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# PC GAMER

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*Interstate '76*  
*iM1A2 Abrams*  
*Theme Hospital*  
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TO  
DOMINATE  
THE  
STRATEGY  
WARS**



# 1. UTILIZE UNSURPASSED TERRAIN ADVANTAGES

Launch underground ambush

Hide spider bikes in ravine



# 2. LAUNCH ADVANCED ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Harass enemy troops

Order units to retreat when hit



# 3. DEVELOP UNRIVALED MAPS AND MISSIONS

Add lava pit to bolster defensive front

Acquire enemy resources to end mission





## Cover Story

# WARCRAFT

THE ADVENTURE CONTINUES



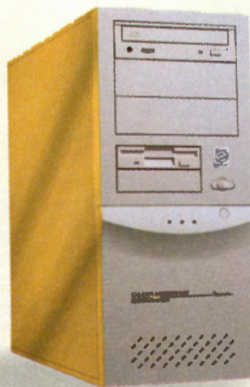
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After bringing us the best real-time strategy game ever, and one of the best hack'n'slash RPGs of all time, Blizzard returns with its most ambitious project yet — a lavish graphic adventure set in the Warcraft universe. *PC Gamer* has bagged the world-exclusive first look at this awesome game in development, and you'll find six pages of never-before seen pictures and info on one of 1997's most eagerly awaited games.

## Hardware

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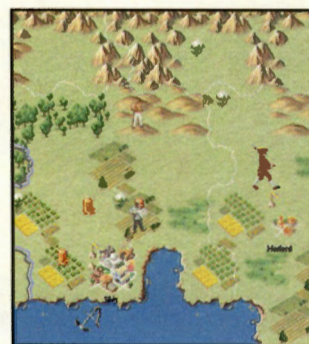
As we welcome our new, full-time technical editor this month, *PC Gamer*'s revamped hardware section goes from strength to strength. This issue we cut through the hype to bring you the full story on DVD-ROM, and have a slew of reviews of everything from the latest cutting-edge gaming system to joysticks, sound cards, and 3D accelerators, plus our ever-helpful Tech Q&A page.



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SSI transports you back to the nineteenth century for an elaborate game of trade, war, politics, diplomacy, and empire building.



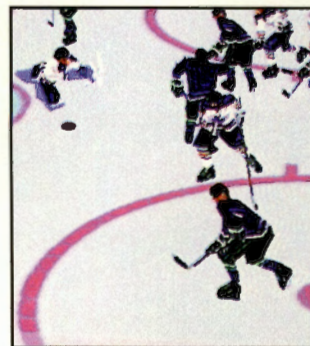
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### 40 NHL Powerplay '98

Virgin's dream to wrestle the hockey crown from EA Sports' *NHL '97* could well come true with this latest update of its cool simulation.





## Reviews

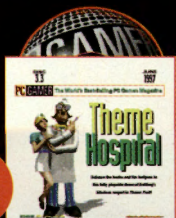
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Our Mike waxes lyrical about the psychology of RPGs, and gets lost in Interplay's unsung gaming great, *Realms of the Haunting*.

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A revolutionary new piece of war software is changing the way Air Force recruits learn about resource management and decision-making. The General explains all.

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### 175 Letters

These are the pages you write, which is why we like them so much.

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Every game we've reviewed and rated during the past six months is here, in one simple at-a-glance guide.

### 216 Next Issue

Just check this page out and see if you can believe what you find there.

## Orcs vs. Humans, round three...

Oh yes. *WarCraft* is back all right — but not how you remember it.

While other developers race to follow Blizzard's lead and bring real-time strategy games to market, the guys at Blizzard have moved one step ahead of that herd — rather than taking the easy route and producing a *WarCraft III*, they're taking their universe of fueding orcs and humans in a brave new direction with a graphic adventure that expands the world and gives it a richer, deeper backstory. Those pinning for some good old-fashioned real-time strategy Blizzard-style will still get their fill from the upcoming *StarCraft*, of course.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, everyone here at *PC Gamer* has been juicing up their permanently installed copies of *Red Alert* with the mission disc, *Counterstrike* — although I can't help but feel a little disappointed that those much-vaunted new units (Tesla Tanks, Wonderdogs, Superjets and the like) are only available in the campaign game, so our regular multi-player games won't be getting the deadlock-breaking boost we'd been hoping for.

Enjoy this month's issue — it's a chunky one, that's for sure.

*Gary*

Gary Whitta, Editor-in-Chief

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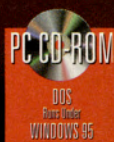


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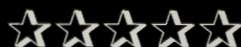
# sink into the



## The Critics are Gushing with Praise:

...destined to become one of the next great cult hits... the game more than lives up to its name... the most fun I've had this year!

-Adrenaline Vault



-PC Gaming Review

Excellent level design, brilliant weapons... an excellent addition to the shooting genre.

-Next Generation On-Line

It doesn't get any better than this... Eye Poppin' Demo Award

-Gamepen



DOS/PC  
CD-ROM



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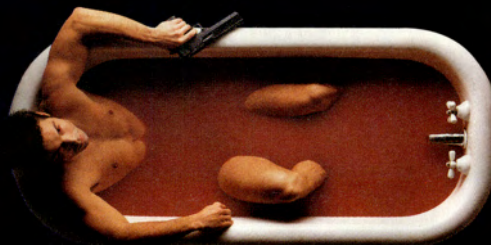
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Product Information Number 160



# Fried Coconut

**N**ow that summer's finally here, we've discovered some interesting new things about our friend, Coconut Monkey — despite his thick, fibrous exterior, he can actually get sunburned! After hanging out on his Island Paradise, drinking mai-tais and soaking up some rays, he's managed to turn himself a dark, angry shade of red. We told him to put on some sunscreen, but he just kept saying "I have no need for your SPF 100. And how would I put it on? I have no hands!"

So while Coconut Monkey rolls himself in a pool of aloe vera gel, we'll turn to the great demos we have lined up on this month's CD. Bullfrog's *Theme Hospital* will keep you laughing while you're busy healing patients, and if you're looking for some driving excitement, check out Activision's super-cool *Interstate '76*!



This is the first screen you'll encounter. From here, you can go straight to the demos, the main menu, or click the Start Here button to view the intro.

## Entering Paradise

Your exploration begins with a panoramic view of Coconut Monkey's Island. You can move the mouse around the screen to scroll left or right. When your mouse scrolls over an area that contains information, it will turn into an arrow. Just click on the highlighted site to enter.

There are also control buttons on the bottom of the screen that will take you directly to any one of the many usable sites. The control buttons can be clicked on to enter and exit each site.

## Quick Start for The CD

1. Insert the CD.
2. From the Windows RUN option (found under the File Menu in Windows 3.1 or Start Menu under Windows 95) type X:START31.EXE or X:START95.EXE, depending on your version of Windows (where X is the letter of your CD-ROM drive).
3. This will run *The CD*.

## FINDING YOUR WAY AROUND



### REVIEWS INDEX



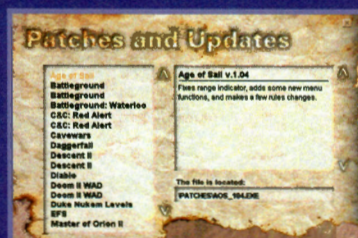
The Reviews Index contains info on every review we've ever run, including the Highs, Lows, and Bottom Line. The arrows will scroll through the index, and there's a search button to help you find any review by title.



### PATCHES



The Patches & Updates section shows a description and location for each of the patches on *The CD*, as well as all of the add-on levels we've included for *Quake*, *WarCraft II*, *Duke Nukem 3D*, and *Doom II*.



### TECH SUPPORT



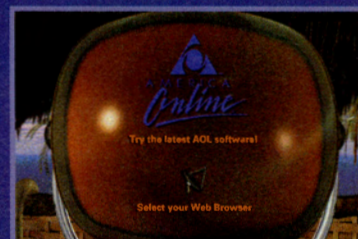
Our Technical Support database includes contact information for many game companies. The arrows will let you scroll through the selections, plus there's a search button so you can find any company by name.



### INTERNET



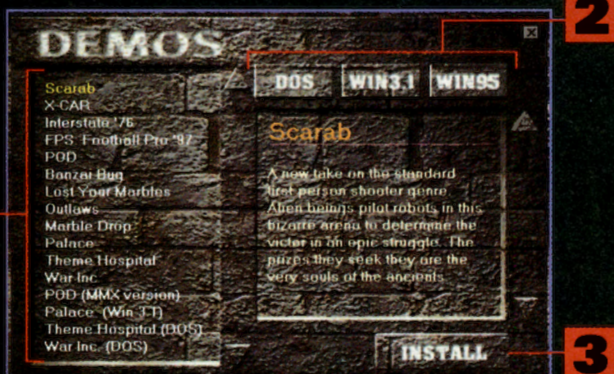
At the Internet Hut, you can install any of the online services on *The CD*. You can also select your web browser to connect to the Internet — very handy for getting online info if you have problems with a demo.





## PLAYING THE DEMOS

This is where you go to install the many demos on *The CD*. When you first enter this screen, a list of all the demos will appear in the left column. **1** Click on the DOS, WIN 3.1, and WIN 95 buttons. **2** This will break the demos down into their respective categories. The INSTALL button **3** will allow you to install a demo and, if applicable, connect to that company's web site (you'll have to first select your browser from the Internet Hut). Occasionally, some of these demos won't install from our front end. In these cases, a message will appear instructing you on how to best install the demo.



### System Requirements

486/33; 4MB RAM; Mouse

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

### Attention Win95 Users

The *PC Gamer* front end should work fine in Windows. To install and run DOS games, you will need to reboot into a DOS session.

## Free Demos!

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

1. You can download demos and check out *PC Gamer's* new look at our World Wide Web site at [www.pcgamer.com](http://www.pcgamer.com) on the Internet. Our Web site also features a special Strategy Plus section, links to other hot Web pages, and gaming news.
2. You can call our Customer Service department at (415) 468-2500 (between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. PST) to have *The CD* mailed to you for only \$7.95 shipping and handling.

### Disc Editors' Note

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

## CONTENTS / MANUAL INSTALLATION COMMANDS

### Installation Shortcuts

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

To manually install a demo, take a look at the Command Box located to the right. This box contains a list of demos along with their directories and installation commands.

To get up and running using the Command Box, first switch to your CD-ROM drive and change to the appropriate directory by typing CD\DIRECTORY, where DIRECTORY is the one listed in the Command Table next to the game you're trying to install. Once in the appropriate directory, type the Install Command, then press Enter.

For example, to install the *X-Car* demo: At the DOS Prompt, type "CD\XCARDEMO" from your CD-ROM drive. Then type SETUP.EXE and press Enter. The demo of *X-Car* will then be installed on your computer. If you're running Windows 95 or Windows 3.1, you can instead use the File Manager or Explorer to find the appropriate directory on *The CD*, and then double-click on the installation command for a Windows-based demo.

Demo	Directory	Install Command	Disc Page	OS
Theme Hospital	\HOSPEMO	SETUP.EXE	10	DOS/WIN95
Interstate '76	\I76DEMO	SETUP.EXE	10	WIN95
Betrayal at Krondor	\KRONDOR	KRONDORZ.EXE	13	DOS
X-CAR	\XCARDEMO	SETUP.EXE	13	DOS
POD	\PODDEMO	SETUP.EXE	15	WIN95
POD (MMX version)	\PODMMX	SETUP.EXE	15	WIN95
Banzai Bug	\BANZAINSTALL	SETUP.EXE	15	WIN95
FPS: Golf	\FPSGOLF	SETUP.EXE	17	WIN95
Lose Your Marbles	\LYMDEMO	MARBNODX.EXE	17	WIN95
SCARAB	\SCARDEMO	SETUP.EXE	20	WIN95
Outlaws	\OUTLAWS	OUTDEMO.EXE	20	WIN95
War, Inc.	\WARDEMO	WARDEMOP.EXE	22	DOS
FPS: Football Pro '97	\FBPRO97	SETUP.EXE	22	WIN95
KKND	\KKNDDEMO	SETUP.EXE	22	DOS
Marble Drop	\MDDEMO	SETUP.EXE	24	DOS
America Online	\AOL	SETUP.EXE	24	WIN3.1
Palace	\PALACE	PAL-201.EXE	24	WIN3.1
Patches	\PATCHES		139	
Doom 2 WADs	\DOOM2			
Quake BSPs	\QUAKE			
Duke Nukem 3D MAPs	\DUKE3D			
C&C: Red Alert MPRs	\C&C			
Warcraft 2 PUDs	\WAR2			



# Interstate '76



Company: Activision

Tech Support: (310) 479-5644

Release Date: Available Now

Category: Action

Required: Windows 95; Pentium 90; 16MB RAM;  
50MB hard-drive space; VLB or PCI SVGA video;  
Mouse

Install: V76DEMO\SETUP.EXE

In an alternate 1976, highway vigilantes are the last hope for human freedom. In *Interstate '76*, you take on the role of Groove Champion, a man who's out to avenge the death of his sister Jade. In command of a sleek Picard Piranha armed

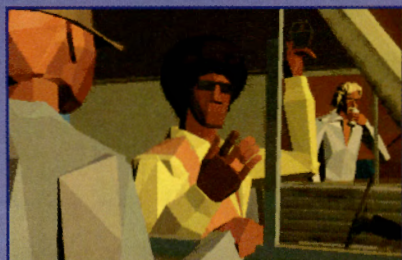


The cops in the "Fuzzbuster" mission are tough to beat. Try to keep moving, and take them out as quickly as possible.

## CONTROL KEYS

Accelerate	NUMBER PAD	[Up Arrow]
Brake	NUMBER PAD	[Down Arrow]
Steer Left	NUMBER PAD	[Left Arrow]
Steer Right	NUMBER PAD	[Right Arrow]
Emergency		[Z]
Reverse		[Tab]
Fire Weapon		[Spacebar]
Cycle Weapons		[Enter]
Toggle Cockpit View		[F1]
Adjustable External Cam		[F2]

to the hilt with mini-guns and rocket launchers, your task is to stop the evil Antonio Malochio from destroying the last of America's oil reserves. You'll fight auto-mercenaries and police officers during the quest, so get used to having gunfire all around you.



The cut-scenes are deliberately low-tech, to keep the feel of the game constant from cut-scene to gameplay.

Take a look at the control box so you can pilot your vehicle to victory. You can also use the joystick to control your car — the stick will accelerate, brake, and steer; button one will fire your selected weapon, and button two will cycle through your weapons. The default view puts you behind the wheel of your car, but if you press F2, you'll get an arcade view from outside your car — we find this view to be the most effective when dealing with the enemy. Also, make use of the Z key to pull the emergency brake. It's a great way to make sudden turns when you've got someone hot on your tail.

Although multi-player action isn't supported in the demo, the full version allows as many as eight players to battle it out over a local area network (LAN), modem, or through an Internet connection. The demo contains two missions from the full version.

# Theme Hospital

Company: Electronic Arts

Tech Support: (415) 572-2787

Release Date: Available Now

Category: Simulation

Required: 486DX2/66; 8MB RAM; 40MB hard-drive  
space; VLB or PCI SVGA video; Mouse

Install: HOSPDEMO\SETUP.EXE

It's time to roll up your sleeves and get into some hospital action! Starting from scratch, it's up to you to build a thriving new business of healing. Keep your patients happy with drink machines, short lines, comfortable chairs to sit in, and nice plants. Keep your doctors happy by outfitting their offices with nice furniture, providing a staff room, and keeping them from working too hard.

Bullfrog's new simulation will challenge your management abilities, and the wacky, off-the-wall humor will keep you

laughing. Wait 'til you see a poor patient with a case of the dreaded Bloaty Head!

To play the game, you might want to take a look at the README.TXT file in the \HOSPDEMO directory on *The CD*. It contains some basic clues about gameplay and some helpful tips on how to succeed in your new business. When you start playing, the tutorial will guide you through placing some of the more important offices and tell you how to hire new employees to take care of your investments. Pay attention to what the advisor in the corner says during play — you could miss something important! When you begin playing, you'll



Place your structures appropriately and keep your staff happy, and the cash will flow in as patients are cured.

have some time to set things up before patients start finding their way in. Take advantage of that time to create a couple of GP offices, a ward, a pharmacy, and a staff room, and add a fire extinguisher, plants, and drink machines. Make sure you hire some receptionists to work behind the reception desks, and definitely invest in a scanner and a cardiovascular machine. A bathroom wouldn't hurt, either. Once you think you're ready, click on the hand near the timer to open your doors to the public. You have one year to cure 20 patients, and the time you take to set up your hospital means less time to cure patients once they start coming in.

## HINT

Time is of the essence in *Theme Hospital*. The first time you play, you might not know the best way to set up your new facility, and you don't want to waste a lot of time while you decide. We suggest you immediately move the mouse cursor to the top of the screen to make the menu appear, click on Options, and move the cursor to

Game Speed. Set the speed to "Slowest" — that'll give you plenty of time to make those important decisions, and once you're ready to tackle the public, you can set the speed back to normal. Then, if you need to make many adjustments, you can slow the game down some to do what you need to without wasting time.





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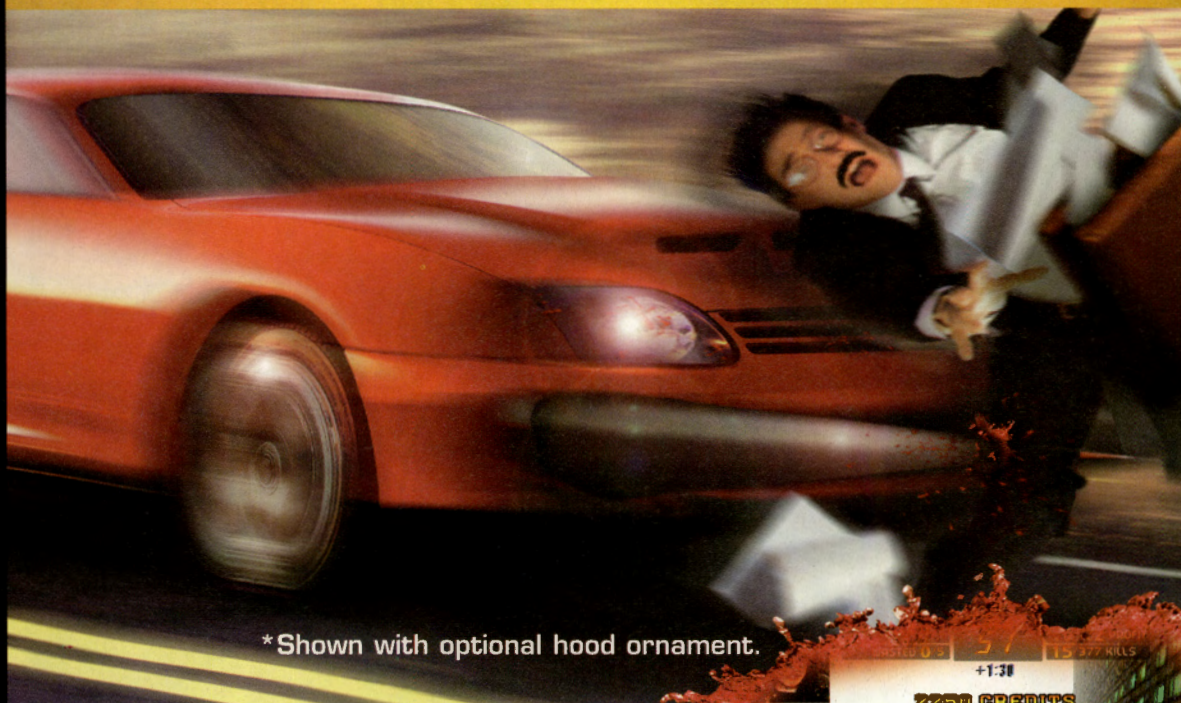
*Car & Pedestrian Magazine*

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*J.D. Cover & Associates*

*"It slices, it dices, it wipes clean in a jiffy."*

*Consumer Contorts*



\*Shown with optional hood ornament.

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# CARMAGEDDON™

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Product Information Number 198

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# Betrayal at Krondor

Company: Sierra  
 Tech Support: None Available  
 Release Date: Available Now  
 Category: Roleplaying  
 Required: 386; 2MB RAM; 3MB hard-drive space;  
 SVGA; Mouse  
 Install: \KRONDOR\KRONDORZ.EXE

**B**etween its easy-to-use first-person interface, simple turn-based combat mode, and a story line created with the help of renowned fantasy author Raymond E. Feist, *Betrayal at Krondor*



*Betrayal at Krondor* was one of the best RPGs of 1994, and now the entire game is free, courtesy of Sierra!

garnered huge popularity, and several awards. Based on Feist's *Riftwar Saga*, the story spans the world of Midkemia, and involves everything from new loyalties, mysterious oracles, and painful betrayal to underground adventure and more sub-quests than you can shake a spell-staff at. And now Sierra is giving it away — free!

The game will install in either DOS or Windows. Since it requires about 600K of free conventional memory, though, you'll probably be better off playing through pure DOS mode (although some fiddling might get it to work under Windows 95). Also, check the documentation to see how to play the game. You'll need to understand the basics of attacking, camping, and inventory management if you hope to succeed. Sierra's not going to provide any technical support for this, though, so if you end up having any problems, there are a couple of trouble-shooting guides that come with it. They're available under the Sierra menu when you install the game under Windows.

# X-Car

Company: Bethesda Softworks  
 Tech Support: (301) 963-2002  
 Release Date: Available Now  
 Category: Racing  
 Required: 486DX2/66; 16MB RAM; 20MB hard-drive space; SVGA  
 Install: \XCARDEMO\SETUP.EXE

**W**e've seen the XnGine in several products from Bethesda, from *Terminator: Future Shock* to *Daggerfall* to *SkyNET*. Now, its latest incarnation is in a racing game — and

## CONTROL KEYS

Accelerate	
Brake	
Steer Left	
Steer Right	
Cycle Views	
Reverse	
Toggle Map On/Off	
Toggle Hud On/Off	



Not only is Coconut Monkey your copilot, his lovable mug is plastered on the back of the car as well!

oh, what a racing game it is!

The more important keyboard commands are listed in the control box. You can use the keyboard, but a joystick or steering wheel will give you better control. The demo contains two tracks, and you can try a variety of racing options on them, such as performing a quick-race, a championship race, or just a practice session that sends you around the track a few times.

When you start the demo, be sure to pick the first car in the list. It's a custom-made *PC Gamer* car, and you'll even have Coconut Monkey as a copilot! You can modify your car, right down to the paint job for it. The full version contains ten race tracks, eight-player network play, and redbook audio for your driving pleasure.

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**REAL.**

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Product Information Number 251



THE CD

POD



Company: UbiSoft Entertainment  
Tech Support: (415) 547-4028  
Release Date: Available Now  
Category: Arcade  
Required: Windows 95; Pentium 120; 16MB RAM;  
SVGA  
Install: \PODDemo\SETUP.EXE  
(\PODMMX\SETUP.EXE for MMX version)

Intel's new MMX processor is starting to make waves in the PC gaming community, and UbiSoft's *POD* is one of the first titles to take advantage of the new instruction set. Flying by at 640x480 with 16-bit color, you're not likely to



see such a pretty arcade racing game anytime soon.

However, if you don't have an MMX chip, don't despair. The game still looks beautiful on a normal Pentium machine, as long as you have the horsepower to run it. The demo contains two

There are a few jumps in both race tracks — watch how you hit them if you don't want to end up slowing down!

The two cars that come with the demo of *POD* may not be speed machines, but if you take the corners right, you won't have any trouble winning the race.

tracks and two cars to sample, and each is stunning.

Control your car with the arrow keys — the up key accelerates, the down key brakes, and the side arrow keys steer. If you want to change gears, press A to upshift, and Z to downshift. That's all there is to it! The full version of *POD* includes 16 tracks, 8 cars, and the ability to connect directly to the Internet to download new tracks, new cars, and compare your high scores with those of other racers across the world!

**INSTALLATION NOTE:** The *POD* demo comes in two versions — one for the MMX chip and one for a normal Pentium. Make sure you install the correct one, or the program may not run correctly. The MMX version is in the \POD-MMX directory, and the other is in the \PODDemo directory.

MAKE ONE  
MISTAKE  
AND YOU'RE  
HISTORY.

PLANET EXPLORER



THE BETRAYAL

A dangerously authentic world

where the characters, places and

are so may never

solve your way out.

Coming this fall from

BANZAI



Company: Grolier Interactive  
Tech Support: (203) 796-2536  
Release Date: Available Now  
Category: Action/Arcade  
Required: Windows 95; Pentium 90; 8MB RAM;  
7MB hard-drive space; SVGA w/1MB RAM  
Install: \BANZAI\INSTALL\SETUP.EXE

Poor Banzai. He went and got himself trapped in an exterminator's house, and now he needs to find his way out. The demo for this intriguing action game introduces you to the strange, yet compelling world of *Banzai Bug*. You'll fly around a garage in search of food while avoiding the deadly traps of the exterminator, then make your way through more traps in the air vents to find Sluggo, the bug you need to talk to in order to plan your escape. Poolio will lead you to him — a friendly insect waiting for you to sate your hunger in the garage.

Use the keyboard to control Banzai as you explore the garage and make your way through the air ducts. The spacebar fires a

spitball at your enemies; at close range, it lets you punch or zap an enemy. Use the arrow keys steer, and press Shift to fly forward. By holding down the F key and pressing the arrow keys, you'll slide in the direction of the key you press. For even more information on how to play this rather unique game, consult the TROUBLESHOOT.TXT file located in the \BANZAI\INSTALL directory on *The CD*.

In order to escape the air vents, you need to take out these turrets blocking the exit. moving, or you won't last



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– PC Games



[www.blizzard.com](http://www.blizzard.com)

1-800-953-SNOW

Product Information Number 101

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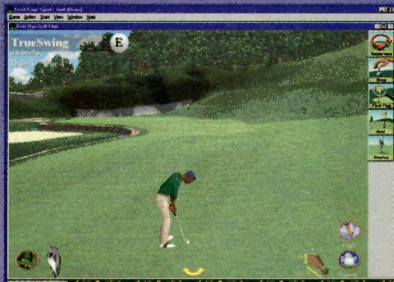
# FPS: Golf



Company: Sierra  
Tech Support: (206) 644-4343  
Release Date: Available Now  
Category: Sports  
Required: Windows 95; Pentium 60; 16MB RAM;  
39MB hard-drive space; SVGA; Mouse  
Install: VFPSGOLF\SETUP.EXE

The Front Page Sports name has always represented some of the most popular sports simulations in PC gaming. *FPS: Golf* should be no different. In the demo, you can play the sixth, seventh, and eighth holes of the Pete Dye Golf Club. The course is located in West Virginia, and could very well be one of the best courses in the country.

*FPS: Golf* contains many options you can mess with to get your golf game down pat, but it's remarkably easy to play. To line up a shot, simply click and hold the two arrows pointing to the left and right underneath the golfer, then move the mouse to line up the arrow. To hit the ball, click and hold the mouse button over the figure of the golfer. Move the mouse down to start your backswing, and then move the mouse forward quickly to strike the ball. By moving the mouse slightly to the left or right while swinging forward, you can make minute adjustments to your aim — be careful, though, or you'll end up with a nasty hook or slice.



Sierra's 3D graphics engine presents the beautiful Pete Dye Golf Club in West Virginia with exquisite detail.

If the mouse-controlled TrueSwing mode isn't your cup of tea, you can always revert to the more traditional three-click method of play (click once to start swinging, again to determine power, and a third time to determine aim). To play with the Tri-click player, you have to start a new game, and select him as the player to use.

In the full version of the game, you can play remotely with as many as eight players over a network, or Sierra's own free Internet gaming system. You can also save your best shots to replay to your friends and family, and even change the golfer's outfit!

# Lose Your Marbles



Company: SegaSoft  
Tech Support: (888) 734-2763  
Release Date: Available Now  
Category: Puzzle  
Required: Win 95; Pentium 60; 8MB RAM; 6MB  
hard-drive space; SVGA with 2MB RAM; Mouse  
Install: LYMDemo\MARBNOEXE

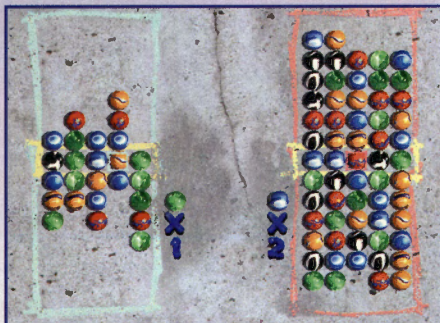
If you've played Tetris to death and you're looking for another mind-bendingly addictive puzzle game, SegaSoft's got your number. *Lose Your Marbles* will take over your thoughts, and you'll dream about those colorful spheres falling from the heavens when you sleep at night.

The basic premise is simple: line up three or more of the same color marbles in the yellow rectangle in the center of the screen to make them disappear. Move the flashing highlight box from side to side through the rectangle with the left and right arrow keys, and raise and lower the selected column with the up and down arrow keys. Pressing the spacebar will rotate the marbles in the yellow rectangle one marble to the right.

Next to your playing field, you'll

see a colored marble with a number underneath it. As you match marbles of that color, the number will rise, telling you how many marbles you'll drop on your opponent's side if you can line up five marbles in the rectangle. Fill the other guy's play area with marbles, and you win the level.

It may sound easy, but it's not. For more tips on how to play the game, select Help from the main menu for a quick tutorial.



Keep your pile of marbles low while giving the opposing player plenty of them.

# EVOLVE OR DIE

## Evolution

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A Darwinian strategy

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# THE WORLD WILL END IN 1999. THE

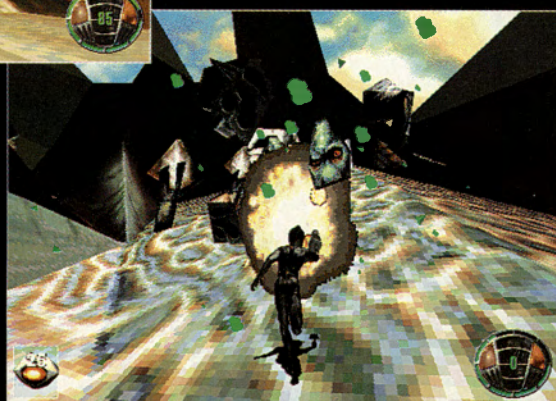
*"One of the most innovative games ever created."*

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*"Futuristic 3-D action/adventure that could set a new standard for PC Gaming."*

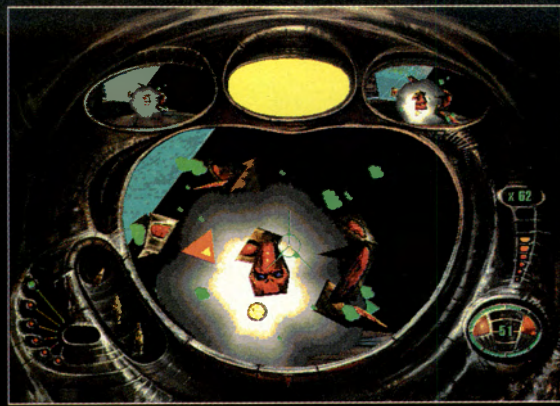
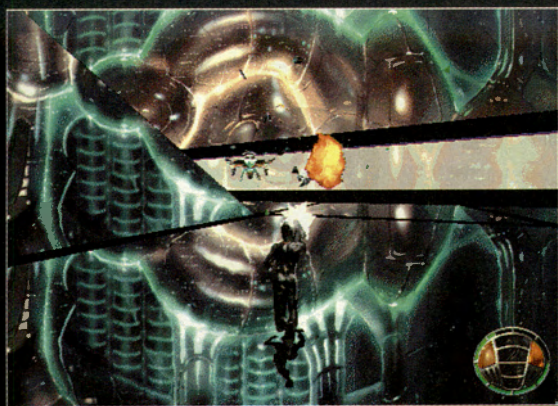
— PC GAMER



**PC CD-ROM**

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Your planet is being bulldozed by the ton. Alien controlled mobile mining cities are strip-mining the earth's surface overrunning and crushing anything in their path...Unless you can stop them.

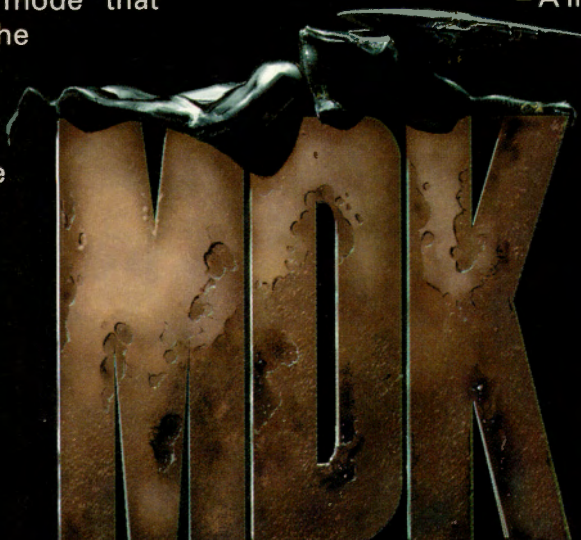
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- Two styles of adrenaline-pumping game dynamics featuring first and third person point of view.



**IT THINKS. THEREFORE IT KILLS.**

Windows '95 and DOS



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<http://www.playmatestoy.com>

Product Information Number 272





# Outlaws



Company: LucasArts  
Tech Support: (415) 507-4545  
Release Date: Available Now  
Category: Action  
Required: Windows 95; Pentium 60; 16MB RAM;  
22MB hard-drive space; SVGA; Mouse  
Install: \OUTLAWS\OUTDEMO.EXE

**Y**ou play ex-marshal James Anderson in this first-person action shooter from LucasArts. After your daughter is kidnapped by an evil land baron,

## HINT

Unlike most first-person shooters, the difficulty levels in *Outlaws* don't control how many enemies are scattered about. Instead, the enemy does more damage as the difficulty increases. When you play in the Ugly level, getting hit twice is enough to take James out of the action. By the same token, most enemies will only require about one shot to kill. That means the entire method of play changes, and at the higher difficulty settings, you need to think your way through the levels, rather than just run into a building and let the lead fly.

it's up to you to fight through the swarms of bad guys to get her back safely.

The controls are pretty standard for a first-person shooter. The arrow keys move your forward, back, and turn. You fire your current weapon with the Ctrl key, and you hold down the Shift key to run. Strafe by holding down the Alt key and pressing either the left or right arrow. This game has a twist, however — each of the weapons has a secondary function. To activate it, press Z. Also, you'll have to reload your weapons — do this by pressing R.

During your adventures, you'll come across handy items you can use later. To scroll through your inventory, use the bracket keys ([ and ]), and press Enter to use the selected item. You



Take on the role of James Anderson, ex-marshal, as he shoots his way through the bad guys to reach his kidnapped daughter.

access the automap by pressing the Tab key, and if you're exploring a dark corridor, try pressing L to ignite your lamp. If a closed door bars your way, press Space to open it.

The full version contains even more levels to play, and several more weapons to use (including a gatling gun). You'll also be able to play multi-player games over a local area network, modem, or serial connection.

# SCARAB



Company: Electronic Arts  
Tech Support: (415) 572-2787  
Release Date: Available Now  
Category: Action  
Required: Windows 95; Pentium 90; 16MB RAM;  
13MB hard-drive space; SVGA; Mouse  
Install: \SCARAB\SETUP.EXE

**I**n *SCARAB*, you control an armored (and armed) robot in a fight to control ancient cities and historic landmarks. A game like *SCARAB* can't really be explained; it needs to be experienced.

## CONTROL KEYS

ACTION	JOYSTICK	KEYBOARD
Move	MOVE JOYSTICK	DIRECTIONAL KEYS
Fire Weapons	BUTTON 1	Spacebar
Dead Eye Aiming	BUTTON 2	HOLD Ctrl
Jump (fire Rocket if Horus)	BUTTON 3	Ins
Raise/Lower Shields	BUTTON 4	del
Rotate Shields	HOLD BUTTON 4	HOLD del
Pick Up Module	BUTTON 5	Enter
Look Up/Down	HAT BUTTON UP/DOWN	+ / -
Center Point of View	TAP BUTTON 2	↑ ↓
Sarcophagus		S
Tower		T

Take a look at the list of control keys to see what commands will lead you to victory. To win a mission, you have to either kill the enemy robots three times each or take control of the city by generating power. Your power comes from towers that you call down from your supply ship by pressing the T key — get your power total to more than 50 percent, and a timer will start ticking down from five

minutes. If you manage to keep control of the city for that amount of time, you win.

There's a lot of strategy behind this game; while you're trying to get your towers set up, the computer opponents strive for the same goal. You'll need to watch out for their towers and make sure your own power output exceeds theirs. Your color is gold — the side of Ra. The enemy, Osiris, is blue — to see where you stand in relation to the bad guys, keep an eye on the graphic depiction of power generation on the map at the right. Meanwhile, you can call for various modules to outfit your robot — such as Rapid Fire or Stealth mode — by pressing the letter corresponding to the module you want. To activate a module, press the number key that matches the number shown next to the module's name. To repair your damaged robot, call for a sarcophagus (S). It will take 15 seconds to completely repair the robot.

Take a look at the online help for a more comprehensive guide to the abilities of your robot and strategies you need to use. The demo contains three missions that take place in Aswan. Also, you can play two-player multi-player games — the full version will let as many as six fighters battle it out for dominance of the ancient Egyptian cities.



Watch for those enemy robots — they're difficult to kill, but they don't seem to have much trouble destroying you!





HEAVY METAL



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Waiting patiently for the next wave in first-person, 3-D action games? Your wait will end with **Unreal**.

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7th Legion

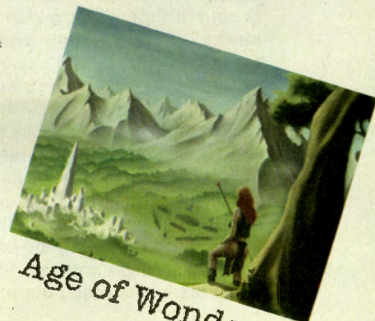
Prefer a little humor and attitude with your adventure? **Curly's Adventure** will give you plenty.

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Whatever your taste, we've got a game for you.



Curly's Adventure



Age of Wonders



For more information, visit us at [www.epicgames.com](http://www.epicgames.com).





Use the engineers you start with to build an In-Vitro Tank, then you can concentrate of building other structures to fortify your headquarters.

## War, Inc.

**Company:** Interactive Magic  
**Tech Support:** (919) 461-0948  
**Release Date:** Available Now  
**Category:** Strategy  
**Required:** 486DX2/66; 16MB RAM; 35MB hard-drive space; SVGA; Mouse  
**Install:** \WARDEMO\WARDEMOP.EXE

It's the 21st century, and corporations are now run by powerful military men who know how to use force to keep the balance sheet out of the red. You are one of those soldiers, and the CEO of your own company. Research and design new military units, send them on campaigns, and earn money for your growing corporation. The strategy is real-time and the rewards are strictly monetary.

Although the demo will only run in DOS mode, I-Magic says the final game will also run under Windows 95. To get started, first explore your office a bit. You can check stock quotes (disabled in the demo, but in the full game, playing the market is a good way to earn a bit of extra cash), and take a look at the units you have available. When you're ready, click on the screen above your desk to see a list of missions.

This one works a bit differently from *Command & Conquer* — to build a new structure, you need to call in the resources, which get air-dropped where you want them. Then you have to send an Engineer to turn the pile of material into a structure. The first structure you build should be an In-Vitro Tank, so you can start cranking out more Engineers to build more units. Once you build a Nanite Manufacturing Facility, you can start putting together units like tanks and hum-vees. During this stage of the game, you don't have to worry about the enemy. Create the forces you want to use in battle, then leave the HQ generation stage and go back to the mission map. There, you can assign units to various task forces and send them to designated targets. Be sure to read the README.TXT file located in the \WARDEMO directory copied to your hard drive. You'll find valuable bits of information, including the best way to start a campaign and how to build up your forces and ready them for battle.

## FPS: Football Pro '97



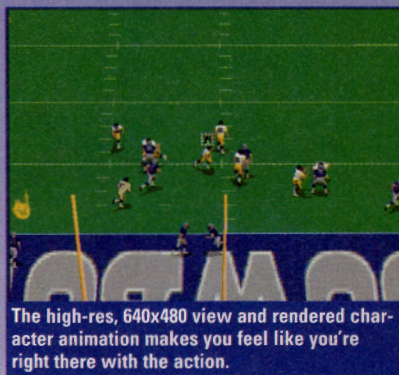
**Company:** Sierra  
**Tech Support:** (206) 644-4343  
**Release Date:** Available Now  
**Category:** Sports  
**Required:** Windows 95; 486DX2/66; 8MB RAM; 34MB hard-drive space; SVGA; Mouse  
**Install:** \FBPRO97\SETUP.EXE

Sierra's Front Page Sports Football simulations have long been among the top-selling sports games for the PC, with tons of stats, exciting arcade action, and all the options an armchair coach could hope for. *FPS: Football Pro '97* is the latest in the line, adding sharp 640x480 graphics and tons of detail.

For the nitty-gritty on how play *FPS: Football Pro '97*, check the comprehensive online help. The demo limits you to one five-minute "quarter," and scoring in that time is no mean feat. You decide how much control you have over the players, from throwing the passes to simply calling the plays. The game works best with a gamepad, but if you're using the keyboard, the cursor keys on your numeric keypad will direct your

players, with Enter acting as button A, and Ctrl serving as button B.

The full version of the game includes a play editor, player ratings editor, league play, and the ability to hook up for some multi-player action via local area network, modem, or serial connection. Put that together with all the stats from the 1997 football season, and *FPS: Football Pro '97* follows admirably in its predecessors' footsteps.



The high-res, 640x480 view and rendered character animation makes you feel like you're right there with the action.

## KKND

**Company:** Electronic Arts  
**Tech Support:** (415) 572-2787  
**Release Date:** Available Now  
**Category:** Strategy  
**Required:** 486DX2/66; 8MB RAM; 14MB hard-drive space; SVGA; Mouse  
**Install:** \KKNDEMO\SETUP.EXE

In the grand tradition of *WarCraft II* and *Command & Conquer* comes Electronic Art's offering, *Krush, Kill, 'N' Destroy*, or *KKND*. The game is filled to overflowing with the stuff that makes real-time strategy great.

The demo has one level of pure, violent mayhem — just build units and attack the enemy. If you're played real-time strategy games before (and at this point, who hasn't?), you'll be right at home here — select a unit with the left mouse button (or by holding the button down to draw a box around multiple units), and either move to a spot or attack an enemy unit by clicking again. To clear a selection, click the right mouse button, and in

those moments when you know gunfire has just broken out on the other side of the map, hold down the right button and move the mouse for a quick-scroll.

To build units, use the menu on the right-hand side of the screen. Hold the mouse pointer over each button for a second or two to see a short description of its function. In order to continue building, you'll have to have oil, so build mobile derricks and move them out to the spots of oil scattered over the map. Then make a Power Station to receive shipments of the oil and convert it to resource units.



What would a real-time strategy game be without heated battles? Watch the AI enemy — he'll start coming after you hard and fast early in the game.

The full version of *KKND* contains full-motion video cut-scenes describing the war between two factions, and support for as many as six players competing over a local area network, or two over a modem/serial connection.



Lady Marrietta  
Baroness, City of Magincia

Prefers white wine.  
Loves to slay dragons.



Are  
you  
with  
us?<sup>™</sup>

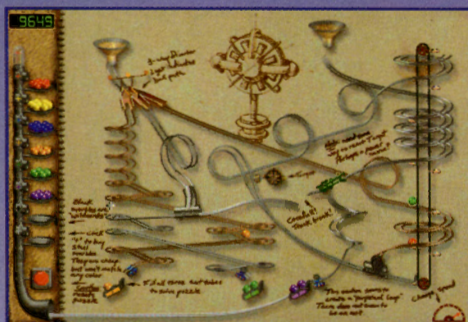
[www.ultimaonline.com](http://www.ultimaonline.com)



We create **worlds.**<sup>™</sup>  
An Electronic Arts® Company

Product Information Number 262





Drop the marbles in the correct order, and you'll go on to the next puzzle. It's easier said than done.

## Marble Drop

**Company:** Maxis  
**Tech Support:** (510) 927-3905  
**Release Date:** Available Now  
**Category:** Puzzle  
**Required:** 486; 8MB RAM; 7MB hard-drive space;  
**SVGA; Windows 3.1 or higher; Mouse**  
**Install:** \WDDemo\SETUP.EXE

The simple goal of Maxis' new puzzle game may lead you to believe it's easy — but give it a try, and you'll see that "simple" and "easy" don't always go hand in hand. In *Marble Drop*, all you have to do is drop some marbles into a mechanical contraption, making sure each colored marble finds its way to the appropriate colored resting spot. Of course, when you throw in freezers, cannons, and teleporters (just to name a few of the gizmos in this game), things get a bit more difficult.

If you enjoy puzzle games, you'll feel the hook grab you as soon as you start playing this one. It's hard to stop. The demo contains five puzzles, all named after recent hurricanes. If you miss getting a marble where it belongs, the marble is destroyed. Since your collection carries over to the next puzzle, if you lose too many of any one color, you might not have the ability to finish the next puzzle. For a description of what various components of the puzzles do, check out the online help. You'll also find some strategy and tips in there to help you out if things get frustrating.

### HAVING PROBLEMS?

We cannot provide technical support for problems you may encounter with the demos on *The CD*. Please use the tech support numbers listed with the demos. *The CD* is rigorously tested by the *PC Gamer* staff and certified virus-free. *PC Gamer* cannot be held responsible for any incompatibility problems caused by the use of *The CD*. However, should your copy fail to run, with error messages that indicate your CD drive cannot read the disc, return it to the following address: PC Gamer Customer Service, The June CD 3.3 Replacement, 150 North Hill Dr., Brisbane, CA 94005. Please indicate any error message you receive.

## The Palace

**Company:** The Palace, Inc.  
**Tech Support:** (800) 798-6110  
**Release Date:** Available Now  
**Category:** Online Chat  
**Required:** 386; 4MB RAM; 6MB hard-drive space;  
**SVGA; Windows 3.1 or higher; Mouse; 16-bit Internet connection.**  
**Install:** \PALACE\PAL-201.EXE

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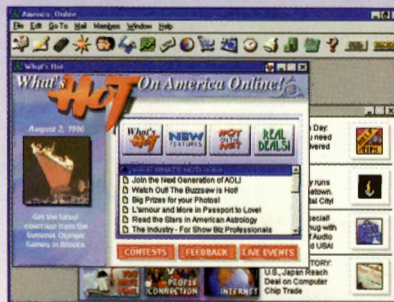
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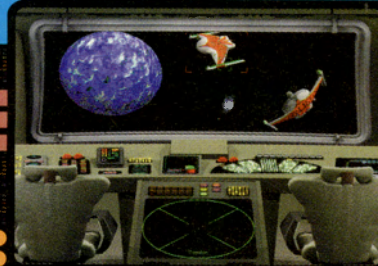
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# Imperialism

World conquest with an SSI flare

Use your diplomatic skills to build and expand your realm in the great age of empires and robber barons in a conquest game with style.

—T. Liam McDonald

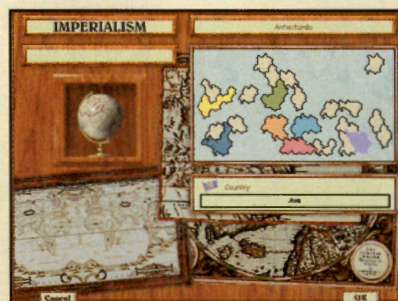
**i**m-pe'ri-al-ism, *n*, the policy and practice of forming and maintaining an empire; in modern times, it is characterized by a struggle for the control of raw materials and world markets, the subjugation and control of territories, the establishment of colonies, etc.

Up until now, few *Civilization*-style conquer-the-world games have not had any connection to the real world and the history of empire-building. *Imperialism* tries something different: a empire-building game that evokes the flavor of Manifest Destiny and the expansion of the British Empire. Though maps are random and there are no historical limits or characters, it tries to capture a more "realistic" feel for what imperialistic expansion and conquest was like at its peak in the nineteenth century.

Trade was the most prominent motivator for expansion: the hunger for raw materials and new markets drove countries outward. Products and their value made an empire. Diplomacy was a complex set of interactions between

trade, war, peace, neutrality, and alliances. War, when it came, could drastically change the course of a country's fortunes for better or worse depending on effective diplomacy and judicious aggression.

With *Imperialism*, the folks at Frog City are trying to recreate the world of the 1800s in which empires and fortunes rose and fell. "*Imperialism* is not designed as a pure conquest game,"



You begin *Imperialism* with a single province on a random map of the earth, and must expand your empire through either guns or butter.

## F.Y.I. FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Game: *Imperialism*  
Developer: Frog City  
Publisher: SSI; 675 Almanor Ave; Suite 201, Sunnyvale, CA 94086-2901 (800) 601-7529  
Projected Price: n/a  
Percentage Complete: 80%

### In a nutshell:

A more sophisticated world conquest game than usual, *Imperialism* strikes a delicate balance between trade, expansion, and conquest.

### What's so special?

Brute force isn't necessarily the name of the game here. *Imperialism* is as much a trading and economic game as it is diplomatic and military: perhaps more so.

### Why should I care?

This is the first time SSI has lent its name and talents to a *Civilization*-style game, and the resulting collaboration with first time developer Frog City is a game with a look and feel completely unlike similar titles.

### And when's it coming out?

Fall 1997

Spring, 1815 \$4,900

Board of Trade

Commodity	Orders	Price	Available	Quantity to Offer
Shirt	Bid	\$900	--	
		\$900	--	
		\$900	--	
		\$900	--	
Paper	Offer	\$100	18	4
		\$300	10	
Wood	Bid	\$300	14	
		\$300	5	
Canned Goods	Bid	\$300	14	
		\$100	1	
Canned Goods	Bid	\$100	--	
		\$100	--	
Canned Goods	Bid	\$100	--	
		\$100	--	
Canned Goods	Bid	\$100	--	
		\$300	--	

When you want to buy or sell items, you go to the bid screen. Here, we're selling canned goods and buying shirts, paper, and wood.





says designer Bill Spieth. "Although most players will be forced to fight at some point in the game, it is possible to win *Imperialism* with defensive military strategy coupled with aggressive diplomacy. The minor nations in this world favor great powers that don't attack them and that supply much needed manufactured goods. Eventually these nations will join a 'friendly' empire as a colony if only to protect themselves from more hostile great powers. Such a colony contributes just as much toward victory as do conquered lands."

Development and balance is the core of *Imperialism*. You begin in a world divided into regions, with seven super powers each claiming a region and neutral states occupying the rest. Rather than building many cities, you build one in your starting province and expand and develop it. This city houses your major elements of production, which can be improved over time to be more efficient.

Turning resources into goods, or trading those resources for capital, is



**"The elements of trade and diplomacy become as critical to the players as war and economic development always are in a strategy game."**

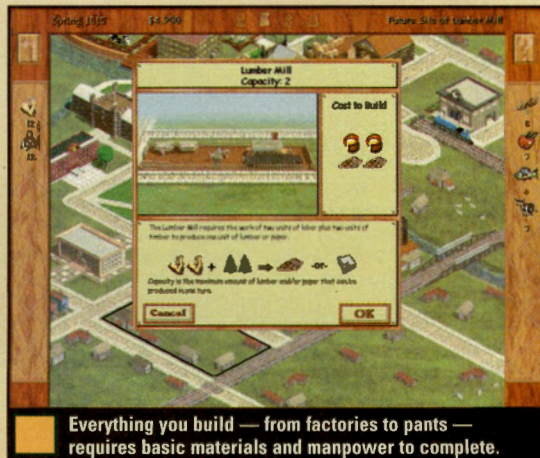
— BILL SPIETH,  
GAME DESIGNER

central to the game. Several units are available to help develop regions: prospectors search for mineral deposits, miners mine them, engineers build railroads and railheads, and so on. Goods can be bought or sold with a bid

screen that lets you sell to the highest bidder, or offer a price to another player to buy materials you need. As a financial model, it's one of the more complex ever attempted in a game like this, and its implementation looks quite promising.

Diplomacy is almost as complex, with various interactions — ranging from declarations of war to offers of pacts, alliances, and even a place in the empire available for all players. As Spieth points out, it all fits together. "The elements of trade and diplomacy become as critical to the players as war and economic development always are in a strategy game," he says. "To achieve this goal, world trade is competitive — players cannot rely on buying what they need or selling what they have. Instead, to guarantee access to foreign resources and markets, players must build relationships with other nations by bribing leaders, offering trade subsidies, establishing embassies, and signing non-aggression pacts or alliances. Eventually, successful players can create reliable supplies of critical resources like coal and iron — but to get enough to feed their factories and mills, they need diplomacy and trade as well as home-based industries."

One goal was to avoid over-emphasis on research and technological advancement. "Players can invest in new technology," Spieth says, "but the primary challenge lies in building an industrial base that takes full advantage of new technologies, not in being the only great power that knows how





“Although *Imperialism* is a strategy game, not a simulation, we intend that the results and successful strategies make sense in a world modeled on the nineteenth century.”

—BILL SPIETH, GAME DESIGNER

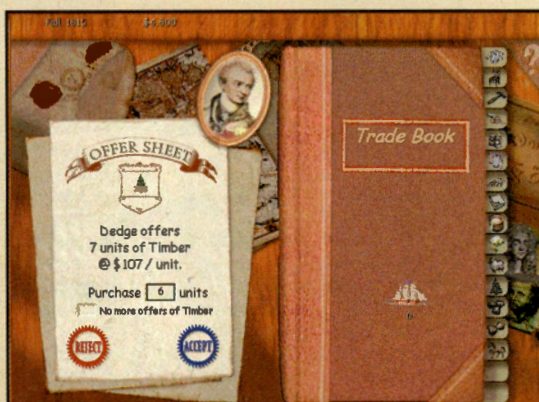


Expert units, like engineers, prospectors, and soldiers, can help transform your empire into a safe and profitable one.

to produce a breech loading rifle. Although *Imperialism* is a strategy game, not a simulation, we intend that the results and successful strategies make sense in a world modeled on the nineteenth century.”

Another element is shaping up to increase *Imperialism*'s fun-factor: an optional tactical combat mode. You didn't think all that talk about trade and diplomacy meant there wasn't some good old-fashioned conquest involved, did you? Each player starts with a small army and can expand it as they see fit. With new technology come new units, but you will primarily be dealing with infantry, cavalry, and artillery. Grouped together, an army can cross into neighboring territory and initiate the battle. This can be played out automatically, or if you want to take a chance for better results, with more units saved at the end or the best possible use of only a few units, you can fight it out in a turn-based miniature-like battle.

In these encounters, players take turns moving based on an initiative system that calculates experience, unit



Trade is central to *Imperialism*, but prices are up to the highest bidder: buy low, sell high is the name of the game.

type, and leader quality. An individual regiment moves and fires, then the next unit goes, and that unit may be friend or enemy. Regiments can choose to reserve fire for their turn, which will allow them to automatically shoot during the enemy unit's turn if one of their units comes in range.

There is a basic morale system that allows for retreats and surrenders, and a general can even rally broken troops on the battlefield. “The strategies stem from the abilities of the various types of regiments,” Spieth says. “For example,



The terrain in *Imperialism* has a distinctive old-world look. The interface lets you deal with things in an orderly fashion.

light cavalry (hussars) are fast, have high initiative, and resist damage effectively. This makes them ideal for drawing the opportunity fire of entrenched enemies allowing heavier units to approach the enemy lines. Regular and grenadier infantry units fight especially well when entrenched but cannot withstand heavy firing while their slow speed makes attacks risky.

“The best strategies change as technology alters the battlefield,” he continues. “At the beginning of the game, the charge of heavy cavalry is often the most effective attack. By the close of the century such an attack is suicidal.”

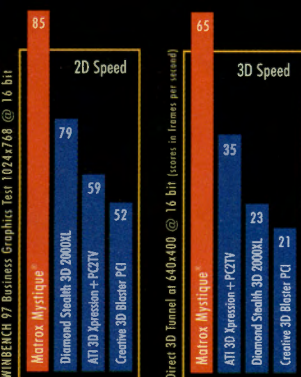
There's a lot to like in the early version of *Imperialism*, from its distinctive old-world look to its complex and well-integrated gameplay. For a game that pulls together a lot of elements, it's surprisingly playable and accessible: there is detail, but it's not overwhelming, and the interface lets you deal with all elements — production, trade, construction, military — in an orderly fashion. “*Imperialism* is a big game with a lot going on,” says Frog City chief Rachel Bernstein. “As a programmer and manager, the challenge is to always be paring it down, keeping it focused. Although it's challenging to make a game like this, it's very satisfying, because it's a game we enjoy playing.”

As producer Carl Norman points out, “The focus of the game is at a much finer scale than we've seen in previous games in this genre. Personally, I like the way the game provides me the opportunity to use a combination of economic, diplomatic, and military actions to decide the fate of my nation. The game can throw some interesting curves; while I might plan on being a great military power, I may end up being more successful as a steel baron or an industrialist. You might start out thinking you'll be the next Napoleon, only to find out you're a haberdasher!”



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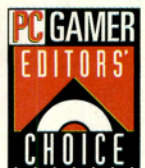


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# Meat Puppet



**Nuking mutant children has never been so much fun**

Newcomer Kronos Digital Entertainment enters the gaming fray with one of the nastiest, most violent, hardcore 2D shooters you'll ever see.

— Colin Williamson

## F.Y.I. FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Game: Meat Puppet  
Developer: Kronos Digital Entertainment  
Publisher: Playmates Interactive, 611 Anton Blvd., Suite 500, Costa Mesa, CA 92626 (714) 428-2100  
Projected Price: TBA  
Percentage Complete: 99.9%

### In a nutshell:

*Meat Puppet* is a *Crusader*-style shoot-'em-up with nightmarish art-deco graphical design.

### What's so special?

Containing juicy gobs of destructive mayhem and some of the wackiest character designs ever to grace a PC screen, *Meat Puppet*'s assassination, action, and tons of attitude should win a cult following.

### Why should I care?

If Kronos plays its cards right, *Meat Puppet* should deliver to drooling action gamers plenty of style and substance — plus lots of gore.

### And when's it coming out?

June 1997

# W

hen it comes to sheer visual style, few companies can even begin to approach Kronos Digital Entertainment. Having earned an impressive backlog of film and television rendering credits, they've pulled out all the artistic stops to bring us *Meat Puppet*, which may turn out to be the most bad-assed, hardcore 2D shooter ever.

*Meat Puppet* takes place in the year 2026, twenty years after "the Big One" takes out most Pacific-rim nations. A handful of mega-corporations rise from the ashes of civilization, taking advantage of the needy and manipulating their way into power, and outfitting humanity with neural implants. Toying with genetic engineering, the corporations (also known as "embassies") bring to life a cyberpunkish nightmare cityscape of mechanized freaks and genetic creations.

