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Exclusive preview inside

**EVEN PAGES OF TOP TIPS**  
Ultima VIII & Beneath A Steel Sky solved

# PC GAMER

The World's Finest PC Games Magazine Vol 1 No 8 July 1994 £3.95

# Overlord

The best flight sim ever...  
we mean it! **EXCLUSIVE**  
review and playable demo!



**OVERLORD**  
EXCLUSIVE! Two complete playable missions from Virgin's stunning new D-Day flight simulation!  
July 1994 Disk 1

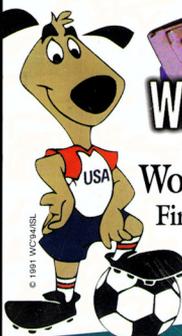
Minimum system: 386, VGA, 2.2 Mb RAM  
**PCGAMER**  
Checked for all known viruses. For more info on how to load and play, turn to page 10

The Kiltrathi Are Back!  
Six-page preview of the biggest PC game of the year! Full story and pics inside...

July 1994 Disk 2

**WORLD CUP 94 CHALLENGE**

ALL the teams! ALL the players! ALL the action! Play right through to the Quarter Finals in our exclusive playable demo of WinSport's feature-packed World Cup management game!  
Requires Windows 3.1 or higher, 5Mb RAM  
**PCGAMER**  
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**WING COMMANDER 3**

World Cup Carnival!  
First review of US Gold's official USA 94 game - page 56

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# KICK

# you know

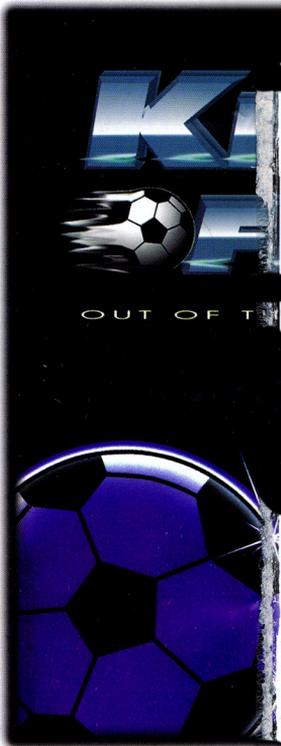


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PC COMPATIBLES



# CD32

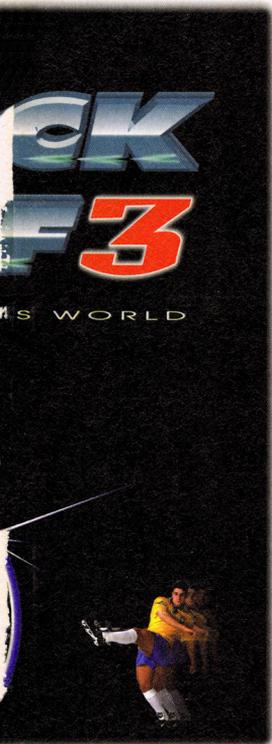
## PC & COMPATIBLES

## PC CD ROM

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They're cute, they're suicidal and now they're in three dimensions! The latest outing for those lovable Lemmings breaks beyond the old two-dimensional boundaries and the result looks, well, interesting. Read all about in on page 14.

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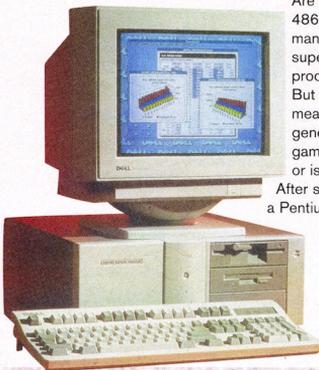
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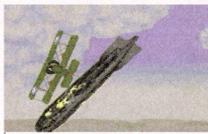
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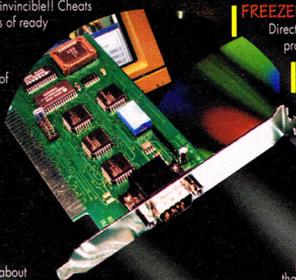
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PC Gamer Word Of The Month:  
Imber v. To lean from side to side while  
watching a car chase in the cinema.



**W**HEN IT COMES to PC CD-ROM gaming, I'm still a sceptic. CD drive and software sales

may be increasing, along with consumer awareness and developer interest, and floppy disks as a mass-market gaming medium may well be a thing of a past in less than a year. There's also no denying that the massively increased storage and audio potential of CD is a fine and dandy thing, and that the convenience of the medium (can you imagine going back to vinyl after you've got used to your CD audio player?) is a major plus too. But as developers rush to get to grips with their powerful new toys, it's easy for them to get over-excited and go off in the wrong direction. As a result, we're still waiting for something that uses CD-ROM's potential properly, with no wastage or fancy gimmicks.

These early abortive attempts can be put down to progress – with any new game format or system, it takes a while before developers really get to grips with the medium – but this month's news of Origin's *Wing Commander 3* (see page 42) could at last be the breakthrough we've all been waiting for.

Although I normally cringe at the term 'interactive movie,' what *Wing Commander 3*'s director and executive producer Chris Roberts has to say about his new game makes a lot of sense. His intentions to produce a gaming experience with a cinematic atmosphere are admirable – but to really succeed in making a game feel like a film, you need technology that can go some way to matching that used in the movies. None of us have ever really been convinced by Origin's cardboard cut-out cartoon characters, and it's that suspension of disbelief that's so critical. Now, with CD-ROM potential and a multi-million dollar budget, Origin might just succeed in producing some cinema that we can actually believe in.

Sure, developers have made attempts at using real sets and actors before, but the performances have been so stilted and amateurish that they seem little more realistic than the two-dimensional, symmetrical heroes of *Srike Commander*. Now, with *Wing Commander 3*, we'll have actors who we've not only heard of before but actors who can also – shock, horror – act. Origin's sincerity and willingness to finally put its money where its mouth is, if it comes off, could mean a major leap forward not just for the interactive movie genre, but for computer gaming as a

*Origin's sincerity and willingness to finally put its money where its mouth is could, if it comes off, mean a major leap forward not just for the interactive movie genre, but for computer gaming as a whole"*

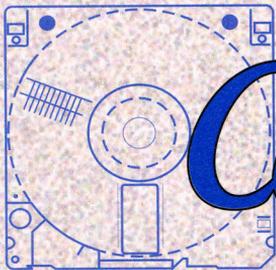
**Gary Whitta**  
Editor

escape into. For all my well-earned scepticism, I'm looking forward to *Wing Commander 3* – from what I've seen so far, it's the only game on the horizon capable of living up to the "next generation of games" promises that we've been hearing for so long. We need companies like Origin, who know what games are all about, to drive the medium forward in this way before the big media giants step in and balls everything up completely. If a few visionary games can show the way, then maybe – just maybe – there's hope for us all yet. Until then, though, I'm happy to remain sceptical. That way I'm always able to be pleasantly surprised when things turn out better than I expected. Smart, eh? Enjoy the issue. **PCG**

whole. But what is it they're really trying to do? The 'interactive movie' moniker is still unlikely to be accurate here, simply because of the very nature of game's structure.

When was the last time you saw a film consisting simply of a series of similar-looking dignified or car chases linked by brief bursts of dramatic dialogue? No, *Wing Commander 3* won't be a movie in the way we've come to think of them, but that's the whole danger of this 'interactive movie' buzzword – it's misleading. What we'll probably end up with is a game that's all the more compelling and atmospheric because the action is played out against, for the first time, a truly believable and intriguing cinematic backdrop. And that's the way forward – not to try to direct films that you can play, but to write games that use cinematic techniques to draw us further into the action and create a world we can





# Coverdisks!

Amazing how sometimes everything fits together, isn't it? This month we're bringing you a particularly timely set of disks, featuring a flight sim based around the D-Day landings (in the same month as the 50th anniversary celebrations, no less) and a World Cup game which, as if you hadn't noticed, coincides rather nicely with certain footy-related goings-on in the USA at the moment. Are we good to you or what?



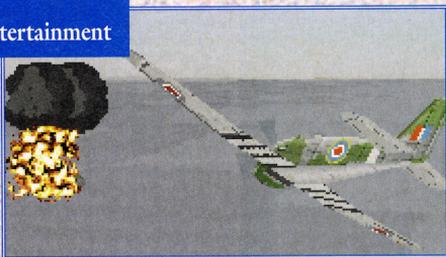
## This Month's Disk Stars...

### Overlord Virgin Interactive Entertainment

As we celebrate 50 years since the Allied liberation of France, Virgin's latest foray into the world of flight combat sims recreates the air battle leading up to that most decisive of WW II events – the D-Day Landings. You can read our opinions of the full game in our exclusive review on page 54, while this demo enables you to fly two complete strike missions against

German coastal positions and give the enemy what for yourself. There's also an impressive rolling demo that takes you through what the rest of the game has to offer, including some stunning pre-recorded combat footage that'll make you go weak at the knees.

All in all, it's a brilliant demo of one of the year's best flight sims – you won't believe how smoothly these planes move!



### World Cup '94 Challenge WinSport

England may not be there this year, but the World Cup remains the greatest sporting tournament in the world, bar none. Chances are, USA '94 is in full swing as you're reading this, so what better time to bring you a fully-playable demo of WinSport's comprehensive management simulation of the event?

Based on WinSport's previous Premier Manager engine, this baby runs through Windows (DOS-only

users need not apply) and features every team and player present at USA '94, complete with all the accurate ratings and player/team statistics you could ask for.

This demo enables you to select any team and take them through the tournament's group stages. The demo terminates once you reach the Quarter Final stage, but up until then you get the full run of almost every feature in the finished game.



# Disk 1

# Overlord

## System Requirements

The *Overlord* demo requires at least a 386 with VGA, 600K of conventional (base) RAM to install, 100K of conventional or UMB (Upper Memory Block) RAM, and 2.2 Mb of EMS (Extended Memory) to actually play. The demo supports Soundblaster, AdLib, Roland MT-32 and LAPC-1 soundcards too.

## Installation And Running

Although our *Overlord* demo fits on a single disk, it decompresses during installation to occupy around 3.5 Mb of hard drive space, so ensure you've got at least that much free before you begin. To install, insert the demo disk in the drive, switch to the a:\> prompt and type INSTALL C:\OVERLORD.

This creates a directory called OVERLORD on your hard drive and installs the game in that directory. If your hard drive is designated by a different letter and/or you want to call the directory something else, simply make these changes yourself to the installation command. Once it's installed, type OVERLORD to load the set-up window. Follow the on-screen instructions to configure graphics and sound options.

(NB: When selecting graphics, press 1 to select VGA 320 by 200 low-res, because this demo doesn't support the full game's SVGA mode. And when selecting the sound effects, note that the 11 KHz effects are better than the 5.5 KHz effects, although they do require slightly more memory.)

Once you've decided your options, the game runs automatically. From

On the tail of the Hun - this view comes courtesy of the exterior target camera. Beautiful, isn't it?



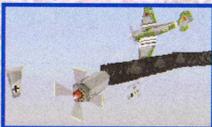
Stunning action from the *Overlord* tutorial.

now on, any time you type in OVERLORD you'll bypass the options screen and go straight into the action. If you want to change the options in the future, type OVERLORD ? (and don't forget the space).

## How To Play

*PC Gamer's Overlord* demo enables you to fly two missions from the main game. In both, the action takes place a few miles north of Cherbourg, where German E-boats are returning to dock from cross-channel raids - the difference between the two missions is that in the second you have German fighters on your tail, which adds to the difficulty.

Your objective is basically to cause as much damage as possible - sink the German boats and lay waste to their land positions. You have



"Mayday, Ginger! I've bought the big one! I'm going down! Tell the boys I crackle..."



THREE CATEGORIES OF TARGETS HAVE BEEN DEFINED. EACH CATEGORY MUST BE CONTROLLED BEFORE THE INVASION CAN BE GIVEN A CHANCE OF SUCCESS.



Dogfighting over the Normandy beaches.

unlimited supplies of bullets and bombs, but you're *not* invincible.

## Control

*Overlord* supports keyboard, mouse and joystick, which you can select from the Configure Demo option on the title screen. Here's a rundown of the key commands you'll need:



Preparing for a low-level strafing run on German coastal positions. Hit that target!

## Exterior Views

There are dozens of these - simply press the Function keys F1 through to F12. Further views are available by using Alt, Shift or Control with these keys. Experiment and see what you come up with - there are some stunning ones on offer.

## Manoeuvring

<b>CURSORS KEYS</b>	Steer the aircraft
<b>+ (plus)</b>	Revs up (numeric keypad gives bigger effects)
<b>- (minus)</b>	Revs down (as above)
<b>, (comma)</b>	Minimum revs
<b>. (full stop)</b>	Maximum military revs
<b>/</b>	Combat boost (NB: leaving this on for more than a few seconds will damage the engine)
<b>INS/DEL</b>	Rudder
<b>END/PGDN</b>	Max rudder

## Weapons Controls

<b>SPACE</b>	Fires selected weapon
<b>PAGE UP</b>	(9 on numeric keypad) toggles between guns and rockets
<b>HOME</b>	(7 on numeric keypad) toggles between single and burst rocket fire
<b>BACKSPACE</b>	Activates Paclock View (view locks onto current target)
<b>Z</b>	Toggles Impact Camera (view switches to targets when destroyed)
<b>X</b>	Toggles Rocket Camera (view switches to follow rockets when fired)

## Miscellaneous

<b>ALT-D</b>	Toggles auto detail on/off
<b>CTRL-D</b>	Enables you to manually select detail levels
<b>P</b>	Pauses the game

## Disk 2

## World Cup '94 Challenge

## System

## Requirements

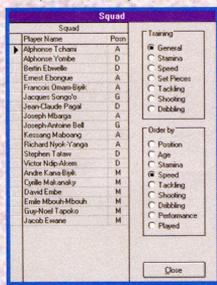
World Cup '94 Challenge requires at least a 386 with Windows 3.1 (or later) and 2 Mb RAM.

## Installation

Slot your disk into the drive and from the A:\> prompt type INSTALL. The install program now creates a directory on your hard drive called WORLD CUP (so make sure you haven't got a directory already going by that name) into which it unpacks the game files. Once it's done its work, type WORLDEMO from within that directory to load the demo.

## How To Play

If you're familiar with Windows you'll have no trouble getting to grips with World Cup '94 Challenge, because everything's Windows and menu-based, with lots of lovely buttons to click. Kick off by typing your name, then select a team from the list of USA '94 qualifiers (don't do what Gaz did and look for England, because they're not there). Once you've done that, the tournament begins and it's up to you what you do next – from the pull-down menus at the top of the screen you can view



Train your squad in specific disciplines or give them a good all-round workout.



groups and fixtures, train your squad, play matches and... Oh, all sorts. Here's what's what.

## Groups

View the current standings in each of the six groups, and see the table of top goalscorers.

## Fixtures

Start the next round of matches.

## Squad

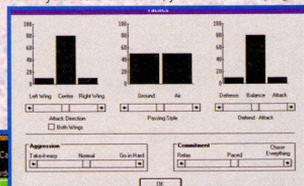
Select this to see a roster of your current squad. You can order them how you like, as well as select specific training programmes.

## Options

Match enables you to dictate variables such as match speed, action replays and the like. Player Admin enables you to change the name, age and position played of any player in any team, so you can put yourself in Midfield for Italy or recreate your favourite team (Bobby Moore's 1966 Cup-winning side, anybody?). There's also a nifty Cheat option which enables you to change jobs from managing one team to another, alter the overall difficulty level or use the curiously named Magic Sponge, which fixes your team's suspension/injury record.

## Playing Matches

Whenever games not involving your team are played, you can watch the results come in via the Generate Results button. From here, click on Commentary or No Commentary to get a minute-by-minute report of goals scored (or simply bring up the final scores if you want a quick result without all the hassle of a match). When your team is involved, you can



Player statistics									
Cameroon					Sweden				
Player Name	Goals	Cards	Subs	Mark	Player Name	Goals	Cards	Subs	Mark
Joseph Antane Bell	6			5	Thomas Flavel				5
Alphonse Yombe	6			6	Paul Anderson	1	Yellow		6
Beno Etouelle	7			6	Joachim Bjorkland				6
Jean-Claude Pagal	6			6	Jari Eriksson				6
Stephen Talou	1			5	Rikard Nilsson				6
Andre Kana-Biyik	1			5	Stefan Petre				6
Cyille Makankaly				5	Jan Larsson				5
David Enbe				5	Klas Ingersson			Off	5
Eddie Moudi-Mbouh	1			7	Anders Larsson				5
Francois Oumou-Biyik	Yellow			6	Mats Liljeberg	1		Off	7
Kessang Maboing	Yellow			7	Tomas Brodin				6
Jacques Song'o					Stefan Hall				6
Victor Ndi-Alem					Roger Lang			On	5
Eug-Nool Tapoko					Malin Malm			On	6
Jacobi Enwe					Martin Dahlin			On	6
Alphonse Tchani					Stefan Schwarz				

Detailed American-style stats on all squad members are available at the click of a button.

sit back and generate the result as above or select Watch Game, which enables you to play about with all the managerial stuff.

First, select your starting line-up by clicking on the names in the squad roster. Once you've picked your 11 players, pick another five to sit on the subs bench, (simply click on Opposition at any time to see the other team's line-up).

Next, select Formation to sort out your team's, er, formation. There are four presets, but you can create your own by selecting each player on the pitch and dragging them to where you want them to be. Once you're happy with your set-up, click on ADD and give the formation a name to add it to the presets. To choose a formation, highlight one from the preset menu and click on SELECT. Press the DROP button to delete any formations you don't like.

After all that, click on PLAY to begin the match. Hit the CONTINUE button to kick off each half. A rolling commentary gives a blow-by-blow account of what's happening as the ball pings about the pitch. You can

alter the speed of the commentary via the sliding bar immediately to the right of the commentary window.

You can also change tactics or make substitutions at any time by clicking on the relevant button. TACTICS enables you to alter playing style via

a series of graphs and sliders, while substitutions are easy – simply select one player from the pitch, another from the bench and click on SUBSTITUTE to make the switch.

## End Of Game

The demo ends when the Quarter Finals begin, regardless of how well you've done. Select NEW GAME from the File menu to start again or, if you want a chance of winning the Cup, buy the real thing! [CC]

## Got A Problem?

We do our utmost to ensure you'll have a trouble-free time with your coverdisks – however, there's always a slim possibility you might have problems. If they won't run, or if you're not getting sound or something, it may be that you haven't got enough memory or that your machine isn't configured properly, so check this first.

If you're still having trouble, or if the game(s) simply won't install at all, it's possible you have a dirty disk(s). If you're convinced that a disk is dodgy, return it to the address shown below and a new, working version will be returned to you within 28 days.

Please note: We do our utmost to provide first class coverdisks that are fun to play. However, PC Gamer and its suppliers and distributors can accept no liability for damage caused by users of the disks. You have been warned...

## Where To Send Your Dodgy Coverdisks

PC Gamer July Disks,  
PO Box 21,  
Davertry,  
NN11 5BU.

● These things take time, so please allow 28 days for us to return a working disk. We'll do our best to sort things out as quickly as possible, you can be sure of that.

## One More Thing

We cannot solve your coverdisk queries over the phone. If you've done everything you can think of and you're still sure your disks are knackered – send them off to the address shown above, along with a letter explaining exactly what the problem is.



# LEMMING

## Adding Some Depth To



Just when you thought it was safe to go back to the puzzle game, the little guys return on another genocidal mission... BY ANDY BUTCHER

**O**N FIRST HEARING ABOUT *Lemmings 3D* you might well have problems imagining how such a game would work – we certainly did. And that's not surprising really. It is a hard concept to grasp without actually seeing the thing. The aim and basic concept remain the same though – lemmings enter a landscape from a certain point and begin to walk straight



(Left and far left) Tsk. Lemmings, eh? You can't take your eyes off them for a minute. (Well, you can, but they usually die.)

ahead with a suicidal disregard for their own safety. It's your job to see that a certain number of the cute little guys survive by guiding them to an exit in another part of the level. To do this you have a number of skills which you can bestow upon the lemming of your choice. The difference here is that the landscape now has three dimensions, making things that bit more complicated. So how does it

work? James Thomas, one of the lead programmers of the project and co-founder of developers Eclipse, explains: "The game is viewed from a roving camera which allows you to pan and zoom around the level, viewing the lemmings in their original minuscule state or zooming right up to their full sized ray-traced glory." As the saying goes, a picture is worth a thousand words, so let's hope the early shots on these pages will give you some idea of what James is on about.

So where did the idea for the game come from? "Well, Martin Hall and myself originally formed Lunatic Software in 1987, programming on the Amiga," says James. "After finishing *Cytron* for Psygnosis in 1992, we started playing around with an abstract 3D puzzle game called *Cubewalker*, which was never released. The game involved

# F.Y.I.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

**In a nutshell?** *Lemmings* in three dimensions instead of two. Well, what did you expect from a game called *Lemmings 3D*?

**What's so special?** Well, aside from the silky smooth 3D engine, intuitive controls and 30 Mb of graphical data (including over 400 frames of animation for the little guys themselves), *Lemmings 3D* promises the same life-destroying addictiveness of its predecessors and more challenging puzzles to boot.

**Why should I care?** Because *Lemmings* still stands as one of the classic puzzle games of all time, and the new 3D environment may just give it a new lease of life.

**And when's it coming out?** Although there's no deadline as yet, January or February is a good bet. Oh, and it'll be a CD-ROM only release.



(Above) They look a bit scary close-up, don't they? Like something out of *Night of the Living Dead*. But save them anyway.

# GS 3D

## The Genre

(Below) Look at their eyes. They don't want to die, but they know they must. Relentlessly they march on, with you their only hope. "Help us," they silently implore. "We'll pay you afterwards and everything."

*"Moving lemmings into a 3D environment opens up a whole new set of puzzle possibilities, and we hope it's not just seen as a gimmick"*

James Thomas, lead programmer

guiding a single creature over a 3D lattice in order to get to an exit. We had a prototype up and running, but found that the machine couldn't do the number of polygons we required at a decent speed. At Psygnosis' suggestion, we moved it over to the PC (a move we've never regretted). We spent a couple of months on this, with regular meetings with Psygnosis' playtesters and our Psygnosis producer, Greg Duddle.

At one of these meetings it was suggested, possibly as a joke, that we should put lemmings in it. So we did! During the early stages of *Cubewalker* we had thought to ourselves of putting in lemmings, but didn't think we'd get the rights to do it. But we took it back a couple of months later and they liked what they saw. Lunatic Software has now disbanded, and we've formed Eclipse with some extra people."

There's little doubt that DMA Designs' original *Lemmings* is one of the classic games of all time. Original, fun and horribly addictive, it changed people's ideas about puzzle games forever and the lemmings themselves quickly became software superstars. But can you teach an old dog new tricks? Will putting the idea into 3D make another great game, or simply spoil the formula? "Moving lemmings into a 3D environment opens up a whole new set of possibilities, and we hope it's



not just seen as a gimmick," replies James. "We are hoping to put the emphasis on problem solving, rather than pixel perfect positioning of the lemmings, and although it was initially difficult to think of original puzzles that actually use the 3D – not just imitations of 2D puzzles – we've got that solved now. There are bound to be some die-hard *Lemmings* fans who think that any changes to the original is a sacrilege, but so far most people who have actually played it for a few minutes have been pleasantly surprised."

Of course, the 3D world brings with it some unique problems that the game's design has had to overcome. The toughest has been the added

complexity that the control system needs to cope with manipulating things in three dimensions. "We're aiming to keep the interface as simple as possible to make the player feel instantly at home. After several attempts at different control methods, we decided to use something similar to that used in Origin's *Ultima Underworld* and *Shadowcaster* games, as most players will already be familiar with this," says James. In addition, Eclipse has modified the game structure slightly, to make it easier to play, as James explains: "When you activate a skill on a lemming, they align themselves to specific boundaries prior to actually starting to act that skill. This takes away the annoying part of having to

align the lemming perfectly to solve the puzzle."

With work on *Lemmings 3D* entering the final stages, it'll soon be do-or-die time for Eclipse's controversial vision.

*Lemmings* purists are bound to be prejudiced against it, but James is confident that even die-hards will be won over. "Everyone who's heard that there's going to be a *Lemmings 3D* said they couldn't envisage it," he says. "But when they see it they think 'Yeah, that's it...'"

PCG



(Left) Building, almost quite literally, a stairway to heaven.

(Above) Lemmings like to sunbathe too, although not for protracted periods. Unless he's dead, of course. Hem hem.

# SCOOP!

Your First Look At...

# NIBELUNG'S

## What's Opera, Doc?

If Wagner's *Ride Of The Valkyries* is good enough for Francis Ford Coppola, then it's good enough for Mike Singleton's new adventure.

BY CHRIS BUXTON

**M**ULTIMEDIA IS IN. IT'S the buzzword of the moment. Everybody wants to make cinematic games with CD quality sound and speech. But what about a different media. What about an operatic game? Surely veteran programmer Mike Singleton has bitten off more than he can chew in trying to turn Richard Wagner's mammoth Ring cycle (The operas *Das Rheingold*, *Die Walküre*, *Siegfried* and *Gotterdammerung*) into a trilogy of adventure games?

It may seem a bizarre subject to pick for a



game but the Ring cycle was a simple choice for Mike. "We're trying to appeal to a different sector of the market and it's got such an interesting story," he says. Mike's business partner, Hugh Batterbury, played a large part in the drafting of the scenario for *Nibelung's Ring* and he was keen to stress the strengths of the tale. "The operas themselves are based around the *Volsung* saga, which is part of Norse mythology, where Tolkien got many of his stories from. Wagner did the same sort of job as Tolkien. He extracted the source material and played around with it. So what we've done is take the major theme of the *Volsung* saga

and blended that with elements of the Ring cycle."

The game will be an adventure - a departure from Singleton's usual epic strategy games - in which the player takes on the role of Sigmund, who is charged with recovering the Ring and returning it to the Rhinemaidens. But to get the Ring he has to perform a series of minor quests. "In a sense, they're your standard adventure type tasks - meeting people and finding objects," says Mike. "But where there will be a departure is in the degree of interaction with other characters. The character interaction, in terms of how characters will help or hinder you, is a bit more complex than

## F.Y.I.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

**In a nutshell** An adventure game based on Wagner's Ring cycle opera and on the *Volsung* saga which Wagner adapted for his operas.

**What's so special?** Have you ever heard of a game based on an opera before? Interactive movies, yes, but an interactive opera? Multimedia in a very real and "fat lady singing" sense.

**Why should I care?** It's being developed by Maelstrom, the company behind *Lords of Midnight* and headed up by seasoned programmer Mike Singleton. "Nuff said.

**And when's it coming out?** Late November-December time.

(Above) If you happen to have a slower machine you can switch on this attractive border designed to look like the proscenium arch in an old theatre.

(Right and below) Interaction with other characters plays a large part in *Nibelung's Ring*. You have the dubious thrill of playing Sigmund, who has the long blond locks and matching moustache normally found adorning a select band of '70s porn stars.



"We're trying to appeal to a different sector of the market... it's got such interesting storylines"

Mike Singleton, Maelstrom

# RING

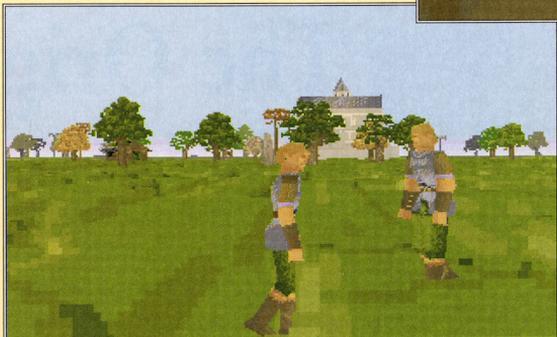
Game **Nibelung's Ring**  
Developer **Maelstrom**  
UK Publisher **Pygmyones**  
Projected Price **£17.95**  
How Complete? **50%**



(Above/top) Sigmund will have to venture underground to complete some of the quests he is set. The landscapes generally have the feel of something between the river Danube and the river Rhine.



(Above/below) Trekking through the mountains can be quite a slog on foot so why not take the open-topped dragon for a test fly. Available in any colour you like so long as it's red.



(Above) Combat will take place on screens like this and will be seen from a third person perspective. You have to select an attacking move from the ones you have been taught – defensive moves are executed automatically.

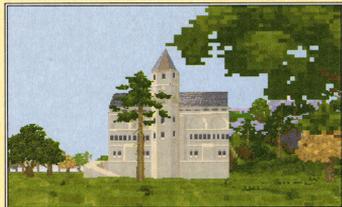
your usual adventure because there is a lot of family feuding in the storylines. If you're going to help someone from family X who don't like family Y, then family Y will get worried and you're more likely to get attacked than aided by them." There are 32 main characters included in *Nibelung's Ring*, and many bit part players, all with their own friends and enemies.

Conversations with other characters take place via a multiple choice list of statements and questions. Next to each possible phrase is a rune – which helps you recognise the "tone" of the speech (whether it's friendly, hostile and so on). In the final version of the game, all the speech will be digitised and you'll have the option of switching off the text. "In digitised speech mode, instead of having text come up when you're over a rune, you get subtitled speech, which is like you talking to yourself, thinking aloud," explains Mike.

At the heart of the game are the 3D graphics showing the lands of the nine nations in *Nibelung's Ring*. The scenery ranges from lush valleys to snow-topped peaks and underground caverns, with all of the game's locations (the halls and hideaways of the main characters) spread across the entire map area. Sigmund travels about the landscape – on foot, over the sea in a longboat and through the air

on the back of a dragon – moving from place to place, meeting other characters and fulfilling his destiny. Hugh's interested in the idea of destiny. "The idea behind Norse mythology is that everything is based on fate. The character cannot escape his destiny. What the Norse people were very keen on was not what you did – as that was predestined – but how you did it. So Sigmund's task is simply to get the Ring that will liberate the Nibelung. How he does that depends upon how the player interacts with other characters in the game." So if Sigmund's destiny is fixed, does this mean the game will be a linear experience? Mike doesn't think so. "It needs basically a more linear style of play. If you really, really want to wander off then nothing's there to stop you."

Of course, it's inevitable that Sigmund will get involved in fights (destiny again, folks) but here when he does start a ruck with another character, the game switches to a third-person perspective view of the action. "The problem with a first-person view," argues Mike, "is that you've got a much more restricted view than you have through your own eyes. The biggest angle you can cope with, practically speaking, is 90 degrees." And then there's the revamped combat system, which Mike is particularly proud of. "One of the fundamentals is that defensive moves are made automatically and you choose the moment at which you're going to launch a counter-attack." You control all the fighting



(Above) One of the many grand halls in *Nibelung's Ring* nestles in the lush, leafy countryside. Maelstrom are still finalising how the game will handle the interiors but are promising something quite special.

from the keypad and Sigmund can learn new attacking moves from other characters who demand that he complete some small task in return.

One great advantage the game has over its competitors is the soundtrack (which relies heavily on music by a certain R Wagner). Freelance musician Paul Robotham has been responsible for converting the composer's work into in-game tunes, and so far the results sound good. Maelstrom seems to have successfully synthesised the flavour of Wagner's operas and the original Nordic sagas with the mechanics of an adventure game – and with another two games to come, the series is already shaping up into an epic undertaking on a par with Wagner's. Although it probably won't take as many years to complete... **PC2**

**SCOOP!**  
Your First Look At...

# WINGS OF

## The Origin

After the big thrills of *Strike Commander* and *Pacific Strike*, Origin goes back to basics with its reconstruction of the war that started it all.

BY ANDY BUTCHER



(Top and above) Air-to-air combat, World War I style - *Wings Of Glory* features both German fighters and zeppelins.

## F.Y.I.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

**In a nutshell** WW I air combat done in Origin's inimitable style. It's that simple, really.

**What's so special?** Well, apart from the superb graphics and sound we've come to expect from all Origin games, *Wings Of Glory* promises to be the best Origin flight sim yet. The original *Strike Commander* engine has been polished and perfected, the gameplay tuned to perfection and the setting offers the purest form of air combat you're likely to see on a PC.

**Why should I care?** Because a game where, for a change, it's just you against the enemy - with no technology to help you out - has undeniable appeal. And then, of course, there's the eminently suitable World War I scenario which is just begging for Origin's high-quality cinematic treatment.

**And when's it coming out?** Sometime in June, but given Origin's track record at meeting deadlines don't hold your breath.

**F**ROM THE FUTURISTIC SPACE combat of *Wing Commander* to the seat-of-your-pants flying action in *Pacific Strike*, Origin has been gradually working its way back through the history of aerial combat. Now, with *Wings Of Glory*, it's reached point zero, the place where it all started - the period when man first fought man in the skies. But why go backwards at all?

