost Himalayan City, a level based around the Chernobyl disaster (yes, a nuclear plant melts down whilst you race), the Swiss Alps and a Haunted Forest. As always with 'thunder' games, there are bound to be

loads of secret levels to unlock which we don't know of yet. In terms of modes, Arctic Thunder has your basic Arcade mode, which, unsurprisingly, is a port from the arcade game. It also has a training mode, something that Hydro Thunder lacked, and the mandatory multiplayer and single race options. Multiplayer was always one of Hydro Thunder's strongest points, and it looks like this game is set to continue the tradition. Unlike Hydro Thunder, however, the game supports up to 4 players with a multi tap in a race or battle mode situation. Midway seem pretty silent on the multiplayer side of things beyond this point, so we'll have to wait till nearer the release to find out more. Arctic Thunder looks like an extremely fun game, and certainly worthy of being Hydro Thunder's sequel. It also seems to have more depth than it's predecessor, without sacrificing the enjoyment factor. Full review coming soon.





Written by Chris Zardis



Bond is back, can EA pull off Goldeneye on the PS2?

AGENT UNDER FIRE

PUBLISHER: EA
PLATFORM: PS2

DEVELOPER: EA
GENRE: Shooter

Movie licences are rarely considered a good thing, but the Bond series has often been an exception to the rule. Any reader who is over five years old will clearly remember that November morning when Goldeneye on the Nintendo 64 hit the shops. Within weeks it was considered as one of the best shoot 'em ups of all time, with the multiplayer mode capturing the attentions of millions of gamers around the world. After the slight disappointment of Tomorrow Never Dies and the mediocre World is not Enough, EA are about to hit back with a brand new Bond game on the Playstation 2. This time, the game has no movie ties to hold it down, so the developers can be more creative whilst keeping to the classic Bond theme. This should mean that the game is tailored more for the video-game market and that there will be a better result at the end of it.

The graphics look pretty impressive, even though the game is still at a relatively early stage. The enemies are much improved over previous Bond games, and are almost faultlessly smooth. The environments are still slightly sharp edged, although I'm sure people won't mind as long as the gameplay turns out well.

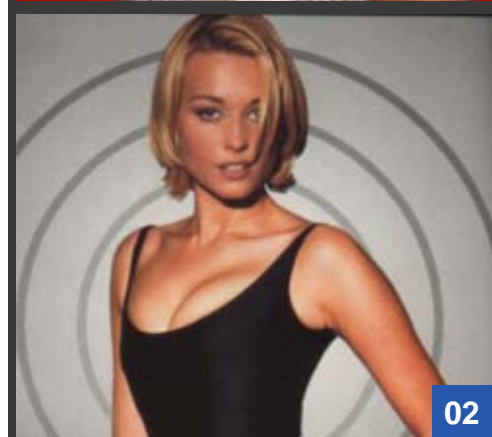
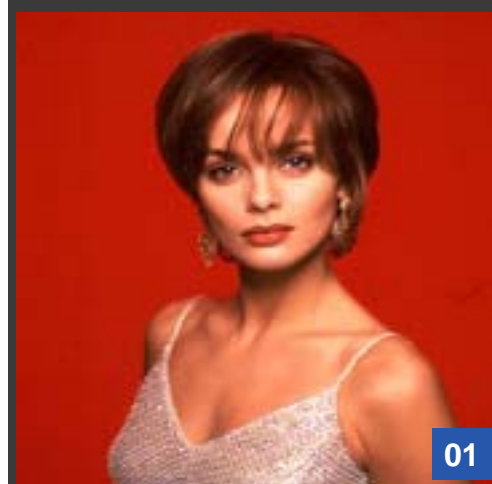
Agent Under Fire's levels have been designed in a way to give the player more control over the action. Most stages have different routes for those who want to get straight into the action with all guns blazing and others who want to proceed the game with stealth and attempt not to be stopped. Which ever route you decide to take there are

still, of course, plenty of opportunities to hide outside a guard's vision and shoot him unaware that you are there. I'm sure most of you are probably waiting for multiplayer to make a mention. Agent Under Fire will come with support for up to four players, although you will need a multi tap, the needed amount of controllers and plenty of friends to get the most out of this mode. There will be several ways to play, including the standard deathmatch, some sort of 'capture the flag' game and something called 'protect the VIP'. Whether the game can live up to the standards set by Rare back in 1997 with Goldeneye, will have to be seen later this year,





Bond Girls



1. Izabella Scorupco as Natalya in *Goldeneye*.

2. Cecilie Thomsen as Professor Inga Bergstrom in *Tomorrow Never Dies*.

3. Sophie Marceau as Elektra King in *The World is not Enough*.

Agent Under Fire will feature two main gameplay methods in the single player game. The shooting part is self explanatory, but there will also be ample opportunity to test out your driving abilities, as this will make up around 30% of the final game. You'll be able to get your hands on several classic Bond cars, as well as, hopefully, a tank. Those who fear that EA are trying to make this part of Agent Under Fire a Mario Kart style racer will be happy to hear that it is still based on objectives, such as finding an item before the enemy before planting a bomb on their vehicle. Sounds fun to me.

James Bond 007: Agent Under Fire will be released in America in the next couple of months and will likely make it to Europe by December, if EA are going to cash in on the Christmas rush. We'll bring you more and a full review of the game as the release draws closer.

We'll be expecting you, Bond...



Stealth returns in 007 Agent Under Fire. We can't wait to get our hands on the sniper rifle once again. Mmm...



'The graphics do look quite poor compared to a lot of the DC games around and so they do slightly disappoint...'

Written by Rob Ratcliff

ALIEN FRONT ONLINE

PUBLISHER: Sega
PLATFORM: Dreamcast

DEVELOPER: Sega
GENRE: Shooter

Aliens are invading looking for a new home and well, stone me, they've picked Earth. The Triclops are a bunch of three-eyed, red and green, not the kind of people you want to be in a dark alley with race. As new Dreamcast games are turning into a dyeing breed Alien Front Online is a nice chance to forget about the sadness of the DC's early departure and seriously kick some alien ass!

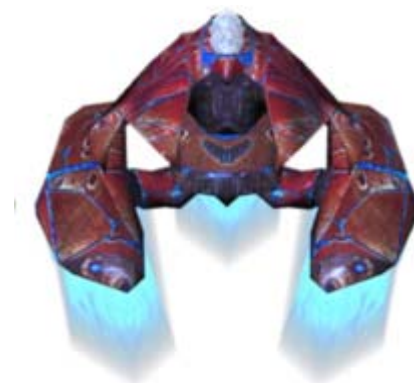
There are 2 ways you can play the game offline, Arcade or Tactics mode. Arcade mode is where you will be taken from place to place around the Earth fighting and you continue until the time is up. You get extra points for team contribution accuracy and the like so it's not just running in guns blazing! Whenever you go online the world top 10 arcade scores are checked, if you have a score high enough you will be automatically updated there. The current top score is 1,188,000 by Macross.

Tactics mode is a series of impressively tough missions that you have to complete, this gives the game a story as opposed to just senseless violence, not that we don't like a bit of that obviously! There are 66 missions in all, 33 for each race, human and alien, the missions are set out so as you can take any route to complete the game. There are 5 endings for each race as well, which no-matter what you will be able to see eventually. Some of the missions will really piss you off as no matter what you do you can't complete them. For instance in one alien mission in Tokyo you have to destroy one of your crashed ships so the humans don't find out our secrets. You are surrounded by gunners and if you are killed once the mis-

sion is failed, it's a bitch to complete but when you figure it out it's very satisfying. That brings us nicely onto the fighting arenas themselves. There are a total of 6 places you can fight in. The Alien Cave, Area 51, Washington DC, Tokyo, Siberia and The Island which is just off the coast of Australia. They are incredibly detailed and it is surprising how everything seems to be animated. All of the buildings that you shoot collapse including bill boards and bus shelters, the sand in Area 51 actually moves in the wind which looks quite hypnotic and there are animal skeletons you can run over! Despite the fact that almost everything in the fighting areas can be destroyed, the graphics do look quite poor compared to a lot of the DC games around and so they do slightly disappoint.