With the continued growth of aggressive female protagonists in computer games, it's not surprising that Kronos has created Lotos, *Meat Puppet*'s patented Girl with a Big Gun. "Lotos is a very angry young woman, and she's going to make everyone pay for it," explains *Meat Puppet* producer David Sears. "She insults her partner, destroys other people's property, and is sort of a 'Lady of the Evening,' if you will." Paying homage to such films as *La Femme Nikita* and *Ghost in the Shell*, *Meat Puppet*'s twisting plotline revolves

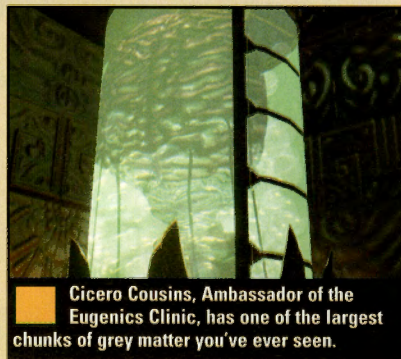


Lotos hits a switch, turning on a spinning blade and liquefying a Child Crusader.

around the Puppet Master, a malevolent being with the ability to transform innocent civilians like Lotos into unlikely assassins. And with a half-dozen company higher-ups marked for death, it looks like Lotos is going to have a long night ahead of her. Accompanying our feminine commando is Dumaine, the faceless yet strangely compassionate liaison to the Puppet Master, who has to work closely with Lotos in order to dodge their unavoidable extermination at the end of the night.

The control is reportedly an easy-to-pick-up deal, with a few "surprises" and other features tossed in for good measure. "We started off with a *Crusader*-driven keyboard interface," says Sears, "but unlike *Crusader*, our character can fire in a 360-degree globe." Lotos will need the ability to shoot in three dimensions, since critters will be hopping around, clinging to the ceiling, and dropping in from above. Beside the keyboard, there's also a more *Diablo*-style, mouse-driven interface, so people can take their pick. Sears also reports that there will be a few platform-game elements thrown into the mix, so be sure to polish up on those jumping skills.

Given a futuristic world where machines and man are combined, Kronos's artists have done a remarkable job bringing the nightmarish inferno of future Los Angeles to life. *Meat Puppet*'s lovingly repulsive cast includes just about every combination of organic matter and mechanical monstrosity you could wish for — from heat-packing punks to mech-driving foetuses floating in embryonic goo. One of the nastier foes that Lotos will be pitted against is the Multiple Metaform — a genetically-engineered horror that sprouts limbs as



Cicero Cousins, Ambassador of the Eugenics Clinic, has one of the largest chunks of grey matter you've ever seen.



# From Roughs to Renders

Much of *Meat Puppet*'s charm derives from its notably stylish art-deco graphics, combined with some of the uncanniest character designs ever. The transition from pencil sketches to the finished product

was overseen by art director Max Chapman, who used Alias and Adobe software to bring his creations to life. Hand-painted Photoshop art was mapped on to Alias Animator 3D models, and the final product was rendered and compressed into PC-compatible sprite data. While creating the architecture was relatively easy, designing the actual characters proved to be more difficult — while Alias software is adept for industrial-style render-

"Fetal Kinevil," one of Meat Puppet's tougher critters, starts out as graphite on paper...



... and through SGI software, is taken into the third dimension, where he is manipulated and animated.



The 3D model of the beautiful yet deadly Lotos bears much in common with the original concept sketch done with pencil and paper.



needed, and is appropriately nicknamed "death in a sausage skin."

One of the universal problems among *Crusader*-style games is a common graphical feel to all of the levels, and a general sterility due to a single tileset. Kronos is avoiding this by using tons of graphics — over a year's worth of artistic work — and by cramming as many graphics as possible into the PC's extended memory. *Meat Puppet*'s engine may also break a few speed records — "It's kind of like the old SR-71 Blackbird — every time you wanted to break a new speed record, they'd take it up and trounce the Russians," says Sears, laughing. "We've had tests where there are over 200 characters running around, each with an independent AI script — and it was *not* slowing down. We're braking the engine at 15 frames per second, which is more than enough to get smooth scrolling and

keep all of our characters moving smoothly." And with Kronos' track record in producing computer animation for films such as *Batman Returns*, the 25 minutes of cutscenes will be of what Sears calls, "disgustingly high quality," setting plenty of new standards in the process.

The amount of humor contained in *Meat Puppet* may also surprise you. "We started out trying to make a really serious game, but we freaked out after three or four months, and started to make things silly — all the character reactions to weapons are pretty funny," says Sears. Though it may be difficult to imagine a chucklesome response to being set on fire or plugged full of micro-rockets, Kronos has crammed an unexpected amount of personality into each weapon hit.

Those over-the-top character designs may manage to offend the

squeamish, though not as much as some of the original ideas that were given the axe. Artist Max Chapman explains: "We sat there in a room and felt that all the ideas we had were getting shot down. I mean, come on — we have to kill *something* in this!" After a few character designs that met disapproval, and a battle to keep the blood the color red, Chapman finally devised the "Toddler Brigadier," a large-headed sprite wielding a surgical knife, and the "Child Crusader," a six-year old with a surgical saw. The response has not been positive from the easily offended. "Everybody's always commenting on 'toddlers this, toddlers that, you guys are like the antichrist, you're killing kids!'" says Chapman. It looks like *Meat Puppet* is already spawning a tad of controversy — there are already rumors that several big-name stores won't be carrying the product, primarily due to the game's penchant for whacking cute little urchins with flame-throwers.

In any case, *Meat Puppet* looks like violent fun for everyone. The game should run optimally on a P100 with 16 megs of ram, a double-speed CD ROM drive, and a 2-meg video card. The release date of June 17th seems just about etched in stone — so until then, get that flame-thrower ready. The toddlers will be waiting for you...

PCG

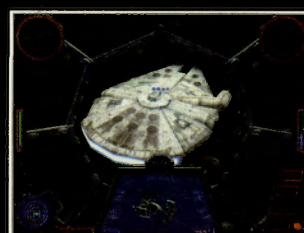
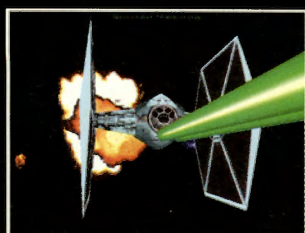


Lotos puts that flame-thrower to good use as she takes out a handful of flesh-eating Abominations. Lotos will face a lot more of these creeps before the night is through.



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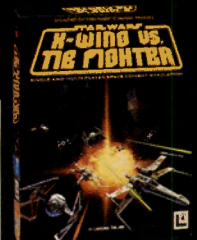
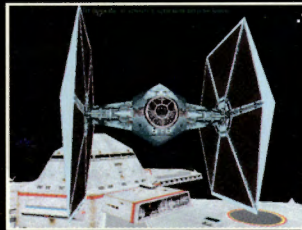






(Floyd from Accounting.)

engine is phenomenal. The new missions are masterstrokes of space mayhem. There's even single player campaigns for an all-new explosive experience. No wonder *Computer Gaming World* proclaims **X-Wing vs. TIE Fighter** "number one on every space sim-er's wish list." And if you don't believe them, just ask Floyd. <http://www.lucasarts.com>



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# NHL Powerplay '98

**Powerplay gets 3D and aims directly at EA's mighty NHL series!**

Radical Entertainment and Virgin team up to unleash a hockey game that can hold its own — and then some — against the award-winning sports games from EA.

— Mike Salmon

## E.Y.I. FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Game: NHL Powerplay '98  
Developer: Radical Entertainment  
Publisher: Virgin Interactive Entertainment, 18061 Fitch Avenue, Irvine, CA 92614 (714) 833-8710  
Projected Price: TBA  
Percentage Complete: 65%

### In a nutshell:

NHL Powerplay '98 is a five-on-five hockey simulation that features both the NHL and NHLPA licenses.

### What's so special?

The polygonal graphics are as sharp as EA's NHL '97. Some amazing animation, Artificial Intelligence, and fast gameplay could have the folks at EA Sports sweating a bit.

### Why should I care?

With the depth of strategy and level of detail in Powerplay '98, there isn't a hockey fan around who shouldn't check out this title.

### And when's it coming out?

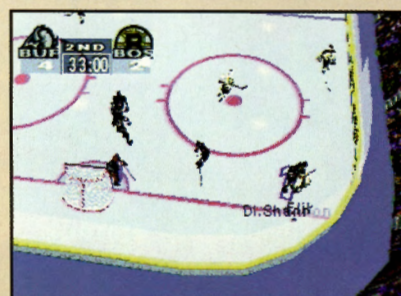
Fall 1997



Zooming in close on the replays, you can really see the details, like the name Bauer all over the players' uniforms, thanks to the Bauer hockey equipment company.

Last year, Radical and Virgin joined forces to make their first hockey game, and while the sprite-based graphics looked dated, the smooth gameplay and superior AI was impressive. Now, after another year of work, NHL Powerplay '98 has given the game a face lift and is ready to explode onto the scene.

Gone are the small sprites of last year and in their place is a clean and smooth 3D engine. The polygonal players feature beautifully texture-mapped uniforms (name and number included) and animation that has no equal in the sports arena. Hockey equipment company Bauer has been signed on as a partner and therefore has its name all over the game — the player's pants, sticks, gloves, and helmets all come with an official Bauer logo. And the graphics are so sharp that you can actually read the tiny Bauer logo on their skates in the replay. Besides that, all of the player textures have added shading, so that the players look even better.

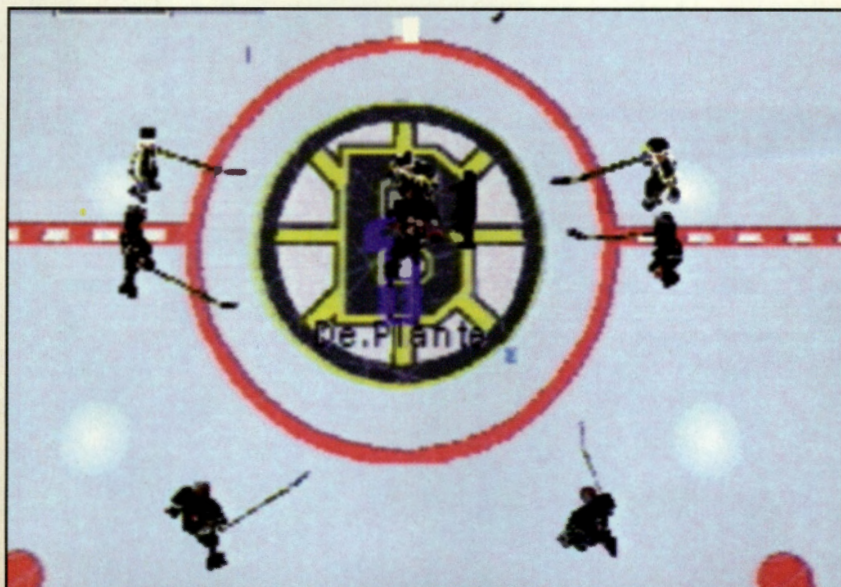


The default camera angle for the game is off the ice a bit, but you can choose to move in closer with one of four camera angles.

One member of the development team was actually stolen from EA, where he did most of the textures on NHL '97.

One of the strongest points in Powerplay is the amazing animations, which includes a plethora of completely new sequences. Some of the smooth motions in the game include dropping to the knees to block a shot, stacking the pads, getting wacked in the head by the puck, a fake shot, hooking, and a whole new batch of checking animations. Not





**Powerplay '98** will look good on your PC, no matter what kind of system you have, because you can play in 3D mode on high-end machines and in 2D mode on lower-end machines.



The game supports all 3D cards and MMX for a super-sharp, high-res, 3D experience.

only do the players sprawl on the ice after a hit, but depending on the velocity, angle, and power of the hit, the player will react differently. Occasionally the tougher players will merely stumble while maintaining possession of the puck. These new moves aren't just for looks, either. Each of them changes the way the game is played. Fake shots can bring defenders to their knees, making it easier to skate by for the goal. The new hook maneuver allows you to tie up a player from behind, but press too hard, and you'll get called for the penalty. And the variety of check animations means that speed isn't the only key to a good team.

Instead of bringing in an NHL superstar for a couple of hours of motion-capture, Radical opted to hire minor league hockey players. And without the egos, the developers were able to spend time to get the motions just right. Therefore, you'll see plenty of great animations in *Powerplay '98* of players getting pounded and falling flat on their face. In order to get the most accurate motion-data, the developers did the motion-capture on ice with pads on. Instead of using the traditional reflective balls, Radical went with a different method of motion-capture using cords. According to the games producer Aron Drayer, "It's a much more effective way of capturing motion, especially on ice." To the gamer, it doesn't really matter who or how the motions are cap-

## CREATING A PLAYER



The developers used minor league hockey players to get the most detailed motion-capture.



Then they took the data and applied it to the basic polygon figures.



Finally, the uniform texture is added. Each player has a patch on their jersey for name and number, which is the final addition.



The looks of *Powerplay '98* are now equal to EA's *NHL '97*, but according to the developers, the key difference is the improved AI.

tured as long as the game looks great, and *Powerplay '98* certainly does that.

The developers didn't stop there. Instead, they are working on completely upgrading every aspect of the game. One of the strongest points in *Powerplay* was the sharp AI, but once again, the developers wanted more. So this time, the goalies will watch the puck go around the ice and, when the situation is right, they will come out of the net to cut down the angle, or even dig a puck out of the corner on a power play. Some other key additions have been added to the checking. Now, when your player is knocked into a stumble, you can attempt to pass the puck, although the accuracy isn't as good. The deep strategy of last year has added options for power plays and penalty killing for a total of 12 different strategy settings. Other new features include create player, trading, fighting, and an all-star game compiled from user stats.

All of this, and *Powerplay '98* is still running at over 30 frames per second. Last year, PC players got the raw end of the deal. While the console versions of *Powerplay* were in beautiful 3D, the PC version was still sprites. This year, the PC gets the high-res graphics, which outshine anything the consoles can offer.

The game fully supports 3D accelerator cards and MMX, which allow for a faster frame-rate and smoother play. What's even more amazing is that no matter what size your computer is, *Powerplay '98* has a game for you. If you're running on a P100 or higher, then the 3D goodness is yours, but for those with slower machines, a special 2D version of the game is available to play as well. When asked how *Powerplay '98* could compete with *NHL '97*, Aron Drayer had this to say: "Our AI was better last year and will be again this year. The players react and play with real NHL strategy. And now, with the graphics enhancements, we will look just as good if not better."

The inclusion of LAN and modem-to-modem play should make *Powerplay '98* a great multi-player experience. What's even more interesting is that *Powerplay* will use 2 to 8 buttons on compatible game pads to give the player much more control than the 2 buttons of *NHL '97*. Even though the game is only about 65 percent finished, it already looks and plays in the same league as EA's champion product, and when it's finished, we could very well have a new player to hold Lord Stanley's Cup high.

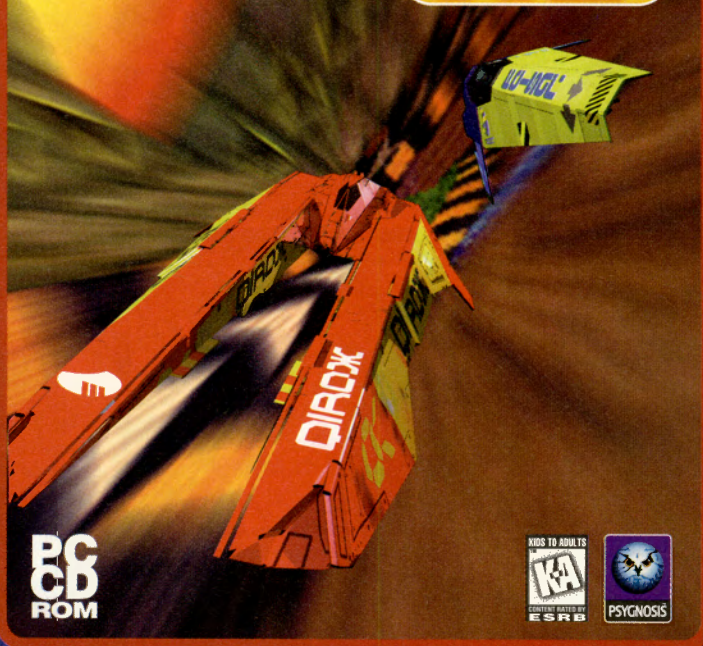
PCG



# ACCELERATE

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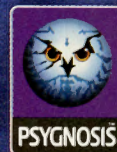


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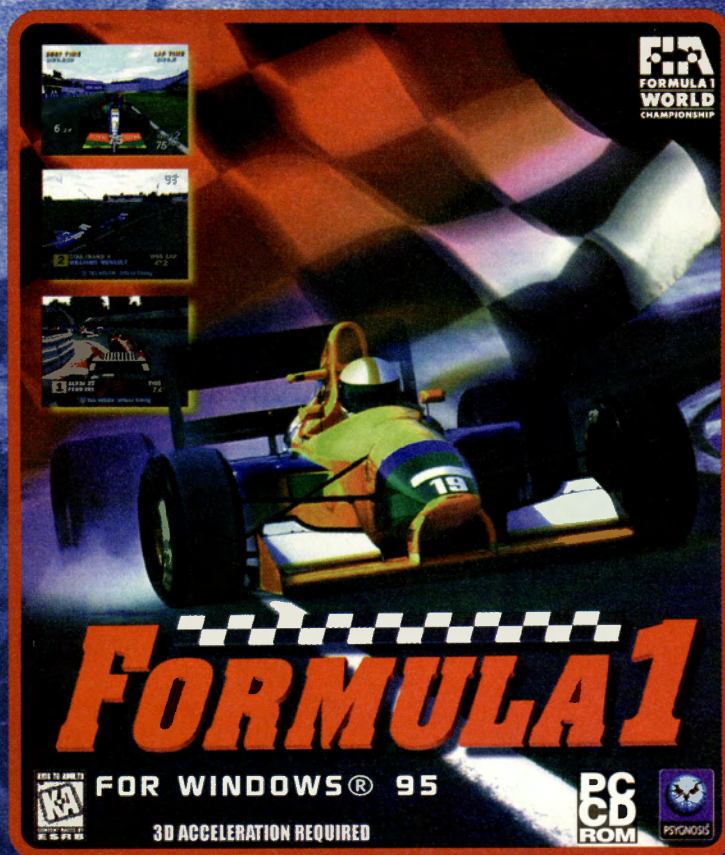
- Video Logic Power VR
- 3DFx Card
- 3D Labs Permedia
- Rendition Verite
- ATI Rage Mk2



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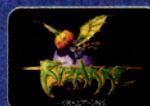


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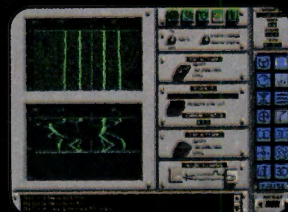
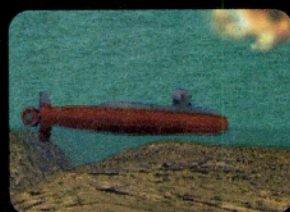
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# Gamestock '97

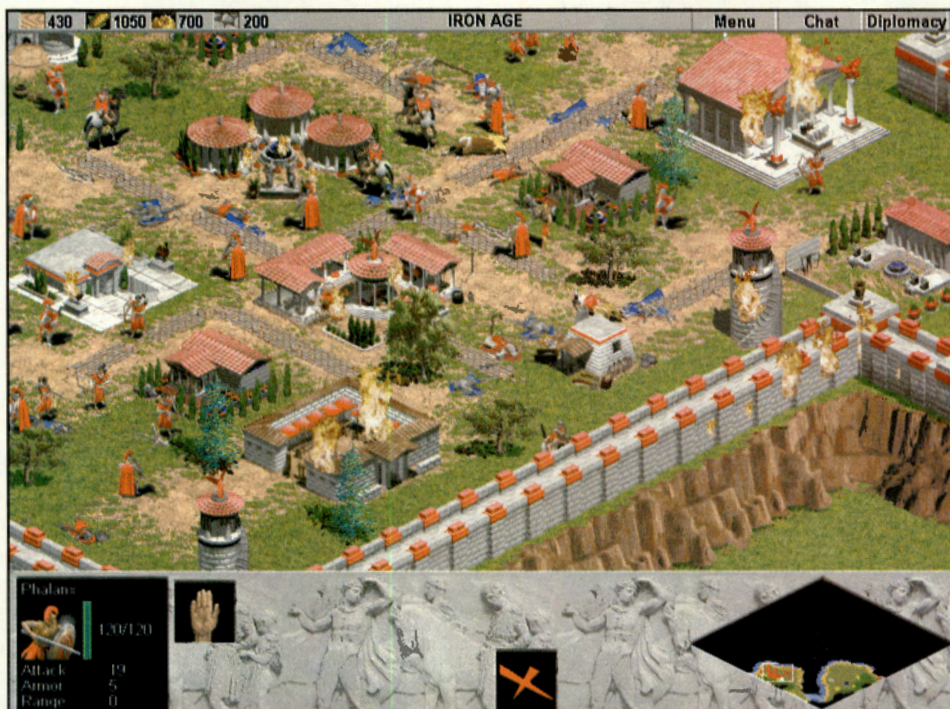
## Microsoft gets serious about games

**W**ell it wasn't Woodstock, and bell-bottoms and love beads were noticeably absent, but Microsoft's first ever Editor's Day for the gaming press did prove a memorable experience beneath the cloudy skies of Redmond, Washington.

Microsoft has been publishing games for a while, but this year marks its first serious push into an industry long-dominated by small, game-oriented publishers. While there's no danger of Microsoft dominating the games field the way it does operating systems, the Microsoft Games Team has put together a solid lineup of titles that many companies would be proud to have.

Last year's *PC Gamer* Wargame of the Year returns in a sequel, as *Close Combat 2* checks in with a new setting (Operation Market Garden) and new 16-bit graphics. The campaign element has been totally revamped as well, with a new point allocation system that lets you choose the units you'll be taking into the next engagement, instead of drawing from a random lot. Look for it this winter.

Also new is *Age of Empires*, a strategy game that combines elements of *Civilization* with *Warcraft II*. It's an empire-building game, beginning in the Stone Ages but moving on to the medieval period. But what sets *Age of Empires* apart from a game like *Civilization* is that everything is



Real-time strategy meets the empire building genre in Microsoft's *Age of Empires*.

happening in real-time. Developed by Ensemble Studios, the game should be out this summer or fall.

Bill Gates steps up to the plate in *Microsoft Baseball 3D*, a graphics-rich baseball sim sporting full 16-bit color, 3D polygon players, real ball physics, and the full range of Major League Baseball parks and players. It's too early to tell whether it belongs in the arcade camp or if it will please the stats and sims crowd, but the game is shaping up to be a looker.

Rounding out this year's offerings are *Microsoft Fighter Ace*, an online game, and two action games, *Critical Depth* and *The Condemned*. And of course, they've signed up Chris Roberts of *Wing Commander* fame (see the May '97 Eyewitness section of *PC Gamer* for full details), though Digital Anvil won't have anything to show until next year. But perhaps some of the most interesting stuff

we saw at Gamestock was ... well, we can't write about that just yet, so stay tuned!

### Get into the Zone

Microsoft is also getting into the online gaming market with the Internet Gaming Zone, a web-based online service for gamers that will go head-to-head with TEN, Mplayer, and Engage. The Zone offers free multi-player matchmaking for owners of Microsoft games like *Monster Truck Madness* or *Close Combat*, as well as free play with such traditional parlor games as bridge, chess, and backgammon. Hasbro Interactive is also partnering with Microsoft, bringing its line of boardgame CD-ROMs like *Monopoly* and *Battleship* to the Zone.

Another component of the Zone will be pay-to-play, online only games such as *Microsoft Fighter Ace*. *Fighter Ace* is an

online flight sim that will support up to 100 players in an arena, making it the first "massively multi-player" game that Microsoft has ever produced. With *Fighter Ace*, Microsoft is going after the same market as the successful *Air Warrior* and *War Birds*. Watch your six, Wild Bill!

The online partnership between Microsoft and DWANGO is also of note. The Zone will function as a web-based front end for DWANGO, the nationwide network of dial-up servers that offers fast gameplay for such speed-intensive games as *Quake*, *Doom*, and *Duke Nukem 3D*. With the new partnership, DWANGO will be rolling out some 40 new servers across the country, and with more people finding out about DWANGO through Microsoft's Zone, DWANGO may finally become a major player in multi-player gaming.



*Close Combat*, last year's *PC Gamer* Wargame of the Year, has a sequel.



# Pax Imperia Update

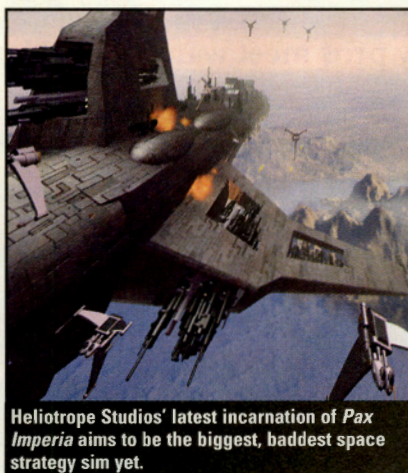
## Space game shaping up

Since being sold by Blizzard to THQ, *Pax Imperia 2* has gone through a name change (it's now *Pax Imperia: Eminent Domain*) and a thorough overhaul in terms of art and gameplay. The new game is shaping up to be quite a good space strategy game.

"In a lot of ways, I consider it to be a new game," says Andrew Sispoidis, president of Heliotrope Studios, the game's developer. Where Blizzard has a philosophy of what Sispoidis calls "strategy lite," by working with THQ, Heliotrope has the opportunity to create the mother of all space strategy games once and for all, going head to head with *Master of Orion* and the rest of the space strategy pack.

"We're fans of their game," Sispoidis says of *Master of Orion*, but he thinks *Eminent Domain* will best it. "It's a deeper game — it has incredible depth for the hard-core gamer."

Some of the depth Sispoidis talks of is already evident in the game. There are a host of options in four different spheres of empire



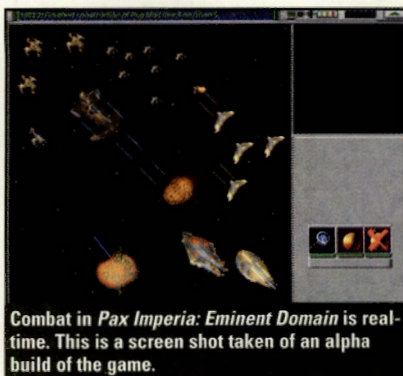
Heliotrope Studios' latest incarnation of *Pax Imperia* aims to be the biggest, baddest space strategy sim yet.

management: economics, diplomacy, espionage, and military action. Like *SimCity*, the game runs continuously, though you can slow or pause the game while you plot your next move. Combat happens in a strategy arena, with units blazing away in real-time action a la *WarCraft II*.

Multi-player games will support up to 16 players on both LAN and the Internet. They want to get the game out to as many online services as possible, so look for it on Mplayer, Engage, TEN, and other gaming networks.

The star map itself is 2D and can support up to 80 stars, though Sispoidis says that RAM's the limit, and if enough players demand it, they may include an option to let the game run as many star systems as your memory can handle. Each star can have up to ten planets around it.

*Eminent Domain* is tentatively set for an August release.



Combat in *Pax Imperia: Eminent Domain* is real-time. This is a screen shot taken of an alpha build of the game.

# EA Invests in Accolade

## Multi-year affiliate label deal made

Electronic Arts has made an investment in Accolade, buying about 15-20 percent of the company. This is a multi-year, affiliate label deal that gives EA exclusive distribution rights to Accolade titles.

Accolade CEO Jim Barnett thinks it's a good deal for Accolade. "For us, it's partnering with the strongest company in the industry," says Barnett, noting that EA is the industry's number one distributor and that this partnership gives Accolade more money to grow its own business.

Although there is some overlap in the two company's titles, particularly with their sports games, the deal shouldn't affect the development of Accolade titles. "We're very

comfortable that they have the adequate incentive to sell our titles as well as their own," says Barnett. EA Sports won't get to look at Hardball design documents, for example. "They get the box copy and they ship it for us, basically," says Bill Linn, PR manager for Accolade. "We remain autonomous."

Accolade is also making future plans, with a slew of new projects in the works. Work on the fourth *Star Control* has just begun, and *Jack Nicklaus 5* is also under development. *Test Drive 4* and a *Deadlock* sequel are also in the works. In other EA news, the company recently started work on its Redwood City, CA headquarters.

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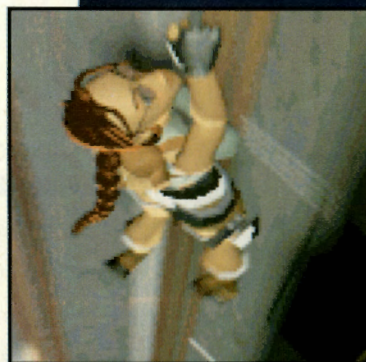


## UNDER CONSTRUCTION

### Tomb Raider: Unfinished Business

Thought you were done with *Tomb Raider*? Think again. This new add-on pack, called *Unfinished Business*, will include two new expert levels, a library of high-resolution Lara Croft art, and a special preview of *Tomb Raider 2*.

In the expansion pack, Lara will have to destroy the last hatchery of Atlantean pods, home of the alien beasts who menaced the daring explorer in the final levels of the original game. There are only two new levels, but since the levels in *Tomb Raider* are huge and sprawling and take a long time to complete, and because these new levels are billed as the toughest yet, there should be many hours of gaming in the package. The add-on pack requires the original *Tomb Raider* game, and is expected to sell for only \$19.95. Look for it this summer.



Lara Croft is back for more in *Tomb Raider: Unfinished Business*.

### Lords of Magic

Sierra's Impressions division is at work on a new strategy game, *Lords of Magic*. It's a real-time strategy game with a fantasy theme, similar in many ways to the well-received *Lords of the Realm II*. But rather than flat trees and mountains forming obstacles, the game features true 3D terrain. It's expected this fall.

.....Continued on page 49

# Connections '97

## Military pros meet wargame designers

**M**axwell Air Force Base, Montgomery, Alabama; 2/26/97: The entrance to the Air Force Wargaming Institute looks like a set from a techno-thriller movie. Lots of chrome; a front desk manned by two "blue beret" guards, illuminated like tropical fish by the glow of innumerable monitor screens; armored doors; steel turnstile so tight that nobody carrying anything larger than a briefcase can possibly enter or leave; surveillance cameras all over the place; and a couple of no-nonsense signs declaring: "NO PERSONAL COMPUTERS ALLOWED BEYOND THIS POINT!"

Tonight, however, the place has a festive air. It's crowded with delegates to Connections '97, the annual get-together of armed forces professionals, Department of Defense specialists, wargame designers, reviewers, authors, and assorted grognards of every stripe. Civilians don't ordinarily get to see much of the AFWI facility, and indeed many of the building's 22 rooms are off limits even tonight. But this is "Demo Night," so there's plenty to see.

In the main conference room, the Air Force is demonstrating one of its latest and hottest wargame systems, called ACES (Air Force Command Exercise System). Tonight's feature: "Operation Dragon," an incredibly detailed simulation of a hypothetical near-future war in Korea. The system can handle as many as 600 players; now *that's* computing power. Four command modes are modeled in the game: air, land, sea, and intelligence, and while the main thrust of the sim is operational, it can go down to the tactical level, far enough to permit the user to design strike packages for each air and naval unit on the map.

This is a *monster* wargame, with hundreds of units displayed on a huge screen, but it's all made manageable by a solid graphical interface no more complicated than that found in most



Col. John Warden (ret.), one of the masterminds of the air campaign against Iraq, delivers a brilliant and provocative lecture on "Warfare in the 21st Century and its Applications to Wargaming," one of the high highlights of the whole affair.

commercial games.

Down the hall is a fascinating product (developed by BTG, Inc.) called *Sensor Combat: Bosnia*. In this sim, the object is not to win a combat victory, but to keep the lid on a dangerous trouble spot by deploying high-tech resources to provide operational security, reliable intelligence, and "deception." That last area is particularly interesting, since it models what the military call "The CNN Factor" — i.e., situation-sensitive manipulation of media coverage to further the overall goal of the operation. There's something naggingly familiar about the map display, too. That's because it's an upgraded version of the *Empire II* engine! Only this game looks to be a lot more interesting....

Further down the hall are Lt. Scott Barnett and Sgt. Dan Snyder from the Marine Corps Modeling and Simulations Command. They're demonstrating a polished version of *Marine Doom* and previewing a new tactical combat game, based on the *Quake* engine, called *Battlesite Zero*. While *Marine Doom* is downloadable and has proven enormously popular, the new game will be a full-fledged commercial product, and it promises to be hot.

### A Star-studded Cast

Remember the furor that erupted when the news got out that the Pentagon had shipped *ten thousand* body-bags to Saudi Arabia during the build-up for Desert

Storm? That was because, in wargame after wargame, Coalition ground forces suffered approximately that number of deaths in simulated campaigns against the Iraqi Army. But when the campaign was over, the actual number of KIAs was only a hundred or so. Sounds like those expert wargamers were pretty dumb, huh?

Not so, says Col. John Warden (ret.), one of the men who conceived and planned the air campaign against Saddam's legions.

The simulations *were* sound, since they were all based on models of a conventional tank-vs.-tank slugging match against a well-fortified enemy. They were also based on models of a "serial" air offensive — that is, sorties against Target A until it was neutralized, followed by sorties against Target B until it was clobbered, and so forth.

Instead, Col. Warden conceived and sold to General Schwarzkopf a plan for a "parallel" air campaign: a massive, all-at-once assault on every major strategic target in Iraq, designed to decapitate Saddam's command and control structure, blind his radar, paralyze his air force. Such a bold, revolutionary strategy simply could not be simulated — the



Air Force personnel and civilians alike practice their skills at "Operation Dragon," a simulated Korean conflict that's one of the centerpieces of the AF's ACES program.



## An Interview with Larry Bond

**L**arry Bond, one of the finest writers in the techno-thriller genre, is also the inventor of the *Harpoon* miniatures system and had considerable input into the PC games based on it. His knowledge of military technology is unsurpassed.

More to the point, Bond is a passionate gamer. He stays current with every development in the wargaming field, both consumer-oriented and Pentagon-level, and is a regular visitor to each Connections conference. He is also a Nice Guy, as he demonstrated by taking time out from his hectic schedule to grant an interview to *PCG*.

### When did you invent Harpoon?

In 1979, when I was still in the Navy. I had a friend who was publishing adventure games; he agreed to take a look at what I'd done, and when he did, he offered to publish it. The first edition came out in 1980: one rule book, ten dollars, and it did very well. It won the H.G. Wells Award



Larry Bond

a year later. It was a very simple process, compared to all the rigamarole you have to go through today in order to bring a game to market.

### And now you're working on a new and improved computer version of Harpoon?

Yes, indeed, and I hope it will be "the ultimate" version. There's a tremendous installed base for the previous versions — a veritable "Harpoon Community" — and I hope this version will rope them all together and get them marching in the same direction. I'm tied in to a number of bulletin boards where *Harpoon* fans discuss and dissect and make suggestions, and some of those ideas are very good. I want to incorporate the best ones whenever I can. A lot of effort is going into improvements in the AI. Remember, the first version was designed for the 286 — now we

have a tremendously greater amount of processing power to work with, which enables us to do so much more to make the game realistic and detailed, and hopefully even more fun to play.

### There's a game based on *The Enemy Within* available at [http://pathfinder.com/twep/games/enemy\\_within](http://pathfinder.com/twep/games/enemy_within). How much input did you have on that?

A fair amount, but it's basically a promotional tool tied into the release of the Warner Books paperback edition — it's not a full-scale PC game. In fact, it's really a high-falutin' card game, not a role-playing adventure or a strategy epic. Within those limits, though, it's fast and fun and certainly true to the spirit of the novel.

### You have one foot in literature and the other in gaming. Do the two interests reinforce each other? Reinforce, absolutely. I guess

*Continued on page 51:  
See Bond*

computer models didn't exist.

Col. Warden's fascinating behind-the-scenes lecture kicked off Connections '97. Begun in 1993, the Connections get-togethers, co-hosted by the Air Command and Staff College and the College of Aerospace Doctrine, Research, and Education, are designed "to promote the mutual exchange of ideas between commercial wargame developers and air power strategists, educators, and historians."

Interest in the event has grown exponentially in the past couple of years. In 1996, for example, only eight software companies demonstrated their wares; this year, the number was 25. The number of delegates now hovers around 100 and represents a remarkable cross-section of the gaming industry, the armed services, and D.O.D. contractors. Speakers include noted historian John Prados, game-reviewers as opinionated and witty as Richard Berg and M. Evan Brooks, and legendary game designer James Dunnigan.

While the interface between consumer wargaming and the professional military is still new, it's taken hold enough that a cer-



Sean Scott, of BTWG, Inc., demonstrates *Sensor Combat: Bosnia* during demo night at the Air Force Wargaming Institute.

tain consensus has emerged.

Among the main points that most speakers agreed on:

- Wargame-based training is considerably less expensive than any other kind;
- It has zero environmental impact;
- It is secure from "overhead observation" — i.e., unfriendly satellite scrutiny;
- It has gained credibility with Congress;
- It confirms the doctrine that "the best time to train a good major general is when that soldier is 21."

Lt. General Redden, CO of the Air University, is obviously one of the enlightened: "While the primary mission of the U.S. military has not changed — to defend the nation and its vital

interests — the environment has," Gen. Redden says. "The threat-base is no longer what it was during the Cold War. We need not merely competent warriors, but brilliant ones. PC technology can make the crucial difference. Wargame training saves time, money, and, ultimately, lives."

James Dunnigan's talk is one of the highlights of Day

Two. This, after all, is a man who's designed more than one hundred wargames, board and computer-based, and who's written some of the sharpest, wittiest books ever penned about modern military affairs (including *A Quick and Dirty Guide to War*). Dunnigan speaks brilliantly on the subject of "Pushing the Envelope: Innovation in Wargame Design."

Aphorisms roll from the stage: "History does not repeat itself, but it sure as hell *para-phrases*." "Artificial intelligence improvement is really marginal — most gamers like mediocre AI, because they can beat them!" "Innovative game design involves a little bit of risk-taking and whole lot of screwing around."

The audience laps it up.

*Continued from page 48*

## Super EF2000

Ocean of America will be showing off the next installment of *EF2000* at E3 late in June. Based on the Eurofighter being developed by NATO, this sequel to one of the better flight sims in recent memory will add a host of improvements, including multi-player options, a tactical mission planner, and campaigns against the Russians across Norway and Sweden. Another Ocean title in the works is *Mission Impossible*, based on the Tom Cruise movie of the same name.

## Iron Wolves

Navy buffs on the Internet can look forward to *Iron Wolves*, an online multi-player game set in World War Two. Players will captain destroyers, corvettes, and submarines. The master server is located in the UK, and players from throughout the world can participate in the ongoing, persistent campaigns. The game has been put together by On-Line, which has worked on *The Lawnmower Man* and *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* CD-ROMs. Check it out at [www.uboat.com](http://www.uboat.com).

## I-magic's Great Battle Series

For those of you who've played the *Great Battles of Alexander* demo and are eager for more battles, you'll be happy to hear that Interactive Magic is planning a whole series of wargames based on the same technology. Called the Great Battles series, upcoming titles that will follow *Alexander* include *Great Battles of Hannibal* and *Great Battles of Julius Caesar*.

## Capitalism Expansion Due

Interactive Magic is also readying *Capitalism Plus!*, a deluxe version of the award-winning business simulation *Capitalism*. The expansion pack will feature new, SVGA graphics, real world maps and a map editor, product specialization, and new scenarios,

*Continued on page 51*



# Dragon Lore II

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# Tomb Raider Duo Quits ...

... but they won't end up at Shiny

In this business, developer turnover is pretty commonplace, and when you're part of a successful project, your market value skyrockets. Case in point: the recent controversy with the *Tomb Raider* team.

Toby Gard, the man responsible for *Tomb Raider*'s original concept and the game's lead artist, along with *Tomb Raider* lead programmer Paul Douglas, both quit Core Design last March, but where they'll end up is anyone's guess.

The original plan was for Gard and Douglas to join Dave Perry's company Shiny

Entertainment out in Los Angeles, but things didn't quite turn out that way. Perry had been talking to the two, and based on the strength of these informal talks, he went on the Internet

and announced that the two were joining his company. But as soon as Perry made his announcement, other publishers swooped in and began offering the *Tomb Raider* duo even sweeter offers — deals Perry says he couldn't match. "They offered them their own company," Perry says. "I wasn't about to do that."

At press time, Gard and Douglas were both in negotiations with various publishers and couldn't be reached for comment. For his part, Perry says he has learned his lesson — he won't be making any more announcements until the deal is done.

In the meantime, Core Design's managing director Jeremy Smith is confident that Gard and Douglas' departure will not affect Core's current key project, *Tomb Raider 2*, since the two weren't involved in the project. "They had obviously decided that they were going to leave shortly after *Tomb Raider*, so they deliberately spaced themselves from *Tomb 2*," says Smith.



## Bond

Continued from page 49

I'm the only mainstream author who has gaming as his background. And not just the fun kind of gaming either: I've done wargame analysis for the Navy, and consulting work for various other D.O.D. agencies. My writing pays the rent, but gaming is still my passion. After all, my novels are themselves simulations of conflicts that might happen in the real world. Gaming helps me get down in the weeds and see the patterns; it

enables me to structure plausible rules for the situations that I write about.

**Just one final question before we head to the bar: will *The Enemy Within* be a movie?**

From your mouth to God's ear! It has a better chance than *Cauldron*, *Vortex*, or *Red Phoenix*, because the sheer scope of those books makes a movie prohibitive. My God, you'd have to rent the Red Army! Come to think of it, these days you probably *could* rent the Red Army — they need the cash.

Continued from page 49

including historical, modern day and futuristic campaigns. It will be both a Win 95 and DOS title, and will support hot seat and E-mail play. Owners of the original version will be able to upgrade to the new version by sending in their original CD and \$29.95 to Interactive Magic.



Revised and expanded, I-Magic's award-winning business sim *Capitalism* is back.

## Critical Depth

Microsoft is readying *Critical Depth*, which will be released for both the PlayStation and Windows 95. Developed by SingleTrac, creators of *Twisted Metal* and *WarHawk*, the game will feature dynamic terrain, real-time 3D graphics, multiple underwater environments and both single and multi-player options.

## Virtua Fighter 2

The highly acclaimed fighting game *Virtua Fighter 2* is being re-released for the PC. Optimized for Windows 95 and Intel's new MMX technology, *Virtua Fighter 2* offers 11 different fighters, 1200 moves, six modes of play and a host of play modes and multi-player options. Among the fighters are two new characters, Lion and Shun, and SegaSoft has promised some special Easter Eggs and new play styles — Survival Mode and Expert Mode. Look for it in July. Rumor also has it that Sega will release *Virtua*



Ouch! Stick a foot in your face with *Virtua Fighter 2* for the PC.

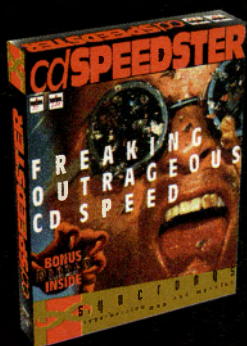
Continued on page 53

**EXTREME** (ik- 'strēm) *adj*: exceeding the ordinary, average or expected.

**ASSAULT** (a- 'solt) *n*: a violent physical attack.







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# Wilbur Joins Epic

## The "biz guy" is back

**T**he original "biz guy" is back: former id Software supremo Jay Wilbur has joined Epic MegaGames in a senior business role.

One of the founders of id Software, Wilbur quit the industry about nine months ago so he could spend more time with his family. "Coming out of id, it was twenty-eight hours a day, nine days a week; really just nonstop, balls-to-the-wall," Wilbur says. "That was really cool, since we had a lot of success, and there's a bunch of guys up there still banging it out, but I have a wife and

kids, and I wanted to devote more time to them."

So part of his arrangement with Epic is that he will get to stay in Texas with his family, working much more regular

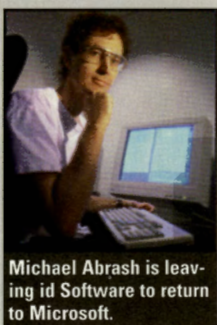


id's 'biz guy' Jay Wilbur joins Epic as "Imperial Advisor."

hours. "When I started talking to the Epic guys, I made it very clear that I'd love to come on, but I wasn't about to go back into that treadmill," says Wilbur. "And they agreed."

Another reason Wilbur picked Epic was the company's solid lineup of games for 1997. "They've got some really kick-ass games on the way, including *Unreal*, *7th Legion* and a bunch of other titles," says Wilbur. "That certainly was a driving factor." According to Wilbur, who's been playing a recent build of *Unreal*, the game is officially scheduled for September. "But you know how those things work — as soon as it's finished," he says.

Now that he's at Epic, he'll take a different title than 'biz guy,' his old job title at id. Instead, he's chosen 'Imperial Advisor.' "We'll see how many other companies have 'Imperial Advisors'



Michael Abrash is leaving id Software to return to Microsoft.

## Another id Departure

**M**ichael Abrash, one of id Software's top programmers, is leaving id Software to return to Microsoft. Abrash's departure is only the latest in a long string of departures — over the last six to nine months, key personnel such as John Romero, Jay Wilbur, Mike Wilson, and others have left for other companies.

Abrash said that he and his wife are looking for somewhere permanent to settle down, and did not like Dallas. Abrash was originally lured away from Microsoft by John Carmack to work on *Quake*. Abrash will return to Microsoft to work on natural language parsing.

"This is the only time anyone has ever left id that we aren't better off without," says id's John Carmack.

in the course of the next year," says Wilbur.

And though he's no longer with id, he's still friendly with his old crew. "They knew I just couldn't deal with the time it was taking to get the job done," says Wilbur. "They all understood, and I go up there every now and then. We remain pretty good friends."

Continued from page 71

Fighter 3 for the PC next year, on systems sporting MMX and DVD.

## World Series Baseball '98

*Triple Play* will get some competition as SegaSoft brings its best arcade baseball game to the PC for the first time later this fall. Featuring all the teams and players from 1997, *World Series Baseball '98* features five play modes, 12 stats to track, and even an option to play as the Arizona Diamondbacks and the Tampa Bay Devil Rays, two teams who haven't started in the real world yet. The game is aimed for the Windows 95 audience with a minimum 60 MHz Pentium CPU. Look for it in September.

## Postal

A new game software company, Running With Scissors, is banking on its nutty name to generate interest and enthusiasm for its upcoming action game, *Postal*. According to its website, *Postal* is a "Non-Stop Killing Action-Strategy Psycho Software Thriller."

It's an isometric-view action game, with each game screen hand-painted — no tile sets have been used in the game art. You'll fight through 16 missions in locales as diverse as a copper mine, an army base and even an ostrich farm, and against opponents ranging from SWAT teams and sheriffs to drunks and, of course, ostriches. The game should be out this summer for both PCs and Macs, and the company hopes to announce a deal with a major publisher sometime soon.



Mail workers go mad in *Postal*, a new isometric action game from Running With Scissors.

Continued on page 54

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Continued from page 53 .....

## MegaCorps

VR-1's transition from virtual reality devices to Internet gaming is about to become a reality, as the company readies *MegaCorps*, its first online, "massively multi-player" Internet game. The game is a turn-based strategy game set in outer space, and thousands of players will be able to compete simultaneously in a competition to build the largest, most powerful intergalactic empire in the known universe. Other Internet games being developed by VR-1 include *The SARAC Project*, an online underwater battle that combines elements of a flight simulator with a resource management game, and *Net Racer*, a multi-player racing game.

## Soldier Boyz

DreamCatcher Interactive is working on *SoldierBoyz*, a new shoot-'em up game set in Vietnam and featuring full-motion video action sequences and a rap music soundtrack. Yes, it's a first-person shooter with FMV! Your mission is to rescue a wealthy industrialist's daughter who has been kidnapped by an evil guerrilla leader. Players will get to choose from one of six juvenile delinquents who are offered a way out of prison if they help in this rescue. Shot in location in the Philippines, the game is based on the film of the same name.

PCG



Full-motion video crops up in the action game *SoldierBoyz* to be published by DreamCatcher Interactive.

# Peter Gabriel in Eden

## Musician takes on CD-ROM game

**B**ritish art rocker Peter Gabriel hosted a party to introduce his new multimedia title: *EVE*. This was the only time the founding member of Genesis was available to discuss the project, prior to going to an extended period of isolation to write lyrics for a new album. The project, a collaboration between Gabriel, Real World Multimedia, and Starwave, has occupied Gabriel's attention for the last two years, and is his first foray into the CD-ROM industry since the ground-breaking *Xplora 1*. At the party, Tibetan singer Yungchen Lhamo offered two songs in her native language, and fellow musicians Lou Reed and Laurie Anderson were on hand to wish Gabriel well.

Unlike many celebrities involved in multimedia, Gabriel actually worked extensively on the design of *EVE* and is quite technically literate, not only contributing music, but also choosing artists and overseeing the entire production. In the game, the player guides "Adam" (Gabriel) through four different worlds based on the songs "Come Talk to Me," "Shaking the Tree," "In Your Eyes," and "Passion." A modern artist was assigned to create each section, with Nils-Udo, Yayoi Kusama, Cathy de Monchaux, and the late Helen Chadwick helping to evoke a world that evolves from mud, through nature, industrial wastelands, post-nuclear waste, and into a final Eden-like state. You can explore the world and click through different elements of the environment to get different video clips and move forward in the game.

Several members of the gaming press were able to sit down with Gabriel to discuss *EVE* (the name stands for a variety of things, but primarily "Evolutionary Virtual Environment") and his views on multimedia and technology.

### What kind of role did you have in the creation of *EVE*?

One of the reasons I think a lot of music CD-ROMs haven't worked is that the musicians haven't really spent a lot of time on the project. For me, this is pretty important. I spent many months working on it,



spending a lot of time with the different artists. That was very important because they had never worked with computers before. I'm not very satisfied with a lot of the visual concepts in some of the existing musical CD-ROMs or virtual environments. These artists we used have real history in their own work and integrity. They've worked a certain way for years, and they've created something that can make it visceral and sensual, which were the aims.

### What limits are there to multimedia as a medium?

The same limits most people have: memory, speed, power. They've got new chips coming out that are much faster, and once they become the standard, it's going to be a different

world altogether. At that point we'll be able to really design experiences, and while there are good things out at the moment, it's very much a "junior" world compared to the one we actually live in. In life, you try to learn from what you experience, and you hope to gain a little knowledge and, hopefully, a little wisdom. Through the experiences artists can create, you get to accelerate that process. We have enormous amounts of opportunities to change ourselves and the environment we live in, and the whole setup for experience design is only just beginning.

We started this about two years ago, so it was hard to predict where technology was going to be and how much was going to be in the consumer's hand by the time we finished, so it was sort of getting shaped as we went along. The dilemma, of course, is whether to design for the better machines that are more capable or the ones that are in more homes. So you try to pitch it somewhere down the middle.

### Do you see a role for the Internet in your projects?

There are some Internet possibilities with *EVE* in terms of exchanging samples and developing information, but it's not designed to take advantage of it. I think some of the best things will

supply the bulk of information on CD-ROM and DVD, and then variations will come down the 'net. That's the smart way to go and what we'd like to work towards that, and *EVE* is only partly in response to that.

Some artists don't want to do it [use the 'net], but as long as you have some pathway that is accessible, and people want to experience the road you've designed for them, that's fine. I think it's a lot more interesting to create

**"A lot can be done through playing games. You can do more forbidden things and explore that about yourself: the dark side."**

**— Peter Gabriel**

**Continued on page 56:  
See Peter Gabriel**



7th LEVEL

# BOT-JACKING, WHAT THE \*@#! IS THE WORLD COMING TO?

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# News Briefs

## GT Joins Starfleet

GT Interactive has signed a broad-based, multi-property co-publishing deal with Simon & Schuster. Simon & Schuster has control of a large number of popular creative properties, including the Star Trek license. With the new agreement, the first few titles that GT will develop will make use of the "Deep Space Nine" license.

## Red Alert Packs Pulled

Successful games have always had trouble with add-on packs, but Westwood has managed to get at least one off the shelves. Head Games has agreed to take *DEFCON 3*, an disk of add-on levels for *Red Alert*, off the market, in accordance with Westwood Studios' wishes. As part of the agreement, Head Games will provide Westwood with figures on how many copies of *DEFCON 3* were sold.

## Inscape Bought Out

Graphix Zone, a publisher of enter-

tainment and interactive music, has bought out Inscape, the maker of such games as *Bad Day on the Midway* and *The Dark Eye*. Graphix Zone will retain the brand name Inscape, using it as an imprint on future game releases.

## Customer Service Online?

The Internet may even be changing how companies do customer service on their products. Spectrum HoloByte has tapped ServiceSoft, an online customer service center, to provide product support for its retail games. Spectrum HoloByte customers will be able to go to the Interactive Help Desk online instead of being put on hold on a tech support call.

## Broderbund Plus TalonSoft

Broderbund will now be distributing TalonSoft's line of computer wargames instead of Empire Interactive, beginning with *Battleground 6: Napoleon in Russia*, followed by *Battleground 7: Bull Run*. In other TalonSoft news, the company has signed SSI's *Age of Rifles* developer Norm Kroger to develop a new game, *The Operational Art of War*, due out in the spring of 1998.

## Correction

There's one correction we need to make from our Sierra feature in the April 1997 issue. The screen shot at the bottom of page 90 is from *X-Fighters*, not *Pro Pilot*.



Inscape, publishers of *Bad Day on the Midway* (shown above), has been bought out by Graphix Zone.

## Peter Gabriel

Continued from page 54

environments with insight for people to explore on their own.

### Do you play many games?

I don't spend a lot of time doing games myself. My multimedia department educates me on what's out there, so I don't have a series of titles I like or don't like. I think what's important is the aesthetic. Some of the stuff which started as sci-fi shoot-'em-ups is evolving into more psychological, physical, natural, and spiritual areas, which interest me a lot. I think there's more of a feminine side coming out

of a technology which started out as a sort of thrusting male provenance. I'm sure there's going to be plenty of that around, but there are more interesting things to do as well.

### If there were no technology limits, is there a dream project you would like to do?

I would love to do this *Experience Path* project, which has been a fantasy for me for about eight years. What we wanted to do was work with the most interesting minds in different fields — whether it was film, music, philosophy, psychology — designing experiences in a convincing way that people could be really active in and challenge them-

## The PC Gamer Playlist

What's hot at the magazine's offices this month.

This month we welcomed aboard our hardware editor, Joel Durham, in true PC Gamer fashion by giving him a baptism by fire in *Red Alert*, courtesy of Gary and Jason. Two minutes and one Tanya later, it was all over. Moving on to *Rocket Jockey*, Joel lasted nearly three minutes against top riders Todd and Mike. It was quite amusing to see Joel yanked off his rocket, strung up between two poles and

left for the crows. Feeling a bit of pity for the former subscriber-turned-game editor, we strapped him into an ABX Leprechaun and sent him out onto the highways of death in *Interstate '76*. Moments later, Dan and Joe had reduced Joel's car to a bullet-ridden, smoking husk. Joel was last seen leaving the offices at a rapid clip — we hope he stops shaking long enough to show up for next month's issue.



"Just one more lap!" BMG's *Moto Racer GP* took PCG by storm.

- |   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. <i>Moto Racer GP</i>                     | Everybody                 |
| 2. <i>Interstate '76</i>                    | Everybody                 |
| 3. <i>Realms of the Haunting</i>            | Dan, Mike, Todd           |
| 4. <i>Rocket Jockey (multi-player beta)</i> | Todd, Jason               |
| 5. <i>Red Alert</i>                         | Dean, Joe, Jason, Quintin |
| 6. <i>MDK</i>                               | Todd, Lisa                |
| 7. <i>Theme Hospital</i>                    | Gary, Jason               |
| 8. <i>iM1A2 Abrams</i>                      | Dean, Joel                |
| 9. <i>Flying Corps</i>                      | Dan, Jason                |
| 10. <i>Magic: The Gathering</i>             | Mike, Joel                |



EVE is Peter Gabriel's new CD-ROM.

selves, as they do in life. There's a project we looked into with a psychologist named Roger Gould. He had created a text-based program — which he's looking to expand — which is primarily for urban kids, which would allow them to look at all sorts of things that they might do in their life. A sort of life modeling program: you get to see the consequences before you do it, and also

have a chance to evaluate who you are and what you might do.

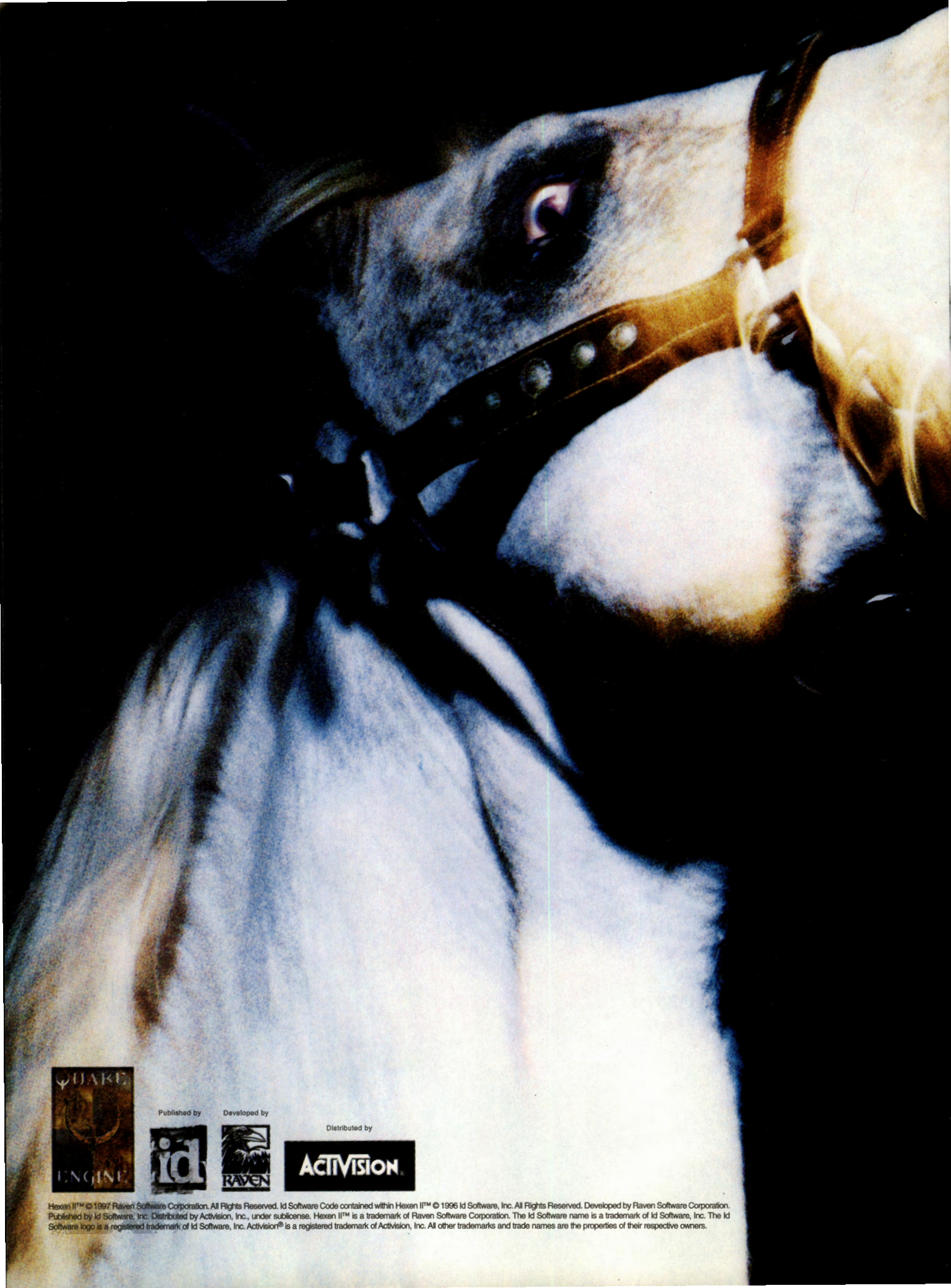
Apparently a lot of disturbed kids elected to go to counseling having gone through the program, where before they never would have. I think we all need things like that to look at ourselves and our relationships and how we function. A lot of that stuff can be done through playing games. You don't have to censor yourself. You can do more forbidden things, and explore that about yourself: the dark side. Learn where it takes you. Get through a wide range of choices, so maybe you make better choices with your real life and relationships.