"There are lots of reasons to go back to World War I," says the game's producer, Warren Spector. "We had this 3D engine, first used in *Strike Commander*, that made it possible to fly against the best-looking planes anyone ever put in a flight sim. Then we did a jet game, which all but guaranteed that you'd never get close enough to the enemy to see how beautiful our planes were. We had the best-looking ground objects in the world, but they zipped past so fast you couldn't focus on them long enough to appreciate them. We had the ability to pan around the cockpit like a pilot twisting his head around, but jet combat, with its radar and guided missiles, ensured that the player would never have to use this capability.

"I thought this was nuts, and I knew I had to do a WW I game like *Wings Of Glory*. I mean, there

you are in the cockpit of a biplane, swivelling your head around in an attempt to spot the enemy before he spots you. You're flying at a bracing 90 miles per hour - if you're lucky - ensuring you get a good long look at the anti-aircraft gun that's ripping your canvas fuselage to shreds. And instead of 'that pixel in the distance is my target - lock missile - fire,' you'd be right on the enemy's tail for a 20-minute, sweat-inducing dogfight. Almost immediately the soundtrack from the movie *The Blue Max* started going through my head. We had to do this game!"

Of course, as well as explaining the advantages of using the *Strike Commander* engine in a World

*"Basically, we're doing a WW I game because I've been fascinated by that era, those planes and those pilots, since I was a kid"*

Warren Spector, producer



(Above) Another brave defender of truth, justice and the freedom of the western world meets his maker. Come up against a few German aces and this scene will become all too familiar to you - they're dead hard and don't like leaving survivors.

# GLORY

## n Of Aerial Combat

Game **Wings Of Glory 1917-1918**  
 Developer **Origin**  
 UK Publisher **Electronic Arts**  
 Projected Price **£29.99**  
 How Complete? **80%**

*"The rule of thumb we use is simple: be scrupulously true to history whenever and wherever you can, but if history gets in the way of fun, ditch the history"*

Warren Spector, producer

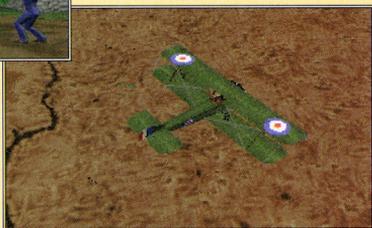
War I scenario, Warren's reasons pretty much tally with why a lot of people don't like modern flight sims. But why World War I instead of WW II? "Basically, we're doing a WW I game because I've been fascinated by that era, those planes and those pilots, since I was a kid," Warren explains. "The idea of a bunch of guys in their teens and 20s duelling to the death in canvas deathtraps amazes me. And beyond my personal interest in the era, there's a purity about the first air war that I'm hoping will appeal. I mean, it's just you and a gun up there - no radar, no guided missiles, no automated systems to compensate for pilot inadequacy - life and death boil down to your abilities versus those of the enemy. I can't imagine any flight sim fan worth his or her salt not getting into that."

The game itself follows a similar format to Origin's previous flight sims - you fly a series of missions that follow the course of the war, during which you fly five classic aircraft, including the Sopwith Camel and Spad XIII. The missions themselves are interspersed with scenes where you can interact with various game characters. "Our primary source of inspiration were movies like



(Left) The high-tech starter motors and extensive base facilities of the first ever air war are accurately portrayed in Wings Of Glory's cinematic cut scenes.

(Below) Don't be lulled by the apparent emptiness of the sky - it can get very dangerous up there very quickly...



Dawn Patrol, Wings, The Blue Max and Hell's Angels," emphasises Warren. "These were great pictures, full of derring-do and acts of mad heroism. We wanted to feel like Errol Flynn and David Niven."

The cinematic quality of Origin's games has always been one of the company's trademarks - and with *Wings Of Glory* things are no different. "Early in the design phase we had a marathon film session which led to some of the best bits of the game. There are spies who make your missions more dangerous, enemy aces who hurl personal challenges at you, and the opportunity to fly missions that affect the outcome of the war - although that's one of the ways we decided to ignore history, since the air war didn't make much of a difference in the grand scheme of World War I."

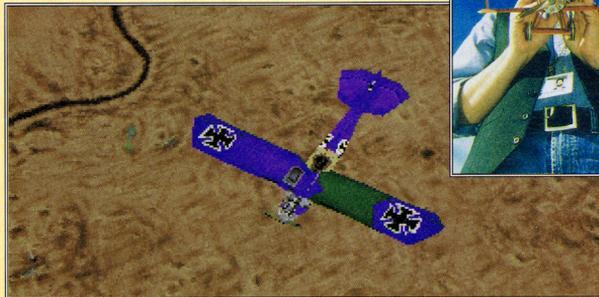
But in a game that attempts to create such a vivid, film-like atmosphere, how have the team dealt with the age-old problem of realism versus fun? "Realism is one

mighty big deal to me and to everyone on the team," says Warren. "However, you can't forget that we're making games here, and fun is of paramount importance. The rule of thumb we use is simple: be scrupulously true to history whenever and wherever you can, but if history gets in the way of fun, ditch the history. Luckily, we haven't had to ditch the history too often. The planes in the realistic mode fly as much like the real thing as we could make them, but we have a 'fun' mode as well, for players who don't have to worry about how tough those crates were to keep in the air." Warren is not unaware of the conflict that this dedication to realism might cause, however. "Sounds like a contradiction, doesn't it? I mean, a realistic game that feels like a movie. But I think that the team's pulled it off."

"We have kept a few tricks up our sleeves," he continues. "For example, we have the best clouds you've ever seen in a flight sim - big, white fluffy things you can fly through, and even shake off an enemy by hiding in them. We also added a flight recorder so that you can save your best missions and watch them at your leisure. There's a mission builder, so you can create missions of your own even after you've finished the main campaign. And then there are the huge zeppelins, bombers so big you can fly between their wings, observation balloons, forests of trees and a hundred other cool things you'll just have to experience for yourself."

So how would Warren describe *Wings Of Glory*? "Something for everyone - history buff and movie buff, flight sim junkie and novice pilot. It's a tall order, and I can't wait to hear what players have to say about the job we've done..."

PCG



(Topright) Warren Spector, the game's producer, has been fascinated with World War I since he was a young lad.



# EYE WITNESS

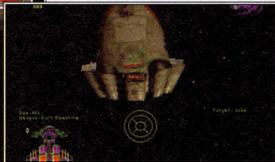
Interviews, Opinion And – Yes! – News From The World Of PC Games

## Kilrathi Commander



*Wing Commander 3* may have stolen the limelight this month with all its movie stars and drop-dead gorgeous 3D (see our preview on page 42), but *Wing Commander Armada* will, in fact, be the next title in the ever-growing *Wing Commander* series.

*Wing Commander Armada* is an action strategy game that enables you



(Above) A giant cruiser soars overhead...

(Left) Switch views and go in for a fly-by to check out the finer ship details.

## A whole new world



(Above) *Aladdin* escapes from the prison.

(Below) In the Cave Of Wonders, Al searches for a lava lamp (lava lamp, geddit? Oh dear).

One of the hottest platform games on the console formats last Christmas, *Virgin's Aladdin*, is now coming out for the PC. The original version was developed by a US team headed by Scottish programmer Dave Perry. During development, Dave and his team were sent six million dollars' worth of animation cells – with Disney drawing 2,000 especially for the video game.

Dave was the man behind *Virgin's Cool Spot* platformer (see

page 60 for a review of the PC conversion) which, although not exactly a breath of fresh air, did feature some quality animation and was genuinely cool. Well, sort of. But thanks to Disney, the animation in *Aladdin* looks set to be even better, with the game shaping up to be one of the best film tie-ins to date. All 12

levels will be included and all will loosely follow the plot of the movie – so expect to see a chase with the Sultan's guards through Agrabah marketplace, the Cave of Wonders, a dungeon escape and a final showdown with the evil Jaffar.

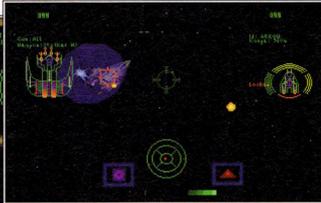
● *Virgin's Aladdin* will be released later in the year. No price as yet.



to play the role of sole commander of either the Kilrathi Empire or the Confederation. You don't just fly missions in this instalment either, you get to choose ships and decide where to send them. You also get to construct your own missions and campaigns – even your own universe.

There are three levels of play – quick dogfights, strategic 'search and destroy' battles or long campaigns where you get to annihilate enemy homeworlds. There are over 2,000 planets to explore, mine and trade with and it's possible to play a head-to-head game over a modem, network or via a special split-screen option.

● **Wing Commander Armada** will be released in June, costing £44.99.



(Above) One of the many ships you can choose to fly yourself or send out in a squadron.

(Left) Close in for the kill as a damaged enemy ship strays across your sights.

(Top) The cockpit design may have changed but Wing Armada retains Wing Commander's feel.

**Simon says**

Adventuresoft is currently developing a 100% all-talkie (as they used to say in Hollywood over 80 years ago) CD-ROM version of its *Simon The Sorcerer* game. Voice talents include Chris Barrie from Red Dwarf and The Brittas Empire, and Roger Blake, who does some voices for Spitting Image. There'll be two hours of dialogue and a brand new soundtrack written specially for the CD version. More details soon.

**Calling all porno fans**



Old men in grubby raincoats who also happen to own a Multimedia PC will be thrilled to learn that one of Britain's top dirty mags has spawned a CD-ROM special featuring nude pictures of over 2,300 models. The package has been published in accordance with the Obscene Publications Act and carries an 'over 18s only' tag. From what we've seen of the *Fiesta* CD, it comprises a clumsy and sloppily-produced Windows interface running feeble programs like striptease slideshows, rude letters and mucky jigsaws. Although porno fans can buy *Fiesta* magazine for a mere fraction of the CD-ROM price (£49.99), this disc version does have one advantage over the paper original – it's much easier to wipe clean...



# The Future



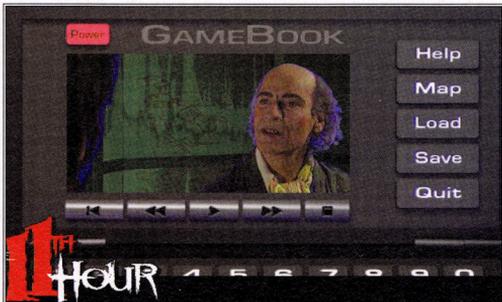
# Entertainment Show

Coming to an Earls Court near you soon – **The Future Entertainment Show '94**, a forum for both the layman and enthusiast looking at everyday computing and gaming, and a place where developers can showcase the latest in Multimedia, CD-ROM and full-motion video technology and software. A special PC stand will be present,

hosted by the staff of Future Publishing's PC magazines *PC Format*, *PC Answers* and the magazine for the discerning reader of taste and breeding, *PC Gamer*. There'll be advice on getting the most from your PC, on upgrading, on getting the best from specific applications, as well as on careers in computing. You'll also get to

meet some top programmers. The FES '94 runs from **Wednesday 26** through to **Sunday 30 October at Earls Court**. And we've got ten tickets to give away to the first ten readers who send us a humorous enough postcard. Send your entries to: **The PC Gamer Giveaway, Future Publishing Ltd., 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW.**

# Tick, tock...



**Are you intelligent?**

Well, if you are you may be interested in Oxford Softworks' *10 Intelligent Strategy Games* pack (catchy title, guys). It's a collection of very old, nay, genuinely classic games –

namely Chess, Othello, Gomoku, Draughts, Go, Backgammon, Bridge, Renji, 4 In A Line and Chinese Chess. You'll be playing against game engines designed by programmers who've won the Computer Olympiad, European and World Championships in their respective fields. The pack runs in Windows and will be released in August. No price as yet.

Oregon-based **Trilobyte** is putting the finishing touches to its sequel to *The 7th Guest*, *The 11th Hour*. Originally intended as just a quick follow-up, the game eventually turned into a fully fledged program in its own right – once Trilobyte started coding they couldn't resist enhancing the original. The new game is less linear than its predecessor and has a moral dimension as well the horror of the first game, but the puzzles remain just as taxing as before – and there are over 40 to work out this time around. There's also over 65 minutes of full-motion video which you can run letterboxed or at 30 frames per second.

● Virgin Interactive Entertainment's *The 11th Hour* is still in development, so no price details or release date as yet.



(Top) *The 11th Hour's* gameplay is full of the same sort of baffling puzzles as *The 7th Guest*.

(Right) That's a bit saucy, madam. (Isn't she in *Drop The Dead Donkey?*)

**The PC Gamer Who's Who**

**No.2 Mark Hamill**

**Age:** 43 (Yes, really!).  
**Appearance:** Ageing blue-eyed boy trying hard to look like Denis Leary.  
**Occupation:** Actor.  
**Why is he in PC Gamer?** He plays Blair, the leading hero-type character in Origin's *Wing Commander 3*.  
**What's he famous for?** Being Luke Skywalker out of *Star Wars*, perhaps?  
**Isn't he a little short for a Stormtrooper?** Yes, but quoting lines from sci-fi films is a very sad pastime.  
**Just what has he done since *Return Of The Jedi*?** Er, aged 11 years.  
**What's next then?** Probably a starring role in 'My Kind Of Day' in the Radio Times.  
**And what exactly is his kind of day?** These days starring in low-budget sci-fi flicks like *Slipstream* and *Time Runner*.  
**Most likely to say:** "Can you put me through to George Lucas, please? What, he's *still* in a meeting?"  
**Least likely to say:** "I'd like to thank the Academy for this award..."

(Right) Mark Hamill or Luke if you find it hard to separate reality from fantasy.



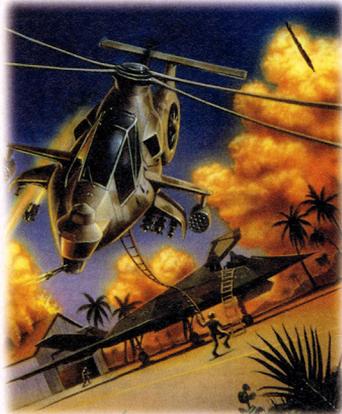
# Strike two!



General Kilbaba is dead, and his vicious son, Kilbaba The Younger, has teamed up with evil drug baron Carlos Ortega to launch a nuclear strike on the USA. This can mean only two things... The story's a tad ridiculous and **Grenlin** will be unleashing

*Jungle Strike* on the PC world not more than a month after *Desert Strike*. *Jungle Strike* uses the same isometric perspective as *Desert Strike*, but considerably revamps the concept by adding four new attack vehicles – a Comanche chopper, MX-9 hovercraft, F-117a Stealth fighter and assault motorcycle (whatever that may be). The game's a lot bigger than its predecessor too, with nine campaigns comprising 30 missions and covering such diverse terrain as deserts, jungles, and tundra – even Washington DC makes an appearance.

● Grenlin's *Jungle Strike* will be released in September on floppy and CD-ROM priced at £34.99.



(Above) In *Jungle Strike* you get to use four different attack vehicles...



(Right) ...and there's a lot more variety in the terrain too.

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(Left) The Beverly Hillbillies in all their glory. Erika's wearing a few more clothes than normal, I see.

(Below) The Clampetts entertain their new neighbours.

(Bottom) Erika stumbles across an illicit hoosh still in the garden.



Gametek is releasing a *The Beverly Hillbillies* game this summer to coincide with the European release of the movie. If you didn't know the original series the idea behind it was that a hillbilly family struck oil and moved with their fabulous wealth to Beverly Hills - much to the surprise of their new neighbours. Hilarious, eh?

Still, after the success of The Addams Family, every '60s TV series is up for Hollywood treatment, it seems - and, as we all know, with each movie there has to be a licensed game. American developers Capstone have resisted the temptation to churn out a

platform game, though, and opted for an action adventure instead. You play head of the house Jed as he takes the family from Arkansas to LA. Unfortunately, Granny's been kidnapped from the mansion and the rest of the family must set off to search for clues and track down her kidnappers.

● Gametek's *Beverly Hillbillies* will be out in July and cost £29.99.

**Doctor Doom**

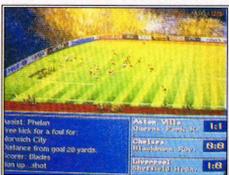
*Doom* has inspired almost every software developer to try its hand at a first-person perspective blaster. Merit Software's stab at fame is called *The Fortress Of Dr Radiaki* and it's silly. Dr Radiaki's fortress is a large, cavernous house (sound familiar?) and there are many different foes to face, including a samurai, a ninja, a robot with a toaster for a head, an alligator and rat men (who probably wear football shirts, eat curry and



drive Cortinas). Graphically, *The Fortress Of Dr Radiaki* has some very nice looking characters and a smooth 3D engine. Gilbert Austin, the man behind Harvestar, is responsible for the kitsch storyline. *The Fortress Of Dr Radiaki* will be released in August. No price details yet.

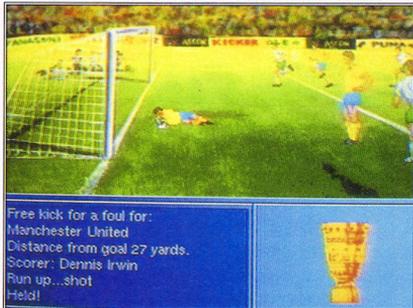
**"Oooh, aaah..."**

...Cantona. Andy, Andy, Andy Cole. One Alan Shearer, there's only one Alan Shearer." Another football season ends and fans who can't go the summer without a bit of leather (even though the season starts about three minutes after The World Cup expires) will want to get hold of Domark's new *End Of Season Data Disk* for its *Championship Manager*. All the latest transfers are included (Peacock at Newcastle, Limpar at Everton and Rocastle at Man City) and so are all the promotions and relegations. So Crystal Palace and Leicester City are in the top flight and Swindon, Oldham and Sheffield United are down among the Burnleys and Bristol Citys of this world. It's out now, priced at **£14.99**, and includes a copy of Nick Hornby's *Fever Pitch* book. Not bad at all.



(From left to right) *On The Ball's* got the prettiest graphics we've seen in a football management title. All the game screens - from squad selection to match highlights - started out as sketches which were subsequently scanned and touched up as (pseudo) watercolour images.

# Germany for the Cup



Another World Cup footie sim? No, this is *On The Ball*, a new football management game from Daze and the UK version of a highly successful German release called *Anstoss*. Developers Ascon decided to break away from the usually dull presentation of management games and created 420 animated sequences to illustrate the game highlights. They were all sketched, scanned and then re-coloured to create a unique watercolour effect.

On the management side of things, up to four players can take part in one league, there's data for individual players - and you can make tactical changes in mid-match, as well as choose from 11 types of training. You can also control the team's finances if you fancy the challenge.

● Daze's *On The Ball* will be out in June in a World Cup edition and at the end of August in a Premier League/First Division edition.

## It's World Cup year

Did you know there's a big football tournament going on at the moment in the USA and it's called the World Cup? Teams from countries all over the world gather together and play soccer to

decide things like who has the worst haircut, who best rolls around the floor in fake agony and who looks most like a porn star

(apparently, some chap called Jurgen Klinsmann

swept the board and won all three last time). And it's very popular, I've been told.

Coincidentally, there are a lot of new football games coming out right about now as well. If you don't know which one to get you could do worse than pick up *Empire's World Cup Year '94* compilation, which gives you *Sensible Soccer*, *Championship Manager '93/94*, *Goal and Striker* for just \$29.99.

## Devilish

Gremlin's *Little Devil* game was designed as an interactive cartoon, but when we reviewed it a few months' back (PCG 3: 43%) Gary Penn thought it was only marginally more interactive than *Dragon's Lair*, which we didn't like that much either (PCG 7: 26%). So chances are the CD edition of *Little Devil* isn't going to strike much of a chord with us.

Still, at least you won't have to waste 30 Megabytes of hard drive on the CD edition. It's out in July (but Gremlin has yet to decide on a price).



**PC GAMER**  
Recommends

The best releases of the last two months...



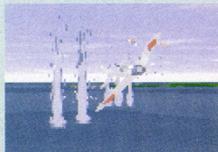
### Sam & Max Hit The Road

It was already a superb adventure, but by putting wonderfully atmospheric speech throughout, LucasArts has made this CD-ROM version even better than the floppy original.



### Theme Park

Magical Bullfrog game that's simply beautiful – in conception, design and execution. Make the biggest, scariest rollercoaster in the world (and bouncy castles). Creative, fun and challenging.



### 1942: The Pacific Air War

A desirable flight sim that's technically and graphically excellent. Versatile too, mixing strategy and seat-of-your-pants flying. But that mission film editor-viewer facility is just showing off.



### The Settlers

Blue Byte's friendly god sim puts you in control of a medieval settlement. Build mines, cut down trees, grow crops and try to expand your borders. Easily accessible and quite engaging.



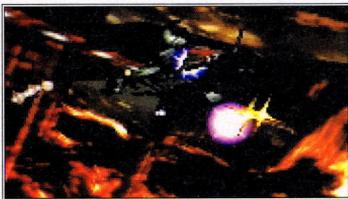
### Pagan: Ultima VIII

Origin's latest role-playing game has the graphics and gameplay to tease an arcade fan into the world of Lord British. Strong story, easy-to-use interface and classy gameplay.



### Pacific Strike

If 1942: *The Pacific Air War* was Arnold Hopkins, then this is Arnold Schwarzenegger. It's all wham, bam, thank you, ma'am. Action-packed, very playable and slickly presented.



(Above) Flying over the first level's lava-covered landscape – it's dark and often difficult to pick out the waves of enemy ships.

(Below) If you're too slow destroying the giant laser battery halfway through level one your ship gets blasted from here to kingdom come.

# Scavenge

Psygnosis' *Microcosm* came in for a fair bit of critical flak (PCG 3: 56%) when it first came out – and deservedly so. Beautiful graphics and sound couldn't mask the fact that the game was effectively just a repetitive shoot-'em-up. Which doesn't bode well for the company's upcoming CD crossover – and *Microcosm* programmers Fujitsu FM Towns Marty's latest effort – *Scavenger 4*.

But wait. *Scavenger 4*'s another shoot-'em-up, true, but it's also far more straightforward than *Microcosm*. Fly across

the surface of a planet, blow away several waves of enemy ships, take out an end-of-level guardian and move onto the next stage. Pretty similar to every other shoot-'em-up you've ever seen before, admittedly, but it is on CD-ROM and it does feature some gorgeous looking backdrops – the first level's set over a lava-covered planet, for instance. There are plenty of cinematic cutaways which either enhance the action or interrupt the gameplay, depending on your point of view too.

● *Psygnosis' Scavenger 4* will be out on CD-ROM soon. No price details as yet.

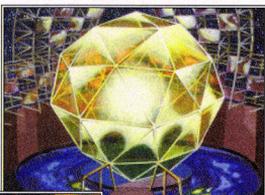


# Go to the Dome

Caught the new series of *The Crystal Maze* yet? That Ten Pole Tudor bloke's not as good as Richard O'Brien, is he? Anyway, yes, a game based on the show is coming out this September. It's icon-driven and uses the same format as the TV show, moving between four zones – Aztec, Medieval, Futuristic and Ocean – and tackling challenges in four different categories – skill, mystery, mental and physical. You collect a crystal for each challenge you complete, each one giving you valuable time in the Crystal Dome at the end of the game.

For the full effect, of course, you have to get five mates around and put them all in dungarees – and don't forget to include one fat, stupid and uncoordinated housewife in your party. And then give her all the physical games.

● Sherston Software's *The Crystal Maze* will be released in September and will cost £39.95.



(Above) The heart of *The Crystal Maze* is the gold and silver token-filled Dome.



(Left) This puzzle looks like a sliding block stocking filler.

(Below) This'll be Richard O'Brien's mum or auntie (or something).

(Below-left) The Aztec Zone.



## Global Multimedia Inc.

The second largest media company in the world, the \$11 billion German-owned Bertelsmann has recently announced that it will be setting up a Multimedia operation. **BMG Multimedia** will be an offshoot of BMG (Bertelsmann Music Group), which owns such labels as Arista, RCA and Ariola (who handle acts like Take That, Whitney Houston and The Eurythmics). Er, so what, you may ask?

Well, Bertelsmann has already worked out a long-term deal with Crystal

Dynamics – who produced *Crash 'n' Burn*, *Total Eclipse* and *The Horde* for the 3DO (check out the PC CD-ROM conversion of *The Horde* on page 72) – and have a stake in developer Rocket Science.

# nger 4

(Right) Level two takes place over the rolling hills of an alien planet.

(Below) More level two action. The backgrounds look nice, but the game does feel as if you're playing a basic shoot-'em-up on top of some pretty pictures.



## Caption Competition

*PC Gamer* readers have been around the block a few times and know the depths some people will sink to get their faces in an august journal like

what we write. Here, for example, is US Gold supreme

Geoff Brown attempting to promote his new USA 94 game by posing with Striker, the World Cup dog. We receive an inordinate number of painful PR piddles like this one, most of which go straight in the bin, but now we've decided to put them to good use and inaugurate the *PC Gamer* caption

competition, kicking off with this tasteful snapshot. So what's going on in this picture? What's being said? Come up with a suitably rib-tickling caption and £50 worth of top-notch software could be winging its way to you before you know it!

**£50 prize**



Answers on a postcard or the back of a sealed envelope to: **PC Gamer Caption Compo**, Future Publishing Ltd., 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW. Closing date Thursday 28 July.

### The third Frontier?

Gametek has announced that it'll soon be releasing a follow-up to *Frontier: Elite II*, called *Frontier - The First Encounters*. The game will go to the roots of the universe explored in *Frontier* - and introduce an enemy force into the proceedings. It'll be a standalone game that keeps the core engine used in *Frontier*, but there will be new graphics and, of course, a new scenario to tuck into too. Thankfully, David Braben won't keep us waiting another nine years whilst he finishes this game.

### Museum of the future city

Another endorsement for the other outstanding *SimCity 2000* has come from the Science Museum in London. There's an exhibition running there at the moment called "City Limits?" which looks at ever-increasing urbanization and aims to show how cities can be developed without totally destroying the environment.

Interestingly enough, part of the show is given over to a specially-designed seven minute playable demo of *SimCity 2000* called



Scienceville. The exhibition runs until September.

### Formula one million years BC

Core's *Chuck Rock* is to get a new sequel, but don't expect another simplistic platformer. *BC Racers* will be an arcade driving game, viewed from above and behind, with you in control of Chuck's dinosaur-powered rally bike.

There are 24 heats to race through, with the whole thing sounding like a cross between *The Flintstones*, *Wacky Races* and Nintendo's *Mario Kart*. There are 14 competitors to race against, with oh-so-Flintstonian names like Brick Jagger, Gary Gritter and Ate Roads. *BC Racers* will be released in December, but we don't have a price as yet. More news as and when we get hold of it.

# A new dimension in football

A late surge (or should that be Serge?) from French team **Infogrames** has put the company in the running for the World Cup of World Cup footie games. **Planet Football** takes a totally different approach to the people's game and puts you right on the pitch with a 3D view of the action, over 6,000 player animations and 11 different camera zooms.

All 24 World Cup teams are included - along with such '94 outsiders as France, Scotland, England and Japan - and each boasts a squad of 15 players (with the England squad sporting a Tel-tastic line up, including



Beardsley and Shearer). Top-down and side-on views usually prevail when it comes to footie sims, so it's a surprise



(Above and left) From behind the goal you can see the entire pitch and all the players at once.



to see this in-pitch format making a comeback - old Amiga vets may remember a soccer game from Spaniards Simulmondo that used a similar perspective. Whether it succeeds in providing both realism and playability, though, remains to be seen - this sort of view can make playing down the pitch (and also into the screen) something of a lottery.

● **Infogrames' Planet Football** will be out in late June, but the price has yet to be decided.

(Left) Getting the ball into the net from this far away is tricky, even for Eric Cantona.

# Movie madness



Any game calling itself an interactive movie these days might just as well place its head neatly on a block of wood and invite the local Axe-Wielding Maniacs Club around. **The Psychotron**, a Windows-based interactive movie developed by The Multimedia Store, seems to be a curious mix of full-motion video and 3D animation sequences. You play an American agent who's tracking



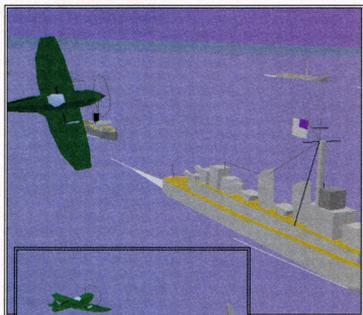
(Above) The mystery deepens when you discover this bomb hidden in a first aid box.

(Left) How are you going to deal with the press? Lie? Or just plain ignore them?

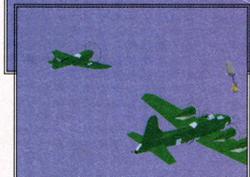
down a Russian Psychotronic Generator that's disappeared in transit to the United States. - interviewing suspects, searching 3D offices and toughing it out with dodgy-looking blokes.

An MPEG version of the game is also on the cards, offering higher quality video (although whether the quality of the acting or the direction of the game itself will be up to scratch is another matter entirely).

● **The Multimedia Store's The Psychotron** will be released in the Summer. No price details as yet.



(Above) Diving in to strafe a destroyer.



(Left) An American bomber with escort.

# Get tooled for D-Day

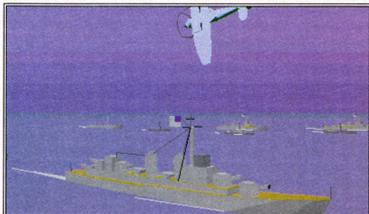
Out in time for the *Operation Overlord* anniversary is a special D-Day flight sim from **Domark**, called *D-Day*, that's been created using the company's very own *Flight Sim Toolkit*. You can play it as a standalone game or as a data disk for *Toolkit* — the title includes a new weapon (torpedoes) and flight (bombers) classes.



The new D-Day title includes six new flight models (including the Spitfire, Typhoon and Mosquito) — and all troop positions are as they were on June 6 1944. The terrain's also been accurately mapped. You also get a

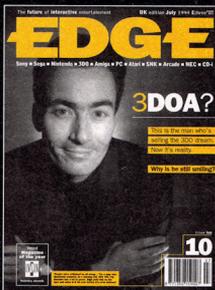
Midway flight sim set around the famous Pacific conflict for your dosh, where you can fly the Zero and the Helicat, as well as take off from Japanese or American carriers. Both titles also support a head-to-head network or serial link.

● **Domark's D-Day (including The Battle Of Midway) is available now and costs £14.99.**



(Above) D-Day — the Allied invasion force crosses the English Channel. This destroyer is being attacked by a reckless German fighter pilot.

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### Planetary encounters

Play-by-mail gaming has always had a small but extremely loyal following – and now PBMs have woken up to the potential of BBSs for their own brand of interpersonal interaction. Solar Flare BBS has been set up specifically as a play centre for the popular PBM game *VGA Planets*. The game, voted Best New Game of 1994 by the British PBM Forum, enables you to explore and colonise 500 planets, meet and greet (or blow away) ten other human opponents, design and equip your own starships – even research new technology for future conquests. For more detailed information, call Solar Flare ☎ (081) 744 2229 or modem them on ☎ (081) 744 2829.

### CD cinema in your home

Move over, VHS; hello, CD-ROM drive. Gametek has announced that they plan to release 30 video CDs before Christmas, presented through the company's newly designed Virtual Movie Theatre (or VMT).

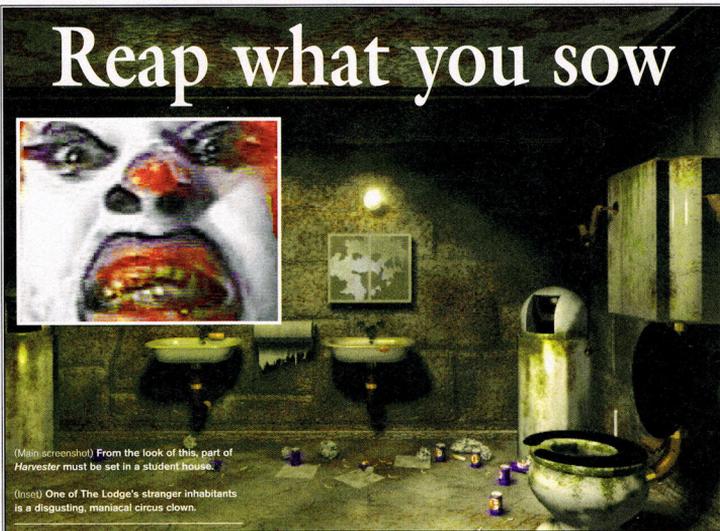
In the VMT, players enter a cinema, play in an arcade full of playable demos of Gametek games (although there probably won't be much of a queue for *Corridor 7*) and then visit an interactive refreshment stand. Titles already signed up include *Night Of The Living Dead*, *Metropolis* and some Charlie Chaplin films, but there are plenty of others in the pipeline.