Of course, all of this disappears when you go online. Online there are 3 modes you can play, Deathmatch, Fortress or Flag. Deathmatch is quite self explanatory, 2 teams consist of up to 4 computer or human players and the team with the most amount of kills at the end win. Fortress is where one team is defending their base and the other has to attack it, each base as four points which need to be killed, If the building is still intact at the end of the time the defenders win, if not the attackers win. Flag mode is unlike the capture the flag most are used to after playing such games as Quake 3 Arena. In this a big green flag is placed in the middle of the map, the teams have to hold onto it for a total of 150 seconds, whichever team does



this first wins. More like Q3A in this is the fact that the person holding the flag, if killed drops it. All of the online play is made more enjoyable by the star system, it's quite complicated but we think we have it sussed. Whenever your team is winning most of the time through a match and winning rather well you get a star. These stars decide your rank, you begin as a Cadet and when you get 10 stars you become a private. There are a total of 10 ranks and you go up a rank every 10 stars, it sounds simple enough but believe us, it isn't! The task of getting top rank is made harder because you can actually lose stars as well. Just as when you win consistently you get a star, when you lose consistently a star is taken away. This makes losing feel that little bit more degrading than it is normally, nice one Sega...

The great thing about the game is it comes with a microphone, this means you can taunt abuse at your opposition when they are losing by pressing Y twice. By pressing it once you can speak to your team only meaning if you want to talk tactics your enemies won't hear about it. It can be quite hard to understand some accents though which can mean you screaming down the microphone 'what the hell are you on about?!' There are a wide array of vehicles you can choose from to slaughter your foe with. Each side has 3 vehicles, the army as 3 tanks and the aliens have a hover craft, a 2 legged walker and a 4 legged walker. Each side's 3 are stronger than the one before but also slower. The 2 extremes are the alien Hov Craft, the fastest craft in the game but it also has the weakest armour and cannon in the game. The other extreme is the aliens SP walker, it has the most powerful cannon and armour in the game but also it is the slowest which can get very frustrating! The way you shoot things sadly can be a bit easy, even when strafing out of the way the auto-lock on means that even a child can't miss his target! This can mean a very tedious game for those who like needing a bit of skill in order to hit the enemy.

CAPTION: ALIEN FRONT ONLINE

The game has some nice effects to boast, but not quite 128 bit yet.





In arcade and online games your enemies leave you a nice little present for your trouble after killing them. All enemies leave a health bonus which can keep you going after those somewhat heated conflicts and sometimes they will leave a little bonus, a sub-weapon. The sub-weapons are great fun and are much stronger than most cannons, there are homing missiles, guided missiles, hellfire missiles and many more, the aliens have equivalents to these in their arsenal in the form of Seeker wings, Flying Drones and Light Swarms. The aliens also have some quite fun sub-weapons like the gravity ball, this lifts the enemies off the ground and pretty much disables them. If you can't kill them in the time they are flying the drop back to Earth will probably finish them off.

The most fun of all of the sub-weapons however, must be the Nuclear Missile. It brings up a warning circle for the 5 seconds it takes to hit and anything inside the circle at the end of that time gets quite literally annihilated, even your own team members. You really have to see this in action to see how powerful it is.

The sound on these explosions and guns going off left right and centre is very good, the explosions seem to echo around the room as they happen, it's great! The music reflects the war-like atmosphere around the game well, it's very military like but not exactly top of the Pops material! AFO is surely a brilliantly fun game that most people can get into but sadly it isn't coming out in Europe. People who are planning on importing it then, may well ask if it's worth it or does the lag spoil the fun. Well the amazing thing is, the lag is practically nonexistent despite the fact that the information has to go all the way across the Atlantic using the Europeans rather pathetic 33K modem. There can be a bit of interference on the voice chat though which can mean you are shielded from all that abuse you opposing team are giving you!



VERDICT

ALIEN FRONT ONLINE

Graphics 7.0 Brilliant gaming environments but not quite up to 128 bit standards.

Sound 8.0 Great explosion and gun sounds with excellent military backing music.

Gameplay 7.0 Loads of engaging missions, but the gameplay can get boring.

Lifespan 6.0 Plenty to do, but it can get very tedious later in the game.

07

A good chance to let some of your stress out with a game that needs little thought online in arcade mode but can stimulate your grey matter in the Tactics mode. Not the longest game in the world, but possibly worth import.



'The storyline is rather dull at times, but it slowly begins to develop as you play the game.'

Written by Amin Hasan

BOMBERMAN TOURNAMENT

PUBLISHER: Acclaim
PLATFORM: Game Boy Advance

Bomberman has been around for a while. The pink pom-pom with an infinite supply of explosives may seem very odd to you at first, but his games have always delivered great strategy and puzzle elements, with a slight pinch of action thrown in. The first Bomberman game to debut on the Game Boy Advance, and most likely not the last, is very different from the classic Bomberman game play. It is easily described as Legend of Zelda with bombs as a weapon with Pokemon thrown in. It's a very interesting mix, in fact. I slapped the Bomberman Tournament cartridge into the GBA and began watching the introduction. The introduction was very colourful and very anime-like, which is a great mix indeed. The graphics were very Super NES-style, which is not a bad thing. The title screen booted up and I hit Start. I was left with two options: Quest and Battle. Being a rather big fan of Battle, I played it first. The only Battle in a Bomberman game I recalled playing was the very old Super Bomberman 2 for Super NES, so the barrage of new features was amazing for me. After losing against the Easy oppo-

nents, I decided to start Quest mode. I died a few times by blowing myself up and having trouble defeating enemies. I began to feel bad because this game seemed like it wasn't for me at first, but after playing it again, I proved myself wrong. For an Action/RPG title, the story was short from outstanding. It was something about meteors hitting Earth and Max disappearing, and Bomberman has to find Max by searching through the bases (e.g. dungeons from Zelda) and towns. The storyline is rather dull at times, but it slowly begins to develop as you play the game. In Quest Mode, the controls are rather confusing at times. Start, instead of the expected menu button, simply pauses. Select brings up the save menu, L brings up the map, and R brings up the actual menu. 'A' uses your currently equipped Bomb while 'B' uses your currently set Karabon's power. You basically walk around in different areas, defeat enemies (which takes a while to get the hang of), blow up obstacles to find items, and solve puzzles. The game can also be very frustrating at times.

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Battling is also very simple. You pick a strategy for each round (3 rounds), like block, attack, then special, or special,

Aside from walking around and blowing up stuff, you get to raise 25 different Karabons that you find. You sometimes have to rescue Karabons or even battle them in order to get them to join your team. A Karabon is like a Pokémon: simply put. But you can set them, a.k.a. equip them, and then use their power with 'B'. For example, use 'Pommy' to teleport to any visited town. Some Karabons give you special abilities, like the Bomb Kick or the ability to push blocks, which become permanent. Others are used to enter boss doors. Training Karabons to battle is rather simple. You can find different food icons (shield, sword, and star) that will be automatically fed to your currently set Karabon and instantly increase their stats. Shield increases defence, sword increases attack, and star increases special attacks. Karabons are also used to battle in rare cases.

Battling is also very simple. You pick a strategy for each round (3 rounds), like block, attack, then special, or special, then attack, then block, etc. Then the Karabon does it automatically. The Karabon does not have to actually knock out the opponent. Whoever has the most HP when the 3 rounds are up, wins. In some cases, you have to use a "SID" to actually fuse two Karabons together and create a new one, or in other words, breed your Karabon. The new Karabon will have qualities of the previous two and are the "key" to opening the boss doors. Speaking of qualities, Karabon also have types. There are only 4 types: fire, water, electric, and earth. Fire has no effect on water; electricity is powerful against water (Pokémon fans will be automatic veterans at the game), etc. This is important when battling your Karabon.