10 DECEMBER

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UNDERNEATH. FEAR HAD FOUND A HOME  
DEEP IN HER SOCKETS, AND SHE WAS NO  
LONGER THE OBEDIENT SERVANT. HER HOOF  
FLAILED WILDLY, SPLATTERING BLOOD FROM  
AN OPEN WOUND ACROSS HER THICK PALE  
COAT, BUT IT WAS NOT ENOUGH TO WARD  
OFF THE DARKNESS THAT CAME SO QUICKLY.  
IT WAS THEN THAT I REALIZED THIS WAS  
ONLY THE BEGINNING OF THE END. IT WAS  
THEN THAT I WIPED DEATH'S REMAINS FROM  
MY SWORD ONTO HER MINE AND TURNED  
AWAY. THE FIRST HORSEMAN WAS FINALLY DEAD.  
ONE DOWN. THREE TO GO.





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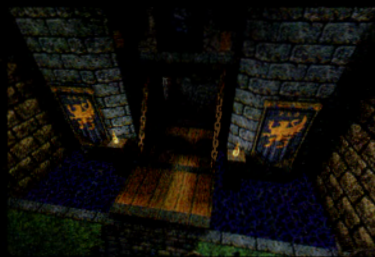
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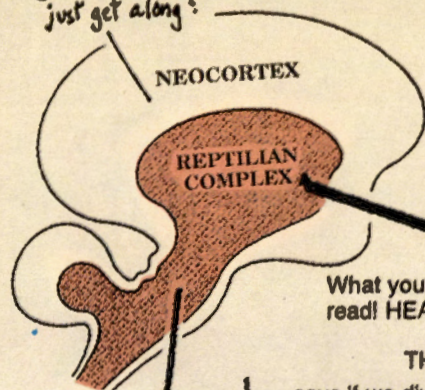
Lose yourself in lightning storms, blowing leaves, earthquakes, spraying fountains and pouring rain.



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# WARCRAFT

## THE ADVENTURE CONTINUES

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The latest addition to the *WarCraft* saga takes the epic struggle of orcs and humans to an adventurous new plateau — but does Blizzard have what it takes to make an adventure game about orcs?

---

By TODD VAUGHN









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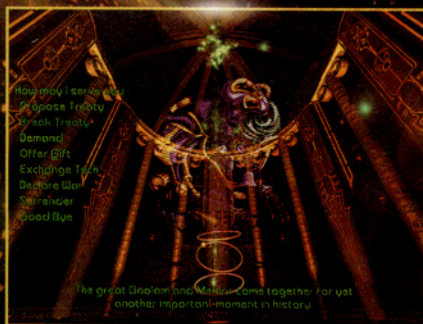
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Since the earliest days of computer gaming, there have been few genres as alluring or enduring as the graphic adventure. Just mention the names of classics like Infocom's *Zork*, LucasArts' *The Secret of Monkey Island*, or Sierra's King's Quest series to a veteran gamer, and you may just see them gaze off into the distance as they reminisce about their favorite adventures, caught up in nostalgia for the days when undiscovered worlds, inventive puzzles, and sharp wit were just a few keystrokes or mouse-clicks away.

While adventure games have always been some of the richest sources of interactive entertainment, giving many of today's top developers their start, traditional adventures seem to have gone by the wayside in recent years, with few publishers willing to undertake the time-intensive task of creating a compelling story and interesting characters. But now that the *Diablo* and *WarCraft* creators at Blizzard Entertainment have thrown their weighty hats into the adventure-game ring, we may soon see a reversal of the genre's fortune. We went straight to the source for the latest on this unexpected move and uncovered Blizzard's master plan for the future of *WarCraft*.



Blizzard's quest for artistic perfection is evident in the lush artwork and backdrops used in the game.

## THE SANE CHOICE

As we made our way to Blizzard Entertainment's offices, there was little doubt in anyone's mind that the company that brought us two of the most acclaimed real-time strategy games has been at the top of its form lately. Even after a series of delays that led to doubts about *Diablo* and battle.net, Blizzard stuck to its guns, releasing the game only when it was truly finished, and was met with success and widespread praise for an exciting product supported by a well-conceived, free multi-player service.

Still, when we first got word of Blizzard's newest project, *WarCraft Adventures: Lord of the Clans*, we wondered if the company had gone quite mad—or at least mistakenly replaced the Roman numeral III with "Adventure." The next *WarCraft* game wouldn't be *WarCraft III*? We were stunned.

So you can imagine our pleasant surprise when, upon arrival, we found that the folks at Blizzard are not only sane, they may actually be developing a cure for the adventure genre's current doldrums with a dramatic, humorous, and entirely new journey to the familiar land of Azeroth.

As we were introduced to the story, characters, and influences that drive the adventure game, it became clear that the idea behind *WarCraft Adventures* isn't so far-fetched. Throughout the *War-*



The dramatic opening sequence sets the stage for *WarCraft Adventures*, as lost Clans struggle in captivity on Azeroth.

Craft family of strategy games and expansion packs, there's always been a vast and diverse world of fantasy, intrigue, and betrayal simmering beneath the constant battles and resource management. *WarCraft Adventures* merely brings those background elements to the fore; once freed from the confines of scrolling mission texts and victory cut-scenes, the rich story line of the *WarCraft* universe proves to be more than sufficient basis for an exciting adventure.

While the move to adventure gaming might seem strange to fans hungry for another *WarCraft* real-time strategy game, Blizzard Executive Producer Bill Roper explains that the drive for new products comes from within the company's own tight-knit core of gamers, not from external pressures. And as Blizzard proved with *Diablo*, those gamers are capable of making waves in a genre that other publishers might ignore.

"Right now there's a lot of talk within the company about feeding our demons," Roper says. "We don't want to just make real-time strategy games or be known as a real-time strategy company. We're all eclectic gamers, and we want to constantly develop the games that really tap into who we are."



As the animated adventure takes shape, richly detailed characters from the *WarCraft* universe are brought to life.



This preliminary sketch shows Thrall disguising himself as a dwarf as he attempts to infiltrate an aviary.

"If you looked at roleplaying games a year ago, they were stagnant," he says. "There weren't many publishers doing them, and the few that were released just weren't breaking new ground. As a result, everyone claimed RPGs were dead, but they were dead only because developers weren't doing enough with them, and people got bored and moved on to something else."

"When Condor brought *Diablo* to us, it was such a natural and obvious concept that we all thought 'This will kick butt. This will be cool.' Because it addressed us as gamers and brought something fresh to the table."

Roper says the same sort of intuitive spark flashed when the idea of an adventure game was presented to them.

"When Capitol Multimedia (a division of Davidson—the company that owns Blizzard) came to us and presented us with the idea for an adventure game based in the *WarCraft* universe," he says, "it seemed a very natural course to take. The idea of expanding on the *WarCraft* brand with the depth of an adventure game just seemed a perfect fit for who we are."

## ANATOMY OF AN ADVENTURE

Despite the success Blizzard has had with the advanced techniques used to create the look and





Throughout the course of the game, Thrall's quest to unite the clans takes him to some familiar places in the Warcraft universe. Here he must investigate the inside of a DeathKnight temple.



During one dramatic scene, Thrall must match wits with the dragon Deathwing.

feel of games like *WarCraft II* and *Diablo*, Blizzard has decided to forgo the latest bells and whistles and take a very traditional approach to the graphics and gameplay of *WarCraft Adventures*.

"We're not necessarily looking to make the next great innovation in adventure game interfaces or rewrite the book on how adventure games are done," Roper says. "There are some very defined standards, and people expect an adventure game to work a certain way, so our main goal is to tap into all the elements that make adventure games enjoyable in the first place — and that's basically a fantastic story and sense of humor."

"Graphically, we wanted to go with the hand-drawn 2D look, as opposed to the 3D-rendered stuff, because 2D art really captures the Warcraft feel," he says. "The characters for *WarCraft II* were rendered 3D models, but then we had artists hand-draw over top of the models so we could give them a very animated, almost cartoonish look. We want to try and maintain a consistent look and feel through both the adventure and strategy games while having that artwork be just as gorgeous as possible."

The huge task of producing the mass amounts of high-quality art needed for the adventure game falls to a group of animators located

in St. Petersburg, Russia. As we pored over a mountain of production sketches, painted cell art, and character drawings, it became obvious that Warcraft's trademark look and feel was in safe hands, making the transition from top-down strategy game to 2D adventure with surprising ease. Still, Roper says communicating the Warcraft vision to an outsider isn't easy.

"The thing that's tough when you're dealing with a third party, whether it's one artist doing just one thing or a hundred doing a number of things, is communicating ideas that are possibly new to them," Roper says. "As we're working with the group of animators in Russia, art will come in for approval or changes, and there are times when we have to say, 'This doesn't look right,' or 'Change this to look like this.'"

"Part of the difficulty is that we're very anal-retentive about our products," he says. "Within the company there's a very focused and universal understanding of the Warcraft universe, the characters, the story lines, the look and feel of all these intimate details — and as we're working with the animators and Capitol, it can be a real challenge sharing that vision. But we're definitely pleased with the results."



## ORCISH EMANCIPATION

The story begins shortly after the end of the *WarCraft II*'s expansion pack, *Beyond the Dark Portal*. A group of orcs has become trapped in the human realm of Azeroth, with no hope of

By drawing on the diverse characters used in the Warcraft strategy titles, Blizzard hopes to reinvigorate the adventure game genre.

## WHAT DOES AN ORC SOUND LIKE?

With the advent of CD-ROMs and sound cards, vocal characterizations have become an important feature of nearly every game on the market, and the Warcraft series is certainly no exception. But after establishing memorable and offbeat characters through short audio clips in the strategy games, Blizzard was faced with the challenge of recording the hours of dialog required for *WarCraft Adventures* — and making sure it lived up to the series' standards.

After recording tons of dialog in Boston using professional voice-over actors, the speech patterns of the various orcs, goblins, and trolls began to come together. But, as Chris Medsen reveals, Blizzard's drive for perfection finally led the company to some big names with booming voices.

"When we wrote the script, we didn't cast anyone in specific roles," Medsen says. "We really didn't have anyone in mind as far as main characters went, but after we did the voice-over work in Boston, there were just a few characters that we felt needed an extra boost. It's not that the performances weren't good, we just wanted something more."

"We'd sit around and say things like 'When I was a kid, I remember watching 'The Transformers,' and Optimus Prime had this bitchin' voice!' And we thought, 'Why not try to get him?'" As a result, Peter Cullin, the one and only Optimus Prime from the classic "Transformers" cartoon series, was brought on to do some of the voices for the game.

Tackling the lead role as Thrall is Clancy Brown, (best known for his work as the evil Kurgan in the cult film *Highlander*), whose snarling baritone and wry delivery help define the orc hero throughout the game. Another booming presence in the game comes from the vocal talent of Tony Jay (Disney's *Hunchback of Notre Dame*), who lends his powerful voice to a number of characters.

"We definitely knew we couldn't have the orcs running around saying 'Zug-zug' all the time," says Bill Roper. "That would be too goofy for the game. But with the voice-overs that we've done, we've been able to match that vocal style and really define each character at the same time."

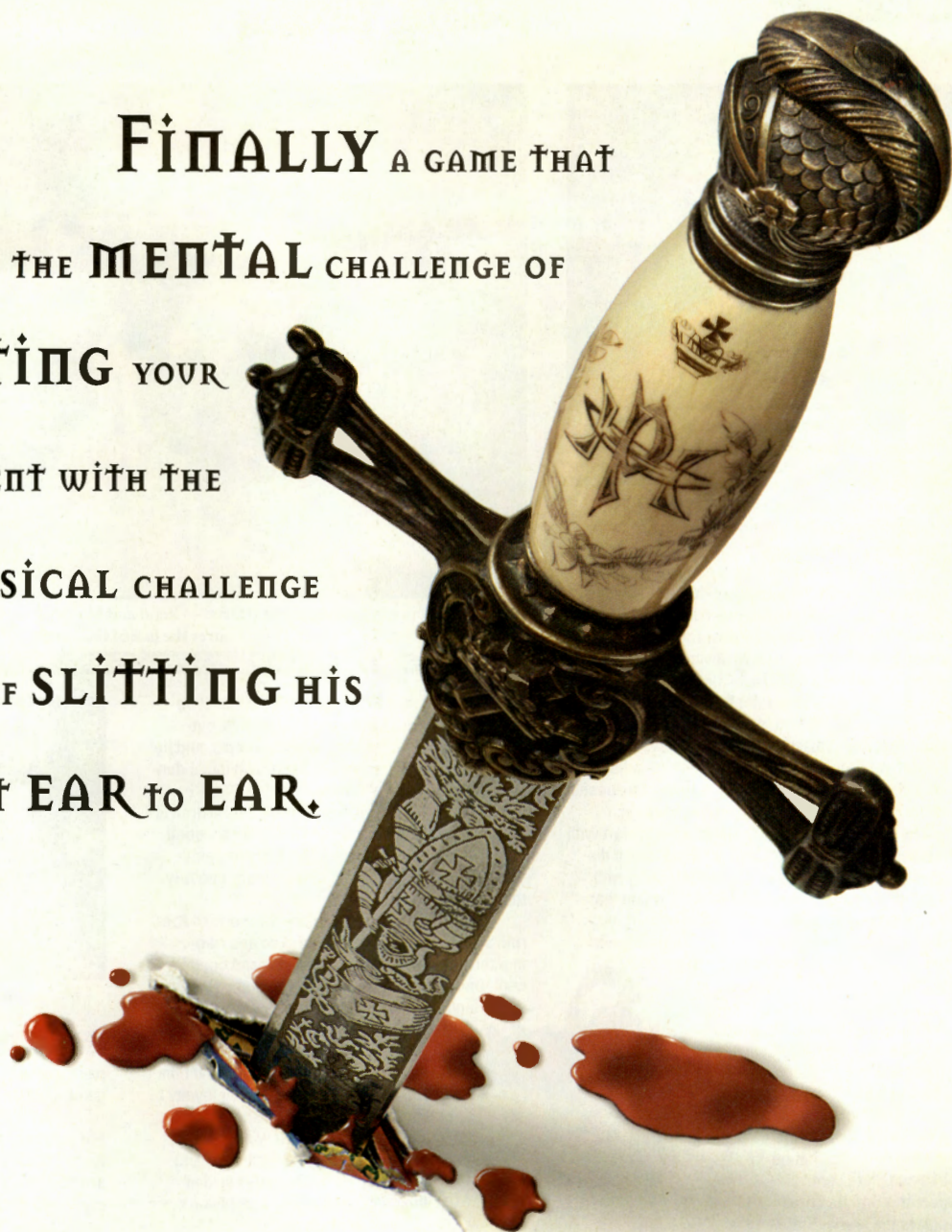
returning to the Horde. As the human council on Azeroth comes to terms with the loss of its own forces to the realm of Draenor, the humans decide these orcs won't be slaughtered; they'll be detained on reservations as long as they stay out of trouble. In the course of the game, you'll interact with these captive orcs as you attempt to reunite the fragmented clans.

Blizzard's Chris Medsen explains that opening up the world of the orcs means a chance to show another side of the brutish race — and weave a compelling story in the bargain.

"The thinking behind the story is that most of what we've seen of the orc characters in the previous Warcraft games was pretty much along the lines of 'Oh, they're just mindless savages,'" Medsen says. "But throughout the course of the game, we can get into the orcs' back story, where we get to see that they're also a very honorable, tight-knit group. As the story progresses, you'll realize that we're not really focusing too much on orc vs.



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Elements from the Warcraft universe, like this Death Knight temple, are used in *WarCraft Adventures*.

human conflict; it's a much darker conflict, as treacherous orcs are selling their buddies out for favor among the humans."

To give the player a starting point within the game that doesn't require an intimate knowledge of orc lore or previous experience with the Warcraft games, the story of the lead character has been carefully crafted to appeal to novices as well as veterans and novices alike.

"The player character for the adventure is Thrall," says Roper. "He's an Orc from a long-lost wolf-rider clan, raised by a human soldier named Lieutenant Blackmoor, who found him on a battlefield. Since he's been raised by humans, he doesn't know much of the orc history or background. We've done that to give the player a fresh start with the universe; they're basically on a journey of discovery with Thrall as they begin interacting with other characters. We wanted to make a title that would allow you to jump right in and become immersed in this world, and if you're familiar with the strategy games, you're going to be engaged as well."

"In the beginning, Thrall basically has no free will, no control over his destiny," Roper says. "He's ordered by Blackmoor to fight a troll, because Blackmoor wants to prove to some visiting generals that he has complete control over this orc. As Thrall enters the arena, Blackmoor orders him to just sit there and take a pounding from the troll until Blackmoor tells him he can fight. Once Blackmoor orders him to fight, he of course makes short work of the troll, and when he's obviously won, Blackmoor orders Thrall to kill the troll. That's when Thrall decides



During the opening sequence, rival Orcs — Rend and Maim — are locked in battle with Thrall's father over the fate of the Horde.

he's had enough, that to kill the troll wouldn't be honorable, because the troll is completely out-matched. So Thrall's sense of honor erupts, and he attacks Blackmoor — only to be thrown into a dungeon for assaulting a human.

"That's where you start the game. Thrall is an accomplished warrior and an accomplished magic-user, and over the course of the game you'll have to become the embodiment of everything that is orcsish."

As Thrall begins to explore the world of Azeroth's orcs, he'll encounter a broken and fragmented society that's become bitter and complacent. Once-proud clans like the fearsome Shattered Hand have taken a turn for the worse in the time away from the Horde.

Featured in the *WarCraft II* expansion pack, the Shattered Hand held honor above all else, and proved their loyalty by cutting off their left hands and replacing them with weapons. Now confined to the reservation, the members of the Shattered Hand Clan have sold all their weapons to buy a pacifying elixir known as black ale.

While the story elements

Using a group of animators in St. Petersburg, Russia, Blizzard is recreating the *WarCraft* feel the old fashioned way — one character at a time.



Blizzard decided to develop its latest game as a traditional graphic adventure.

paint a grim view of orc life, Chris Medsen says the game's not all gloom-and-doom.

"A lot of the issues we deal with in the game are very intense," he says. "There's betrayal, there's the issue of the orcs being confined to what are basically internment camps, and issues of slavery — we knew if we maintained that tone, it would simply be too dark and gritty, so there's a lot of humor. It's not a bleak look at how terrible things have become for the orcs."

One recurring source of humor comes in the form of an ongoing dwarf and goblin rivalry as each race attempts to outdo the other's technology, with Thrall invariably caught in the middle. Roper describes one situation where Thrall must actually impersonate a dwarf.

"Since Thrall is an accomplished magic-user as well as an accomplished warrior, Thrall has to change himself into a Dwarf and go into a Dwarven



DUROTAN



ORGE



SINGE



DREKTHAR



SOLDIER



NAZGREL



camp so he can spy on them for the Goblins," he says. "There's this Dwarf maiden that has the tots for him — it's very funny."

And as Thrall makes his way out of one predicament or another, those familiar with the characters from the strategy games will find themselves rubbing shoulders with some of Azeroth and Draenor's more infamous characters. Roper says that part of the reason for incorporating all of these familiar characters has been response from the fans of the strategy games.

"We get constant E-mails and letters from people who've read the manuals and loved the story," Roper says, "and they'll say 'Wow, this is more like an RPG or an adventure game.' They always have questions about what happened to certain characters or what's the real story behind the end of the expansion pack. This is our chance to tell them."

## SETTING THE STAGE FOR *WarCraft III*

Considering the high production values and traditional approach guiding the creation of *WarCraft Adventures*, it looks like Blizzard's first entry into the adventure game genre will be a memorable one. But as our meeting with Blizzard drew to a



Lush backgrounds have to be created as Blizzard moves the *WarCraft* universe from top-down strategy game to 2D adventure.

close, the inevitable question of *WarCraft*'s real-time strategy future still hung in the air.

We pressed Blizzard for information — any information — on *WarCraft III*, and were assured that Blizzard isn't about to let *WarCraft*'s influence fade from the real-time strategy arena.

"There's two things we want to do with the adventure game," Roper says. "The first, of course, is to do something different with the brand. We love

adventure games, we love the *WarCraft* universe we've worked hard to create, and we thought it would be a lot of fun to bring the characters out in a new light.

"But we also know that we want to continue to have a presence within the real-time strategy genre after the release of *StarCraft*, and *WarCraft Adventures* allows us to set the stage for *WarCraft III*," he says. "We don't have a release date — we don't even have a year — but *WarCraft III* will happen. We already have an idea of where we want the next strategy game to start, and we'll definitely be developing those ideas over time.

"If we were a purely commercial-driven company, we'd probably be on *WarCraft XI* by now, but I think those concerns always need to be tempered and driven by a consistent vision that can address our desires as well. The adventure game is one of those desires."

Fair enough, as far as we're concerned. Blizzard's desires haven't been wrong so far.

PCG

# STARCRAFT IS COMING!

No visit to the Blizzard offices would be complete without a thorough shakedown of the company's eagerly awaited real-time strategy game, *StarCraft*, so we twisted a few arms to sample the latest work-in-progress, and the outlook is good.

*StarCraft* was put on hold so the team could help Blizzard North finalize *Diablo*, but Blizzard has obviously redoubled its efforts on this science fiction real-time strategy game — the version we saw showed substantial improvements over earlier builds.

While the graphics for terrain and units are easily some of the best we've seen in a strategy title, we were especially impressed by the new special effects that have been added. Real-time light-sourcing creates a dramatic effect during heavy firefights against multiple enemies. And lighting effects won't just be cosmetic; some of the units will be able to generate their own light sources, allowing them to reveal more of the map —

while simultaneously making them tempting targets when approaching enemy territory. Also on display was a great cloaking effect, which makes units all but invisible behind a lightly shimmering disguise.

Nearly all of the unit types from the game's three races (Protoss, Terran, and Zerg) have been implemented, and the design teams are in the process of programming artificial intelligence routines to control them.

For multi-player competition, Blizzard is planning a new variation on alliances that will let multiple gamers command units from a single base. One player could manage the economy while other players control military units.

While the all-too-brief demo of *StarCraft* left us thoroughly impressed, a lot has changed since the title was first announced. With more than 20 real-time strategy games due by year's end, the feed-

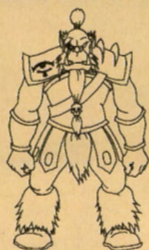
*StarCraft*'s graphics for the individual units are some of the sharpest we've seen.



As our latest look at Blizzard's *StarCraft* revealed, this real-time epic is destined to heat things up when it's released in the fall.

ing frenzy surrounding the genre Blizzard helped define has created an intensely competitive environment. Still, Blizzard is confident that *StarCraft* can deliver more the goods better than anyone else's game.

"We know *StarCraft* is going to be the best real-time strategy game out there," says Chris Blizzard's Medsen. "With this many titles coming, it's going to be hard to cut above the chaff, but I think what we offer is the same sort of thing we brought to the *WarCraft* games — a compelling character package that you can connect with and relate to, and that goes way beyond whatever gameplay elements or units we add to the game."



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### Meet Joel!

*The sharpened stick welcomes another lost soul to the PCG family*

**T**his month we'd like to welcome Joel Durham to the *PC Gamer* team as he assumes the reins of our new hardware section — The Hard Stuff — and a coveted role as *PCG*'s technical editor. With a brain the size of an engine block and an irrepressible love for all things electronic, Joel's role is to delve inside the mysterious magic going on inside our PCs and demystify the jargon for real-world consumption. Within moments of his arrival, he had already proven his worth by showing Gary that a mouse is not an intercom and monitors work better when they're plugged in.

So when we wanted to learn more about Joel's outlook on computers, gaming, and life as a Rochester, N.Y. refugee, we knew there was only one place to turn — the fabled *PC Gamer* sharpened stick.

**PCG:** Hello, Joel! Welcome aboard! How does it feel to be part of our happy crew?

**JOEL:** It's been really fun so far. Say, is that a sharpened stick?

**PCG:** Er, no.

**JOEL:** It sure looks like one. I may be from New York, but I do know what a sharpened stick looks like. Is that the

same one you used on Jason?

**PCG:** No this one's different. See, it's almost brand-new.... Hey! You can't have it...it, er, belongs to the company.

**JOEL:** What's it for?

**PCG:** Poking things.

**JOEL:** Like me, perhaps?

**PCG:** No, we only use it to poke... you know... stuff.

**JOEL:** You're not poking anything now.

**PCG:** Ha! Just wait. Hey! What's that behind you?

**JOEL:** This is ridiculous. You want to distract me so you can poke me. How long do I have to suffer through this charade?

**PCG:** You and that big brain of yours are ruining the fun. Now hold still, and let's do this. You look over there, and we'll poke you. Just remember to say "Ow!"

**JOEL:** Okay. Um, wow!

**PCG:** Not "Wow!" "Ow!" You know, like it hurts. Try and capture the moment.

**JOEL:** (Stares blankly at the wall) The company really pays for those things?

**PCG:** You think you're real smart, don't you, city-boy?



### Hardware Requirements

With each *PC Gamer* review, you'll find two very important pieces of information: the game's minimum hardware requirements and the hardware configurations we recommend as the least you'll need to really enjoy the game. While a game will run on the minimum system the manufacturer specifies, it might not run all that well. Because of this, we test each game on several systems so we can bring you a more realistic assessment of what you'll really need.

#### THE PC GAMER RATINGS SYSTEM

##### 100%-90% CLASSIC

Not many games can earn a rating over 90%, and even fewer can approach the magic 100. Anything that we rate over 90% is an instant classic — a game that's truly significant in both content and design, and one that we'd recommend without reservation to anyone interested in PC gaming.

##### 89%-80% EXCELLENT

These are excellent games. Anything that scores in this range is well worth your attention, though it may not make any significant advances over its rivals. Also, some genuine benchmark games of decidedly specialist taste will fall into this area — it may be the best 7th Cavalry simulation on the market, but not all of us want to relive Little Bighorn.

##### 79%-70% VERY GOOD

These are pretty good games, which we would recommend to fans of the particular genre —

although it's a safe bet that there are probably better games out there.

##### 69%-60% GOOD

A reasonable, above-average game. It may be worth buying, but probably has a few significant flaws that keep it from earning a higher rating.

##### 59%-50% FAIR

Very ordinary games. Not completely worthless, but not a very good way to spend your gaming dollar, either.

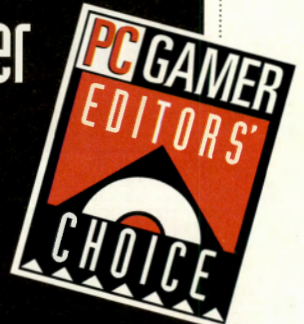
##### 49%-40% BELOW AVERAGE

Poor quality. Only a few, slightly redeeming features keep them from falling into the abyss of the next category...

##### 39%-0% DON'T BOTHER

Just terrible games — and the lower you go, the worse they get. Avoid these titles like the Plague — and don't say we didn't warn you!

### PC Gamer Editors' Choice Awards



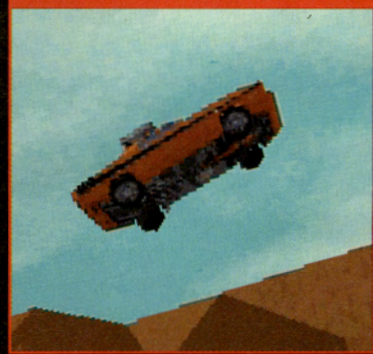
Every month, we honor the best games we see — those earning 88% or above — with our Editors' Choice award. It's not easy to earn, and there are a lot of excellent games that fall just short of the honor. So when you see the *PCG* Editors' Choice logo on a game at a local software shop, you can bet it's among the best.

#### IM1A2 ABRAMS



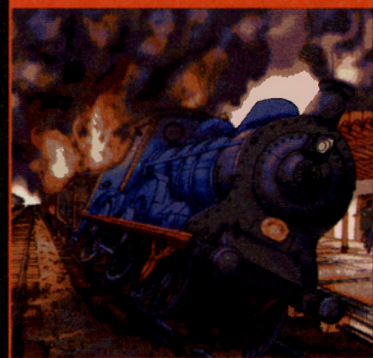
p.100

#### INTERSTATE '76



p.76

#### THE LAST EXPRESS



p.108



# Interstate '76



EDITORS'

**Category:** Action

**Developer:** Activision

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

Required	We Recommend
Windows 95; 4x CD-ROM drive; Pentium 90; 16MB RAM; 80MB HD space; 14.4Kbps modem, or Internet provider for multi-play	Pentium 166; 32MB RAM; 110MB hard-drive space; Joystick or steering controller; 28.8Kbps or faster modem

**Activision takes us to an alternate 1976 where vigilantes keep the streets clean.**

If you've ever bought a copy of *Road & Track* or *Motor Trend* — or even flipped through them at the newsstand — you're on your way to loving Activision's *Interstate '76*. If you're the least bit nostalgic for the 1970s, you're halfway home. And if you like a good, original action game, you're already there.

*Interstate '76* certainly isn't the first driving-and-shooting game to grace the PC, but it may well have the most original premise of the year. Set in an alternate-history in which the 1970s gas crisis has sent the world to hell in a handbasket, *I76* tells the story of a group of vigilantes who arm their cars and take to the highway to dispense justice.

The 1970s setting provides a perfect excuse to roll out some good, old-fashioned muscle cars. If you'd rather drive a 1971 Mustang Mach V than a brand-new BMW Z3, you'll drool over the Detroit steel on display in *I76*.

You'll also drool over the many ways you can customize your car. *I76* offers four different engines, four suspensions, four types of brakes, and four wheel sizes; 24 weapons (including machine guns, smart missiles, flamethrowers, and mine-droppers); and nine special items (ranging from curb feelers to radar jammers). You can even tailor the amount of armor on each side of your car to suit your fighting style.

Best of all, the changes you make have a very noticeable effect on your car's performance. Salvage a big-block, 432 cubic-inch V8 and coil-over shocks from your fallen enemies, and your car will accelerate and hug the road much better than it did with its stock suspension and

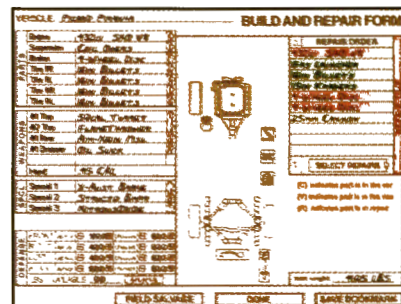
The external view is especially useful when you're using a turret-mounted gun.

six-cylinder mill. Gradually turning your car into a serious hotrod is even more satisfying than adding new weapons and defenses.

*I76*'s physics model goes a long way toward creating a convincing sense of driving that hotrod; your car's front-end rises under quick acceleration and dips under heavy braking, and the body "rolls" from side to side as the suspension flexes in hard turns and lane changes. It's not painstakingly realistic, but it's utterly believable in the context of the game.

The graphics are convincing, too — beautifully texture-mapped and shaded, and available in resolutions ranging from 320x200 to 1,024x768. Of course, you'll need a very stout machine — at least a 166MHz Pentium with 32MB of RAM — to run *I76* at 640x480 with all the details maxed out. The

This spectacular stunt sequence isn't taken from a cut-scene; it's from the second mission. As you follow your buddy, Taurus, over a suspension-punishing jump, the "camera" automatically switches to an external view to catch the action.



Between missions, you can have your buddy Skeeter repair and customize your car with parts you've salvaged from the battlefield.





■ Your car's .50 caliber machine gun turret should make short work of this bad guy — but watch your rear-view for his buddy.

lower resolutions don't look nearly as good, and for higher resolutions, you're looking at a Pentium Pro. Fortunately, the game provides a wide array of options for trading graphic detail for a little more smoothness. So the game is playable on the 16MB Pentium 90 Activision lists as a minimum — but I wouldn't recommend it.

Still, if you've got a P120 or P133, you'll find it's worth turning those detail options down. The game won't look quite as good as the screen-shots on the box, but it's not the graphics that make *I76* a winner — it's the gameplay. The fierce turning-fights in the desert; the thrill of evading the bad-guys with a daring high-speed jump, "Dukes of Hazzard"-style; the sheer joy of firing up your Napalm Hose and melting a buddy's car into slag over the Internet — these things are worth a little graphics tweaking.

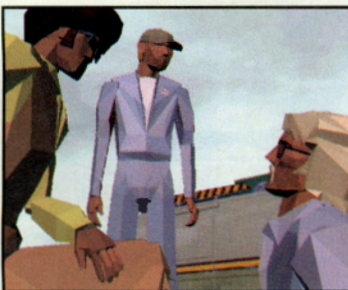
Of course, there's no such thing as a perfect game, and *I76* isn't without its shortcomings. In the single-player game, some of the 30 missions are extremely tough, leading to some serious frustration as you play a mission over and

over until you get it right. That wouldn't be so bad if many of the missions were not long, drawn-out affairs. A shame, since some of the hardest missions have two distinct phases and could easily have been turned into two missions — with an all-important chance to save the game in between.

And while the multi-player support generally works very well, it still feels a

little tacked-on. Activision isn't charging a penny for online action over its three dedicated Internet servers, but the multi-player element could've been handled better. The biggest flaw is that there are no restrictions on the kind of car and weapons you can bring into a death-match. Naturally, everyone loads up with the hottest radar-guided missiles, and victory becomes less a matter of skill and finesse than a matter of being the first to target the enemy and fire. The fact that there's no chat feature available while setting up a game makes it hard to coordinate with other players and set ground-rules that could overcome the lack of restrictions. Activision says these problems will be addressed in a future patch, but at the moment the *I76* team is working on fixing a few bugs that have cropped up since the game's release. (I ran into a couple of these myself; conflicts with the Diamond Monster 3D and the Sound Blaster AWE 64

Gold on the main test machine caused an occasional crash until I updated the drivers for those cards.) Finally, a very small nit to pick: Most of the voice-acting is commendable; the guy who plays Taurus is especially good, sounding uncannily like Samuel Jackson in *Pulp Fiction*. But the choice of John DeLancie to play the villain was a definite wrong turn. Antonio



■ The game's cut-scenes are rendered in stylized 3D that blends perfectly with gameplay.



■ The flamethrower is devastating at short range. This Gremlin-lookalike is about to go up in smoke.

Malochio is a dark, mustachioed, pin-striped figure of evil, in the tradition of 1970s TV bad-guys — and while DeLancie was perfectly cast as the prima-donna demigod Q on "Star Trek," his high, peevish voice isn't nearly menacing enough to do Malochio justice.

But there are an awful lot of games out there that wish they had as few problems as *Interstate '76* — and most of them aren't as much fun. If you like action and you're looking for a break from giant robots and mutant space marines, dust off those bell-bottoms and check out *I76*.

— Dan Bennett

## PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

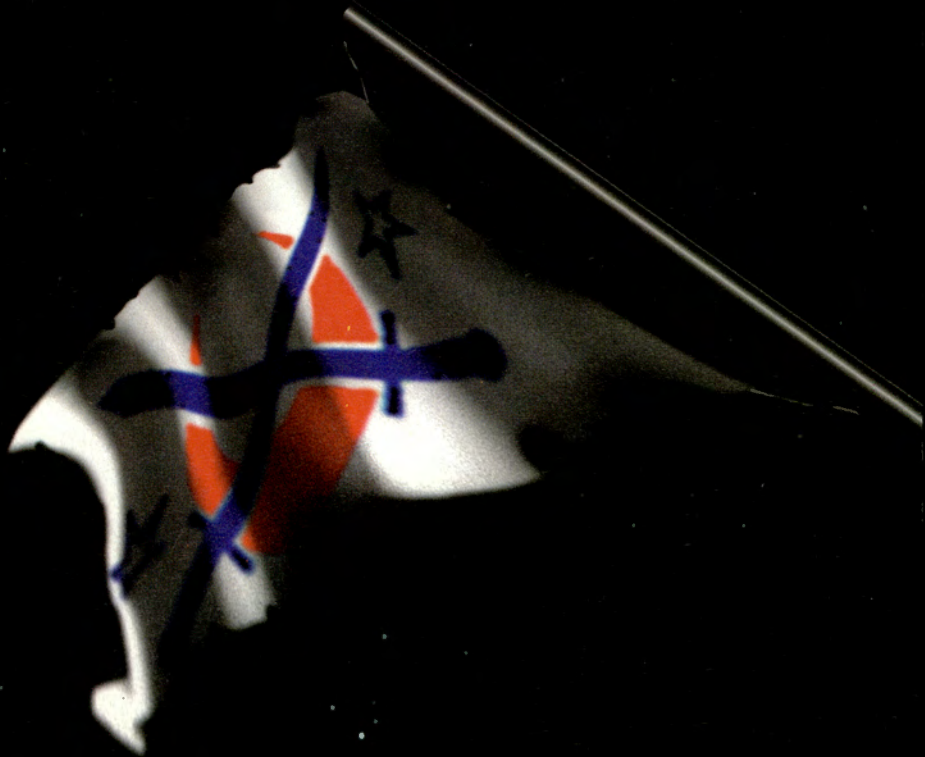
**HIGHS:** Original premise; great gameplay, graphics; built-in Internet support.

**LOWS:** Steep hardware requirements; some frustrating missions.

**BOTTOM LINE:** Full of 1970s atmosphere and attitude, *I76* proves that Activision has more tricks up its sleeve than giant robots. It's a blast.

# 93%





# Earth...you have a problem.

A first-person sci-fi adventure designed exclusively for MMX.

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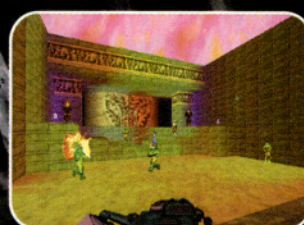
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# The Arrival



**Category:** Graphic Adventure

**Developer:** Enteraktion, Inc.

**Publisher:** Live Interactive, 15400 Sherman Way, P.O. Box 10124, Van Nuys, CA 91410 (818) 988-5060

Required	We Recommend
Windows 95, Quad-speed CD-ROM drive; Pentium; 8MB RAM; 4MB hard-drive space; DirectX supported video card; Mouse	Pentium 90; 16MB RAM; Supported sound card

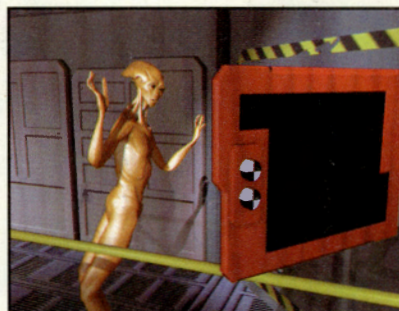
**Stop watching the skies and start watching your back in this CD-ROM sequel to the critically acclaimed movie.**

First of all, relax — *The Arrival* is not another lame attempt to translate a popular movie into an *Exciting Interactive Experience!* Well, not exactly. The game actually takes place ten years after the events in the movie, with those floppy-headed aliens taking another stab at converting our atmosphere into one more hospitable for themselves. You, on the other hand, are languishing in a prison cell in a nearby solar system, having been captured after stumbling across one of their bases in the New Mexico desert. Naturally, Earth's only hope of averting disaster is your timely escape and return to warn them.

*The Arrival* is Live Entertainment

and Enteraktion's first foray into computer games, and I was prepared for a valiant but unsatisfying effort, along the lines of *Piranha's Majestic*. But unlike other games of alien exploration (*Alien Virus*, *Robot City*, *Chaos Continuum*) *The Arrival* is not just another static screen pixel hunt. You glide smoothly from one location to another, with the ability to pan 360 degrees horizontally and 60 degrees vertically at most stopping points. The high resolution graphics and animations are eerily beautiful, and there's always some little flash of nuance to catch your eye — blinking lights, discharges of steam, busy robots, etc. Once past the first few clichéd scenes, where everything you need to escape your cell and spring into action is conveniently close at hand, I found myself awed by the spectacular detail of the alien installation and the effective way that glimpses of its entirety through windows and open structures reveal its imposing scale.

A malfunctioning reactor has



■ **Surprise! Surprise! After a not-too-tough puzzle, you gain access to an alien wall safe.**

forced most of the aliens to evacuate the station, so you're relatively free to experiment and explore, your appearance altered by the "curtain of light" effect from the movie (backward-bending knees and all). You'll need to collect objects and solve puzzles (using familiar, mouse-driven interface icons) to gain access to some parts of the station, not to mention three satellite Outstations, a Moon Base Mining Colony, and the various shuttles needed to reach them (and home!).

Unfortunately, these puzzles are the weakest element of the game. Those not involving retrieval and use of appropriate (and far-flung) objects serve as simplistic security devices — tests of memory, object manipulation, sound, color and light (a la *The 7th Guest* or *The Daedalus Encounter*) — and seem to indicate that the invaders are more concerned with entertainment than seriously safeguarding their secrets.

Although timed and untimed modes are available, the three hour limit in timed mode (with saves available) is really only there for those who need an artificially induced crisis to perform their best. You'll definitely want to take advantage of the untimed mode to get familiar with things first.

If mind-wracking puzzles aren't high on your priority list, *The Arrival's* spectacular graphics, wall-to-wall digital sound, non-linear path, and multiple endings will provide many hours of intriguing exploration. Turn off the lights, crank the subwoofer, and go for it.

— Scott Wolf



■ **A little more colorful than most of the alien installation, the recycling center carries components vital for your return to earth.**

**PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT**

**HIGHS:** Outstanding graphics and sound, eerie and atmospheric.

**LOWS:** Some puzzles too easy; moderate amount of CD swapping.

**BOTTOM LINE:** An engaging adventure despite the simplistic puzzles.

**81%**

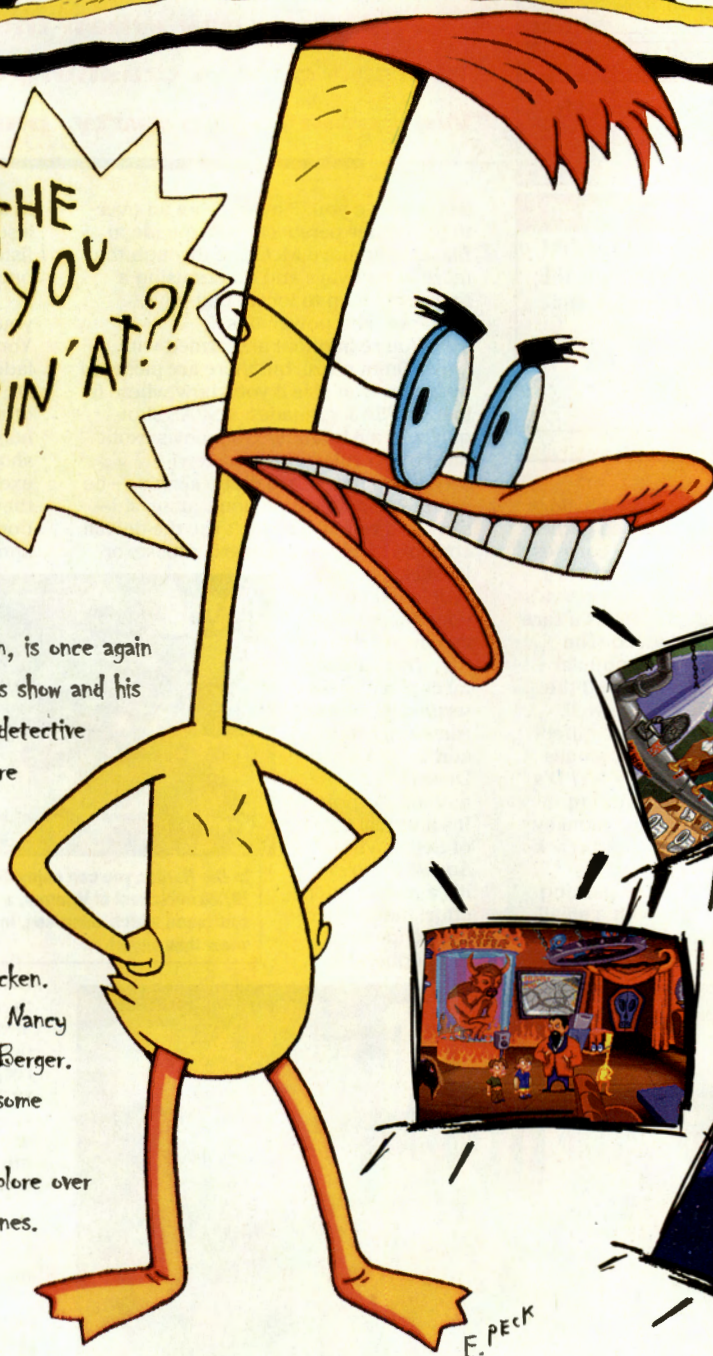


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Product Information Number 273



# Die Hard Trilogy



**Category:** Arcade

**Developer:** Probe Entertainment

**Publisher:** Fox Interactive, P.O. Box 900,  
Beverly Hills, CA 90213  
(310) 369-5369

Required	We Recommend
Windows 95; Double-speed CD-ROM drive; Pentium 120; 16 MB RAM; 11 MB hard- drive space; Sound card	8-speed CD-ROM drive; Pentium 166; 3D accelerator card

**What do you say when the NYPD's John McClane comes crashing onto your PC?**  
**"Welcome to the party, pal!"**

With the checkered history of movie-licensed games littered with the corpses of celluloid-to-software failures, Fox Interactive's *Die Hard Trilogy* is a rare creature, indeed. The phenomenally popular films have survived the translation quite well, resulting in three different and exciting games that let you play NYPD's John McClane doing what he does best: throwing a monkey wrench into evildoers' plans and cracking wise the whole time.

*Die Hard* starts off in the parking garage of Nakatomi Plaza with a small army of Eurotrash terrorists out for your blood and plenty more on the 23

levels above you. Playing from an over-the-shoulder perspective (like *Fade to Black*), you move McClane through the maze of hallways and offices using a tiny radar map to locate bad guys, hostages, and power-ups.

You're barefoot and armed with only a 9mm pistol, but there are plenty of upgrades available if you know where to look (MP5A3, grenades, a SPAS shot-gun, and a Alexander Godunov's exotic Steyr AUG rifle, to name a few). McClane's moves are pretty simple — he can move in four directions, jump, sidestep, and roll. If you don't like the default controls by either keyboard, mouse, or joystick, you can redefine them to your liking (as you can in each game).

*Die Harder* takes place in the terminals, tunnels, runways, grounds and airspace of Dulles International Airport. It's a virtual clone of Sega's *Virtua Squad*, but overall, it's a much better effort, not to mention longer and a lot tougher. Here,

in addition to weapon upgrades, you can also pick up a second pistol for two-fisted action, and you only have to click once to reload.

*Die Hard With a Vengeance* finds you tearing through the streets of New York in a Yellow Cab pursuing bomb-laden vehicles and stationary devices set to detonate at any minute. Although other cars become available, they all handle pretty poorly — a fact that should have rendered the experience an exercise in frustration, and yet I enjoyed the hell out of it. This is no safe, sanctioned racing event — it's a white-knuckle *Quarantine*-style rampage over

real estate teeming with traffic and pedestrians. The final chase scene, requiring you to drive over small explosive charges to launch into the air and ram Simon's escaping helicopter, is positively inspired.

The games can be played in any order, and each one faithfully captures the feel of the movie it's based on, with appropriate music, sound effects, and dialog by a decent



In *Die Harder*, you can enjoy the majesty of 28,000 cubic feet of Wintrex, a foam rubber substance which, onscreen, looks more like snow than snow!

Bruce Willis sound-a-like — any one of them could have been released alone and done quite well. While graphic detail, game speed, and control response are heavily dependent on your system (a 3D accelerator card is highly recommended), configuration options are flexible enough for anyone with the minimum specs to find an acceptable level of each.

The *Die Hard Trilogy* does have its flaws, but there is a lot of gaming bang for the buck here. Yippie-ki-yay, monkeyfunktors!

— Scott Wolf

## PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

**HIGHS:** Successfully captures the *Die Hard* spirit in three different, enjoyable game styles.

**LOWS:** High system requirements, somewhat sluggish controls, gets a bit repetitive.

**BOTTOM LINE:** Great value for your gaming dollar, provided you have the horsepower.

# 84%



Ho, ho, ho, now I have a machine gun! Considerate level bosses hang around huge red signs for easy holiday ID in *Die Hard*.



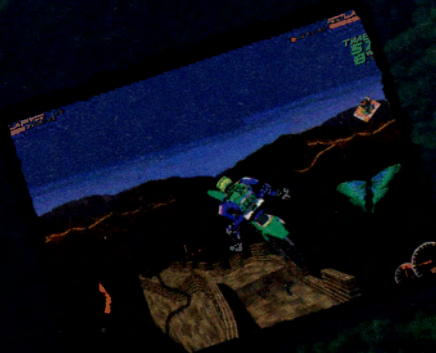


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greatest architectural  
achievements.



# Not to men



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PC Windows® 95



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Product Information Number 106



# Magic: The Gathering



**Category:** Strategy

**Developer:** MicroProse

**Publisher:** Spectrum HoloByte, 2490  
Mariner Square Loop, Alameda, CA 94501 (510) 522-1164

## Required

Windows 95; Quad-speed CD-ROM drive; 486DX4/100; 16MB RAM; 90MB hard-drive space; SVGA; Mouse

## We Recommend

Pentium 120 or higher; Supported sound card

**The popular collectible card game has finally made the transition to the computer, and *Magic fans will be pleased.***

When Wizards of the Coast published its *Magic: The Gathering* card game in 1993, it created a frenzy over the deceptively simple playing cards with pretty pictures and obscure symbols. Players did everything they could to get their hands on newer, better cards to add to their decks, making themselves tougher and tougher to beat.

Now the folks at MicroProse have translated the game to the PC, and they've done a pretty good job.

The computer game contains all the cards from the fourth edition of the card game, plus 12 unique, computer-only cards that form the Astral Set. Each of these cards has several functions, one of which is chosen at random by the computer (the Prismatic Dragon card, for instance, changes to a random color during its controller's upkeep). It's a good example of MicroProse's efforts to make its version of *Magic: The Gathering* more than just a direct translation of the card game, since the Astral cards could only



**The deck builder lets you create your dream deck from all the cards in the game. The game comes with all the cards of the Fourth Edition set, as well as some computer-only Astral set cards.**

work in a computer simulation.

The game offers several ways to play: You can take on the computer in a direct duel, in which you select your deck and the computer's, then play a straight game of *Magic* starting with 20 life points. Or you can start the adventure portion of the game, journeying through the land of Shandalar in a quest to save the world from a master villain. You can also enter the Deck Builder, where you can put together a

deck of your own design. There's also a multimedia tutorial that does a decent, if simplistic, job of explaining the basics of the game.

In a game this complex, though, there's no substitute for a good manual. Weighing in at about 210 pages, MicroProse's manual is nearly exhaustive enough to explain not only how to play the computer version of *Magic*, but how to play the card game as well. The card game itself is only covered in

## Magic 101

Players familiar with *Magic: The Gathering* know what is meant by "different colors of mana." But if you've never played the game before, here's a brief outline of what the colors are, and the types of spells they might cast:



**WHITE MANA** comes from the plains. It's usually associated with goodness, health, and prosperity. The creatures usually summoned by white mana are angels, paladins, and the like. Most of the sorceries have to do with protection, or gaining life. The antitheses of white mana are black and red.



**GREEN MANA** is produced by forests. Green magic involves the wildness of growth, the power of untamed creatures of the land, and solidity of the trees. Green has a lot of creatures in its repertoire, including things like elves, bears, and spiders. The opposites of green are blue and black.



**BLUE MANA** springs from the islands in the sea. Blue magic involves the nefarious ways of sorcery, and many cards are centered on casting complex spells, but there are some powerful creatures, such as the leviathan, that can cause tremendous damage. Blue strives most against red and green.



**RED MANA** draws its strength from the mountains, the home of dwarves and goblins. Red is a powerful color, full of strength. Some of the most destructive spells are in red's category, and red's fighters are the most feared. Red fights hardest against blue and white.



**BLACK MANA** comes from the swamps. The most feared color, black magic centers on death. Among its creatures are skeletons, zombies, and other foul monsters. Black magic is also the most self-destructive and the most ruthless. Black's opposites are white and green.





**A fatal blow is about to descend as these two cocatrices take out the computer AI. It might be overkill, but it sure feels good!**

about 100 pages, but there's still more here than you'll find in the little instruction book that comes with a starter deck of Magic cards.

The computer opponent is no slouch when it comes to playing the game. It may not threaten tournament champions, but the average player will find plenty of challenge. And with four difficulty settings to choose from, you can determine if the computer will make a few mistakes during play, or if it will always take advantage of any edge it has over you.

The weakest part of the game is the adventure option. In it, you become a fledgling spell-caster, the last person standing between Shandalar's freedom and dominance by an all-powerful wizard intent on overthrowing the beautiful land. The story is epic, but the actual gameplay isn't nearly as impressive. You travel across the land via an overhead map, *Heroes of Might & Magic*-style. You can visit towns, fight creatures that wander the countryside, and perform various quests. Guild Lords, representing the various colors in a game of *Magic*, gain power by conquering cities and using them as a mana "tap." Once a Guild Lord taps enough cities, he'll cast the Spell of Dominion, and the game's over. It's your job to make sure that doesn't happen, while creating taps of your own to increase your power. Along the way, you'll run into creatures wan-



**At towns and cities, you'll find food, clues, and cards. Go on a quest, and you might be rewarded with a mana tap of your own.**



**The battlefield can get a bit crowded sometimes — when that happens, the game slows down a bit. We recommend at least a Pentium 120 to get decent performance out of the game.**



**The overhead map will lead you through the five basic land-scapes of Shandalar in your quest to stop Arzakon.**

dering the countryside, you'll gain amulets you can trade for cards, and you'll win cards in battle.

There are dungeons that contain a variety of treasures, and World Magics you can use while traveling (these spells do things like destroying the nearest creature, so you don't have to duel if you aren't up to it). But most of the game is just walking from point to point in the map and fighting duel after duel after duel. Eventually, you need to face down each of the five Guild Lords, then fight the usual Evil Wizard, Arzakon.

It's a sensible approach to making an adventure game out of *Magic*. But the constant duels can be a bit tiresome in the adventure format, where you're expecting the story to develop.

The hardware requirements are pretty steep; you'll need at least a Pentium 120 to get decent performance. And even then, if you have a lot of cards on the table, the computer AI can take a while to figure out its next move.

But probably the biggest mistake

MicroProse made with this one was to release it without multi-player support. Sure, they promise a patch later on, but *Magic* has always been a social game, and the challenge of another human opponent simply can't be replaced by artificial intelligence, no matter how good it is. And the game probably could've used another pass through MicroProse's testing department; right out of the box, *Magic* crashed several times — twice just as I was about to beat a particularly difficult opponent. There's nothing more frustrating than tapping enough mana to sizzle the last several points out of an opponent with a Fireball, then having the game freeze just as you cast the spell.

Still, MicroProse's *Magic: The Gathering* does a great job of bringing the card game to the PC. It'll be of interest to *Magic* fans who can't always find human opponents to duel, and it's a nice introduction for gamers curious about all the fuss that surrounded the card game a couple of years ago.

—Michael Wolf

**PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT**

**HIGHS:** Stays true to the Wizards of the Coast card game; intelligent computer AI.

**83%**

**LOWES:** Adventure element is not very interesting; no multi-player support; high system requirements.

**BOTTOM LINE:** If you've played the card game, you'll like the PC version; it's also a good way to learn.



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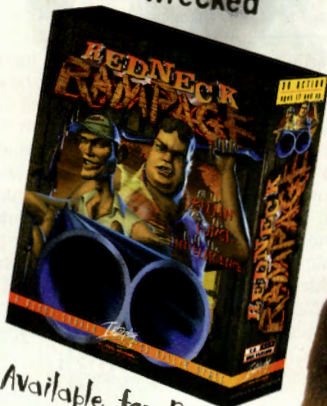
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Product Information Number 192



# T-MEK

**Category:** Arcade

**Developer:** Bits Corporation

**Publisher:** WizardWorks Software, 2300 Berkshire Lane No., Plymouth, MN 55441 (612) 559-5301

Required	We Recommend
Double-speed CD-ROM drive; 486DX4 100; 8MB RAM; 8MB hard-drive space; Super VGA; DOS 5.0	Quad-speed CD-ROM drive; Pentium 90; 16MB RAM; Supported sound card; Joystick

Atari's old coin-op game *Battlezone* was quite a hit back in its day. Even the Army wanted a piece of that tank sim action, and commissioned Atari to make a special training version, *Military Battlezone*. Apparently Atari decided to try and squeeze the last remaining bits of life out of ole *Battlezone*, because that's exactly what *T-MEK* is. Originally developed for the arcades by Atari Games, *T-MEK* is nothing more than an updated *Battlezone*.

You are a warrior peon in the distant Lacertan System, a system of six planets ruled by the Predator-look-a-like Nazrac, and his five underlings. To get anywhere in Nazrac's police state, you must prove yourself worthy by battling it out in the *T-MEK* tournaments — competitions between highly mobile tank-like hovercrafts, the MEKs, held on each of the six environmentally unpleasant planets. The winner of each tournament must face each successively harder Warlord ruler of each planet until he or she faces Nazrac on his



Even though it was an arcade powerhouse, *T-MEK*'s bland graphics and ho-hum gameplay leave the PC version feeling flat.

**The box says *T-MEK* is a "Smash Arcade Hit," but the only smashing you'll experience is your head into the wall for buying it.**

home planet of Etramel.

Once you get past the mildly-interesting premise, however, the actual gameplay is far less exciting. It's pretty standard first-person shooter fare, with none of the sim elements that made games like *Mechwarrior* so great. Choose from six MEKs, varying in weapon power, shield strength, and speed, and take it to the arena. Power-ups are granted when you successfully kill another MEK, and you can refill your special weapon capacity by driving under the beam of a Reload Platform — not so much a platform, per se, but actually a hovering plane. Go figure.

The arenas themselves are woeefully barren, occupied only by a few monoliths or poles to obscure your view. Combat view is extremely limited, as you can only see a hundred yards or so in front of you, due to the degree of pop up (your cross-hairs will lock onto a target long before it actually pops into view). Given the low amount of objects on the screen at any given time, it's staggering at how pixelated the images can become close-up. Even in high detail mode, the enemy MEKs look more like piles of shattered stained glass than anything resembling a futuristic tank.

However, *T-MEK* isn't all bad. The game is surprisingly fast and smooth — so fast, in fact, it takes a little getting used to the thrust. These are hovercrafts, and not tanks, after all. And while the gameplay may not be the most original ever conceived, it is fairly solid once you can actually find an enemy. The special weapons, from Shockbolt to Acid Drone, are effective, although it would be nice if each MEK had a variety of weapons to choose from. As it is, you spend most of your time just mindlessly shooting. There's no conservation necessary either, as the Reload Platforms are easily located, which throws any strategy out the window.