# Reap what you sow



(Main screenshot) From the look of this, part of *Harvester* must be set in a student house.

(Inset) One of The Lodge's stranger inhabitants is a disgusting, maniacal circus clown.



All is not what it seems in the small middle-American town of Harvest. As David Lynch has proved (on several occasions), America's soft underbelly

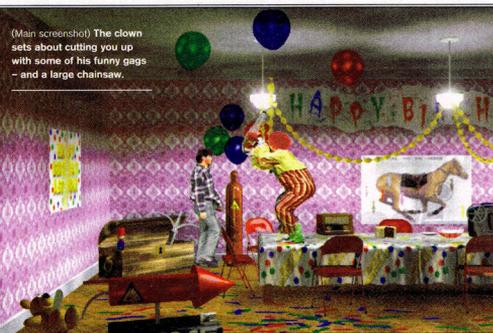
can be quite disgusting and pervy when it wants to be, so should you really be surprised when your girlfriend disappears and you find a skull and

spinal cord in her bed? Developed by ex-Origin screenwriter Gilbert Austin (*Privateer*, *Strike Command*),

*Harvester* is a new role-playing cum action game from Dallas-based Merit Software, which claims to be "a graphically violent experience in terror."

No-one in the town is interested in your problems or the fact that your girl's gone, and your only clue leads to the mysterious Lodge Of The Order Of The Harvest Moon. Inside you'll encounter dangerous traps and vicious monsters (they had to be in there somewhere). Austin and his team have aimed for a cinematic feel with SVGA graphics, digitised video characters and over 100 3D animated sequences.

● Merit Software's *Harvester* will be released in September on CD-ROM. No price as yet.



(Main screenshot) The clown sets about cutting you up with some of his funny gags – and a large chainsaw.

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## Charts

Ⓢ Up Ⓣ Down ● Non mover ✨ New entry

What a quality Top Ten there is in the Full Price Top 40 this month: *SimCity 2000* still majestic at the top, with *Cannon Fodder*, *Pacific Strike*, *Battle Isle 2*, *F14 Fleet Defender*, *Frontier: Elite II* and *UFO: Enemy Unknown* in there too. It's a marked contrast to the US charts where all manner of unplayable fat and CD trifles dominate. No taste, the Yanks.

**Long-term sellers** that have proved their worth with year-long sojourns in the charts include *X-Wing* (back in the Top Ten a year after being at Number One), the supremely enjoyable strategy game *Civilization*, *Lemmings 2* and *Formula One Grand Prix*. In the budget stakes *Doom* makes two appearances – because it's being sold as Shareware any company can make up their own pack and hawk it. Still, it deserves such success for being one of our favourite games. The CD charts are still a mix of upgraded floppy games, CD originals and compilations, though. Next month expect to see a glut of football games to see a glut of football games take over that shelf space.



(Above) *SimCity 2000* – big, beautiful and the best-seller yet again.



(Left) Arriving in style at the top of the CD charts is the excellent *Sam & Max Hit The Road*.

### Full Price Top 40

1	●	SimCity 2000	PCD	94%	Maxis	£39.99
2	Ⓣ	Cannon Fodder	PCD	93%	Virgin	£34.99
3	●	Premier Manager 2	PCD	79%	Gremlin	£34.99
4	✨	Pacific Strike	PCD	93%	Electronic Arts/Origin	£49.99
5	✨	Battle Isle 2	PCD	93%	Blue Byte	£39.99
6	Ⓣ	F14 Fleet Defender	PCD	88%	MicroProse	£44.99
7	●	Flight Simulator v.5	PCD	N/A%	Microsoft	£39.99
8	Ⓣ	Frontier: Elite II	PCD	90%	Gametek/Konami	£39.99
9	Ⓣ	UFO: Enemy Unknown	PCD	91%	MicroProse	£44.99
10	Ⓣ	X-Wing	PCD	N/A%	US Gold/LucasArts	£45.99
11	Ⓣ	TFX	PCD	89%	Ocean	£44.99
12	Ⓣ	Pagan: Ultima VIII	PCD	93%	Electronic Arts/Origin	£49.99
13	Ⓣ	IndyCar Racing	PCD	93%	Virgin	£44.99
14	Ⓣ	Sensible Soccer '92/'93	PCD	N/A%	Renegade	£32.99
15	Ⓣ	Sam & Max Hit The Road	PCD	93%	US Gold/LucasArts	£42.99
16	Ⓣ	Beneath A Steel Sky	PCD	91%	Virgin	£34.99
17	Ⓣ	The Elder Scrolls: Arena	PCD	87%	US Gold/LucasArts	£45.99
18	Ⓣ	Championship Manager Compendium	PCD	N/A%	Domark	£27.99
19	Ⓣ	Jurassic Park	PCD	70%	Ocean	£34.99
20	Ⓣ	Wolfenstein 3D	PCD	N/A%	Mindscape/id	£19.99
21	Ⓣ	B-Wing	PCD	80%	US Gold/LucasArts	£20.99
22	Ⓣ	Alone In The Dark 2	PCD	92%	Infogrames	£49.99
23	Ⓣ	Civilization	PCD	90%	MicroProse	£39.99
24	Ⓣ	Lemmings 2: The Tribes	PCD	N/A%	Psychosis	£39.99
25	✨	Flashback	PCD	N/A%	US Gold	£37.99
26	●	Formula One Grand Prix	PCD	N/A%	MicroProse	£44.99
27	✨	Mavis Beacon (UK Edition)	PCD	N/A%	Mindscape	£34.99
28	Ⓣ	SSN-21 Seawolf	PCD	89%	Electronic Arts	£44.99
29	Ⓣ	Legends Of Valour	PCD	N/A%	US Gold	£39.99
30	Ⓣ	Indiana Jones/Atlantis (action game)	PCD	N/A%	US Gold/LucasArts	£30.99
31	Ⓣ	Legend	PCD	N/A%	Mindscape	£19.99
32	Ⓣ	Mortal Kombat	PCD	79%	Virgin	£29.99
33	Ⓣ	Chessmaster 4000 Turbo	PCD	91%	Mindscape	£34.99
34	Ⓣ	Evasive Action	PCD	90%	Mindscape	£34.99
35	Ⓣ	Comanche: Maximum Overkill	PCD	90%	US Gold	£45.99
36	✨	Network. Q RAC Rally	PCD	N/A%	Europress	£34.99
37	Ⓣ	Corridor 7	PCD	43%	Gametek	£19.99
38	Ⓣ	Award Winners Gold Edition	PCD	N/A%	Empire	£34.99
39	✨	Detroit	PCD	73%	Impressions	£39.99
40	Ⓣ	Indiana Jones/Atlantis (adventure)	PCD	89%	US Gold/LucasArts	£37.99

### American Top 10

1	Ⓣ	Myst	Electronic Arts
2	Ⓣ	SimCity 2000	Maxis
3	Ⓣ	The 7th Guest	Virgin
4	●	The Elder Scrolls: Arena	Bethesda
5	✨	AD&D Dragon's Gold	SSI
6	✨	Rebel Assault	LucasArts
7	Ⓣ	Master Of Orion	MicroProse
8	✨	The Trail Of Krondor	Sierra
9	✨	Corridor 7	Gametek
10	●	Coaster	Disney

### Budget Top 10

1	Ⓣ	Doom	PCD	N/A%	Titanium Seal	£4.99
2	Ⓣ	Jimmy White's Snooker	PCD	85%	The Hit Squad	£14.99
3	Ⓣ	SimCity Classic	PCD	88%	The Hit Squad	£16.99
4	Ⓣ	The Secret Of Monkey Island	PCD	N/A%	Kixx XL	£16.99
5	✨	Doom	PCD	N/A%	Micro Star	£6.99
6	✨	Dune	PCD	92%	The Hit Squad	£14.99
7	Ⓣ	Eye Of The Beholder	PCD	79%	Kixx XL	£18.99
8	Ⓣ	Populous & The Promised Lands	PCD	N/A%	The Hit Squad	£14.99
9	Ⓣ	Wing Commander	PCD	82%	The Hit Squad	£14.99
10	✨	Magic Land Dizzy	PCD	N/A%	Codemasters	£9.99

### This Time Last Year Top 10

1	X-Wing	US Gold
2	Lemmings 2	Psychosis
3	Strike Commander	Electronic Arts
4	Formula One Grand Prix	MicroProse
5	Zool	Gremlin
6	Dune 2	Virgin
7	Lemmings/Oh No More Lemmings	Psychosis
8	Strike Commander Speech Pack	Electronic Arts
9	Indiana Jones & The Fate Of Atlantis	US Gold
10	Civilization	MicroProse

### CD-ROM Top 10

1	Ⓣ	Sam & Max Hit The Road	PCD	93%	LucasArts/US Gold	£45.99
2	●	The 7th Guest/Dune	PCD	N/A%	Telstar	£49.99
3	●	Rebel Assault	PCD	64%	LucasArts/US Gold	£45.99
4	Ⓣ	MegaRace	PCD	80%	Mindscape	£39.99
5	Ⓣ	Day Of The Tentacle	PCD	N/A%	LucasArts/US Gold	£45.99
6	✨	Jack Nicklaus Compendium	PCD	N/A%	Accolade	£19.99
7	✨	Star Trek: 25th Anniversary	PCD	84%	Interplay	£49.99
8	Ⓣ	CD Challenge Pack	PCD	N/A%	Mindscape	£39.99
9	✨	UFO: Enemy Unknown	PCD	91%	MicroProse	£44.99
10	Ⓣ	Battle Isle 2	PCD	93%	Blue Byte	£49.99

For weekly PC games software charts updates, try tuning in to Digitiser, page 470 of Teletext, on Channel 4

Official Gallup UK Charts.

# Q&A

# The Unbelievable Truth

**Q** I am soon going to buy my first PC and I'm a bit concerned that some of the games may be a bit complicated. By this I mean your thorough review of *Fleet Defender* (PCG 6: 88%), where you state that there are "over 100 keyboard controls in all to master." I would like to know if games like *X-Wing* or *SimCity 2000* are going to take hours of frustration to physically play?

Paul Gatt,  
Plymouth

**A** The PC runs the most complex and involving games you can play anywhere – but they also demand the most patience and devotion if you're to get the best out of them. That's not to say you have to be a Tefal-head, though – you can be happy into the likes of *Fleet Defender* or *X-Wing* within an hour of installation. Rest assured, even with the most complex titles, like *SimCity 2000*, the rewards are well worth the effort.

Providing you're not some kind of slack-jawed tragiolyde, you'll still be playing PC titles long after your console-owning friends have burned through a dozen of their flimsy arcade carts...



(Above) MicroProse's *Fleet Defender* – a weighty manual and loads of key commands, but it's well worth persevering with.

**Q** Since reading your Shareware feature in issue three about the Spectrum and Commodore 64 emulators, I've been hunting high and low around various bulletin boards looking for them – I'd love to play some of my old 8-bit favourites again. But although you mentioned that these programs are widely available, I've been unable to find any. What's going on?

Simon Brooke,  
London

**A** Most bulletin boards and Shareware companies have removed these programs from their libraries after it became apparent that such ported-over programs are a bit on the dodgy side, legally speaking. By copying a piece of commercial software, however old, and putting it on a public bulletin board, you get into the very nazy maze of copyright and piracy law.

You could argue that since these old games – and the hardware used to run them – are now defunct, emulating them like this does nobody any harm. But rather than run the risk of having legal action brought against them, nearly all BBSs have now cleared the decks of these programs. Shame, really. Gary Penn's column on page 41 this month tackles the subject, in fact. In the meantime, the hard

Tense, nervous headache? Is a PC games-related problem perplexing or, indeed, vexing you? The price of a stamp is all it costs to vanquish those anxieties for good. *PC Gamer's* men in the know stand ready, willing and able...

core of Shareware programmers haven't been put off – their latest trick is, believe or not, an Amstrad CPC emulator, complete with classic games!

**Q** I heard recently that LucasArts is planning a sequel to *X-Wing* – not *TIE Fighter*, which I already know about, but a fully-fledged *X-Wing 2*. Is there anything in this or is it just the usual gossip?

Clive Boyle,  
Doncaster

**A** You'll not hear anything official for a while, but some LucasArts employees were overheard talking at the European Computer Trade Show in London earlier this year about an *X-Wing* sequel (which will reputedly use some of the new techniques pioneered by *TIE Fighter*). But *X-Wing* rumours are nothing new – just a couple of months ago word was going around that the game's creators, Lawrence Holland and Ed Killam, had left the company to take part in a secret project for Virgin (a rumour which acquired some plausibility by the constant *TIE Fighter* delays). In the end, however, it turned out to be unfounded.

And in the neverending merry-go-round of rumour and hearsay that is today's software industry, less than half of what you hear on the grapevine ever turns out to be true, but the *X-Wing 2* story sounds more credible than most. No-one was available for comment officially at time of going to press, but we'll keep you posted.



(Above) *TIE Fighter* from LucasArts – soon to be followed by *X-Wing 2*? Read the answer to Clive Boyle's letter to find out.

**Q** As a *Doom* addict (who, by the way, has completed the whole thing on Ultra Violence level – can anybody top that?), I'm confused about the news of new versions and

sequels supposedly on the way. Can somebody tell me just exactly what is meant to happen and when?

Craig Downey,  
Middlesbrough



(Above) *Doom*: It's great and there's loads more on the way.

**A** Id Software is at the moment working on the latest version of *Doom*, v 1.3, which cleans up any bugs still present in the current v 1.2 release, but is, in effect, the same game. The next big *Doom*-related release is the official sequel, *Doom II: Hell On Earth*, which will be released not as Shareware, but in the shops as a full-price commercial game. With a whole new set of levels (the action will take place mostly outside), new baddies and a host of other features, it's due out in time for the usual Christmas rush.

Id is currently in negotiations with various publishers to sort out who will actually be distributing *Doom II* in Europe, but nothing's been confirmed as yet. In the meantime, outside developers are producing two new, original games based on the *Doom* engine. Raven Software, creators of *Origin's* *Shadowcaster*, is working on *Druid*, which is reported to be a *D&D* version of *Doom*, while *Cygnus Studios* (who produced the superb shoot-'em-up *Raptor* for *Apogee*) has a game called *Strife*, which is something a little more sophisticated.

After all that lot, the next game from id will be *Quake*, which promises a true 3D environment (you'll be able to look up and down this time). It's still in the early stages and won't be out until the early part of 1995. We'll keep you informed...

Send your queries to:  
The Unbelievable Truth,  
*PC Gamer*, 30 Monmouth  
Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW.





# Does big business mean bad games?

Chris Buxton



*Every week* seems to bring news of yet another entertainment or media giant who's decided to muscle in on the games software scene. Either they're setting up their own label, gobbling up some vulnerable software firm that got a bit too ambitious in the console boom, or entering into some sort of marriage with an established player in the games industry (only to devour them afterwards when all the fuss has died down).

German music company Bertelsmann (RCA, Arista, Ariola) is the latest addition to the fold, announcing that it too will now be setting up a Multimedia operation-division-group type thing. Then there's the huge Matsushita empire (MCA/Universal, Panasonic, Technics, JVC), which has a substantial interest in Interplay. And Sony (Columbia, TriStar, CBS), who bought Psygnosis last year and is already making noises about its forthcoming Playstation console. So is big brother watching us? Are the innocent pleasures of computer gaming about to be transformed into so much mass market corporate 'product'?

Well, it all depends on whether you believe things were better in your day and that they don't make games like they used to. If you're that narrow-minded then you'll probably see an overwhelming global conspiracy to take games away from 'ver kids' and deliver them into the hands of sober-suited businessmen who only care about profit (and you probably believe that Kennedy was murdered by a religious sect that worship Clive Dunn). But wait, maybe you're right. Maybe, when the corporate yes-men roll into the offices of VeryGoodSoft, they'll bring their super ray guns along, which will turn talented programmers and game designers into zombie-like creatures who sit motionless all day and just stare at their monitors.

I don't think it will be all sweetness and light, though. Large media companies come with plenty of excess baggage. Do I really have to tell you about banal mass marketing designed to appeal to the lowest common denominator? About insidious tie-ins to any sort of name property? About precisely programmed pan-media build-ups to the release of key products? No, you know that already. Big businesses aren't pretty. They're huge, ugly brutes that use H-bombs to swat flies. However, they're also only really organization systems - very efficient systems (at least, the successful ones are), admittedly, but organization systems all the same. They marshal human resources and exploit (in a business sense of the word) creative talent whether it's Steven Spielberg, George Michael, U2 - or some programmer from the suburbs.

But for every star, there are hundreds of half-baked grafters turning out dull movies, repetitive music and bad games. You see, it's the bad games

that I worry about (actually, that's a complete lie. I worry about far more important things - like what my chances are with that redhead in the corner of the bar or whether I can afford a new car, but I'm trying to argue a point here). Bad games have been around since the year dot and there's nothing that Sony or Matsushita or whoever are going to do to change that sad fact.

Besides, for the last ten years the game industry has been (fairly) professional and business-like anyway. The number of zeroes in the corporate balance sheet might have increased, but games are still games. Look back over the last few years and at your software collection - how many games would you say are genuinely great? Not just well-produced titles that do the job, but innovative, thrilling, enjoyable games that made a real lasting mark. Ten, 20, 30? Let's be generous, how about 100? And how much software has been produced in that same period? Thousands.

If, like me, you subscribe to the healthy principle that 99% of anything is rubbish, then the arrival of Japanese-owned corporations won't worry you in the slightest. Most games are derivative, hackneyed 'products,' tailored to exploit a certain licence or repeat a certain formula that's worked before anyway. And that's not going to change with the arrival of big money and big firms. The only thing that makes good games is talented people, and if they go want to go where the money is, good luck to them. The best games - the only ones worth spending your money on - will still find their way onto the shelves, no matter who owns, markets or distributes them and they'll still have to fight for space with so much shoddy software.

● Chris Buxton is the Deputy Editor of *PC Gamer* and is pretty rubbish himself for 99% of the time.

*"Big businesses aren't pretty - they're huge and ugly brutes that can marshal human resources and exploit creative talent - whether it's U2 or some programmer from the suburbs"*



# Sweet home Chicago

Simon Williams

*"Things are going to be easier under Windows 4 – although titles run in a DOS window will still hit the 640K ceiling, genuine Windows games will have the full run of all the memory installed on a PC"*

## **"Shock! Horror!"** Windows In Secret DOS Takeover Scandal!

It was revealed today that there'll be no independent MS-DOS sitting under the next version of Microsoft's graphical operating system, Windows 4 – codenamed Chicago (*What a bummer – Ed*). Astonished gamer Ron Pickles claimed, "My gob has never been so smacked. Without MS-DOS, how will I run *Invasion Of The Mutant Space Bats of Doom?* Come to think of it, how will I ever run *Doom?*"

In fact, things may not be quite as bad as Ron is making out. Although you won't be able to quit Windows 4 for DOS, you'll still be able to run a DOS box by clicking on the DOS Prompt icon as you can under current Windows versions. "Oh, Great," returns Ron. "We all know how fast games run under Windows (i.e. not very) – and how many of them won't run at all."

Well, Ron, Microsoft has thought of that – and is determined to do something about it in the shape of WinG (pronounced Win-Gee). WinG is a set of graphics routines which offers greatly increased graphics performance for programs running under Windows. It's suitable for all sorts of Multimedia applications, but there's a special emphasis on games.

Software written using WinG will run directly under Windows as a Windows application – but also as if it's been written under specialist, DOS-based operating environments. The routines permit direct access to the Windows accelerator chips found on most modern video cards and are device independent, so they theoretically work with Windows on non-Intel PCs (like the Power PC).

As an example of what WinG can do (the only example so far, in fact), id Software took a copy of

*Doom* and ported the core of it over to Windows under WinG. It took them just two days, although a fully playable version of the game for Windows isn't expected until Christmas. People who have seen the prototype running claim it's virtually as fast as the DOS version.

Microsoft is keen to push WinG as an answer for games producers who want to get software ready for Windows 4, but the code will also work under Windows 3.1 and 3.11, or so the company says. In fact, a workable version of the code wasn't available until the end of April, so developers who want to release Windows versions of games this year will have to get their skates on. Mind you, there's other support for games developers – namely a manual on using WinG (the zappily named "Writing HOT Games for Microsoft Windows" – plenty of street cred there) and a forum on the information service CompuServe.

Things really are going to be easier for games authors under Windows 4, though. The new version will be a 32-bit operating system – or at least the important parts will be. This, and its protected mode operation, mean that that irritating 640K restriction we put up with at the moment will soon be a thing of the past. Although games run in a DOS box will still hit the 640K ceiling, genuine Windows titles will have the full run of all the memory installed on a PC. And this will all be as one continuous chunk, not as little bits here and there, or 64K portions 'viewed' through a memory window. It will give the PC the same kind of memory set-up as other sensible micro-computers.

Other improvements in Windows 4 include multi-reading, a more elegant and powerful way of implementing multi-tasking. This is the system by which you can have more than one program running at once. In games terms, it means that parts of a program can be kept running in real time in the background, while you do something exciting in the foreground. *SimCity 2001*, anyone?

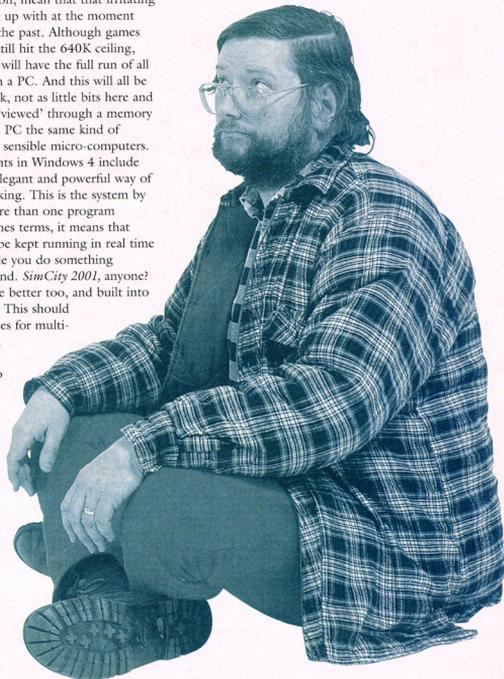
Networking will be better too, and built into Windows 4 as standard. This should increase the opportunities for multi-player games and, when combined with built-in support for digital video in windows bigger than a Sony Watchman screen, provide the technology for some good interactive movies at long last.

But where does all this get us? We have Microsoft saying it wants Windows to be the core of a new breed of home entertainment machine and appearing to provide the software to do it. We have gamers with a huge investment in PC games that

appear to be incompatible with Windows 4. Microsoft UK says that users will be "pleasantly surprised" with the facilities provided for DOS programs, but also admits that games are likely to be troublesome. If titles are written according to Microsoft's specific guidelines, there should be no problems. But how many games are ever written to anybody's guidelines?

It looks like we'll all be playing the old game of waiting for new versions of existing software. Except that, with games, we're unlikely to see upgrades. Who wants to work on making *Fred & Jim Hit The M25* compatible with a new version of Windows when almost everybody's already bought it, played it to the end and chucked it in the bin? It looks as though PC gamers may well have to run two machines, then – one for Windows and its fancy new games, the other for DOS and releases that have gone before.

● Simon Williams writes *PC Gamer's* Systems section (this month, the ultimate PC – see page 104) and is a regular contributor on games-related technical subjects.



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# I really do love my PC

Gary Penn

**Aren't IBM PC** compatibles great? I love 'em. The PC's one of the few computers available that's actually capable of fulfilling the promise that manufacturers used to spin out to sell machines a decade ago: it really *can* be used for work, rest and play.

But the best thing about PCs (especially for sad old men like me) is that they provide access to the largest software library in the world – and I can wallow in melancholy and have a laugh at the same time. Yes, thanks to this one piece of hardware – and two pieces of software – it's possible to play all the games from one old format (the Sinclair Spectrum) and most of the games from another (the Commodore 64). The crap smells just as bad as it ever did (and most of the games considered fresh in their day are now well past their sell-by date) but the fact remains that a handful of releases are still more entertaining and involving (and suggestive of the medium's potential) than the lightweight puff that passes for cutting-edge interactive entertainment these days.

However, recently bulletin boards and other Shareware libraries have been forced to remove such emulators, along with the ported-over games, from their catalogues, because technically they contravene the original software's copyright. The law's the law, of course, but it's such a shame, because the original tape-based versions have long since died and gone out of popular consumption, and these tributes are effectively keeping the memory of these old classics alive. Who else is going to carry on their legacy?

Who wants a fat turkey called *Strike Commander* sprawling across their his or her drive when they could have such old Commodore 64 faves as *Head Over Heels*, *The Sentinel*, *Paravroid* and, oh, at least a dozen others combined? Okay, they may not look appealing enough to convince your mates that you aren't some kind of sad anorak, but looks aren't everything. And don't forget how little memory they take up too.

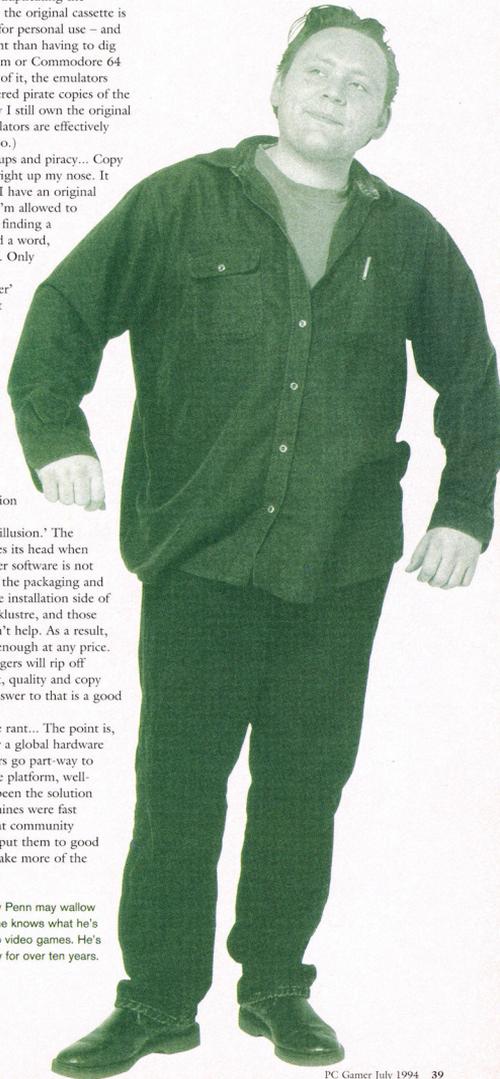
There's also something comforting about the fact that the tools may be dead but the medium

lives on. As far as I can see, duplicating the software on hard drive from the original cassette is equivalent to backing it up for personal use – and it's certainly more convenient than having to dig out and set up your Spectrum or Commodore 64 every time. (Come to think of it, the emulators themselves could be considered pirate copies of the hardware, but seeing as how I still own the original machines, I reckon the emulators are effectively back-ups for personal use too.)

And speaking of back-ups and piracy... Copy protection as it stands gets right up my nose. It makes my blood boil when I have an original copy of a game but before I'm allowed to play it I have to fart around finding a page, a paragraph, a line and a word, and then have to type it in... Only to find more often than not that I get at least one 'answer' wrong, usually when it's not made clear that you should include headlines in the manual when you're counting. Yes, publishers need to find some form of equivalent protection to minimise casual copying, but, given the price of the software, I expect to see some imagination put into integrating the copy protection with the software, and thus making it more part of the 'illusion.' The price of software always raises its head when piracy is an issue, but cheaper software is not enough: the presentation of the packaging and the software – principally the installation side of things – is almost always lacklustre, and those huge, near-empty boxes don't help. As a result, the game isn't 'collectable' enough at any price. Sure, some greedy little buggers will rip off anything – regardless of cost, quality and copy protection – but the only answer to that is a good punch up the bracket.

Meanwhile, back at the rant... The point is, there's always been a call for a global hardware standard, but these emulators go part-way to show that, irrespective of the platform, well-crafted software has always been the solution (well, it would be if all machines were fast enough and the development community pulled their fingers out and put them to good use on their keyboards to make more of the under-exploited medium).

● Video games journalist Gary Penn may wallow in the glories of the past, but he knows what he's talking about when it comes to video games. He's been involved with the industry for over ten years.



*"Sure, some greedy little buggers will rip off anything – regardless of cost, quality and copy protection – but the only answer to that is a good punch up the bracket"*

# Cables

Write to the Editor at:  
Cables, PC Gamer, Future  
Publishing Ltd., 30 Monmouth  
Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW.

There's no escaping *Doom* these days. Even the dreaming spires of our letters page offers no refuge. And we say the word "breasts" loads of times too. Look!

## Letter Of The Month!

### Violently unhappy

Dear PC Gamer,

I write in protest at the views expressed by John Harper (last month) about violent games.

Personally, I can't see the problem. After all, if you don't like it, don't buy it. If there is a correlation between TV, videos and computer games and violent crime then I'd like to know what inspired Jack The Ripper to commit bloody murder. Violence on TV, in videos and particularly in computer games is merely a scapegoat for those who dislike it. I don't particularly like Eastenders, but I don't go around saying that it will cause nationwide depression if you want to watch it. This would be an absurd and untrue statement.

I am also sure that *PC Gamer* does not base its judgement of games solely on how violent they are. That would be silly. What would happen to such non-violent greats as *SimCity 2000*? It doesn't matter whether you love or hate *Doom*, you have to admit it's a masterpiece the likes of which PC gameplayers have never seen before. THAT is why it scored so highly, not just in *PC Gamer* but in many other PC magazines too.

The whole idea of a computer game is to try and place you there you'd not normally be, such as in the cockpit of an aircraft or on the bridge of a spacecraft. It tries to get you away from the tedious reality of life for a while – a life full of people complaining about violence, sex and oppression. Personally, I'm sick of it and think everyone should simply lead their own lives. I like a good, violent game such as *Doom*. It gives me something else to think about. Some may argue that any game could do this. Well, probably, but I enjoy the violence (there just isn't enough on TV these days!). What's more, I can distinguish it from real life.

Basically, you cannot say that a game is bad simply because it is violent. That is a very narrow-minded statement to make. If I reviewed games for a magazine I would leave my opinion out and consider other factors such as gameplay and depth because I know that my opinion is not going to be shared by everyone. At least I know when I am wrong.

Yours sincerely,

Nick Hunt,  
Downham Market, Norfolk

### Double standards

Dear PC Gamer,

The quaint moral stance you take in the June edition caused a bit of a hull around here. On page 42 in response to John Harper's dislike of *Doom*'s "...perversely satisfying impact wounds..." you

declaim, "Surely... people... have the intelligence to distinguish between what is patently a game... and their real lives." So how does this square up with a couple of censored placards plastered over computer depictions of female breasts (sorry, b\*\*\*\*s) on page 24, together with a remark that this game is too liberated for you? I suggest the staff member who ordered the placards avoids certain Mediterranean beaches on his hols or he'll go all red and not know where to look.

It seems that computerised naked breasts (sorry, b\*\*\*\*s) are more horrible for you than computerised blood, guts and death. I think you are a weird man.

Yours,

Peter Austwick,  
Bath

*Nick's letter is a fair representation of the mail we received in response to John Harper's letter. As for Peter's comments, I'm glad to report that, to a man (and one woman), the PC Gamer team can tell the difference between computer depictions of breasts and real breasts. However, we can't show them in our magazine because we aren't that kind of topshelf flesh mag.*

### General enquiries

Dear Gary,

Hello, I've nothing in particular to write about, just a few points and questions.

1. In *PCG* 6's letter of the month, Trevor McGuire failed to mention one other way to obtain cheap software – and that's at computer shows, such as your very own Future Entertainment Show. The stands there will sell you games at ridiculously low prices. At last year's FES, for instance, I got *Frontier: Elite 2* for just £20.

2. In reply to one John who said that next month's issue (*PCG* 7) would have a CD on the cover, but when I phoned Future they told me it wasn't going to happen for a few months. When is *PC Gamer* CD going to materialise? Also, when it does, how can subscribers get the CD edition delivered instead of the floppy edition?

3. The CD market is really starting to take off, just as well really because I have just shelved out £180 on a Mitsumi FX001D double-speed drive (I made the decision after reading your article in *PCG* 4. Cheers, it helped a lot). At the moment, a lot of games are coming out on floppy, only to be followed a few months later by a CD edition (*Pacific Strike* and *Ultima VIII*, for example). If you know that a game is going to come out on CD at a later date, please can you say so in your reviews because it would help a great deal.

4. Any chance of some screenshots of *Wing Commander 3* or *Grand Prix 2*?

5. Talking of Grand Prix, I'm still getting to grips with the death of Senna and Ratzenburger.

According to Murray Walker, Ratzenburger's team-mate was David Brabham, he's not THE David Brabham who wrote *Frontier*, is he?