Aside from the main game, Quest Mode, you have the ultimate multiplayer feature, Battle Mode. Battle Mode is one of the best features in any Bomberman game, and is perfect for multiple players. You can play Single Player mode if you don't have any friends with a GBA or any friends at all, or you can play multiplayer with a single cartridge. The goal in Battle Mode is to try and blow up your opponents. That's the best way to put it.

There are 8 different courses to choose from, and all of them are very interesting. Your bombs blow up in the shape of a plus sign, so you have to keep that in mind when trying to nail someone. You can also trap them (you can't walk through bombs),

kick the bombs into them, etc. There are plenty of items to make you more powerful (increase your walking speed, the explosion sizes, how many bombs you can place, kick bombs, throw bombs, etc.) and plenty of stage obstacles to make the possibilities endless.

There are some little, less-noticeable changes that kind of give me the question "why?" You can no longer select your Bomberman's colour, a feature I found awesome in Super Bomberman 2, nor is your bomb/explosion coloured after your colour. Even these small changes would have been nice, but nothing to whine about. Quest Mode is great, but without Battle Mode, Bomberman Tournament would most likely go down the drains. Quest Mode is, indeed, very difficult in parts. The bases are incredibly frustrating, especially the Pretty Base. And the multiple puzzles that you must solve in Quest Mode can give you the urge to flatten your GBA with a mallet. But it just takes some patience to pass the game. Bomberman Tournament is very short compared to most games, but it is made up for with the difficulty.



With the endless capabilities of Battle Mode, which means you'll still have something to do with the game. Plus, there are new features such as, if you die, you can stand in the sidelines and throw bombs down at the opponents. If you manage to defeat a player with your bomb, you will be resurrected into the game (optional). Other features, such as fishing and tie-breakers, make Battle Mode excellent. If you only use one cartridge in multiplayer, the load times can get rather bad, but it's nothing to throw a fit over. Another interesting note: even with all of the bombs flying around and explosions going on in Battle Mode, the game very rarely slows down (every character would have to place 4 bombs to make it slow down). The music is rather catchy in some areas, like the Battle Mode theme or the Quest Mode Boss theme, but other times, they just get annoying and dull. They could have at least thought of some new themes for different towns and bases. The sound effects are very Bomberman-like, but I also think that they could have been better in some parts.

The introduction and anime feeling to the game quickly shows that this game is very colourful. The graphics are very good and colourful, but could have easily been better in some parts. The GBA is new, and the developers are very new to the GBA. In a few years, graphics will hopefully be outstanding on the GBA. We have evidence of this just by setting our minds back to the days of the SNES. Is it worth your money, well I never found the point of renting games that you have the urge to own? It just ruins the feeling you get when

you play the game for the first time. Not to mention renting RPG's is kind of lame. Since Bomberman Tournament is an RPG, and it's rather frustrating, you may get angry at it, return it to the rental store, and never want to play it again. Though I would suggest you can make more of your money if you forked it over Mario Kart, this game isn't bad but it's not great. Originality could have used some of Miyamoto/Suzuki/Yuji Naka magic, but if you can't wait for the next Zelda and Pokémon and want to practice your terrorist skills, Bomberman does more than fill your appetite.



The arenas in Bomberman Tournament vary quite a lot from stage to stage, with this underwater stage being just an example.

VERDICT

BOMBERMAN TOURNAMENT

Graphics 6.0 Standard 16-bit eye candy.

Sound 7.0 Nice original score, as always, works best with headphones.

Gameplay 6.0 Not too shabby, handles like Zelda, and performs like Bomberman.

Lifespan 7.0 Adventure alone won't keep you going, multiplayer will last you ages.

06

The first Bomberman title on the GBA proves to be a short, frustrating, unique one. Not that any of that is bad. If you have friends who have a GBA make the purchase, otherwise, don't get it for single player.



'I was impressed, the scene of a huge explosion, frozen in time Matrix style'

Written by Amin Hasan

TWISTED METAL BLACK

PUBLISHER: Sony
PLATFORM: Playstation 2

Having never seriously played a Twisted Metal game, I can neither personally comment on the quality of any of the previous games, nor can I compare Twisted Metal: Black to its predecessors. What I can say is that Twisted Metal: Black is a great game, and that Incog Inc. has done a fantastic job in creating a fully satisfying gaming experience. Right from the refined opening sequence, I was impressed. The sound of the Rolling Stones' "Paint it Black" fills your ears as you are greeted with the scene of a huge explosion, frozen in time Matrix style. The camera quickly makes its way through the flaming pedestrians, airborne cars, and ramshackle buildings, closing in what appears to be a clown driving a heavily armed ice cream truck, and finally rests on said clown's face, revealing bloodshot eyes, cracked teeth, and singed tufts of bright red hair. Welcome to Twisted Metal: Black, where even the menu system is an adventure. What this game lacks in innovation, it makes up for in polish and sheer fun. Like previous Twisted Metal games, the suspicious figure

Calypso is holding a tournament, and the last man (or woman) standing can have their wishes fulfilled. Only this time Calypso has decided on raiding an asylum in order to find his contestants. Most of the characters are clichéd psychos, but each storyline is implemented with efficiency. Some of the characters are more interesting than others, and it appears Incog Inc. may have run out of ideas (three of the characters follow the "scarred face/hiding behind a mask" idea), but this is certainly good stuff. There is really nothing new or original that stands out in terms of gameplay in Twisted Metal: Black, so gamers looking for some sort of revolution will be disappointed. With that out of the way, this is the most well executed car combat game in history, so fans of the Twisted Metal (or any other car combat games) series looking for a good fix of the same old tricks will be in heaven. The level design varies from being merely good to excellent, with fairly destructible environments to boot. The stage Abandoned Skyscrapers stands out especially in its quality; jumping from rooftop to rooftop, crossing perilous bridges, and ramming enemies off the edge to their untimely deaths is a blast. The weapons are the same generic stuff seen over and over, but each car has a special attack, as well as other special moves that break up the monotony of missiles, homing missiles, cluster missiles, power missiles, and clustered homing missiles. With a blazing frame rate and virtually no slowdown, cars in Twisted Metal: Black handle like a dream, and have refreshingly unrealistic physics. After playing Gran Turismo 3, where taking a turn at over 40 mph is like trying to move a brick, pulling off 180s on a dime in a dump truck is oddly satisfying.



Now, before you start thinking that Twisted Metal: Black is perfect, with a lack of originality as its only flaw, I am here to tell you there are some things that could be improved. The first is the initially steep learning curve. Although this levels out nicely soon, even on easy, the other cars will probably make mincemeat of Twisted Metal newcomers, perhaps alienating a few people from reaching their full potential. After a few hours of playing, hopefully most gamers will become slightly more adept at defeating the competition, and this will be a non-issue.

Another issue is the strange actions of the AI. If each character in Twisted Metal: Black is going solo, in the tournament to fulfil their own desires, why do the computer controlled cars rarely attack other computer controlled cars, even if they are side by side, and instead gang up on you like it's nobody's business? Perhaps it would take away from the challenge if your artificial opponents unmercifully destroyed each other, leaving you the victor without a struggle, but it still seems a bit odd watching two adversaries who are supposed to be facing off against one another standing motionless, not doing a thing.

Finally, the multiplayer mode ends up rather lacklustre, with only three basic modes (death match, 2-player co-op, and last man standing), none of which offer any new spin on one simple strategy: Kill, kill, kill.



Still, Twisted Metal: Black is rock solid in the game-play department, and the whole "kill, kill, kill" premise offers much more fun than I might have led on. Car combat titles might not offer much depth, but Twisted Metal: Black is jam packed with more destructive goodness than any of its predecessors.

There is plenty to uncover in Twisted Metal: Black, and this is one experience that is worth seeing through to the end. With over a dozen characters, each with their own quest in story mode, as well as the mysterious, well-hidden black boxes that unlock some extra goodies, single-player gaming alone could take up a few dozen hours.