The game features two modes of play, Arcade and Extreme, which vary only in that Arcade is a straight port from the coin-op version, and Extreme has extra intermittent levels and



The evil overseer of *T-MEK*'s arena style battles is Nazrak Shung, and he gets his kicks by wearing snazzy outfits and taunting you during the game.



Different vehicles are provided for each round, yet you'll find that it doesn't matter what you're driving during actual gameplay.

new sound effects. The amount of difference between the two is almost negligible, which makes you wonder why they even bothered with the Arcade mode to begin with.

It's one thing to pump a couple of bucks into an arcade machine for a limited, albeit exciting, gameplay experience. It's another thing, however, to drop fifty bucks on a really limited game. And you don't even get to sit in the big, cool arcade housing.

— Adam Douglas

**PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT**

**HIGHS:** Two modes of play, good frame rate.

**LOWS:** Poor graphics even in High Detail mode, limited gameplay.

**BOTTOM LINE:** The promise of a decent 'mech fighter is lost in the reality of this lack-luster shooter.

**36%**



# Stargunner

**Category:** Arcade

**Developer:** Apogee

**Publisher:** Apogee, P.O. Box 496419,  
Garland, TX 75049  
(800) APOGEE1

## Required

Double-speed  
CD-ROM drive; 486;  
8MB RAM; DOS 5.0  
or later

## We Recommend

4x CD drive; Pentium  
90+; 16MB RAM;  
Speed compensat-  
ing joystick card

a good deal of blasting to do. There are four main episodes to choose from, each comprised of a series of stages. Before each stage, you outfit your ship with a wide variety of blasters, bombs, and other unique features. Of course, all of these improvements cost money, which you obtain by blowing stuff up. The further you progress, the more powerful the equipment you can afford. The backgrounds for each

episode are all unique, and, along with the more than 70 different enemies, help to keep things fresh. And that's important, as all shooters become repetitive after a while.

Though this type of game has been done before — many times — *Stargunner's* take on the arcade side-scroller is a good one, although it is pretty tough to beat, even on the easy setting.. So if you're in the mood for some challenging arcade fun, you can't go wrong with this one. There's currently a shareware version available which can be downloaded at the [www.apogee1.com/catalog/stargunner/](http://www.apogee1.com/catalog/stargunner/) web site.

— Joseph Novicki



■ One entire episode is sea-based. As in all the other episodes, you scroll from left to right, killing as you go along. Those are either really big piranha, or you've got one tiny ship.

A lot can be said for simple arcade blast-away-with-your-bad-ass-spaceship amusement. The relentless twitch of the trigger finger and constant demand on your reflexes can prove to be an enjoyable diversion. And when a game provides good, crisp graphics, smooth gameplay, and a variety of foes to devastate, it makes it all the more fun.

That's what Apogee brings us with *Stargunner*. There's nothing fancy here. It's a simple side-scrolling shoot-'em-up with, as the name implies, a starship blasting away at everything. And there's

## PC GAMER

## FINAL VERDICT

**HIGHS:** A good, pure, arcade-shooter; clean, crisp graphics.

**LOWS:** The game may be too hard, even on the easy settings.

**BOTTOM LINE:** If you're in the mood for an arcade-shooter, this is one of the best — it may be as good as Apogee's own *Raptor*.

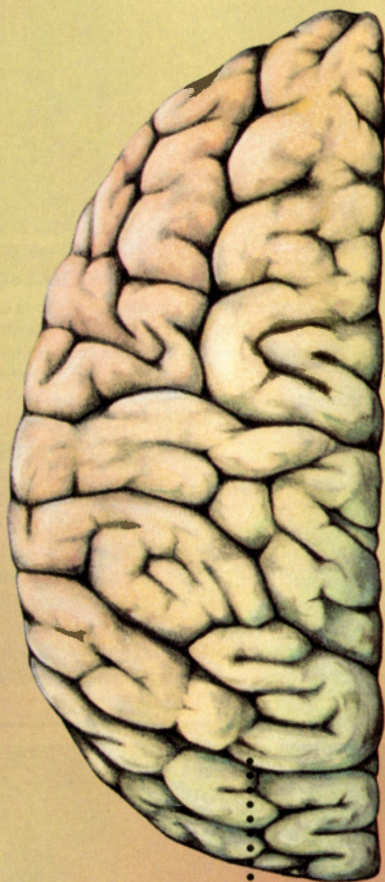
# 80%

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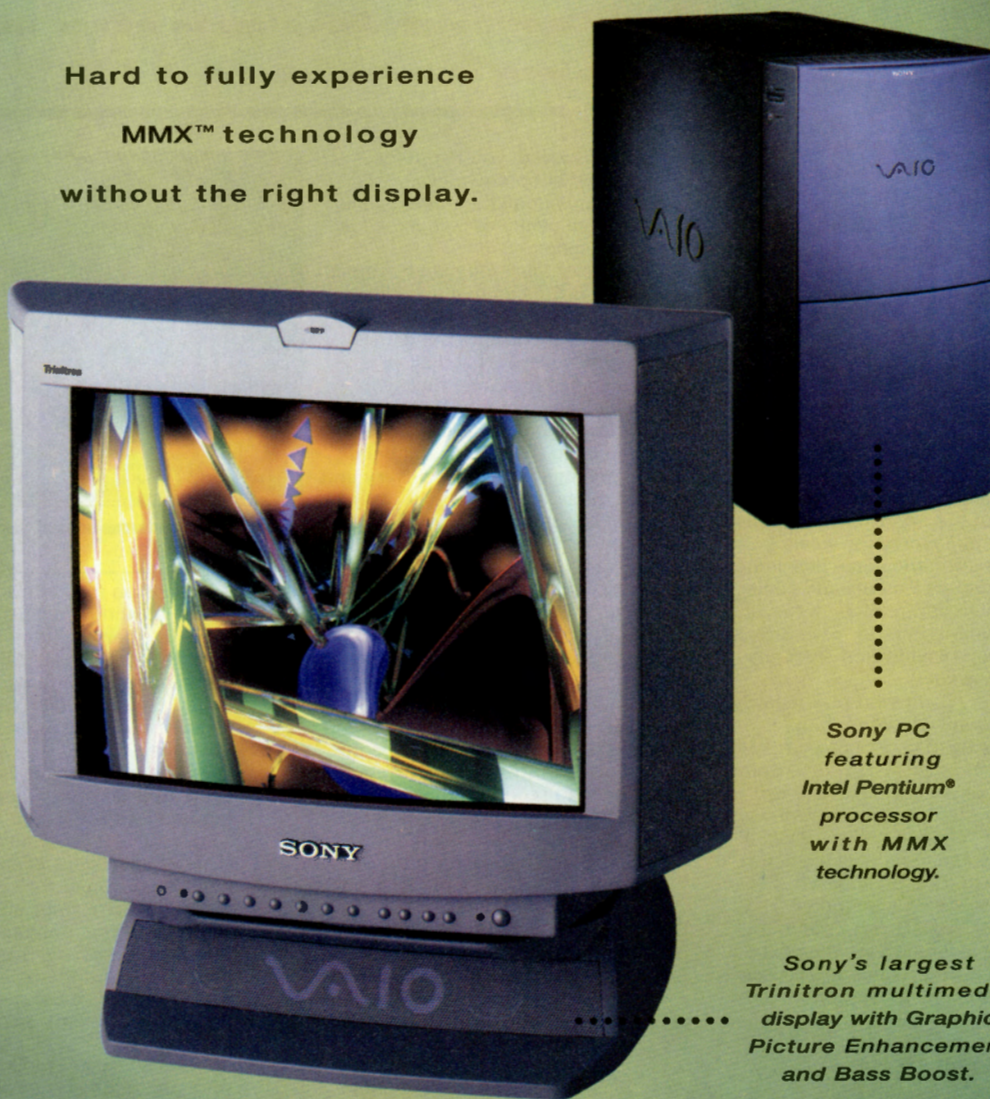
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# Star Command: Revolution

**Category:** Real-time strategy

**Developer:** Metropolis

**Publisher:** GT Interactive, 16 East 40th St., New York, NY 10016  
(800) 434-2637

Required	We Recommend
Double-speed CD-ROM drive; 486DX/66; 16MB RAM; DOS 5.0 or higher; 1MB VRAM; 50MB hard-drive space	Quad-speed CD-ROM drive; Pentium; Supported sound card

**A real-time strategy game set in space, *Star Command: Revolution* never quite kicks into hyperdrive.**

Orcs were dead, you had to go ahead and chop down every tree and empty out all the mines just so you'll have plenty of resources for the next map.

One of *Star Command's* touted features is the fact that you can play any of the four different races as you progress through the game. Once you've researched all your technologies from one race, you automatically begin to learn technologies from other races. You'll be able to build their units and buildings, giving you access to every unit in the game.

While this allows you to build a mixed force, it does mean that you'll have a lot of overlap and wasted resources building the many bases and structures required for a multi-racial army. It also means that in effect, there aren't really four different races in the game, but one big race with four different building paths and a lot of repeated units. It just seems like you're doing a lot of extra work just to get the one good unit in the game you need. You also need to scoop up five different kinds of resources.

There are a handful of intriguing units specific to each race, such as the Terran's "Switcher," which lets you switch its location with any of your other units on the board. This is pretty handy, particularly with the otherwise immobile missile launchers. However, it does lend itself to some more sluggish play, as the best tactic seems to be to build up a huge wall of ships, missile platforms, and carriers, then lure the enemy ships a few at a time with scouts, then slowly move forward again. So unlike *WarCraft II* or *Red Alert*, there never seems to be a sense of urgency or immediacy — that feeling that you have to build as fast as you can to hold off the onslaught.

And while ostensibly set in space, *Star Command* actu-



**The large, ponderous units of *Star Command* move pretty slowly.**

ally plays on a 2D surface covered with asteroids and nebulas that function more like barriers than interstellar objects. For all practical purposes, the game has a less interesting and less varied environment than *Red Alert* or *WarCraft II*, since it lacks the equivalent of water.

The graphics for the space backdrop are also pretty bland, hardly varying between the levels. The units themselves are also large and blocky, on the scale of the largest of the *WarCraft II* units, but without the character. The different race's ships all look relatively similar — large, non-aerodynamic blobs that slowly move through the crowded battlefield. And the bipedal units are vague and out of focus, hardly as detailed as similarly-sized units found in *Red Alert*.

Let's face it: *WarCraft II* and *Red Alert* are tough acts to follow, and *Star Command* just isn't up to par. Real-time strategy fanatics might want to pick this one up or one of the other "interim" games, but the rest of us are probably better off waiting for *StarCraft* or *C&C II*.

— Jason Bates



***Star Command: Revolution* is a real-time strategy game set in the depths of interstellar space.**

## PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

**HIGHS:** Many units; some new gameplay concepts; long, non-linear campaign.

**LOWS:** Low-key action; ho-hum graphics; token space environment.

**BOTTOM LINE:** There are some new twists here, but nothing really compelling.

# 75%



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**WINDOWS 95  
CD-ROM**



Product Information Number 162



# Mutant Penguins

**Category:** Puzzle/Arcade

**Developer:** Sunrise Games Ltd.

**Publisher:** GameTek, Three Harbour Dr., Suite 110, Sausalito, CA 94965 (800) GAMETEK

Required	We Recommend
Double-speed CD-ROM drive; 486DX/2 66; 8MB RAM; 20MB hard-drive space; Mouse	Pentium 90; 16MB RAM; Supported sound card

**Cute characters and a twisted plot are combined to create a seductively addictive puzzle romp — but this game has faults, too.**

The plot has all of the bells and whistles of an Ed Wood flick and all his originality to boot. It begins with radio and television transmissions from Earth bouncing around the universe for decades before finally arriving in the galaxy of "Bleurgghh." This dingy part of the cosmos is home to an evil race of aliens who become inspired to conquer the Earth after being convinced by the transmissions that the planet is ripe for conquest. Unfortunately for the slimy green aliens, their plan gets off to a rocky start after the last transmission they receive, a wildlife show, convinces them that penguins are the dominant species here. So, the outer-space nimrods take the form of the kings of the frozen tundra and launch their attack.

As the attack begins, the player's job is to guide his or her character, either Rodney or Bernard, through increasingly more difficult levels in an effort to thwart the mutants' attack. The focus of each level is the Doomscale — a basic weight-scale that determines whether the planet lives or dies. The mutant penguins win the level if they are able to get more soldiers to the scale and tip it in their favor. The player wins if his or her character is able to



**Lose a level, and the last thing you will see is a mutant sinking his teeth into you.**



**Part of the puzzle on some levels is knowing when to release the good penguins and begin them on their march toward the Doomscale.**



**The heart of the battle is here — the Doomscale. Keep the mutants from it, and you might just tip the game in your favor.**

lead the good penguins to the scale and tip it in the Earth's favor.

To help in the fight, players can find various weapons on each level including bats, frying pans, and the super club. Whack a mutant with a weapon such as the frying pan, and the evil penguin will release several power-ups that can be collected and used to improve your character's weapons. The improvement of the weapons is critical as an endless stream of marching mutants on most levels offers little hope for the player to be successful unless he or she is armed to the teeth.

Knowing how to use the weapons though is not enough. Players must develop a strategy for each level or even the strongest attacks will fall under the marching webbed feet of the aliens. Clearly, the game aims to capitalize on the style of play that was introduced in

*Lemmings*, and while the characters are cute, there is one problem with the game.

When running under DOS mode in Windows 95, the computer repeatedly accesses the CD-ROM and freezes play. This might be more forgivable if the computer running the program was not up to the task. But this is a game with graphics that are straight from a Super Nintendo cartridge and hardly taxing for any modern machine. Only sloppy programming can be to blame for this problem. The game does run smoothly if the machine is rebooted in DOS and then launched.

With graphics that are adorable and gameplay that is surprisingly engaging, *Mutant Penguins* is a nice diversion that reignites warm memories of *Lemmings*. While it pales in comparison to that classic, *Penguins* carries a street price of just over \$20, and for that amount, *Mutant Penguins* is a fairly solid catch.

— Brett Jones

## PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

**HIGHS:** Whimsical graphics, nice music, and tough puzzles.

**LOWS:** Repeated access of the CD-ROM under Win 95 will frustrate most players.

**BOTTOM LINE:** A new take on *Lemmings* with a budget price, *Mutant Penguins* is a wannabe winner.

# 68%

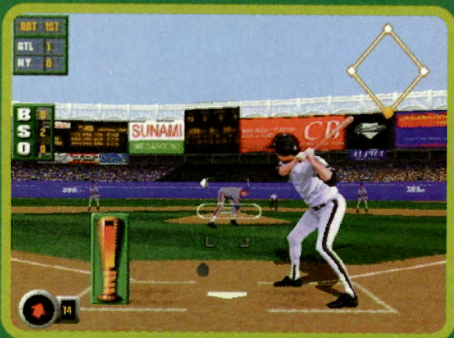


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The hot dogs.  
The pine tar.**





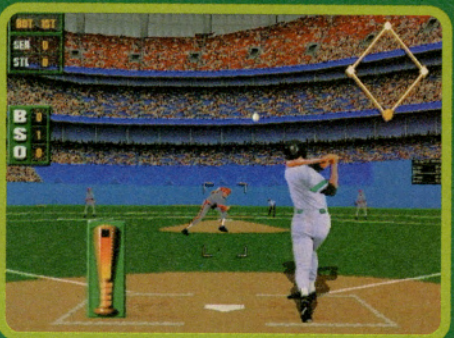
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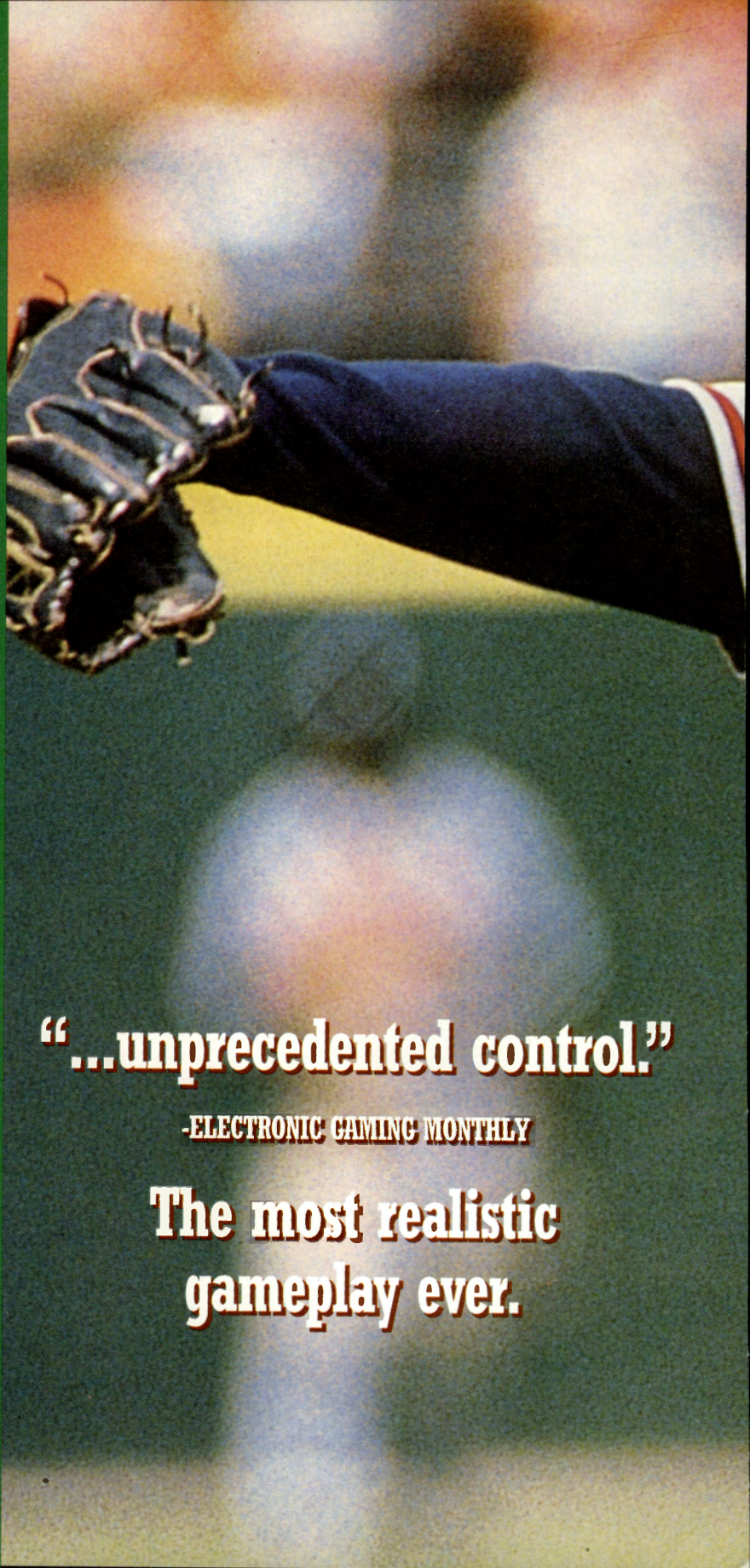
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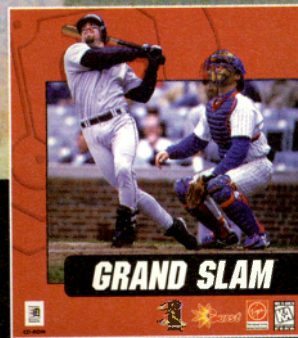
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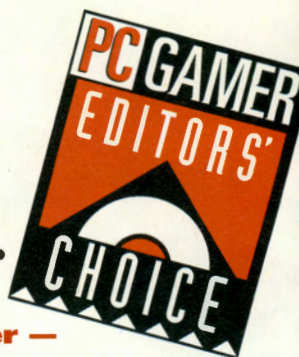
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Product Information Number 340



# iM1A2 Abrams



**Category:** Simulation

**Developer:** Charybdis Entertainment

**Publisher:** Interactive Magic, P.O. Box 13491, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709 (919) 461-0722

## Required

Windows 95;  
Quad-speed  
CD-ROM drive;  
486DX2/66; 16MB  
RAM; Super VGA  
video; Mouse

## We Recommend

Pentium 90 or  
higher; Joystick;  
Supported sound  
card

**After a long wait, "The Best Tank Sim Ever" finally gets a challenger — one that proves worthy in every respect.**

When MicroProse released *M1 Tank Platoon* in 1989, it was an immediate and enduring success. Tanks sims have come and gone (mostly gone) since then, but none has quite measured up to that classic... until now.

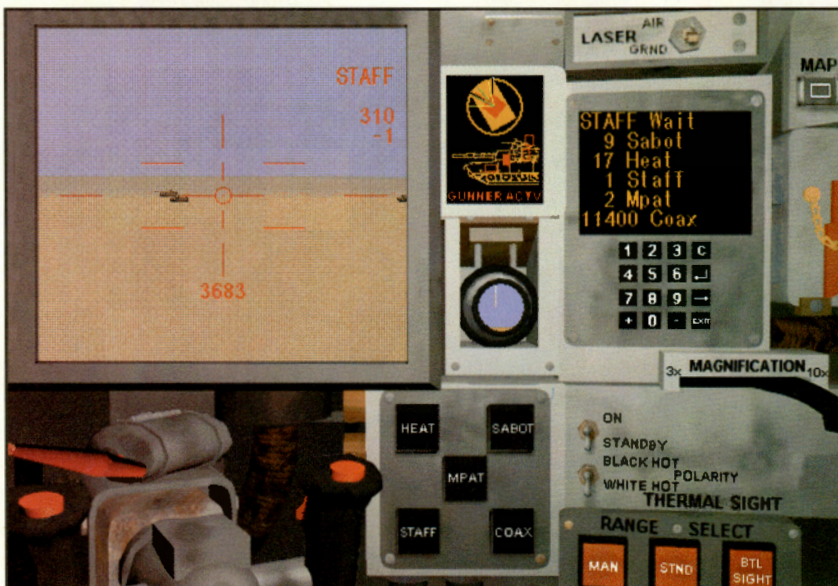
Under the direction of *Tank Platoon* designer Arnold Hendrick, Interactive Magic's new *iM1A2 Abrams* finally gives us a follow-up that is every bit the heir to the *Tank Platoon* throne.

In 1989, of course, the Abrams was an untested vehicle, and it had plenty of Congressional critics: it was too complex and would break down under combat stress; it guzzled gas and would catch fire too easily; it was too expensive compared to its Warsaw Pact opponents, etc. Then came the Gulf War, in which the Abrams delivered such sensational performance that it is now regarded as the finest Main Battle Tank in the world.

The M1A2 is the latest model to see service, and it's significantly improved over the original tank: better armor, a more powerful gun, "smart" ammunition, advanced computer systems. All of these developments are faithfully modeled in this simulation, but the interface has been streamlined so that, even with all the new gadgets, it's actually a lot easier to play than *Tank Platoon*.

While everything can be controlled with a mouse, you'll probably want to use a combination of joystick, mouse, and keyboard. I know that sounds complicated — and, at first, it is a bit daunting — but in practice it all works very smoothly.

For basic familiarization, there's the traditional Quickstart mission that lets you jump right in against a horde of incompetent Iraqi tanks and start blowing things up. Next comes a long and varied list of single missions, most of them playable in an hour or less. For the ulti-



**The computerized gunner performs well, but nothing beats the pleasure of squeezing off the rounds yourself. Just remember to re-issue a "Fire At Will" command when you leave this position.**



**Use maximum zoom on the MFD map to fine-tune your tanks' positions.**

mate challenge, of course, you need to create a persona for the personnel files and try one of the extended campaigns.

These are waged in near-future crisis spots: Iraq, Bosnia, and the Ukraine. The Iraq-Kuwait campaign is best for gaining experience — the terrain is flat and the enemy not very bright. Bosnia offers an intermediate level of difficulty, with its mountainous landscape and better-equipped Serb opponents; Ukraine is the toughest — this is where you'll face the most up-to-date weapons, including the top secret T-95.

You can play campaigns either as a lieutenant (commanding a single platoon of tanks and receiving your orders from

on high), or as a captain, commanding a full company, including supporting armor, air assets, and artillery. Playing at the captain level is certainly the greater challenge, so it's best to play as a platoon leader until you have a grasp on the tactics and technology.

One new Abrams feature you'll need to master is the Commander's Independent Thermal Viewer (CITV), a coffee-can shaped cupola on the left side of the turret. Actually, it's a turret-with-a-turret that rotates independently and allows the commander to search out and designate new targets for the gunner to engage. No other tank is known to have this feature, and it gives you a big edge, especially at night.

Veteran players of MicroProse's *M1 Tank Platoon* will be right at home with the interface; new players will probably find it a bit overwhelming at first. Besides using the mouse or joystick to scan for enemies, you'll need to skip back and forth from numerous pull-up menus grouped along the bottom of the screen (where you issue movement, formation, and viewpoint orders), and regularly check the situation map on the main MFD. Well, this is a state-of-the-art tank, not a T-34, so you can't expect to become fluent in these tasks right away. But have faith: the interface is actually as tight and logical as it could be, consistent with the desired level of realism, and after a few



missions, you'll do the right thing at the right time, automatically.

Your computer-controlled crew members are pretty sharp, so it's quite possible to fight and win a major engagement without ever taking over the guns. Of course, there are times when you'll want to take over the gun, if only for the visceral thrill of putting a sabot round on an enemy tank yourself. Just remember to re-issue a "Fire At Will" order when you decide to leave the gunner's station, or the computer will not resume control.

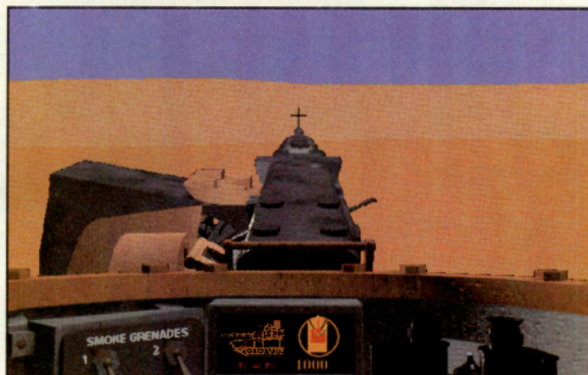
How about the action? It's hot. Against a background of vivid sound effects (including radio transmissions that provide vital updates on the situation), you see bursting shells, damaging hits, and total brew-ups. There are hundreds of gratifying visual treats embedded in the game: observing a distant artillery strike from the open hatch, seeing enemy infantry bail out of a burning BMP, turrets flying into the air from direct hits, buildings and bunkers catching fire when you hose them down with the commander's machine gun, etc.

If there's a drawback, it's an aesthetic one: many engagements take place at such long ranges that, even through the magnified gunner's sight, you simply don't see all much detail. In this regard,

it's analogous to modern aerial warfare: unless the designer "cheats" by giving you a close-up of your target being hit, all you see is a missile trail and a tiny flash. I-Magic could have included a window to show you all the mayhem, but did not, apparently feeling that it would compromise the standard of realism. What you see in this sim is what you would see if you were there, which means that observing some of the coolest special effects is more or less a matter of chance.

Take the matter of the new STAFF ammo (a top-attack round that's still experimental): I would dearly love to see what happens when one of these babies detonates over a column of BMPs, but so far, in 30 or so hours of play, I haven't, although my gunner and I have fired a lot of them. Still, such graphic blandishments are really incidental, compared to the level of realism.

I-Magic thoughtfully offers 11 pages of configuration options, all thoroughly explained in the excellent 200-page manual, which enable you to tweak the graphical elements for maximum performance on your PC. Without full texturing



Hull-down in the Saudi desert, waiting for the enemy to appear — there's lots of tension at moments like this.

and shading turned on (better have a hefty CPU if you want the full show), the terrain tends toward the generic; this is no problem in the desert or Ukraine scenarios (where everything is pretty flat and generic anyhow), but it does pose problems in Bosnia's mountains, where enemy tanks often seem to appear magically against high, flat, backgrounds.

The presentation of some displays and menu screens is pretty rough, too. For some reason, I-Magic opted to use typewriter-style text throughout, and there are places where it's jammed together and hard to read. Graphics certainly aren't the most important element of a game like this, but a little more attention to detail would've given the game less of an unfinished feel.

On the up-side, 3D-object graphics are rock-solid: detailed tanks, snappy explosions, clean aircraft models, furiously burning wrecks. We're a long way from *Tank Platoon's* big, clunky polygons and spewing-triangle explosions here!

So, then: is this, as I-Magic claims, "the best tank simulation in the world"? Well, if you're looking for the total "gestalt" of fighting a modern armor engagement (rather than a glorified arcade shoot-'em-up), I think it is. It's a mature, seasoned design that gives you a very plausible idea of what the real thing must be like, and the campaigns, in particular, provide plenty of raw, wargaming drama.

The more I played, the more respect I gained for I-Magic's achievement; this program is going to stay on my hard drive for a long time to come. If you loved *Tank Platoon*, you need not hesitate to invest in this sequel. If you're not familiar with that game, but have any interest in the subject of modern warfare, there's not another product on the market that quite measures up to *iM1A2 Abrams*.

— William R. Trotter

## Tactical Tips

### Going hull-down

A tank in the "hull-down" posture is situated so that only its turret is visible to the enemy, thus presenting a much smaller, harder-to-hit target. For defensive missions especially, this is highly advantageous. Doing it in real life requires only a good view of the terrain and a few quick maneuvers; doing it on your monitor screen is a bit trickier. First (assuming you have time before the enemy appears), go to the MFD map and chart a course to the crest of a ridge; zoom in to the max, and you can usually position your vehicles with a fair degree of precision. Next, check between the gunner's position and the driver's. If the driver can't see anything but dirt and the gunner can see the terrain stretching out in front of the tank, you're (almost) in business. With the Abrams, you can still do a little fine-

tuning, because the Gunner's Primary Sight (GPS) is located on top of the turret; so it's possible for him to have a clear view while the muzzle is actually digging a hole in the ground. To double-check your position, switch to the Gunner's Auxiliary Sight (GAS), which is actually mounted alongside the gun barrel — if you see blue sky through that aperture, it means your cannon is clear and ready to fire.

### Bringing down a Hind

Few incidents in this game are more satisfying than blowing a heavily armed attack chopper out of the sky. In the past, the only way to do that was to engage with the commander's machine gun — difficult, at best, and highly risky for the commander. Fortunately, the new MPAT anti-helicopter round turns your Abrams into a pretty deadly anti-aircraft gun. When you spot an

oncoming Hind, go to the gunner's position and switch the laser sighting to "Air." Line the sights up on the chopper, load an MPAT round, and lose the target. As soon as you get a good range reading, the tank's computers and the shell's proximity device will do the rest — just lob that shell in the general vicinity of the Hind, and you've got a better than fifty-fifty chance of swatting it down like a mosquito. Very gratifying!

### Dueling with a T-95

This new Russian vehicle is a bear: its frontal armor is so tough that even a SABOT round will bounce off at any range greater than 1,000 meters. STAFF rounds are more effective, but chances are there will be more T-95s than you have shells. Your best bet (like a Sherman commander stalking a Panther) is to maneuver for a side or rear shot.

### PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

**HIGHS:** An exciting and challenging game, with solid graphics, excellent sound, and plenty of battlefield action.

**LOWS:** Graphic presentation has some rough edges.  
**BOTTOM LINE:** An exceptional, heavyweight sim, and a worthy successor to its forebearer.

89%

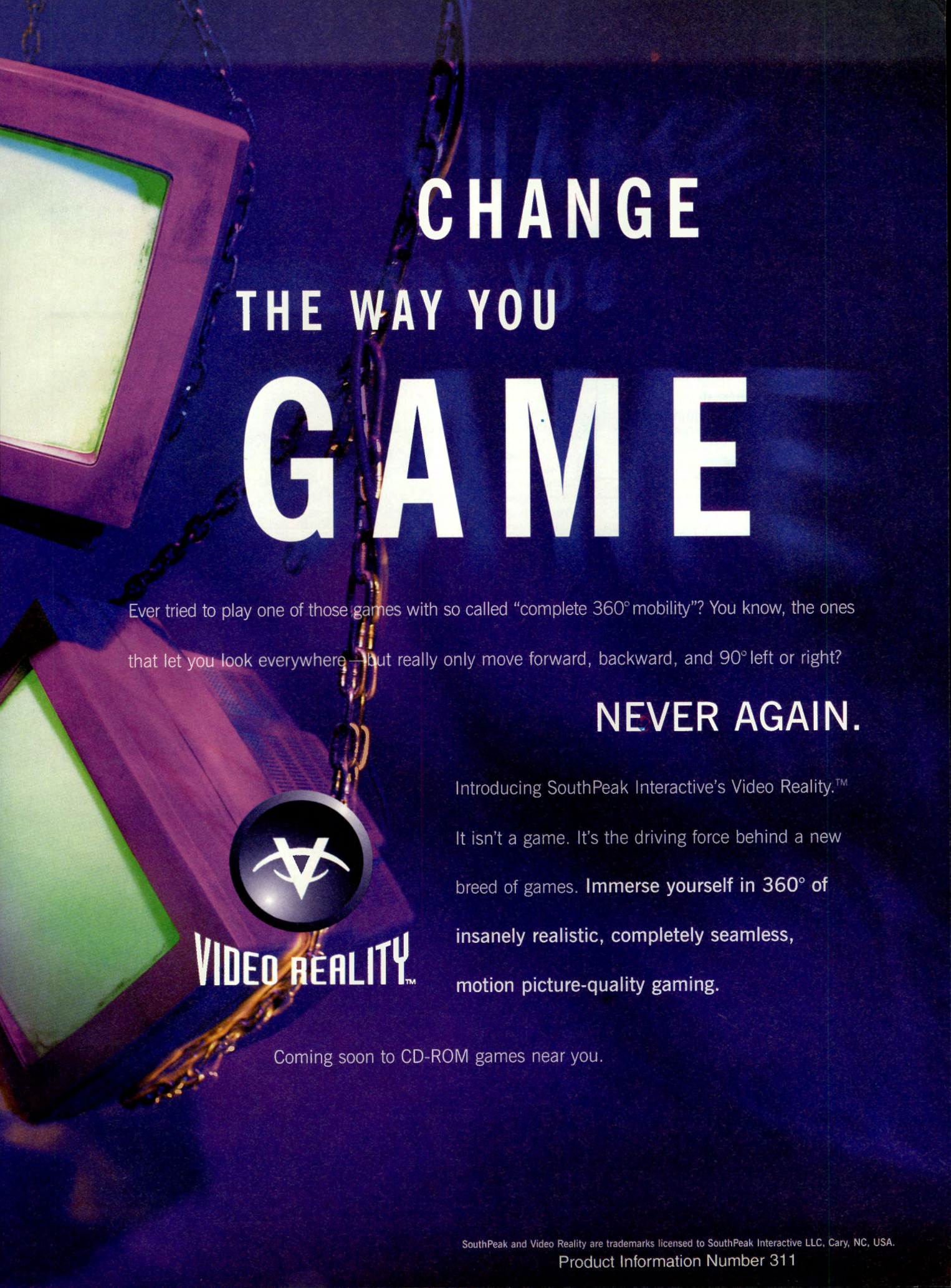




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# Theme Hospital

**Category:** Business simulation

**Developer:** Bullfrog Productions

**Publisher:** Electronic Arts, 1450 Fashion Island Blvd., San Mateo, CA 94404 (415) 571-7171

Required	We Recommend
Double-speed CD-ROM drive; 486DX2/66; 8MB RAM; 1MB SVGA video card; 25MB hard-drive space	Pentium 133; 16MB RAM; 55MB hard-drive space; SoundBlaster AWE32

**W**e don't see nearly enough dip-n-twiddle games — those curiously immersive "software toys" where it's possible to become utterly absorbed in a little (or not so little) world of your own design and making. Maxis' classic *SimCity* opened the door to this new way of gaming, but it's arguable that it wasn't really a game — although your city could go to ruin if not run properly, there weren't any victory or failure conditions as such. Bullfrog followed Maxis' lead and upped the ante with *Theme Park*, the first game in its Designer Series collection, which charged players to design and build an amusement park, then — and here's the hard part — operate it profitably. Everything from the layout of the roller-coaster to how much salt to put on the french fries was under the player's con-

**This sequel to *Theme Park* takes a light-hearted look at the world of healthcare — and it's sure to give you plenty of headaches and fun.**

trol, and so dense were the underlying mechanics that even the seemingly smallest decision could blossom into a very big deal indeed.

The sequel *Theme Hospital* follows very similar lines, although surprisingly, the new setting, which you'd imagine to be much more sterile than the non-stop fun of a theme park, actually allows for greater comedy thanks to Bullfrog's cute handling of the subject. As in *Theme Park*, it's all about money — the bottom line is ultimately all that matters to the Ministry of Health, who will happily reward you with big salaries and bigger challenges if you turn a tidy profit, and just as happily fire your ass if your hospital doesn't bring in the bucks.

It's up to you to build your hospital from the ground up, starting with an empty isometric floorplan into which you purchase and place diagnosis rooms, treatment rooms, and other facilities. You need to plan your design efficiently, to minimize inconvenience for your patients (or perhaps we should call them customers) and keep them happy. Then you need to employ staff — doctors to do the diagnosing and curing, nurses to run the wards and dispense medicines, receptionists to handle the flow of incoming patients, and handymen to keep the place clean, water the plants, and maintain hospital equipment. On top of all that, there's no end of incidentals to keep in mind — radiators to heat the hospital, plants to make the place look nice, benches so waiting patients don't have to stand, drinks machines so they don't get thirsty, bathrooms so they don't... well, you know. Everything comes at a cost, and the key to the game is maintaining the delicate financial balance between your incomings and outgoings — if you're paying more in salaries and maintenance than



■ Adding luxuries like video games and pool tables in the staff rooms will help keep your doctors and nurses happy.

patients are paying you for their treatment, it won't be long before you're either flat broke or grovelling to the bank manager for a loan (which he'll gladly give you, at exorbitant interest).

There are all kind of domino effects at work — if you push your staff too hard, for instance (they need to rest in the staff room from

time to time, but you can decide how often that's allowed), the quality of their work diminishes, patients start dying, and your reputation suffers. If patients have to wait too long to see a doctor, they'll leave and go to another hospital (there are several other computer-run hospitals you're constantly competing against). If your treatments are too expensive, less people will come to be cured — it's a constant balancing act of everything from large issues like what cures to research, what equipment to buy, and how much time to spend training your doctors, to how often to water the plants, and where best to put down seating in the corridors.

This all sounds terribly deep, complex and... well, a bit dull, and indeed it would be if it wasn't for the humorous slant Bullfrog has put on everything. This is in no small part due to the graphics, which are in wonderfully drawn SVGA, and create a lavish cartoon world which, at times, is just great fun to sit back and watch as patients and staff go about their business. And while you'll use computer scanners, x-rays and operating theaters, you don't have to tackle morbid, real-life diseases — all the afflic-



■ Handymen are cheap to employ but essential to keeping a hospital clean and running efficiently.



■ Clicking on a character will give you a readout of what he or she is up to — this doctor's chart shows how happy, tired, and able he is, and lists special skills.





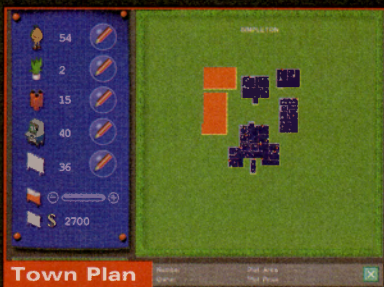
Plenty of amusing cutscenes sprinkled throughout the game will keep you giggling.

tions are amusingly surreal, as is the equipment you need to buy to cure them. Bloaty Head, for example, is cured by pricking the inflated cranium so it pops, then re-pressuring the head to its original size with an inflation machine. In the Slack Tongue Clinic, patients are cured by having their tongue run through a mangle, and those with King Syndrome (you can't miss them, they look like bad Elvis impersonators) are all better after a consultation with a psychiatrist. These new conditions are introduced as you progress through the game into bigger and more complex hospitals, and it gives great incentive to progress — just to see what cooky diseases the game will challenge you with next.

There's much, much more to *Theme Hospital* than I have room to go into here — VIP visits, epidemic alerts, earthquakes (yes, earthquakes), autopsies, drug research... the number of things requiring your attention is mind-boggling, and it can get quite daunting, even overwhelming at times — but, hey, you're running a hospital here, not a popsicle stand, and no one said it would be easy. It's easy to get bogged-down in micro-management, and the constant process of placing plants and radiators can become laborious, but all these tiny elements add up to one very big picture. As anyone who's played *SimCity* or *Theme Park* knows, making everything come together and having a success on your hands is immensely satisfying. Keeping your hospital on track, attending to problems, expanding and turning a profit is a process that it's all-too easy

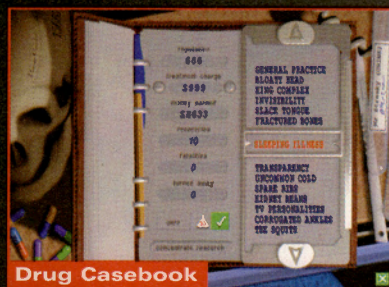
## DECISIONS, DECISIONS

In *Theme Hospital*, there are plenty of other screens you need to refer to aside from the main game view in order to keep your hospital in check. Here's just a few...



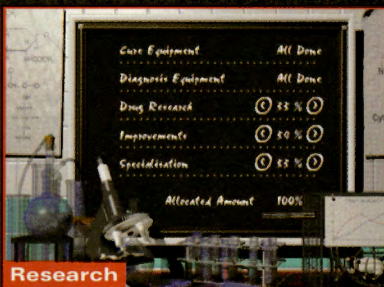
Town Plan

Check this out for a complete overview of your hospital buildings, showing all people and objects, as well as how well the place is heated. From here, you can also buy new buildings to expand your hospital.



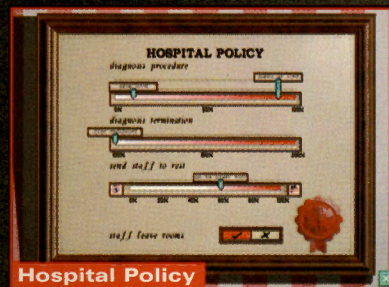
Drug Casebook

Come here to find out how effective your treatments are, and to set the price of each treatment. If one condition is causing lots of problems, you can concentrate your research efforts on coming up with a cure for it.



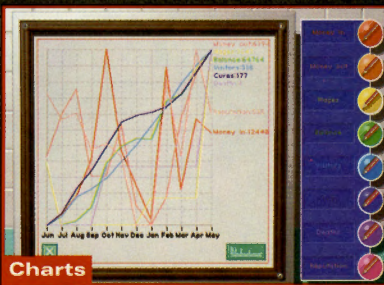
Research

Once you've built a research department, your doctors will come up with new drugs, diagnosis, and treatment equipment. Use the selectors here to decide in what areas you want to specialize.



Hospital Policy

How certain of a diagnosis must a doctor be before treating a patient? When should they be discharged? How hard must your doctors work before they can have a rest? Decide all this and more at the hospital policy screen.



Charts

Come here for a glimpse of how your cashflow, reputation, cures, deaths, and treatments have progressed over the last year.



Bank Manager

Only visit this guy as a last resort — he'll lend you up to 50 grand at a snap, but paying him back can be tricky.

to get hopelessly absorbed in — it's one of those games where the time just flies by, and suddenly it's 3a.m. and you're still playing. *Theme Hospital*'s setting, style and intense micro-management will not be to everybody's taste, but for most of us, I suspect, this will come as a real breath of fresh air — this is a genuine original, and if you're looking for a change from the usual routine of adventuring, roleplaying, and flying, while at the same time just good old-fashioned fun, this is a terrific bet.

— Gary Whitta

**PC GAMER** FINAL VERDICT

**HIGHS:** Very original, deeply absorbing, and lots of fun to watch.

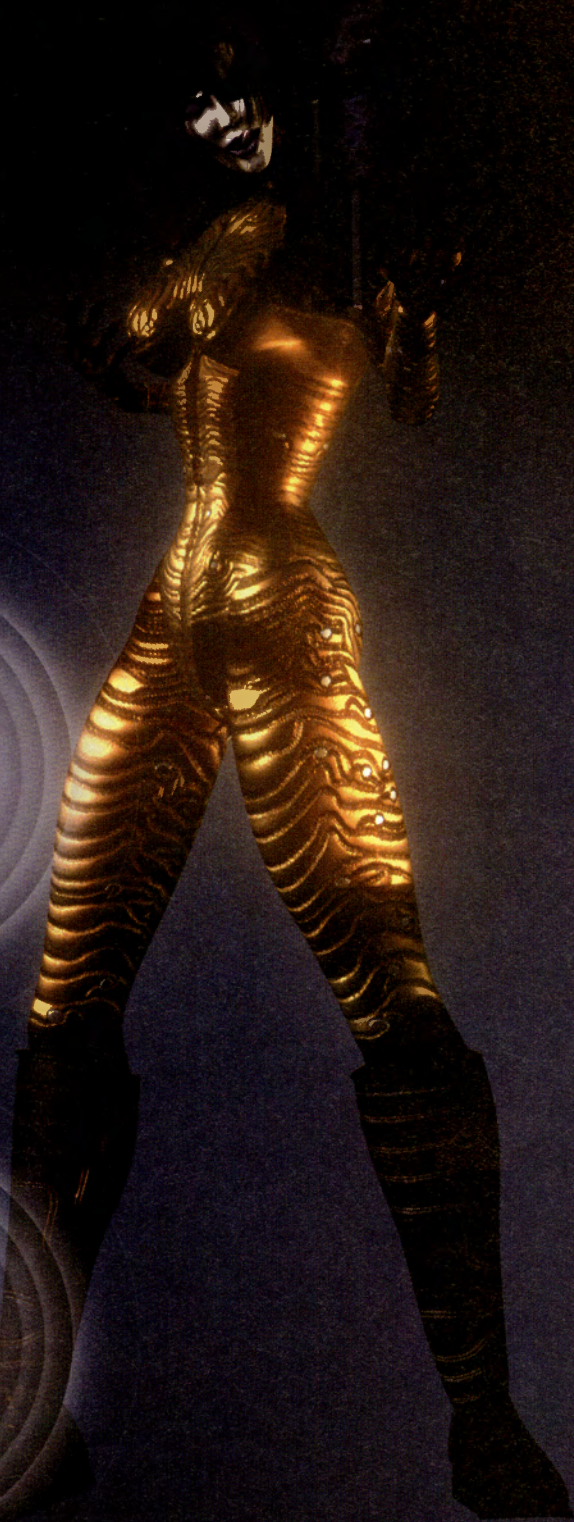
**LOWS:** Intense micro-management can become daunting.

**BOTTOM LINE:** Oodles of gameplay and lots of laughs, for those who have plenty of patience and concentration.

**86%**



# ONE MURDER AT A TIME.



PC CD-ROM





# BUILDING A BETTER TOMORROW,

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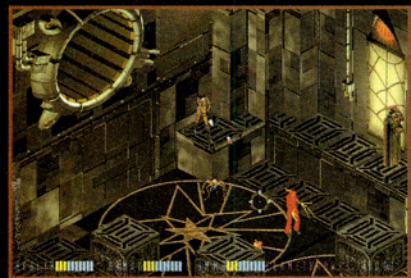
—C/NET GAMECENTER.COM

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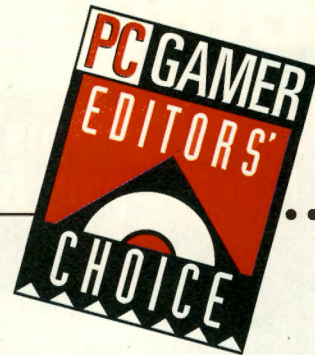
# The Last Express

**Category:** Adventure

**Developer:** Smoking Car Productions

**Publisher:** Broderbund Software, P.O. Box 6121, Novato, CA 94948 (415) 382-4400

**This grand adventure brings to life an age of elegance and dangerous intrigue.**



Required	We Recommend
4X CD-ROM drive; Pentium 60; DOS 6.0 or higher; 8MB RAM; 35MB HD space; Super VGA; SoundBlaster compatible sound card	Pentium 100; 16MB RAM

**T**he Orient Express... these words conjure a powerful symbol of European culture at its most elegant. Since 1883 (with interruptions for two wars, of course), this Paris-to-Istanbul express train has stood for leisure travel at its most luxurious. Is there anyone who would not jump at the chance to ride these rails?

Taking full advantage of the train's mythology, designer Jordan Mechner (whose *Prince of Persia* set a new standard for sophistication in the arcade action genre on the PC and Macintosh) has pulled out all the stops to create a big, rich, engrossing adventure set in July, 1914, on the eve of the cataclysm that was World War One.

The player assumes the role of a young American doctor named Robert Cath, who boards the train in Paris to keep an appointment with his best friend, Tyler Whitney. Cath is a kind of Hemingway hero: a wounded idealist who views the world with a cynical detachment that masks his real commitment to honor and decency. His speech is concise, his powers of observation keen, his demeanor very private, yet, when the chips are down, he is also a man capable of decisive action.

As soon as Cath boards the train, he locates Whitney's compartment and enters it, only to find his friend dead on the floor in a pool of blood. This game does not beat around the bush: as soon as you find Whitney's body, you have to get rid of it (before the conductor enters). You do this by first



■ The Orient Express has become a cultural icon in novels, films, and now, PC games. It's still a first-class ride, but the elegance is a little faded now.

laying the body on the fold-away bed, then opening the compartment window and simply dumping poor Whitney's remains out into the night. Then you must locate a clean jacket (hanging beside the window) and exchange it for your own blood-stained clothing.

If you do this successfully, the conductor will knock (but not come in) and inform you that August Schmidt — a wealthy German arms manufacturer — is waiting for you in the dining car. This is an adventure game, of course, so you

need to search Whitney's compartment thoroughly before venturing forth to meet Herr Schmidt.

In the dining car, and in the corridors leading to it, you'll have your first encounters with a colorful cast of interactive characters: Anna, a lovely young Austrian woman whose fame as a concert violinist

provides excellent cover for her real occupation as a spy; the Obolenskys (an elderly Russian aristocrat and his charming 17-year-old daughter); Alexei (a Russian anarchist who spends his spare time either reading political tracts or making bombs); Kronos (a mysterious and grotesquely rich art collector who rides in his own private carriage); Mahmud, a eunuch in charge of an eight-woman harem; and a quartet of sinister Serbian revolutionaries who are plotting to take over the train once it reaches the Balkans.

It's typical of this game's depth that this varied and volatile mix of characters all talk and act like real passengers on a real train, at least when you're not furthering the plot with specific dialogs: they take their meals at the proper times, converse with their fellow passengers, argue amongst themselves, etc. The illusion of reality is enhanced by solid voice-acting and authentic foreign accents throughout. And I have never seen a better use of rotoscoped animation than what is on display here: characters move and gesture fluidly, and each has very individual mannerisms.

The overall graphic style is quite



■ Balkan nationalists doing their thing — those Serbs are such impetuous fellows!



# All Aboard!

**F**rom the train's first trip, in 1883, everything about the Orient Express (Europe's first "Train De Luxe") was first class. There simply were no "second class" tickets, and a round trip for two to Istanbul (then known, of course, as Constantinople), cost 60 pounds sterling — about as much as the annual rent on a medium-sized house in London. Servants accompanying their employers did get a 20 percent fare-cut, but even so, a valet traveling with his master had to purchase, or have purchased for him, a ticket whose cost was roughly equivalent to a year's salary.

Nowhere was the train's opulence more evident than in the dining car, with its Genoese velvet curtains, Gobelin tapestries, engraved silverware, and goblets of cut crystal. The sleeping compartments weren't too shabby either, featuring plush wall-to-wall carpeting, leather upholstery, crisp white bed-linens, and running water.

The train's aura of international intrigue was not wholly fictional. In addition to the usual financiers, opera stars, and diplomats, kings and princes could be found dining across from secret service agents and "bankers" whose briefcases bulged with stolen bearer bonds. Both the French and English governments maintained permanent herths for international couriers, some of whom were also spies, who ate and slept with dispatch cases chained to their wrists.

Perhaps the most famous (or infamous) passenger was the obscenely rich international arms merchant, Sir Basil Zaharoff. It was on the Orient Express that Sir Basil consummated his love affair with a beautiful Spanish lady, the Duchess of Marchena, when she escaped from her deranged husband, on their wedding night, and slipped into Zaharoff's favorite compartment, No. 7. He finally married her, 38 years later, after the Duke's long-overdue demise.

Cultural immortality was conveyed on the train in 1974, with the release of a lavish film version of Agatha Christie's classic *Murder on the Orient Express*, starring Albert Finney as the formidable Belgian detective (and Lucullan gourmet), Hercule Poirot.

And if you've studied French, you may have run across the following once-popular poem (*Ode* by Valéry Larbaud):

*Lend me your great noise, your grand allure so soft,*

*Your mighty flit across lit-up Europe,  
O Train de Luxe! And the squeaky music,*

*Which wails along your shiny leather-paneled corridors,*

*Whilst behind the lacquered doors with heavy brass locks,*

*The millionaires sleep.*



When Milos attacks you with a knife, dodge his thrusts twice, then click on his upper body — if you hit just the right spot, you'll disarm him, after which the two of you can have a civilized chat.

breathtaking. Mechner and company have gone for an authentic Art Nouveau look — hand-drawn ink outlines filled in with flat washes of color, very much along the lines of Toulouse Latrec and Alphonse Mocha. And the 3D rendered backgrounds vividly convey the splendor of the real Orient Express' appointments: gleaming teak, polished brass, supple leathers, Moorish-pattern fabrics, and stained glass. The entire ambiance is recreated so faithfully that you expect to see Hercule Poirot on his way to the salon car!



In the dining car, you'll see what luxury travel used to be.

Given the character-mix and the political turmoil of Europe at this time, you would expect a complex plot, filled with intrigues and treachery, and you get it: you need to purloin documents, eavesdrop on fellow passengers, locate and trade objects, read journals and telegrams, break into locked compartments, track down an important Faberge egg, disarm a bomb, and take control of a runaway train — and, oh, yes, you'll also have to survive the odd knife-attack, too.

Puzzles and conundrums abound, and they are mostly of a fairly high order of difficulty. Some players may find them too hard (in this regard, I'd rate the game right up there with *Rama*). Several

times during the game, for example, you'll have to climb out through your compartment window and either spy on other passengers or break into their rooms — but exactly when you need to do this is not always apparent from the context. You also need to steal some documents from a magazine the conductor is reading, but you can only do that when he's gone, and you can only see the magazine when you're very close to his vacant chair — it's very easy to walk right past it. In a sense, the game's very richness of texture sometimes works against you: you'll enjoy the ambiance so much, you'll forget to look for clues.

Mostly, the interface is a standard arrow-and-hand affair, and quite smooth. One problematic feature, however, is the game's unique and curious save-game system. Instead of clicking on a slot and typing in a brief description of your save, you must exit the game and click on a big Faberge egg, which then changes color. To access a past save, you have to remember whether you saved as "blue game" or "red game" or "purple game". This struck me as needlessly confusing, although one does get used to it eventually.

While *The Last Express* may be exceptionally difficult, it is also exceptionally beautiful and immersive. For many gamers, that's an appealing trade-off.

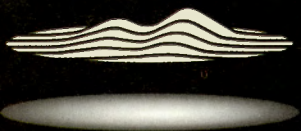
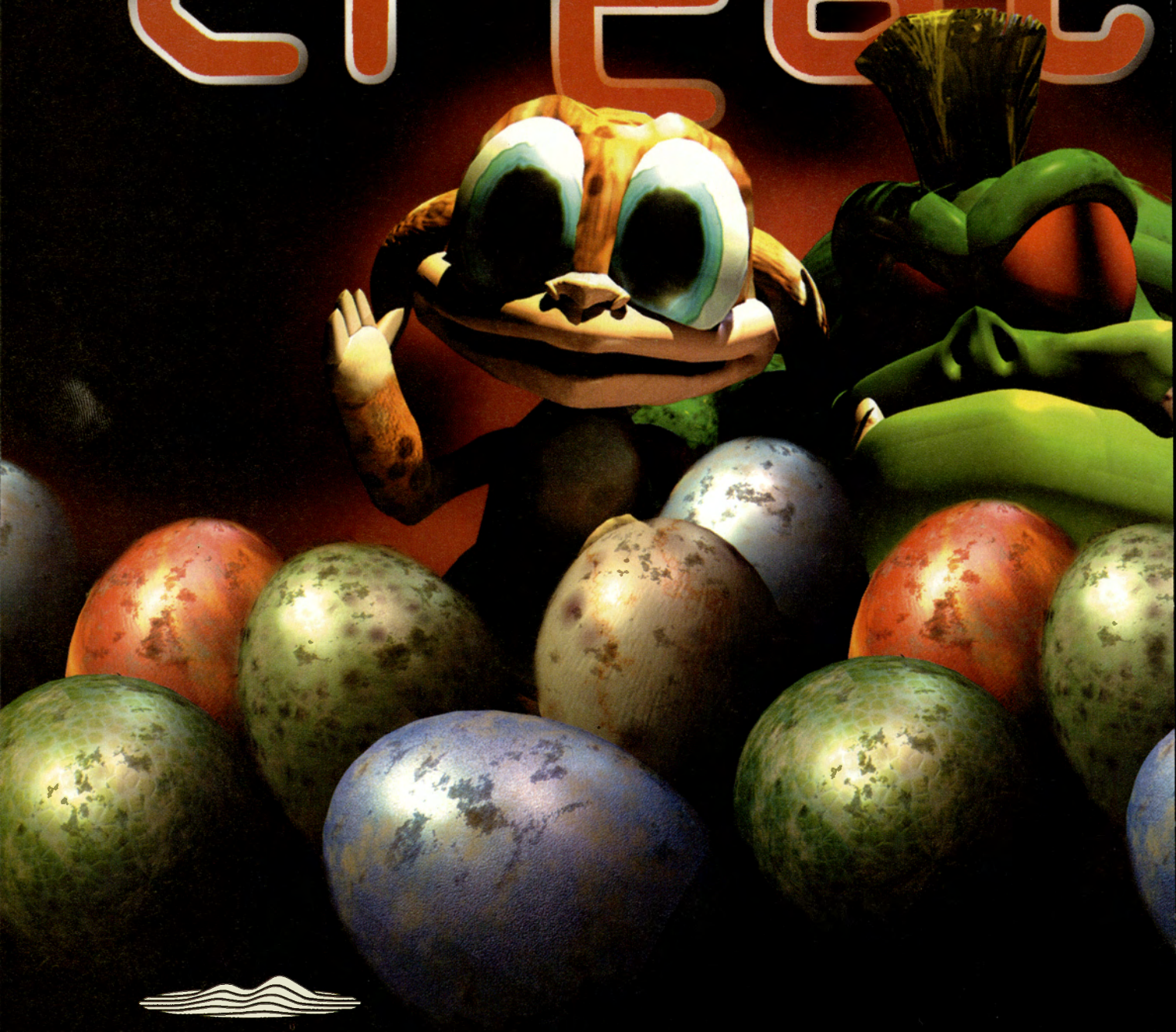
— William R. Trotter

<b>PC GAMER</b>	<b>FINAL VERDICT</b>
<b>HIGHS:</b> Lovely graphics and mood are complimented by good acting and a rich story line.	<div style="font-size: 48pt; font-weight: bold;">90%</div>
<b>LOWS:</b> Puzzles are often quite difficult, and the save-game system is off-putting in the extreme.	
<b>BOTTOM LINE:</b> A unique and polished adventure game with a strong, sustained, historical flavor.	