Yours sincerely,

Scott McCarthy,  
Neath, West Glamorgan

1. Yes, at shows like our very own FES (see *EyeWitness* page 20 for more details) you can pick up some very tasty bargains. (We'd like to point out that we've never met Scott and haven't on any account shipped him a bag full of used fivers).

2. *PC Gamer* CD will appear this autumn. Subscribers will be informed of the changes and how it affects subscriptions nearer the time.

3. Sure, we'll try to keep you up to date, but often we don't know if a game is going to be released on CD when we first review it.

4. Gorge yourself on our six-page *Wing Commander 3* feature – and then wait patiently as we pester *MicroProse* for Grand Prix 2 shots.

5. Er, you must mean David Braben (author of *Elite*, *Virus* and *Frontier*).

### A friend in need

Dear Gary,

I am writing in response to a letter from Craig Skelo in the April issue of *PC Gamer*. Craig, who requested a section in your magazine devoted to technical problems in games, mentioned that he was having problems in the two-player mode of *IndyCar Racing*. I wanted to inform you that a patch is available in case you intend to publish just such a problems page.

Version 1.04 of *IndyCar Racing* is currently available on many on-line services, including the Papyrus BBS, the Internet ([ftp.std.com](http://ftp.std.com) in the directory [/ftp/americas/papyrus](http://ftp.america.com/papyrus)), CompuServe (Go Papyrus), Vendor's Online and Genie. The version 1.04e update to the UK version of *IndyCar* is available on the Internet, as well as the Virgin UK BBS ☞ (081) 964 8242. Additional international versions are also available from Virgin UK. Non modem users can obtain the UK version by calling ☞ (081) 964 8242 and the US version by calling ☞ 617 868 3103.

Changes in version 1.04 and 1.04e include correction of the modem and direct connect play faults, a hot key to disable joystick/wheel control of the steering devices with no y-axis, and an Accelerated Time feature to resolve a race if you crash out early and wish to see the results or have it count toward the championship season. All fixes from earlier versions are included in this update.

Your sincerely,

Jane C Sieczkiewicz,  
Manager, Customer Support,  
Papyrus Publishing,  
Somerville, Massachusetts, USA



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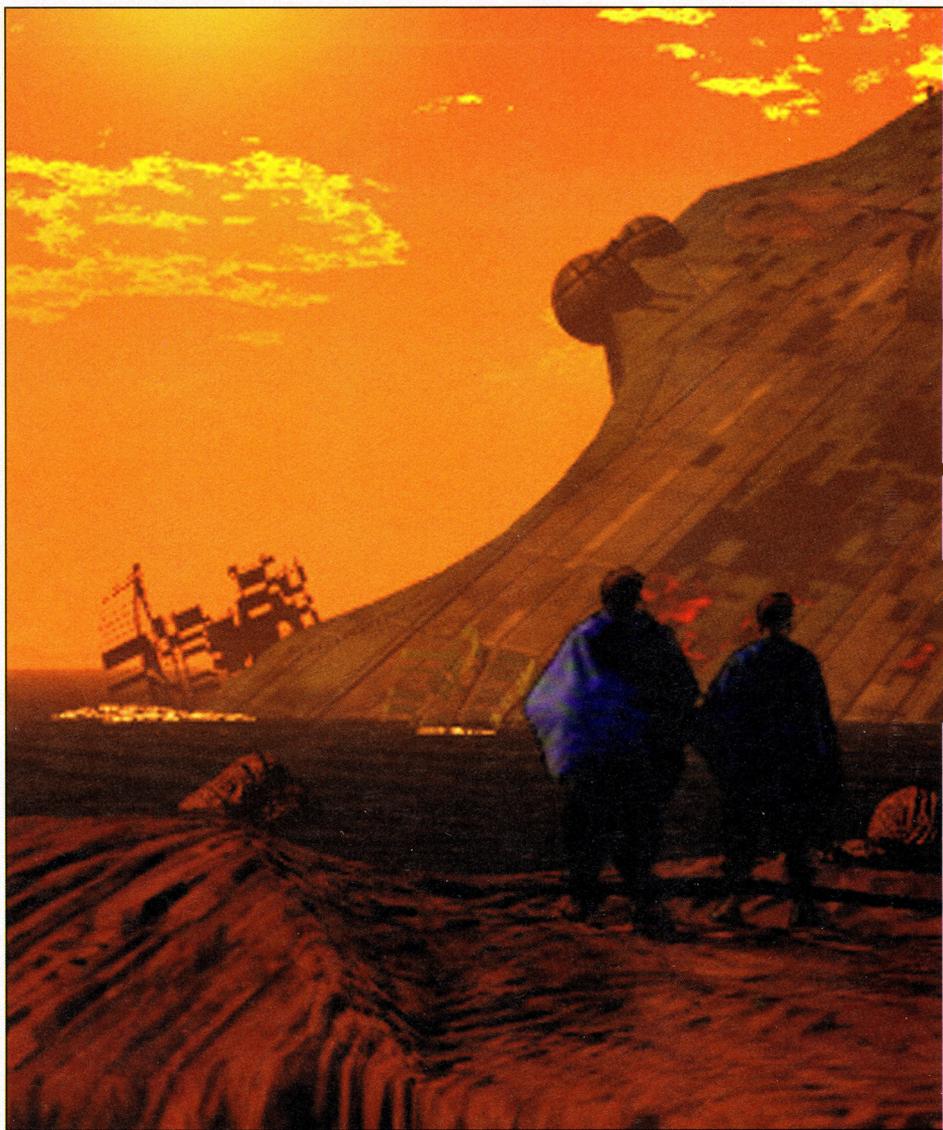
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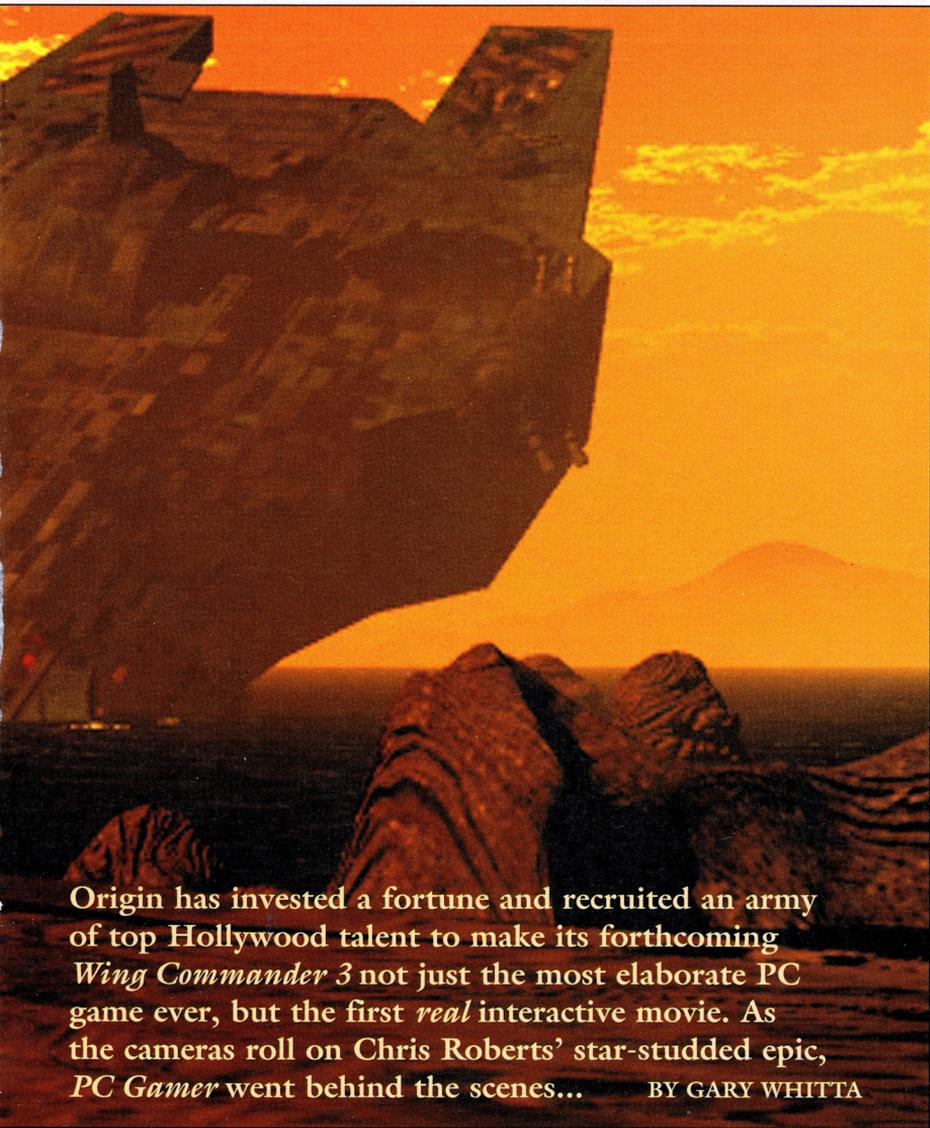
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# A GAME WITHO



Origin has invested a fortune and recruited an army of top Hollywood talent to make its forthcoming *Wing Commander 3* not just the most elaborate PC game ever, but the first *real* interactive movie. As the cameras roll on Chris Roberts' star-studded epic, *PC Gamer* went behind the scenes... BY GARY WHITTA

# OUT FRONTIERS



# WING COMMANDER 3

**A** LONG TIME AGO, IN A place far, far away – 1989, in Austin, Texas, to be precise – a young expatriate games designer by the name of Chris Roberts had an idea. What if you took a conventional game and presented it in the style of a movie? With lifelike characters and dialogue – and an exciting story that looked as if it had been taken right out of a film, but which enabled the player to dictate the plot by his or her own actions? The result, the expansive

space opera *Wing Commander*, has now become something of a landmark title. Not only did it break new technical ground, it almost single-handedly created a new (and much maligned) buzzword – the interactive movie.

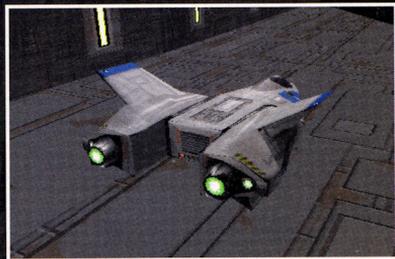
Of course, it looks pretty tame and limited by today's standards. A space age 3D dogfighting game linked by animated cartoon-style sequences depicting the lives of the starfighter pilots and advancing the story. The player's influence over the path of the story was minimal, the cinematic sequences at best unconvincing; at worst, comical. 1992's sequel, although technically superior, suffered from many of the same problems.

None of this, however, prevented *Wing Commander* from becoming an overnight phenomenon, a household name among PC owners of all persuasions, and propelling Chris Roberts to the status of software superstar. We'd never seen anything like it before, after all, and though interactive movies now have the software industry more excited than ever, Origin's pioneering work, typified by the *Wing Commander* series, has yet to be bettered.

But *Wing Commander* was four years ago, and times have changed. Competition is fiercer, the big movie studios and Japanese media giants are starting to take an interest and – most importantly of all – CD-ROM has arrived. And if the original

(Main #screenshot) Origin's next-generation of 3D technology developed specifically for *Wing Commander 3* provides the kind of in-game graphics you'd normally only see in non-interactive intros. Here, a Ferran Confederation fighter skims the surface of its mother ship.

(Inset) *Wing Commander 3* even enables pilots to fly inside the superstructure of enemy capital ships.



Mark Hamill (right) plays the hero Chris Blair, and John Rhys-Davies his wingman Paladin in a scene from the upcoming *Wing Commander 3: The Heart Of The Tiger*, the latest instalment in the series and, undoubtedly, the most ambitious PC game development ever undertaken.



*“There’s an intensity with storytelling you get with live actors that you can’t get with animated film... Most importantly, you have a chance to ‘be’ the hero instead of ‘watch’ the hero. You immerse yourself in the environment in which the story is told, as well as in the emotions of the characters. That to me is a truly interactive movie”*

Chris Roberts, director and executive producer



*Wing Commander* seems primitive by today’s standards, it’s positively prehistoric compared to those set by *Wing Commander 3: The Heart Of The Tiger*, the latest instalment in the series and, undoubtedly, the most ambitious PC game development ever undertaken.

*Wing Commander 3* represents a quantum leap forward for both its developers at Origin and PC games as a whole – the combination of the next generation of 3D graphics technology and a big-budget Hollywood movie shoot (complete with top actors and state-of-the-art special effects) makes it groundbreaking in virtually every department. Perhaps the most telling sign of *Wing Commander 3*’s pioneering status is that in the project’s production notes it’s cited as a film first, and a video game second. Obviously, Origin’s taking this one dead seriously.

Chris Roberts is, as ever, at the helm as Director and Executive Producer for the next stage in the realisation of his vision. “In the past, when I created the first two *Wing Commander* games, I tried to be as cinematic as possible, but the technology held me back,” he says. “The new technology available for *Wing Commander 3* enables us to take the next step in combining linear and interactive technologies to achieve a heightened emotional involvement for the players. It draws them into the game to an extent they have not previously experienced.”

### Cinematic Excellence

Roberts talks passionately about his pet project, as well he might considering the effort and investment that he and Origin are pumping into it. As well as the construction of the 3D game sections at Origin’s HQ in Texas, Roberts is overseeing the direction of the live-action film sequences in Hollywood.

It’s here that most of the effort is currently being focused, as the 50-strong film crew strives to produce cinematic scenes that, for once, wouldn’t look out of place in a ‘real’ movie. To this end,

Origin has assembled an impressive array of cinematic talent. Heading the on-screen cast is Mark Hamill – best known as Luke Skywalker from the Star Wars trilogy – as the hero, fighter pilot Chris Blair. Also on set are Malcolm McDowell (playing Blair’s commanding officer Admiral Tolwyn), John Rhys-Davies (he of Indiana Jones fame) and even ex-porn movie star Ginger Lynn Allen!

The costs of such an elaborate production are immense, although not quite as much as you’d expect from a conventional movie enterprise. The team is filming all of *Wing Commander 3*’s live action in front of a chromakey blue-screen – this enables graphic designers to electronically superimpose the actors over computer-generated backdrops and artificial ‘sets’ at a later date (this obviously saves Origin having to build expensive scenery and provides greater flexibility in terms of what they can achieve on-screen). Aside from that, everything is *very* real, *very* time-consuming and *very* expensive to put together – notably the futuristic costumes and uniforms, not to

*“I have the feeling that I may look back in 50 years and say, ‘Hey, I was in at the beginning of this phenomenon,’ just like actors at the end of the silent film era might have done when they began doing talking pictures”*

Mark Hamill, actor



*"The new technology available for Wing Commander 3 enables us to take the next step in combining linear and interactive technologies to achieve a heightened emotional involvement for the players. It draws them into the game to an extent they have not previously experienced"*

Chris Roberts, director and executive producer

mention the prosthetic alien make-up for the actors playing the cat-like Kiltrathi.

Similar in technical terms to the making of a conventional movie, but vastly different in terms of storylining and structure, *Wing Commander 3's* innovative production has intrigued the actors taking part. "There are so many eventualities in the script that making this is a whole new ball game," says Mark Hamill. "I have the feeling that I may look back in 50 years and say, 'Hey, I was in at the beginning of this phenomenon,' just like actors at the end of the silent film era might have done when they began doing talking pictures."

Although his stardom as Luke Skywalker, the greatest science-fiction hero of them all, was undoubtedly a major factor in casting Hamill for the role, he's no stranger to games, and his experience has helped him adjust to the new skills required of him on the *Wing Commander 3* set. "I've always been fascinated by puzzles and games of all kinds. What I'm trying to provide in the variations of each scene are the pieces of the puzzle that are needed to complete this story."

John Rhys-Davies, who plays Blair's wingman Paladin, shares Hamill's vision. "I believe that CD-ROM is indeed a trailblazing medium," he says.

"My own interests have always been in science fiction and technology, both of which are in abundant supply in *Wing Commander 3*. It's fun and entertaining and, I think, points the way towards the future of mass entertainment."

As the cinematic sequences that make up the game are only one piece of the game's overall make-up, you'd imagine there wouldn't be that much to shoot. In the old *Wing Commanders*, you'd only see about 20 or so scenes in an entire game, for example. But since *Wing Commander 3* has the most interactive storyline of the series so far, the crew is having to shoot a separate scene for each eventuality the player could trigger – including many different versions of the same scene. In all, *Wing Commander 3's* crew shot as much footage as you'd see in a conventional movie – around two hours' worth.

"You write a script 120 pages long in the linear world, but in interactive, you write a script 300 pages wide," explains producer Donna Burkons. And as a former story executive at United Artists and 20th Century Fox, she knows what she's talking about. "An interactive movie follows a story, but there can be several different branches, several variations on one plot."

Whatever the difficulties involved, Chris Roberts is convinced that the effort will be worth it. "There's an intensity in storytelling you get with live actors that you can't get with animated film," he says. "We have a lot more variety in shot selection, a full audio track. Most importantly, you, the player, have a chance to *be* the hero instead of *watch* the hero. You feel the same participation in the movie whether you're in the cockpit flying a mission or talking to people on the starship. You immerse yourself in the environment in which the story is told, as well as in the emotions of the characters. That to me is a truly interactive movie."

## The Story Goes On...

But what of the story itself? Set in the year 2654, it

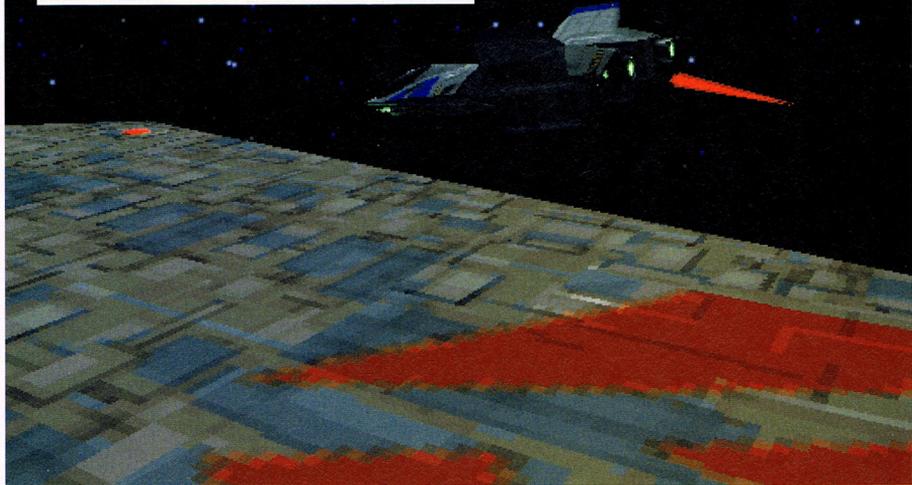


A Terran starfighter in all its high-res glory, flying through *Wing Commander 3's* exquisitely-detailed universe. With graphics this detailed, is it any wonder *Wing Commander 3* is CD-ROM only? If you still haven't got that CD drive, we recommend you start saving your cash now...



(Main screenshot) Space age graphics to rival those seen in Channel 4's quirky *Babylon 5* (although, to be honest, that wouldn't be hard) as a Terran ship comes into land.

(Inset) Actors had to undergo gruelling prosthetic make-up sessions to bring the evil Kilrathi characters to life.



*"I believe that CD-ROM is indeed a trailblazing medium. My own interests have always been in science fiction and technology, both of which are in abundant supply in Wing Commander 3. It's fun and entertaining and, I think, points the way towards the future of mass entertainment"*

John Rhys-Davies, actor

continues to follow the galactic war between the Terran Confederation and the scheming, evil Kilrathi, a feline alien race bent on conquering Earth. Following on from the events of *Wing Commander 2*, we see starfighter pilot Chris Blair (Hamill) re-assigned to the ageing battle carrier TCS Victory after the destruction of the fleet's flagship Tiger's Claw.

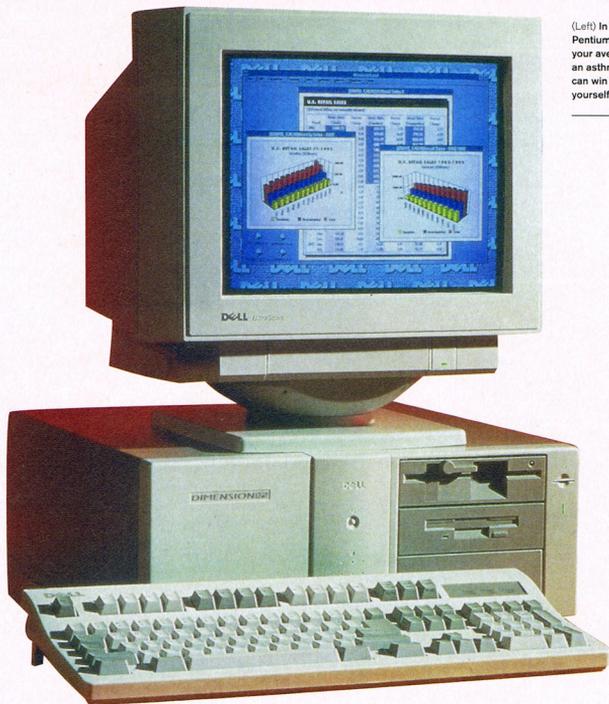
The story centres around a particularly grim time in the history of the war, with the intractable Kilrathi gaining a strategic upper hand and the allied human forces up against the ropes. Nowhere is morale lower than on the Victory itself, more a bucket or rusty bolts than a fighting ship. As in previous episodes, the story – and the mood of the principal characters – are affected by your actions when you step into Blair's shoes during combat missions. "With *Wing Commander 3* the player becomes the hero," boasts Roberts. "You feel responsibility for what happens."

Of course, the possible problem with all this is that the movie side of things may be so impressive that the actual game might struggle to keep up. But if Origin's early 3D work is anything to go by, the space combat sequences will be every bit as impressive – if not more impressive – than the expensive film sequences that link them. The screenshots on these pages may look like scenes from some elaborate non-interactive intro, but they are, in fact, taken from the game itself – you actually get to fly, fight and interact with starships and backdrops this detailed. After endless refinements of the old *Wing Commander* engine

with games like *Strike Commander*, *Pacific Strike* and *Wings Of Glory*, *Wing Commander 3* represents Origin's next generation of 3D graphics. Just what kind of PC you'll need to get them moving is another question, but since the game won't see the light of day until at least the end of the year (but that could slip), and given EA's super-pally relationship with Intel, it's possible that a game this technically-advanced is being pitched only at the very top end of the hardware market – the 486DX and Pentium systems.

*Wing Commander 3: The Heart Of The Tiger* is still in production – Origin is winding up the filming as we speak, but ahead of the company are still many months of perfecting the game itself and then bringing it and the edited footage together to create one seamless and – hopefully – entertaining release. As such, it's still far too early to say whether it will be as groundbreaking as Origin claims, but it certainly looks like a belter – and do you think the company that gave us *Pacific Strike* and the *Ultima* series would sink so much money into a turkey? Nah, us neither.

The interactive movie needs a right royal kick up the backside now more than ever, and coming from the same team that created the genre in the first place, *Wing Commander 3* could be just the game to do it. The player becomes the hero, enthuses Roberts, and if he's right, the fate of the galaxy will rest in your hands. But whether you win or lose, it's unlikely we'll see a final victory for the Terrans or Kilrathi in this instalment – there's always *Wing Commander 4*, after all... **PCG**



(Left) In terms of speed, Dell's Pentium 90-based set-up makes your average 486 look like an asthmatic pensioner. And you can win this very machine for yourself on page 104!

# A Five Star *Future?*

Does Intel's fifth-generation Pentium processor herald a new age for PC gaming – or is it, as some sceptics claim, just a lot of hot air and fancy techno-talk? Gary Penn took one for a test drive...

**F**OR ALL ITS HEART-warming abilities, the worst thing about buying an IBM PC compatible is that as soon as you've bought the thing, the machine's already out of date and decreasing in value – just like a new car, really. There's life in the 486 yet, but perpetually dissatisfied consumers and developers alike are always eyeing up superior performance models (and often at the expense of making more of what they have). The next step forwards is, logically, the 586. Only it isn't. Not quite. Like it or lump it, it's called the Pentium (simply because manufacturer Intel could register the name and not the number).

It's been said that the Pentium processor is too little too late – and too expensive with it. There have also been claims that Intel is deliberately making it difficult for us to buy the new 100 Mhz 486DX4 machines because the company is obviously desperate for the Pentium processor to

succeed. And when you try to find out whether or not a Pentium system is a worthwhile investment, you get caught up in a (by now traditional) technological cobweb spun by hardware-loving journalists and programmers.

I'm not a mechanic or an engineer, so I found it quite difficult to digest the technical rationale put

*"It won't change your life. It is good, but it's not that good. It's not the marked jump in technology we expected"*

Martin Kenwright  
Digital Image Design

forward for and against the Pentium processor, but I'm more than qualified to impart a driver's point-of-view. The proof of the cliché is in the eating, so where better to see a Pentium system in action than at the Intel Corporation itself?

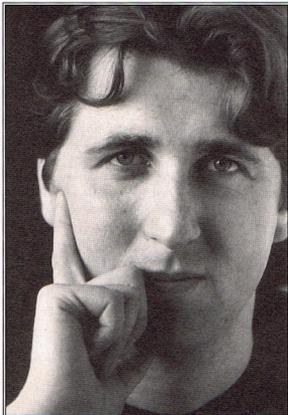
Surprisingly, Intel didn't have any ready-made machines available, so they had to build one – a 90 Mhz Pentium, no less (using a Soundblaster 16 and an ATI Mach 32 card with 2 Mb on-board VRAM on the PCI Bus, in case you were wondering about the visual and aural side). This is the kind of machine that Intel confidently believes will quickly become the 'standard.'

*Flight Simulator 5.0* and *Strike Commander* are two titles that cannot perform at their full potential on my humble 33 Mhz 486DX at home, so it makes sense to use them as some form of yardstick. On a Pentium machine, I didn't expect to see so much a visible increase in speed as at least a more fluid environment – and I wasn't disappointed. In fact, I was pleasantly surprised. Even Stephen Fry would be lost for words to describe the smoothness of *Flight Simulator 5.0* (in 640 by 400 mode) and *Strike Commander* (and in both cases the detail parameters were set at maximum).

More surprising still, though, was how *Strike Commander* suddenly became by far and away the least alluring of the two titles (partly because I never liked it much – always a bad sign – but mainly because a fluid *Flight Simulator 5.0* is so much more graceful!). Regardless of the Pentium system's alleged technical shortcomings, I couldn't possibly

(Right) The problem with benchmark statistics is that manufacturers can use them to say whatever they want – and they don't often provide any concrete comparisons. Also, machines run at different speeds depending on what's being done and how well it's being done. However, Intel still puts its faith in the iComp ratings seen here (understandably).

(Below) Martin Kenwright of Digital Image Design, creators of the superswift flight sim *TFX* and the forthcoming *Inferno*. "I don't think the Pentium warrants a purchase yet – there are too many good 486s available for less."



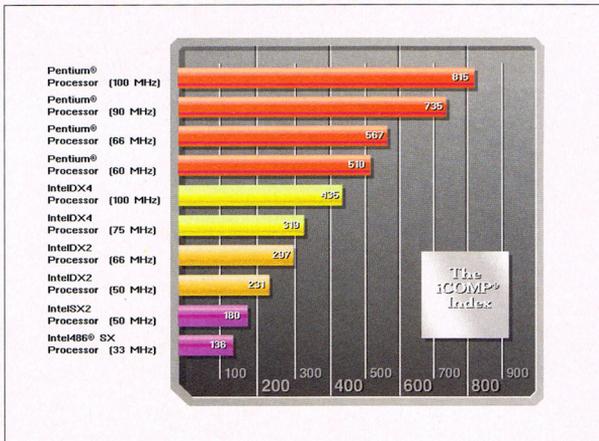
grumble. But it won't last. To a certain extent, buying the likes of a Pentium system only encourages developers to push the technology and not the medium. The 486 as it stands is more than capable of running seamless software, but not when authors effectively misuse the tool by insisting on adding more and more trivial detail to enhance their gear's looks when static – and reduce the overall effect when it's in motion. I guarantee that by the end of this year there will be a handful of simulations more detailed than ever before, but with all the animate elegance of John Candy in a tutu.

Intel says that the architecture of the Pentium-based machines has advantages over the 486's. The speed of the machine isn't solely down to the processor, for example: no matter how speedy it is, there's still a bottleneck with the video output – a problem alleviated, apparently, by the Pentium's 64-bit "burst" bus (which effectively means the device can output twice as much information at once to feed the screen).

In fairness, I haven't seen *Flight Simulator 5.0* and *Strike Commander* working on a 100 Mhz 486DX4. On a 66 Mhz 486DX2, they are smoother, but – predictably, I suppose – not as smooth as when a 90 Mhz Pentium's pulling the strings. Yes, that's only to be expected with the price tag, but the cost will tumble eventually – and all the faster when Intel's competitors begin their fierce onslaught.

Rival manufacturers will undoubtedly match the Pentium processor's performance and price. But Intel argue that the PC compatible's architecture has to develop, and that's only possible via a structure along the lines of a Pentium-based machine. In theory, when you upgrade to a Pentium system, there shouldn't be a need to replace huge chunks of your hardware when the likes of 180 Mhz Pentium or Hexium (Sexium?) processors are made available.

There's also the not inconsiderable matter of compatibility between different generations of



machines – who wants to ditch their expensive and expensive software library? As far as compatibility with entertainment software for the 486 is concerned, Intel says it went to great lengths to ensure that everything available would work on Pentium machines (but added that there are bound to be a few casualties). So far, the Pentium processor appears to be 99% secure (Psychogon's *Microcosm* didn't work originally, but that problem's now been fixed).

To help the Pentium machines succeed, companies need software bimbos: sexy-looking entertainment software that says, "I only look this good and perform this well with a Pentium behind me." And it will come – just as some fashion-conscious sheep were moved to buy 486 machines on the strength of, say, *Strike Commander*, and investing in CD-ROM drives thanks to the beautiful looking *The 7th Guest*. Intel reckons we can expect to see some awesome software by this Christmas. Forthcoming Electronic Arts releases that will run on a 486 but benefit from the extra Pentium power include Origin's stunning *BioForge* and *Wings Of Glory* (scooped on page 18), and Bullfrog's awe-inspiring *Magic Carpet*.

So will I be investing in a Pentium-driven machine? Well, no – at least not just yet. I'm an old-fashioned guy at heart who prefers decent games first and foremost and has no desire to drool

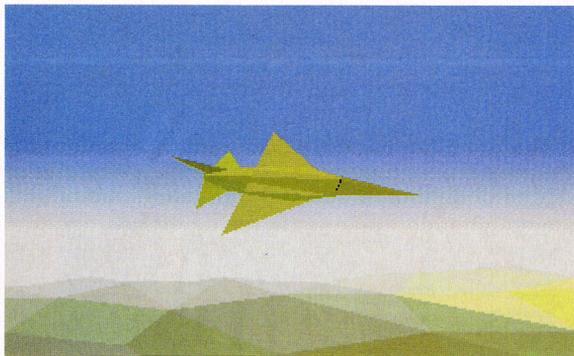
*"A faster processor means programmers have the facility to hide mistakes behind speed. You never know – our next game may be written to suit the Pentium. I doubt it, but it may. It will be a while before the Pentium becomes the chip of our choice"*

Jay Wilbur, id Software

over (or show off) bigger, faster, glossier simulations and adventures. But you might, and if you do you may as well consider a 90 Mhz or 100 Mhz Pentium (I certainly can't see the advantage of the 60 Mhz and 66 Mhz), so you can get off on *Flight Simulator 5.0* or *Pacific Strike* and the 'next generation' of entertainment software running at a more than acceptable rate.



(Left) Here it is, then – Intel's Pentium processor laid bare. Not very impressive to look at here, but once connected inside a PC, it's a hot throbbing sex machine capable of knocking your trousers off with its Tron Hill-like turn of speed. Not bad.



Even with the detail set as low as possible, *Strike Commander* (above) and *Flight Simulator 5.0* (below) don't run as smoothly on my 33 Mhz 486DX as they do with maximum detail settings on a 90 Mhz Pentium.

## Why Intel Reckons The Pentium Will Make A Difference

Andrew Tait, Intel's Marketing Manager for Europe, reckons there are several reasons why the Pentium will succeed.

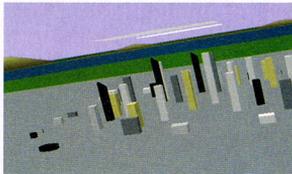
"Clearly, it has superb performance which means games will become more realistic - flight simulations will feel more like flying; with driving

*"The pricing of the Pentium processor systems is coming down faster than any other PC system, and we've been able to make the processor faster than any other microprocessor we've made before. We're ramping up production - we'll be making millions of Pentium processors this year"*

Andy Tait, Intel

simulations it will feel more like you are in an actual car, and so on.