Although each multiplayer mode ultimately revolves around the same concept (missiles, missiles, and more missiles into the hood of your opponent's car), that should in no way deter a few friends from sharing in the obliteration. Twisted Metal: Black is not a title that can be fully experienced in a rental, and gamers who are willing to put in the time will find their skills steadily increasing. I was extremely wary of what Twisted Metal: Black might look like after examining some still pictures that looked drab and jagged. I'm happy to report, however, that this game is poetry in motion, and is definitely one of the finer looking titles on the PlayStation 2. The distinctly dark, gothic look of Twisted Metal: Black is perfectly suited to the twisted world. Every level takes place in either a psychotic industrial setting or a desolate, rural wasteland. Each car looks nice, and the effects produced by the ammunition issuing forth from the cars look even nicer. Environments are often surrounded in darkness and rain; in fact there is not one stage that takes place in the daytime or in good weather, which adds a lot to the whole experience of the game.



CAPTION: TWISTED METAL BLACK

The explosions look somewhat dated in this image, but then again, some of the other effects in the game are great. You can definitely destroy stuff in Twisted Metal, which is a good thing when you think about the genre that it's located.

Twisted Metal: Black may not be the best-looking PlayStation 2 title, but its individual visual style and undeniably good graphics are nothing to scoff at.

Every level takes place in either a psychotic industrial setting or a desolate, rural wasteland. Each car looks nice, and the effects produced by the ammunition issuing forth from the cars look even nicer. Environments are often surrounded in darkness and rain; in fact there is not one stage that takes place in the daytime or in good weather, which adds to the whole experience. Twisted Metal: Black may not be the best-looking PlayStation 2 title, but its individual visual style and undeniably good graphics are nothing to scoff at.



Several fine actors have lent their voices to Twisted Metal: Black, actors that can actually convey a wide range of emotions. Even in games with mostly enjoyable voices, there are almost always a few piss poor performances, but in Twisted Metal: Black, all the voices are at least tolerable, if not convincing or moving. A special mention goes out to actor J.S. Gilbert, who provided great voices for No Face, Axel, Agent Stone, and, the hallmark character of Twisted Metal, Sweettooth. The other sounds in Twisted Metal: Black are somewhat lacking. Weapons and explosions don't sound as loud or distinct as they should, and besides "Paint It Black" by the Stones, there is little music to be found (except for the eerie sounds of Sweettooth's ice cream truck). To summarize, audio in Twisted Metal: Black is quite the mixed bag. In the end, Twisted Metal: Black does not add anything new to the gaming world, but instead builds on its ancestors to provide some damn good fun. Although just falling short of excellence in basically every aspect, Twisted Metal: Black certainly belongs in the upper echelon of PlayStation 2 titles. Perhaps not a must-buy on other platforms, Twisted Metal: Black provides plenty of entertainment on a console starved for AAA titles. So, anyone looking for a solid, enjoyable title to tide him or her over until a true killer app comes along look no further.



VERDICT

TWISTED METAL BLACK

Graphics 7.0 The game shows the PS2's power to make dull, demonic atmospheres.

Sound 6.0 Not the greatest of soundtracks with only one commendable tune..

Gameplay 8.0 Great action, don't expect to survive anything in your first few turns.

Lifespan 7.0 Will have you killing off the hours trying to burn some heavy rubber.

07

This game warrants one thing above all, great fun. However, the lack of originality and steep learning curve can really hurt those novices. Put in the required hours and effort and you will reign supreme.



'The detail on the characters is good, and the environments can be very atmospheric.'

Written by Chris Zardis

CODE VERONICA X

PUBLISHER: Sony
PLATFORM: Playstation 2

Don't go thinking that this is a brand new Resident Evil game, Code Veronica was first released on Dreamcast as one of the console's only highlights during the drought of early 2000. But, what's with the 'X' pasted on the end of this title? To be honest, not a lot. There are 10 minutes of extra cut scenes, a free Devil May Cry demo and, possibly the *biggest* advance, however, is the lack of 60Hz mode. In other words, this is almost exactly the same game as was released on Dreamcast last year.

However, that's not to say that it's a bad game. In fact, assuming you haven't played the DC original, it's one of the best buys on PS2 yet.

The game starts with you playing Claire Redfield, who has been captured by the Umbrella corporation whilst searching their Paris lab, trying to look for her lost brother, Chris. Now, the island she is imprisoned on is under attack, and the prison guard decides to let you go under the circumstances, to give you a chance of living. Later in the game, you also play as Chris Redfield and Steve, who you meet whilst trying to escape from the island.

Graphically, this game is almost identical to the DC game. The detail on the characters is good, and the environments can be very atmospheric. As many of you will know, Code Veronica is the first Resident Evil game to feature fully 3D backgrounds. No more animated paintings, this thing has swooping camera angles and all. However, Capcom have cleverly kept still-angled cameras in the game to add tension and surprise as you don't know what lies ahead of you.

There are some very tough opponents to deal with in Resi Code Veronica. The deadly Bandersnatches are just an example of this. With their huge, stretchy arms, running is not an option, as they can reach across a whole room. The only option is to shoot with all your might. Let's just hope you're armed with something a bit more powerful than the *bow gun*.

When you start the game, you are armed only with a knife (assuming that you find it on the desk in the cell room that you start off in), leaving you vulnerable to attack. We won't give anything away, but running around just *knowing* something's about to happen to you at the beginning is a great feeling that only the Resi games can re create. After a while, you come across a handgun. This is where the proper action starts. Shooting zombies is good.





During your quest, you will come across such weapons of destruction as the acid rounds for the grenade launcher, the shotgun, the sniper rifle and the double hand guns.

Gameplay wise, there are still problems in Resident Evil's controls. Using what seems like exactly the same engine as used in Resi 1, you still have to use 'left and right' on the d pad to turn your character around *very slowly*, then use hold forward to walk in the direction that you are pointed. Thankfully, the engine has been tweaked that little bit since 1996. Now, you can immediately turn 180 degrees to face an enemy, or use the lock on function (allowing you to aim at two enemies at once if you have a double pistol). However, turning around manually is still irritating and will take some getting used to if you haven't played previous Resi games. Also, when you hit a wall, the character keeps trying to walk into it, which seems a bit dodgy, really, but we're not complaining when the only real competitor is Alone in the Dark.

Now, for the issue that seems to plague every released Resident Evil game, lifespan. Thankfully, Code Veronica seems to

be an exception to the standard '5 hours and you're finished' rule that previous Resi games seem to have. Although the game can be rushed through at quite a pace, normal gameplay time for the first time that you play is about 15-20 hours, which isn't bad, really.

Once you've completed the game, however, there really isn't that much to come back to. You can play it over and over for the sake of unlocking a few costumes and a slightly dodgy first-person mode, but what's the point? There really isn't one, but that isn't so important, as Resident Evil games are almost like a movie, they are a one off experience that can't really be replicated once you've run through it once.

Overall, it is clear that this game has been released to try to get an extra buck from PS2 owners. It's also a great game, but don't expect anything remarkable if you've already played through the Dreamcast game. If you haven't though it's probably the best horror experience on PS2 as we write.



VERDICT

RESIDENT EVIL CODE VERONICA X

Graphics 8.0 The same as the one year old DC game. Still excellent, however.

Sound 7.0 Very atmospheric at times. Wouldn't be the same without sound.

Gameplay 7.0 Unrivalled, but the controls are still slightly flawed.

Lifespan 8.0 If you haven't played it before, it's quite long. Replay value is low.

08

Resident Evil Code Veronica X is a very worthy purchase as long as you don't own the DC original. Some will argue that it's worth it for the Devil May Cry demo alone, but who would spend £40 on a demo?



'The storyline is rather dull at times, but it slowly begins to develop as you play the game.'