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# creat



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Douglas Adams, Author of Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy

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# Test Drive Off Road

**Category:** Racing

**Developer:** Elite

**Publisher:** Accolade, 5300 Stevens Creek Blvd., Suite 500, San Jose, CA 95129 (800) 245-7744

Required	We Recommend
Double-speed CD-ROM drive; Pentium 90; 16MB RAM	Quad-speed CD-ROM drive; Pentium 166; 16MB RAM; Supported sound card; Gamepad or joystick

Back when I was a boy, we didn't have your fancy racers like *The Need for Speed* — we played something called *Test Drive* on our Apple IIs and Commodore 64s — and darn it, it was good enough for us. *Test Drive*, a driving sim pioneer, had none-too-appealing graphics, but it was fun, with its high-speed chases against the cops while dodging pesky oncoming traffic. Fortunately, *Test Drive's* numerous sequels have managed to stay pretty solid — at least until now.

The latest title to carry the sacred *Test Drive* moniker is *Off Road*, a bumpy racing sim where the selection of vehicles consists of jeeps and other all-terrain, mud-slingin' trucks, including the Hummer, Jeep Wrangler, Land Rover Defender 90, and the Chevy Z21. The ten tracks are surfaced with dirt, mud, and snow, so the forces of traction won't be on your side.

*Off Road's* racing options are the standard fare — you can practice a track an infinite number of times, or compete in a tournament, where victory unlocks extra tracks and more vehicles. With an abundance of tracks and trucks (which most other racers seem to lack), how could *Off Road* be so bad?



Don't expect to "catch phat air" as in *Monster Truck Madness* — *Off Road's* trucks are firmly rooted to the ground.

**Accolade's latest *Test Drive* swerves off the pavement and in to a deep pit of muddy mediocrity.**



You'll discover plenty of bumps and icy surprises in the "Winter Wonderland" track.

For starters, the control and physics model are way off. Even though the tracks are littered with steep inclines and plenty of drop-offs, the trucks seem to "stick" to the ground as if the forces of gravity have tripled — I catch more air hitting speed bumps at fifteen miles an hour in my Ford Tempo. Don't be expecting any *Monster Truck Madness*-style graceful leaps or midair mayhem. Likewise, the control is skewed. While you expect the terrain to be uncooperative, the trucks shouldn't swerve and slide uncontrollably like Hot Wheels on ice.

Another big problem *Off Road* runs into is the track design, which is appallingly dull. There are basically two track conditions — muddy or snowy. A typical race consists of having to pass through a half-dozen checkpoints, most of which are grouped closely together, giving you little opportunity to branch off the track and find a quicker route. The obstacles you'll encounter on the track manage to be repetitive and pixelicious, and suffer from the curse of pop-in. Track, trees, and other blunt truck-stopping objects magically appear in front of you at the last possible second, providing instant and unneeded challenges. I time and again, you'll roar down what appears to be a long straight-away, and then pile head-on into a metal barrier that wasn't there a few seconds ago. Whee!

If you think that an SVGA mode can redeem some of *Off Road's* ugliness, think again. High-res mode reduces the frame rate to a slug-like crawl, and I get the itchy feeling that the 8-bit *Test Drives* ran

smoother. Even with all the detail turned off, the results are less than pleasing.

Though you may get a few kicks out of the obnoxious thrash-rock soundtrack by lovable rock band Gravity Kills, you'll be ready to strangle the doofus of an announcer who exclaims "We're jammin' now!" every ten seconds. *Off Road* is semi-redeemed by including IPX and modem multi-player support along with a semi-playable split-screen mode — but finding someone else who could actually enjoy playing this would be a mite tricky.

*Off Road* has to make you wonder why Accolade is so nonchalantly tossing about the *Test Drive* name. Just ask any computer game old-timer — the real *Test Drive* is about flying down long tracks in exotic cars while avoiding traffic and out-running cops — not slogging around through a barely playable, pixelated mess. Hopefully, the next *Test Drive* will move back to solid pavement. Until then, save your money for a real Jeep Wrangler.

— Colin Williamson

## PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

**HIGHS:** Network play is okay; groovy thrash soundtrack.

**LOWS:** Scenery pop-in from hell; bizarre physics; chunk-a-licious graphics.

**BOTTOM LINE:** It would be a better to find an Apple IIe emulator and get your hands on the original *Test Drive*.

# 64%



# Fallen Haven

**Category:** Strategy

**Developer:** Micromeq

**Publisher:** Interactive Magic, P.O. Box 3491, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709 (919) 461-0722

Required	We Recommend
Double-speed CD-ROM drive; 486/33; 8MB RAM; 25MB hard-drive space	Pentium 100; 16MB RAM

**Our French friends from north of the border give us a decent, low-cal science-fiction wargame.**

province at a time to attack, then launch a drop ship to that region with forces. Certain provinces have specific bonuses for their conquest, such as a new unit or a number of resource points, and come complete with guerrilla forces ready to fight on your side. These special provinces also have specific goals, like destroying a rocket launcher or a research facility.

During the strategic turn, you can zoom into each province in a city display that shows troops, roads, and buildings. Cities can be expanded with new structures that generate more resource points (such as mines), faster research, and combat units. Research allocation is done with slider bars, and results in bonuses such as better armor, firepower, and movement.

There are nine units on each side (aircraft, armor, and infantry) with fairly distinct differences: humans are fast with long-range weapons and light armor, while Taurans tend to be slower and more powerful. It's a good match-up that allows diverse play from both sides. The limited number of units is a disappointment in a game like this, however, and keep things from getting really interesting.

Combat itself is fast and easy to handle: units move in phases, and can choose to allocate their action points for movement or firing weapons multiple times. Each has a choice of using a heavy weapon (usually powerful but shorter range and requiring more

action points) or a light weapon (the opposite). Or they can save action points for "over watch" mode, which will use them for automatic defensive fire during the opposing turn. The weapon mix leads to various tactics: a squad can lob a mortar shell over a wall, or move out and try to attack with their beam weapon.

The one problem we have with this system is the high expendability of units, which is almost akin to a



**A missile attack gets through the defenses of a human city located in the frozen wastelands of the north.**

**F**allen Haven is a surprising game in many ways. It came out of nowhere (French Canada, to be precise) to be picked up by Interactive Magic. It borrows heavily from other games, yet still maintains its own distinct look and feel. And for a "small" and uncomplicated game, it is surprisingly engaging and enjoyable.

Fallen Haven is strategic/tactical turn-based science-fiction wargame. You can play from either the invading alien Tauran side or the rebel human side, always starting at opposite ends of the map, with neutrals in the middle. The goal is to conquer neutral territories and then conquer the enemy, with a second campaign option that puts a thinly-stretched enemy in control of the entire planet and you in charge of a single province.

From a screen reminiscent of the original *Syndicate*, you pick one



**A Tauran tank fires its heavy weapon on a human AFV. Combat is fast and fairly easy to control.**

*Command & Conquer*-style game. A single hit can take out some units, and this plays poorly in a phased system. Since you can't call in reinforcements or fix damaged units, this can lead to some frustrating replays as you prepare just the right drop-ship mix for the mission. There is also too much reliance on gun turrets in city layout: you attack more turrets than you do units, and it wears your forces. Battles seem to be channeled to a single approach by these turrets and by city layout, rather than allowing a variety of tactics.

Fallen Haven is trying for a stripped down, faster paced *X-COM* feel. The result is a good success that has a high compulsive-play factor. Lack of multi-player will seriously hurt its lifespan, though a sequel (not an add-on or patch) is planned with multi-player. If some elements of design are a little clumsy or if the AI seems to be dozing, it's not a serious problem, just one that keeps Fallen Haven from being the success it should be.

— T. Liam McDonald

## PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

**HIGHS:** A simple approach that allows for quick play.

**LOWS:** Too few units. High unit expendability in a turn-based game doesn't really work. No multi-player.

**BOTTOM LINE:** A fair bet if you want some quick gameplay, but it could use some refinements.

# 79%





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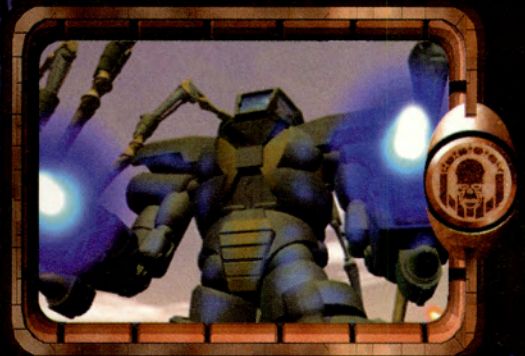


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Product Information Number 376



# SCARAB



**Category:** Action

**Developer:** Electronic Arts

**Publisher:** Electronic Arts, P.O. Box 7578,  
San Mateo, CA 94403-7578  
(415) 571-7171

## Required

Windows 95;  
Quad-speed  
CD-ROM drive;  
16MB RAM;  
DirectX compatible  
video card

## We Recommend

Pentium 166; 16MB  
RAM; Supported  
sound card;  
Modem

Now, here's an interesting set-up: throughout Ancient Egypt, it seems that aliens have been deploying invisible robots. Only visible to "animals without souls," these mech-clad extraterrestrials are sent to battle over the souls of the city inhabitants. You control the robots of Ra, who must crush the robots of Osiris in order to free "the Souls of the Ancients." Bet ya didn't read that in the history books.

Equipped with this month's gooffest plot, SCARAB attempts to mix the first-person shooter action of *Powerslave* with the strategic play of *Mechwarrior 2*, and even adds a touch of resource management. You command three styles of mechs, modeled after the Egyptian gods Anubis, Sekhmet, and Horus, each with their different strengths and weaknesses. To win against Osiris' collection of robots, you can either nuke them three times in a row, or you can strategically position "Towers of Ra," monuments

that allocate the collective power of human worship. If you correctly place enough of these towers, a clock begins to count down, and if you're still alive by the time it reaches zero, you win the mission.

As you play from a first-person, *Doom*-style perspective, you're assisted by a ship that flies overhead and drops goodies onto the battlefield at your request. Smoke bombs, mortars, x-ray vision, and plenty of other weapons are available — but be sure to snatch them up before your opponent does, since equipment add-ons are usable by both warring factions. Floating ankhs also populate the wargrounds. These can grant you healing, or can set off a stupendous explosion if hit with weapon fire.

The control is a mixed bag; you're better off with a keyboard and mouse than the recommended joystick control. One detestable blunder involves the pinpoint firing scheme — when you aim high on the screen, there's a jerky, disorienting shift as the view realigns itself a few inches up. Another minor annoyance is the inability to pinpoint fire when moving — you're only able to fire straight forward when on the run.

The scenery that your mechs compete on are empty Egyptian-style cities, with futuristic floating walkways and hydraulic lifts. Unfortunately, SCARAB has disappointingly sterile visuals, with the Egyptian architecture consisting of simple geometric shapes covered with undeniably pixelated textures. Some of the special effects look extremely cheesy — smoke is depicted as flat gray circles, and your laser blasts look like they were taken out of *Battlezone*. On the other hand, the robots themselves are nicely animated (especially when their arms are blown off), and there's a neat shield effect whenever a hit registers.

As a single-player game, SCARAB has a listless feel. The challenge of competing against a single faceless computer opponent isn't very fulfilling — especially since we all started playing multi-player *Doom* a few years ago. Many of the simple one-on-one, slow-paced deathmatches can go for minutes without visual contact



Put yer hands in the air, Bubba! At least the cutscenes aren't half bad.



An Osiris mech meets a fiery doom — but still has two lives to go.

between the two players, and makes SCARAB feel like a waiting game. What saves SCARAB from mediocrity, however, is the multi-player capabilities; support for play over the Mplayer network is included right out of the box, and competing against humans is infinitely more fun.

SCARAB isn't a terrible game — it's just that others have done the same thing much better. And when it comes to gamers' dollars, mediocre just doesn't cut it. If you're hungry for a new game to try out on Mplayer, you may want to take a look at SCARAB — just don't expect to get much mileage out of the single-player mode.

— Colin Williamson



This peculiar whatchamahoozit will rally the life spirit of the invisible humans all around you. We know, it doesn't make any sense.

## PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

**HIGHS:** Internet play is good fun; an okay title for fans of *Powerslave* and *Mechwarrior 2*.

**LOWS:** Poor graphics; you have to admit that *Powerslave* and *Mech2* did it much better.

**BOTTOM LINE:** Unless you're extremely desperate for a different style of Deathmatch, skip it.

# 58%



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# 3DO Games: Decathlon



**Category:** Arcade

**Developer:** Studio 3DO

**Publisher:** Studio 3DO, 600 Galveston Dr.,  
Redwood City, CA 94063  
(800) 336-3506

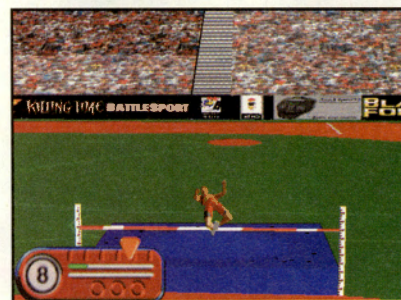
Required	We Recommend
Windows 95; Double-speed CD-ROM drive; 486DX66; 8MB RAM; 8MB hard- drive space; Mouse	Quad-speed CD-ROM drive; Pentium 90; 16MB RAM; 48MB hard- drive space; Joystick or gamepad

When I was a kid, a new game arrived at the local arcade that required a little more physical prowess than most. *Track And Field* was all the rage for a few months because your character's performance was determined by how fast you could repeatedly press two buttons in rapid succession. At last, a game that required physical prowess, at least in your fingers. However, the smarter kids soon learned they could beat the other guy by balancing a pencil on one finger and striking the other end to hit both buttons, thus creating a cheat to run faster. Ingenious. Well, not much has changed in the

**If repeatedly pressing two buttons for minutes at a time is your thing, *Decathlon* may be the track game you've been waiting for.**

world of virtual track and field. *3DO Games: Decathlon* is, for all its graphic advancements over the old arcade game, really just a modern version of *Track And Field*. You've got 10 events to compete in, from the relatively easy 100-meter dash to the finger-cramping excess of the 1500-meter run, from the difficult-to-time shot put to the easy-as-pie high jump. Every event you remember from high school track is here. That being said, though, that's about all that's here. For all its motion-captured polygonal characters and talk of a "sophisticated model of human bio-mechanics," *3DO Games: Decathlon* is fairly dry and uninspired.

You start by picking a player from a group of eight athletes, each rated on strength, stamina, and speed. As no one athlete can be gifted in all three areas, you can expect your athlete to do well in some events and not so well in others. Your player's attributes are then combined into his (and we do mean 'his,' as there are no female contestants) potential. During an event, as you compete your potential drops, eventually to be replaced with a yellow fatigue bar. As your fatigue grows, your player's performance drops. It's an interesting idea, although when actually playing the game, neither potential nor fatigue seems to have any bearing on your performance. That's all down to



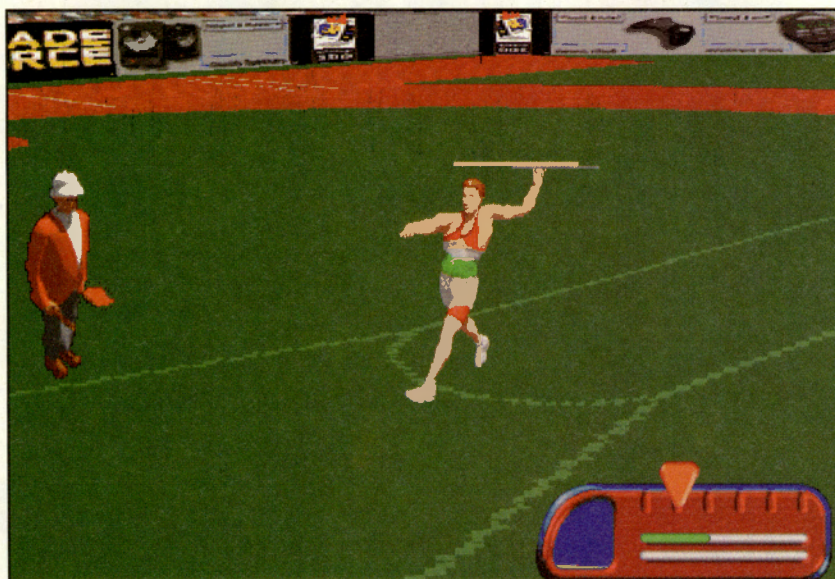
**Motion-captured contestants and nicely rendered backdrops make *Decathlon* a treat to watch, but the repetitive gameplay and limited controls knock the wind out of this track and field derby.**

button mashing. It's this furious pounding of buttons that's *Decathlon*'s biggest drawback. Aside from the obvious drawbacks (finger cramps), and the not so obvious (keyboard or joystick wear), it's just not all that fun.

However, *Decathlon* does have its redeeming qualities. The polygonal players look great, although they do look a little like clones of each other. The motion-captured players, who move like actual athletes, do add a much-needed touch of realism to the game. And, in a touch of muted brilliance, 3DO has made *Decathlon* 8-player networkable (although you will need two copies of the game for more than 5 people to play). This is far more enjoyable than playing against 7 AI players.

Ultimately, however, *3DO Games: Decathlon* suffers in its sterile presentation. There's no excitement here; no thrill of victory, no (dare I say it) agony of defeat. Sure, the players look and move great, but it needs more. It's still just polygons moving on a flat background. And that's not enough to justify two cramped fingers and a broken keyboard.

— Adam Douglas



**Top performance in your chosen event relies solely on your ability to tap your controller buttons in rapid succession — here, you're hurling your javelin with button-mashing precision.**

## PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

**HIGHS:** Beautifully animated players, network compatible

**LOWS:** Sterile presentation, cramping fingers from button mashing

**BOTTOM LINE:** While it may look pretty good, this game suffers from a lack of excitement. It's not worth the finger cramps.

**60%**



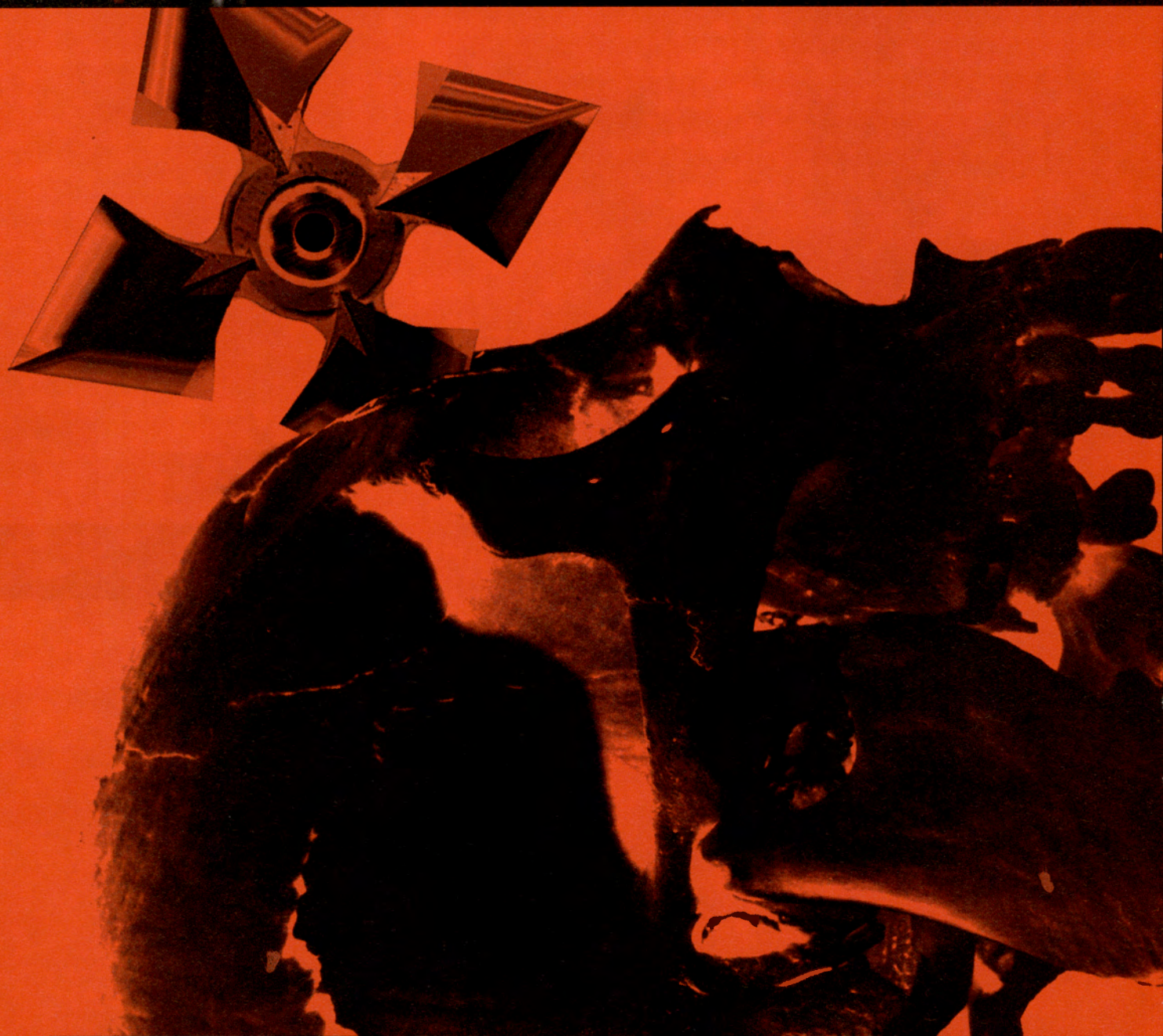


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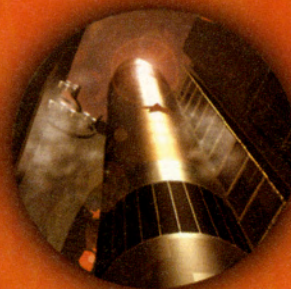


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# The Hard Stuff

**W**elcome to the second edition of The Hard Stuff, dedicated to keeping you and your PC ready to tackle anything the gaming world assaults you with. I'm the new Technical Editor of *PC Gamer*, Joel Durham Jr. —

which basically means that, as the new guy, I get a newer, faster computer than the rest of the staff, and everybody hates me for it.

Before we swan-dive into the section, let me bore you with a little bit about my background. I'm one of those people — perhaps you know one, maybe you are one — who spend more time with their computers in pieces than with it actually assembled and working. Since I keep all of my financial records, phone numbers, and other personal information on my computer, having it stripped down to components most of the time makes it difficult for me to pay bills, call friends, etc. Trust me, credit card companies do not take kindly to excuses like, "Well, I can't write any checks until I get this video accelerator installed."

So I had to get a job which would let me deal with my passion for field-stripping a PC without getting into trouble. My love of all things technical led me to a job as a computer service technician, which was great — except that it didn't involve games. I was having a hard time keeping my mind on servicing some boring office equipment, while debating whether to spend my paycheck on *Jetfighter III* or save up for an MMX motherboard.

My dreams came true when I stumbled upon an opening at *PC Gamer*. Now I get to mess with cool hardware and play games all day, and get paid for it! (*Editor's Note:* The new ones always say cute things like that before we've broken their spirits.) Unfortunately, now both my computer at home and at work are perpetually reduced to piles of circuit boards — I had to reassemble my machine just to write this.

But enough about me — it's time to hit The Hard Stuff!

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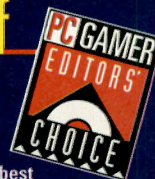
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## How We Rate The Hard Stuff

You've been around long enough to know the latest and greatest technology doesn't mean a thing unless it can improve the games you love to play. That's why we skip the scientific calculators and algebraic equations to put every peripheral, utility, and technology through the rigorous demands of real-world testing, to give you the lowdown on which devices deliver lightning fast performance, and which ones fizzle from the start.

### PC Gamer Editors' Choice Awards



Every month, we honor the best peripherals, utilities, and hardware we test with our Editors' Choice award. So when you see the PCG Editors' Choice logo on hardware at a local computer store, you can be sure it's among the best.



## ■ The future of optical media has arrived

124 PC GAMER June 1997



# Visual Computing

## ■ Intel announces new paradigm

Intel has announced a sweeping initiative to change the computer industry over the next several years. Under the blanket name "Visual Computing," the plan is intended to blur the distinction between high-end workstations and consumer-level PCs.

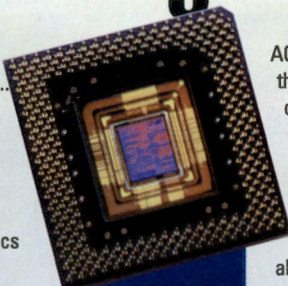
"Our activities to align industry efforts will ensure the rapid adoption of open, standards-based solutions by providing the building blocks necessary to deliver this on Intel-based platforms," says Craig R. Barrett, Intel's chief executive officer. "The initiative represents an exciting opportunity for industry participants to deliver new products and technologies."

Through Visual Computing, Intel says, performance of desktop computers will increase tenfold over the next three years. The key goal is to improve the video and 3D graphic performance available on lower-end computers.

Through new strategic part-

nerships and the increased power of the upcoming Pentium II, Advanced Graphics Port (AGP) video technology, and Universal Serial Bus (USB) standards, Intel hopes to bring the capabilities of the high-end proprietary workstations into the price range of PCs — and to give powerful, professional software the capability to run well on Intel platforms.

The Pentium II, known during development as Klamath, is the next generation CPU, combining the Pentium Pro with the relatively new MMX multimedia processing technology. AGP is a high-speed video bus designed to transfer data between the CPU and video hardware at speeds at least twice as fast as current PCI technology. Intel already has plans for faster



Intel has introduced sweeping initiatives to make new technology, like MMX, more accessible.

AGP standards than those of equipment currently being developed.

USB technology is designed to simplify adding peripherals by allowing all types of components — joysticks, keyboards, mice, drives — to be added to a single, high-speed, external port. USB products are to be plug-and-play compatible.

What does it all

mean to gamers? Theoretically, it means better gaming. Titles produced years from now that use all of this new technology could make the amazing 3D-accelerated games of today look like *Pong*.

The new technologies should begin emerging later this year. We're already seeing new computers shipping with USB ports, and USB peripherals are trickling into the market as you read this. AGP is set to make an appearance by year's end. Stay tuned.

# Win 95's Evolution Continues

## ■ Microsoft bulks up DirectX

Developers of Windows 95 games may soon have to go back to school; Microsoft is finishing up development of the latest version of their Windows 95 API, DirectX. A DirectX 5.0 beta became available to software developers in early April.

An API (Application Program Interface) is a simplified set of instructions built right into an operating system, which allows software programs to access hardware without the need for full-blown drivers for every device. The inclusion of DirectX is a key factor in Windows 95's success as a gaming platform (especially as compared to Windows 3.1 — unless

you consider *Hearts* to be the high point of computer gaming). According to Microsoft, DirectX has been heartily embraced by the gaming development community since Windows 95's release, with 250 DirectX games shipping in the 1996 holiday season alone.

DirectX 5.0 is intended to bring more functionality to the Win 95 API. New enhancements to be integrated reflect the trends of the hardware industry. They include:

- Support for Intel's MMX and AGP (Advanced Graphics Port)
- Better Direct3D, including support for advanced 3D hardware functions like anti-aliasing, anisotropic filtering, z-buffering, and fog
- Support for force-feedback joysticks

- Multiple monitor support
- MPEG-1 and MPEG-2 codec support

DirectX 5.0 will also have increased appeal for multimedia producers. The new architecture will incorporate Internet publishing capabilities like streaming animation, video, and audio. This eliminates the need to download an entire multimedia file before viewing it on a web site. Developers will also be able to attach animation and behavior to media objects, like those silly animated link icons you see all over the Web.

DirectX 5.0 should be available sometime in June of this year. As with previous versions of DirectX, it will ship with games that require it and will be set up when the game is installed to your PC.

## Peripheral Visions

The Future of Hardware

### Monster Sound

PCI-based audio is here.

Diamond has released *Monster Sound*, a PCI audio accelerator (see May 1997 for the full story).

Developed for Windows 95, the new sound card's most highly touted feature is its ability to produce true 3D sound. It features outputs for four speakers, and it's capable of 24 independent audio streams.

"The evolution of PC audio has lingered far behind that of other personal computer technologies," says Bill Schroeder, CEO and president of Diamond Multimedia. "With *Monster Sound*...everyone from game developers and players to music hobbyists can finally take advantage of [Windows 95's] advanced programmable audio functions."

Activision, LucasArts, Interplay, Westwood Studios and other developers are creating games that will support *Monster Sound*, Diamond says.

### 3D Rage Pro

ATI's 3D *Rage Pro* graphics accelerator is turning heads; it's the first 3D card to provide support for Intel's upcoming Accelerated Graphics Port (AGP) technology. DVD-ready, the 3D *Rage Pro* is expected to improve 3D performance over the previous line of ATI cards by a factor of three.

The specs of this 2D/3D card are impressive: MPEG-2 support, 100MHz SGRAM, 4KB texture cache and tons of 3D features should make it a performer. The 3D *Rage Pro* integrates a floating-point engine that's capable of processing 1.2 million triangles per second.

3D *Rage Pro* will be available in either PCI or AGP versions. Expect to see the former on store shelves in June and the AGP version later this year.





**MONSTER SOUND.** Listen up. If you're not experiencing Diamond Multimedia's outrageous Monster Sound 3D PCI sound card, you're really missing something. Monster Sound provides true CD-quality 3D positional audio—with up to 24 independent audio streams—and support for Microsoft's DirectSound and DirectSound 3D APIs. It also comes bundled with a suite of advanced audio applications. Monster Sound will do for your ears what Monster 3D did for your PC graphics. So visit us on the Web at [www.diamondmm.com/monstersound](http://www.diamondmm.com/monstersound) for all the facts and the location of your nearest Diamond retailer. Because hearing is believing.



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behind.**



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**Accelerate your world.**



# S2 Multimedia HPM-4060



**Company:** Diamond Audio Technology  
[www.diamondaudio.com](http://www.diamondaudio.com)

**Phone:** (310) 582-1121**Prices:** \$449.99

**Y**ou've probably never heard of the S2 Multimedia division of Diamond Audio Technology, but that name is becoming hard to ignore in the high-end speaker market. At a street price of around \$380, Diamond's HPM-4060 speaker system is on the expensive side, but it provides a host of features and excellent sound quality.

The system centers on a 30-watt, 6" subwoofer in a case that's built like an M-1 Abrams. Another 15 watts goes out to each of two satellite speakers, each housing a 1/2" tweeter and a

**The S2 Multimedia HPM-4060 combines power and accuracy with features other high-end speaker systems lack.**



4" midrange driver. Those wattage ratings follow the traditional RMS standard used in the hi-fi audio industry, so what you see is what you get. (Many multimedia speakers are rated for "peak music power output"—a basically meaningless system that results in inflated numbers and explains why your "40-watt" PC speakers aren't as loud as your 20-watt boom box.)

That's plenty of power for any gaming application; you'll probably find yourself keeping the volume control at or below the halfway mark — which leaves plenty of headroom. Of the multimedia speaker systems we've heard, only the \$700 Bose Acoustimass and \$350 Cambridge MicroWorks can top this one for sheer output and accuracy.

And the HPM-4060 has some features those speakers lack. The subwoofer unit allows for all kinds of inputs, with two pairs of

RCA jacks and two 1/8" stereo jacks. A control module that can be mounted in a 5 1/4" drive bay puts volume, bass, treble, and balance controls at your fingertips. Push-buttons control mute, input

select, and loudness (a boost in high and low frequencies that improves clarity at low volume), as well as "3DSP," a stereo expander.

Besides its price, which may be prohibitive for many gamers, the S2 system has only a couple of drawbacks. While the stereo expansion creates a wider, more clearly defined sound field, it adds a noticeable amount of noise, or hiss. And there's occasionally a little crackle or pop when the system comes up out of its power-saving standby mode.

Small complaints, really, when you take into account the system's solid construction, rich features, and sound quality. It's an expensive speaker system, but this is definitely a case of getting what you pay for.

**PC GAMER** FINAL VERDICT

**HIGHS:** These speakers have solid construction, ample power, and impressive accuracy. The subwoofer unit allows for several different kinds of input.

**LOWs:** High-end means high-priced; 3DSP expander adds some noise.

**BOTTOM LINE:** If you've got the frogskins for a high-end multimedia speaker setup, the HPM-4060 belongs on your short-list of contenders.

# Cambridge MicroWorks



**Company:** Cambridge SoundWorks  
*www.hifi.com*

**Phone:** (800) 367-4434**Prices:** \$349.99

should fit just about anywhere (they come with their own angled stands for desktop placement, plus hardware that lets you mount them on the wall).

They're driven at 12 watts each by a three-channel amp; the remaining 43 watts go to a 6 1/2" woofer mounted in a ported, wooden cabinet (no lifeless plastic for this subwoofer).

Looking at the tiny satellites and the big subwoofer, you won't be surprised that the MicroWorks reproduces highs and lows accurately. What's stunning is how well it does with everything in between. The MicroWorks' response is as flat and accurate as that of speaker systems costing twice as much. It really has to be heard to be believed — and even then you may find yourself looking for the big speakers hiding behind the curtain.

The simplicity of these speakers may be off-putting to gamers who've grown accustomed to cheaper speakers encrusted with all manner of gimmicks and gewgaws. The MicroWorks has no built-in stereo expander; it doesn't even have tone controls (although a gain knob on the subwoofer lets you tailor bass response). But its quality more than

**The MicroWorks system bolsters Cambridge SoundWorks' reputation for magically cramming huge sound quality into small packages.**



makes up for the lack of those features. This is a true audiophile system for gamers who want PC speakers that sound as good (or better) than their home stereos.

**PC GAMER** FINAL VERDICT

**HIGHS:** Unbelievable clarity and precision in a small, elegant package; lots of power for serious output.

**LOWS:** Priced for purists only; won't appeal to gamers who want lots of frills and knobs to twiddle with.

**BOTTOM LINE:** They're on the costly side, but you'd have to spend hundreds more to get better sound from a compact speaker system.

**C**ambridge SoundWorks' line of multimedia speakers is still one of the leading wonders of the computer world; only legendary designer Henry Kloss and a handful of engineers know exactly how Cambridge gets such huge sound out of such simple, compact speaker systems. To the rest of us, it's a mystery akin to magic — and the MicroWorks system is good juju, indeed.

The MicroWorks is big brother to the SoundWorks system we reviewed last year (Peripheral Visions, September 1996), with considerably more power (67 watts total) and a larger subwoofer. The result is a much bigger sound that retains all the clarity and precision that characterize the SoundWorks.

The two satellite speakers house 3" long-throw drivers in attractive 4" cubes that



# Ultimate 3D model 644

**Company:** Techworks  
www.techwrks.com

**Phone:** (800) 688-7466 (TO ORDER)

**Prices:** \$99.95 (4MB REVIEWED,  
INTRODUCTORY PRICE)  
\$129.95 (AFTER JUNE 6)

The most notable attribute of the Techworks ultimate 3D line is the price: Utilizing the Cirrus Logic Laguna3D chipset, a 2MB Ultimate 3D card retails as low as \$79.95. The 4MB version reviewed is under a hundred dollars, but only until June 6.

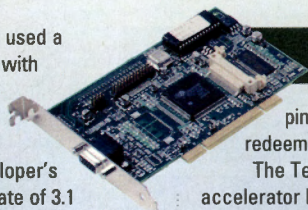
Video mode support is fairly standard, achieving 16.7 million colors all the way to 1024 x 768 pixels, with a maximum resolution of 1600 x 1200 at 256 colors. Output becomes a bit fuzzy at resolutions higher than 800 x 600, however.

At first, we thought this might be a technical problem with the card we were given to test, but the glitch persisted even after having receiving a second card from the manufacturer and testing both in multiple machines.

For benchmarking, we used a Pentium 200 MMX machine with 32MB of RAM. The Direct 3D benchmarking tool included with Microsoft's Windows 95 Software Developer's Kit showed an average fill rate of 3.1 million pixels per second, an excellent polygon rate of 379.44 thousand pixels per second, and .94 thousand intersections per second. Performance in Direct3D accelerated games such as *Monster Truck Madness* and *HyperBlade* was satisfactory.

2D performance was solid, but not exceptional. In the non-accelerated version of *Quake*, the card provided average frame rates of 44.9 frames per second at 320 x 200, 11.68 FPS at 640 x 480, and an a choppy 6.73 FPS at 800 x 600.

The saving grace for a mediocre product can often be the bundled software. Unfortunately, at the time this article was written, TechWorks was still in negotiation with game developers. Dale Smith, the company's Marketing Communications Specialist, was unable to disclose what games may be included with Ultimate 3D cards, or even when they would become available. The cards ship-



TechWorks' Ultimate 3D 2D/3D video adapter is priced to sell.

ping at press time include a coupon redeemable for three unspecified games.

The TechWorks Ultimate 3D video accelerator line is cheap, but not necessarily a bargain. 3D accelerators with the newest chipsets from S3, Rendition and 3Dfx are poised to hit the market, so it may be worthwhile to save your dollars for one of those bad boys. If you absolutely must have a low-cost, middle-of-the-road 3D card (and you already have Direct3D games to use it with), then an Ultimate 3D may be for you—but buy it before the price goes up.

## PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

**HIGHS:** Very low price for a 2D/3D video solution with status quo performance.

**LOWS:** Fuzzy images at high res, no bundled software (yet).

**BOTTOM LINE:** This card is currently available at a great price, but there are much better options for a little more. With new generation 3D accelerators arriving on the market any day now, it may be worth it to save your dollars.

# Wingman Extreme Digital

**Company:** Logitech  
www.logitech.com

**Phone:** (510) 795-8500

**Prices:** \$49.95

Logitech is well known by gamers for its exceptional line of joysticks, and the new Wingman Extreme Digital carries on those high standards. Able to perform in digital and analog modes, the stick works well in both Windows 95 and DOS. If you're familiar with Logitech's Wingman Extreme, you'll already be accustomed to the feel of the WED. The grip fits an average-sized hand as if it were custom-molded just for you; the buttons are in all the right places; and the stick just looks like a sculpted work of art.

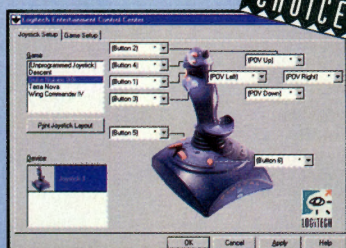
The WED features four buttons and a hat switch on the stick, with two additional buttons and a throttle slider set into the base. All of the buttons are programmable in Windows 95 through a Control Panel icon. In DOS mode, WED is analog-only; like the original Wingman

Extreme, it emulates a Thrustmaster FCS, so the throttle isn't supported.

Installation was a breeze. The included software went in flawlessly, and we were in business within minutes. Programming WED was effortless. Preprogrammed configurations were included for four games: *Descent*, *Duke Nukem 3D*, *Terra Nova*, and *Wing Commander IV*.

The handle's tension is perfect, with resistance light toward the center and increasing smoothly toward the extremes. In digital mode, response is instantaneous, bestowing the lucky gamer with extension-of-your-hand control. This makes WED a good choice for fast-reflex action games. Only one drawback: the base is a little too light. While playing *Interstate '76*, the joystick actually lifted off the desk occasionally when the action got heavy.

It's possible flight sim nuts will be put off by the WED's modern looks. The stick cer-



The Logitech Wingman Extreme Digital comes with an intuitive, point-and-click programming interface.

tainly doesn't look like it was torn out of the cockpit of an F-15; if a realistic look and feel is more important to you than comfort and response, you'll want to look elsewhere. We found the WED to be just fine in sims both realistic (*Microsoft Flight Simulator*) and fanciful (*TIE Fighter*).

If you're looking for an all-around controller, consider the Wingman Extreme Digital.

Logitech's entry into the digital joystick category is everything we've come to expect from them: well built, comfortable, and a joy to use.

## PC GAMER FINAL VERDICT

**HIGHS:** Very ergonomic design, excellent on-line documentation, simple programming GUI, and it looks really cool!

**LOWS:** Unrealistic look and feel.

**BOTTOM LINE:** The Wingman Extreme Digital is an excellent all purpose joystick. Logitech has somehow managed to improve its excellent Wingman Extreme for its foray into digital controllers.



**PC GAMER**  
PRESENTS

The **MDK**  
you think,  
therefore, you **win**  
**sweepstakes!!!**



Yes indeedly!

To celebrate the imminent launch of its rather impressive looking new game from Shiny Entertainment, **MDK**, the boys and girls at Playmates are offering *PC Gamer* readers an exclusive chance win a hot **PENTIUM SYSTEM** from Compaq.

The Presario boasts a 166MHz processor, 24MB RAM, an 8-speed CD-ROM drive, 2.5GB hard drive,

Power VR accelerator card, JBL pro premium speakers, fax modem, and a 17" monitor. The whole set-up retails for around \$3,000, but it can be yours if you're lucky enough to have your post-card pulled out of **Coconut Monkey's** banana basket.

Playmates is also offering 10 runners-up prizes of limited-edition **MDK** posters signed by the game's developers at Shiny. Another 100 runners-up

will receive exclusive **MDK** hats, while a further 200 winners will get an **MDK** poster. All you have to do to enter is **FILL OUT THE ENTRY CARD YOU'LL FIND NEXT TO THIS PAGE**, correctly identifying the names of the three cities or destinations listed somewhere on the **MDK** game packaging.

Postage on the card is pre-paid, so it costs nothing to enter.

What are you waiting for?

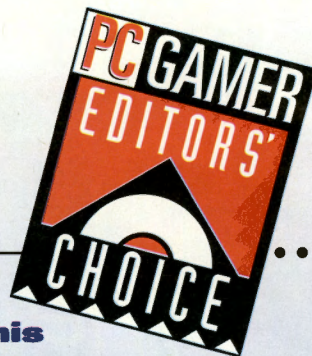


NO PURCHASE NECESSARY TO ENTER. This sweepstakes is open between May 15th and July 15th, 1997. You may also request an official entry card by writing "You Think, Therefore You Win Sweepstakes," P.O. Box 2020, Grand Rapids, MN 55745-2020. This sweepstakes is open to all legal residents of the United States (except Puerto Rico), 16 years of age or older.

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# Falcon Mach V



**Company:** Falcon Northwest  
www.falcon-nw.com

**Phone:** (800) 258-6778 (TO ORDER)  
(541) 269-0696 (TECH SUPPORT)

**Prices:** \$3,495 (AS REVIEWED)

**Playing games is serious business for the makers of this no-holds-barred gaming powerhouse.**

**F**ew computer manufacturers have embraced the gaming market as eagerly as Falcon Northwest. These guys have been custom-building machines specifically for gamers since the company was founded five years ago.

Getting our Mach V system set up was no problem; the documentation is truly exceptional. All of the books and software for installed components are included, but there are plenty of pleasant extras here. Everything comes in a sturdy three-ring binder personalized with the customer's name. All of the serial numbers and specs for the components are conveniently recorded. Hardware configurations are spelled out clearly, including the resources (IRQ's, I/O ports, etc.) used by expansion cards — which is especially helpful since Falcon deals only in custom-built PCs (see sidebar). A Mach V includes a one-year warranty with a unique repair policy:

## At Your Service

The fine folks at Falcon Northwest have brought back a tradition that has long been ignored in every facet of retail: customer service. That, plus the fact that they cater primarily to gaming enthusiasts, makes their company an absolute pleasure for a gamer to work with.

Kelt Reeves, President of Falcon, takes gaming seriously. "We actually created the gaming PC five years ago, when nobody else knew what it was," he says. Falcon's primary market, besides being gamers, consists of second-time computer buyers. "We get people who have bought a computer before and put up with all the hassles of upgrading," he says.

Reeves indicated that people who are crazy about PC gaming usually know exactly what they want in a computer, so Falcon deals almost exclusively in custom-built machines. A typical phone order can take an hour and a half. Reeves says that people generally don't mind being on the phone for that duration. "Everyone's got their idea of what a dream machine is. We want to build exactly what our customers want."



This Princeton E070 is everything a gamer could want in a 17" monitor.

While Falcon Northwest doesn't offer on-site service, it does have an Overnight Service Policy: if a hardware problem develops that cannot be solved over the phone, the company will have the system picked up by an overnight courier, fix it, and send it overnight back to the customer.

The connectors on the back of the case are all clearly labeled, right down to the modem's COM port. The back of the case is well ventilated, and there's room inside for as many as four cooling fans. With a main fan that adjusts its speed to cope with temperature changes in the machine's innards, this isn't a PC, it's a refrigerator!

Which brings us to the guts: the roomy, mid-tower ATX case is quite accessible. The left side panel is held on with just two screws and slides off to reveal easy access to the internal components. Our system came with an ASUS ATX system board loaded with an MMX-capable 200MHz Pentium, 512K of level-two cache, and 32MB of 60ns EDO DRAM. I/O is onboard, featuring the usual assortment: two nine-pin serial ports, a parallel port, PS/2-style mouse and keyboard connectors, dual IDE connectors, and a floppy drive connector. Two of the four 72-pin SIMM sockets are occupied by 16MB modules, so there's plenty of room left over to take the Mach V to 64MB or higher. The case and the system board work well together, with everything of importance easily reached by people with normal-sized fingers. There is also a USB controller and an IR port.

Room for expansion is provided by three PCI slots, three ISA slots, and one shared slot. Three five-inch drive bays, accessible from the front, are provided, along with four three-inch bays: two with front access and two internal. A

3.1GB Western Digital Caviar EIDE hard drive occupies one of the internal three-inch bays, providing fast, ample storage. It's quick, benchmarking at 11.6 milliseconds access time and a transfer rate of 4.1MB per second.

The Toshiba 12x internal IDE CD-ROM, which clocked in with a 120ms seek time and nearly 1.4MB per second average transfer rate, resides in the top five-inch bay, leaving two unoccupied. At the time of this writing, 12x CD-ROM drives will not be available from Falcon Northwest — 16x drives will be offered instead. A 1.44MB floppy drive lives in one of the front three-inch bays.

There was some disappointment with the input devices included with this particular Mach V, but once again, everything you see reviewed here can be changed to meet your needs. The mouse is a serviceable but unspectacular Microsoft two-button model. The Focus 104-key Windows 95 keyboard is a bit clunky, with a spacebar that bulges in the middle, presumably in imitation of those funky ergonomic keyboards. This can be a problem: if you tend to rest your thumbs beneath the space bar, you may find yourself hitting it accidentally.

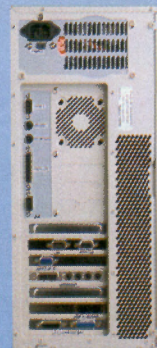
For gaming, Falcon furnished a CH Combat Stick. This a great entry-level controller, comfortable and very sturdy; then again, this system isn't aimed at the entry-level computer gamer. Experienced PC jockeys who appreciate the power of this machine may want to trade up for a high-end stick — assuming they haven't got one already.

Video acceleration is where the Falcon soars; occupying two PCI slots is a dynamic duo consisting of a Diamond Stealth 3D 2000 with 4MB EDO RAM, and a Diamond Monster 3D with the incredible 3Dfx Voodoo chipset.

3Dfx-accelerated games like *Tomb Raider* and *GLQuake* are simply breathtaking and play fluidly. *GLQuake* averaged 45 frames per second at 640x480 resolution! If the 3D craze is your motivation for purchasing a new PC, look no further.

2D and DOS perfor-

**All of the ports are conveniently labeled.**



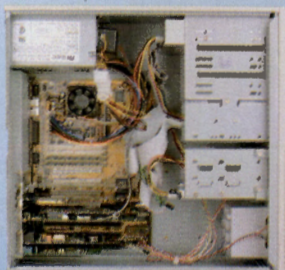




**The Falcon Mach V is a monster gaming machine.**

mance was equally impressive. *Duke Nukem 3D* ran at about 150 frames per second at 320x200, 35 fps at 640x480, and a perfectly playable 23 fps at 800x600. Non-accelerated *Quake* clocked in at 45fps at 320x280, 21.4fps at 640x480, and 14.5 fps at 800x600.

The Princeton Graphics Systems E070 17" monitor is a winner, with a crisp, expansive display. Its flat screen features a 15.8 inch, anti-glare coated surface. Maximum resolution is a sharp 1280x1024, non-interlaced at 65Mhz. Easy-to-use controls include adjustments for horizontal and vertical position and size, brightness, contrast, geometry, manual degauss, and even manual color correction. It automatically synchs to different display modes, and it's fully plug-and-play compatible.




**The spacious interior of the ATX box won't cramp your fingers.**

For sound, Falcon went with a Creative Labs Sound Blaster 16 PNP. Surprisingly, Falcon doesn't offer higher-end Creative Labs equipment. Kelt Reeves, President of Falcon Systems, explains that since digital sound has not changed significantly since the SB16 — and the card is wavetable upgradable — a higher-end basic digital card was unnecessary. Reeves quite correctly points out that the wavetable quality offered by current Sound Blaster products can't match that of the Yamaha Waveforce XG daughterboard included with this system — this is a professional-quality synthesizer that cranks out incredibly convincing MIDI music. The Mach V

is one of the few ready-made systems out there that doesn't require you to replace a crappy sound card as soon as you get it.

Signals are pumped through a set of Altec Lansing ACS55 speakers, with decent two-speaker surround sound and a subwoofer to bring that satisfying thump to the bass.

They're small enough not to be intrusive, but they've got plenty of power.



Falcon has chosen to include a CH Gamecard 3 Automatic game port card. This dedicated, high-speed game card automatically compensates for the speed of the CPU to ensure compatibility with all games. Unfortunately, Windows 95 also detects the game port built into the Sound Blaster — even if it has been disabled — resulting in a conflict that can deny you the

use of any joystick. Falcon technical support proved quick and helpful, however; this is a problem they frequently encounter, so one brief call and some fiddling with the Win 95 Device Manager was sufficient to get the matter cleared up. A representative of Falcon has told us that the company has begun to include a written solution for that problem in the manual.

Still, it is strange that Falcon chooses to use a dedicated game card; even on the fastest PCs, we've never run into problems with the Sound Blaster's built-in port. If you choose to order a Mach V, you might consider having Falcon leave the CH card out of your custom configuration — it'll take little or nothing off the cost, but it may save you some headaches.

The modem, a US Robotics Sportster  
Voice 28.8 Faxmodem with Personal Voice Mail

(and the single component with the longest name), came with QuickLink Message Center, an easy to use terminal/fax/voice-mail program. While the software offered the convenience of multiple voice mailboxes, the sound quality of the voice messages was not good enough to threaten to put your answering machine out of a job.

The big hard drive came with Windows 95 preinstalled and fully configured. Drivers for all of the peripherals were set up and working right out of the box. Real-mode drivers were provided for everything and configured to load when the computer is rebooted into DOS mode, so finicky DOS games that don't like Windows 95 are only a couple of mouse clicks away. One oddity with the Win 95 configuration was that two mysterious "Unsupported devices" appeared in

Win 95's Device Manager under Other Devices. Although this has no effect on the system's mighty performance, it is a bit of a curiosity. Reeves speculated that one of the devices is probably the USB port, which the current version of Windows 95 has no idea what to do with.

Also included were several shareware benchmarking programs and tons of shareware versions of popular first-person shooters, from *Wolfenstein 3D* to *Quake* and everything in between. The Diamond Monster 3D software package was also supplied, including 3D-accelerated versions of *MechWarrior 2*, *HyperBlade*, *Whiplash*, and *Descent II: Destination Quanton*.

The Falcon system was tested with tons of other games, including *Jetfighter III*, *Interstate '76*, *AH-64D Longbow*, *Rocket Jockey*, *Moto Racer GP*, and more. Results were straightforward: this computer is capable of running any current game the way it was meant to be run. Its price is on the high side, but with its excellent components, solid customer service, and out-of-the-box ease of use, a Falcon Northwest Mach V system is well worth considering.

**PC GAMER** FINAL VERDICT

**HIGHS:** Fast, powerful, and upgradable. Able to do justice to any game on the store shelves. Excellent customer service.

**LOWS:** Very high price.

**BOTTOM LINE:** If your biggest reason for purchasing a computer is to play games, Falcon Northwest Systems has one just for you. These guys will build an excellent computer tailored to your preferences.



**SOME KILL FOR SPORT.  
SOME KILL FOR GLORY.  
YOU KILL FOR POWER.**

# **Machine Hunter™** **Coming Soon!**

Download The Demo  
@ [www.machinehunter.com](http://www.machinehunter.com)

Product Information Number 244



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**EUROCOM**  
ENTERTAINMENT SOFTWARE



# Apocalypse 5D

**Company:** VideoLogic  
[www.videologic.com](http://www.videologic.com)

**Phone:** (800) 578-5644**Prices:** \$299 (WITH 8MB)

**I**n a market inundated by 3D accelerators, it's hard to find one that allows for great 2D as well as 3D performance. With some accelerators, you can keep your lightning-fast 2D accelerator card and simply add 3D performance on a separate board. But that takes up another valuable PCI slot in your machine, and considering the wide variety of hardware that's starting to demand those slots (such as Diamond's Monster Sound 3D sound card), it's real estate that could be used for future upgrades. VideoLogic, however, has come up with the Apocalypse 5D, one of the best solutions for the problem we've seen yet. The feisty little video card company has taken its GrafixStar 600 128-bit video board (which uses Tseng Labs' very fast ET6000 2D chip) and combined it on one board with the latest

version of the PowerVR 3D accelerator—the PCX2 (which also sells as a 3D-only add-in card).

Rather than working directly with polygons, the PowerVR uses something called "infinite planes," which lets it do things like gorgeous real-time shadows and lighting — processes that would give other 3D cards fits. It also contains no Z-buffer; instead, it uses a process which only renders the pixels that will be visible on the screen. That prevents the card from calculating, rendering, and shading pixels you'll never see, and thus cuts down on the time it takes to create a scene. In our Direct3D tests using Microsoft's Win 95 Software Developer's Kit on a Pentium 200MMX with 32MB of RAM, it returned a fill rate of 5.7 million pixels per second, a nice polygon rate of 387.86 thousand per second, and 1.34 thousand intersections per second. Its 2D performance was fairly impressive, too — the non-accelerated version of *Quake* gave us results of 50.6 frames per second at 320x200, 16.9 FPS at 640x480, and 11.8 FPS at 800x600.

The 8MB version of the Apocalypse 5D contains 4MB of MDRAM (Multibank Dynamic RAM) for the 2D frame buffer on the GraftixStar



**Ultim@te Race** shows off the Apocalypse 5D's great touch with shadows and light-sourcing.

600 portion of the card, and 4MB of SDRAM (Synchronous Dynamic RAM) for texture memory on the PowerVR portion. For a slightly lower cost, you can get a 6MB version that has 2MB MDRAM for the frame buffer. Either way, the card ships with four accelerated games: Activision's *MechWarrior 2*, Kalisto's *Ultimate Race*, Psygnosis' *Wipeout XL*, and Capcom's *Resident Evil*.

**PC GAMER** FINAL VERDICT

**HIGHS:** Excellent 2D and 3D performance across the board; only takes up one precious PCI slot; unique PowerVR architecture ensures higher speeds with higher-end computers.

**LOWS:** High system requirements: a Pentium 166+ and 32MB RAM is recommended.

**BOTTOM LINE:** The Apocalypse 5D has the best of both worlds under one roof. For all your applications, this is the card to get.

# AWE64 Gold

**Company:** Creative Labs  
[www.creaf.com](http://www.creaf.com)

**Phone:** (408) 428-6600 (TO ORDER)

**Prices:** \$249.99 (M.S.R.P.)

**C**reative Labs' new top of the line sound card has a lot of interesting features — and a few questionable ones.

The AWE64 Gold gets its name from the fact that it's capable of playing 64 simultaneous voices, or notes, of wavetable MIDI music — twice as many as the AWE32 and most other sound cards. That's a little deceptive, though; read the fine print, and you'll find that 32 of those voices are software-based, provided by a program called Creative WaveSynth. The WaveSynth sounds better than most software-based wavetable synthesizers, but it's prone to most of the same drawbacks: it takes up a big chunk of memory, it can chew up 10 to 15 percent of your processor's power, and it only works under Windows.

**Creative's AWE64 Gold offers loads of new features, but it's more than most gamers need — or care to pay for.**

Those drawbacks might not mean much to gamers, since no games currently exist that use more than 32 MIDI voices. So why lay out the extra money for an AWE64 Gold? Depending on what you're looking for, the answer to that question may lie in the board's other extras.

The Gold features 4MB of onboard RAM for storing customized wavetable instrument files, called "SoundFonts." That's a big improvement over the standard AWE64's 512K. More RAM means more detailed instrument samples — with the 4MB SoundFont file loaded, the Gold provides better MIDI sound than any previous Creative Labs board.

The quality of the Gold's digital sound is improved, too, with lower harmonic distortion and noise than you'll find in other boards aimed at gamers. It also has full-duplex capability, which means it can record and play back digital sound simultaneously — that's handy for multi-track digital recording, and it also lets you speak and listen at the same time when using an Internet "telephone" program (like the Creative WebPhone, included).

In addition to the WebPhone, the software bundle includes two games (*Eradicator*

and *Magic Carpet* 2); a powerful utility for editing SoundFonts; and *Vocaloid Orchestrator Plus*.

Still, the AWE64 Gold will only be a bargain if your needs fall somewhere between those of the average gamer and the professional musician. If you've already got a Sound Blaster 16 and you're just looking for improved MIDI music in games, you'll get better sound from a wavetable add-in card or daughterboard like the Yamaha SW60XG or Roland SC-10. And if you're really an audiophile, you'll probably want a professional-class sound card like those from Roland or Turtle Beach.

**PC GAMER** FINAL VERDICT

**HIGHS:** Low distortion and noise; 4MB of RAM means better MIDI; 64 MIDI voices.

**LOWS:** 32 of those 64 voices are software-based, limiting their usefulness significantly.

**BOTTOM LINE:** The AWE64 Gold sits near the high end of mid-priced sound cards; it certainly tops any of Creative's other cards, but it doesn't have the sound quality of products from Turtle Beach and Yamaha.



# Tech Q&A

Our new tech editor, Joel, is eager to answer your gaming hardware questions! Send 'em to [jdurham@pcgamer.com](mailto:jdurham@pcgamer.com).



The Windows 95-logo key can be a real problem in DOS games running under Windows — especially in *Doom*-style games like *Duke Nukem 3D*.

**Q** Is there a way to disable the stupid Windows 95 key between the Ctrl and Alt keys on my keyboard? When I hit it accidentally while playing some DOS games through Win95, it causes a crash.

— Richard Waters, via the Internet

**A** The Win 95-logo key, which brings up your Start menu, can be quite a nuisance, especially in DOS games which utilize the classic *Doom* setup, with heavy use of the Ctrl and Alt keys. Luckily, the thoughtful programmers at Microsoft have provided desperate gamers with a way to turn that pesky key off. The fix is one of the Windows 95 Kernel Power Toys, which can be downloaded from [www.microsoft.com/windows/download/doswinkey.exe](http://www.microsoft.com/windows/download/doswinkey.exe). It's a self-extracting file, and instructions for use can be accessed by double-clicking the included .inf file.