"Also, PCs are moving towards a price level that people can afford for the home. The pricing of the Pentium processor systems is coming down faster than any other PC system, and we've been able to make the processor faster than any other microprocessor we've made before. We're ramping



*"We're impressed with the Pentium as a piece of kit. We're all striving for the ultimate home entertainment gaming experience, and anything that can help us achieve that aim has to be a good thing. We're delighted to be associated with it"*

David Wilson, Electronic Arts

up production - we'll be making millions of Pentium processors this year.

"The home market is certainly the fastest growing segment at the moment; the home market for the Pentium will match the business market in time. In future people will make business decisions based on their experience at home.

"A question often asked at the moment is, basically, what is games machine of the future? Is it 3DO? PSX? The Sega Saturn? Project Reality? The Jaguar? Or is it the PC? There's a lot of confusion out there, but one thing's for sure: PCs will continue to be compatible with previous generations and will continue to be supported by software developers. It's not going to go away."

## What The Rest Of The Industry Has To Say

Has the Pentium processor made much of an impression on the entertainment software developers and publishers? We asked leading industry figures for their opinions.

"The interesting thing about the Pentium," says Bullfrog's boss Peter Molyneux, "is that, really, the only type of consumer who needs it is the gamer. It doesn't make a significant difference to applications. The big chip manufacturers appear to be realising that the games market needs this sort of technology. I'd say within a year or so the Pentium price will be the same as a 486 today.

"I think people will take it more seriously not because of the speed - people are not utilising the speed of the 486 yet - but because manufacturers are now realising that people buy these machines because, say, *Strike Commander* runs fast. The entertainment market is where the big bucks are coming from now. Unfortunately, the problem with Pentium-specific stuff... It's like writing for a completely new machine. The difference is in some ways similar to the jump from a 286 to a 386 - it took ages to get used to that. With *Magic Carpet* - the flying over a real-time landscape - if we compile it for the Pentium it runs eight times faster. It's completely smooth. We've put an option in for 640 by 480 and that knocks the speed down to 12 frames. It's designed not to ever run at any less on all machines, but it still looks stunning, and that's only - only! - on a 60 Mhz Pentium.

"It's an interesting era in technology - manufacturers are outstripping public demands. It takes three years to get used to any machine. The problem with faster machines is that it promotes laziness not innovation, which is what we need more of. We won't be using the Pentium to push graphical stuff; we want to use speed to do much more internally; to make the games appear stronger externally. We won't be physically converting anything for the Pentium. We're planning *Magic Carpet*, *Creation* and *Dungeon Keeper*, but the

# Buying And Upgrading To A Pentium-Based Machine

From an upgrade point-of-view, let's assume that the average PC owner has something similar to my trusty old piece of kit: a Vale 33 Mhz 486DX with 4 Mb RAM, a 250 Mb hard drive and a 1 Mb Diamond Stealth video card (as well as some other irrelevant stuff besides).

The choice of available upgrades is a DX2, a DX4 or a Pentium system. I bought my PC from Evesham Micros, so I gave them a call to get some form of yardstick prices (obtaining the costs of stand-alone DX4 and Pentium motherboards from Simply Computers instead). To upgrade to a DX2 I only need an override chip. To upgrade to a DX4, however, I need a new motherboard (£74 plus VAT) and replacement RAM (8 Mb at £278 plus VAT), as well as the processor (£508 plus VAT). Eek.

To upgrade to a 60 Mhz or 90 Mhz Pentium, I need not only a new motherboard (£308 plus VAT), processor (£549 or £685 plus VAT) and RAM (£278 plus VAT), but also a video card too (mine uses a VL Bus, not the required PCI) – something like the Orchid 64 with 1 Mb VRAM (£165 plus VAT) or, better still, the Diamond Stealth 32 with 2 Mb VRAM (£196 plus VAT). Eek again.

	From New	Upgrade
<b>33 Mhz 486DX</b>	£1,469 (£1,726)	-
<b>66 Mhz 486DX2</b>	£1,599 (£1,879)	+ £489 (£575)
<b>100 Mhz 486DX4</b>	£1,799 (£2,114)	+ £860 (£1,010)**
<b>60 Mhz Pentium*</b>	£1,899 (£2,231)	+ £1,300 (£1,528)**
<b>90 Mhz Pentium*</b>	£2,099 (£2,466)	+ £1,453 (£1,707)**

\* PCI ONLY

\*\* Simply Computers ☎ (081) 523 4020.

All prices exclude VAT (bracketed figures include VAT) and assume 8 Mb RAM, a 250 Mb hard drive, and either PCI or VL Bus, unless otherwise stated.

upgrading your processor if your video card's not any good."

"Faster is better," says id Software's Jay Wilbur, with a trace of irony. "A faster processor means programmers have the facility to hide mistakes behind speed. We optimised our stuff for the 386 chip and the 486 is next. You never know, our next game may be written to suit the Pentium. I doubt it, but it may. It will be a while before the Pentium becomes the chip of our choice. I think you'll be seeing some stuff picking up on the 486 – it will effectively become what the 386 is today, and by then the 686 will be out and you'll be asking about that."

"It won't change your life," says Digital Image Design's Managing Director Martin Kenwright. "It is good, but it's not *that* good. It's not the marked jump in technology we expected, especially when you consider the exponential explosion in consoles. The Pentium at the moment is one step further along the line, but it's not just the Pentium chip – it's the interfaces, the video cards, and the architecture of the computer that make a difference. I don't think it warrants a purchase just yet – there are too many good 486s available for less."

Electronic Arts won't be releasing any Pentium-only software for the time-being – "that would be cutting off our nose to spite our face," says EA's PR man David Wilson. "It just wouldn't be in our interests to exclude 486 owners." But at least six releases, one of them Bullfrog's *Magic Carpet*, will be written to make the most of the 486 and the Pentium.

"We're impressed with the Pentium as a piece of kit," he continues. "We're all striving for the ultimate home entertainment gaming experience – the day when we achieve total interaction with a film-like experience, taking on decisions in a rich, atmospheric environment – and anything that can help up achieve that aim – the next step in hardware, say – has to be a good thing. We're delighted to be associated with it."

"Origin has a specific ethos to obviously push the technology to the limit, supporting the upper-end machines – and they've never hidden the fact. But Origin is only part of the EA global family – Bullfrog, for example, isn't sitting in Texas, so it has a different perspective on the set-ups that are financially viable. There's a place for a publisher or developer creating 286 software still, but there's also a place for Origin who is almost a pioneer in many respects."

250

emphasis will be on more gameplay and less bullshit – like all those rendered screens."

"One of the biggest changes on the Pentium compared to the 486," Electronic Arts' Technical Supporter Hugo Van Der Sanden explains, "is that the floating point instructions are very much faster than they used to be. They were traditionally very slow and programmers developed their own techniques to find efficient solutions to using them. I think the impact of the Pentium's release is diminished because of this."

"If programmers can take the bold step of throwing away their bag of integer tricks (used to avoid floating point use and take advantage of the genuine floating point instructions on the Pentium), then they can achieve effects not attempted before – say, semi-transparent water, where there'd be a reflection and at the same time you could see through it. And if you were looking at a scene, say, on the Pentium and you zoom in, it can happen smoothly without any wobbling lines."

"The other main improvement," adds Van Der Sanden, "is two 'pipelines,' which is effectively like two processors running at the same time. Simply plotting points on a Pentium 66 will happen roughly twice as fast as on a 66 Mhz 486. A lot of video cards now have 1 Mb or 2 Mb on-board, but

even so there's a bottleneck when transferring data between the computer's RAM and the card's. You won't see a massive improvement with 486 code written before the Pentium arrived. A program written in C on a 486 will probably run, say, 50% faster on the Pentium, but if that program's recompiled and optimised for the Pentium it will be another 50-100% faster.

"I think initially you'll see more of the same, but it will be better and more realistic. True Artificial Intelligence hasn't been done yet. Take role-playing games – you talk to people and they go through prepared statements and standard responses are used when there's nothing new to tell. With the extra power, it's possible to make opponents learn from your behaviour. Faster scrolling? Probably not. It's also down to the video card. It's pointless

*"We won't be physically converting anything for the Pentium. We're planning Magic Carpet, Creation and Dungeon Keeper, but the emphasis will be on more gameplay and less bullshit – like all those rendered sequences..."*

Peter Molyneux, Bullfrog

(Right) Bullfrog Productions' main man, Theme Park creator and mag superstar Peter Molyneux, at his office in Surrey. "The problem with faster machines is that it promotes laziness, not innovation, which is what we need more of."





# The **PC GAMER** Review Directory

July 1994

**"We Shall Fight Them On The Beaches..."**

*Re-live the most decisive battle of the 20th century in Virgin's brilliant Overlord - over the page.*



# Overlord

## That PC Gamer Review Policy In Full

### How we rate and review our games...

**I** We undertake to review every new, finished game we can get our hands on, be it full-price, budget, re-release or add-on module. We won't ignore a game simply because it's deemed unfashionable or "not worth reviewing." We don't discriminate against particular genres, either, such as arcade titles or strategy games.

**2** We use the best reviewers in the business. By the best, we mean eminently experienced PC gamers whose opinions you can trust because they know what they're talking about. We make sure all our testers spend a considerable amount of time playing the games they review.

**3** We don't believe in massive, vacuous reviews that ramble on for page after page before telling you if the game is any good or not - sharp and to the point are the watchwords here. It's thus very rare for a *PC Gamer* review to run for more than two pages. We're not an instruction manual - our job is to tell you whether a game is worth buying.

### ...and, of course, how we mark them.

**Our** marking system is easy to get the hang of. We have to be tough, because we're all well aware, as you are, how expensive PC games are these days. However, we're not afraid to award software high marks when we feel it deserves it. Here's roughly how our ratings stack up...

### 100%-90%

A classic game - unreservedly recommended to anyone with an interest in PC gaming.

### 89%-80%

An excellent game. Well worthy of attention, but perhaps not the best of its breed. Also, some benchmark games of decidedly specialist taste.

### 79%-70%

A good game which we'd have no hesitation in recommending to fans of the type. However, there are bound to be superior examples of the genre.

### 69%-60%

A reasonable game that is above average. It may be worth playing and, perhaps, buying, but is flawed in significant respects.

### 59%-50%

Very average. By no means an embarrassment, but hardly the best way to spend your cash.

### 49%-40%

Poor quality. There may be something slightly more interesting about it than games which fall into the abyss of the last category, however.

### 39% or below

Dreadful rubbish. Avoid at all costs.

### Finally, those awards...

We have two of these. The big Game Of The Month award goes to the most impressive piece of software to come our way during the course of the issue, while Recommended merits are slapped on any other titles that we believe are well deserving of your cash.

### Full-Price Reviews

*Definitive ratings of every new disk game released this month start over the page.*

### CD-ROM Reviews

*All the latest CD titles rounded up, starting on page 72...*

### Re-Issues

*The good, the bad and the ugly of the latest batch of re-releases - page 78.*

(Right) In the squadron's 'ready room' you can read the log, look at the score table or even write your own report...

(Below) Your Spitfire plummets from the sky. Oops.



# Overlord



The three allied aircraft available in *Overlord* (in full SVGA):

(Top) Despite reaching the end of its operational life at the time of *Overlord*, the Spitfire remained a superb fighter. Here, a lone attacker approaches a pair of Heinkel medium bombers.

(Middle) The American Mustang, having only recently entered service, is a superb all-rounder. It is ugly, though.

(Bottom) The Typhoon performs poorly at high altitude.



# Trium



Rowan celebrates the 50th anniversary of D-Day with the best flight sim of the year.

Publisher	Virgin
Developer	Rowan Software
Price	£78.95
Minimum System	386, 4 Mb RAM
Recommended	486, 486DX2 for SVGA
Sound Support	Soundblaster, AdLib or Roland
Release Date	Out Now

OVER THE PAST YEAR, the PC games market has changed rapidly, both in the level of technology being used and in the quality of the games themselves. Programming that only a year before would have been revolutionary has now become commonplace, and the pace hardly seems to be dropping off – the majority of new releases either refining established techniques or creating totally new ones.

Nevertheless, the last three months have been exceptional, with a flight simulation arriving each issue that has set a new standard for the genre. First came *Pacific Strike* from Origin (*PCG* 6: 93%), with its action-packed flying and cinematic atmosphere, then MicroProse's superb all-rounder *1942: The Pacific Air War* (*PCG* 7: 93%). And now *Overlord* has arrived, which is quite clearly the best of the bunch.

Set in the closing stages of the war in Europe, *Overlord* deals with the struggle for air supremacy in the run-up to the Normandy Landings. Enrolled as a pilot in the Allied Expeditionary Air Force on April 1 1944, it's your job to get German activity in the invasion area under control before the landing on June 6. As an AEAF pilot you have a choice of three different

aircraft – the Typhoon, Spitfire or Mustang – and take part in a variety of different missions, from escorting medium bombers against 'hard' targets, such as coastal batteries and marshalling yards, to sweep missions where you simply to stir up trouble.

The first thing that makes *Overlord* stand out is the graphics. Even compared to *Pacific Strike* and *1942: The Pacific Air War*, this is a stunning piece of work. Rowan Software seems to have taken the best elements from all the other flight sims, put them all together and then improved them. The aircraft themselves are amazing – lovingly detailed, beautifully smooth and complete with authentic markings from the period. Just as impressive, though, is the terrain. *Overlord* manages to create a real sense of distance, height and scale, the very things that let most flight sims down. The only game that comes close is *TEX*, which makes use of a similar 'distance haze.'

But the terrain is far from just visually impressive – it's also frighteningly accurate. Virtually all of Northern France has been mapped out, with all the towns and the major roads and railways connected as they were back then. All the ground targets are based on photographs from the National Archive Of Reconnaissance Photographs at Keele University, the Imperial War Museum and





# Solid



(Right) The utterly skill-tastic German attacking force breaks through the Irish defence, giving Pat Bonner something to worry about. Get in there, Kilnsmann!

As World Cup fever grips the planet once more, US Gold unleashes its "official licensed product." It may have the fancy badge, but does it have the balls?

**S**TILL THE GREATEST sporting spectacle on Earth, the World Cup stands alone in its ability to attract the attention of the entire planet for one month every four years. With it comes a wave of conflicting emotions — I'm not afraid to admit that I blubbed like a baby when Chris Waddle's missed penalty in the semi-final shoot-out knocked England out of Italia '90, or that I nearly kicked my TV set into oblivion when we failed to qualify for this year's event — and, of course, some of the greatest football you'll ever see. Unfortunately, the World Cup also brings with it an unseemly number



## World Cup USA 94

of spin-off merchandise, and computer gamers will have had more bad experiences than most.

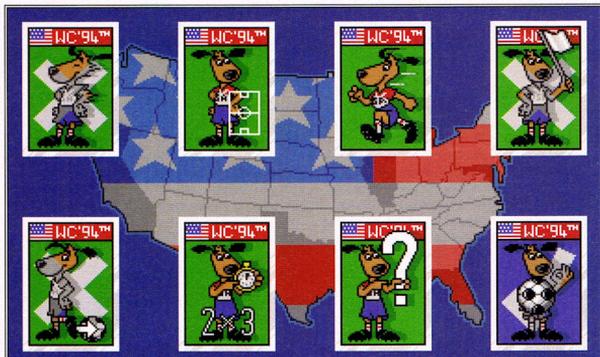
This year's been no exception. Countless software companies are currently rushing out their unofficial foxy games in an attempt to cash in, but US Gold is the team to watch, slicing through the lot of 'em with its latest mascot-splattered, officially endorsed offering. There's already been talk of *World Cup USA 94* selling over a million copies across all formats around the world during its first fortnight alone, which makes it one of the biggest computer games of all time — and that's before the tournament itself is even over. With Striker, the cheeky (and, let's not forget, official) World Cup mascot adorning the packaging and in-game presentation, US Gold can surely do no wrong.

Providing, of course, the game's up to scratch. US Gold's reputation is not exactly untarnished in this area, having been found guilty during both

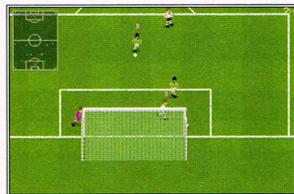
Publisher	US Gold
Developer	Tiertex
Price	\$32.99
Minimum System	386
Recommended	486
Sound Support	Soundblaster, Roland
Release Date	Out Now

previous World Cups of releasing officially licensed games that failed dismally to live up to the tournament's reputation. Italia '90 was barely mediocre, and *World Cup Carnival*, its lamentable effort for Mexico '86, still enjoys legendary status in the industry's all-time Hall Of Shame. So not much to indicate a winning entry this year, then?

Well, surprisingly, although it doesn't offer anything particularly innovative or even very original (in fact, it's a pretty predictable, by-the-



(Above) Options galore in three of *World Cup USA 94*'s main selection screen, which enables you to alter almost every aspect of the game. (Right) Select your team and adjust its tactical formation. (Above right) A goal at last for Jackie's boys, surely?





(Above) Customise the team with your own combination of strip, hair and skin colour.

(Left) A vicious sliding tackle from a Brazilian midfielder. Where's your glasses, ref?

*"There's plenty of potential for some stunning football, including easy-to-perform overhead kicks and impressive tackling..."*

numbers affair throughout), *World Cup USA 94* is still one of the best football games on the PC to date. The approach here, it seems, has been to play it safe. Rather than go out on a limb and come up with a daring new control method or view perspective, *World Cup's* designers Tiertex have constructed a game using the most successful features from other footy classics, like *Kick Off* and *Sensible Soccer*. And as if that wasn't enough to guarantee quality, they've also incorporated an exhaustive options system that enables you to turn just about every feature on or off to suit your tastes. Hey, this is one big licence and you can't go alienating possible buyers by taking humongous risks, right?

I don't know if this approach is a great idea or a contemptible act of plagiarism, but I'm happy to admit it sort of works. The first few times you play you'll be unhappy – either the action's not at the right speed, the controls aren't quite to your liking, the rules are too strict (or some such thing) – but once you spend some time customising the options, you'll eventually find a style that suits you.

*Kick Off* fanatics can opt for a fast, fluid game, where great ball control and individual skill is everything, for example, while *Sensible* players can devise a more conventional set-up, where the ball sticks to your foot for easier control (and there's a greater emphasis on tactics and the passing game). It's almost like a football construction set, so comprehensive is the customising facility. Admittedly, it can take a while to get the right blend of features, but the thought that Tiertex has put into the design is such that few players are



(Above) Oh, unbelievable! It's moments like this that make the *World Cup* so magical, as a screaming USA shot is spectacularly tipped over the bar by the Swedish keeper.

unlikely to find a configuration they won't be able to enjoy straightaway.

As structure is concerned, things are pretty much as you'd expect. The default mode enables you to play through a realistic reconstruction of the tournament, with accuracy reaching right down to the correct dates and locations of the matches. You can also customise your own *World Cup*, replacing any of the actual competitors with those who failed to qualify, so the likes of England and France can take part, after all. Unfortunately, the realism falls down when you go to alter team tactics and make substitutions – all the players' names are made up. Apparently, there's no end of legal hassle involved in reproducing the real names – but then why couldn't the developers have given us the option to edit the details, so real soccer buffs could assemble the teams themselves?

But for those who just want a decent game of football, *World Cup USA 94* will provide more of a challenge than most – all the teams play a decent game, and the difficulty curve between, say, rank outsiders Saudi Arabia and favourites Brazil is well handled. More importantly, there's plenty of potential for some stunning football, including easy-to-perform overhead kicks, impressive tackling and, of course, some great goal-scoring moments. The ubiquitous replay mode features several playback speeds, so you

*"Tiertex has incorporated an exhaustive options system that enables you to turn just about every feature on or off to suit your tastes"*

can really revel in your achievements. Another major plus is the impressive player sprites and animations. Although some casual observers didn't care much for the graphics, I found the overall scale and definition to be pretty much spot-on.

Granted, *World Cup USA 94* doesn't break any moulds or shatter any preconceptions about what a football game should be all about, but on a system that's still crying out for decent soccer titles, it doesn't really need to. It's thoughtfully designed, plays a realistic, solid game and, best of all, recreates those rare, magic moments of football fantasy for which the *World Cup* is famous. *USA '94* may soon face tough competition from EA Sports' much-hailed *FIFA International Soccer*, but for now this is the clear leader of the pack – and earns its place in history as the first ever official *World Cup* game that actually comes close to deserving its licence.

GARY WHITTA

Colombia 4	Italy 4	Germany 4
U. S. A. 4	Norway 3	South Korea 4
Switzerland 4	Eire 3	Bolivia 4
Romania 1	Mexico 0	Spain 1
Brazil 3	Belgium 3	Nigeria 3
Sweden 3	Saudi Arabia 1	Argentina 3
Russia 0	Holland 1	Bulgaria 0
Cameroon 0	Morocco 0	Greece 0

(Left) The 24 teams in their actual groups – although how 500-1 Saudi Arabia got a point off Holland is anyone's guess.

**PC GAMER** *Final Rating*

**84%** Highs  
Lows

A fast and fluid football with options galore.

No real player names and no fluffing groundswearing.

**The Verdict** A fine football game and, for once, a worthy *World Cup* spin-off.



(Above) The ability to fly through complex structures like this at *Delta V* speed is what separates the men from the boys.



# Delta V

Publisher	US Gold
Developer	Bethesda Softworks
Price	\$45.99
Minimum System	386
Recommended	486DX2
Sound Support	All major cards
Release Date	5/11 Out Now



(Above) Netrunners can test their skills on a wireframe computer simulation before tackling the real thing.

(Right) You select missions at operations HQ.

(Below) Lasers are fast, but torpedoes are more accurate and more reliable against nippy enemy ships like these.



# Break

Frightening, frenetic and almost unbelievably fast, Bethesda's latest is not for those of a nervous disposition.

**T**HE LATEST SPIN-OFF from William Gibson's cyberpunk future vision may not be the most original, but it is, at least, one of the most elaborate. A cursory scan through *Delta V*'s instruction manual yields a frightening number of Gibson-esque buzzwords as it outlines the story of a high-tech society dominated by giant corporations (sound familiar?). In a world where data is the most valuable commodity, skilled pilots—or netrunners—are hired by the competing corporations to fly into the virtual world of cyberspace, knock out rival computer networks from within and steal information.

Flying a fighter craft called a Trace (codenamed Delta V) through the electronically-generated 'matrix,' these virtual saboteurs face hordes of defence drones and rival netrunners as they attempt to seek out their targets and destroy them. The rewards for success are bucketfuls of cash and equipment upgrades for subsequent missions. But while all this combat is happening in a virtual world of software and electronic pulses, pilots' direct mental links to the Traces means that if a ship is destroyed, the neural feedback effectively wipes them out too. What this all boils down to is a fast-

*"Delta V walks a treacherously thin line between compulsion and frustration"*



(Left) A netrunner jacks into the matrix in *Delta V*'s intro.

(Right) Users of slower machines can turn down the detail level if they want to maintain the speed that faster PCs can deliver.



(Left) Select your weapons and equipment from the wide range available before you take off on a new mission.

(Below) Oh dear – the screen glowing red means you've taken a rather hot laser bolt up the bum.



# neck

moving shoot-'em-up that has you, as one such netrunner, belting across perilous and increasingly bizarre-looking landscapes, all the while dodging obstacles and putting up with wave after wave of enemy defence craft.

The cyberspace landscape consists basically of a long, meandering trench that pilots must successfully navigate to survive – it's possible to pull up and fly above it in comparatively obstacle-free space, true, but the resultant temperature build-up and exposure to enemy fire will ultimately destroy your craft if you stay out too long. So the trick is to learn to run the trench without crashing into the ornate structures that get in your way. They range from simple struts and blocks to giant floating spheres and tunnels with almost impossibly narrow exits. Since you have no control over your ship's minimum speed – you're constantly propelled forward at breakneck velocity – your only option is to precisely steer through the maze of obstacles as you're catapulted towards them.

Whatever the specific objective on any given run, your aim is basically to reach the far end of the trench in one piece and take out whatever's waiting for you there – be it a floating defence platform, a security system or a series of drones. It all looks and feels remarkably similar to the climactic X-Wing trench run from *Star Wars*, with each mission's final target the Death Star exhaust port by any other name. Once you complete a mission, you're pulled out of the grid and returned to company HQ for your cash prize (how many credits you accumulate effectively standing in for points) and next briefing. From time to time new equipment, like energy and armour boosters and an array of bolt-on weaponry, come on-line to help you deal with the increasingly advanced trench defences.

Sounds pretty good, huh? Well, wait until you see it in action. On a fast PC *Delta V* skims along at an almost giddingly fast rate, and to the casual spectator it's an awesome sight. But herein lies the

problem – *Delta V* is more enjoyable to watch than it is to play, the faults only becoming apparent when you grab the joystick. For a start, the game's considerable turn of speed, impressive to the spectator, can be annoying to the pilot. It's simply too fast. As you're hurled down a narrow trench, often almost totally blocked by obstacles, you need near impossibly quick reflexes to react and survive. When you hit an object you're momentarily thrown backwards before immediately hurtling forward again, which gives you little time to correct your line and often results in crash after infuriating crash.

The situation is aggravated by an over-responsive control system – anything more than the slightest tap of the joystick (by far the best control method of the three available) can send you spiralling off course, or into a roll from which it can be difficult to recover.

But it's not like this all of the time. There are several, thoughtfully-designed parts in *Delta V* where just the right amount of skill will see you through safely. When you seem to be flying well and getting along nicely, it can be a very satisfying experience too. But unfairly tough obstacles – and the subsequently annoying crashes – are always just around the corner. As a result, *Delta V* walks a treacherously thin line between compulsion and

frustration. The other major gripe is the poor combat – there are plenty of things to shoot at, sure, but that over-responsive flight control makes aiming fiddly, and the weapons and explosions aren't that impressive. To find a game with almost unlimited pyrotechnic potential lacking in this department is a major disappointment, particularly when the lavish (sometimes OTT) presentation leads you to expect big things.

Technically impressive, lovely to look at and listen to, but with inconsistent and often downright aggravating gameplay – that's *Delta V*. The most annoying thing about it is that the game's strong ideas and technical prowess could have made for an epoch-making blaster. Oh well, there's always next time, Bethesda...  
GARY WHITTA



(Above) Your targeting cursor automatically tracks and locks onto targets when they're in range, but it's still up to you to aim and fire accurately. The annoying thing is you've got to do all that aiming business while avoiding monstrous obstacles, like this one here. It ain't easy, believe me.

**PCGAMER** *Final Rating*

**68%** **Highs** **Lows**

Super-slick, fast-moving, non-stop 3D action throughout. It's just too fiddly and difficult to get into or enjoy properly.

**The Verdict** A missed opportunity, but a good indicator of things to come from Bethesda.

# Bouncy

## Cool Spot

Can the trendy blemish retain his charm on the loftier PC platform?

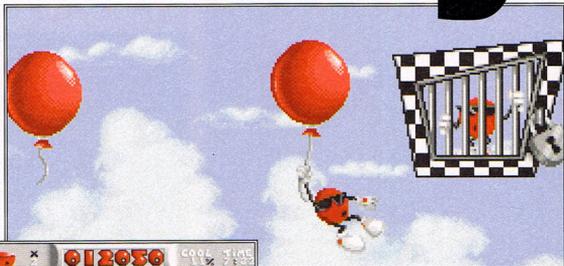
(Right) Collect the required amount of 'cool', find the exit, shoot it a bit and your zitty friend will be a free man, er, I mean spot.

**W**HY DOES someone buy a PC? As part of their home office maybe? As an expensive games machine for the more cerebral, perhaps? Maybe even as a means of fulfilling their masochistic love for installing software via an interface with all the user-friendliness of a hormonally imbalanced rattlesnake. But, I presume, never, ever, under any circumstances, purely as a console substitute.

"I played this great platformer on a console the other day," you announce to your PC-owning mates – and all you get in return are icy glares. "Hey, that Sonic geezer's kinda cool!" you exclaim – and those same friends look at you as if you've just slipped off the shelves of Looms R Us. Let's face it, when you pay close to a grand for a reasonably powerful PC, it's not to play games you can play on a console worth £150.

And so it is with trepidation, and not a little distaste, that I try to understand why Virgin has decided to release *Cool Spot* on the PC. What we have here, then, is a nearadamant perfect conversion of the Mega Drive original, the main character being Cool Spot himself, a spot who's cool because he wears sunglasses and swaggers when he walks. He's known in America as the 7-Up advertising icon – the transatlantic equivalent of our own Fido Dido.

On each of the game's expansive eight-way scrolling levels, one of



(Left) Spot seems to get an awful lot of hassle from crabs.



Publisher	Virgin
Developer	In-house
Price	£29.99
Minimum System	386, VGA
Recommended	486
Sound Support	AdLib, Soundblaster
Release Date	Out Now

Spot's little pals has been imprisoned in a cage. To rescue him, you have to boost your 'cool' rating by collecting pills scattered throughout the level. Once you've scooped a sufficient number, you can open the cages. I'd like to be able to say there's more to it than that, but there isn't. What there is is the usual mix of bad guys, themed levels (beach, docks and so on...) and some very pleasing animation to take your mind off the lack of variety.

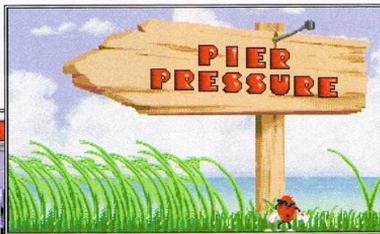
Oh, and there's a whole heap of challenge in here too. The good thing about *Cool Spot* is that

*"When you pay close to a grand for a PC, it's not to play games you can play on a console worth £150"*

there are three skill levels, but instead of merely making the enemies harder on a higher level, the game really does step up a gear as you progress. On Hard, for example, the cage is positioned high up in the sky, so Spot has to negotiate a whole new platform section to get to it.

I'd like to be able to wholeheartedly recommend this to PC owners and say, "Hey, this is just the breath of fresh air you need," but, frankly, there are much better platform games out there – *Toi Joe* (PCG 1: 82%) and *Fury Of The Furries* (PCG 2: 89%) to name but two. Although a standard platformer on a PC is a slightly misplaced thing, I think it's time PC gamers got the chance to experience the cheap thrill of the console concept. It's just that the game's going to have to be pretty special to pry them away from the likes of *Doom* and *Theme Park*. *Cool Spot* does have a curious hook – the animation is exceptional – and I've no doubt that some will adore it, but there's nothing here to dispel the myth that console owners are ultimately sad geeks who play games with no soul.

ANDY DYER



(Above) A suitably 'hilarious' pun introduces each level. Chortle, guffaw (etc. etc.).



(Left) Rope burns don't deter our beloved acne-esque hero – especially when there's an extra time bonus for the taking.



**PC GAMER** Final Rating

**72%** Highs  
Lows

A graphical treat – great animation, fine scrolling and a fab soundtrack. A bit repetitive, and not very thought-provoking.

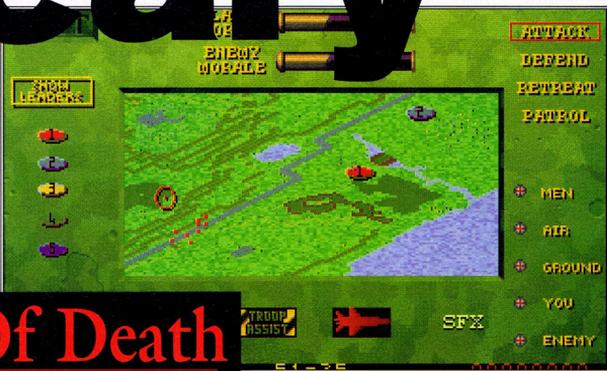
**The Verdict** The game oozes character and attitude, but it's just a feast for the eyes really.



# Dreary

(Below) A map of a mission, complete with options.

The first in a run of *Cannon Fodder* clones arrives – and on this evidence one is obviously more than enough.



## Theatre Of Death

**E**VER SINCE IT FIRST came into being, the home computer industry has thrived on cheap imitations – who could forget all those horribly crude copies of *Space Invaders*, *Galaxians*, *Scramble*, *Asteroids*, *Donkey Kong* and *PacMan*? But while it was inevitable that *Doom* would usher in a rash of lazy imitations, I never expected to see any clones of Sensible Software's *Cannon Fodder*.

I neither know nor care if *Theatre Of Death* was conceived before or after the fact, but it's clear from playing it that even Les Dennis could manage a more convincing imitation. That said, *Theatre Of Death* is bad enough in its own right, so there's no need to condemn it for its similarity to *Cannon Fodder*. Sensible's effort is a veritable potpourri of established ideas presented in an entertaining way. It's not without its faults, but at least the delivery is efficient and the action fluid and focused. *Theatre Of Death*, on the other hand, is so bloated with extraneous digitised imagery and irritating 'features' that ultimately (and quite deservedly) it drowns in its own vomit.