Written by Alex Anderson

PHANTASY STAR ONLINE v2

PUBLISHER: Sega
PLATFORM: Dreamcast

Rarely these days does a game come out that changes peoples lives. And PSO was one of these titles. It made people sit in the same place for hours during one marathon gaming session. There were reports that peoples phone bills were around £250 a month due to playing PSO so much online and even an online radio station was set up. The reason that PSO was such a success was that there was a sense of community in the game. People all over the world were playing together whether they are American, British, Japanese or any of the other nationalities that played the game. PSO was also a landmark game in breaking the language barrier, you could use the word select to say simple sentences and the game would change this from your language into the 4 other languages supported (Japanese, English, French, German and Spanish). The game was a huge hit that en-

sured the life of the Dreamcast for a little longer. The game go so popular that Sonic Team decided to release a new and improved version on PSO called PSov2. The game was not a true sequel to PSO but was designed to fill the time until the true sequel PSO2 is released. At first PSov2 was going to be a Japan only game, but due to the high level over protest about this through Online Petitions the game was announced for the US. The game has been out in Japan for quite some time but is being released on the 25th (by the time you read this PSov2 will be out in the US) September in the US. So what has been added to the game that deserves you to go out and spend your hard earned cash on the game and on the pay-per play fee? Well Sonic Team made some good decisions with some of the additions to the game. By far the best addition was the auto-save feature which Sonic Team added while you are online. The game would quickly save whenever you left the shops or your bank. So that if you get the infamous FSOD or BSOD (Frozen Screen of Death and Black Screen of Death) then the effects are less serious and you can load up your game again without losing all of your weapons. This is a feature that will keep people playing longer as no more do you spend 200 hours (or so) building up a character. Only to have it destroyed by a 12 year old who thinks he is so clever as he can copy codes from a site and enter them into a gs (Game Shark). There were many stories of people spending almost all of their free time playing the game only to get FSOD'ed by a person who thinks it is funny to ruin others peoples fun. And this caused many people to quit the game.



Sonic Team also added to the game the chance to get to level 200. In PSO once you reached level 100 all you could do was keeping playing with the character to find some rares or start a new character. Now in PSOV2 you can reach level 200 which could take a while. As to get between some levels after level 100 takes a while. Some levels it can take up to and maybe even more than 100,000 exp to go up a level. It will be sometime before we start to see loads of level 200 legit players.

You will also need a level in the 100's if you want to stand a chance against the monsters in Ultimate Mode. These are not just tougher monsters with some stats enhanced. The monsters in ultimate can think. And will team up with each other in order to kick your ass. Most of the beasts are now as fast as Delsabres in Very Hard Mode and it can take 13 hits to kill every single beast. And these hits are taking 300 away each time. If you are a low level then stay away from here as you will most likely get killed every single time a Hildeblue or a <insert animal name> hits you. Not only have the monsters changed and got nastier, all the levels have undergone a much-needed makeover. Now instead of Pioneer 2 being in space it has now landed on Ragol. The Forest level has changed from the gorgeous sunny day to a picturesque sunset. The caves, mines and the ruins have also changed with the mines looking even more digital. All the bosses have also been changed. Also weapons that in PSO were rare are now easy to find in Ultimate. And there is some 100 new rares available in Ultimate. And the changes make them look even better than they did in the first game. So if you think that Ultimate mode will be a walk in the park then you are in for a big surprise. One of the most anticipated and talked about new modes in PSOV2 is Battle Mode. So if you are fed up of playing with your friends then why not try to kill them. When the game was first released in Japan there was 4 standard modes on Battle Mode...

- Collect the most meseta
- You all start at level 1 and need to find everything i.e. weapons etc...
- A warp battle you are level 1 you need to find everything and there is loads of warps all over the place.
- And last but not least a mode where you stay the same level and can use everything that you have found on normal mode.



CAPTION: PHANTASY STAR ONLINE v2

You can even get Sega Saturn, Mega Drive (Genesis in the States) and Master System mags in this latest version of Phantasy Star Online. Respect to the makers.

In all of the battle modes if you find or lose anything when you exit the battle. If you found the item in battle mode then you lose it but if you had used the item in battle mode. But lost it on leaving battle mode then you get it back. After only around 2 months of being re-released Sonic Team had added two more battle modes. The first being a team battle and the second was a long corridor where players had nowhere to go but run at each other. Battle mode requires more thought than simply rushing at your opponent with the first weapon you find, you have to think. Do you use a handgun and hit them from far away or attack them with a sabre and do more damage but have a higher chance of getting hurt?



One thing that you notice straight away is that techniques use far more magic than in co-operation mode. And if you decide to use resta then be warned if you use resta close to anyone then it will help him or her as well. When the US version of PSOv2 is released then this is bound to be one of the most popular modes. Challenge mode is considered by many people as being very underrated. In challenge mode you have to complete a challenge in a certain time. You also start the challenge at a certain level, for the first challenge you start off the way you do when you first create a character (level 1 with a sabre, handgun or cane). If you successfully complete the challenge then you are awarded a rank and a special name. If you get all A Ranks for the challenges then you get to choose a S-Weapon. This is an improved weapon that you get to give a name. There have also been some minor additions from PSO and the most significant of these is the dressing room. This feature lets you, for a fee change your characters hair and costume. So if you are fed up with looking at the same character that you have been looking at for countless hours then just pay 100,000 meseta and you can then change your characters appearance. By far the smallest addition to PSOv2 is the ability to choose costumes that in PSO you had to enter codes for. So now you have access to 9 costumes rather than the regular 7. Sonic Team have also added tracers to bullets so whenever you fire a handgun you will see a trace of the bullet.

All of the new features make this game a vast improvement on the first. But there are some flaws with the game Sega have not implemented a system to stop people cheating with gamesharks. And despite paying roughly £6 per 3 months for access to the online options very little seems to have been done to the server to stop cheaters.



It seems that most of the money has been spent adding more quests to the servers. If Sega wants to make PSOv2 the hit it deserves to be then it needs to try and stop people from ruining other peoples fun. PSOv2 will be released in the UK next year. It was widely thought that the game would never see the light of day in the UK. But a UK release date of February 2002 has been penciled in by Sega. We'll bring you more as soon it arrives here at Dualgamer.

VERDICT

PHANTASY STAR ONLINE v2

Graphics 7.0 Same as the first game, clear, functional but not overwhelming.

Sound 7.0 The sound is not the worst ever but does get very dull after a while.

Gameplay 9.0 Some argue to say it's the best on DC. A must for RPG fans.

Lifespan 7.0 Offline mode is limited, but the game really comes alive when online.

09

The game is an improvement over the great PSO and is well worth a buy if you plan to play online often. If you are just going to play offline then there is nothing new to keep you occupied for much longer than the original.

Interviewer: Brian Vienneau | Thanks to Gamebabetv.com and Annie Block

DG: First off I would like to thank you for agreeing to do this interview, would you please introduce yourself for everyone and tell them what exactly you do in the industry.

My name is Annie Block and I'm also known as annieAlias on gamebabetv.com. On the site, I review, recommend, and offer tips and tricks to the latest video games and consoles.

DG: What are your feelings about Microsoft making its move into the console market?

I'm not exactly surprised, but I doubt they'll come out with something better than what's on the market now. Perhaps in a few years, they'll make their mark on the video game industry as they have in the computer industry, but it definitely won't happen soon.



Annie Block's (annieAlias) favourite colour is mustard yellow. Which sort of explains the top. Her favourite game is Zelda: Ocarina of Time. Wonder what she thinks about the new Zelda...

DG: Well, it is clear that you are a Nintendo fan. But what is your favourite Next Gen console and why?

I really like the Playstation 2. It tends to take awhile loading but the graphics and gameplay are much better than what has been out there. As long as these new consoles are better than this, I'm sure they'll become my favourites.

DG: How long have you been playing games for and what inspired you to be a Journalist?

I've been playing games ever since I was about 5 on my Atari. Ever since, I've been addicted. I couldn't wait to try the latest games and consoles and always loved playing against people to show off my skill. If there was an arcade nearby, I had to go play a few games. Also, I'm been interested in the media for the past few years and finding a job that lets me review something I love to do and broadcast it on the internet is like a dream come true.



DG: The graphical change in Zelda for the GameCube from the originally planned realistic graphics to the cell-shaded cartoony style has raised a few eyebrows. What are your feelings on the issue?