**Q** I bought a new computer with Windows 95 pre-installed. I still own several DOS games that don't perform well in Win 95, and now, without DOS's Memmaker, I can't get enough free conventional memory in DOS mode to run them

properly. How can I optimize memory in MS-DOS mode?

— Mark Wallace, via the Internet

**A** There are several ways you can get your games to run, Mark. While Windows 95 doesn't include Memmaker — the program DOS used to automatically optimize your memory configuration — it does provide the same memory manager that Memmaker uses. It's called EMM386, and you can invoke it by several different methods.

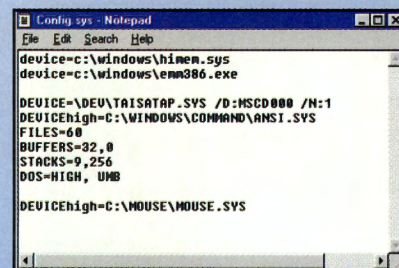
The easiest is to use Notepad to edit your startup files, CONFIG.SYS and AUTOEXEC.BAT (it's a good idea to back these files up before altering them, just in case). Insert the following lines at the top of your CONFIG.SYS file:

```
device=c:\windows\himem.sys
device=c:\windows\emm386.exe
```

Once you've done that, you'll be able to load any drivers and utilities in your startup files into high memory, freeing up precious base memory. Lines in the CONFIG.SYS file that load device drivers usually start with the word "device." Chance it to "devicehigh" to

load that driver high. Similarly, in the AUTOEXEC.BAT file, lines loading terminate-and-stay-resident (TSR) programs may be preceded with "LH" to load them high. Be aware that some drivers and TSRs will not run in high memory and may cause errors when you attempt to load them there. When you've finished altering the files, save them and restart your computer. As it boots, hit the F8 key as soon as you see the words "Starting Windows 95" to invoke a startup menu. Select "Command Prompt Only" to try out your new configuration.

Another way to tweak MS-DOS mode for gaming is to create shortcuts for each game, and specify DOS configurations for each one. This method was described in detail in the April 1997 Tim's Tech Shop column.



You can still use good old EMM386 in Windows 95 DOS mode, if you know where to find it.

**Q** I just got a new 2GB IDE hard drive to replace my outdated, 270MB one. I want to transfer Windows 95 and all the data to my new drive without losing anything, but I don't have access to a network. Do I have to buy a tape drive?

— Tom Mulet, Peoria, IL

**A** Believe it or not, Windows 95 makes it much easier to clone a hard drive than you might think. Simply install the new drive as a slave to the old one, being sure to set it up properly in your computer's CMOS setup program. After you reboot, run FDISK (if you are not familiar with this program, you should find instructions in the documentation that came with the new drive) and format it through Windows 95. Then, using Windows Explorer, simply drag all of the contents from your old drive and drop it onto the new one. The operating system will clone everything — even the hidden and system files — to the new drive. Remove your obsolete hard drive, set the new one up as the boot drive, and reboot.



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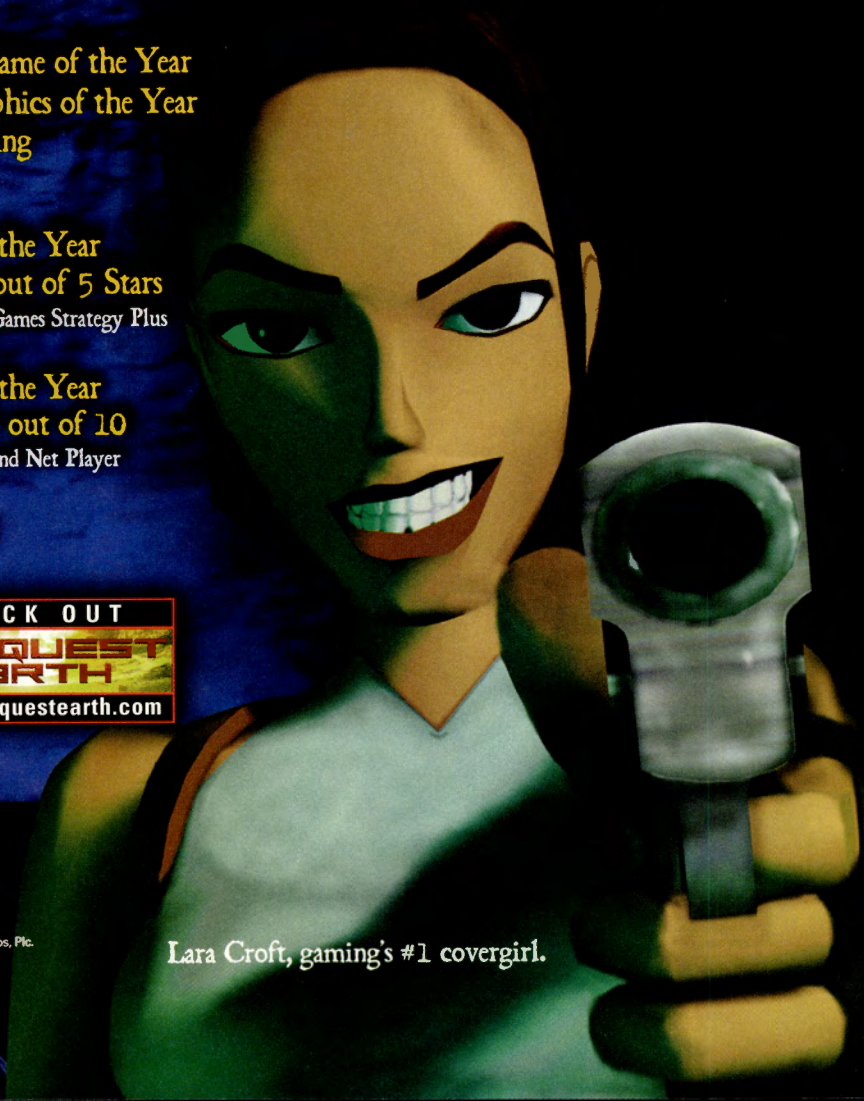
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# Walkthrough for Quake?

**T**here's a TV commercial for an Internet provider in which computer geeks bemoan the fact that now even their mothers can get on the Internet, because it's so easy.

A similar sentiment circulated among *Quake* discussion groups with regard to

Virtus' *Deathmatch Maker*: Now anyone can create a level! Easily! Now, a process that was painstaking, time-consuming, and often brain-twistingly difficult can be done, literally, in minutes.

Virtus is the creator of a landmark 3D world-creator called Virtus Walkthrough that enables users to create simple, navigable 3D environments very quickly. Architects, planners, and film producers have been the prime market for Walkthrough, but now that Virtus has gotten into the gaming business (with Tom Clancy's SSN) they are finding new uses for their flagship product: The first is the astonishing *Deathmatch Maker*, the first id-authorized level creator for *Quake*.

If you've ever played around with *Quake* level editors, then a few minutes with *Deathmatch Maker* will be like a revelation. Virtus boasts that you can create a new *Quake* level in 30 minutes, and it's no idle claim. Three screens and a

tool bar give you almost all you need: a screen for drawing, a crude 3D view of the environment as it takes shape, and a gallery window full of shapes and textures.

The strength of *DMM* lies in the Walkthrough technology, which lets you link a wide variety of ready-made 3D shapes to make a continuous level. Slopes, rooms, objects, sprites (including all the original monsters), lifts, and a large selection of textures are available in galleries and can simply be dragged right into the work-screen to become part of the level. Once 3D objects are placed in the drawing window, you can view the evolving level map

help—a major failing for a program this complex. Also, you need to use a separate tool, like the shareware MipMap, to import custom textures, and this is difficult and cumbersome. A native texture-import mode is almost required. And, not surprisingly, *DMM* is also a memory monster.

But when you can create a level and see it take shape as easily as you can with *DMM*, a few failings can easily be tolerated. If Virtus manages to carry its 3D world-creating talents over to other gaming realms (flight sims? RPGs?), there is no telling where custom game creation can go.

T. Liam McDonald



from top, front, or the side.

Whole new shapes can be created from a basic shape gallery, meaning there's virtually no limit to the size and shape of a given room or level, including multiple levels. A palette of light sources allows you to carefully light each level merely by placing the light source as an object. Objects can easily be assigned properties to turn them into lifts, traps, buttons, and other moving parts. As you're doing all this, you can see and even walk around the level in the 3D view, which is rudimentary but useful for design purposes.

It's so easy, it's almost scary, and somehow it works its Virtus magic in the area of compiling levels as well, which takes far less time than with other editing utilities. There are a couple of drawbacks: The documentation is thin, and there's no online

A new 3D tool called *Deathmatch Maker* from the makers of Virtus Walkthrough means anyone can create wicked *Quake* levels.



The Hammer of Thor smites foes with a deadly electric bolt.

## That Level Thang

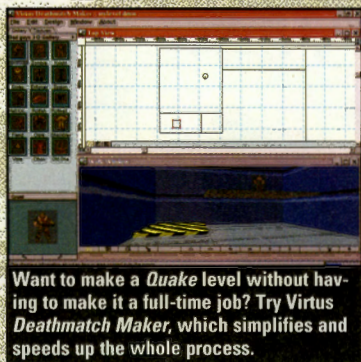
Three *Quake* add-ons have already hit, and more are coming as I write. They're not the kind of ground-breaking retooling of gameplay we might have hoped for, but they'll do in a pinch.

The most unusual is a decidedly unauthorized product called *Shrak*, from Quantum Access, which bills itself as "the first total conversion of *Quake*." That is: a new game with new textures, levels, and maps built with the *QuakeC* technology.

"Wait a minute," I hear you saying. "Is that legal?" Good question, and no one seems to be answering yet. id creates new products with its technology and also licenses that technology out for a profit. Why would they sit idly by and let a third party create something from which id will make no profit? All I can say is, if you want *Shrak*, get it while you can.

*Shrak* is an interesting, if not altogether successful, product. The new levels and textures are often quite good and innovative. I found the tunnels, the use of water, and a very cool tram car solid additions to the *Quake* universe. The ten new weapons also include a few great twists, some of them already familiar to *Quake* fans. There's a foe-to-friend converter, plastic explosives, an inflator dartgun that literally blows a subject up, and a grappling hook for reaching out-of-the-way places. A "utility belt" packed with neat things is found on several levels.

The monsters are where *Shrak* fails, however. They're pretty hokey across the board, with an acid-spitting grub and a floating eyeball (a la *Eye of the Beholder*) the only decent additions. Okay, the scorpion's



Want to make a *Quake* level without having to make it a full-time job? Try Virtus *Deathmatch Maker*, which simplifies and speeds up the whole process.



not bad, but the two-headed mutant is just too stupid for words. This, and mediocre new sounds, seriously weaken what could have been a nice enhancement. As it is, you get 19 fairly well-designed levels with capture-the-flag and deathmatch games. It's a decent bet at \$19.95.

The first official id mission pack isn't nearly as ambitious as *Shrak*, so it has less chance to fail. *Scourge of Armagon*, developed by Hipnotic for Activision, is a 15-level, three-episode addition that gives us some very cool new treats. But, greedy bastards that we are, we thought a few more would have been better.

*Armagon's* level design is fabulous, with some huge rooms that open like puzzle-boxes as you watch, large vistas, great underwater levels, and a real labyrinth approach. This is solid stuff, full of invention and attention to detail, and far better than the original *Quake* levels. Still...you see the same old, drab textures. Everything is a dismal brown and gray. Wouldn't a new mission disk be a good opportunity to spark up the palette a bit?

The new stuff is damn fine, too, but only leaves you wanting more. The two monsters are great: there's a giant



The slug from *Shrak* isn't so bad... but the rest of the monsters are pretty corndog.

scorpion with nailguns for claws and a lethal sting, and little gremlins that can steal your weapons and turn them on you. Unlike the *Shrak* monsters, these are very cool. Some new weapons also add to the mix: The grenade launcher now doubles as a proximity mine launcher: these suckers stick to the wall or floor and detonate when something comes within range. The laser cannon is a neat little instrument that lets you bounce laser blasts off walls like a cue ball: Shambler in the corner pocket! Finally, Thor's War Hammer sends waves of electric force out along the ground, zapping anyone in range (that's right: there's finally a big hammer in *Quake*).

A few new power-ups can also be found along the way: the

Horn of Conjuring spawns a creature to fight at your side; the Empathy Shield divides damage between you and your attacker; and a wetsuit provides immunity to lightning attacks. Overall, a solid addition to the *Quake* family. By the time you read this, *Quake Mission Pack No. 2, The Dissolution of Eternity* from Rogue Entertainment will also be out, featuring eight new monsters, several new weapons (including lava nails!), an anti-gravity belt, and capture-the-flag levels.

And as if all that isn't enough 3D carnage in your face, you can always try a binge-and-purge package known as the *id Anthology*. *id* has gathered everything they've done (with the exception of *Heretic* and *Hexen*), into one splashy, \$120 package. Oldies like *Commander*

*Keen* (1 through 7), *Rescue Rover* (1 and 2), *Hover Tank 3D*, *Dangerous Dave*, *Catacombs 3D*, *Shadow Knights*, *Wolfenstein 3D*, and *Spear of Destiny*, join monster hits *The Ultimate Doom*, *Doom II*, *Master Levels for Doom II*, and *Final Doom* (all DOS, Win 95, and Mac versions) and *Quake*. *id* souvenirs include a "Book of *id*," a pewter demon, poster, comic book, collector's card, T-shirt, and a set of dog tags.

Everyone else, from the Beatles to Roberta Williams, are repackaging their past for large profits and an easy ego-massage, so why not *id*? Well, maybe because "I Am the Walrus" has aged far better than *Dangerous Dave*. But, hey, don't fight it: happiness is a warm gun (and a Ferrari).

PCG

## BUG PATCHES\*

**Age of Sail 1.04** (TalonSoft): Fixes range indicator, adds some new menu functions, and makes a few rules changes. [aos\\_104.exe](#)

**Battleground Bulge/Ardennes v.1.32** (TalonSoft): Some further rules changes and bug fixes. [bgb\\_132.exe](#)

**Battleground: Waterloo v.1.08** (TalonSoft): Fixes bugs that sometimes awarded points for recapturing one's own uncrewed artillery, that allowed skirmishers in a hex with artillery to remain in the hex after being overrun by cavalry, and reversed unit colors in jump maps. Also adds improved A/I movement. [bgw\\_108.exe](#)

**Battleground Gettysburg v.1.30:** (TalonSoft): Some enhancements, including new optional rules. [bgb\\_130.exe](#)

**Cavewars v.1.2 Beta** (Avalon Hill): Fixes all known video card conflicts with Rendition-based 3D cards. [cw1\\_20.exe](#)

**Daggerfall: Malacath Quest Files** (Bethesda): Allows you to summon Malacath on the 8th of Frostfall from the Mages' Guild without the game locking up. [malacath.zip](#)

**Descent II Voodoo 3Dfx Patch** (Interplay Productions): Updates Voodoo 3Dfx chipset support. [d2voodoo.zip](#)

**Descent II Verite Patch** (Interplay Productions): Updates the support for the

Rendition Verite chipset. [d2verite.zip](#)

**Dialo v.1.02** (Blizzard): Corrects the NULL cell buffer errors and other draw problems, intermittent crash in Join Game screen, data corruption problem which could cause a player to get locked out of battle.net when creating a new channel, some equipped items not being seen by other players in multi-player games, the Level Advance Indicator, inaccurate display of game creation time, and other errors. Improves error handling for dropped network packets, provides more descriptive messages when unable to join a game, prevents Lazarus's red portal from disappearing after leaving his lair, and so on. [drt102.exe](#)

**Emperor of the Fading Suns v.1.2** (SegaSoft): Many fixes in this patch, including game speed increase, fixed inquisition, a "Bomb Again" button, full screen planet maps, proscripted technologies; adds gunships, and does much more. [efs\\_p12.zip](#)

**Master of Orion II v.1.3** (MicroProse): New custom race features, changes to ship refitting, and rules changes related to player movement, weapons characteristics, racial bonuses, and other areas. [moo2v13.zip](#)

**QuakeGL (id):** An OpenGL version of *Quake* that allows for new visual effects and drastically smoother graphics on 3Dfx-based 3D accelerator cards. [glq3\\_28.zip](#)

**Shrak for Quake 2.0** (Quantum Axis):

Adds GL support, fixes team play, adds a "Bugwar" mode (play as bugs), and other delights. [shrak\\_v2.zip](#)

**SimCopter 1.02** (Maxis): Adds a "real flight" mode. [scopt102.zip](#)

**Tomb Raider 3Dfx Final Patch** (Eidos): This final 3Dfxvideo patch fixes some conflicts with Sound Blaster cards. [3dfx.zip](#)

**Tomb Raider Matrox Mystique Final Patch** (Eidos): This is the final Matrox Mystique video patch. [tr-matr.zip](#)

**Tomb Raider Rendition Final Patch** (Eidos): This is the final Rendition video patch. [rendfina.zip](#)

**VFX1 Quake Drivers v.2.03** (Forte): This latest *Quake* driver for the VFX1 VR headset fixes numerous bugs from all previous releases of this driver. [qkevfx1.exe](#)

**VFX1 Drivers and Utilities v.2.13** (Forte): Contains both MS-DOS real mode drivers as well as WIN95 direct Input drivers. [vfx1\\_213.exe](#)

**Whiplash Voodoo 3Dfx Patch** (Interplay): Updates Voodoo 3Dfx chipset support. [3dfxwhip.zip](#)

**Whiplash Verite Patch** (Interplay): Updates Verite chipset support. [renwhip.zip](#)

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# Parenting on the Web

**P**ick a problem — any problem — and chances are you can tackle it on the web. I'm not saying you can solve it — but, then again, I'm not saying you can't. Take alleged cases of chicken pox, for example. We've had an epidemic of alleged cases of chicken pox in my family, and I think

we've made a few payments on our pediatrician's new sailboat trying to confirm or deny the allegations. So, this time, as I signed my check for nearly \$40 — a steep fee for a diagnosis of rampant bug bites — I vowed to search the web for help. I headed for Lycos to search for sites that refer to chicken pox, and started my most satisfying web-trek so far.

I stumbled on some cool sites for families; sites that offer loads of information on the physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual lives of children and parents. Best of all, while months ago I had found references to brochures, citations for articles, and reviews of literature, I now found the text of these documents. I found images to back up the text, and many opportunities to offer feedback, ask for more help, and share my own ideas.

To learn more about par-

enting, explore these sites especially designed for families.

## Fami-cology

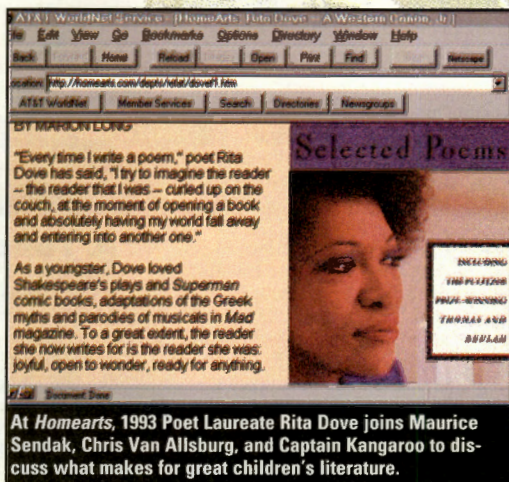
I found Chicken Pox clues at [www.healthylives.com](http://www.healthylives.com), along with detailed information on more than ten other diseases, including shingles, ulcers, migraines, and a few related directly to children: chicken pox, which is covered under shingles, and ear infections.

The site comes from pharmaceutical company GlaxoWellcome, which produces medicine for most, if not all, of the diseases discussed on the site. But there's no blatant advertising of the company's products, and the

## A Publishing Point of View

Take a look at how publishers of home-oriented magazines spin their words into strands of the web at [www.homearts.com](http://www.homearts.com).

Produced by The Hearst Corporation, the site offers slicker articles than some other sites. But then, they have a big pool of slick



At Homearts, 1993 Poet Laureate Rita Dove joins Maurice Sendak, Chris Van Allsburg, and Captain Kangaroo to discuss what makes for great children's literature.

## Heidi E. H. Aycock

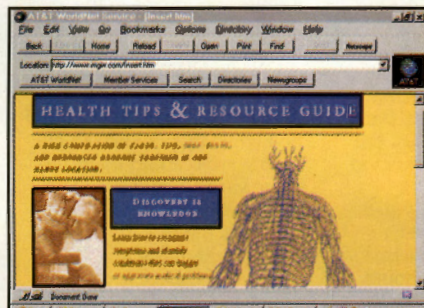


information is extremely helpful to parents.

The highlights of the site were the detailed, clear articles on diseases as well as the pictures — not that I ever hope to see another picture of a person with shingles again. At least I've got a good visual idea of what

chicken pox looks like, albeit in a lower resolution than reality. Also, no parent should miss the article called Today's Children Face New Threats to Health. It's startling what havoc a little technology and stress can wreak on a child's life. Thank goodness extended computer use isn't on the list of threats.

Before you shell out big bucks for some professional parenting advice, be sure to check out what you can find online.



At HealthyLives, parents can find clear — and at times clinical — information on many health problems, including chicken pox and ear infections.

articles to draw from.

You'll find excerpts from Hearst's *Redbook*, *Popular Mechanics*, and *Good Housekeeping* magazines. Information isn't limited to parenting and health issues, either. You'll find waistline-development as well as child-development tips. You'll find hints for home improvement and golf-stroke improvement. And you'll find a path to some pretty wild cyber-recreation at Planet Lunch.

The highlight of the Homearts site was also the highlight of my whole adventure on the web this month. Head for the pages on children's books, where Homearts is building a list of must-read children's books. To help them create this junior version of Western Canon, six children's book experts were asked to talk about what makes kiddie-lit great and to offer some titles for the list.

Maurice Sendak (*Where the Wild Things Are*, among numerous other wonderful books), Chris Van Allsburg (*Jumanji* and *The Polar Express*), 1993 Poet Laureate Rita Dove, and Captain Kangaroo teach you to think about books in ways that will help you make the best choices. Compare Captain Kangaroo's selections, which teach values, to Chris Van Allsburg selections, which thrill children and ignite their imaginations. These pages are a delight to read for the nostalgia they evoke and the ideas they inspire.



## A Place For Us

From Homearts, I surfed to [www.parentsplace.com](http://www.parentsplace.com), a less slick, more chatty site. Created by a mom-and-dad team "who really want to stay home and parent," the site devotes its pages to popular parenting information. From chat rooms to bulletin boards, there's plenty of opportunities to share ideas. After exploring the bulletin boards as an interloper, I found that the content was interesting, the layout of the forums was easy to understand, and the scope of the topics was extensive. The site's creators believe actual parents are the best resource for parenting information, and they make that information easy to access.

The highlight of Parentsplace is the enormous collection of online parenting literature — full texts of brochures on child safety, developmental issues, disabilities, and so on. There's loads to learn, albeit not deep loads. Another highlight of the site is Don Elum's and Jeanne Elum's areas, *Raising a Son* and *Raising a Daughter*. Like Parentsplace creators, the Elums are a mom-and-dad duo, and they happen to be experts on gender issues in child rearing. Check out their Q and A Column by topic for reassurance that your boy's interest in guns is normal, and why. Other experts with Q and A columns include a preschool teacher, a single mother, and a dentist.

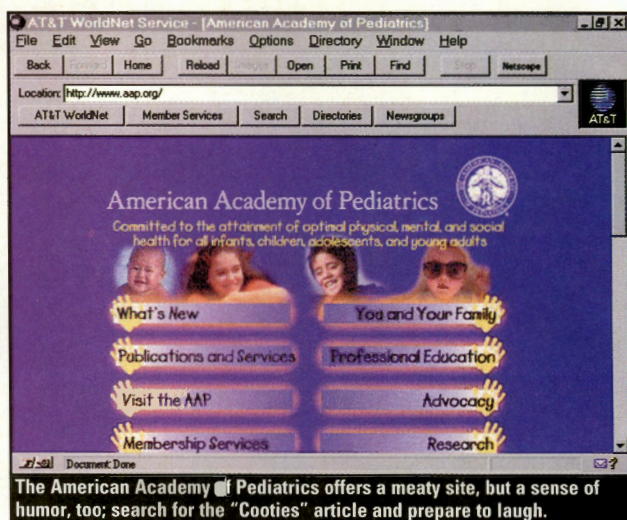


## A Taste For Us

Like Parentsplace, [www.parentsoup.com](http://www.parentsoup.com) is like a big coffee shop for moms and dads. I didn't find celebrities like the Eliums on this site, but I did find another large library of articles from such sources as the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission and the National Center for Learning Disabilities.

I couldn't figure out who produces this site, but they should be commended for their sense of visual style as well as their interpersonal skills. They have created an attractive interface that expresses a sense of humor and fun, but it's a site that expects to be taken seriously. The combination of authoritative articles and inviting forums creates an appealing site.

Besides the atmosphere of Parentsoup, the icebreakers were the highlights of this site. In an effort to provoke lively debate, Parentsoup publishes "What Would You Do If..." questions. The first day I visited the site, the question was, on its surface, lighthearted: "Your child has prepared a



sumptuous breakfast in bed for you, and the main dish is a mudpie; you can tell this is important to your child. Do you chow down the delicacy or conjure up a reason not to?" A few days later, the question was more serious: "Would you let your teenager continue to socialize with a friend who experiments with drugs?" There are more facets to this discussion than you'll find on Gwyneth Paltrow's engagement ring.

## When You Need to Know

For the official word on everything child-ish, tap in the address for the American Academy of Pediatrics. These are the folks who tell us whether our infants should sleep on their backs, their sides, or their stomachs. They tell us where to put our car seats and whether to vaccinate our kids against chicken pox. Chicken pox! That's how I got started on this web quest in the first place.

At [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org), you can find many of the kinds of articles you'd find on any of the sites mentioned above. However, [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org) is the horse's mouth in many cases, the source from which most other sites get their information on children's health. Barring the article on cooties, the real highlight of this site is the section called *Where We Stand*. On these pages, you'll learn that healthy infants should sleep on their backs, that your young child should sit in the middle of the back seat, and that all kids should be vaccinated against chicken pox. The list of recommendations is long and also covers

circumcision, equal access to education for people with AIDS, and sex education. The AAP's positions are not always the only sane approach to every health issue, but they represent the mainstream (and, perhaps, the insurance companies') positions on many medical treatments.

## What Did I Learn?

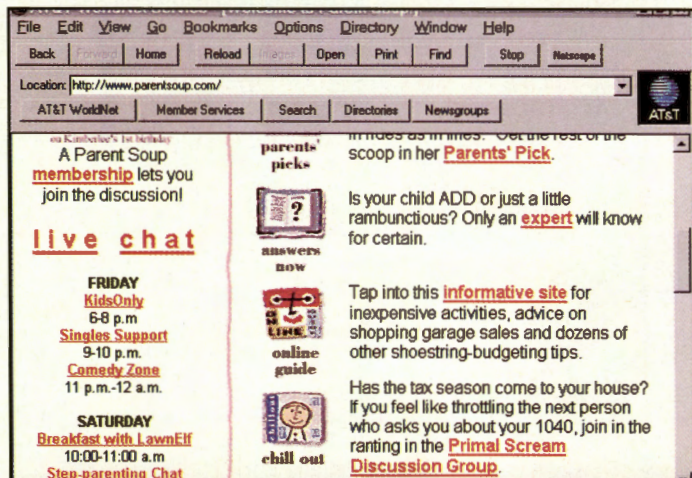
I learned that ear infections can be caused by cigarette smoke, but I didn't learn why. Although I believe this factoid, it underscores the point that some information, regardless of its source, may be influenced by politics and money as well as data and reason.

Gender experts Don and Jeanne Elum convinced me that the problem with buying a toy gun is not the gun. The problem is the limits to imaginative play. They suggest that parents build simpler toys that can — and probably will — be turned into guns, but that can also be turned into magic wands and golf clubs and telescopes and so on.

Maurice Sendak, who has infinite confidence in the minds of children, taught me that *Grimms' Fairy Tales* were originally intended for adults, as a kind of catalog of folk tales. The brothers were horrified when they found out children were reading the gruesome yarns. Sendak explains why kids enjoyed the stories so much, though, and I got a good laugh out of it.

Finally, I learned that I might as well vaccinate my kids against chicken pox, so I can put an end to my frequent trips to the pediatrician.

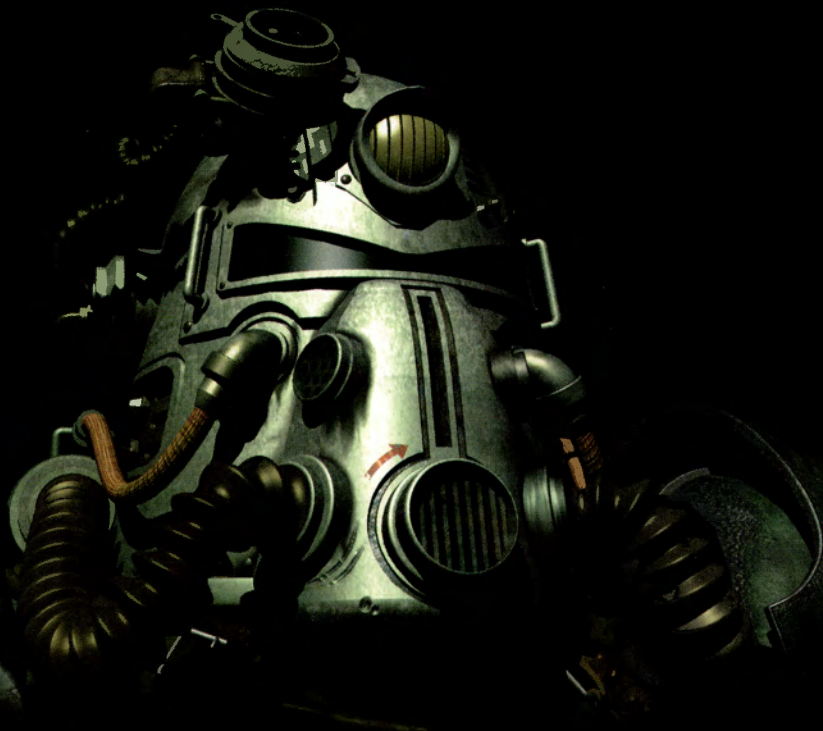
PCG



Of all the parenting sites I've seen, Parentsoup has the most attractive and interesting interface, and it's mixed up with some provocative conversations, too.



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Product Information Number 139



[www.engagegames.com/gamer](http://www.engagegames.com/gamer)

Food and sleep optional.

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# Will You Pay to Play?

**M**player's switch from hourly charges to a free service made some waves in the Internet gaming community, although perhaps not as much as Mplayer may have hoped.

Quake clans and the battle.net faithful, for example, who don't need dedicated game services, couldn't care less. But Mplayer certainly got the attention of its main competitor, TEN, which was quick to point out the potential pitfalls of such a strategy: lower profits for game developers; less cash for exclusive content; and less money to plow into improving the infrastructure.

Online gaming is a new business, and there's not a lot to compare it to. The only things that come close are the commercial web sites — but here, we find virtually all commercial web pages offer free content, funded by advertising revenues.

TEN might argue that commercial web sites are not a valid analogy, since they don't have the same compelling content (i.e. the games). But how compelling can any content be if it's free elsewhere? Even a game "exclusive" is unimportant; you'd have to be the most fanatical of *Duke Nukem 3D* players to pay to play that game on TEN instead of playing a comparable game like *Quake* for free on Mplayer or elsewhere. And you could always play *Duke* via Kali, your modem, or even a local BBS.

No one game has ever had the kind of market dominance that justifies the exclusive deal, and next year's hot new game is always around the corner: *Unreal*, *Jedi Knight*, *Quake 2*, *MetalTek*, *Daikatana*, (to name just a few in *Duke*'s first-person shooter

category). And however many tournaments, ladders, or other fluff-functions you add, they aren't worth paying an hourly rate on top of ISP charges. Even AOL, which has eight million customers compared to TEN's 25,000, saw the light and went with a flat rate plan. And how do you get around the fact that longtime Internet users are just not accustomed to paying for content?

## Enter the Giant

And then there's Microsoft and its online gaming service, the Internet Gaming Zone. The Redmond, WA, giant plans to offer free parlor games, like

killed a huge part of Netscape's potential profits.

So why should Microsoft take an interest in web browsers? For now, the browser is the key to web, and the web is where the money is on the 'net. Control the user's interface to the web, and you control how they access the web. Control their access, and you have a competitive advantage for your own applications — and your own online entertainment.

The driving goal of Internet business is to make the medium as big, visible, and profitable as broadcasting. Plans carefully laid now will pay off in the future, when web-capable computers are as ubiquitous as televisions are

Jason Bates



Spades and Bridge, free Internet matchmaking for Microsoft's retail games, and charge daily or monthly fees for premium, online-only games like *Fighter Ace*. And although they'll tell you otherwise, Microsoft developers should have the inside track on DirectX and Win 97, as well as the reputation and resources of the largest software company in the world. So how they set their pricing in this emerging market bears careful watching.

Don't forget what happened last year with web browsers: Netscape was riding high with the success of Navigator until Microsoft's free Internet Explorer came along. It now has a 30 percent market share compared to Netscape's 70 percent — and Netscape dare not start charging for its browser now. By offering a comparable browser for free, Microsoft

TEN and Mplayer are struggling to find a successful price-model for their online gaming services — and here comes Microsoft.

today. As computer game hobbyists, we're a test market of sorts: we're online in force, we're seeing the ads, we're using the game content, and we're spending money.

So just as Microsoft realizes how important web browsers are, it also realizes how important online gaming is. True, when I kicked off this column months ago, I said if TEN and Mplayer go belly up, Internet gaming would suffer a large setback — but we're past that point now. Every time I turn around, I hear about some new online game: I can't even mention them all, let alone cover them in one column.

## Don't forget DWANGO

Something else not to be overlooked is Microsoft's deal with DWANGO. This is big news, and more bad news for TEN and Mplayer. DWANGO is a dial-up "IPX-spoof," meaning the service will have (hell, has had) the fastest games anywhere. Action games like *Doom*, *Duke*, *Quake* — that's DWANGO's specialty. The only thing that's held it back has been a lack of national coverage; now the service plans to add some 50 servers across the country. You have to wonder how much of that is Microsoft money, or if Microsoft might buy DWANGO outright.

Many journalists have a reflexive, anti-Microsoft bias, but this fear that Microsoft will dominate games the way it has operating systems or business apps is groundless. Gaming is a hit-driven, entertainment industry, and picking the hits will be as hard as ever.

Only a handful of people at Microsoft are responsible for scouting out developers and signing up projects, and in that respect they have no more advantage than does a similar team elsewhere.

In games, you want diversity, not standardization, and the next id Software is already out there, pounding out code in some garage, waiting to be signed. A great game is a great game, no matter whose name is on the box.

ECG



# Sun Worship Gone Awry

**A**s I write this, Spring has just arrived. I'm sitting out in the warm sun, soaking up those rays, and I can't help but feel that all is right with the world. After all, we've got a ton of new games to look forward to, and that just makes the bright sunshine and cool breeze all the

more lovely. Unfortunately, because I lack a decent laptop machine, when those games come out, the sun will have to take a back burner to more pressing matters — the computer.

Which is kind of sad. After all, isn't the purpose of our lives to be content, enjoying the fruits of nature and the warmth of human companionship? Sitting at home in front of a glowing monitor, soaking up X-rays, and interacting with a computerized intelligence isn't quite the same as taking your loved ones to the park — but I guess each has its place.

Some people have mentioned that computer role-playing gamers are a solitary lot, prone to playing games by ourselves. But look at all the multi-player roleplaying games (RPGs) coming out. Obviously, RPG fans aren't necessarily a bunch of loners; most of us got our start in the most social games you can play: those pencil-and-paper RPGs that always require plenty of soda (or beer), lots of chips, excellent imaginations, and a good chunk of a Saturday afternoon. You can't even start a decent pen-and-paper game without at least three people.

So as I listen to the planes flying by and the traffic outside on the street, I can't help but wonder what the future of those online games will offer us. What kind of communities will

develop? Where will those online games take those who decide to spend their time in them?

You know what would be great? When technology reaches the point where wireless modems and decent laptop computers are affordable by even the stingiest of computer gamers. Then we can all interact, play, and experience life together while sitting in the great outdoors. Because, after all, that's what your characters are doing as they travel from place to place, aren't they? Why not join them? Besides, a little bit of a tan wouldn't hurt!

(Postscript: A couple of days after I wrote the above,



Interplay's *Realms of the Haunting* leads you on an adventure through several mysterious worlds.

the next corner, or though the next teleporter. Well, that's happened to me just recently, and it came from a

rather surprising source — Interplay Productions' *Realms of the Haunting*.

I certainly didn't expect this game to have such appeal. But as I watched Todd play through it for his review (in the May 1997 issue), I was amazed; every time I looked over Todd's shoulder, he was in an entirely new location, doing entirely new things. So I decided to give it a try, and was hooked from the start.

Very much like the Ultima Underworld games or *System Shock*, the game is first-person with some action elements, but mostly it's puzzle and story oriented. The full-motion video (FMV) gives it an epic feel, but what really grabbed me were the twists at various points in the story, and the great level of exploration. The game is huge! I can honestly say that the worst part about the game was the ending — but only because I was sad to see it go. If you're an adventure fan of any kind, I urge you to check this game out immediately!

## Correction

In my April 1997 column, I went into depth about CyberNation's new online RPG, *Ethereal*. However, I gave the wrong URL for their web site. But that doesn't matter anymore, because they changed it anyway. Currently, the correct address is [www.cybernations.com](http://www.cybernations.com). Log on and check out what could be one of the best online RPGs in development.

PCG

## Michael Wolf



Sir-tech sent me a beta version of *Realms of Arkania: Shadows Over Riva*. I haven't seen the sun since. Check our web site, [www.pcgamer.com](http://www.pcgamer.com), for my early impressions of what looks to be a fantastic RPG for 1997.)

## Realms of the Haunting

You know that wonderful feeling you get when you're so into a game that it seems to consume your every waking thought? When you start playing at five o'clock in the evening, and before you know it your stomach is growling at two in the morning — so you grab a bag of chips and keep going? You know you really need to go to bed and get some rest for work the next day, but you simply have to see what's around

What if all the gamers of the world could afford to have laptop computers? Family picnics would never be the same, that's for sure!



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*Actual scene from the game.*

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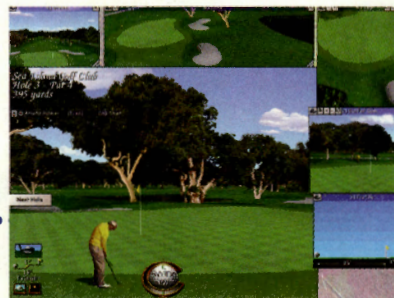


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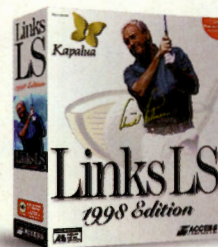
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# Dispatches from the Front

## Wounded, But Not Dead

**A**casualty report floating around the Internet concerns the rumored demise of Arsenal's long-awaited *Road to Moscow*. Not so, says Arsenal CEO Jim Degoe. "The product has slipped due to unforeseen design problems, but we remain committed to getting it out and doing it right."

The company itself is in no immediate danger, Degoe says; its investors understand the problem and are hanging in there for the long haul. Other Arsenal products (*Armor in Action* and the naval sim *Weapons Free*) are proceeding as planned. "Are we going to survive?" says Degoe. "Damn right we are!" Hang in there, buddy.

## AFROTC Sim Hits the Web

When Col. Rock Roszak (gotta love that name!) took over as head of Virginia Tech's Air Force ROTC program two and a half years ago, he sensed that something crucial was lacking in the cadet curriculum. The Army cadets got to run tactical exercises in the woods on weekends, and the Navy cadets got to practice their seamanship on a local lake, but the AFROTC kids simply didn't have enough "warrior stuff" to supplement their book-learning.

As it happened, Roszak was at that time a beta-tester for the new mission disc to Avalon-Hill's *Flight Commander 2* and was even conducting an E-mail campaign with the game's designer. He organized a squadron of cadets to play the game after duty hours, but although this gave the kids some tactical practice, it still didn't match

the Colonel's vision of something more comprehensive.

"What I really wanted to create was a kind of 'Sim Air Force,'" Roszak says, "which would give the cadets experience not just in combat tactics but in all the elements that go into creating a modern aerial force-structure. I drew up a plan, presented it to the administration, and they gave us their blessing — along with a few more computers."

Thus was born *Air War 2000*, a detailed and realistic simulation of all the factors that go into creating and maintaining a successful air force in today's world. Starting in the fall, Virginia Tech's AFROTC students are given 3,000 buy-

officers must." The cadets are also presented with investment opportunities, which can be allocated for such things as satellite recon, AWACS support, or SAM batteries.

In the simulated year 1990, the Col. springs a "surprise conflict" on the cadets so they can see how well they're doing, again using the *Flight Commander 2* engine. This enables them to see if they've allowed their force structure to become too heavy in air-to-ground assets and so forth.

The climax of the year-long program comes with a full-scale simulated campaign over the fictional "Hokieland," complete with campaign maps, kill-tallies, and mock-up staffs. The

kids take up their assignments, plan their sorties and strike packages, and fight it out in real-time. Uncontested strikes are resolved by the Excel program, contested ones by means of *Flight Commander 2*.

"The kids learn things that are really important, and they have a lot of fun," Roszak says. At present, 22 other colleges and universities have expressed interest in implementing similar programs, and by the end of 1998, *Air War 2000* may be adopted nationwide by all AFROTC programs.

All in all, this success story underscores the continuing merger of commercial wargames and professional military applications. Interested readers can browse the *Air War 2000* home page at: [www.vt.edu:10021/mil/USAF](http://www.vt.edu:10021/mil/USAF).

William R. Trotter



The old Desktop is getting cluttered, so it's high time the General got up to date on the latest wargaming happenings.

## Mysteries of Ad Copy Revealed!

One of the more light-hearted moments in the Connections '97 conference (see Eyewitness for full details) was when my esteemed colleague, M. Evan Brooks, passed out a paper titled "How to Interpret Computer Gaming Hyperbole." Evan's observations were so funny and wickedly on-target that I asked his permission to share some of them with you.

In the list below, you'll first read what the ad copy says, followed by what the phrases really mean:

- "Superb AI" ... The multi-player options don't work.
- "Excellent multi-player options" ... The AI doesn't work.
- "Intuitive interface" ... The publisher didn't include a manual.
- "Non-stop action!" ... No plot.
- "Accurately reflects the Fog of War" ... Not even the designer can understand what the program is doing.
- "The best flight sim since..."

...In this version, you can empty the ashtrays on the plane.

- "The most realistic wargame ever released" ... Contains more obscure details about the 19th Panzer Division than even its commander wanted to know.

Thanks, Evan!

PCG



# Getting Real

**T**he gameplay vs. realism issue has received a lot of lip service recently, both here and online, and we're no closer to resolution than Archie was to choosing between Betty and Veronica. Perhaps the oddest aspect of this argument is the many "expert" opinions being offered by people who have no real-world experience in the aircraft they purport to be authorities on.

Kesmai's Jonathan Baron said on the Internet that "Realism, as sold and packaged these days, is most often a sham. It plays to misconceptions of flight that are understandable among people whose flight experience has been in simulation or occasional rides in airplanes. The vast majority of sim buyers do not give a rodent's backside about alleged realism. They might feel better about buying a sim with the realism worshipers' stamp of approval, but they'll shut most of that stuff off when they play. It is inarguable that most people buy sims to have fun, first and foremost."

But NovaLogic, still stinging from criticism of *F-22 Lightning II*'s "unrealistic" flight model have upped the ante with their release of *Comanche 3* while simultaneously giving new definition to the phrase "put your money where your mouth is."

In order to lend more credibility to the latest Comanche incarnation, Nova-

Logic invited a bunch of media weasels (myself included) down to the Sikorsky Development Flight Center in West Palm Beach, Florida to see a "wheels up" test flight of RAH-66 Prototype No. 1. That's right — the *genuine* article. It's an amazing piece of machinery — powerful, agile, and quiet, with a radar signature 400 times smaller than the Apache's. (Realism junkies take note: the Comanche is controlled by a 4-axis fly-by-wire control stick. There are no anti-torque pedals; twisting the cyclic controls the "Fantail," with vertical movement of the cyclic controlling collective.)

While the Comanche flight was a treat, the real reason for the trip was to allow



Before a guard could smack him in the head with a rifle butt, Scott managed to get a nice shot of the real Comanche's cockpit.

## Scott Wolf



The Wolf finally gets his paws on the controls of a real, live helicopter, takes a spin over the Florida Everglades — and lives to tell about it.

each and every one of us to get a true feel for rotary-wing flight by actually flying a Bell JetRanger. After a brief orientation on helicopter flight controls, pilot Randy "Rocky" Rowles took us each on an NOE (Nap of the Earth) tour of the Everglades, demonstrating Terrain Masking, Return-to-Target, and Autorotation techniques before setting down at a small airport and handing the controls over to us.

One by one, we learned to use the anti-torque pedals, collective, and cyclic. Now, I've logged several thousand hours in helo simulations and thought I knew the ropes. But to finally be handed the reins like this, to feel the forces of gravity, movement, and delayed input response made me feel like I'd just emerged from a coma with a memory

of flight training but no real experience. I was amazed at how little physical — and how much mental — effort was required to make the docile JetRanger behave. And Rowles was surprised at how easily gamers transitioned to the real thing.

Back at the hotel, we sat down to fly *Comanche 3* and apply our newfound knowledge to the game. I'll be damned if she didn't behave almost identically (military specs aside) to the one we'd flown only minutes ago. What better way to end the Realism Roundabout than to put you in the real thing before putting you in the simulation? It was a daring and dramatic move on NovaLogic's part, and I only wish it were possible for all gamers to have the same experience.

Of course, none of this would've mattered if NovaLogic hadn't taken the time to get the flight model right, and with plenty of assistance from Boeing Sikorsky and the U.S. Army, you can bet they did.

Don't get me wrong — an hour of stick time in a JetRanger does not make me an authority, but it's an hour more than many other flight-sim "experts" have. Games like *Longbow* and *Apache* (not to mention *Hind*) are outstanding sims, especially if you like a heavy cockpit workload, but don't close access to your flight-sim setup until you've given *Comanche 3* a try.

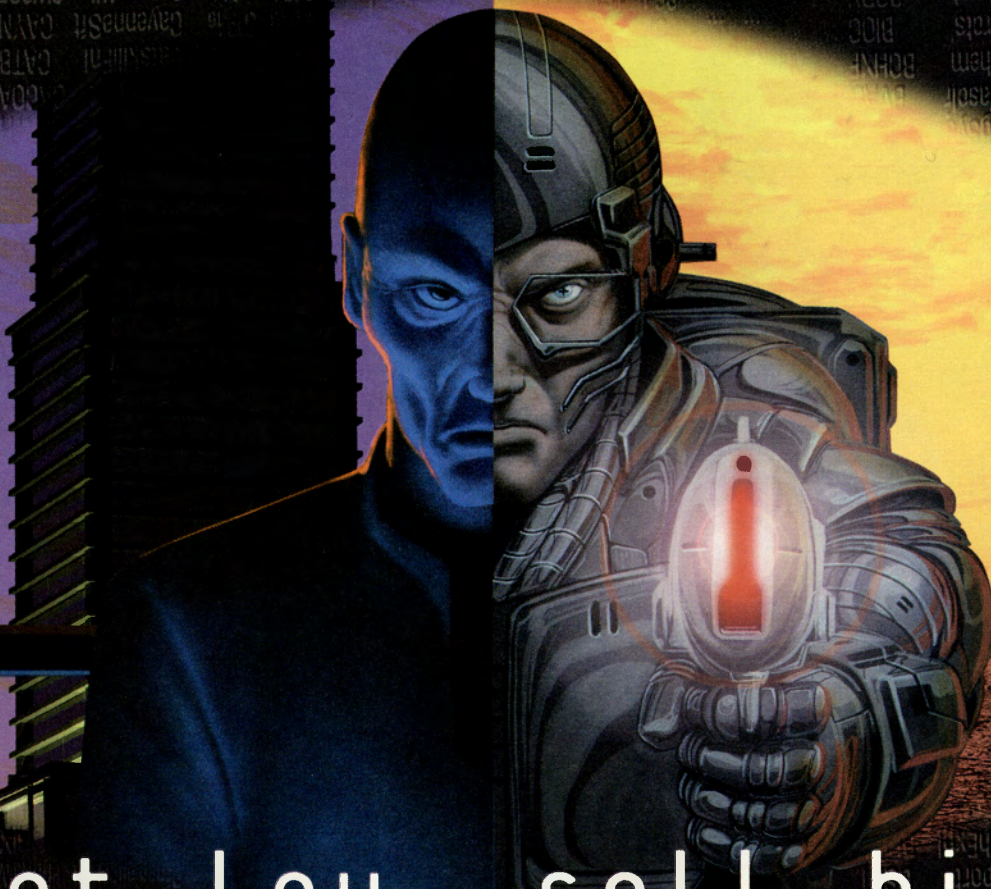
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Hard to believe, but some lunatic actually let Scott fly this thing!



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## Diablo

### The developers get you through Diablo's rough spots.

The levels and quests may be randomly generated, but you can always look forward to some tough tasks ahead of you when you start a new game of Blizzard's *Diablo*. Knowing how tough things can be, we went straight to the source — the people who created the game — to get some information and special tips on how to take care of the bad guys. Here's what they had to say.

### THE BUTCHER

QUEST MONSTER: The Butcher

HIT POINTS: 50

DAMAGE: 6-12

REWARD: The Butcher's Cleaver (+10 to Strength, 4-24 Damage, Durability = 10)

TIP: When preparing for battle with the Butcher, a character's most effective offense is a good defense. Regardless of class, characters should carry a sturdy shield and have at least a 15 or better armor class.



### TRISTRAM'S WATER SUPPLY

QUEST MONSTER: No unique monster

REWARD: Ring of Truth (+10 to Hit Points, Absorbs 1 point damage per hit, Resist All 10%)

TIP: Regardless of character class, a good tactic for this quest is moving forward and then walking back, drawing a few creatures in at a time to avoid fighting too many monsters simultaneously.

### SKELETON KING

QUEST MONSTER: Skeleton King

HIT POINTS: 60

DAMAGE: 6-16

Resistance to Fire and Lightning

Immune to Non-Fire and Lightning Magic, except for Stone Curse and Holy Bolt

REWARD: The Undead Crown (Armor Class = 8, Life Stealing +5%)

TIP: A Sorcerer should fill his belt with mana potions and use Holy Bolt to kill the Skeleton King and his army. For Warriors or Rogues, blunt objects such as a mace, Morning Star, or War Hammer are most effective against the undead, as well as Holy Bolt.



### GHARBAD THE WEAK

QUEST MONSTER: Gharbad the Weak

HIT POINTS: 120

DAMAGE: 8-16

REWARD: Random

Magical Item

TIP: The best tip for this quest is to be prepared for Gharbad to betray characters on their third visit. Gharbad lives up to his surname "The Weak," so characters should use their spells or weapon to put a quick end to the deceiver.



### ODGEN'S SIGN

QUEST MONSTER: Snotspill

HIT POINTS: 220

DAMAGE: 10-18

Resistance to Lightning

REWARD: Harlequin Crest, if the sign is given to Ogden. (+2 to all stats, +7 to Hit Points, +7 to Mana, -3 to Armor Class, -1 to Damage Received)

TIP: To access the stairs down to level five, players must destroy Snotspill and his large number of followers. Spells from a distance such as Lightning or Fire Bolt work well. For hand-to-hand combat, using a blade weapon in the doorway is effective.



### THE MAGIC ROCK

QUEST MONSTER: No unique monster

REWARD: Emphyrean Band (+2 to all stats, +20% to Light radius, Fast hit recovery, Absorbs trap damage)

TIP: This object is randomly placed on a pedestal within the catacombs on the fifth level. The monsters guarding the rock are random as well. Be sure to return the rock to Griswald for the magical ring.



## ARKAINE'S VALOR

**QUEST MONSTER:** No unique monster

**REWARD:** Arkaine's Valor (Splint Mail, +25 to Armor Class, +10 to Vitality, Absorbs 3 points damage per hit received, Fastest hit recovery)

**TIP:** You have to fight your way through plenty of demons to get at the armor. A Sorcerer should use his highest level spell of either Fire or Charged Bolt. Both the Warrior and Rogue will want to close the distance between the creatures, so the demons do not have room to charge.

## CHAMBER OF BONE

**QUEST MONSTER:** No unique monster

**REWARD:** Guardian Spell

**TIP:** Once again, you'll have to battle through hordes of the enemy to get at the spell. Sorcerers should conserve mana by waiting until horned demons are close before firing shots. The Warrior and Rogue should use an edged weapon against the horned demon, but also have a blunt weapon to use against the undead that lurk in the area.

## HALLS OF THE BLIND

**QUEST MONSTER:** No unique monster

**REWARD:** Optic amulet (+20% to Light Radius, +20% to Resist Lightning, Absorbs one point of damage per hit, +5 to Magic)

**TIP:** When fighting the hidden hand-to-hand, try left click attacking once and then moving away. Then once they reappear, left click to attack them again.

## ZHAR THE MAD

**QUEST MONSTER:** Zhar the Mad

**HIT POINTS:** 360

**DAMAGE:** 16-40

Resistance to Fire and Lightning

Immune to other Magic (except Stone Curse)

**REWARD:** Random book

**TIP:** If Zhar becomes maddened and attacks,

try to attack him from range with a bow or spells. The Warrior should left click and swing at him only once, then wait for him to disappear. Once he reappears, repeat the process over again until he dies.



## BLACK MUSHROOM

**QUEST MONSTER:** No unique monster

**REWARD:** Spectral Elixir (+3 to all attributes)

**TIP:** On the ninth level, players should search for a patch of mushrooms. Pick the largest one, and return it to Adria. Players then need return to the ninth level, kill a demon and then return the demon's brain to Pepin to get the Spectral Elixir.

## WARLORD OF BLOOD



**QUEST MONSTER:** Warlord of Blood

**HIT POINTS:** 850

**DAMAGE:** 35-50

Immune to Fire, Lightning, and other Magic

**REWARD:** Random magic item and access to the 14th level.

**TIP:** The Warlord of Blood wears hellishly thick armor and is extremely resilient. Additionally, the Warlord of Blood is immune to fire, lightning, and magic. The best method for the Sorcerer to use in battle is the Mana Shield and use a powerful weapon. All characters should lure the beast's followers away and destroy them before attacking the Warlord.

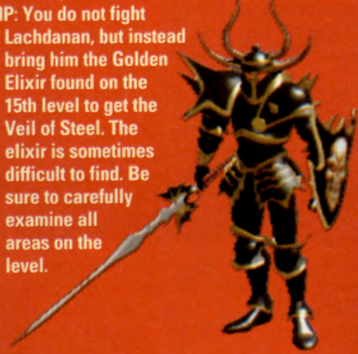
## LACHDANAN

**QUEST MONSTER:** Lachdanan

**HIT POINTS:** 500

**REWARD:** Veil of Steel (+50% to Resist All, +60% to Armor Class, -30 to Mana, +15 to Strength, +15 to Vitality, -20% to Light Radius)

**TIP:** You do not fight Lachdanan, but instead bring him the Golden Elixir found on the 15th level to get the Veil of Steel. The elixir is sometimes difficult to find. Be sure to carefully examine all areas on the level.



## ANVIL OF FURY

**QUEST MONSTER:** No unique monster

**REWARD:** Griswold's Edge (Fire Hit 1 to 10, +25 to Hit, Faster attack, Knocks back monster, +20 to Mana, -20 to Hit Points)

**TIP:** The Anvil of Fury is randomly placed on the tenth level of the cathedral. If the anvil is returned to Griswold, he will create a powerful blade.

## ARCHBISHOP LAZARUS

**QUEST MONSTERS:** Archbishop Lazarus,

Red Vex, and Black Jade

**LAZARUS HIT POINTS:** 600

**LAZARUS DAMAGE:** 30-50

**RED VEX AND BLACK JADE HIT POINTS:** 400

**RED VEX AND BLACK JADE DAMAGE:** 30-50

**REWARD:** Opportunity to kill Diablo and three random magic items.

**TIP:** If fighting hand-to-hand, click left on Lazarus once to initiate a single attack. Then wait for him to disappear and reappear before clicking on him again to commence attacking, just like you did for Zhar the Mad. Continuing this pattern should destroy him. Both the Sorcerer and Rogue should fight at range, firing off spells or arrows at the locations to which he teleports.



## DIABLO

**QUEST MONSTER:** Diablo

**HIT POINTS:** 833

**DAMAGE:** 30-60

Resistance to Fire, Lightning, and other Magic

Immune to Stone Curse

**REWARD:** You win and save the world.

**TIP:** Cast Mana Shield if you have it, and fill your belt with any remaining Full Rejuvenation potions. Once Diablo spots a character and begins to unleash Hellfire, regardless of class, the best strategy is to close the distance between the character and the Demon Lord. His raking claws are not as potent as the Hellfire.



# Multi-Player Red Alert, Part Two

## It's the definitive multi-player Red Alert strategy guide, again!

Here it is, the conclusion to last month's monster of a strategy guide for *Red Alert*. This time we look at the big picture, covering some of the strategic overhead in multi-player mayhem, with treaties, alliances, and the end game.

### Treaties

Although you will sometimes run into games that are "No Tanyas" or "Ore Truck Treaties," particularly on the Internet gaming services where just getting enough players up and running can be a chore, in pure LAN/modem play, such pacts are a bit of a cop-out. It is your responsibility to fight off Tanyas and stake off enough territory for ore-mining. Tanyas are only dangerous to the unprepared, and no treaty should be necessary. Tank builders can usually build enough tanks to have one huge force to dominate the central ore fields, protecting their harvesters from harm.

And as a worst-case defense against Tanyas, you can crank out enough tanks to play MAD (Mutually Assured Destruction) with a Tanya-loving enemy: if he wipes out your buildings with the wicked woman, you'll have enough tanks to roll down and take out his base, since he'll have spent all of his money on the Tech Center, APC, and Tanyas, while you've bought nothing but tanks, tanks, and more tanks. You may both lose, but maybe in the next game, he won't be so eager to send Tanyas on you, and will instead target some other, more inept patsy.

### Alliances

Some games will begin with pre-determined allies: in such games, your job is to find your ally on the map as soon as possible, and coordinate first defenses, and then attacks. Many targets cannot be taken out by one nuclear bomb, but two or more allies working in tandem with coordinated nuclear attacks one after the other can lay an enemy to waste.

But if you're playing every man for himself in a big map, you had better build up a mixed defensive capability: Scatter your power plants for surviving nuclear attacks, build lots of rockets and some anti-air defenses, and try to wall off the approaches to your base with concrete or lines of tanks to keep Tanya-filled APCs out. And if you're playing "first one you meet is your ally," as we often do in four-

to-eight player games, find the player closest to you and make them your ally. That's one less flank to worry about.

Finally, if you're going into a game with pre-set partners, and you have reason to believe that the map will let each side build up a while before being tank-mobbed, it often pays to have one partner be the Soviets, the other the Allies. Crank out an MCV apiece early, build Con Yards in each other's bases, and then temporarily go to war as you each take the other's yard with engineers. This should allow each partner to have access to the full range of Soviet and Allied units. Nothing can be more pleasing than the twin strength of Gap Generators and Tesla Coils.