The experience starts as it means to go on: a (surprise, surprise!) pointless rendered introductory sequence (this one's mercifully brief), followed by a predictable presentation of credits. In fairness (and more's the pity), there hasn't been anything much more sublime used in the past decade or so. But the lack of imagination displayed from the outset is nothing compared to the absence of talent apparent when you eventually get down to the nitty gritty of playing...

The panel surrounding the playfield, the shoddy use of pixels and perspective to convey atmosphere, and the playfield only scrolling when the troops are close to the edge of the screen (unless you shift the view yourself) – it all contributes to an inappropriate and

uncomfortable claustrophobic feeling that'll have you reaching for the reset button.

I can overlook the uninspired settings (grass, desert, snow and lunar), the absence of clear boundaries at the edge of the playfield and the scrolling successfully simulating the sensation of wading through an ocean, but it's impossible to ignore the awkward playability and the multitude of

*"So bloated with extraneous digitised imagery and 'features' that ultimately (and quite deservedly) it drowns in its own vomit"*

inept components such as the unexpected (and unavoidable) sharks lurking in the expanses of water; the bloody boring deaths; the completely unconvincing explosions; the bland behaviour of the enemy soldiers; the accuracy required to shoot enemy soldiers but not your own men; the misplaced limitation on your ammunition supplies; the use of options to determine your troop's status (attack, defence, retreat or patrol); the presence of morale indicators; the (unfortunately) unremarkable airstrikes; the stupid electric fences; the oh-so-droll textual

Publisher	Psygnosis
Developer	Software Shed
Price	£34.99
Minimum System	386, VGA
Recommended	486
Sound Support	All major cards
Release Date	Out Now

quips; the senseless camera option; the... There's more, but (sob) I'm just too distraught to go on.

Believe it or not, there are a couple of reasonable ideas in evidence – the inclusion of a global overview to provide a choice of 'route' through the missions (which also reflects how well you're doing), for example, and the provision of 'animal cannon fodder,' as it were, for target practice. But the fact remains that not even Norman Wisdom could have made a clumsier job of *Theatre Of Death*. For less than a tanner this insipid sloppiness would only just be excusable, but at this price it's a farce.

GARY PENN



(Above and left) Playing any further than the first mission is like rubbing salt into a gaping wound, which is why I'm in agony at the moment. Even controlling a fleet of choppers isn't anywhere near as much fun as it should be.

**PC GAMER** Final Rating

**30%** Highs Only if you melt the disks and breathe in the fumes.  
Lows Too numerous to summarise.

**The Verdict** Not offensively poor, not even laughably poor – just plain poor.



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# Al-Qadim: The Genie's Curse

## So-So

Publisher	US Gold
Developer	SSI
Price	\$35.99
Minimum System	386DX33, 4 Mb RAM, VGA
Recommended	486
Sound Support	All major cards
Release Date	Out Now



An D&D game with no character generation, a ridiculously simple interface and virtually no stats? What's SSI playing at?



(Above) Exploring the wreck of a magical ship involves many dangers, including a seemingly endless stream of undead monsters. Luckily, your magical sling enables you to deal with them from a distance – and the ship is worth the trouble.



(Above) There's nothing quite like a spot of mindless destruction to cheer you up when you can't find your way through some mysterious caverns. Besides, those huge vases were asking for it, if you ask me.

(Top) No RPG would be complete without a few strange extra-dimensional locations, and *Al-Qadim* is no exception.

**A**FTER A SPATE OF first-person perspective games in its official AD&D range, SSI has tried something slightly different with *Al-Qadim*, a title which falls somewhere between a hardcore RPG and an arcade adventure – the D&D stats are present, but you hardly ever need to worry about them. In fact, a great deal of the gameplay is almost *Gauntlet*-like in nature. The world of *Al-Qadim* is also quite different to the usual medieval RPG setting – employing an Arabian Nights style milieu, with the land comprising a series of islands rather than one big expanse of desert.

You play a young corsair, the son of a rich merchant, who's been pledged to marry the beautiful daughter of the powerful Caliph. On

returning home after a spot of training, everything seems to be going swimmingly until your family's genie attacks and destroys another merchant's ship, nearly killing the Caliph who was on board and spiriting away his daughter – the love of your life (not to mention your ticket to princedom). As a genie in service to someone cannot do anything without them ordering it, your family is imprisoned on charges of treason, and is forced to take an oath never to summon the genie again. Only you are left free. Your task, then, is to clear your family's name and rescue the princess, setting things up quite nicely for a 'happy ever after' end sequence. But when you discover that your family's genie was forced to attack the ship by a strange and powerful enemy, you know you have to defeat this force of evil if you're ever to see your inamorata again.

The arcade nature of *Al-Qadim* makes it very easy to get into, and it's more fun than some

*"The gameplay hangs far more on patience and persistence than creative thinking or problem-solving – a cardinal sin for an RPG"*

RPGs. Unfortunately, that's about as good as it gets. The gameplay hangs far more on patience and persistence than creative thinking or problem-solving – a cardinal sin for an RPG. The graphics too are barely adequate. SSI really should have put a lot more effort into the action too. The scrolling is far from smooth and the animation virtually non-existent – the result is a game that looks and feels archaic and primitive. Put up against something like *The Horde* (reviewed on page 72), which uses a similar viewpoint, it's quite pitiful. The controls don't feel too hot either – your character seems to slide about over the screen, and in combat just lining him up accurately can be a pain.

*Al-Qadim* tries hard to be accessible, inoffensive and appeal to the masses, but through the many faults and inadequacies that such an approach entails, it's unlikely to whet the appetites of either hardened role-players (it's far too superficial) or newcomers (it's got little of a really good RPG's appeal). Don't expect this one to set the world alight.

ANDY BUTCHER

<b>PC GAMER</b>	<b>Final Rating</b>
<b>72%</b>	Highs Average graphics and a limited challenge.
<b>The Verdict</b>	Lows Fun for while, but not much more.

# Samey

## Pinball Dreams 2

21st Century Entertainment may be the kings of pinball but why are they still clinging to their *Dreams*?

Publisher	21st Century Entertainment
Developer	Spidersoft
Price	£19.99
Minimum System	386, VGA
Recommended	486
Sound Support	All major sound cards
Release Date	Out Now

**P**INBALL – IT'S THE BEST thing you can get in a pub. Apart from beer, of course. And whisky. And large groups of unattached women. And pool tables. And jukeboxes. Still, it's better than crewcutted blokes with no necks who look at you as if you've just slagged off their mothers. And it's certainly better than crap pub bands who insist on playing bad covers of '60s classics...

Anyway, pinball – it's quite good in a I'd-much-rather-play-this-than-have-to-strike-up-a-conversation-with-you sort of way. (*You really are a very bitter man, Chris – Ed.*) Actually, I do like pinball, especially good computer versions of it.

What's more, I'm much better at it than I am at the real thing. Even better, then, that this latest simulation, *Pinball Dreams 2*, plays such an exceptionally good game. Okay, before I write



(Above) Tally ho and chocks away, Stall Turn's a topping wheeze and bags of fun.

(Right) Safari's easily the best table of the lot – it's got a good learning curve and requires a lot of skill to master.



anything else you should know that this is an expansion pack, so you can't play it if you haven't got the original *Pinball Dreams*. Now, of course, this leaves me with two alternatives. Either I can say something completely bloody obvious like, "Well, if you liked the first game this'll give you more of the same, pinball fans" or I could go for something like... Actually, come to think to think of it, what else could I say? I mean, pinball's pinball, isn't it? And there's no finer pinball engine than 21st Century's. *Pinball Dreams* and its sequel, *Pinball Fantasies* (PCG 3: 89%), have both been phenomenally successful because they simulate actual pinball table mechanics so damn well.

*Pinball Dreams 2* gives you four new tables to play with, and each has its own cutesy theme. *Neptune* is the first – and it's the hardest one on which to rack up high scores. There are two ramps to hit and both have huge speed-building wire run-backs. There's one tiny set of drop-targets slap bang in the middle of the table too, which makes it almost impossible to reach the bonus roll-overs at the top of the screen. It's also tough trying to light up the letters in the word 'Neptune,' which then enables the jackpot. Because you can't get up to the top of the table, the ball's usually back at your flippers in no time and you're struggling to make a big strike.

*Safari* is a much better table, with two tricky but not impossible ramps that you can rack up

*"Neptune's the hardest table on which to rack up high scores. There are two ramps to hit and both have huge speed-building run-backs"*

repeats on, and two just as fair ball traps. It's possible to get your bonus multiplied seven times if you can play the monkey roll-overs properly. The key thing about this table is that it always rewards skilful play (and has a great soundtrack consisting of jungle drums and animal cries too).

The other two tables both follow *Safari*'s example and are really playable, although you won't get high scores unless you practise. Both *Revenge*



(Above) Blimey, it's a bit cold for a swimsuit, love. You could have someone's eyes out with those... Ahem, sorry, I forgot myself. And that robot's weapon looks like a... (*Snip – Ed.*)

*Of The Robot Warriors* and *Stall Turn* have the same features as the previous tables – two ball traps, a couple of wire run-backs, bonus roll-overs and a jackpot to build up to. *Revenge* has a novel single entrance to its two wire run-backs, but *Stall Turn* is marginally more fun to play – if only because the jaunty music and "Tally Ho!" effects are a laugh.

So should you buy *Pinball Dreams 2*? If you want a pinball game and don't already have the original title, I'd recommend you lash out on 21st Century's sequel *Pinball Fantasies* (or, if you can, wait until *Pinball Illusions* – with its multi-ball feature – comes out) which is just a bit more lavish. If you have *Dreams*, you'll know what you're getting here. I thoroughly enjoyed playing all the tables and the game is as addictive as ever. Ultimately, though, the tables – with their identical features – feel a little samey and don't really expand on the original.

CHRIS BUXTON

**PCGAMER** Final Rating

**79%** Highs  
Lows

Four enjoyable and playable pinball tables.

All the tables have the same features.

**The Verdict** A great game, but the four samey tables aren't that different to those in the original.

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# Robinson's Requiem

A requiem is usually played at funerals. How apt – this game's a real stiff.

Publisher	Daze
Developer	Silmairils
Price	£39.99
Minimum System	386, VGA
Recommended	486
Sound Support	All major cards
Release Date	Out Now

# Lost



(Above) A 3D Studio Intro. Haven't seen one of those before.

(Left and far left) These plains couldn't have been more aptly named. Elsewhere some form of native life grows at you.



(Above) You control Robinson via a bank of icons on the left – these bring up various inventories, health monitors, maps and other useful but spectacularly dull things. Click on the punch icon and you can punch this chap and put him down.

**L**OST, CONFUSED AND without a friend in the world? You've probably just bought *Robinson's Requiem* – one of the dulllest and most unplayable games I've seen in a long time. Ostensibly a survival simulation, it is, in fact, a real-life endurance test. How long can you put up with the fiddly controls? When will you tire of the cumbersome interface? How long will it be before you give up and return to a better game that doesn't demand patience in saintly proportions?

Okay, so I'm being a bit hard, but *Robinson's Requiem* doesn't go out of its way to pull you into its little world. For a start, the plot is convoluted and unconvincing – you play a government agent, Robinson, who's been sent on a bogus mission by

*"Robinson's about as simple to manoeuvre as a JCB in a multi-storey car park"*

his superiors. You've subsequently crashlanded onto a prison planet (you later discover that the government's been wanting to get rid of you for ages). Survive long enough, investigate your new (and obviously harmful) surroundings and find a way to escape – that's your brief.

At the heart of it all is the 3D engine that churns out the texture-mapped first-person perspective view of the prison planet. As 3D engines go, it's not bad. Unfortunately, it doesn't get to do a great deal and hardly paints the prettier pictures. Most of the time you're roaming around the planet taking in the sights – which usually consist of a few drab hills, some trees and the odd patch of water.

The first inhabitant you encounter in your travels is another prisoner who comes at you with a knife. A few good punches is all that's required to dispatch him though – and then you can pilfer the man's gear. With this mighty impressive kit, you can then set your sights further afield and try to find out what lies beyond the valley.

It doesn't sound all that dreadful, does it? Well, the trouble is *Robinson's Requiem* is more like an Ordnance Survey map than a game. The clunky

controls and, let's face it, unattractive graphics make it feel like some inferior 8-bit effort. The exceptionally loose structure (yes, I know it's called exploring, but still...) puts you off and leaves you in the dark from the word go. There's no eight-directional joystick control either – instead you have six ungainly icons to play with: forwards, reverse, turn left, turn right, shuffle left and shuffle right. You can use the keypad, but this still doesn't give Robinson enough mobility. Embarrassingly, small bumps in the ground stop him in his tracks. He can't even climb the most innocuous looking hills. In fact, he's about as simple to manoeuvre as a JCB in a multi-storey car park. Objects are a right pain to manipulate too. You have some matches, leaves and wood, but can you make a fire? No, thank you very much.

I don't know if *Robinson's Requiem* started life as an adventure, or if it was supposed to be like this, but whatever the case it fails to grab your attention and hardly gives you any incentive to play. Surviving on a hostile alien planet's not meant to be easy, true enough, but when you're hampered by inadequate controls and faced with screen after screen of dowdy graphics you really want to end it all. Or not begin in the first place, which is what I'd recommend.

CHRIS BUXTON



(Left) There are more than just plains in Robinson's *Requiem*. You can explore caves (as shown here), swim across lakes... It's a whole new world that lets you climb every mountain and ford every stream... Although there is a distinct lack of singing nuns (which is a shame because they would have given the proceedings a bit of a lift, to be honest).

**PC GAMER** *Final Rating*

**40%** Highs  
Lows

The by now obligatory 3D Studio-rendered intro is all right.

Looks dull, plays dull and is dull.

**The Verdict** Your task is to find the game beneath the drab 3D visuals and irritating interface.

# Frustrating



## Origamo

Publisher	Mirage
Developer	QQP
Price	£39.99
Minimum System	386, SVGA
Recommended	386, 25Mhz or higher
Sound Support	Soundblaster, AdLib, Roland
Release Date	Out Now

(Left) In order to progress through the adventure mode, you must explore a rather simplistic maze. PacMan meets PGR.

The PC is hardly short of *Tetris* clones, but does *Origamo* add anything new to the genre?

**G**ROUNDBREAKING games seldom set standards that are impossible to follow. Since the first *Space Invaders* clone appeared in the early '80s, creative thought has been abandoned for the most part in favour of blatant plagiarising of other people's good ideas. Clones and variations can often be superior to the original game, but not so with *Tetris*. Alexei Pazhitnov's stunningly simplistic puzzle has yet to be bettered. But my, those software producers will keep trying...

*Origamo* is yet another addition to the interlocking, Lego-esque pile of block-building puzzle titles. It includes aspects from many different games, but nothing really that new. You are presented initially with a maze, embarrassingly entitled, 'The Maze of Eternity,' which enables you to choose the level you wish to start on. The game proper is a simple kinetic jigsaw puzzle.

The reason for the title soon becomes apparent. The jigsaw puzzles you must solve are all shaped like two-dimensional Origami sculptures. Each of these shapes is made up of several kinds of patterned tile. Your task is to fill these tiles with suitable shapes from a conveyor belt at the base of the screen. Should this belt fill with shapes before you complete the puzzle, the game's over. You can

deposit useless shapes in a bin at the righthand side of the screen, but trash more than 50 and you'll have to start again.

There are a couple of strategic elements involved. Should you cover all the tiles of a pattern set, for example, the conveyor belt resets itself, thus buying you some time. It also becomes apparent very quickly that you should use large, unwieldy shapes as often as possible – the smaller, more useful shapes are pretty rare.

It should only take you a couple of goes before you get to grips with *Origamo*, and the first couple of hours are engrossing and addictive. There

*"Yet another addition to the Lego-esque pile of block-building puzzle Tetris games for the PC – although it doesn't do anything that new..."*



(Above) A virgin level. This one is actually more difficult than most – there's only one pattern.

(Left) This level (Wrench) is plain evil. If you don't use parallelograms, you might as well forget it.



is, however, a ridiculous drawback to all this puzzling fun. On certain levels, you can fill up most of a pattern with incredible agility and precision, but then you have to wait for the last piece to arrive on the belt. Often, it simply doesn't turn up, forcing you to drop your maximum 50 pieces in the bin and end the game. This seems to be a deliberate punishment for failing to use the more complicated pieces, but it's actually the result of bad planning and detracts from the otherwise random nature of gameplay.

Graphic thrills and a multitude of options do make up for some of these failings, though. There are many ways to play – in one scenario, for example, you're thrown into a half-hearted adventure set-up where you have to collect items by completing puzzles. Get it right and you can access previously unseen levels.

With a little more thought and some more intensive playtesting, *Origamo* might have been, at long last, some real competition for *Tetris*. Sadly, though, there are too many niggling problems with the gameplay. And although there are plenty of difficulty levels, there isn't really much difference between them – they're all pretty much of a muchness. When eventually it does get harder, it simply gets too fast and almost unplayable – not so much difficult as impossible. Not bad, but look out for the Shareware clones – they'll probably be better than this.

FRANK O'CONNOR

**PC GAMER Final Rating**

**51%** Highs  
Lows

Interesting and initially addictive gameplay with plenty of options. Strange gameplay quirks that punish the less-than-perfect player.

**The Verdict** Potentially superb, but actually rather limited puzzle game. Stick to Tetris.

Publisher	Empire Software
Developer	Graftgold
Price	£29.99
Minimum System	386, VGA
Recommended	386DX
Sound Support	Roland, AdLib, & Soundblaster
Release Date	Out Now

(Left) The highly skilled and internationally famous American team take to the pitch – and this time they're up against the equally impressive Romania. Can't you just feel the tension in the air? Snore...



# Empire Soccer 94

# Relegated



The global frenzy sparked off by the World Cup continues, with everyone and their granny releasing a football game. Unfortunately, and ironically, not all of them qualify...

**W**HAT IS IT ABOUT foxy games? Although, in theory, they should be simple to produce, it's so damn unusual to ever find a good one. Soccer fans have always had to put up with a lot during big

tournaments like the European Championships or the World Cup. Everybody jumps on the bandwagon and game quality inevitably suffers – *Empire Soccer 94* being a fine example.

It's a shame, because, apart from one huge problem, it's an enjoyable game. Developers Graftgold have chosen to emphasise the fun and playability over accuracy and statistics, so the gameplay is remarkably simple to get into. Although there are 32 national teams to choose from (including England), and you can play practice or exhibition games, as well as the full World Cup (in which up to eight players can compete), *Empire Soccer 94* contains virtually no stats other than half and full-time reports on

*“So what’s the huge, horrible flaw that ruins the game? It’s quite simple really – you can’t see enough of the pitch”*

games and the group tables. Tactics and management are limited to choosing from one of five preset formations and selecting a ‘special’ ability, such as Banana Shot or Super Barge.

The controls, while simple, still accommodate such shots as sliding tackles, headers and flip kicks. The goalkeeper is computer controlled, except during penalties, and on the whole does a fair job.

Graphically, everything is quite nicely done too – the pitch scrolls smoothly, the ball rolls and bounces well and the players are adequately animated in a cartoony kinda way.

So what’s the huge, horrible flaw? It’s quite simple really, and so fundamental that it’s hard to believe Graftgold released this without anyone picking up on it – you can’t see enough of the pitch. For a start, there’s a status bar along the bottom of the screen that eats up nearly a quarter of the potential play area. Admittedly, you can see to either side, but considering that the pitch is laid out vertically, this is no compensation. As if to compound the problem, though, the player with the ball doesn’t remain centred, but moves towards the top or bottom of the display when he’s moving. This means that when you have the ball and are running up or down the pitch you can only see about four feet ahead. So dodging defenders or passing up the pitch is a matter of sheer luck, and you can’t even see the posts until you’re halfway into the area. Defending is just as hard – you can’t see your own players until the opposing player has run past them. This makes the game all but impossible to play. How this ‘tiny detail’ slipped the notice of the programmers, playtesters and publishers is a mystery we may never unravel, but in the meantime, save yourself the worry and avoid buying this game.

ANDY BUTCHER



(Above) Your manager expresses his pleasure at your last goal in his own inimitable style while your players prepare for the centre. The game is full of little pictures like this, some of which are quite amusing.



(Left) Watch the opponent’s desperate saves again and again. The traditional action replay feature is somewhat limited though.

**PC GAMER** *Final Rating*

**45%** **Highs** Clearly drawn cartoon graphics and simple controls.

**Lows** You can't see enough of the pitch.

**The Verdict** A fun foxy game, made unplayable by the tiny pitch display.

# Q

## The Horde<sup>CD</sup>



A kindly king, an evil high chancellor, a serving boy and an endless stream of vicious red monsters with huge appetites. Just another day in the Shimto Plains...

**I**T'S BECOMING INCREASINGLY rare for a new PC game not to conveniently fall into one of the standard categories we all know and love – without wanting to sound like Gary Penn, originality is a lot harder to come by than it ever used to be. In much the same way, humour in computer games is a somewhat less than common commodity. It's pleasantly surprising, then, to find

that Crystal Dynamics' *The Horde* has both qualities in spades.

Chauncey, a gangly young serving boy in the service of King Winthrop, has saved the king from choking to death during a royal feast. In a display of overwhelming gratitude, Winthrop bestows on him the title of Sir Chauncey The Brave and hands him the deeds to vast tracts of lands, as well as the magical sword Grimthwacker. Unfortunately, Chauncey's sudden rise in social status has

inadvertently put the boy between the scheming high chancellor Kronus Maclor and his throne-snatching ambitions. To make matters worse, Chauncey's newly acquired lands are being overrun by the unimaginably evil Horde, malicious and ever-hungry red creatures who enjoy devouring everything and anything.

The action takes place over a series of turns, each of which represents a season. At the start of each season you have two minutes in which to cultivate your village and prepare your defences, then the Horde attacks. Controlling Chauncey on the isometric view of your land, you have to kill all of the hordlings before they eat your villagers. Succeed and you're presented with a summary of your situation, including how much money you've gained from your crops and various other sources. If your defence of the village is particularly good,

*"By far the funniest aspect of the game is the evil chancellor, who actually manages to out-do Alan Rickman's performance as the Sheriff Of Nottingham in Robin Hood: Prince Of Thieves"*



(Left) An adolescent hordling explodes in a satisfying spray of red slime. Unfortunately, there are, erm, hordes more where that came from. The two behind you, for a start.

# wirky

(Below) Another red scumbag bites the dust, but behind you a horling shaman wanders through the snow, just about to fireball you and resurrect his companions.

Publisher	US Gold
Developer	Crystal Dynamics
Price	£44.99
Minimum System	33 Mhz, 386, 4 Mb, CD-ROM
Recommended	486
Sound Support	All major cards
Release Date	Out Now



(Left) Hmmm, decisions, decisions – which ugly red monster to kill first?

*“There’s precious little to fault here – The Horde is quirky, original and great fun to play”*

people move into your land and your village grows and becomes more prosperous.

At the end of each year you pay taxes to the chancellor, who takes an unhealthy amount of pleasure in raising them as much as possible for the most spurious of reasons. You then have the option to buy various items from Ye Olde Shoppe. These range from better weapons and magical equipment to new village-cultivating techniques, such as the ability to build stone walls. If you manage to keep your community thriving for a few years and fight off all the horlings in the area, the king awards you a medal and gives you the deeds to a new land, with its own (inevitably tougher) challenges and new breeds of hordling to contend with.

*The Horde*, then, is a strange hybrid of strategy and arcade hacking. Before the horlings attack, you plan out your defences, building walls or fences as obstacles, and digging spike-filled pits and moats. At first, the horlings are single-minded, suicidal creatures which head straight for the nearest edible substance and ignore everything else (not a bad thing when you’re trying to lop their heads off). But as the game progresses the monsters

begin to learn new tricks and get sneakier – avoiding traps, running away from Chauncey and generally making life more difficult. In addition, new lands provide progressively tougher challenges – swamps which you have to reclaim by planting trees, deserts that need irrigation and so forth.

In terms of presentation, *The Horde* is flawless – the in-game character animations in particular are superb, as are the atmospheric background themes and suitably spooky sound effects. And the obligatory cinematic interludes are some of the best examples of video footage I’ve yet seen in a CD-ROM title, professionally produced and full of suitably overblown acting and hammy accents. Each year there are random events, which you’re informed of as if you’re watching a medieval TV news broadcast, and after a while the horlings even start a publicity campaign of their own, with



(Above) Desert horlings have horns and burrow beneath the sand.

some brilliantly rendered animations. It’s remarkably amusing, although whether you’ll appreciate it depends on how well developed your sense of the ridiculous is. By far the funniest aspect is the evil chancellor, who actually manages to outdo Alan Rickman’s performance as the Sheriff Of Nottingham in Robin Hood: Prince Of Thieves. His continuous attempts to cause trouble are, on occasion, simply hilarious, but even at their worst they manage to raise a smile.

For all this, though, *The Horde* does have a major flaw – its lastability. Despite the changing lands, new horlings and ever-expanding range of items, the game does become repetitive after a while. Turns are just too similar. The humour, the presentation and the addictive simplicity of the gameplay all serve to offset this problem, but not well enough. After a few solid hours of play, the lack of significant variety becomes more noticeable, and you quickly begin to lose interest. It’s a shame, because otherwise there’s precious little to fault here – the gameplay itself is quirky, distinctly original and great fun.

I thoroughly enjoyed playing *The Horde*, and although it’s not the kind of title you’ll be playing continuously for weeks, you’ll still find yourself coming back to it again and again, especially when you’re in need of some light relief. Questionable lastability aside, full marks to Crystal Dynamics for the game’s originality and humour – rival developers should take note...

ANDY BUTCHER

<b>PCGAMER</b>	<i>Final Rating</i>
<b>84%</b>	Highs Excellent graphics and sound, combined with wonderful silliness.
Lows	Repetitive gameplay begins to pall quite quickly.
<b>The Verdict</b>	A unique and fun game – but it won’t last for long.

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# Seedy

## Plumbers Don't Wear Ties<sup>CD</sup>

No, say it isn't true. CD titles can be bad, but not this bad, surely? Read and be appalled...

**P**LUMBERS DON'T WEAR Ties fails dismally to live up to its billing as an "interactive romantic comedy." It has the interactivity of a cold corpse, the romance of a bag of chips, and is funny for about 30 seconds – if you consider being repeatedly struck by lightning as being funny, that is. And after the initial shock wears off and the awesome dreadfulness of the thing becomes apparent, it simply stops being even funny. It's just sad. Not just a little bit sad, mind you. Every single aspect of this disc – from presentation to content – is sad. It is, in fact, the very quintessence of sadness. A sad man sitting sadly at home with the word 'sad' tattooed across his face is positively well-adjusted by comparison.

Basically, *Plumbers Don't Wear Ties* is a narrated slideshow for proto-adolescent morons – the semi-interactive equivalent of a photo love story in a girl's comic. John, it appears, is a mobile plumber-on-call beefcake with a ludicrous necktie and the personality of a late-night weatherman. Jane, on the other hand, is an unemployed secretary whose off-exposed chest brings a whole new meaning to the term 'Silicon Valley.'

The objective is to get these two dislikable individuals to shag each other. It's hard to state it



(Above) Two untalented actors feign a passionate embrace.

(Below) The production values are somewhat less than lush.

Publisher	Unica
Developer	United Pictures
Price	£34
Minimum System	386, 33Mhz, 2 Mb RAM
Recommended	486
Sound Support	Windows-compatible card
Release Date	Out Now

*"An irksome and yobbishly executed pseudo-pornographic photo-story with the wit and charm of an elephant's arse"*

in any other terms, when their idea of seductive repartee is "You're single?", "Yes – very." The sorry pair trudge through the motions of a story, pausing every now and then to let you choose the path of the plot. These moments of interaction are so few and far between that a couple of times my screensaver cut in and mercifully obscured the action.

Three choices present themselves at these brief interludes of decision-making. For example: Jane is confronted by a potential employer. Is she offered the job or not? What if her prospective boss were to demand sexual favours in exchange for employment? Needless to say, the tatty story can only progress if the odious man forces himself on her – cue a 'hilarious' rape scene.

Every now and then, a heavy-handed stab at self-referential irony attempts to clear your conscience – to assure you that it's all 'just a laugh.' But it isn't – it's a shoddy



piece of sensationalist tat. Printing the message "The following scene displays graphic, gratuitous nudity" doesn't make a series of tacky skin pics any more acceptable. It's merely an attempt to exploit the conscience of the audience, in the same way that it exploits the body of the female character at every opportunity.

*Plumbers Don't Wear Ties* is an irksome and yobbishly executed pseudo-pornographic photo-story with the wit and charm of an elephant's arse. Technically, it's positively Cro-Magnon – if you can't be bothered to 'play' the game properly (and, believe me, you can't), you can simply run the CD through a graphics program to view every still as a BMP file and watch the 'story' out for yourself. It scores its three percentage points purely for originality – I've never seen anything like it. Hopefully, I never will again. JON SMITH



(Above) Positive role models and politically correct imagery ahoy.

**PC GAMER** *Final Rating*

**3%** **Highs** Superb plot, deep and involving gameplay.  
**Lows** Only joking.

**The Verdict** The trade of entertainment – a relentlessly offensive piece of lousish drivel.

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- **TAKE CONTROL** - Buying a joystick is easy. Buying one that doesn't fall apart or stop working within a week is another matter entirely. But fear not! We've rounded up 20 rubber-necked joystick reviews and ranked them from the absolute joystick buyers' guide.
- **WINDOW POLISH** - Add a bit of spit and polish to your Windows set-up with four programs designed to enhance your desktop. We review and rate *PC Tools for Windows 2.0*, *Desktop 2.0*, *NewWave* and *Automator for Windows*.
- **TOMORROW'S WORLD** - We cast our critical eyes over the new PowerPC and ask whether it really is a serious contender or a hyped-up tin box.

• **GAMES FREELY** - More PC games reviewed than you knew existed.

# PC FORMAT

It may not exactly change your life, but it will almost certainly challenge the way you use your PC.

JULY ISSUE ON SALE THURSDAY 16 JUNE

# Syndicate Plus<sup>CD</sup>



(Left) Destruction on a grand scale – and all in the name of corporate expansion.

Publisher	Electronic Arts
Developer	Bullfrog
Price	£44.99
Recommended	486
Release Date	Out Now

and new weapons (including a powerful airstrike). The levels start off simply enough – just knock off a bloke sat in an unguarded building – but soon you'll be exploring teeming metropolises, hijacking monorails, torching cars and using bystanders as bullet-proof vests. Nasty stuff – but great fun all the same.

**T**HIS BUMPER CD bundle of the original *Syndicate* and *American Revolt* expansion pack represents terrific value for money for anyone who hasn't already been sucked into the nightmare world of the *Syndicate* scenario.

Corporate takeovers have changed in the cities of tomorrow, you see. At one time, a few millions and a bit of insider information were enough to get your feet under the desk, but now you need a hit squad of heavily-armed cyborgs if you want to get anywhere.

If you don't know the game already, it's pure Bullfrog – global domination by ruthless manipulation

of the masses. Each level is a hugely detailed future city, full of people going about their daily business completely unaware of the fact that you're about to cut them down with an irrational burst of machine gun

fire. Ultra-violence is the aim – and to take over territories owned by other syndicates by assassinating or subverting key members of rival organisations getting in the way.

There are 50 missions in the original *Syndicate*, and *American*

*Revolt* adds another 21, along with ten special multi-player missions, network play support for up to ten players



(Above) Do well and you can upgrade your cyborgs with some serious firepower.



More than a game, *Syndicate* is a stunning piece of software which serves up arcade blasting and strategic depth in equal measure. One of the best releases to appear last year, the irresistible scenario and ruthlessly vicious gameplay are a devastating combination. There aren't any CD-specific enhancements, but *Syndicate Plus* doesn't suffer for that. It's still an essential purchase, whether it's on floppy or CD, and you should snap it up right away. CHRIS BUXTON

**PC GAMER Final Rating**  
**91%** Highs  
 Two games on one disc.  
 Lows  
 No fancy CD-only extras.  
**The Verdict** The best way to play one of the best PC games.