As much as the realistic graphics are impressive, that kind of issue doesn't tend to concern me as much as the ease of gameplay, the difficulty of the game, and things along that line. It's a little disappointing, but as long as they produce a good game, it's not that big of a deal to me.

DG: How did you come across Gamebabe Tv?

Actually, I was walking home from classes and noticed a flyer reading, "I like girls that play video games." It got my attention since I don't know too many girls who do like video games and when I read about the job I set up an audition right away.

DG: Being a Girl (Women) yourself, do you think there are enough girl-oriented games out there?

I don't exactly find games to be either sex oriented but girls do not seem as interested in video games as guys. I'm not exactly sure how they could make a video game to be more girl-oriented because it will still be a video game. If you don't like to play video games, it won't matter which sex they're oriented too. It's more of a uni-sex industry but it just draws in more of the male population.

DG: How often do you shoot Gamebabe Tv?

About once a month I shoot four episodes for the site.

DG: What is your all time favourite videogame and why?

That's a difficult question. I don't think I really have a favourite, mostly because I go through games so quickly. In high school, I really like Quake and Warcraft II, but once I beat them and found bigger and better games, the new ones became my favourite. I particularly like the first Zelda on the 64.

DG: We at Dualgamer are curious to know how you got the name Annie Alias?

I typically use the name raven or annabelle when playing video games so it's not any of my game ids. The creators at gamebabetv gave me the name. I'm told it is based on my demeanor, style, looks and the feel I convey on camera. I kinda like that!!!



[Above] Quake III: Arena



There are four 'Game babes' in total, piXeLKat, Bufferchic, AnnieAlias and spritegirl. Now all we need to know is their phone numbers.



[Above] Some very relevant studio snaps.

Thanks to Annie for taking the time out to talk to us, and to all the kind people at Gamebabetv.com. Look out for more interview features in future issues of Dualgamer.







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MARIO KART SUPER CIRCUIT™

WALKTHROUGH



Mario Kart Advance
Game Boy Advance
Out Now

Publisher: Nintenedo
Developer: Intelligent Systems
Platform: Game Boy Advance
Genre: Racing

Walkthrough written by Cruzn15

As if our review last month wasn't enough, Cruzn15 has been playing Mario Kart until his thumbs bleed and we're the first magazine to present you with a full walkthrough.

What we said: 'Mario proves that, no matter how much others try, he is still the king of kart.' [Dualgamer Issue 02, 9.4 / 10]

- CHARACTERS -

When choosing a character, you want to keep the two main factors in mind. First of all, you'll want to look at a character's "Speed". Now, the title of that category can be very misleading because the "Speed" category is actually the character's acceleration while a character with more "Weight" will have a higher max speed. If you're a beginner you'll probably want to look for a character with high acceleration because you may be spinning out a lot. After you get the hang of it you may want to move to a heavier, faster character or look around and see who's best for you. (See below for all the characters)



Mario - The legendary plumber is the best rounded of all the characters. He has middle-of-the-road top speed and average acceleration.



Yoshi - This little dinosaur packs the most weight out of all the characters in the lightweight class. Good acceleration plus speed.



Luigi - Mario's brother, Luigi, is similarly well rounded like Mario however he has supreme steering that rules over all other characters.



Donkey Kong - While taking advantage of the power and max speed of his class, Donkey Kong also has the best steering of all heavies.



Peach - Princess Peach has nice acceleration but still doesn't lack in top speed quite as much as Toad.



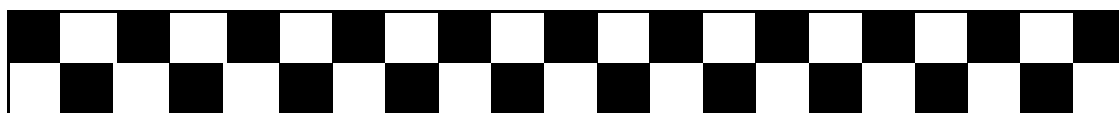
Wario - Mario's evil enemy really packs a punch with huge power to tear up the competition. Thus, He's a great character for Battle Mode.



Toad - This little guy has the best acceleration out of every character in the game. New players may want to take Toad out for a first run.



Bowser - Not only doesn't he pack enough power to take out his opponents but he also has the highest max speed of all the characters.



- ITEMS -

If you've ever played a Mario Kart game, you'll know that items and weapons are an integral part of the series. You could just focus on collecting coins to boost up your top speed and pass the bunch or you could go for a speed boost or mow 'em down with a shell. Look for Item Boxes during the heat of the race.



Star - The Star will speed you up a bit and shield you from attacks while giving you the ability to mow through racers and obstacles throughout the course for a short period of time.



Mushroom - This will give you a short, powerful boost. You get three of these to use as you like in time trial mode. Use all three on the second or third laps if you want to get a record.



Lightning - The bolt makes all of your opponents (as long as they don't have a ghost or star activated) small, slow and vulnerable for you to run them over for a short amount of time.



Boo - The Boo ghost will steal an item from another player and give it to you. If you aren't in first, he'll also attempt to track down the first place racer and slow him down and steal a few of his coins.



Banana - Lets you hold a banana behind you to interfere with drivers or items trying to bump you from behind. You can also drop a banana behind you for other racers to trip on or toss it a few yards in front of you.



Red Shell - Sends a heat-seeking shell to track down the racer in front of you. If you want to take out the person behind you, hold back and let go. It'll wait there and hit the next passer by.



Green Shell - Travels in a straight line and will bounce off walls and obstacles until it hits a character. You can also shoot it behind you or hold it behind your kart for protection.



Spiny Shell - Also known as the Blue Shell, send this baby off and it will go after the first place player no matter what place you're in or who it hits along the way. You can also hold it behind your kart and use it as a long-lasting shield.



WALKTHROUGH



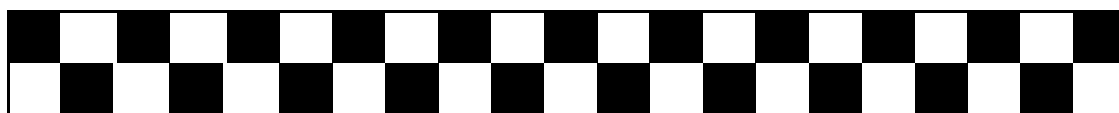
Use your 3 boosts very wisely in time trial mode to achieve the best results.



Mario enjoys the beauty of GBA powered beaches. Mmm... Mode 7.



Get out of that plant, Mario! There's a race on, you know.



- TRACKS 01-

A racing game without tracks is like, err, a Gameboy without batteries. Here's a full list of the ones you'll encounter in Mario Kart Super Circuit.

Mushroom Cup



Peach Circuit - This one is pretty straightforward. Follow the road the whole way around and at some points you can shave small bits of a second off your time by mushroom boosting corners. Beside that, collect as many coins and items as possible and use them to your advantage.



Shy Guy Beach - The first beach level is fairly simple and gives you your first taste of a shortcut. Follow the track and lookout for the crabs throughout the course. After the first bumpy grass area, hit a sharp left and you'll find a nice little shortcut and an island piled with coins.



Riverside Park - There aren't really any shortcuts in this track. Just keep your eye out for out of the way coin trails and make sure you grab each row of coins at the end of each lap. Pickup the speed boost as you drive for a little kick into high gear.



Bowser Castle 1 - Bowser's first castle is simple and doesn't require any shortcuts or extremely sharp turns. Falling in the lava isn't that easy either, so you shouldn't have any problems here. Look out for the rows of coins all throughout the castle.

Flower Cup



Mario Circuit - Like Peach's Circuit, Mario's is fairly basic. Follow the track and collect all the coins (laid in simple rows). Toward the end of each lap, you'll see a pit stop like area at the right. On the first or second lap, you'll want to find your way into it and pickup the row of coins and boost.