### End-game

In a closely fought network battle, the ore will often run out long before the battle is decided. Then the key to victory becomes crate recovery, and he who has the fastest units that can span the most territory will recover the most crates, get the most money, and probably win the game. This is why you build those fast jeeps and APCs. Also, when you find a bunch of infantry in a crate, scatter them around the map and hide them under trees. They will act as "Freedom Fighters" to distract the enemies and recover crates.

During lulls in the fighting, you must constantly be scouring your territory for new crates. The vigilant player will recoup four or five times as much money as the player who does not understand the value of crates and keeps his eyes nervously fixed on his base, worrying about Tanyas. And once most of the ore is gone, sell off all but one of your harvesters by moving them onto the Repair Bay and using the sell key. Keep the one remaining harvester for scooping up the ore that will eventually regenerate in the fields near your base.

### The Map

Knowing what is going on during a game of *Red Alert* is crucial to success. Always run the small map in your upper right in the max zoom out (click on the globe icon to do so), so you're seeing not only your units but also everyone else's. Build that radar dome ASAP so you get that map, and then the Tech Center, for the GPS satellite. If you're the Soviets, send your spy planes out to black areas of the maps as soon as they are available; never wait.

Likewise, use your nukes and paratroops as soon as they are ready, as you always want to be maximizing production. If you have no idea where to drop paratroops, drop them in or outside your own base for additional defense, as soon as they are available — just don't get them in the way of your harvesters. Dropping paratroopers over enemy anti-air is another good tactic,

since it will tie up AA guns who will then ignore a flight of choppers or jets.

Taking out your enemy's map is a huge step towards victory. Taking out an Allied Tech Center or Radar Dome will do the trick, though if they have Gaps

up, you won't be able to find them. Sacrifice a heavy tank if you have to — send it into his base under the black shroud, with your mouse ready to drop the nuke on any targets of opportunity. Otherwise use the spy or paratroops.

### Beating Computer Opponents

*Red Alert's* skirmish mode against AI players is an excellent way to get your feet wet for multi-player gaming, though keep in mind the computer players are pretty brainless and will never be as devious and unpredictable as a human rival. But what they will do is build up fast, ridiculously so, and attack you constantly.

One good tactic to use against them is to build up air power quickly, form a strike team of six or more helicopters, and then take out their construction yard. Do it early enough, and the computer will have built up no air defense. Next take out his barracks to choke off his production of rocket men, and after that his base is pretty much yours for the picking. But he'll sell every building he's got and throw all his troops in one massive human wave against your base. To beat it, a Tanya or two can work wonders, as can a harvester targeted to run over the infantry.

### SimBase

Occasionally you'll see a peculiar situation in *Red Alert*, something we've dubbed "SimBase." This is when two players, usually newbies, move about the map so cautiously, retreating like blushing school girls each time they meet, that half an hour later each side has one gigantic base sprawling along half of the map with massive, immobile armies reminiscent of a U.N. Peacekeeping force.

If you find yourself in conflict with one of these tyros, a tough-talking Tanya or two dropped in some forgotten alley of their sprawling metropolis will usually snap them out of their timidity.



Swarms of helicopters are highly effective against the hapless ranks of computer troops.



Some of *Red Alert's* more intriguing options are set up by the players themselves before a game.



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# Discworld II, Part Two

## It ain't over until the dead granny talks!

Last issue, we got you up to about the halfway point in Psygnosis' epic graphic adventure — now we're proud to present the thrilling conclusion.



Take the ring from the decaying arm (which you remembered to pick up earlier, of course) and give it to the female dwarf in Holy Wood in order to gain the horse costume you need to infiltrate the elf kingdom.

### TOMB RAIDING

Return to the cart-wheel in the desert and talk to S.T. Ungulant to get the jingle. Return to Holy Wood and give the milk-maid, jingle, and snow-storms (gimmick) to Dibbler. Head past the trainer and into the make-up room (next to the piano). To get the glamorous pictures, head back to the trainer and take the camera. Now talk to him about imps. When the imp runs into the painting, use the boomerang on him and use him on the camera. Before leaving Holy Wood, go into the Castle on the set and look at the horse costume. Talk to the props dwarf about horse costumes to find out what she wants in return. Leave Holy Wood and sail to the hill, talk to Bone Idle about jingles, and use the knife on Bone Idle to get the band. Return to the Shades and walk into Mrs. Cake's shop again. Take the scissors and open the closet to get the ironing board. Now enter the mortuary and talk to Casanunda. Once he has left, talk to Granny Weatherwax about elves.



Death's butler Albert is an irritable old guy, but if you can complete his tasks, he'll have no option but to let you become the grim reaper part-time.

Rincewind will need to dress up as a unicorn to get into the Elven Kingdom. (You see where the horse costume comes into it now?), but you'll need to go to the Fool's Guild and pick up the hooter first. Sail to the Pyramid and take the pot (glue). Use the scissors on the mummy to get some bandage. Use the bandage on the wooden arm to make a fake mummy's arm.

### OH NO, NOT DOBBIN AGAIN

Travel to the Oasis and use the wooden arm on the rotten arm to steal it and double-click on it to remove the ring. Return to Holy Wood and use the ring on

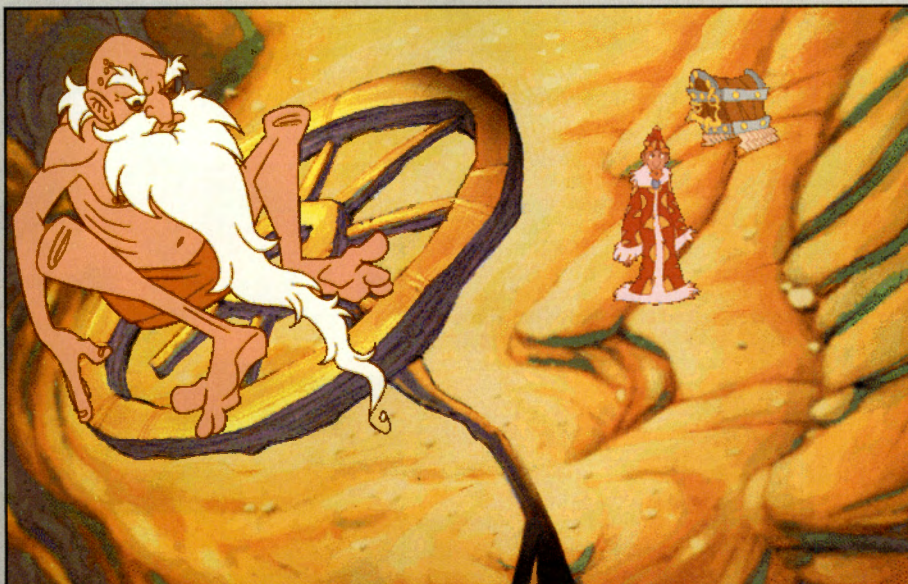


Death's horse Binky needs to be broken in, so grab that saddle and see how long you can stay on for.

the dwarf. Now you need a back-end for the horse. Return to the UU dining hall. Use the glue on the hooter, then use the finished item on the horse costume to get a unicorn costume. Talk to the librarian about the unicorn costume. Go to the forest and use the unicorn costume on the librarian. Be sure that the unicorn costume and the camera are being held in Rincewind's inventory as the luggage cannot come with you. Walk into the stone circle. Use the unicorn costume on Rincewind. Then use the camera on the Elf Queen. Run away. Return to Holy Wood and give the film to the make-up lady. Give the band to Dibbler.

### FURNITURE HIDES SECRET, PERHAPS?

To get the stunt double, use the saw on the ironing board. Use the glue on the surf board and go surfing. In the cave, use the camera on the cave paintings. Return to the shades and use the death certificate on Reg Shoe's door (opposite the entrance to Mrs. Cake's shop and up the steps). Open the closet and talk to the black sheep about being a stunt double. Give the film of cave paintings to the sheep. After the screening of the film, take the reel from the projector and use it on the editing machine. Use the film of the Elf Queen on the editing machine, then use the doctored reel on the projector.



Sitting on a cartwheel oun in the wilderness, S.T. Ungulant may be as crazy as a bag of color-blind badgers, but he's of invaluable help when it comes to composing the promotional jingle you need to give to Dibbler.





By attaching the one ton weight to the hook by the docks, then adding the ten ton sticker, you'll be able to knock a hole in the novelty shop wall and gain those elusive snow domes (the promotional novelties you need) with ease.



Grab an ironing board and the arm from the tailor's dummy in Mrs. Cake's shop — you'll need them both right at the end of the game.

### ACT III : The Grim Rincewind

Go into Death's house and enter the kitchen to talk to Albert before going upstairs to the study. Take the inkwell and pull the cord to summon Albert. While he is absent, return to the kitchen and take the sugar pot and the oily rag. Leave and take the curtains from the hall. Enter the stable and take the rope. Use the glue on the saddle and give the sugar to Binky. Double-click on the saddle, then ride Binky and enter Death's garden and use the ink on the pond. Use the curtain on the pond to get a black robe and return to the kitchen and show Albert the robe. Go upstairs to Susan's room and get the rabbit and the string. Use the rabbit, while in the inventory, to get the pyjamas and return to the garden to use the pyjamas on Rincewind. Use the matches on the oily rag and then the burning rag on the bee-hive. Double-click on the hive to get some wax, and then use the sugar-pot on the hive to get some

honey. Now use the wax on the string to make a candle. Look at the toy-cart and talk to Susan (on the swing) about it. Return to Death's house. Look under the doormat to get a key, then enter and take the scythe from the umbrella stand.

### PLAYING DEATH

Show the scythe to Albert and open the oven door. Enter the Hall Of Records and take Rincewind's book. Use the key on the alcove and use the matches on the candle to light it. Enter the alcove and use the candle on the alcove. Take the single tablet, then return to the garden to give the book to Susan and then give her the tablet. Go to Death's field and use the scythe on the toy cart and then use the reaper machine on the corn. Tie the rope to the boomerang and use this on the chimney of Death's house. Climb up and use the chimney to imitate Death's booming voice. See Albert again before returning to the garden and get the gnome's fishing rod. Use the rod on the honey pot and then use that on the dots (ant souls) in the pit. Show the resulting item to Albert.



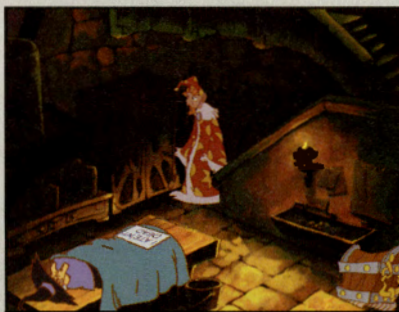
Susan will trade that useful toy cart for some of the books in Death's library — go get 'em for her.

### ACT IV: Till Death Do Us Part

At the bone stock, get the cork from Death's hat. Go to Djelibeybi and ask Uri Djeller about the Fountain of Youth. Go back to the camels and wait for the prospector to arrive. Click on his saddlebags to get his canteen. Now put the rotten arm in his saddle bag so the vultures will follow him. Go to the Fountain of Youth and use the cork on it and then use the hour-glass on the sand to extend Death's life.

### EPILOGUE : Queen Kong

Talk to Dibbler about bladders and then use the canteen on the bladders. Put them in Rincewind's inventory, look at the raven, then talk to Granny Weatherwax about Ravens. Finally, take her broom and use it on Rincewind for a well-earned feeling of warmth and satisfaction. The End. Da Daaah!



Granny Weatherwax may look dead, but she's not — talk to her to find out everything you ever wanted to know about elves.



In the game's epilogue, Queen Kong, only Rincewind can save the day (now there's a surprise) as the Queen of the Elves goes crazy at the top of the Ankh-Morpork clock tower. Grab Granny's broom and fly!





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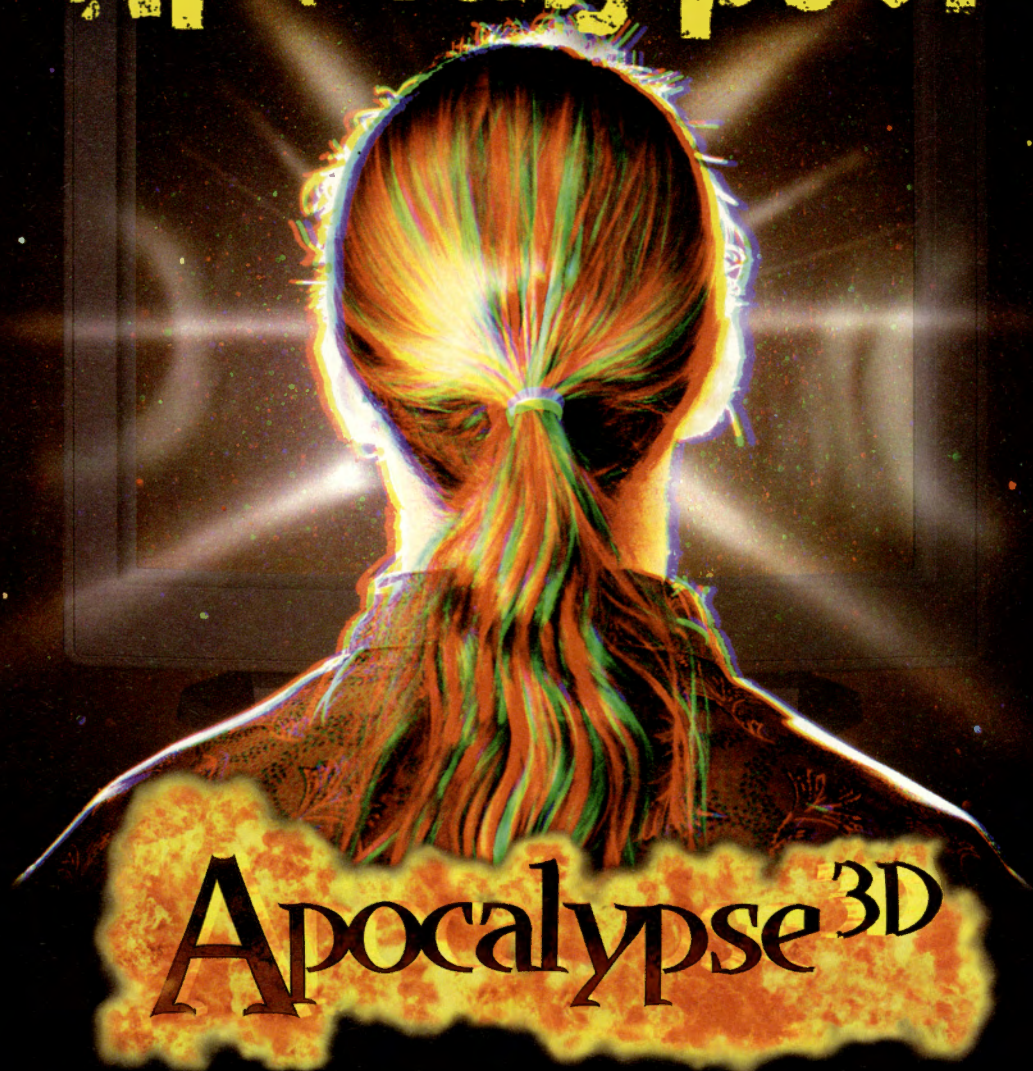
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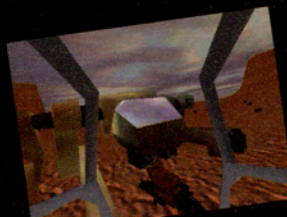
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# Obsidian

**When nanotechnology wreaks havoc, resort to our complete walkthrough.**

The search for Max is a long and tough one, and with unconventional puzzle logic, you'll probably need some help. Try out these guides when things start to get rough.



Make your way through this maze of bureaucracy in the Department of Pre-Approvals.

## Introductory Realm: The Forest

You begin the game standing in a forest clearing. Click around until you find the campsite and go into the tent. In one of the sleeping bags, you'll find a PDA. Turn on the power, and you'll learn of a global environmental crisis, Lilah and Max's role in the detoxification project, the use of nanotechnology, and the inexplicable outcropping of black rock that appears to be growing.

Check out everything in the PDA, including the films, the dreams, the Obsidian growth log, and the speeches. Once you've done everything you need to here, a blood curdling scream will lead you outside. Follow the sound and you'll come face-to-face with Obsidian's shiny surface. Literally. The reflection in the rock is Lilah's — you are she. You'll also notice Max's cap on the ground, but as you do, Obsidian opens and you tumble forwards. In front of you are thousands of Nanobots, all building relentlessly, and, as you begin to draw away from them, the pattern they are forming solidifies.

## Dream Realm 1: The Bureau

You find yourself in a room, but you seem to be half-way up the wall standing on a platform — it's an elevator. From here, you can see the bureau chief across from you. However, he can't extend the bridge to meet you, so you'll have to find your own way across. Push the elevator button to bring it down to floor level, move to the counter in front of you, and ring the bell. This is your first encounter with a vidbot. It's not very encouraging,

but you are in a bureaucracy here. In the corner of the room, to your right as you stood in the elevator, is a red door. Go through it and check out the book to learn how to read the signs.

Re-enter the main room and begin to go around the booths. The fourth booth on the left is Bridge Repair, where the vidbot will tell you to retrieve a document filed under "Standard Damage" in the records room.

To get to records, turn so the booths are behind you and the elevator is in front. You'll see the room goes off into the distance. Walk to the right of the elevator and start down the ramp. You'll be re-oriented so that you are climbing down a ladder: if you look to the sides, you'll see books on shelves that drop horizontally to the floor below you when you move them. Walk to the end of the library and climb up another ladder to find yourself back in the room with the booths, but now you are parallel to the floor. Return to the elevator and push the button.

You're in a records room where there are two computers. Find the one with the "cloud ring" option for some insight into the filing system. Give the word mixer the words "standard damage" and it will come up with the word "tradesman." It is under this word that you will find your document filed.

With the paper in

your inventory, make your way to the Department of Pre-Approvals. Follow the red ramp onto the nexus, and, by clicking the lever, move around until the wall with the glass maze is behind you. Turn around and enter the maze. Use the picture at left to navigate through the maze, feeding the colored keys into each gate-lock and moving through the rooms in the following order: enter room 3, 6, 5, 8, 9, 6, 9, 6, 9, 6, 9, 6, 5, 2, 1, 4, 1, 4, 7. In the final room, have your document stamped.

Pre-approved, go back to the nexus and navigate to the room with the large waiting area. Go around behind the booth, and you'll find a clock consisting of the sun, moon, and earth. Set the dials with the sun two clicks clockwise, the moon two clicks counterclockwise, the earth one click counterclockwise, and start it up.

Returning to the nexus, you'll meet the rebel. To talk to her more, turn the nexus bulb counterclockwise until it goes dark. As before, use the records computers to translate the rebel's "orient militia" clue into "limitation," and find this in the files. The number you pull up, 934, is the code for the phone you'll now find on the mural wall of the nexus. Enter the number and position the sliders: left at the bottom; center in the middle of the lower half; right in the center of the chief's office. Now you can call the chief to have him open the secret door for you.

Go through, and you'll see a balancing rock. Rock it so that its base is facing you and return to the main room. You are on the Executive face, but in the wrong orientation. Go to your right and you can climb the booths like a ladder. Keep climbing to the railing, then over the vidbot and onto the Atlas Statue. From here, you can cross the bridge to the chief.

For an unexplained reason, meeting with the chief allows you to see into Max's mind. You'll experience his spider dream, which becomes a vehicle through which you enter the next realm of the game.

## Dream Realm 2: The Spider

You won't be able to move the grate to get to Max underneath, due to the immense metal spider leg that's holding it down. Approach one of the pillars of wooden scaffolding that is holding the spider up: you'll find you can walk into it and climb up through the center. Each of the sets of scaffolding will take you up to one of four different puzzle worlds: fire, air, metal, and oil.



The nexus, where you change your outlook of life.

The fire puzzle is a test for eye-hand coordination. There's no trick to it. Just watch the order of the lightning strikes and adjust the tree branches until they both meet the posts below the branches at the same moment.



Time the branches by clicking on one and holding it, then release the button to start its movement again. Each correctly timed branch creates a musical note.

The tornado on the horizon tells you you're facing the air puzzle. Look around, and you'll find what looks like a bowling ball in a pipe. Click on the ball, and you'll find a game board. Place markers in all the perimeter spaces leaving an open space in the middle. Then go back to the ball-gun, and shoot directly into the center of the tornado.

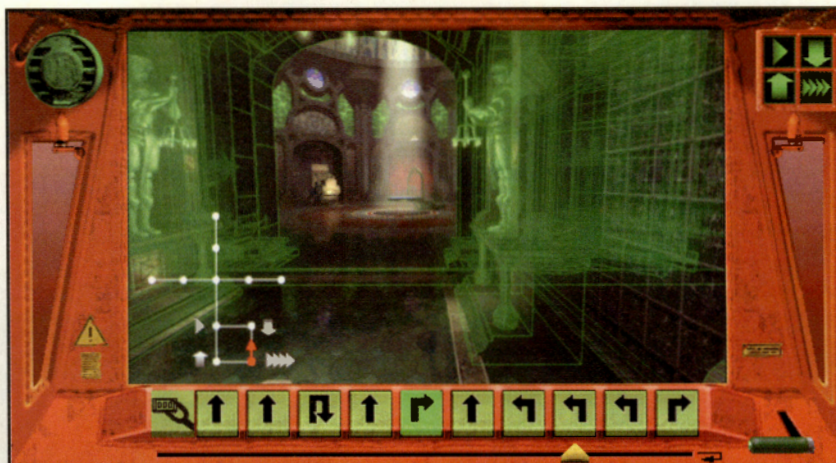
To complete the metal puzzle, you need to navigate your way to the chemistry room. It's to the right, past the conveyor belt. Take the top left test tube and pour it into the beaker. Add to it the forth test tube from the third row and press the mix button. Take the beaker out to the chemical bath at the conveyor belt and push the belt's start button.

As you enter the oil puzzle there is a number — 038-1 — in the sand. Go to the dowser on the roof of the building, enter the numbers, and push the button. Go back down on to the sand, pass the canyon and out to the ocean. You need to coordinate the movement of the waves by clicking on the squares to nudge them into position. All nine squares of ocean need to be absolutely synchronized. Once they are, a block of the ocean will rise up, revealing a pattern. Go back to the building, and you'll see that pattern through the window next to a door with a similar design. Shift the design around until the two match. Go to the contour map and track down the area where you just "removed" the piece of ocean. This will give you the coordinates 133 and 5. Enter this number into the dowser and push the button.

After completing each of these puzzles, you will find yourself facing a star map in the cosmology room. You will have a relevant image to place into the slots on the console: fire goes into the torch slot; air goes beneath the wind-sock; metal goes under the anvil; and oil slips under the oil can. As a final step, connect the stars to form a spider image, and you're on your way to the next realm.



Max is held prisoner in the distance, and your only way to him is by assembling this floating bridge.



In the Church of the Machine, use the keys in the top right corner to program the arrows along the bottom of the screen that control the spider's movements.



Rearrange the bird pictures inside this zoetrope, and the plane's engine will start with ease for you.

### Dream Realm 3: Bismuth

Throughout this realm you, have a companion, Bismuth. Follow him through the junkyard. You will find a small bird-shaped plane resting on the palm of a giant hand. Go inside: you'll need to repair it before it flies. In the engine room, at the back, is a small zoetrope. Rearrange the sequence of the bird pictures until they create a seamless flight, and your plane will be ready for take off. Go up front and take the pilot's seat.

Choose one of the three planets on the destination map — you are unable to go to the frame in the sky at this point.

In the Piazza, Bismuth plays a game of tag through the statues. You need to keep him in sight, with yourself to one side of him and removing the statue to the other side. Herd him this way until you trap him in corner between you and an empty space: you win.

On Statue, you'll find a printing press that produces canvas for Bismuth to paint on. He needs a blank canvas, so go to the press and take a look at the sheets at the back. Move the shapes you see there until you've hidden them all. Click the projector button and listen before you go back to the plane.

There is a giant spider

in the middle of the Church of the Machine. Climb up into it and look over the controls. Program the spider to go down each hall and return to the central altar. In the top right corner are the buttons that enable you to change the arrows across the bottom. Set them up to read left, forward, back, forward, right, forward, left, left, left, right. Once the program has run through, head back to the altar, retrieve the chip, and return to the plane.

Back in the plane, insert the chip into the space marked "Insert." Go to the pilot's seat, start the engine, and transfer the plane to machine control. Flip the D1 switch on the control panel, as the voice commands say to do. From here, defy the commands. You are playing the same game you played on the Piazza, trying to trap a red light, your opponent, in the corner with an open switch casing to one side and your green light on the other. This programs the flight for a non-regulation destination — the Frame in the Sky, and the Conductor.

### The Finale — The Conductor

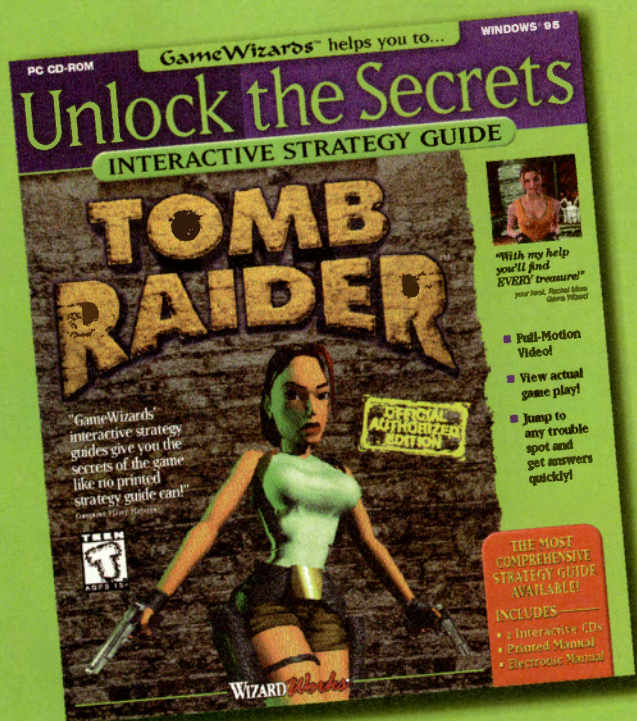
Your first task here is to free Max. Follow the paths until you come to the unassembled bridge. He's on the other side. See the picture at left for a clue as to how the bridge fits together. You can nudge it into place fairly easily, as long as you move the pieces far out to the edges to alter their alignment. Once you go across, free Max by removing the chemical beaker from under his prison.

Go back to Ceres. The lever that turns her over to human control is under a dome beside a set of 16 buttons. Half of the buttons are doubled-up, and every time you push one of them, the whole panel of buttons reorganizes itself. Watch carefully. You need to push only the eight single buttons, not the doubles. It's trial and error, but with patience, and maybe a friend to watch one side of the panel for you, you'll do it.

The final puzzle — whether to terminate Ceres or let her continue on her quest for an environmentally clean and human-free world — doesn't have a right or wrong answer. That one is entirely up to you.



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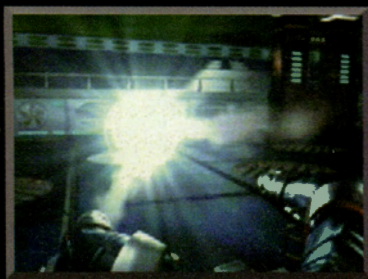


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# Readers' Requests

## Help me Strategy Central, you're my only hope!

Stuck in *Stargunner*? Befuddled by *Blood*? Cowering from *Quake*? Never fear, the elusive, underpaid gaming gurus who inhabit the musty vaults of Strategy Central have scribbled down all the answers on tiny little scrolls, which they guarded with their very lives, and now give to you.



With a little help from Strategy Central, the puzzles in *Realms of the Haunting* are a snap!

## Realms of the Haunting

This is so frustrating! I've managed to get near the end of *Realms of the Haunting*, but two puzzles are holding me back. They're both in the same place, where there are eight puzzles in a circle. The first one has five hands on a wall, and each hand moves some walls, and the other is a room where fireballs shoot at me whenever I walk over some platforms. What do I do to get past these crazy puzzles?

— Roy Shilden, Arroyo Grande, CA

The puzzles you're facing are some of the more difficult the game has to offer. However, a little bit of patience will see you a long way toward your goal. First of all, for the one with the five panels on the wall, you might want to try re-loading your game just before you start touching them. Then, press the top right panel, then the bottom left panel. That will open up a path to the panel inside the glowing walls.

The fireball room is a bit trickier. First of all, try not to step on the panels that cause the fireballs to shoot. Jump over them at the corners, and you shouldn't have too much trouble. You'll notice some mirrors moving back and forth, some of them protected by a force field. There are four of them, and one is not protected. Shoot and break the unprotected one to bring down the field on one of the other three. Shoot the next unprotected one to bring down the shield on one of the last two, and so on. Once you break all four mirrors, the lights will go out, and you can go into the alcove directly across from the entrance. Jump up on to the pedestal in the corner to lower it, and it will bring down the force field on the dial in the other room.

The trick to getting out of this area is getting all of the dials in all eight

rooms to show the red light at the bottom. Once you accomplish that, the fires protecting the gate will go out, and after you kill the pyromaniac that comes after you, you can continue on your way.

## Blood

Help! I've been playing the *Blood* demo on your CD, and I just can't get very far. If you have any cheat codes, please E-mail them to me so I can finish this darn game and get on with my work.

— Josh Greenberg, via the Internet

For shame Josh! You should know by now that the wizened gurus who run Strategy Central couldn't possibly send E-mail answers to every reader who writes in! But we've answered your humble plea for help with a whole slew of cheat codes (at right) for the action-packed game of *Blood*.



Getting a great engine for your ship in *Stargunner* is easy with the following tip.

## Stargunner

I have an excellent cheat for a new game, *Stargunner*, by GT Interactive. When you enter the supply store, select the most expensive engine you can afford. (Sorry, this will not work on weapons). Click on the buy button, and while the engine is installing, click on the undo button. You will still get the engine, but you will also get all of your money back.

— Lionel D. Hibbs, Slidell, LA

That's a great tip Lionel, but we sure wish buying engines was that easy in real life!

## Quake

I have a tip for the very awesome game *Quake*. You remember when you said

## Cheater's Corner

### Blood

If the hordes of heavily armed Undead are giving you trouble in the shareware version of *Blood*, the gore-filled first-person shooter from GT and Monolith, here's some secret codes that will keep you alive. Type T first and then the code:

mcgee	Immolation
onering	Invisibility
nocapinmyass	Invulnerability
capinmyass	Turns Off Invulnerability
goonies	Automap Cheat
eva galli	Clipping Mode
rate	Shows Framerate
idaho	Gives You All Weapons and Wmmo
bunz	John Woo-mode
lara croft	All Weapons and Unlimited Ammo
keymaster	Gives You All Keys
satchel	Gives You All Items
griswold	Gives You Full Armor
spork	Gives You 200 Health
mario	Level Warp
sterno	Fade to Black Screen Effect
jojo	Drunken Sailor Screen Effect

there was no automap? Well, I was playing, and I found something like an automap. All you do is type the NOCLIP code in the console, run through a wall until you see gray, and then turn around. You use D and C to fly up and down as if you were in "fly" mode, and you use A and Z to look up and down at the level. When you're ready to start playing again, you just turn no clipping off using the NOCLIP cheat again, and you'll be back where you were before you looked at the level, as long as you aren't in any part of the level. This might not be good enough to get the esteemed "Tip of the Month" award, but I think it's pretty darn cool.

— John Barefoot, Dunn, NC

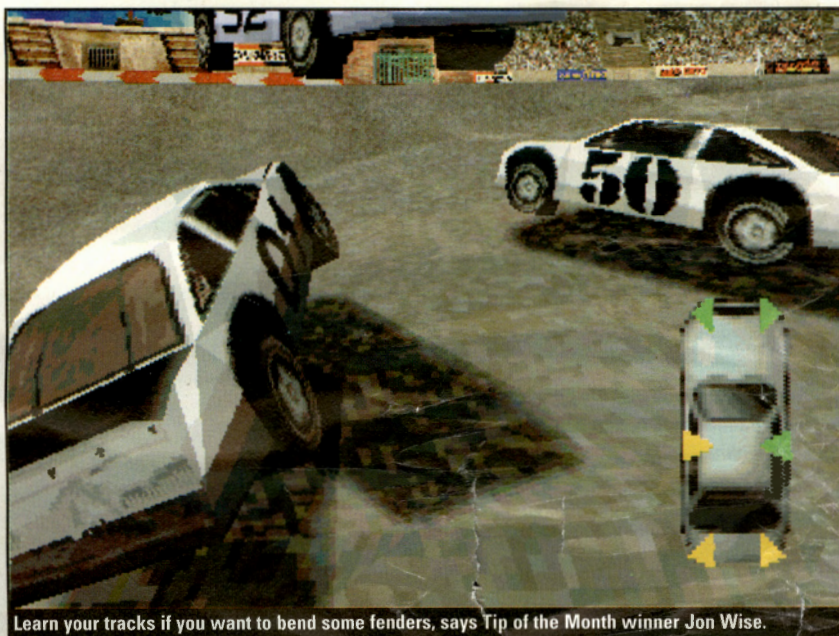
We think it's pretty cool too, John!

## Destruction Derby 2

I must say, *Destruction Derby 2* is one of the most difficult games I've played in a long time. After about two straight days of playing though, I was able to come up with a few tricks you can use to win in *Wreckin' Racing* (these tips got me to Division One).

1. Preserve your car. It sounds





Learn your tracks if you want to bend some fenders, says Tip of the Month winner Jon Wise.

obvious, but you will often find yourself putting the goal of destroying your opponents' cars above saving your own. Often, by then end of the race, most of the cars will be trashed and you can pick up a few points by placing in the top three — and all you have to do is limp through the track and avoid the wrecked cars.

2. Go through the track backwards. This is the only way you are going to rack up enough points to advance to Division 1. The moment the race starts, pull off to the shoulder of the road and turn around. Then you can speed through the track going the wrong way and hit the leader at high speed (double points!).
3. Don't hit any cars that are upside down or on their sides. You won't

get awarded any points.

4. When you do hit cars, try to hit them off-center. If you hit them directly in the front, you will take serious damage to your valuable engine section and will rarely rack up any points. If you hit a car in one of its four corners, you will very likely send it into a spin and rack up serious pointage.

5. Try to broadside slow-moving cars that are severely damaged and are moving slowly. Of course, hit the car towards the front or back, but not in the center. If you hit a car that is moving more slowly than you, you will rarely take any damage, but you will be able to send that car spinning.
6. Pick a spot where cars come around a corner and you can easily ram them and set up camp. Just wait there and smash cars each time they come around. Sometimes you can block a narrow road by turning your car sideways. All the cars that pass by will plow into you and you may be able to accumulate points. Blocking roads is not always advisable, because it is possible that you will not lose any points and may, at the same time, lose a front wheel in the process.

7. Drive in reverse. If you start to take damage in the front portion of your vehicle (or even before then), start driving in reverse. It's far better to take damage on your rear bumper than on your front one. You can live without a wheel, but not without an engine.
8. Don't attack large packs of cars. Your points are awarded by the amount of spin induced. If you get

## Cheater's Corner

### Blood & Magic

If you've been having trouble with *Blood & Magic*, the *Forgotten Realms* real-time strategy game from Interplay, here are some mystic formulae to help you get back on track. Hold down ALT as you type in these codes.

<b>BOOST</b>	Gives you 300 mana points
<b>ELMINSTER</b>	Full research
<b>ACOLYTE</b>	Summons Basal Golem
<b>ALASKA</b>	Summons Gnome
<b>SMOG</b>	Summons Wym
<b>JARETH</b>	Summons Goblin
<b>FATHER</b>	Summons Cleric
<b>MERV</b>	Summons Griffin
<b>WOLVERINE</b>	Summons Druid
<b>CONCRETE</b>	Summons Stone Golem
<b>MERLIN</b>	Summons Wizard
<b>GREMLIN</b>	Summons Enchanter
<b>DEAD FLESH</b>	Summons Zombie
<b>FATAL ATTRACTION</b>	Summons Fury
<b>FLYING MONKIES</b>	Summons Gargoyle
<b>RAISE DEAD</b>	Summons Ghoul
<b>BODY GUARD</b>	Summons Guardian
<b>MICROSQUISH</b>	Summons Juggernaut
<b>MOTHER IN LAW</b>	Summons Harpy
<b>SEDUCTION</b>	Summons Nymph
<b>LANCELOT</b>	Summons Paladin
<b>YOGI</b>	Summons Ranger
<b>SHADOW</b>	Summons Wraith

a car spinning, but it crashes into another car and stops, you won't get any points for your efforts (but you will, more than likely, get damaged).

9. Learn your tracks. Knowing when and where an opponent will turn a corner is essential in destroying his or her car.
10. Be sure to save your game after a successful race!

Hope this helps. I got scores over 250 using these techniques.

— Jon Wise, via AOL

Thanks Jon, those are great tips — obviously you've been in a few real-life derbies too! Congratulations, you're our Tip O' the Month Club winner for June, so expect a box full of Gaming Goodness to be winging your way real soon! **PCG**

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Product Information Number 199



# Win 95 is cool, but sucks with DOS games!



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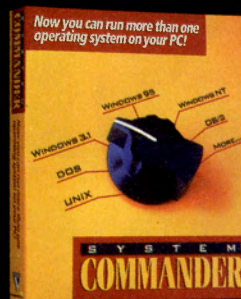
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Product Information Number 357



It's June, the traditional month of romance, weddings, and hay fever. So we thought we might write a love song to our readers, with classic June rhymes like "moon" and "spoon."

And then we thought, "Screw it; it's too silly." Then we thought, "Why not have our readers write *us* a love song?" Just be sure to include the words "plasmodium," "mutchkin," and "vinegaroon."

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## Questioning the Codies

I have just seen the winners of the Codies (the Software Publishers Association's annual awards), and I felt I had to respond. Best Adventure/RPG was *Tomb Raider*; Best Arcade/Action Game was *Rebel Assault II*; Best Simulation was *A.D.A.M. Practice Practical*; Best Sports Game was *Links LS*; and the Best Strategy Game was *Monty Python and the Quest for the Holy Grail*.

What buffoons picked these games?! *Tomb Raider* was good, but why was it in the adventure category? And *Rebel Assault II*... need I even speak about this drivel? Their simulation pick isn't even a game! Their sports pick might have been the only highlight. And, *Monty Python*, although one of my favorite movies, has no place alongside *Heroes of Might and Magic II* or *Red Alert*.

I am utterly disgusted with these selections by the Software Publisher's Association. Who appointed these "judges" to vote on something they

obviously know nothing about?  
— Lawrence Johnson, via the Internet

We were baffled by the SPA's gaming awards, too, Lawrence. The Codies web site ([www.spa.org/codies/1997/](http://www.spa.org/codies/1997/)) contains a long list of the preliminary judges who participated, but out of more than 130 names, we recognized precious few who had anything to do with computer gaming. And it seems clear that those few didn't have much say in determining the gaming winners; regardless of your opinion of the games that won, it'd be hard for any gamer to argue that the *Monty Python* game belongs in the strategy category. We're actually a little disappointed; the Codies are so bizarre this year, they've taken attention away from the PC Gamer Awards. Half of the people who would normally be sticking us with spears over our choices are too busy poking fun at the SPA.

## Play Free or Die

With regard to your article on online gaming, I think it was a waste of space. Why would anyone pay all that money to play those games? MPlayer, TEN, and all those expensive services are unneces-



Why pay for online gaming services when you can play *Duke Nukem* for free?

sary. First of all, you can play all those games for free using the network or modem multi-player choices. Second of all, good games offer free multi-player over the Internet, like *Quake*, *Red Alert*, *Diablo*, etc. I have free unlimited multi-player gaming. If I want to play *Quake* with 15 other people in Australia and Japan, what do I do? I hop on my ISP and fire up Qspy! Want to play *Red Alert* or *Command & Conquer*? Hop on Westwood Chat for free and play a virtuously lag-free game! Want to play *Diablo*, go to battle.net for free! Want to play *Doom II* or *Duke Nukem 3D*? Get

## Sex and Violence

I would like to disagree with Patrick Ratanpunna, who boldly espouses the view that sex in games is bad (Letters section, April 1997 issue). I'm sorry, but the strippers in *Duke Nukem 3D* are hilarious! They add to the general feel of *Duke*, and I don't think a little pixelized cleavage is going to kill anyone. I just don't understand why it's okay to blow bad guys into flying blood-flurries with bazookas, but when you show a little skin, it's lights out. If anything, violence is worse than sex — and heck, I like 'em both!

— Jackson Pritt, Salinas, CA

Well, Jackson, we can only hope you're not combining those two pastimes — although, of course, what you do in your spare time with whips, chains, and another consenting adult is your business. There does seem to be a double standard at work; very few people who complain about sexual content in games seem to have a problem with graphic violence.

There's an inconsistency here that suggests some advocates of censorship haven't really thought it through.



Scantily-clad women or bloody, disembodied heads — guess which image disturbs the censors more.





**Bravo Romeo Delta's** a bit of an eyesore, but it's the only recent game to tackle nuclear war head-on.

on irc #dcdoom (an Internet realtime chat channel), where there are hundreds of gamers in your area code, and play them direct for free!

I just wanted to let my fellow gamers know that there is no reason to pay 20 bucks a month for Internet access, then 20 more bones a month to play games that you bought for \$50! Do all those services think gamers are rich? I don't know about you guys, but once I buy the games, I have no more money to pay for the multi-player gaming at those places. I ain't Mr. Moneybags. I say screw Mplayer, TEN, Dwango, and support Westwood, Blizzard, id software, etc.!

— **Mark Gibson**, *via the Internet*

*Well, you probably know by now that MPlayer has started offering its service for free, Mark. Still say screw 'em? Seriously, free multi-player gaming is great, and companies that release games with built-in Internet support (as well as modem and network options) deserve a lot of credit. We think it's the wave of the future, and it'll be interesting to see what the pay-to-play services do to stay competitive.*

## Bring on the Bombs

Why is it that there seem to be no games that contain nuclear war? I'm not a sicko or anything, but I think that games based on the Cold War and the Communist/NATO "conflict" would be great! I understand that once the missiles fly, the game would basically be over. However, it seems to me that a great strategy/diplomacy game of deterrence or limited nuclear war with nice little explosions could be a success if programmed right. It almost seems strange that such an influence on the world (nuclear war) is never mentioned in today's games.

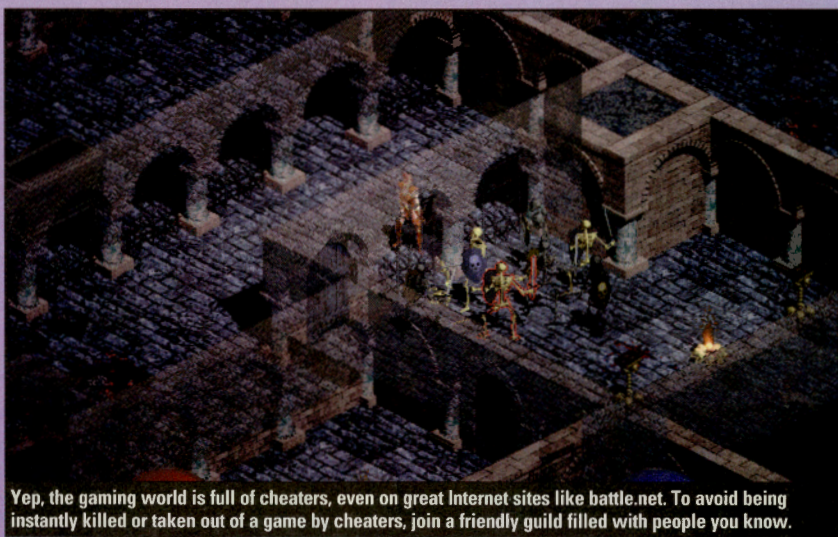
— **Michael D. Cameron**, *Madison Heights, MI*

The specter of nuclear war has been strangely absent from PC gaming in recent years, unless you count those mini-nukes in *Red Alert*. Chris Crawford's classic *Balance of Power* (1985) was a great game of global politics, but it depicted nuclear war realistically — as the result of a losing game. More recently, RAW Entertainment's

*Bravo Romeo Delta (1995) directly addressed nuclear war, challenging the player to manage a limited nuclear exchange without letting it spiral out of control. The graphics were crude, at best, but the game easily ran on a 386.*

## No Time for Real-Time

Why can't companies design games that could be enjoyed either in real-time or turn-based mode? After getting home from a hectic workday, I would like nothing more than to sit down and spend an hour or so playing something that does not test how fast I could move the pointer around the screen or how fast I can click the mouse buttons. I have been collecting software like *Steel Panthers*, *Master of Orion*, *X-COM* and the like; recently, I played *Lords of the Realm II*, and though it was billed as having real-time battles, it does give me the option to 'skip' the battles and leave me with the results; I would have liked to play out the battles à la *X-COM*-style management. Now, Lucasfilm is coming out with *Rebellion*, and as much as I like the movies and the *X-Wing* and *TIE Fighter* space sims, I am hesitant to venture into such a "real-time" game, trying to micro-manage not just a colony or planet but many star systems. "Real-



**Yep, the gaming world is full of cheaters, even on great Internet sites like battle.net. To avoid being instantly killed or taken out of a game by cheaters, join a friendly guild filled with people you know**

time" one-on-one in flight sims and first-person shooters is one thing, but when it's a whole battlefield or galaxy, I think it's asking too much.

Even in real life, the U.S. Army decided a few years back to keep their maneuvering tactical units small so junior officers have better control over situations. With almost every company jumping onto the "real-time" bandwagon, the industry is leaving many of us wanting. How much more work would it be to have both real-time and turn-based programmed into their games!?

— Reynold Wong, *via the Internet*

## It's Just Wrong

I love playing *Diablo* on Blizzard's battle.net. But there is one problem: cheating. I think around half the people on battle.net are using cheat programs. Townkill lets people kill you in town, where you are unable to fight back. *Diablo Trainer* lets people copy items and can give them all the spells and change attributes and level. *Autokill.exe* is the worse of all — it lets anyone just kill you with the push of a button. These cheats ruin the game for honest players like me.

Blizzard came out with a patch which destroyed the cheats, but the people that programmed the original cheats are starting to put newer versions onto the Internet, and those stupid jerks are telling everyone on battle.net where to download them. I think cheating makes the game lose all of its challenge and fun. The best way to avoid cheating is joining a friendly guild where you can play games with guild members that you know will not cheat.

— **Jake Black**, *Northville, NY*

*Jake, your experience in Diablo just goes to prove there are jerks everywhere; and the anonymity the Internet can provide makes it a real jerk-magnet. It's great that Blizzard was so quick to respond with a patch that disabled the first wave of cheat programs, but you've already hit on a better solution — just play the game with a few people you know and trust, lock everyone else out, and let the twits fall where they may.*

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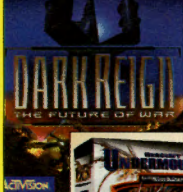
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# THE PC GAMER

## REVIEWS INDEX

**I**t's back! Yes, it's time for the PC Gamer Reviews Index, a semi-annual round-up of every game we've reviewed in the past six months. You'll find the good, the bad, and the ugly all right here in an

easy-to-use format. Want to know what we rated *Diablo* or *HyperBlade*? Want to know what month your favorite game was covered so you can read the full review? Then look no further because everything you need is right here.

TITLE	ISSUE / PAGE	CATEGORY	PUBLISHER	HIGHS	LOWS	BOTTOM LINE	RATING	EDITORS' CHOICE
<b>3D Ultra Pinball: Creep Night</b> 	February '97 p. 141	Pinball Simulation	Sierra, 3380 146th Place S.E. Suite 300, Bellevue, WA 98007 (800) 757-7707	Great graphics effects, sounds, and gameplay.	Only three tables; limited appeal with the "creepy" theme.	Whether you love pinball or not, this game will grab your attention... and keep it.	<b>85%</b>	
<b>A-10 Cuba!</b> 	March '97 p. 160	Flight Simulation	Activision, 11601 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1000, Los Angeles, CA 90025 (310) 473-9200	Detailed and frisky flight model; outstanding sound; smooth, simple graphics.	Somewhat irksome controls; no printed manual; only 12 missions.	An immersive but very limited flight sim that thrives in the Windows 95 environment.	<b>68%</b>	
<b>A Fork in The Tale</b> 	May '97 p. 129	Interactive Movie	AnyRiver Ent., 280 Utah Ave., South San Francisco, CA 94080 (415) 742-7932	Lots of great comedy from Rob Schneider; fast-moving, lag-free video.	Tedious, uninteresting story; banal gameplay; frustrating repetition.	Think FMV sucks? You'll think it again.	<b>34%</b>	
<b>Admiral: Sea Battles</b> 	February '97 p. 164	Strategy	Megamedia Corp., 47381 Bayside Parkway, Fremont, CA 94539 (510) 623-1100	Great graphics, intense action, challenging scenarios.	The manual needs to be translated into real English; some awkward design elements cause irritation.	A tight, clean, unpretentious little game that could become a classic.	<b>80%</b>	



TITLE	ISSUE / PAGE	CATEGORY	PUBLISHER	HIGHS	LOWS	BOTTOM LINE	RATING	EDITORS' CHOICE
<b>Age of Sail</b> 	March '97 p. 141	Strategy	TalonSoft, P.O. Box 632, Forest Hill, MD 21050-0632 (410) 933-9191	Huge number of scenarios; solid campaign mode; excellent battle-editor.	Controlling big engagements too often means zooming out and missing some of the fun.	A sumptuous looking, smooth-playing recreation of a fascinating era.	<b>85%</b>	
<b>Agile Warrior F-111X</b> 	May '97 p. 116	Shooter	Virgin Interactive, 1861 Fitch Ave., Irvine, CA 92614 (800) 874-4607	Numerous missions to accomplish; lots of ammunition to play with.	Bland landscapes; jerky control; targets difficult to find.	Even die-hard shooter fans will find this insipid and uninspired.	<b>40%</b>	
<b>Alien Incident</b> 	February '97 p. 129	Adventure	Gametek, 2999 N.E. 191st St., Suite 500, Aventura, FL 33180 (800) GAMETEK	Colorful graphics, good writing, and a solid game at the core.	Flaky sound drivers, some setup troubles, no in-game voice acting.	Good choice for adventure gaming beginners; something to take out for the whippersnappers.	<b>73%</b>	
<b>Amber</b> 	May '97 p. 133	Puzzle	Changeling, 2507 Albata Ave., Austin, TX 78757-2102 (512) 419-7085	A promising opening; nice rendered graphics.	Illogical puzzles; mostly static backgrounds; very small amount of game-play.	<i>Amber</i> falls more than a few steps short of achieving its potential.	<b>53%</b>	
<b>Amok</b> 	May '97 p. 125	Shooter	GT Interactive, 16 East 40th St., New York, NY, 10016 (212) 679-6850	Fast, frenetic action; it runs from the CD!	Frustratingly difficult; stingy password allotment; no mouse or joystick support.	Although it won't win any prizes, <i>Amok</i> is a decent, but somewhat dated and repetitious, shooter.	<b>65%</b>	
<b>Archimedean Dynasty</b> 	March '97 p. 138	Action	Blue Byte Software, 870 E. Higgins Rd., Suite 143, Schaumburg, IL 60173 (847) 995-9981	Great graphics; sophisticated combat engine; plenty of strategy; involving story line.	May run slow on older machines, gameplay is fairly linear, and there are no multi-player options.	This intriguing sub combat game will please action lovers everywhere.	<b>84%</b>	
<b>Area 51</b> 	February '97 p. 167	Action	GT Interactive, 16 East 40th St., New York, NY 10016 (800) 434-2637	Lots of enemies to kill. Loads of ammo, power-ups, and aliens.	Grainy graphics, sluggish pace, one-dimensional gameplay.	Unless you adored the arcade version and can overlook some glaring flaws, don't bother.	<b>58%</b>	
<b>Ashes to Ashes</b> 	February '97 p. 145	Action	Corel Corp., 1600 Carling Ave., Ottawa, Ont., Canada K1Z8R7 (800) 772-6735	Attractive graphics, multiple vehicles, and interesting outdoor environments.	Disorienting, confusing. Uninspired.	There's no reason to recommend this. It's bland, confusing, and tiresome.	<b>25%</b>	
<b>Assassin 2015</b> 	January '97 p. 236	Action	Inscape, P.O. Box 251829, Los Angeles, CA 90025 (800) 741-3043	Adrienne Barbeau's husky voice-overs are nicely done.	The game is very short, not very challenging, and, aside from the cut-scenes, looks very dated.	<i>Assassin</i> seems to miss the point of what first-person shootin' fun is all about.	<b>35%</b>	
<b>Azrael's Tear</b> 	February '97 p. 160	Adventure	Mindscape, 88 Rowland Way, Novato, CA 94945 (415) 897-9900	Beautiful in high-res; interesting plot-line; well-developed characters.	Runs poorly even on high-end machines; lots of hunting for yet another key.	A good graphic adventure with lots to explore, but you need a powerful PC.	<b>82%</b>	
<b>Baku Baku</b> 	January '97 p. 251	Puzzle	Sega Entertainment, P.O. Box 8097, Redwood City, CA 94063 (888) SEGA-SALES	Nicely rendered animals; great two-player mode; extra strategy makes it stand out.	May be too "cute" for some; PC conversion loses a little.	Despite its full-screen failings, <i>Baku Baku</i> is a puzzle game not to be missed.	<b>83%</b>	



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TITLE	ISSUE / PAGE	CATEGORY	PUBLISHER	HIGHS	LOWS	BOTTOM LINE	RATING	EDITORS' CHOICE
<b>Baldies</b> 	April '97 p. 112	Strategy	Panasonic Interactive, 4701 Patrick Henry Dr., Ste. 1101, Santa Clara, CA 95054 (408) 653-1898	Cute. A new twist.	Much of the game relies on luck. You have little control over the baldies, which is very frustrating.	It's a great attempt at making something fresh and funny, but it falls flat after the first few levels.	55%	
<b>Banzai Bug</b> 	May '97 p. 134	Action	Grolier Interactive Inc., Sherman Turnpike, Danbury, CT 06816 (800) 356-5590	Lots of originality; good graphics and sound; cute touches throughout game.	Flawed basic design; often frustrating to play; technically spartan.	A promising title that didn't quite live up to its potential.	56%	
<b>Battlecruiser 3000 AD</b> 	January '97 p. 208	Strategy	Take 2 Interactive, 1004 Ligonier St., Latrobe, PA 15650 (412) 472-2000	The intro animation is very cool.	Annoying bugs; crashes; features don't work; inadequate manual. It wasn't finished when it shipped.	Maybe Take 2 can still fix this game. Until then, don't buy it.	15%	
<b>Battleship</b> 	March '97 p. 110	Strategy	Hasbro Interactive, 50 Dunham Rd., Beverly, MA 01915 (617) 746-2903	Hey, it's <i>Battleship</i> — with snazzy cut-scenes and great multi-player support.	Those cut-scenes won't go away; there's not option for turn-based combat during the scenario modes.	A pretty good port of a classic.	78%	
<b>Bedlam</b> 	January '97 p. 225	Action	GT Interactive, 16 East 40th St., New York, NY 10016 (800) 434-2637	Easy to control, lots of explosions.	No multi-player mode, questionable level design, tedious switch-hunts, enemies too easy to kill.	A reasonably workmanlike effort with some drawbacks.	68%	
<b>Blood &amp; Magic</b> 	March '97 p. 118	Strategy	Interplay, 16815 Von Karman Ave., Irvine, CA 92714 (714) 553-6655	Lots of terrain variety, good graphics (for VGA), great single-player game.	Flat sound effects, constantly clicking on basal golems.	It's not just another <i>WarCraft: Blood &amp; Magic</i> has some interesting, new ideas.	83%	
<b>Bug!</b> 	January '97 p. 259	Arcade	Sega Entertainment, P.O. Box 8097, Redwood City, CA 94063 (888) SEGA-SALES	Cute characters; solid control.	The game itself is incredibly dry and uninspired. Not Sega's best title to choose to port over to the PC.	Unless you're a die-hard platform freak, stay away from <i>Bug!</i>	44%	
<b>Caddy Hack</b> 	December '96 p. 289	Miniature Golf Simulation	Virgin Interactive Entertainment, 18601 Fitch Avenue, Irvine, CA 92714 (714) 833-8710	The animations, graphics, and course design are nicely done.	Lousy ball physics, bad controls, and cheesy horror theme.	Miniature golf gone bad. The poorly executed gameplay gives miniature golf sims a bad debut.	29%	
<b>Callahan's Crosstime Saloon</b> 	May '97 p. 139	Adventure	Take 2 Interactive, 1004 Ligonier St., Latrobe, PA 15650 (412) 474-2000	There are some genuinely funny jokes. Gameplay is just right: not too easy or hard.	There are some genuinely unfunny jokes. Some puzzles were pointless.	A traditional adventure game with a good story, funny bits, and decent puzzles.	86%	
<b>Captain Quazar</b> 	February '97 p. 141	Arcade	3DO, 600 Galveston Dr., Redwood City, CA 94063 (800) 336-3506	It's easy to set up and start playing.	No fun, plenty of annoying faults.	Half-hearted arcade dross to be avoided.	19%	
<b>Case of the Rose Tattoo: The Lost Files of Sherlock Holmes</b> 	December '96 p. 282	Graphic Adventure	Electronic Arts, 1450 Fashion Island Blvd., San Mateo, CA 94404 (415) 571-7171	Great story; gorgeous graphics; good puzzles.	Typical graphic adventure complaints; jarring lapses in realism; snail-like pace except on fast PCs.	A must-have for Sherlock Holmes fans and anyone who enjoys a good mystery.	80%	