# The Lost Files Of Sherlock Holmes<sup>CD</sup>

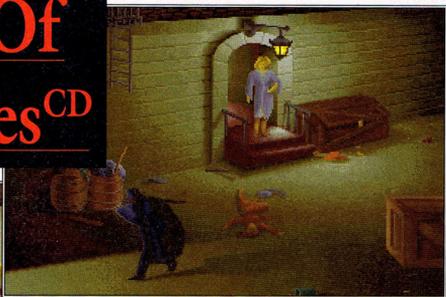
Publisher	Electronics
Developer	Mythos Software
Price	£39.99
Recommended	386
Release Date	Out Now

**E**LECTRONIC ARTS' first graphic adventure predates *PC Gamer* by a couple of years and surprisingly remains the company's only foray into Sierra/LucasArts territory. Which is a shame because the game has everything you'd expect from a classy adventure – an utterly compelling storyline, challenging yet approachable puzzles and an easy-to-use interface. As Holmes, you're



investigating 'The Case Of The Serrated Scalpel' – a seemingly open and shut murder case that Scotland Yard (and your old pal Inspector Lestrade) have attributed to the

Terror Of Whitechapel – Jack The Ripper. Naturally, Holmes knows different – a brief examination of the victim's corpse is all that's required to throw doubt on the Ripper hypothesis. That's the starting point – and from hereon in you and Watson travel around atmospheric London locations that, for



(Above) Has The Ripper struck again? Lestrade thinks so, but Holmes notices a few clues which point the finger of suspicion elsewhere...

(Left) At the scene of the crime it pays to check out every detail and pick up anything that you find – if you can do it without being seen.

once, are free of the hyperbolic 'gunvorinis' Americans seem to love so much. Visit the theatre, the morgue, Old Scotland Yard, the opera, Covent Garden, London Zoo... In all, there are about 30 beautifully detailed locations for you and your amiable companion to roam through and explore.

It's hard to believe that this game's two years old now. It certainly doesn't look it. It's just as good as any recent graphic adventure and captures the feel of Holmes' London better than any other similar game I've played. In just wish that instead of

simply plinking the game on CD (and reducing it by a fiver) EA had done what every other CD upgrade seems to do – replace the characters' text speeches with actual recorded speech. That would have made this really special. CHRIS BUXTON



(Above) Holmes has his own mini lab at Baker Street.

**PC GAMER Final Rating**  
**80%** Highs  
 Wonderfully evocative.  
 Lows  
 Again, no fancy CD extras.  
**The Verdict** Feels just like a good Conan Doyle yarn.

# RE-ISSUES

Building up a decent software collection ain't easy, especially if you only buy games at full whack. That's why checking out what old stuff is being re-released at budget price is such a good idea. When you know what's worth getting and what to leave on the shelf, it makes everything so much easier.



## Budget Bitmaps

The Bitmap Brothers are one of the few programming outfits to have got themselves a bit of a reputation, but I've always thought this said more about the public's desire to see some sort of programmer 'auteurs' than the quality of the games themselves. Sure, *Speedball 2* was good, but I was never a fan of *The Chaos Engine* or the team's *Xenon* games. *Cadaver* (Kixx, £16.99), however, could be considered a lost classic – if it had been a classic in the first place. It's an isometric arcade adventure of the type made famous by Ultimate Play The Game's *Knight Lore*, and has the slick, shiny graphics that are the Bitmap's stock-in-trade. But it's quite a soulless affair, the gameplay blatantly failing to live up to the fancy surface. There's too much to-ing and fro-ing and needless death for my liking. It certainly isn't a pleasurable experience. Still, the Bitmaps have fans who might want to get it at a budget price. Me, I'd rather play *D-Generation*. 61%



The Bitmap Brothers take *Knight Lore* and give it their shiny, metallic treatment in *Cadaver*. The game fails to get you going, though. Even the inclusion of extra levels doesn't lift it.

## Go To War

Action Sixteen is re-releasing a couple of 360's strategy games this month – the much-lauded naval combat game *Harpoon* and *Patriot*. *Patriot* (Action Sixteen, £16.99) is a straightforward Gulf War wargame that recreates the 1990 land battles between Iraqi and Coalition forces in Kuwait. Far less sensational than something like *Desert Strike* (you can play Iraqi or UN forces),

RECOMMENDED

85%

## D-Generation

This sort of isometric 3D title was so popular in the mid-'80s it was a genre unto itself, with the world and his wife wanting to release the next



*Knight Lore*. However, within a few years everyone was sick of the format – until Robert Cook's fabulous *D-Generation* rekindled interest in the forgotten delights of Ultimate's *tour de force* and proved itself to be one of the best arcade

adventures on the PC in a long, long time. It's such a beautifully conceived game – you're a delivery boy trapped inside a hi-tech office block and have to make your way past the building's security systems and lethal NeoGens to reach the mysterious Dr

Derrida. The rooms maintain a fine balance between dexterity-testing tasks and brain-teasing

puzzles, so players of all persuasions will be satisfied. The recent Windows version is slightly better but it's slightly more expensive (£20). The choice is up to you – just so long as you get one of them.

£16.99 ACTION SIXTEEN (CD & FLOPPY)



Put a foot wrong here and the chances are you'll end up frazzled, fried or... wotsit. Some of the later rooms in the building are dang near impossible, but fun all the same.

it's also unfortunately far less involving. Not surprisingly, it's no fun playing the outnumbered and outgunned Iraqi's and if you want a wargame you're much better off going for *Harpoon*. 64%

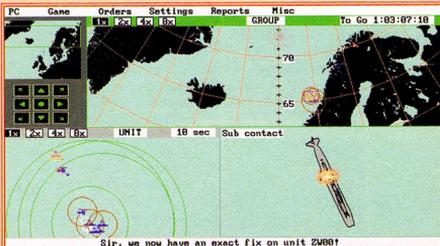
All the combat in *Harpoon* (Action Sixteen, £17.99) takes place in real time, which means you really do need to know the technical capabilities of your ships if you're to



It's a thrill a minute in *Patriot*. Okay, that's a complete lie, but this is a wargame, after all.



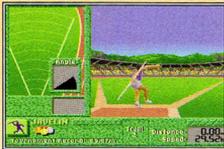
come out on top. It's also extremely detailed, which only adds to the satisfaction when you finally come away with what the game has to throw at you. One of the most rewarding modern wargames around, *Harpoon* offers much more excitement than rival war titles and could even woo a die-hard arcadester. Maybe. 79%



The almost legendary *Harpoon*. Still the best modern naval combat game around. Complex, absorbing and worth investigating. And it's far more exciting than most other wargames.

68<sup>95</sup>

## Summer Challenge



Push your keyboard to the limit with Accolade's *Summer Challenge*. This is the javelin event in case you weren't sure.

*Summer Challenge*, sports vastly superior graphics (mixing polygons and sprites), although the meat of the gameplay is still vintage *Daley*. Events include archery, equestrianism, kayak, 400 metre hurdles, pole vault, high jump, javelin and cycling. Some require delicate control, others simple button-pummeling action. I'm real fan of this sort of game and love picking them up every now and then to see if I can crack a couple of records (the kayaking is bloody hard though). Get a couple of mates around and it brings out the worst in them and the best in the game. Not outstanding or special in any way in particular, just fun.

£12.99 THE HIT SQUAD

*Daley Thompson's Decathlon* was a landmark game for me – I remember breaking a couple of joysticks and spending hours on end competing against mates to see who could get the most impressive time for the 100 metres. Accolade's 1992 revamp of the concept, *Summer Challenge*, sports

## Quest For Gameplay



Bravely take to your cursor keys (none of that mice business here) and guide your character up the stairs. If you can, *King's Quest III* in all its glory.

Bullfrog's *Populous* and *PowerMonger* games inspired more than a few clones – and Virgin's *Realms (The Hit Squad, £12.99)* was one of the more forgettable ones. Divide your time between protecting and developing your cities and managing your armies. It looks very simple compared to the dated *PowerMonger*, let alone more impressive modern fare like *The Settlers*, and it's not easy either. 54%

## Greetings, Comrade

After producing the exotic and atmospheric *Dune*, French coders Cryo created

Kixx's misguided devotion to Sierra's *King's Quest* series continues with the re-release of *King's Quest III: To Heir Is Human (Kixx, £16.99)* which looks every bit its seven years of age. Clunky CGA graphics, an embarrassing soundtrack of beeps and a painfully basic interface all get in the way of the story – which isn't much to talk about anyway. Only *King's Quest* fans (or those with little taste) need apply. 44%

78<sup>95</sup>

## Dune

I've never read the *Dune* books by Frank Herbert, but I did love the David Lynch movie based on the books. It was such a sumptuous production – wonderful sets and costumes, beautiful photography – shame the movie didn't really live up to its potential. And you could



You are Paul Atreides and this is your bird. You come across her in the desert (ooer) and she just latches onto you. I should be so lucky.



say the same about *Cryo's* audacious *Dune*. It's based on the movie rather than the books and looks superb.

There's a wonderful soundtrack running throughout and the conversations you have with

the Atreides and the Fremen really set a great atmosphere. The game, however, feels a little linear. Characters suggest things and so long as you carry them out things progress quite happily on their own. Still, everything gets more edgy when the Harkonnens muscle in and you get a bit more to do. *Dune* tells a great story but isn't so hot as a game. Despite this, I really did enjoy it (and played it for far too long, so maybe it's got something, after all).

£14.99 THE HIT SQUAD

*KGB (The Hit Squad, £12.99)*, a Soviet spy thriller set in 1991 at the time of Gorbachev's reforms. Like *Dune*, *KGB* has a restricted, linear storyline and is enjoyable and attractive. I always fancied playing one of Stalin's finest, but in *KGB* the story unfortunately just washes over me and is ultimately disappointing. 56%

## Okay, Okay, So We Goofed...

In last month's *PC Gamer* Re-Issues pages we reviewed *Indiana Jones And The Fate Of Atlantis* adventure. This was, in fact, a complete porky on our part and the offending party has been summarily tried and executed (the Editorial team thought a rough slapping about the face with a pair of Marigolds would have been sufficient, but there you go...). *Indiana Jones And The Fate Of Atlantis* is only available at full price (£37.99) and there are currently no plans to release it on the Kixx label. It's still very good though.

## Also Available

### Archer Maclean's Pool

#### The Hit Squad £14.99

Uses the same engine as *Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker* for America's green baize game. It's good but pool's fat more lightweight than snooker. 75%

### Test Drive 3 The Hit Squad £12.99

Were the *Test Drive* titles any good, even when they were first released? A boring, uneventful driving game with a choice of several dashboards from supercars. Oh dear, oh dear. 44%

### Supremacy The Hit Squad £12.99

Build your own empire in space in this appealing – if not exactly unique – strategy game. Covers the same ground as the recent *Reunion*. 77%

### Jack Nicklaus CD Action Sixteen £16.99

An okay simulation, really just *Mean 18* with knobs on. I still prefer *PGA*, and Accolade do the decent *Signature Edition* CD pack with extra courses and a designer for £20. 55%



The Golden Bear swings out in some rather tasteless golf attire. White shoes with that outfit! I ask you.



Want to be Jacques Cousteau? Well, get a snorkel instead of wasting your cash on *Oceans Below*.

### Oceans Below CD Action Sixteen £16.99

Multimedia diving 'experience'. Less fun than a veruca-packed sesh in a pool packed with jabbering schoolkids. The Big Blue it isn't. Or Jaws. Or even *The Deep*. 33%

# NET

# works



(Above and right) *Capture The Flag's* smooth presentation is aided and abetted by some wonderfully useful help boxes.

**The Internet** has absolutely nothing to do with The Net – a ‘worthy’ BBC effort at a computer TV show, which is just as crap as Micro Live (but at least Jools is cuter than Fred Harris). No, it’s what clever people drop into conversation when they’re talking about all those interconnected bulletin boards and information networks. As ever, there are the twin delights of discovering some decent new games and playing *Doom* for hours (just to make sure all those new patches and levels work properly) when you hook up this month.

## Capture The Flag

Our favourite piece of Shareware for a long while, *Capture The Flag* is actually two years old, but it’s just so good we had to mention it. Big in the States, it’s based on one of those strange combat ‘games’ cubs and scouts are always going on about. A large rectangular area of land is divided in half and a team of eight occupy each half. Each team has a flag in its half and the objective is to capture the other team’s flag. It’s a turn-based game, with your team’s movements limited by a finite number of action points (which you use for running, walking and crawling). But the unusual thing is you can only see your opponent’s people if your men can see them directly. The terrain affects your vision, you see, so hiding behind rocks and stealthily walking through woods to conceal your actions is all part of the fun. And if your people get caught in the opponent’s area, chances are they’ll be captured and you’ll have to cope with a smaller attack force. A wonderfully simple idea, well-executed, with attractive presentation, *Capture The Flag* is every bit as good as any full price release. It’s even got an excellent tutorial mode and a useful help facility. Essential.

## The Oregon Trail

We liked *The Oregon Trail*. It’s pretty rubbish, but entertaining all the same. You’re an American pioneer following the treacherous Oregon trail to start a new life. Together with four others, you outfit a covered wagon with oxen and supplies and

Why pay a small fortune for games when you can get great software for nothing? Both *Capture The Flag* and *God Of Thunder* take PC gaming into uncharted territory.

BY CHRIS BUXTON



set off from the town of Independence. Your journey’s beset with problems from day one – you’ll be forced to go hunting when you run out of food, for instance, and in uncharted places you’ll require the help of Indian guides. And then there’s all that disease (which can kill off your people) – as well as re-stocking and repairing of your wagon at the few remaining outposts – to worry about. You control the action via basic information screens with static graphics. These show the status of your pioneers and enable you talk to other wagons or traders. Now and then there’ll be little arcade

sections where you hunt bear and deer or sail a raft down rapids, but they’re nothing special. Although *The Oregon Trail* is basic, undemanding stuff, we enjoyed it – and that’s enough for us.

## God Of Thunder

Another lovely piece of Shareware. *God Of Thunder*’s an arcade adventure, quite similar to Nintendo’s enormously successful *Zelda* series (*The Legend of Zelda* was the first game to sell over one million copies). The story’s taken straight from Norse mythology – you play Thor, who’s been sent down from Asgard to Midgard (the land of the humans) to stop the renegade god Loki. Loki plans to take control of Midgard and only you can stop him – by racing around a push-screen scrolling game collecting gems, shooting Loki’s soldiers and chatting to the locals. The story unfolds via the



Big Blue River crossing  
March 14, 1848

Press SPACE BAR to continue

*The Oregon Trail* – it’s no oil painting, and unless you’re into very basic strategy games you’ll hate it. We liked it, though.

(Left and below) Yes, *Software Creations' God Of Thunder* does look like *The Legend Of Zelda*. And lo and behold, it plays just like it as well. This has to be one of the most enjoyable one-player Shareware games we've seen in a long time – and comes highly recommended.



conversations you have with the friendly people of Midgard, who tell you what's going on and point you in the right direction. I've got so used to PC adventures and RPGs recently that I've forgotten just how much fun these games can be. **Software Creations**, the team who coded the fabulous Shareware *Hexagon* (reviewed last month), is responsible for this title as well – and excellent it is too. Nice going, guys.

**Combat Zone**

These kind of games aren't really my cup of tea, but even I can see that *Combat Zone's* a bit of a donkey. As you might have guessed from the title, it's an abstract wargame, with all the standard counters, turns and different unit types you'd expect from the genre – but without the strategy. Basically, you've got a featureless map with one or two bottlenecks where all the major barneys take place. Okay, that's a bit of an exaggeration, but there isn't a great deal of scope here for conducting well thought out offensives or grand tactical struggles. The game's many shortcomings will frustrate anyone who's used to a well-designed wargame, and it doesn't offer anything for novices.

**Billy The Kid**

If you read last month's Shareware section, you'll have seen a simplistic little arcade game called *Seabanner's Quest*. *Billy The Kid* is coded by the same guy, American Bill Dedes, and it seems to be Bill's mission in life to produce games that try hard but just don't quite hit the mark. *Billy The Kid* blends side-on platformer action with scrolling isometric levels, but both styles of play are spoiled by jilty animation and overly basic level designs. You also only get three levels in the Shareware version, and unless you have a fondness for the sort of games that would've been shunned by the



Bill Dedes' *Billy The Kid* game isn't exactly the best arcade game going on the PC, but its simplistic fun is good enough for a few goes.



(Right) Could it be that *Econoland 2001* is more boring than it looks? Can Phil and Grant go through one day in Eastenders without saying 'slag'?

Sinclair Spectrum (even on a good day) it's best avoided.

**Tommy's Wheel Of Misfortune**

Now we're off subject better than to play a seven year old, text-only rip-off of an intensely bad gameshow, but what can I say? We read the title and thought that any game with such a silly name deserved a playing. If you've seen the *Wheel Of Fortune TV* show you'll know just what to expect – Hangman without the gallows (but with a wheel, of course). The wheel here, however, is just a rectangle of numbers, there's no pointer and the words just get highlighted one by one. There are no graphics either. Most of the phrases are unfathomable American *bon mots* that mean nothing to Brits. Nevertheless, *Tommy's Wheel Of Misfortune* still kept us amused for a good hour or so. Nothing to be proud of, I know, but at least this most lacklustre of wordgames gave us a fun chance to compete against each other.

DATE	09F	00M1	18V	CM	Tea:R	CF:R	Money	ROKs	Leads	UnEmp
2001-1	2054	403	221	1438	21.0	5.2	766	16.1	32.0	6.3
2001-2	2186	407	241	1458	21.0	5.0	770	17.2	3.2	5.0
2001-3	2168	411	264	1493	21.0	5.1	833	17.4	8.4	4.8
2001-4	2235	415	280	1552	21.0	5.7	869	17.8	8.6	4.8
2002-1	2394	419	314	1571	21.0	6.7	995	16.5	9.5	3.3
2002-2	2365	423	340	1601	21.0	8.5	941	16.1	10.9	2.6
2002-3	2276	427	273	1577	21.0	9.1	976	14.7	13.0	3.7
2002-4	2179	431	219	1530	21.0	8.7	1010	13.9	13.5	3.8
2003-1	2153	436	280	1580	21.0	7.7	1045	13.9	12.2	7.8
2003-2	2191	441	228	1522	21.0	6.5	1083	14.5	10.1	8.3
2003-3	2252	446	250	1556	21.0	5.3	1124	15.5	8.1	8.2
2003-4	2326	451	273	1602	21.0	4.4	1171	16.4	6.6	7.6
2004-1	2495	456	299	1654	21.0	3.8	1220	16.9	5.8	6.7
2004-2	2457	461	327	1709	21.0	3.7	1271	16.6	5.7	5.7
2004-3	2529	466	358	1764	21.0	4.0	1321	15.8	6.2	4.6
2004-4	2682	471	392	1819	21.0	4.9	1370	14.9	7.2	3.6

**Econoland 2001**

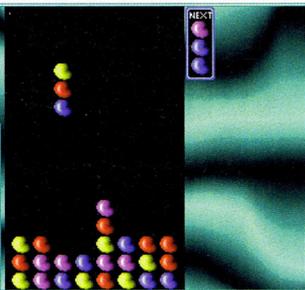
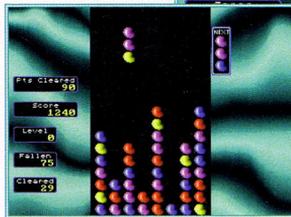
Now I was thinking this would be a bit of a *Sim City* experience that enabled you to make life the Chancellor Of The Exchequer. In fact, it's more of a sim for hardened economists than a game. Set levels of government expenditure, taxation and general monetary policy – and then watch the country squirm. You can opt to total control of finances or, if you're feeling hard enough, relinquish control of the money supply and let the Senate veto your decisions. Many moons ago, I took A level Economics and even though I could just about work out what was

*Those Contacts*

All the games featured in this month's Shareware section are available from good Public Domain libraries and bulletin boards across the country.

You could try PD Soft, 1 Bryant Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS1 2YD = (0702) 466933 and Invicta Shareware, 6 Walsingham Road, Orington, Kent BR5 3BW = (081) 302 6213. If you have a modem, try After Hours = (0785) 228214 or The 021 Connection = (021) 520 7615.

(Left and below) *Jelly Bean Factory* has some gaudy SVGA graphics, but the *Columns* gameplay and boppy tunes save the day.



again. I'd still rather play *Tetris*, though – even if it is old hat.

### Yet More Doom Patches

This month, another collection of *Doom* patches and levels has appeared on the boards. *Crazy Doom Levels* keeps exactly the same level designs as the full version, but changes the sounds and graphics for the enemies, replacing guards with stickmen and demonlords with cartoon bears. Imps get to wear jack straps and sunglasses, while guard sergeants acquire bizzare mohican haircuts. Very silly and only funny for a few minutes. American Frederick Bradley, however, has set about

designing a series of levels just for *Deathmatch Doom*. The first level is modelled on his own house in Washington and looks surprisingly good – he used *Forever*, another *Doom* patch, to create sky graphics, and designed the wood look himself. The house has only one suicide spot, plenty of ambush points and several secret bits. To finish the level, two players need to co-operate – one has to stand in a lift while the other has to press the exit button which is only revealed when the lift goes down. Can't wait to see all the levels, Fred.

If you've come up with an impressive *Doom* patch of new levels, characters or sounds, send it in to us at the following address: **Yet More Doom Patches, PC Gamer, Future Publishing Ltd., 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW**. The best will get a mention here and a prize (if Gary can afford any after that *MVP 3-Point Basketball* fiasco in the May issue. Score over 336 and you'll get a game worth £50, he said. Now he's having to dish out over a grand's worth of prizes. Ha!). **PCG**

going on in the game, I didn't give a damn about *Economland*. This is number crunching at its most retentive and I can't see anyone outside a University Fiscal Studies unit getting much from it. That shouldn't really come as a surprise, though – *Economland 2001* was developed at the Wesleyan University in Connecticut.

### Jelly Bean Factory

Jelly beans, smelly beans. This game is a *Columns* clone. *Columns* never really had the success of *Tetris*, partly because it was a Sega-only game (designed specifically as a rival for *Tetris*) and partly because it simply wasn't as good. In *Jelly Bean Factory*, columns of three differently coloured beans fall down the screen and you have to make a line of three beans in the same colour to make them disappear. That's all there is to it, and *Jelly Bean Factory* does it all quite well. The SVGA graphics for the beans are a bit OTT and look decidedly flat against the plain black background. Apart from this, it's easily as good as any *Columns*-like around and ideal for dipping into now and



(Above, above-right and top-right) As if *Doom* wasn't enough as it stands, *Crazy Doom Levels* throws in smiley 'Watchmen' faces on the floor, stickmen and cartoon dinosaurs. All the sound effects are new too – and there's a big kiddy drawing of the sun with an insane smiling face shining in the sky.



### Why Did They Bother?



Believe it or not, there's a thriving market for fishing games in the USA – and it's not just on computers. Successful titles get converted across to consoles and even the Game Boy (I can just see the ads: 'Away with dangerous hooks. Away with noxious maggots. Yes, folks, at last you play CompuFish by the riverbank or even in a boat!'). It's a dull enough 'sport' as it is, but take away the dubious thrill of 'communing with nature' and what are you left with? Hours of sitting still, doing very little. Not surprisingly, *Bass Fishing* is very good at simulating this – and for the full-on fishing experience, experts can select from a number of rods, lures, types of bait and weights. Then you can steer your boat out to what you think is a good spot, drop anchor, cast off and wait. And wait. And... Well, come on, what were you expecting? If fishing lights your candle then you might like this, but I reckon you'd rather settle for the real thing anyway. Mind you, I still think there's potential for a good stamp-collecting game...

# CUT, TICK & POST CUT, TICK & POST CUT, TICK & POST

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# Diagnositics

Where Gaming Problems

Find Their Solutions...

## Pagan: Ultima VIII

### The Complete Solution Part 1

After last issue's *Beginner's Guide*, we proudly present the first part of our exclusive solution to this massive game. Along with the efforts of the diligent *Diagnositics posse* come Mr C Lee's excellent maps of all the main areas in the game, for which he wins – yes, you guessed it – his choice of software from our *Shop-O-Matic* pages.

Assuming you were following the *Beginner's Guide* last issue, you should now be ready to start the game proper. However, here are some bits and bobs you should try out before you progress any further. If you climb up the outside of the guard post to the north of Mordea's Palace (the one with the locked doors), you'll find a key ring inside, which is a very handy item. Just use keys on the ring as you find them, and then use the ring on locks – if you have the correct key, it will automatically be selected. Second, before leaving the city, enter the Palace and climb the stairs to the roof. Walk to the centre and you'll see your first teleporter pad. You can't use it yet, but you do need to see it before moving on.



It's best to organise your equipment so that you can find it quickly.



Mythran's rather strange house is also home to a teleporter pad, allowing you to get back there quickly whenever you want.

### Mythran

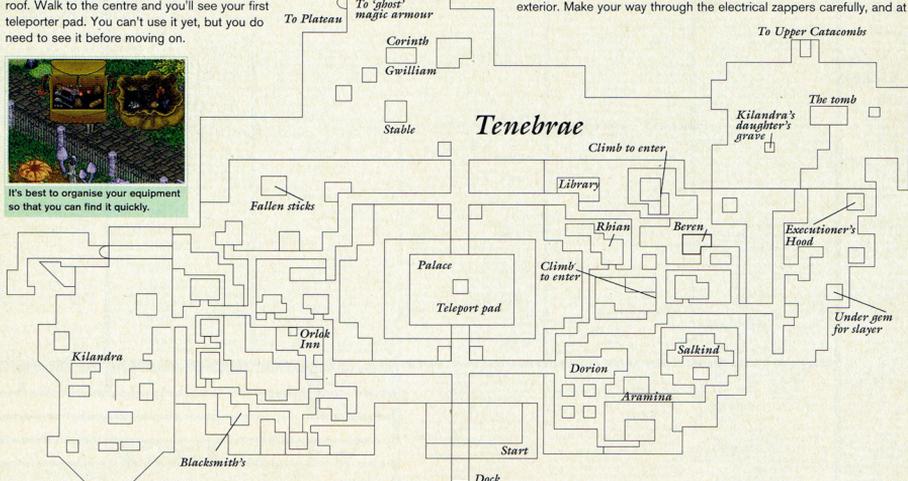
Start your quest with the mysterious scholar. Leave Tenebrae via the northern gate and follow the path through the valley until you reach the cave entrance. Follow the tunnel until you find the underground lake with the stepping stones, then hop

across using the route on the Plateau Map (it's always a good idea to save the game before jumping like this, just in case). From here on in you'll encounter several ghouls. As long as you

deal with them one at a time, they shouldn't cause you too much trouble (and certainly shouldn't be life-threatening).

When you come to the iron gates and the jammed lever, cross the rope bridge to the area with more levers. Work your way along them, setting each so that the adjacent winch moves when you throw the lever (throw the lever, and if the winch moves, leave it there. If the winch doesn't move, throw the lever again until it does). Now operate the main lever in this area and you should hear a rumbling sound. The earth will also shake slightly. Go back over the rope bridge and throw the final lever to open the gates. Follow the tunnel out of the caverns and into the Plateau. Walk directly south to find Mythran's cottage.

Be warned: the inside of the cottage is very different to the exterior. Make your way through the electrical apparatus carefully, and at





The eastern exit from Tenebrae – turn north here and you're on the road to the Cemetery and your first steps towards escaping from Pagan and defeating the Guardian (again).

At the other end you'll find a couple of healing potions. Take these and go through the door to the house proper. Once inside, find Mythran (he's the old guy with the staff) and speak to him about everything. Tell him the truth about your situation and he will agree to help you. He will give you the Recall Device, which enables you to use the teleporter pads, and a red healing potion. In addition, he'll sell you a scroll that can open magically locked or hidden doors (this is vital). Once you've finished talking to him, go upstairs, read all the books (there's a lot of them, but the knowledge is useful) and walk to the front of the house (east). You'll see a teleporter pad here. Double-click on the Recall Device and select Central Tenebrae as your destination.

## The Cemetery

The first form of elemental magic you can learn is Necromancy, the realm of the Earth Titan, Lithos. Leave Tenebrae via the eastern gate and follow the road north to the cemetery. Once there, talk to Vividos and he'll tell you that Lothian, the current Necromancer, is near death, but he cannot perform the ceremony to send her spirit to Lithos without a ritual dagger that has been confiscated by the tyrannical Mordea. Volunteer to get the dagger for him.

### Getting The Dagger

During Bloodwatch, go and visit Aramina, Mordea's maid, at her house in Eastern Tenebrae (use a clock to tell the time). Talk to her, listen to her woes and be nice. Ask about the dagger. If you are pleasant to her she will give you the key to the closet in Mordea's chambers and the chest within. Go to the Palace, enter the throne room and look under a cushion on a table along the west wall. Here you'll find the key to Mordea's Chambers, which lie through the doors to either side of the throne. Unlock the door, go into Mordea's Chambers and unlock the closet in the northwestern corner of the room. Open the chest that lies inside and take the dagger.

Do not do any of these things when there are people about, or when Mordea is asleep. Instead, leave the Palace and rest for one period of time, then return. The area should now be clear.

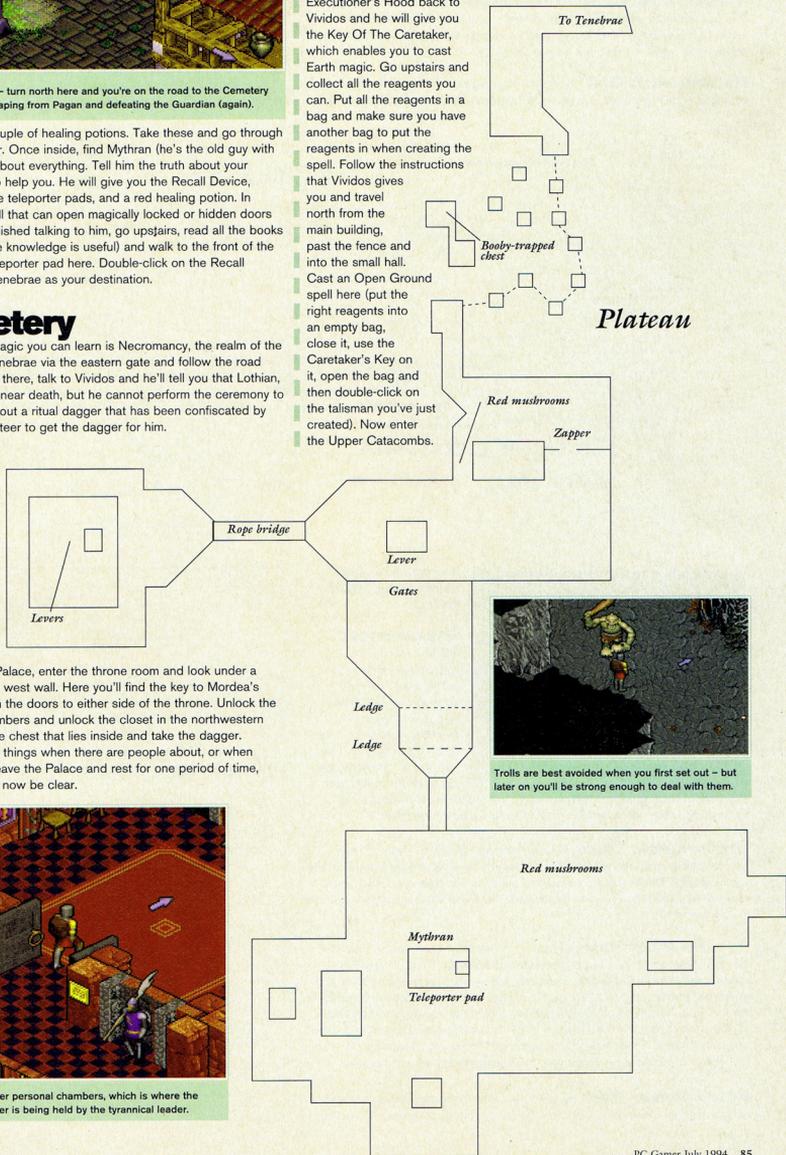
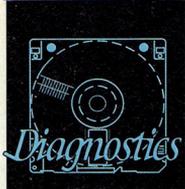


Mordea's throne room leads to her personal chambers, which is where the necromancer's ceremonial dagger is being held by the tyrannical leader.

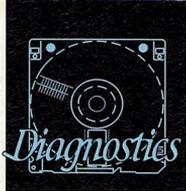
## Back At The Cemetery

Go back to the cemetery, give the dagger to Vividos and watch the ceremony (the faint-hearted should avert their eyes). Afterwards, accept his offer to become an apprentice.

He'll ask you to retrieve some reagents for him (see the map of Tenebrae on the facing page). Take the sticks and Executioner's Hood back to Vividos and he will give you the Key Of The Caretaker, which enables you to cast Earth magic. Go upstairs and collect all the reagents you can. Put all the reagents in a bag and make sure you have another bag to put the reagents in when creating the spell. Follow the instructions that Vividos gives you and travel north from the main building, past the fence and into the small hall. Cast an Open Ground spell here (put the right reagents into an empty bag, close it, use the Caretaker's Key on it, open the bag and then double-click on the talisman you've just created). Now enter the Upper Catacombs.



Trolls are best avoided when you first set out – but later on you'll be strong enough to deal with them.



## The Upper Catacombs

Make your way to the place marked on the map of the catacombs and you'll fall through the floor into the tombs of the necromancers. Examine the barrels and then concentrate on creating the six Dead Speak spells.