Boo Lake - There are two small shortcuts, both being narrow bridges. If you feel you can hit them without falling off, the first about halfway through the course. You'll see a right turn with a large dark area to the left and no wall to prevent you from falling. (Boo Lake continues below...)

At the top of the screen, a small picture of a fork in the road will appear and if you can spot a blinking blue bridge, take that to a nice shortcut. The second one is not long after that. It's a nice, visible, narrow bridge to your left.



WALKTHROUGH



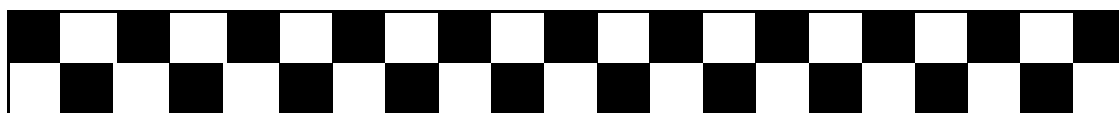
Red shells are generally more common in this game than in MK64.



Go back and look at the SNES version, it looks so dated now...



According to a poll Nintendo conducted, Bowser is the least popular.



- TRACKS 02-

Our Mario Kart walkthrough continues with the remainder of the Flower Cup, plus track guides from the Lightning Cup.

Flower Cup Continued...



Cheese Land - (One of the Editor's favorite tracks for some strange reason) Stay on the track cause this is one windy road. Besides slowing up considerably when driving on the cheese at the edges of the course, lookout for the mice running from end to end toward the finish line.



Bowser Castle 2 - Make sure you remember to avoid the lava pits and collect the long rows of coins and you'll run through the big man's second castle like a cakewalk. Some of the corners are a bit more tricky than the first castle, but nothing you haven't seen elsewhere.

Lightning Cup



Luigi Circuit - It's just another rainy day in the Luigi Circuit and there will be plenty of puddles of water riddled throughout the course. If you hit one of these puddles of water, you'll spinout, although you can sometimes get away safely if you quickly tap 'B' afterwards.



Sky Garden - The name says it all. You're in the sky and you're going to want to keep from falling off. Don't let opponents try and knock you off and look out for sharp turns. There is a very brief shortcut here where you'll see a little bump before a turn to get over a small gap with a power up.



Cheep Cheep Island - Without any concrete shortcuts and crabs crawling back and forth across the course, just look for coins, Item Boxes and a couple wide speed boosts to shave seconds off your time.



Sunset Wilds - A great thing about Sunset Wilds is how the time changes from a beautiful setting sun to the dark night. There are plenty of speed boosts toward the end of the track but you better have some nice turning if you want to hit them because most lead right into a Shy Guy teepee.

(Sunset Wilds continues here...) Hit a teepee and a Shy Guy jumps on your back and really interferes with your driving. If you happen to get attacked, hop up and down (R button) until he falls.



WALKTHROUGH



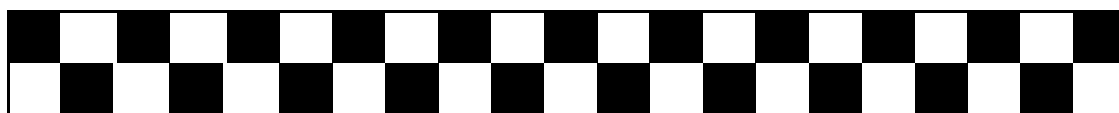
Luigi's surely got to have cut down on the pizzas to get that amount of air.



The Bowser Castle levels are great, but perhaps there are a few too many.



Mmm... this game even has lighting effects. The GBA has proven itself.



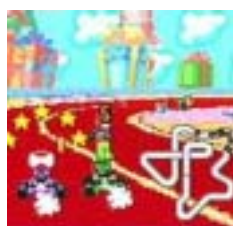
- TRACKS 03-

Even more Mario Kart tracks and tips from Dualgamer with the Star Cup and first half of the Special Cup.

Star Cup



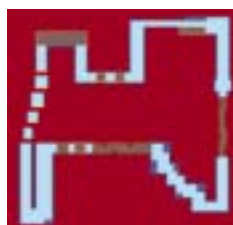
Snow Land - Although an overall difficult track, the only major obstacle are the pools of water toward the end of each lap. If you can manage to hop those, you'll be home safe and free.



Ribbon Road - Try and hit the speed boosts laid on the course for a one-after-another jump ahead of your competition. The compute players don't seem to take advantage of the substantial speed boosts.



Yoshi Desert - This track is very easy but it is crucial to stay on the road. If you stray a bit off at some turns, you could find yourself in the whirlpool of quicksand. If you happen to fall into that trap, you'll be attacked by a plant and lose a large amount of time.



Bowser Castle 3 - The third iteration of Bowser's Castle isn't much of a drastic change from the previous two. Grab all the coins and item boxes around the course and you should be fine.

Special Cup



Lakeside Park - One major addition in this track is what I like to call the Deadly Dividers. At some turns, you can veer off course and hit a wall, possibly hopping over it and placed far behind the rest of the racers. There is also a big shortcut in this race using a boost to jump over a ramp.



Broken Pier - There are two shortcuts in this course. If you see a group of coins forming the shape of an arrow and are fortunate enough to have a mushroom handy, use it to boost and following the arrow for a long jump and a large shortcut. The second is an easily visible rickety bridge.

(Extra Tips) Like all other Mario Karts, you can boost from the starting line by hitting and holding the gas at a certain moment. This time, you'll want to hit it not long after the second light is lit.



WALKTHROUGH



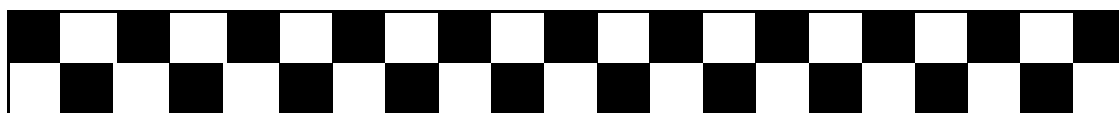
The day– night feature of the Sunset Wilds level is pretty cool.



Every character has a victory animation when they cross the line.



The battle mode, sadly, can't be played with one player and AI people.



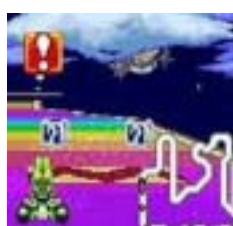
- TRACKS 04-

The last part of the walkthrough, with the final courses of the Special Cup tipped for your reading pleasure.

Special Cup Continued...



Bowser Castle 4 - The last castle incorporates a little from all the previous Bowser Castle levels. Follow the track and collect all the coins you can get your hands on.



Rainbow Road - The track doesn't have borders so if you hit the edge you'll bounce up and fly off. This can come to your advantage halfway through the course because when you spot a narrow strip of road off to the left, you can run over the edge and bounce over to a selection of boosts.

Wait, there's more - After you complete each normal cup (with a gold), go back to each one and try to grab at least 100 coins throughout the cup and then you'll gain access to the classic (SNES) tracks. The classic Super Mario Kart cups are significantly shorter than the normal races and are five laps instead of three.

Classic Mushroom Cup

Mario Circuit 1
Donut Plains 1
Ghost Valley 1
Bowser Castle 1

Classic Lighting Cup

Bowser Castle 2
Mario Circuit 3
Koopa Beach 1
Choco Island 2

Classic Flower Cup

Mario Circuit 2
Choco Island 1
Ghost Valley 2
Donut Plains 2

Classic Star Cup

Vanilla Lake 1
Bowser Castle 3
Mario Circuit 4
Donut Plains 3

Classic Special Cup - This is the last cup in the game, making a total of 40 tracks. Koopa Beach 2, Ghost Valley 3, Vanilla Lake 2 and Rainbow Road.

Classic SNES Tracks in Time Trial - Once you have gained access to the secret tracks in 150cc mode, you'll be able to play them in Time Trial.

Change Title Screen - After you get a gold rating in every track in 150cc, the title screen color will change from blue to green.

Hope you enjoyed the Mario Kart Super Circuit Walkthrough.