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<b>Cave Wars</b> 	March '97 p. 162	Strategy	Avalon Hill, 4517 Hartford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214 (410) 254-9200	A novel concept, with a multi- tiered world and bizarre subter- ranean milieu.	A lack of update screens, diplo- macy, interac- tion, custom options, tactical combat.	Bare bones strategic gaming with few frills; fresh ideas but poor execution.	<b>75%</b>	
<b>Circle of Blood</b> 	January '97 p. 234	Graphic Adventure	Virgin Interactive Ent., 19061 Fitch Ave., Irvine, CA 92614 (800) 874-4607	Simple interface; beautiful, crisp graphics; chal- lenging puzzles; intriguing story line.	Voice acting isn't exactly profes- sional; some puz- zles require too much pixel- hunting.	It's entertaining, challenging, and worth playing, but it's not a graphic adventure that will blow you away.	<b>80%</b>	
<b>Clandestiny</b> 	March '97 p. 157	Puzzle	Virgin Interactive Ent., 18061 Fitch Avenue, Irvine, CA 92714 (800) 874-4607	Nice rendering, and there's a hid- den book with some good Scottish recipes.	Cheesy anima- tion, bad dialog, lame-o puzzles.	If tired puzzlers ye buy, best give it a try. If ye're nae into it, ye'd best let it sit.	<b>30%</b>	
<b>Command &amp; Conquer: Red Alert</b> 	December '96 p. 238	Real-time Strategy	Virgin Interactive Ent., 18061 Fitch Avenue, Irvine, CA 92714 (800) 874-4607	It's a follow-up to one of the best games of all time, and it's faithful to the original.	Some changes are cosmetic; AI hasn't improved much; some missions have too much "puzzle" element.	<i>Red Alert</i> will be liked by the legions of the faithful, and win new converts as well.	<b>91%</b>	
<b>Connections</b> 	December '96 p. 293	Puzzle	Discovery Channel Multimedia, 7700 Wisconsin Ave., Bethesda, MD 20814 (301) 986-1999	James Burke and his collection of videos; great graphics.	Not much game- play; thin con- nections; only five levels.	Burke is enter- taining to watch, but that doesn't necessarily make <i>Connections</i> a great game.	<b>59%</b>	
<b>Crystal Skull, The</b> 	February '97 p. 172	Adventure	Maxis, 2121 N. California Blvd., Walnut Creek, CA 94596-3572 (800) 336-2947	A few okay puz- zles; some of the acting is good for its unintentional comedic value.	Mostly puzzles; less-than-great graphics.	Want a Multi- media Aztec Adventure, try <i>Inca</i> . Want a good adventure, get <i>The Beast Within</i> .	<b>33%</b>	
<b>CyberGladiators</b> 	February '97 p. 117	Fighting	Sierra Online, 3380 146th Place S.E. Suite 300, Bellevue, WA 98007 (800) 757-7707	Attractive graph- ics; smooth ani- mations; intuitive controls.	Minimal story- line or options; uninspired, angu- lar characters.	This is a real arcade-style fighter for the PC that's more than capable of stand- ing up to a fight.	<b>80%</b>	
<b>Daggerfall</b> 	December '96 p. 242	Roleplaying	Bethesda Softworks, 1370 Piccard Drive, Rockville, MD 20850 (301) 926-8300	A huge world with tons of dun- geons, monsters, characters, spells.	Bugs should have been smoked out before release. Some generic dungeons are boring to explore.	One of the more realistic, involved, and impressive RPGs out. A defi- nite must for any RPG fan.	<b>90%</b>	
<b>Daytona USA</b> 	February '97 p. 171	Arcade	Sega Enter- tainment, P.O. Box 8097, Redwood City, CA 94063 (888) SEGA-SALES	Realistic driving physics; smooth graphics.	Choppy frame- rate; limited num- ber of cars and tracks; it could have been done much better.	<i>Daytona USA</i> is a solid, if limited, racing experi- ence.	<b>67%</b>	
<b>Deadlock</b> 	December '96 p. 304	Strategy	Accolade, 5300 Stevens Creek Blvd. Suite 500 San Jose, CA 95129 (408) 985-1700	Deep, engrossing, and handsome, it's one of the best conquer-the- planet strategy games in years.	Surly and ungrate- ful colonists get pissed off too easily and too often.	This may well be the long-awaited inheritor of the <i>Master of Orion</i> crown.	<b>88%</b>	
<b>Deadly Tide</b> 	January '97 p. 260	Action	Microsoft, One Microsoft Way, Redmond, WA 98052-6399 (206) 637-9308	Damn fine graph- ics, a semi- playable 360- degree shooting mode, and cool rendered bubbles.	Too bad it's still a cookie-cutter rail-shooter. Gets real boring, real fast.	The Waterworld of gaming.	<b>60%</b>	



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TITLE	ISSUE / PAGE	CATEGORY	PUBLISHER	HIGHS	LOWS	BOTTOM LINE	RATING	EDITORS' CHOICE
<b>Death Rally</b> 	February '97 p. 142	Arcade	GT Interactive, 16 East 40th St., New York, NY 10016 (800) 434-2637	Beautiful graphics; fast racing action; it's fun playing dirty.	No race map; merely average computer opponents.	You can take revenge on bad drivers in this fun arcade racer (without legal consequences).	84%	
<b>DeathDrome</b> 	April '97 p. 130	Action	Viacom New Media, 1515 Broadway, New York, NY 10036 (800) 469-2539	Runs fast, looks good, and it can be fun.	Once you figure out how to exploit a glaring design flaw, it's far too easy.	With a little more care and attention paid to gameplay, <i>DeathDrome</i> could have been a lot better.	68%	
<b>Destiny</b> 	January '97 p. 242	Strategy	Interactive Magic, P.O. Box 13491, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709 (919) 461-0722	Strategic level play has great detail and epic sweep.	Tactical combat and 3D modes just don't work; Discovery system is poorly explained.	An admirable contender, but it won't replace <i>Civilization</i> in the hearts of many gamers.	75%	
<b>Destruction Derby 2</b> 	March '97 p. 124	Arcade	Psygnosis/Sony Interactive, 919 E. Hillsdale Blvd., 2nd Floor, Foster City, CA 94404 (800) 438-7794	Sensational graphics, bone-breaking action; about as subtle as a shower of anvils.	Hardware requirements are steep if you want maximum performance.	If you liked the original, you'll love this sequel.	86%	
<b>Deus</b> 	April '97 p. 137	Adventure	ReadySoft, 2221 Yonge St. Suite 400, Toronto, Canada, M4S24B (416) 322-7350	Immersive sound; two play modes; an improvement over its predecessor.	Irritations still outweigh any enjoyment you might find.	Interesting ideas are sabotaged by poor implementation and dated design.	58%	
<b>Devo's Adventures of the Smart Patrol</b> 	December '96 p. 265	Puzzle	Inscape, P.O. Box 251829, Los Angeles, CA 90025 (800) 741-3043	Lots of Devo influence, and some pretty funny moments.	It's too bad it's held together by a lousy game.	It's much better than the CDs from Queensryche and that thing known as Prince, but that ain't saying much.	57%	
<b>Diablo</b> 	March '97 p. 102	Roleplaying	Blizzard Entertainment, P.O. Box 18077, Irvine, CA, 92713 (714) 953-7669	Beautiful scenery; streamlined interface; multi-player support.	Load times long for slow PCs; some quests are fairly linear; limited options with ranged weapons.	RPG fans have waited for this one for a long time, and they won't be disappointed.	90%	PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE
<b>Discworld II</b> 	April '97 p. 102	Graphic Adventure	Psygnosis, 919 E. Hillsdale Blvd., 2nd Floor, Foster City, CA 94404 (800) 438-7794	Terrific animation, great music, and a huge story to work your way through.	Too much pointless dialog, working knowledge of Discworld books required.	Discworld fans will have fun, but everyone else will simply be confused.	73%	
<b>Dragonheart: Fire and Steel</b> 	April '97 p. 113	Arcade	Acclaim, One Acclaim Plaza, Glen Cove, NY 11542-2777 (516) 759-7800	Them dragons are good eatin'.	Clumsy controls, repetitive gameplay, and chunky graphics. A terrible use of a good movie license.	It's pointless and it has little to do with the movie. Don't bother.	25%	
<b>Drowned God</b> 	February '97 p. 110	Puzzle	Inscape, P.O. Box 251829, Los Angeles, CA 90025 (800) 741-3043	Visually sumptuous and atmospheric, with interesting conspiratorial content.	Many familiar and frustrating puzzles, with almost as many bugs and frequent dead ends.	A fair twiddleware game that's undermined by bugs and mediocre gameplay.	69%	
<b>Emperor of the Fading Suns</b> 	May '97 p. 138	Strategy	SegaSoft, Inc., 150 Shoreline Dr., Redwood City, CA 94065 (415) 802-4400	It's epic in scale, atmospheric, and full of extremely deep gameplay.	Inadequate manual; stratospheric learning curve; solo play becomes a real trudge.	A lot of people are going to love this game; I didn't --- but I respect it greatly.	75%	



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<b>Eradicator</b> 	January '97 p. 212	Action	Accolade, 5300 Stevens Creek Blvd., Suite 500, San Jose, CA 95129 (800) 245-7744	PIP; new enemies to kill; a few good weapons.	A few bad weapons; aggravating levels; repetitive, uninspired music.	It's a decent shoot-'em-up, but <i>Eradicator</i> needed to do more to take on <i>Quake</i> or <i>Duke</i> on their home turf.	78%	
<b>Extreme Chess</b> 	April '97 p. 131	Chess	Simon & Schuster, 19840 Pioneer Ave., Torrance, CA 90503 (310) 793-0600	Powerful chess engine; many classic games; strong analysis and annotation features.	Poor documentation; occasionally awkward and confusing interface; no Internet play.	This is the chess game for serious chess players. It may help improve your game.	91%	PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE
<b>F-22 Lightning II</b> 	December '96 p. 246	Flight Simulation	NovaLogic Inc., 6010 Mureau Road, Suite 200, Calabasas, CA 91302 (818) 880-1997	Beautiful graphics; easy to get into; multi-player sessions require only one CD.	Too simplistic, and too easy, to satisfy most hardcore air combat fans.	<i>F-22</i> is hardly the realistic, detailed simulation NovaLogic claims it is, but there's still fun to be had here.	78%	
<b>FIFA Soccer 97</b> 	March '97 p. 152	Sports Simulation	Electronic Arts, 1450 Fashion Island Boulevard, San Mateo, CA 94404 (415) 571-7171	Authentic, fun, gameplay; exquisite presentation.	Players occasionally behave erratically; tournament modes could be better defined.	<i>FIFA 97</i> is a great leap forward for PC soccer games, and terrific entertainment in its own right.	88%	PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE
<b>Flying Corps</b> 	May '97 p. 120	Flight Simulation	Empire, 13220 Wisteria Dr., Bay N-2, Germantown, MD 20874 (310) 916-9303	Visually gorgeous and full game world. Detailed flight model; strong gameplay.	Useless Win95 mode; screwy keyboard layout and viewing options; joystick problems.	A flawed gem, but a gem nonetheless. A wonderful sim with an authentic feel.	90%	PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE
<b>Front Page Sports: Football Pro '97</b> 	April '97 p. 116	Sports Simulation	Sierra, 3380 146th Place S.E., Suite 300, Bellevue, WA 98007 (800) 757-7707	The original design is there; you won't find a better way to make leagues and plays.	Dubious multi-player action; numerous bugs; Windows screen clutter, DOS hangovers.	You'd be better off with an earlier DOS version of the game.	65%	
<b>Full Tilt! 2 Pinball</b> 	March '97 p. 149	Pinball Simulation	Maxis, 2121 North California Blvd., Suite 600, Walnut Creek, CA 94596 (800) 336-2947	Great graphics and sound; many clever enhancements over the original game.	We wish it came with five or six tables, instead of three.	No pinball addict should miss <i>Full Tilt 2!</i>	84%	
<b>FX Fighter Turbo</b> 	March '97 p. 105	Fighting	GTE Entertainment, 2035 Corte Del Nogal, Suite 200, Carlsbad, CA 92009 (800) GTE-TODAY	It's more of the same for <i>FX Fighter</i> fans; the network play is a plus.	Inferior graphics; little innovation; and clumsy controls.	If you must have network play, you might as well get this one, but there are plenty of better 3D fighters.	47%	
<b>G-Nome</b> 	May '97 p. 117	Action	7th Level, P.O. Box 832190, Richardson, TX 75083-2190 (800) 884-8863 Ext. 77	Pretty graphics; the ability to eject and enter enemy 'bots and buildings adds variety.	Choppy animation; sluggish control; inadequate manual.	<i>G-Nome</i> had the goods to be a hit, but poor execution makes it a disappointment.	68%	
<b>Gender Wars</b> 	December '96 p. 281	Squad Combat	GT Interactive, 16 East 40th St., New York, NY 10016 (800) 434-2637	A fun squad-based combat game.	Degrading to both sexes, and some weird screen flicker takes away from the enjoyment.	This one should hold you over 'till <i>Syndicate Wars</i> arrives in town.	78%	
<b>Gene Wars</b> 	December '96 p. 285	Strategy	Electronic Arts, 1450 Fashion Island Blvd., San Mateo, CA 94404 (415) 571-7171	Clean interface, sharp graphics, and moody sound effects.	Uninspired combat and resource management, lack of variety in missions and unit types.	With more variety and less repetition, <i>Gene Wars</i> could have been something special.	61%	



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P	I	N	C	H	W	
	R					
S						

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BREAK .....Z	PUNCH .....S	SPRAY .....C	TURBO .....V
STOMP .....T	STAND .....R	PRESS .....E	DREAM .....O
CRUSH .....I	SCORE .....H	SLANT .....L	CHASE .....P

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<b>Gex</b> 	April '97 p. 141	Arcade	Microsoft, One Microsoft Way, Redmond, WA 98052-6399 (206) 882-8080	A few interesting additions to the genre, and you can turn off Gex's voice!	So-so graphics; not all that amusing.	If Microsoft tells you something's funny, run for your life. I found more humor in Windows 95.	<b>58%</b>	
<b>Golden Gate</b> 	May '97 p. 128	Puzzle	Panasonic Interactive Media, 4701 Patrick Henry Dr., Santa Clara, CA 95054 (408) 653-1898	Nicely done watercolor-style graphics.	Really bad acting; tedious puzzles; complete lack of originality; one of the worst endings in gaming history.	If you've played <i>Myst</i> , you don't need to play it again in San Francisco.	<b>31%</b>	
<b>Golden Nugget</b> 	May '97 p. 132	Casino	Virgin Interactive Ent., 18061 Fitch Avenue, Irvine, CA 92714 (800) 874-4607	Adam West! Pure West!	Pitifully slow, even on a fast PC; no instructions; bad controls; poor recreation of casino games.	<i>Golden Nugget</i> makes you appreciate shareware casino games.	<b>18%</b>	
<b>Grid Runner</b> 	March '97 p. 144	Arcade	Virgin Interactive Ent., 18061 Fitch Avenue, Irvine, CA 92714 (800) 874-4607	Fast-paced action, good-looking graphics.	Network play would have been great, and the split-screen two-player mode wears on the eyes.	<i>Grid Runner</i> dares to be different, and succeeds, but where's the 'net-play?	<b>77%</b>	
<b>Hardline</b> 	May '97 p. 109	Action	Virgin Interactive Ent., 18061 Fitch Avenue, Irvine, CA 92714 (800) 874-4607	Video quality is good; the graphic sex scene is sure to tick off the busy-bodies in Washington.	Held together by the worst arcade sequences in recent memory.	Go watch a Troma movie instead.	<b>24%</b>	
<b>Harvester</b> 	December '96 p. 276	Adventure	Merit Studios, 13707 Gamma Rd., Dallas, TX 75244, (214) 385-2353	A serviceable adventure with an unflinching approach; delivers the gory goods as promised.	Outdated interface; unrelenting unpleasantness bound to offend some.	Definitely not for the squeamish.	<b>82%</b>	
<b>Hellbender</b> 	December '96 p. 268	Action	Microsoft, 1 Microsoft Way, Redmond, WA 98052-6399 (206) 637-9308	Nice accelerated graphics and, if you enjoyed <i>Terminal Velocity</i> , here's more of the same.	TV has been through enough incarnations. Chunky graphics, subterranean play equal frustration.	We've seen this before, and it really is time to move on...	<b>66%</b>	
<b>Heroes of Might &amp; Magic II</b> 	February '97 p. 138	Strategy	New World Computing, P.O. Box 4302, Hollywood, CA 90078 (818) 889-5650	A very well-designed strategy game. Anything this hard to stop playing has to be good.	The wait-your-turn, multi-player option for network and modem play is tedious without a time limit imposed.	If you enjoy strategy games, you simply must have this one.	<b>91%</b>	PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE
<b>Hind</b> 	December '96 p. 272	Flight Simulation	Interactive Magic, P.O. Box 13491, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709 (919) 461-0722	A solid flight model with crisp graphics and a slew of gameplay options.	Dodgy joystick calibration and support. Explosions still chunky.	Just about everything a flight hack could want in a sim is here. Buy it.	<b>90%</b>	PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE
<b>Hunter Hunted</b> 	February '97 p. 155	Action	Sierra, 3380 146th Place S.E., Suite 300, Bellevue, WA 98007 (800) 757-7707	It looks good, sounds great, and is easy to pick up and play.	Addictive while it lasts, but it won't last for long. The two-player mode isn't so compelling.	Impressive example of 2D action gaming, showing what the PC can do in this genre.	<b>78%</b>	
<b>Huygen's Disclosure</b> 	April '97 p. 153	Adventure	Microforum, 1 Woodborough Ave., Toronto, Canada, M6M5A1 (800) 465-2323	Well-designed interface; some challenging puzzles.	Some of the puzzles are of the abstract, 7th Guest variety.	A decent graphic adventure with a handful of significant flaws.	<b>68%</b>	



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TITLE	ISSUE / PAGE	CATEGORY	PUBLISHER	HIGHS	LOWS	BOTTOM LINE	RATING	EDITORS' CHOICE
HyperBlade 	February '97 p. 120	Action	Activision, 11601 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1000, Los Angeles, CA 90025 (310) 473-9200	Fast action, smooth graphics, and built-in 3D accelerator support.	Odd controls, erratic artificial intelligence, and disorienting environments.	If you're willing to accept a few minor flaws, this can make you a superstar in the sport of the future.	78%	
Iron Man/X-O Manowar in Heavy Metal 	April '97 p. 129	Arcade	Acclaim, One Acclaim Plaza, Glen Cove, NY 11542-2777 (516) 759-7800	Umm, I'm thinking...	Poor graphics; sluggish control; no AI to speak of; lack of innovation; outdated comic book license.	Avoid this dog like it has rabies, and don't say we didn't warn you.	15%	
Jetfighter III 	March '97 p. 142	Flight Simulation	Interplay, 16815 Von Karman Ave., Irvine, CA 92714 (800) 969-4263	Great action; impressive graphics, controls.	Fuzzy physics model, demanding system requirements. No multi-play.	If you can forgive the occasionally unrealistic action, you'll be rewarded with a thrilling sim.	88%	PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE
Jonny Quest: Cover-Up At Roswell 	January '97 p. 240	Adventure/Puzzle	Virgin Sound and Vision, 122 S. Robertson Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90048 (310) 246-4666	Excellent production value for animation and sound.	Entirely too easy. The puzzles are very childish in nature.	The animations of the "Jonny Quest" universe aren't enough to propel this breeze of an adventure.	60%	
Jumanji 	February '97 p. 145	Arcade	Philips Media, 10960 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90024 (303) 739-4131	Sharp graphics; no violence; kids may enjoy the movie tie-in.	Too easy for skilled gamers; nothing to keep you coming back.	There are better arcade games out there for kids and adults.	65%	
Krush Kill 'N Destroy 	May '97 p. 112	Strategy	Electronic Arts, 1450 Fashion Island Blvd., San Mateo, CA 94403 (415) 513-7171	Polished graphics, nice variety, decent multi-player options.	Weak artificial intelligence. Extremely difficult missions.	Some of the touches that made the originals great aren't here, but <i>KKND</i> is still worth playing.	82%	
Krazy Ivan 	April '97 p. 154	Action	Psygnosis, 919 East Hillsdale Blvd., Foster City, CA 94404 (415) 655-5683	Lots of weapons and power-ups; smooth game-play; multi-player.	Easily finished in a few sittings; occasionally wonky controls.	<i>Krazy Ivan</i> is a little too simplistic; most PC gamers will find it a hollow experience.	60%	
Leisure Suit Larry in Love for Sail! 	April '97 p. 133	Graphic Adventure	Sierra, P.O. Box 85006, Bellevue, WA 98007 (206) 644-4343	Great graphics; Al Lowe's skewed humor; the return of the (optional) text-based interface.	Fairly high "been there, done that" factor; sometimes the tongue-in-cheek humor is tiresome.	If you can handle Adult Situations and Partial Nudity, this is a ship-shape winner.	84%	
Lighthouse 	December '96 p. 290	Puzzle	Sierra, P.O. Box 3404, Salinas, CA 93912 (800) 757-7707	Interesting world and story, many good puzzles with different solutions.	Some frustrating puzzles, pixel hunting, occasionally awkward interface.	A somewhat flawed but overall entertaining trip through a parallel world.	82%	
Lords of the Realm II 	February '97 p. 148	Strategy	Sierra Online, 3380 146th Place S.E. Suite 300, Bellevue, WA 98007 (800) 757-7707	Excellent balance of strategic and tactical play; fun combat; superb realm-building.	More charts would help. AI is sometimes either too easy or too hard. No custom castles!	<i>LORII</i> is immense fun for both the empire-builder and the medieval combatant.	92%	PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE
M.A.X. 	April '97 p. 124	Strategy	Interplay, 16815 Von Karman Ave., Irvine, CA 92606 (714) 553-6678	Great balance among units and structures; tough AI; multi-player options; loads of replay value.	No Internet support; manual should have been better.	This could end up being the best turn-based strategy game of 1997.	90%	PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE



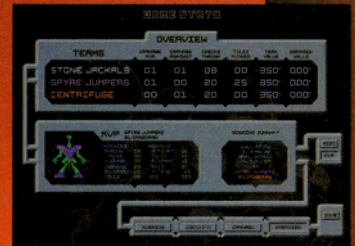


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TITLE	ISSUE / PAGE	CATEGORY	PUBLISHER	HIGHS	LOWS	BOTTOM LINE	RATING	EDITORS' CHOICE
<b>Madden NFL 97</b> 	January '97 p. 216	Sports Simulation	Electronic Arts, 1450 Fashion Island Blvd., San Mateo, CA 94404 (415) 571-7171	Excellent graphics and animations; smooth interface; more than 100 teams.	Suspect AI; questionable season simulation results; mediocre commentary; numerous quirks.	There's a lot of fun to be had with <i>Madden NFL 97</i> , but not a lot of realism.	74%	
<b>Magic: The Gathering—BattleMage</b> 	May '97 p. 102	Action	Acclaim Entertainment, 1 Acclaim Plaza, Glen Cove, NY 11542-2708 (516) 759-7900	It tries to capture the feel of playing <i>Magic: The Gathering</i> real-time.	It fails to achieve its goal with any sort of success.	A terrible game. If you want a <i>Magic: TG</i> PC game, wait for MicroProse's version.	30%	
<b>Master of Orion II: Battle at Antares</b> 	March '97 p. 134	Strategy	MicroProse, 180 Lakefront Drive, Hunt Valley, MD 21030-2245 (410) 771-1151	Endless replay value, thanks to randomly generated universes and gameplay variables.	The amount of micromanaging required is almost overwhelming.	A great update of a classic game, even with the micromanaging.	86%	
<b>Maui Mallard in Cold Shadow</b> 	April '97 p. 113	Arcade	Disney Interactive, 500 South Buena Vista St., Burbank, CA 91521 (800) 426-3306	Smooth animation and Disney's attention to character design.	Reliance on traditional platform formula makes it predictable.	If you're nostalgic for a mindless action/platform thrill, this is it, but there are better action games.	62%	
<b>MechWarrior II: Mercenaries</b> 	December '96 p. 252	Action	Activision, 11601 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1000, Los Angeles, CA 90025 (310) 473-9200	New business model, improved graphics make Mercs even more fun than <i>Mech2</i> .	New graphics options mean steeper hardware requirements.	If you liked <i>MechWarrior 2</i> , you'll love <i>Mercenaries</i> .	95%	PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE
<b>MegaRace 2</b> 	December '96 p. 254	Arcade	Mindscape, 88 Rowland Way, Novato, CA 94945 (415) 897-9900	Gorgeous graphics and big, branching tracks.	Dodgy controls; long video segments; and underwhelming sense of speed.	Where the original shined on the track, <i>MegaRace 2</i> merely putts along at a leisurely pace.	65%	
<b>Microsoft Golf 3.0</b> 	April '97 p. 136	Sports Simulation	Microsoft, One Microsoft Way, Redmond, WA 98052-6399 (206) 635-6100	Easy multi-player options for playing over the 'net.	The graphics should've been updated; the menu-driven interface is sorta clunky.	If Internet competition is your thing, <i>MS Golf</i> delivers; if you're a die-hard duffer, stick to <i>Links LS</i> .	65%	
<b>Microsoft Soccer</b> 	March '97 p. 129	Sports Simulation	Microsoft, 1 Microsoft Way, Redmond, WA 98052-6399 (800) 429-9400	Easy installation; network play.	Frustrating gameplay; average graphics; cheesy sound effects; only one view of on-field gameplay.	In the market for a great soccer sim? You won't find it here.	58%	
<b>Mode</b> 	January '97 p. 248	Adventure	Corel, The Corel Building, 1600 Carling Ave., Ottawa, Ontario Canada K1Z8R7 (800) 772-6735	Hitting the escape button gets you out of the game very quickly.	It exists. It takes up four CDs that would have been better used for John Tesh music.	The nadir of non-interactive video junk.	10%	
<b>Monster Truck Madness</b> 	December '96 p. 248	Arcade	Microsoft Corporation, 1 Microsoft Way, Redmond, WA 98052-6399 (206) 637-9308	Great-looking trucks; outstanding racing; fun network play. The horn plays "Dixie".	Really needs a monster system to run. More tracks would have been nice.	More fun than you can have at the state fair arena.	85%	
<b>Mummy: Tomb of the Pharaoh</b> 	April '97 p. 150	Puzzle	Interplay, 16815 Von Karman Ave., Irvine, CA, 92606 (714) 533-6678	The music and sound effects provide a wonderful atmosphere.	Plot and puzzles are ordinary, without anything new to offer the seasoned player.	A good introduction to the adventure game genre, but there's better out there.	65%	



TITLE	ISSUE / PAGE	CATEGORY	PUBLISHER	HIGHS	LOWS	BOTTOM LINE	RATING	EDITORS' CHOICE
NASCAR Racing 2 	March '97 p. 116	Sports Simulation	Sierra, 3380 146th Place S.E. Suite 300, Bellevue, WA 98007 (800) 757-7707	Improved graphics, frame rate, interface; great multi-player options.	Demanding system requirements. Occasionally fishy AI.	A worthwhile upgrade from the original. If you never tried it, here's your chance to catch the fever.	90%	
NBA Full Court Press 	January '97 p. 247	Sports Simulation	Microsoft, One Microsoft Way, Redmond, WA 98052-6399 (206) 637-9308	Slick presentation; great commentary; what you'd expect from an NBA license.	Bland graphics; unsatisfying feel; doesn't pack the kind of attitude an NBA license suggests.	There have been better basketball games; there's better to come. Why buy this?	60%	
NBA Live 97 	April '97 p. 98	Sports Simulation	Electronic Arts, 1450 Fashion Island Blvd., San Mateo, CA 94404 (415) 571-7171	Incredible graphics, full rosters, all the stats, and unequalled presentation.	Slippery control, poor frame-rate on slower systems, and some flaws as a sim.	The best-looking, best-playing, basketball game available, even with its flaws.	84%	
NCAA Championship Basketball 	December '96 p. 308	Sports Simulation	GTE Entertainment, 2035 Corte Del Nogal, #200, Carlsbad, CA 92009 (619) 431-8801	Good on-court gameplay; recruiting and multi-player options give it a good shelf life.	Results of simulated games are questionable; only one viewing perspective; inaccurate stats.	A fun college basketball sim, but one that can clearly stand some improvement.	65%	
Necrodome 	February '97 p. 114	Action/Arcade	SSI, 675 Almanor Ave., Suite 210, Sunnyvale, CA 94086 (408) 737-6880	Many play options; Internet support; lots of things to smash and shoot.	Murky, circular levels; too many stops and starts.	Fun and playable, but not really remarkable.	84%	
Nemesis: The Wizardry Adventure 	February '97 p. 134	Adventure	Sir-tech Software, P.O. Box 245, Ogdensburg, NY 13669 (315) 393-6633	Pretty graphics; unique puzzles; variety of creatures, dungeons.	Awkward combat interface; story line isn't involving.	A decent graphic adventure, but if you're dying for Wizardry games, you're bound to be disappointed.	73%	
Neverhood Chronicles, The 	December '96 p. 258	Adventure	Dreamworks Interactive, 640 N. Sepulveda Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90049 (310) 234-7000	Wonderful clay-mation animations and backdrops.	Repetitive and pointless puzzling; almost no interaction.	The tiresome puzzles and limited interaction squash the life out of what could be an amazing adventure.	40%	
NHL 97 	December '96 p. 298	Sports Simulation	Electronic Arts, 1450 Fashion Island Blvd., San Mateo, CA 94404 (415) 571-7171	Current high-water mark for sports sims, especially its polygonal characters. Good AI.	No customizability, little management, sluggish fights, and some slanted scoring results.	If you've got the system and are even remotely interested in hockey, pick this one up!	93%	
Nihilist 	March '97 p. 158	Arcade	Philips Media, 10960 Wilshire Blvd., 7th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90024 (800) 340-7888	The soundtrack is vaguely rocking.	Shallow gameplay and generally mediocre design make this game a downer even in the bargain bin.	Flashy graphics mean little when a game is this bad.	26%	
Noir 	February '97 p. 126	Adventure	Cyberdreams, 2500 Broadway, Santa Monica, CA 90404 (818) 222-9348	Well-chosen locations and music create the feeling of 1940s film noir.	Lack of interactivity; infuriatingly confusing movement interface.	Film buffs might appreciate it on a superficial level, but hard-core adventure gamers will be let down.	58%	
Obsidian 	May '97 p. 124	Puzzle	SegaSoft, 150 Shoreline Dr., Redwood City, CA 94065 (415) 802-4400	Great graphics and sound, engaging story line.	Lots of CD swapping. Brief gameplay for experienced adventure fans.	It distinguishes itself as a truly different adventure; traditional puzzling melds with abstract thought.	83%	



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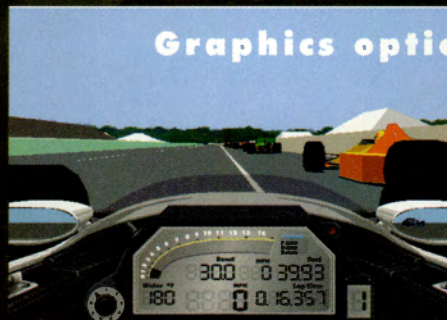
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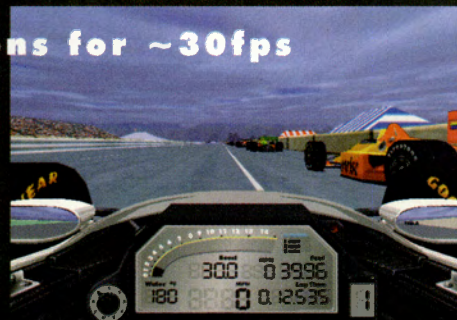
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Product Information Number 188



TITLE	ISSUE / PAGE	CATEGORY	PUBLISHER	HIGHS	LOWS	BOTTOM LINE	RATING	EDITORS' CHOICE
<b>Over the Reich</b> 	March '97 p. 165	Wargame	Avalon Hill, 4517 Hartford Road, Baltimore, MD 21214 (410) 254-9200	Elegant interface; exciting battles; engrossing campaign play.	High-tech sim-jockeys may find it too sedate, maybe too abstract.	A unique and singularly intelligent game; will captivate anyone with an interest in WWII aerial combat.	85%	
<b>Phantasmagoria: A Puzzle of Flesh</b> 	March '97 p. 122	Adventure	Sierra, 3380 146th Place S.E. Suite 300, Bellevue, WA 98007 (800) 757-7707	Original premise; good acting; generally good special effects.	Very little interactivity; far too easy; ending feels tacked-on.	Great production values, more shock value than any other PC adventure, but as a game, it falls flat.	63%	
<b>Powerslave</b> 	May '97 p. 107	Action	Playmates Interactive, 611 Anton Blvd., Suite 500, Costa Mesa, CA 92626 (714) 428-2112	Good level-design, novel setting, nice music. Well intentioned...	...But poorly executed, with a dated engine and inadequacies in almost everything.	Pick up <i>Duke</i> or <i>Quake</i> , or wait for <i>Shadow Warrior</i> , <i>Blood</i> , <i>Jedi Knight</i> , etc.	58%	
<b>Pray for Death</b> 	February '97 p. 163	Fighting	Virgin Interactive Entertainment, 19061 Fitch Avenue, Irvine, CA 92614 (714) 883-8710	Lovely graphics and audio design.	Everything else — plays worse than <i>Killer Instinct</i> .	With good looks and lousy gameplay, it's the <i>Myst</i> of fighting games.	24%	
<b>Privateer 2: The Darkening</b> 	March '97 p. 108	Action	Origin, 5918 W. Courtyard Dr., Austin, TX 78730, (512) 434-4357	Great graphics; good acting; lots of weapons and ships.	A few bugs slipped by; joystick control doesn't support fancier features.	A terrific space shoot'em up that has more to do between missions than watch movies.	92%	
<b>Pro League Baseball '97</b> 	May '97 p. 106	Sports Simulation	Micro Sports Inc., 1001 Millersville Road, Lancaster, PA 17604-9975 (800) 334-2722	Hands-off general manager feature does an adequate job.	The game is buggy and the control interface is poorly designed. Practically useless manual.	Problem-plagued graphics and an unplayable arcade control system.	30%	
<b>Rama</b> 	February '97 p. 152	Puzzle	Sierra, 3380 146th Place S.E. Suite 300, Bellevue, WA 98007 (800) 757-7707	A rich and faithful adaptation of the novels; lovely interface; gorgeous visuals.	The most complicated, convoluted puzzles you've ever wrestled with.	A monumental achievement; a landmark game that raises the bar several notches.	92%	
<b>Realms of the Haunting</b> 	April '97 p. 140	Adventure	Interplay, 16815 Von Karman Ave., Irvine, CA 92606 (714) 553-6678	Large game world; devious puzzles; creepy atmosphere.	Clunky interface; sluggish beginning; occasionally vague plot.	If you've been looking for a good adventure yarn with genuine thrills, <i>Realms</i> awaits.	86%	
<b>Road Rash</b> 	December '96 p. 310	Arcade	Electronic Arts, 1450 Fashion Island Blvd., San Mateo, CA 94404 (415) 571-7171	Nice graphics; great action; multi-player support.	It gets dull, since it's basically the same old <i>Road Rash</i> that appeared on the 3DO.	It's repetitive and campy, but it's a chance to relive those irreverent days of youth.	79%	
<b>Robert E. Lee Civil War General</b> 	December '96 p. 301	Military Simulation	Sierra Online, 3380 146th Place S.E. Suite 300, Bellevue, WA 98007 (800) 757-7707	Easy to learn; excellent you-are-there video reenactments.	Simple command structure forces player to control each unit; may be too easy for veteran wargamers.	A serious wargame, wrapped in a friendly multimedia package.	84%	
<b>RoboQuest</b> 	April '97 p. 145	Action	Philips Media, 10960 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90024 (800) 340-7888	Since it doesn't include an uninstall program, you'll get some practice in deleting files.	Construction kit is linear and pointless; the sub-par <i>Doom</i> -clone doesn't make up for it.	Two poorly designed segments can't hope to make a good game.	12%	



TITLE	ISSUE / PAGE	CATEGORY	PUBLISHER	HIGHS	LOWS	BOTTOM LINE	RATING	EDITORS' CHOICE
<b>Rocket Jockey</b> 	February '97 p. 130	Action/Arcade	SegaSoft, 150 Shoreline Dr., Redwood City, CA 94065 (415) 802-4400	Addictive action, intuitive controls, loads of variety.	Demanding requirements, annoying time limits, no sign of the touted multi-player features.	A raucous action game that pulls off a truly inventive theme with style, humor, and additive gameplay.	85%	
<b>Scorched Planet</b> 	April '97 p. 146	Action	Virgin Interactive Ent., 18061 Fitch Avenue, Irvine, CA 92714 (800) 874-4607	Splendid graphics; good game-play, and a slick morphing vehicle to control.	Music isn't great; full-motion video is only so-so.	This has the fun, creative spark that too many other games aim for and miss.	85%	
<b>Screamer 2</b> 	January '97 p. 256	Arcade	Virgin Interactive Ent., 18061 Fitch Avenue, Irvine, CA 92714 (800) 874-4607	Astonishing graphics; great arcade driving "feel" puts <i>Ridge Racer</i> to shame.	Needs more tracks and more cars.	Play this when your Playstation-owning friends come over; be sure to wipe up the drool afterwards.	88%	
<b>Sega Rally PC</b> 	May '97 p. 140	Arcade Racing	Sega, 150 Shoreline Dr., Redwood City, CA 94065 (415) 802-4400	Great graphics; smooth control; excellent Internet play.	May leave you craving more tracks and cars; some pretty high system requirements.	This great conversion is a must-have for arcade racing fans.	88%	
<b>Shattered Steel</b> 	January '97 p. 239	Action	Interplay, 16815 Von Karman Avenue, Irvine CA 92606 (800) 969-4263	Nice, fast graphics; great network play; more big-robot action than you can shake a joystick at.	A bit lacking on the strategy side.	For no-fault mech combat, <i>Shattered Steel</i> is a blast.	87%	
<b>SimCopter</b> 	March '97 p. 150	Flight Simulation	Maxis, 2121 North California Blvd., Suite 600, Walnut Creek, CA 94596 (800) 336-2947	Swooping around skyscrapers is a blast.	Control is too simplistic; and not all of the bugs have been cleaned up.	Think of it as a modern <i>Chop-licker</i> , and you'll be fine; think of it as a sim, and you're doomed.	76%	
<b>SimGolf</b> 	April '97 p. 107	Sports Simulation	Maxis, 212 N. California Blvd., Suite 600, Walnut Creek, CA 94596 (800) 336-2947	Robert Trent Jones, Jr., does the video tips. The profile view is well done.	Poor controls, ancient graphics, bad interface.	There are much better golf games out there.	52%	
<b>SkyNET</b> 	February '97 p. 108	Action	Bethesda Softworks, 1370 Piccard Drive, Rockville, MD 20850 (301) 926-8300	Clean SVGA graphics; slick interface; expansive mission areas; new multi-player options.	Extremely difficult at times; poor control lay-out for Hunter/Killer.	If you're into multi-player games or looking for something different, this is hard to beat.	88%	
<b>Slamscape</b> 	February '97 p. 146	Action	Viacom NewMedia, 1515 Broadway, New York, NY 10036 (800) 469-2539	Uh, well, God Lives Underwater did do the soundtrack.	Overall lousy gameplay, no net-working, audio design still sucks.	This sucks, Beavis — even a dill-hole can figure that much out!	53%	
<b>Solid Ice</b> 	February '97 p. 124	Sports Simulation	Empire Interactive, 13220 Wisteria Dr., Germantown, MD 20874 (301) 916-9302	Flexible player editor; you can design uniforms.	Gameplay is slow, and the artificial intelligence is merely average.	Until this undergoes some serious revisions, customizability is its only saving grace.	30%	
<b>Sonic CD</b> 	December '96 p. 267	Arcade	Sega Entertainment, P.O. Box 8097, Redwood City, CA 94063 (510) 371-3131	A great conversion, every bit as fast and colorful as the Sega Genesis originals.	Formless gameplay; limited replay value.	Tried and tested fun for kids, but just an MTV-style high-speed headache for the rest of us.	65%	



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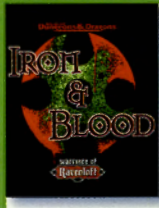
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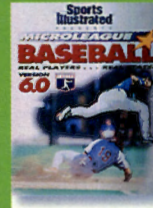
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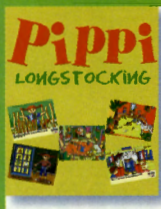
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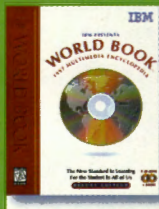
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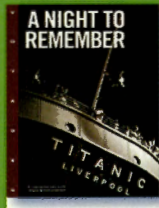
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Product Information Number 312



TITLE	ISSUE / PAGE	CATEGORY	PUBLISHER	HIGHS	LOWS	BOTTOM LINE	RATING	EDITORS' CHOICE
<b>Soultrap</b> 	May '97 p. 113	Action	Microforum, 1 Woodborough Ave., Toronto, Ontario, Canada (800) 685-3863	Funky graphics and a unique play system.	Frustratingly narrow levels cause you to die more often than not; a stinker of an ending.	3D platformer fans may dig it, but the rest of us may find it too frustrating.	69%	
<b>Spaceward Ho! IV</b> 	February '97 p. 118	Strategy	New World Computing, P.O. Box 4302, Hollywood, CA 90078 (818) 889-5600	Easy to learn, but with hidden depth; tenacious AI opponents; multi-player options.	A few gamers who insist on micro-managing all the fiddly bits won't go for it.	A great little strategy game, and with a street price that should be less than \$30, it's a bargain.	89%	PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE
<b>Star Control 3</b> 	December '96 p. 260	Adventure	Accolade, 5300 Stevens Creek Blvd., Suite 500, San Jose, CA 95129 (800) 245-7744	Epic story line; wide variety of aliens; professional voice acting; tons of things to do.	Alien animatronics aren't that impressive; lots of traveling time; boring strategic colony element.	Even with its few faults, <i>Star Control 3</i> is a worthy successor, and a blast to play.	90%	PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE
<b>Star General</b> 	March '97 p. 113	Strategy	SSI, 675 Almanor Ave., Suite 210, Sunnyvale, CA 94086 (800) 601-7529	Good, jump-right-in gameplay with time-tested <i>Panzer General</i> play style.	Mediocre, confusing graphics. Some scenario goals are far-fetched. Long waits in multi-play.	A good beer-n-pretzels wargame for those who like their combat without a lot of micro-management.	86%	
<b>Starfighter</b> 	March '97 p. 166	Arcade	3DO, 600 Galveston Drive, Redwood City, CA 94063 (415) 261-3454	Smooth graphics; plenty of missions; the explosions are really cool.	Control is on the jumpy side; cruddy mission map; loads of scenery pop-up.	It's a clone of <i>Terminal Velocity</i> , but at least it's remotely enjoyable.	70%	
<b>Stars!</b> 	April '97 p. 106	Strategy	Empire Interactive, 13220 Wisteria Dr., Germantown, MD 20874 (301) 916-9302	Rich in depth and flexibility; intuitive interface, excellent manual, unmatched tutorial.	The number of command windows can be confusing. May not interest casual gamers.	Proves there can be more to games than cute characters and big explosions.	88%	PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE
<b>Steel Panthers II: Modern Battles</b> 	February '97 p. 158	Wargame	SSI, 675 Almanor Ave., Suite 201, Sunnyvale, CA 94086-2901 (408) 737-6880	Great graphics, silky-smooth interface, tremendous variety of scenarios.	Lots of niggling little flaws that indicate a premature release.	When and if the bugs are fixed with a patch, this'll be a helluva wargame.	80%	
<b>Striker 96</b> 	December '96 p. 257	Sports Simulation	Acclaim Entertainment, 1 Acclaim Plaza, Glen Cove, NY 11542-2777 (800) 759-7800	Straight-forward, unclouded, and pleasant to look at.	Annoying sound effects, frustrating control, and bad AI.	Another failed attempt at an authentic, playable PC soccer sim. It's just not very much fun to play.	40%	
<b>Surface Tension</b> 	February '97 p. 156	Action	Gametek, 2999 N.E. 191st Street, Suite 500,ventura, FL 33180 (800) GAMETEK	Mission maps are large, and there are plenty of missions to fly.	Still, you have to put up with a crummy flight model, shabby acting and sub-par graphics.	It's basically a sci-fi rehash of <i>Comanche</i> , but it may interest die-hards.	62%	
<b>Syndicate Wars</b> 	January '97 p. 221	Action/Strategy	Electronic Arts, 1450 Fashion Island Blvd., San Mateo, CA 94404 (415) 571-7171	Demanding real-time action; wonderfully dark and moody feel.	Dark graphics occasionally make details hard to spot; missions could use more variety.	If you liked the destruction and carnage of the original <i>Syndicate</i> , prepare to create a new world order.	88%	PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE
<b>Third Reich PC</b> 	February '97 p. 168	Wargame	Avalon Hill, 4517 Hartford Rd., Baltimore, MD 21214 (410) 254-9200	It's a solid, faithful adaptation of the boardgame.	But that's all it is — there's no multi-play, no what-if scenarios — just a conversion of the board game.	If it had come out five or six years ago, it coulda been a contender.	72%	



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<b>Timelapse</b> 	April '97 p. 110	Puzzle	GTE Ent., 1035 Corte Del Nogal, #100, Carlsbad, CA 92009 (800) GTE-TODAY	Beautiful graphics; intriguing story line; some interesting puzzles.	Meaningless puzzles; restricted movement; linear gameplay; standard point-and-click affair.	The graphics and story line aren't enough to save <i>Timelapse</i> .	60%	
<b>Tom Clancy SSN</b> 	March '97 p. 130	Simulation	Simon & Schuster, 175 Fifth Ave., Suite 2122, New York, NY 10010 (800) 910-0099	Great atmosphere; terrific sound; and plenty of gameplay to get your teeth into.	Missions can become repetitive; no facility to save the game within a mission.	Too flashy for the real experts, but one of the most fun and playable sub games around.	84%	
<b>Tomb Raider</b> 	February '97 p. 104	Action/Adventure	Eidos Interactive, 303 Sacramento Street, San Francisco, CA 94111 (415) 616-2022	Terrific puzzle design; nail-biting action; sumptuous environments.	Minor though they are, some clipping or polygon-cracking bugs crop up from time to time.	<i>Tomb Raider</i> is one of the most addictive, original, and atmospheric games the PC has ever seen.	95%	PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE
<b>Toonstruck</b> 	January '97 p. 254	Graphic Adventure	Virgin Interactive Entertainment, 19061 Fitch Avenue, Irvine, CA 92614 (714) 883-8710	Great presentation wrapped around a solid, playable adventure.	Tiresome interaction, predictable humor, never-ending cliches grind down player's will to live.	Cartoon freaks will have some fun, but for everyone else, <i>Toonstruck</i> tries way too hard to amuse.	70%	
<b>Total Control Football</b> 	December '96 p. 294	Sports Simulation	Philips Media, 10960 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90024 (303) 739-4131	This team management sim is comprehensive and unique.	On-field action doesn't measure up to currently available gridiron games.	If a suit and tie is your idea of a football uniform, this is your game.	82%	
<b>Toy Story</b> 	April '97 p. 149	Action	Disney Interactive, 500 S. Buena Vista St., Burbank, CA 91521 (800) 426-3306	Those cute <i>Toy Story</i> characters.	Sluggish control; children will find it overly difficult and frustrating.	A lackluster side-scroller game; <i>Toy Story</i> doesn't come close to recapturing the magic of the film.	27%	
<b>Virtua Squad</b> 	January '97 p. 226	Arcade	Sega Entertainment, P.O. Box 8097, Redwood City, CA 94063 (888) SEGA-SALES	Spectacular to look at, and intense fun to play in the early stages.	Only three levels, which are over all too quickly.	Entertaining diversion; competent "twitch" game, but one that will be gathering dust real soon.	70%	
<b>Wages of War: The Business of Battle</b> 	March '97 p. 106	Strategy	New World Computing, P.O. Box 4302, Hollywood, CA 90078 (818) 889-5600	The trimmings aren't much, but the basic game is a solid and rewarding effort.	Graphics are a little bland and dated; thin manual could've been better.	A few quirks don't keep this from being a good squad-level combat game.	78%	
<b>War Wind</b> 	January '97 p. 230	Real-time Strategy	SSI, 675 Almanor Ave., Suite 201, Sunnyvale, CA 94086-2901 (800) 601-7529	A detailed approach to real-time strategy gaming, with complex units and rich background.	Some goals are not clearly defined.	A strong, fulfilling strategy title; good for people who want to move on from <i>WarCraft II</i> .	90%	PC GAMER EDITORS' CHOICE
<b>Wooden Ships and Iron Men</b> 	January '97 p. 262	Strategy	Avalon Hill, 4517 Hartford Rd., Baltimore, MD 21214 (410) 254-9200	Snappy graphics; marvelously intuitive interface; a good scenario generator.	The Campaign element is a bit thin, and those log entries grow tiresome rather quickly.	This game is easy to like if you have any interest in the subject matter.	80%	
<b>WWF In Your House</b> 	April '97 p. 120	Arcade	Acclaim, One Acclaim Plaza, Glen Cove, NY 11542-2777 (516) 759-7800	Manages to be totally stupid and totally enjoyable; excellent network play.	This game deserved better graphics than it got.	Takes the dumbest phenomenon on cable television and makes it fun.	79%	



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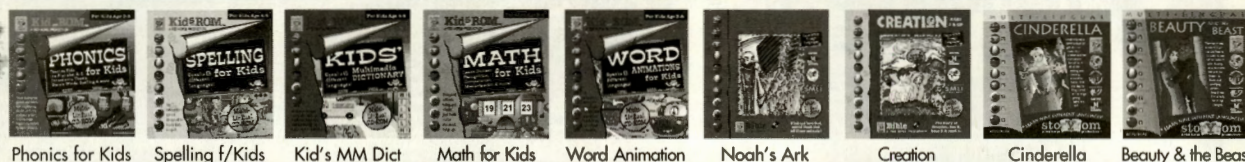
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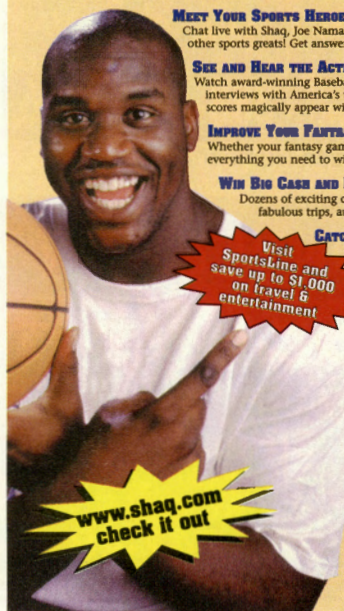
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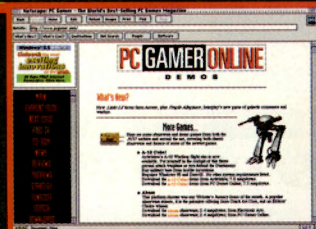
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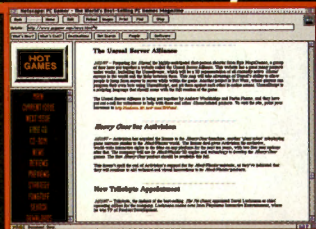
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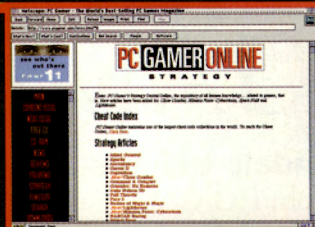
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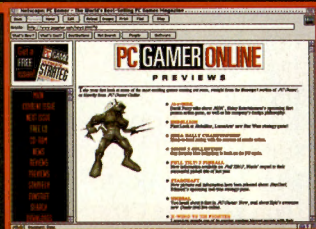
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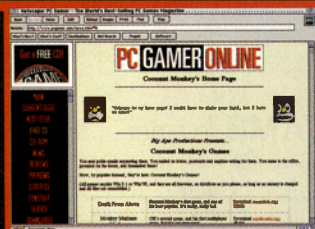
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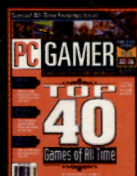
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Have we got a **PC Gamer** for you next month! The summer months are traditionally when games magazines become slimmer and less action-packed due to the seasonal slump. But **PC Gamer** thumbs its nose at that notion, with a **July issue that will blow your socks off...**

Vol. 4 No. 7  
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Don't Miss It!

# EXCLUSIVE MONKEY ISLAND! ★ SPECIAL!

★ *The Curse of Monkey Island Preview!*

★ *The Curse of Monkey Island Playable Demo!*

★ *Monkey Island 1 & 2 Complete Games on the CD!*

Shiver me timbers, splice the mainbrace, har har haaaaa me laddy (etc. etc.). Yes, we're going pirate mad next month as **PC Gamer** brings you an amazing **Monkey Island** special. We've got the world's first in-depth preview of LucasArts' amazing *The Curse of Monkey Island*, the long-awaited third installment in one of PC gaming's best-loved adventure series. We'll also have an exclusive (and rather large) playable demo of the game on *The CD*, along with — get this — the complete, full-price versions of both previous games, *The Secret Of Monkey Island* and *Monkey Island 2: LeChuck's Revenge!* This is not a free offer, but for a few measly bucks and a phone call, you'll be able to unlock the code on our disc and play both of these all-time classics in their entirety.



## Reviews

• Jack Nicklaus 4

• Hexen II

• Outlaws

• NCAA Final Four

• Red Alert: Counterstrike

• British Open Championship Golf



...and many more!

## Tom Clancy

Also next month, we go behind the scenes at Red Storm Entertainment, the new company set up by the lord of the techno-thriller, Tom Clancy. We will be taking the wraps off Red Storm's first two games and even sitting down to talk geopolitics and multi-player gaming with the Clancy man himself. Don't miss it.



EXCLUSIVE!

JUNE 1997

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"You must be Jake," Susan said as she sat down. Her voice was indescribable; she opened her mouth, and the early-evening chatter and clatter of the restaurant faded away.

Jake thought that if someone bottled that voice, they could sell it in the restaurant, right alongside the Dom Perignon and the 30 year-old Glenlivet. It was every bit as classy and intoxicating, and Jake had an idea it could be twice as addictive. It was obvious Susan had no idea why her husband had hired Jake. More than likely, Marcus Priest had told her Jake was going to act as her security guard. She had to know what kind of business Marcus was in, so it would've made sense that he'd want someone to protect her.

Which just goes to show, Jake thought, how stunningly beautiful and utterly wrong can coexist in the same package.

TO BE CONTINUED...



introducing

# Jack Nicklaus 4™

*"The Course Designer is a landmark!"*

*-T. Liam McDonald*

*PC Gamer*

*"...gives Links LS a run for its money."*

*Strategy Plus*

*"A truly revolutionary product. Links finally has some stiff competition. A Course Designer so easy to use, that you'll quickly find yourself addicted.*

*16.7 million colors with one major improvement: virtually no redraw wait!"*

*Computer and Net Player*

*"...promises to be among the greatest achievements yet on the electronic links."*

*PC Games*

*"...impressive..."*

*GOLF WEEK*



## The Course Designer

## From Tee to Green



This is the Course Designer that created all 5 Nicklaus-designed courses in the game!

Use the Designer to re-create your favorite course! Import, modify, and play courses from previous Nicklaus games!



Challenge golfing legend Jack Nicklaus – The Golfer of the Century – on one of his own signature courses!

Play with friends across the room or around the world via serial, modem, LAN, and the Internet!



# From Tee to Green

## The Tee Shot



Pop-up displays are optional—leave them off for the purest golfing experience.



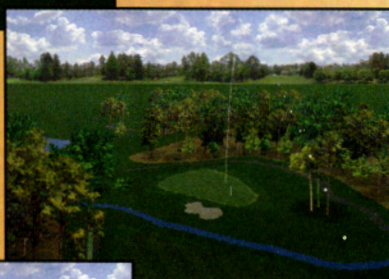
The fastest screen redraw times on the PC allow the camera to automatically switch to the landing in full-screen, from varying viewpoints!

## The Approach Shot



Every shot flies, bounces, and rolls true to the game, with the best ball physics model in existence. Courses are accurate to within 6 inches!

New "Intensity Control™" reproduces the dynamics that shape the shot. "Club up and swing easy" for control or a low trajectory; "swing hard" when you want spin and distance.



Multipayer play is fully supported, including recorded rounds, shared keyboard, serial, modem, LAN and Internet play.



Weather can change in the middle of the round, and natural wind variations and every possible turf condition add to the challenge!

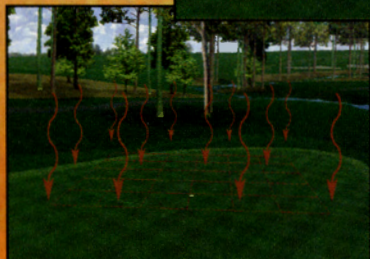
## Around The Green



Separate chipping and putting meters maximize control around the green.



Our new approach makes putting more realistic. Mow lines on the green help you read the contour.

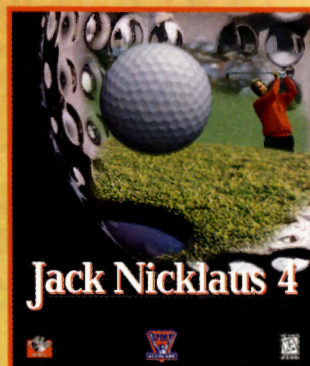


For enhanced gameplay, this optional grid floats down and drapes itself over the green, clearly showing all high and low spots.

Look for the Jack Nicklaus 4 playable demos in select magazines, online at <http://www.accolade.com> or at your local retailer.

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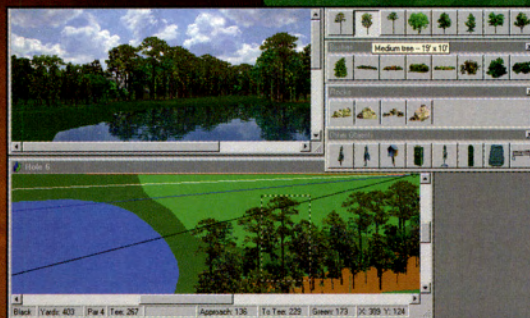


Featuring Colleton River Plantation,  
Country Club of the South, Muirfield Village,  
Cabo del Sol, and Winding Springs.

## The Course Designer



Input the basic details of a course from a real scorecard—the “Wizard” automatically routes each hole.



Choose from over 100 different types of trees, bushes, rocks, and other objects!



Click and drag on its shape

Choose from a variety of templates, or create your own shapes. Changing terrain is as easy as click-and-drag.

The result: a new bunker

“Is it live or is it...?” Our Course Designer is so true-to-life, it’s hard to tell the difference!

This image is of the 3rd Green at Country Club of the South. The left half of the image is from the Course Designer; the right half of the image is an actual photo.



The Hole View of the new bunker.



# AWE 64 SOUNDS OF WAR

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2. Grenades.
3. Deafening Silence.
4. 64mm Shells.
5. The Crackle Of Uzi Fire
6. "Incoming!"
7. "That Was A Close One."
8. Random Gunfire.
9. "Private Curtis Jones, 51st Airborne"
10. Anti-Tank Guns.
11. The Clink Of An Aluminum Mess Kit.
12. Dangling Dog Tags.
13. Ricocheting Bullets.
14. Sigh Of Relief.
15. A Harmonica Playing Yankee Doodle.
16. Give peace a chance.
17. Flight of the Valkyrie.
18. Shovels Digging Trenches.
19. Prayer.
20. Dirty Jokes.
21. "Sniffle."
22. Nervous Laughter.
23. Letters From Children.
24. Bombs bursting in air.
25. Battle Plans.
26. "Over The Top, Boys!"
27. The Battle Hymn Of The Republic.
28. Bullets Whizzing Past Your Helmet.
29. Random Snipers.
30. Surface To Air Missiles.
31. Anti-Aircraft Fire.
32. The Doors Playing "The End."
33. The Whistle Of Tracers
34. "Medic! Medic!"
35. The Star Spangled Banner.
36. The Thunder Of An Air Strike.
37. "Hit The Dirt."
38. A Rain Of Debris Landing All Around You.
39. Taps.
40. "Uurrrrrpp!"
41. Low Flying Sidewinders.
42. Strafing From The Air.
43. Ak-47 Assault Rifles.
44. Standard Issue M-16's.
45. The Sharpening Of Bayonets.
46. The Hiss Of Mustard Gas.
47. A Declaration Of Peace.
48. Rain.
49. Howitzers.
50. The Cheer Of Victory.
51. Quiet.
52. The Low Rumble Of Bombs In The Distance.
53. The Squawk Of A Radio Call For Help.
54. Com chatter.
55. "Surrender Now!"
56. Troops Marching.
57. Jungle Animals.
58. "The Biscuits In The Army, They Say Are Mighty Fine."
59. The Angry Croak Of Your Commander.
60. A Tropical Storm.
61. A Blazing Oil Well Fire.
62. Unrolling Adhesive Bandages.
63. "Ugh!"
64. "I Wanna Go Home."



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