Written by Cruzn15 (Design by Chris Zardis)



WALKTHROUGH



Three homing shells is a God send in this situation, 1st position is imminent.



The Yoshi Desert based battle arena is particularly fun to play.



Using a mushroom here could save valuable mini-seconds.

Letters@Dg

With Melanie Usher

Email: Letters@Dualgamer.com to get your letter on this page.

It's not like the old days...

Is it just me, or are games these days just getting plain boring? We've seen the come and go of the 16-bit machines which were the most 'solid' consoles that ever existed as you could never really find any bugs in the games. Then came the 'CD Generation', along with it's plague of problems. The least of which is the commercialisation of games, where Sony made gaming popular, and acceptable in today's society. Games could make loads of money despite being absolute turd. The standard of today's games had been declining, no thanks to piracy of PSX games. Nintendo have stopped their games being reproduced illegally by having cartridges for decades, but when the time came to switch to the disc format, they decided to opt for specially made discs which are a different capacity to normal CD's. Gaming as such, will improve as all the smaller, less-rich companies will not be able to afford the fees that Sony are trying to squeeze out of them, and will eventually go bankrupt due to lack of sales

as the PS2 is used as a form of digital entertainment, not just as a console. This means that the big developers such as Sega, Capcom and Namco will have more breathing room where as smaller companies may disappear. Let's hope this war doesn't end up as another monopoly.

Adam Halliwell, UK

There is some very strong competition to the PS2. Both the NGC and the Xbox have great merits and should do well. ... hopefully.

Mr Miyamoto... Zelda crazy?

Well, it looks like Miyamoto had a bit too much sake that night, doesn't it? Of course I'm referring to cel-shaded Zelda. Sometimes referred to as "creative" and "inspired", but more commonly known as "awful" and "oh dear". It seems that Nintendo have majorly messed up here. But the question is - will they do what the public want by bringing back regular Zelda or force the public to accept it?

Daniel Hirst, Hong Kong

The public will probably grow to accept it. Miyamoto could still pull off something great.

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Official Fangen.net Magazine

Guess the game



Clue: Circus Anyone?



Clue: Released on the Saturn

Answers to the above are on the last page of this issue.



Babes in Dualgamer

03

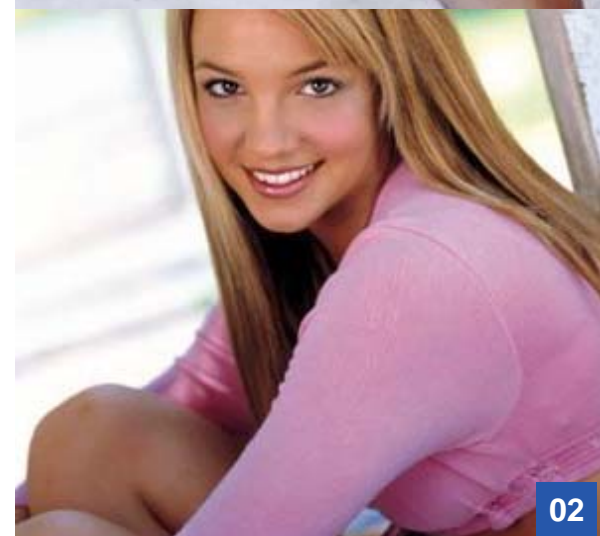
Always the best part of the magazine, we've gone pop princess mad, well, even though we wouldn't generally admit it. We have to admit, although these girls can sometimes be very annoying, they do have looks. Enjoy, and see you next month for more.

Question in Dualgamer: Which of the 3 girls on this page received complaints from animal rights campaigners after her seductive dance routine with a snake and other animals at the MTV music awards 2001?

The answer to this question, and also the questions on the letters page can be found on the last page of this magazine.



01



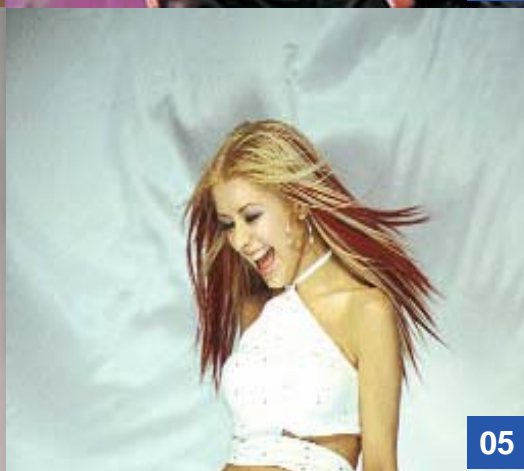
02



04



03



05

Like you're going to read them... here are the captions!

- 1) Mmm... Brittny in one of her nicest images ever.
- 2) 'No, I don't wear make up, honest!'
- 3) Jessica Simpson looking rather 'mistressy'.... oh dear...
- 4) A much nicer shot of our Jess.
- 5) This would be Christina Aguilera. To be honest, the expression on her face makes us thankful that the photo stops at her waist.

Feedback? Ideas?
Send them to letters@dualgamer.com and we'll get back to you as soon as humanly possible.

MORE BABES IN DUALGAMER 04

FEATURES BABES IN DUALGAMER

In DG issue 04...



[above] The Crash Bandicoot team prepare for Jak and Daxter's debut on PS2 in our full preview.

[below] Grand Theft Auto 3 is likely to be one of the highlights this Christmas. We look at it in depth.

Dualgamer+ members get the magazine earlier.



Dualgamer- Written by

Chris Zardis, David Allan, Ben Matthew, Michael Bickley, Cruzn15, Rob Ratcliff, Mr A Nonimouse, Melanie Usher, Amin Hasan, Brian Vienneau.

Answers to 'Guess the Game': Firstly, Starshot: Space Circus Fever was Infogrames' Mario 64 wannabe, released on the N64 in 1999. The second game was Sega's answer to the PSX's Coolboarders, Steep Slope Sliders. It was released on the Sega Saturn in early 1998.

The address to email to is inbox@dualgamer.com. Alternatively, check out the forums or the chat room the site, www.dualgamer.com.

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ISSUE 04: 21st October 2001

The prankster's guide to... The Home. By Mr A Nonimouse

This month we have Pranks for around the home and as a special bonus (or a way to fill up space if you're a cynic) we've included 5 ways of how to disturb your unexpecting neighbours.

If you have a mailbox by the road that is prone to being knocked off by baseball bat wielding vandals, here is a way to get even. Get one of the larger size mailboxes and weld a regular size one inside it. Now secure it to the pole. Next take cement and fill in the space around the regular mailbox. Next time some vandal tries to take it off with a baseball bat, he'll be in for a surprise and maybe even a broken wrist! Hehe...

The night before bin day in the local neighbourhood, get someone's trash can and fill it up with water while the trash is still in it, the later at night you do this the better. Then lean the trash can against someone's door, now you have two options, either ring the doorbell, run like hell and watch trash flood into their house, or leave it for the morning so they have a nice surprise when they're on their way to work.

If you know a girl (or guy) that is obsessed with her with long, luscious hair, get her conditioner and squirt in a few ounces of baby oil and shake well (not so much where the conditioner will feel unnaturally oily). After she washes her hair, her hair will be limp, oily, and un-curlable, and she won't know why. This is great to do before school pictures, a big date, etc.

5 Ways to disturb your Neighbours.

- Stand over the plants in your yard with a hose and Scream; "I have your life in my hands, bow down to me!" Then point at each one and declare them good or bad plants, while watering the bad ones.
- Ask them if you can put your trash in their cans, if they ask why say, "Mine are full of bodies", then stutter and say, "I uh mean other garbage." Walk away laughing hysterically.
- Patrol the perimeter of your yard while carrying a broom. If they come close state that there is a 3-foot neutral area between the two yards.
- At night transplant the plants in their garden. Tomorrow... "looks like they're on the move again."
- When they're watching TV, pull a lawn chair behind their window. Sit down with popcorn and a drink and ask them if they could open a window so you can hear too.