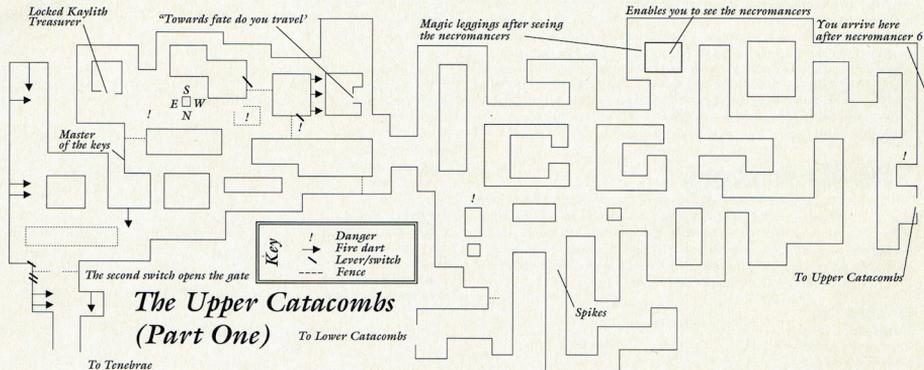
Use the Death Mask spell to walk safely past the nastiest of baddies.

There's nothing like a good ceremonial sacrifice to show you just what kind of place this Pagan is. At least the old Necromancer was quite happy to go through with it.

## The Necromancers

This section of the game is relatively simple – you visit a dead necromancer, speak to him with the Dead Speak spell and he teaches you a new spell which you normally need to reach the next necromancer.

**Necromancer One** Using the map, make your way to the first necromancer's resting place, cast Dead Speak and learn the Death Mask spell



The first of the necromancers. Finding these ancient corpses is quite easy really, just be sure to use the right spells at the right moment, as we've explained.

from him. Once you've finished talking, prepare the spell.

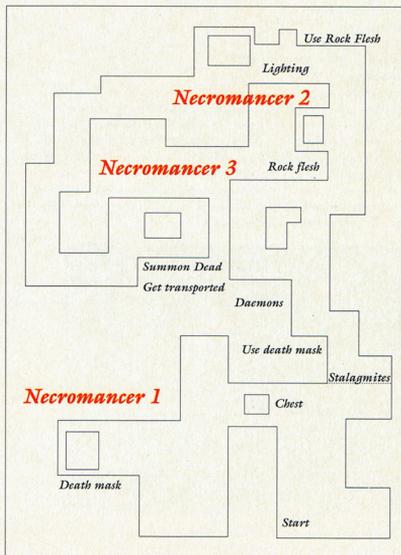
**Necromancer Two** The row of stalagmites blocking your path should now have disappeared. Follow the map, and when the daemons appear, cast the Death Mask spell and run past them – they'll ignore you because of the spell.

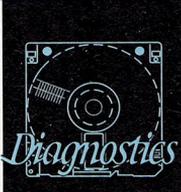
Dead Speak with the second necromancer and learn the Rock Flesh spell. Once again, when you've finished talking to him, prepare the spell.

**Necromancer Three** Follow the map, cast Rock Flesh at the indicated point, then run west along the tunnel – the spell protects you from the lightning bolts. Follow the map around to the third necromancer, Dead Speak with him and learn the Summon Dead spell. You'll now be magically transported to another area.

**Necromancer Four** Searching the skeletons and bodies that litter the ground here should restock your supply of reagents. Pass through the zappers and then jump the gap. If you stay here you'll have to fight ghouls and skeletons, and although you're obviously meant to cast the Summon Dead spell here, it doesn't really help. Instead, just peg it past the bad guys and find the necromancer. Learn the Grant Peace spell, and you'll be transported to a safe area where you can rest and pick up some stuff. When you're done, enter the tent with the stone chair in it and you'll be transported to yet another area

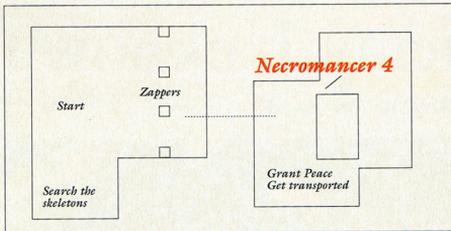
**Necromancer Five** Head south, cross the water and you'll find a raised platform. Climb on top of it, but be careful, because the middle section





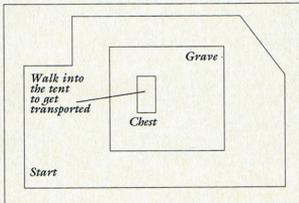
## To Be Continued...

That's all that there's space for now, but next month you'll help overthrow the evil Mordaa, learn even more magic and meet a few Titans – and that's just for starters. See you then...

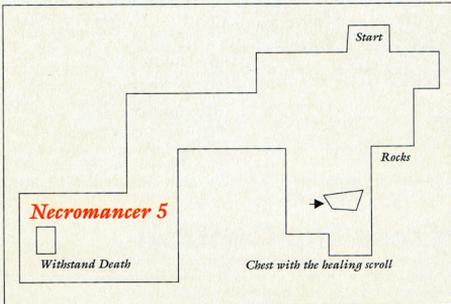
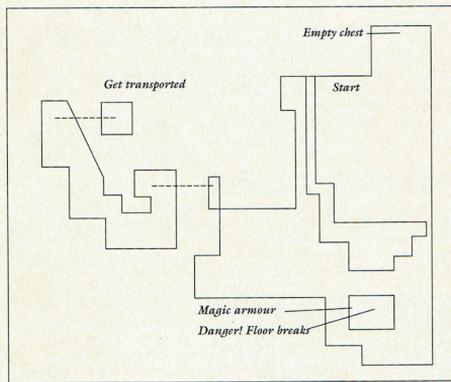


collapses if you walk on it. Get the magical armour and then walk to the northwest to the lava. Jump across (see the map), follow the path to a gap and then leap. You'll now be transported.

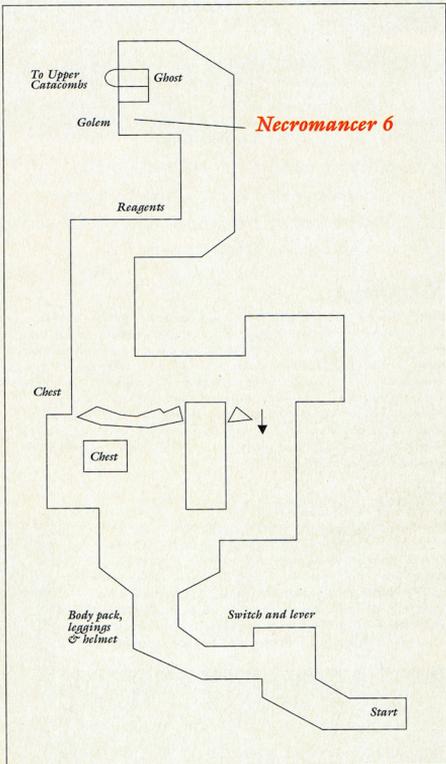
Go south and west, Dead Speak with the fifth necromancer and then learn the Withstand Death spell. The screen will fade out and you'll be transported again.



**Necromancer Six** Prepare a couple of Grant Peace spells – they'll come in handy. Follow the map, and eventually you'll come to the resting place of Galious, the first ever necromancer. Open the door, enter the room and Dead Speak with him. He'll teach you the Summon Golem spell and give you more information. Go up the stairs and you'll appear in the Upper Catacombs.



Lithos The Mountain King, Titan of Earth, is just one of the new friends you'll be meeting in the August issue – so don't miss out on the next part of our exclusive Pagan solution.



## Pagan: Ultima VIII

Origin's *Pagan: Ultima VIII* was reviewed in the May issue of *PC Gamer*, scored 93% and earned itself one of our special Recommended awards, which we only bestow on games of particular merit. It costs £44.99.



# UFO: Enemy Unknown

A Beginner's Guide To Saving The Earth

Part 2



(Above) Always use at least two soldiers when you're exploring buildings – to ensure no aliens sneak past.



(Right) This is the kind of situation you want to avoid – never send a single soldier into a UFO without back-up.

After last month's in-depth look at the strategic side of MicroProse's superb game, it's time to concentrate on dealing with the aliens up close. In other words...

## Tactics

Being able to successfully complete the ground combat missions in *UFO: Enemy Unknown* is just as important as managing the strategy side of things. For a start, ground combat missions have a large influence on your monthly rating, and thus directly affect your funding. In addition, only by capturing living aliens can you learn enough about the enemy to finish the game, and only by having highly experienced troops will you be able to succeed in the final missions. Unfortunately, due to the virtually limitless number of different situations that can arise, it's much harder to give specific advice on this area of play. The following, then, are simply broad guidelines that cover the main aspects of combat missions.

## Play Safe

The single most important thing to remember is, quite simply, to keep your troops alive at all costs. I can't stress this basic idea enough – only by gaining experience will your troops be good enough for the later missions, and only by staying alive can they gain the necessary experience. The safety of your troops should therefore always be uppermost in your mind, especially during the early missions when they're weak and unprotected. Always think about protecting your squad from enemy fire before anything else.

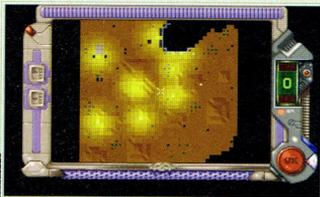


Although it's impossible to guarantee that your troops won't get shot, there are several ways you can lessen the risks.

- Always take your time when exploring unexplored territory. Never move a soldier into a new area when they don't have enough Time Units left to move out of it. (Never step through a door or around a corner unless your soldier has enough time to shoot and step back out of trouble, for example.)
- Try to move your troops in pairs, and finish their moves facing in different directions, so that aliens cannot sneak up on them.
- Space your troops out. If your forces are clumped together a rogue shot may hit an innocent bystander. Also, soldiers standing in a group can interfere with each others' lines of fire.
- Use whatever cover is available to hide your troops and protect them from fire. Try not to leave people standing out in the open – they'll be easy targets.

## Be Methodical

It's very important that you plan ahead and explore the battlefield carefully. There's nothing worse than not being able to find the last alien – you know he's out there somewhere, but you don't know exactly *where*. With this in mind, use the overhead map and look at where your transport has landed in relation to the rest of the map, then sweep your squad out across it slowly. Always explore



(Above) An example of the kind of 'sweep' you should make across the area of the mission.

(Left) Remember to exploit high vantage points.

every area carefully as you go, so as not to miss any aliens. This way you can be fairly confident that no aliens will creep in from 'behind' your squad, between your soldiers and the transport. This will also enable you to spot and deal with all the aliens in one sweep, and prevent you from missing any. When dealing with the larger UFOs it's best to cover the exits and use the rest of your soldiers to sweep the surrounding area. Once you've dealt with any aliens outside, you can then use your entire squad to explore the UFO itself. Remember, it's best

to take things slowly and extremely carefully – it not only lessens the risks, but it saves you time in the long run.

## Know The Controls

Be sure that you use the game's controls properly. This sounds stupidly obvious, but it's surprisingly easy to forget about some of the more useful functions while actually playing, so bear the following in mind:

- Get into the habit of using the Reserve Time Units buttons so that your



This is the way to deploy your squad – spread out and cover all the surrounding terrain.

soldiers are ready for Opportunity Fire. This can often make the difference between life and death, especially in the cramped confines of a UFO or a town.

- Remember that kneeling increases your soldiers chance of hitting by a small amount. It also makes them a smaller target. Be careful, though, because if there are walls or fences between the soldier and his target, kneeling often breaks your line of sight.
- Use the correct mode of fire for the situation. With autofire-capable weapons, such as laser rifles, use autofire at any range up to about a screen's width, and aim shots beyond that. Only use snap shots when you don't have enough Time Units left for the other modes. With single-shot weapons, especially those with severely limited ammo (such as small launchers), always use aimed fire unless you are at very short range – every shot counts with weapons like this, so it's important to maximise your chances of hitting.

## Know The Battlefield

There are several types of mission you'll encounter in *UFO*, some of which can occur on different terrains. In order of difficulty, they are:

- **Crash Sites** The most common type of mission, and normally the easiest. The best thing about crash sites is that you never have to attempt one at night. As the crash site remains 'active' for at least 24 hours, simply wait until daylight before landing your transport.
- **Ground Assaults** These vary in difficulty depending on the size of the UFO and the time of day. Since the aliens rarely hang around for too long, you have little control over the lighting conditions – you just have to go in there and do your best. However, the benefits from capturing an undamaged UFO are considerable – they're the best source of Elerium-115, for a start. Always send an interceptor to hover over the landed UFO while your transport makes its way to the site, so that if it takes off in the meantime you can immediately shoot it down.
- **Terror Sites** Thankfully, these are rare. With so many buildings, alleys and other hiding places, just finding the aliens can be a nightmare. These are also the only missions where you're under considerable time pressure – you have to stop the aliens as quickly as possible in order to save the local inhabitants – which can be a real pain. In addition, the sites are only active for a short period of time, so you have little choice as to the time of day.



Always approach UFOs with caution – aliens often hide out close by, and then move around behind your soldiers as they enter the ship. Don't go in until you've checked outside first.

However, it's vitally important to stop terror sites wherever they occur, because they have a significant effect on your monthly rating.

- **Base Defence** Once again, these are rare, but if the aliens do discover one of your places, expect several attacks – when they find a base they don't forget where it is. However, if you have designed your bases with defence in mind (see last issue), they shouldn't be too vulnerable. Just be sure to station troops at all your bases.
- **Alien Bases** These are very dangerous, but can really boost your monthly rating. They also provide you with Alien Commanders (which you must capture if you want to complete the game).

## Capture Aliens

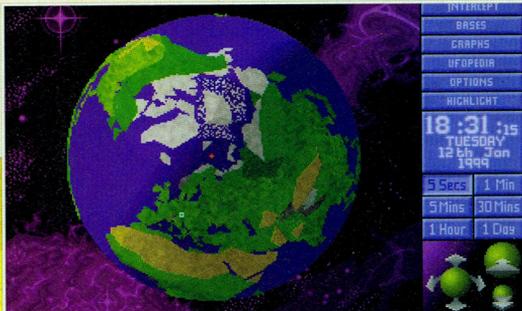
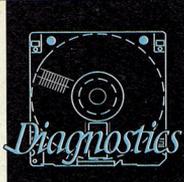
To successfully complete *UFO*, you must capture living aliens and research them. There are several 'ranks' within the various major alien races, and each provides different information:

- **Alien Soldiers** The most common form of alien. Researching Soldiers simply gives you more information about the race and their motivations – a kind of supplement to the information you glean from alien autopsies.
- **Alien Medics** These often give you more information about aliens you have yet to research.
- **Alien Engineers** Each engineer you capture gives you detailed information about one of the various types of UFO used by the aliens.
- **Alien Navigators** Similar to engineers, except each navigator gives you detailed information about a specific type of mission.
- **Alien Leaders/Commanders** These are the aliens that enable you to finish the game. By researching captured leaders and commanders, you not only learn about the Hyperwave Decoder and Psi Lab base facilities, but gradually uncover the truth behind the alien attacks and the means by which you can take the fight to the enemy, dealing with the menace once and for all.

The simplest way to subdue aliens is by using the **small launcher**. The **stun bomb** this weapon fires is explosive and covers a fairly large area, but is harmless to your own troops, provided they're wearing effective armour (otherwise you'll just knock them out). In addition, you can use the **stun sticks**, but these require you to get up close to the alien, which is dangerous, or the **psi amp**, once you've got psionically trained troops.

You'll only find the high rank aliens inside alien bases or the larger UFOs.

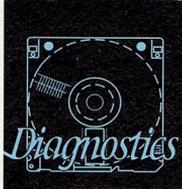
They normally stay in the control room or bridge area. If you want to be sure of what you're capturing, use the mind probe on the target.



## UFO: Enemy Unknown

MicroProse's excellent *UFO: Enemy Unknown* was reviewed in the April issue of *PC Gamer*, where it scored 91% and earned one of our special Recommended awards. It costs £44.99.





# Beneath A Steel Sky

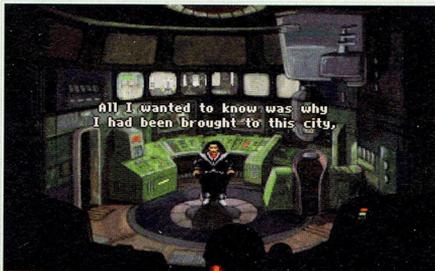
Union City in all its smoggy, gloomy and oppressive glory, seen during the intro sequence as the police chopper crashes. Dave Gibbons drew this, you know.

*After countless delays, Revolution's latest game (PCG 1: 91%, £39.99) finally came out only a couple of months ago. The good news is that it's still a top quality graphic adventure. The bad news is that a lot of people seem to be having trouble with it – so we thought the least we could do is print this splendid complete solution from Scott McCarthy of West Glamorgan, who wins himself his choice of game from the plethora on offer in Shop-O-Matic (page 110).*



## Escaping From Security

After the intro sequence, you'll find yourself stuck on a steel walkway. Pick up the metal rung from the left of the screen and use it on the door to the right. After a short series of events, you'll end up outside the fire exit. Open the door and go back in. Now walk down the stairs and go through the door to the right. Use the circuit board with the middle piece of junk to activate your robotic pal Joey. Examine the transporter robot and then go to the room on the right. Talk to Hobbins and ask him what's wrong with the robot, then go back to the left and ask Joey to fix it. He may take some persuading, so keep pestering him until he gives in. Once you've done this, stand on the lift to set off the alarm, then quickly enter the room to the right and open the cupboard. Take the spanner and go back to the left, then, when the lift leaves, jump down the hole. You'll now be inside the furnace room. Examine the slot and the door. Ask Joey if he can open the door. Reich will appear. Once you've killed Reich, examine his corpse to obtain his shades and his ID card. Go through the door to reach the walkways. Travel one screen to the right to find the lift and the entrance to the pipe factory. Enter the factory.



It all gets very cyberpunk as you interface with the computer near the end of the game.

## The Pipe Factory

Talk to the girl about everything until Lamb shows up and transfers her. When Lamb asks you what you are doing here, tell him you're doing routine inspection and he should let you stay. Go to the right and walk into the storeroom to the back. The alarm will go off and you will be told that only robots can enter, so ask Joey to search the room for you. While Joey is doing this, use the spanner with the cogs to jam them. Once you've stopped production, pick up the spanner and ask Joey what he found in the storeroom – he will tell you about a fusebox. Go to the left and you'll see that the robot has stopped working. Use the spanner on the robot and ask Joey if he wants a new shell. Now go back to the right and ask Joey to knock out the fusebox. You can watch through the window if you want. Once the fuses are out, enter the storeroom. Now open the gangway and pick up the putty from underneath it. Give the putty to Joey for analysis and he'll tell you it's plastic explosive. Ignore the key and the WD40 – they are both red herrings. Leave the storeroom and you will be searched (don't worry about losing the shades – you don't need them). Leave the pipe factory and walk to the far left of the walkway. Now go through the door to the left to enter the steam control room.



## The Steam Control Room

To the right of the screen you'll find two buttons.

Loosen both of them with

Struck by a bit of the old Indiana Jones?

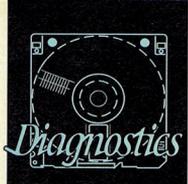
the spanner and then ask Joey to press the button on the right. Time your actions carefully, and press the button on the left at the same time. This will blow the pipe

above you and send the old man running for Hobbins. While he's gone, turn off the red switch to the left and pick up the light bulb. Use the putty on the light socket and turn on the switch again to blow open the door. Put both switches in the down position to turn the lift back on, then leave the room and go back to the lift. Before using it, examine the red cable to the right and ask Joey to melt through it with his welder. Now use your ID card to open the lift and go down to the middle level.

## The Middle Level

Pick up the cable and walk left through the archway. Use your ID card with the door to the left and enter the apartment. Move the pillow and pick up the magazine. Leave the apartment and head back to the lift (but continue to the right). Here you'll find an insurance firm and travel agents. Enter the travel





## LINC-SPACE (yes, again)

You'll now find two new items in your inventory, one marked Blind and the other marked Playback. Go to the room to the right and use Blind on the eye. Quickly go through the door in the middle of the screen before

the eye wakes up. Ignore the guard and walk through middle door. Use Playback with the well to view a recorded message from Anita. She'll tell you about a man called Eduardo, who you must find on the ground level (he's the gardener by Mrs Piermont's apartment). She also tells you about a subway leading to LINC. Log off from LINC-SPACE and go back to ground level to speak to Eduardo.

## Ground Level (again)



The higher you go, the grottier it gets in the city of the future. Natch.

Ask Eduardo about the blue flowers. He'll tell you that they are dandelions. Now talk to the boy next to him and ask him about the game he is playing. Keep talking to him about games until he tells you about the dandelion game. He'll then tell you that dandelions are yellow not blue. Talk to Eduardo

again and tell him of his mistake. He will then admit that he is not really a gardener. Talk to him about Anita, and keep pestering him until he tells you about

a virus hidden inside LINC-SPACE. Walk around the pond until you find an old shed. Examine the door and you'll find it's got an old-fashioned lock. Use your ID card with the lock to open the door, then enter and take the secateurs. Now go back to the St James Club. The door to the courtroom should be open. Go in for a cross between Fawtly Towers and LA Law. Say anything you like – it makes no difference to the outcome of events. Leave the courtroom and enter the St James Club.

## Getting To The Subway

The band should have stopped playing inside the club. Use the jukebox and select the song called 'You Search, But Find Nothing.' Before long, the record will stick and Colston will get out of his seat to give the machine a good kicking. While he's gone, take his glass from the table and go to Burke's Bio Surgery. Give the glass to Burke to obtain Colston's finger prints. Go back to the club and use the metal plate next to the door at the back. You are now in the cellar. Use the metal bar with the large crate, pick up the lid and use it with the small box that's also in the room. Stand on the small box and use the metal bar with the grating. Now use the secateurs to cut away at the grating. Climb through to reach the subway.

## The Subway

Walk to the right and follow the track where it turns to the left. Stop when you get to the room with the hole in the wall. Look carefully to the left of the hole and you'll find a socket. Use the light bulb with the socket. The monster behind the hole won't hurt you anymore. Walk to the right. Here you'll find an old station. It's a good idea to save the game here. Go to the next room and, as soon as you can, run towards the exit at the other end – otherwise the roof will collapse on top of you (that's why it's a good idea to save the game beforehand). To open the door to the right, rupture one of the veins. Find the plaster and use the metal bar on it. Now use the spanner to knock out a brick. Take the brick, then use the metal bar with the swelling and bash it in with the brick. Pick up the metal bar. Before long, a medical robot will appear. Now enter the door.

## LINC Central

Look through the grating and you'll see a room with an android looking after some android babies. Follow the robot back to his recharging point. Once he is charging, find the expansion port on his back and plug in Joey's card. Ask Joey to inspect the room to the left. When he comes back, ask him what he found. Ask him to tell you about the feeding tank. He will tell you about a tap that can be opened to drain it away – ask Joey to open this tap. Go back to the door you came through initially, and go through the door to the back. You are now in the furnace room. Use the computer at the back of the room and reduce the temperature. Quickly stand on the iris-style covering and pull the handle to loosen the grating. Go back upstairs and look through the grating again. There

should now be a green puddle on the floor. Go back to the recharge room and enter the room to the left. The android will now notice the puddle, step on the grating and fall into the furnace. Walk around to the back and into the other half of the room. Walk through the open door to the right. Use the computer by the door to open the main door. Walk back out. A guard will find you. Joey will try to help, but he'll get smashed up (although he will kill the guard before disintegrating). Take his LINC card and use it with the LINC-SPACE terminal in the other room.

## LINC-SPACE (for the very last time, we promise)

You'll now find a new item, marked Divine Wrath, in your inventory. Go to the room with the Knight, remembering to use Blind on the eye. Use Divine Wrath on the Knight to kill him, then log off and log back on with Anita's card. You'll have to be as fast as you can here – use Blind with the eye in this room, then quickly go to the right. Blind the eye again, and go through the door in the middle. Go through the door in the middle again and go past the hologram projector into the room with the tuning fork. If you are quick enough, the eye should still be blind and you will be able to pick up the tuning fork. Go back to the room where the Knight used to be and enter the room on the right. Use the tuning fork with the crystal, pick up the virus and log off.

## Poisoning The Food Supply

Go left and examine the robot to retrieve Joey's circuit board. Enter the large door to the right and use Anita's card with the computer to give it the virus. Pick up the tongs to the right of the screen and use them with the tissue samples. Afterwards, use the tongs (holding a tissue sample) with the vat of liquid nitrogen. Now go to the room on the right, walk over to the middle android and open its cabinet. Insert Joey's card into the expansion slot and use the monitor to download Joey's character. Select the start up program and Joey will come back to life (as Ken). Go to the room on the right and ask Ken to push his hand against the panel to the right. When he does so, push your hand against the panel to the left. The door will open, but Ken will get stuck. Don't worry, he'll free himself later. Walk through the door and to the end of the pipe, then use the cable with the pipe connector. Climb down the metal rungs and drop the tongs into the orifice. A door will open to the left. Once again, it's best to save here as the following section requires fast reflexes. Grab the cable and swing into the room.

## LINC

Inside you'll find your father – soon he'll be rejected by LINC. As soon as Ken shows up, ask him to sit in the chair. Now just sit back and watch the mysteries of Union City and Linc reveal themselves...



Comedy hilarity shenanigans ahoj when interacting with Union City officials. It's like a cross between Blade Runner and Robin's Nest. Except Robin's Nest was funnier. A lot funnier, in fact – which just goes to show you how sad the humour is in this game...

## Beneath A Steel Sky

Virgin's *Beneath A Steel Sky* costs £39.99 and was reviewed in the December issue of *PC Gamer*, where it earned 91% and was awarded one of our special Recommended accolades.



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For a copy of the Competition Rules please write to Sue Campbell at Psygnosis Ltd, South Harrington Building, Sefton Street, Liverpool, L3 4BQ.

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Bath, Avon BA1 2BW.

## Your gameplay queries answered by the experts

### Alone In The Dark

**Q** *Alone In The Dark* is driving me nuts. I can't kill the spiders, the thing in the cellar tunnel keeps eating me alive and what's the key in the ballroom for? I've spent countless hours trying to figure it all out. I presume there's an application for each item in the house? Are there any red herrings? What's the pot of human flesh for? How do I kill the thing in the bathroom? What's the ultimate goal of the game?

M V Finnegan, Cheshire

**A** *Right. First of all, the point of the game is to escape from the house – which, as you know, isn't as easy as it sounds. Second, there are several red herrings and dead ends to watch out for. The trick is finding out what's useful and what's not. As to your individual problems, you can't kill the spiders. You just have to avoid them.*

*You can avoid the worm in the cellar tunnel by turning right at the fork. Don't bump into the sharp rock but go quickly right, select the pistol and fire twice at the flying creature (this takes some practice). Continue, but don't leave the hole because the worm will soon show up again. As*

*soon as you see it, quickly (and I mean quickly) retrace your steps. When you reach the sharp rock, you'll see a new entrance.*

*The key in the ballroom opens a chest just past the worm. If the pot of human flesh is the 'soup' in the kitchen, you can put it on the table in the dining room to distract the five zombies. Finally, you can't kill the thing in the bathroom, only drive it back with your sword.*

### The Secret Of Monkey Island 2

**Q** I'm currently playing the brilliant *Monkey Island 2* – but I've unfortunately come to an impasse. Could you please, with your infinite wisdom, explain how to get the map piece from Rum Roger's cottage? I've managed to beat Rum Rogers at the drinking competition, but when I pull the brick, Guybrush falls through the trapdoor and onto the beach without picking up the map piece from the skeleton.

*How do I get Guybrush back into the room when he argues he is too short to go through the hole from the beach? Your expertise would be much appreciated as I would like to complete the game before my hair-pulling frustration leads to wig wearing.*

Denise Norton, Bath

**A** *Basically, you're pulling the wrong brick. Once you've won the drinking contest, walk to the top of the room and find the mirror frame hanging on the wall. Take the mirror from the antiques shop and use it with the frame to mount it inside said frame. Walk over to the bottom-right corner of the*



*room, to the front door, and open the window to the right. Go out through the door and walk over to the ugly statue. Now put the telescope from the big tree in the statue's hand. A beam of sunlight will shine through the telescope, through the open window, bounce off the mirror and end up shining on a single brick in the wall on the far left of the room. Remember the brick. The light will now stop shining and you'll go over and pick up the telescope once it falls to the ground.*

*Go back into the house, pull the indicated brick and fall through the trapdoor into the basement room with the map fragment. Pulling any other brick will dump you out on the beach.*

### Star Trek: 25th Anniversary

**Q** I've got really far in *Star Trek: 25th Anniversary*, but in the sixth mission I can't get past the heavy-duty door in the Proxima system. I've tried all the numbers, but still haven't found any clues. Please help.

Jack Press, Weybridge

**A** *I'm not entirely sure which door you mean. Jack – there are two – so here's the solution to both of them. When you enter the system, use Uhura to hail, then talk to Spock. Consult the computer and read about Proxima, Proxetry, Lucra, Sofs, Scythe and base numbers. Beam down to the asteroid, pick up a*



rock and walk to the door. Use Spock on the keypad to the right of the door and enter the code 10,200. Go through the door. Use the tricorder and then Spock on the computer terminal. Afterwards, use Spock on the writing on the door and then on the lock. Enter 122 and walk through.



## Pagan: Ultima VIII

**Q** I've been playing Pagan for some time now and although I'm enjoying it immensely there's one thing that's bothering me. Which magical weapon is the most powerful? So far I've found five – including The Hammer Of Strength, The Deceiver, The Slayer, The Scimitar Of Kumash-Gor and The Protector – and I'm having trouble deciding what to use and what to throw away. Help!

Adrian Collop, Lancaster



**A** Generally, the further into the game you go, the more powerful the weapon you'll find. Of the weapons you have, the Hammer Of Strength is the weakest. Both The Deceiver and Protector increase your armour class, although The Protector is the more powerful of the two. The Scimitar Of Kumash-Gor is just a good all-round weapon. The Slayer acts as a pretty normal mace, but after every 20 hits can kill an opponent instantly. The most powerful weapon in the game is The Flame Sting, which you can find on Daemon Crag, home of the Sorcerers.

## Simon The Sorcerer

**Q** I've been playing this game for a while now, but recently I got stuck. How do you get out of the room in the goblin cave after you've climbed inside the box outside the shop? I've been stuck here for ages. Help!

Stuart Windham, Rochester

**A** First off, look at the boxes to get your spell book back. Now peer inside. You'll find a piece of paper. Use the paper with the door. Just beside you there should be a rat bone. Pick it up and use it with the lock. The key now falls onto the paper on the other side of the door. Pull the paper to bring it – and the key – within reach. Now simply open the door with the key you've just retrieved.

## Leisure Suit Larry 6

**Q** Leisure Suit Larry 6 is causing me grief, so I was wondering if you could help me out? I've managed to get to Gammie, but I can't get any further. I think I have to fix the cellulite sucker machine in the health spa, but I don't know how to do it.

Jon Candell, York

**A** You're right – you do need to fix the cellulite sucker. First, go to the dining room and search the ice in the middle of the buffet. You'll find an orange. Now search the garbage cans in the kitchen and take the tin of lard. Visit the gym and take the rubber belt off the slimming machine. Go to the health spa's cellulite sucker machine and use the lard on the piston.

Now use the rubber on the broken pipe and the wrench with the large canister. Take the filter from the large canister and wash it in the kitchen sink. Put the filter back, tighten the bolts and test out the machine. If it works, go and tell Gammie

then follow her there. When she's lying down, attach the small tubes to her thighs and start the machine. Give her the orange. To finish, give Gammie a frozen hand towel (use the sink and the fridge in the kitchen) and some mineral water (on a tray of food to the right of the health spa). **PCG**



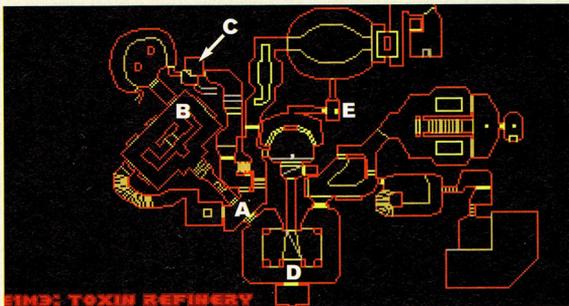
## Doom (Again)

In last month's Emergency 911 we showed you how to reach the secret level on the first world of Doom, the Military Base. Unfortunately, some evil publishing gremlins got stuck in the works and the map that went with the directions had the labels all messed up.

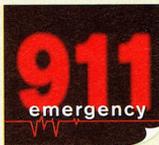
Here, then, is the correctly labelled map. To get to the Military Base, go to level three of Knee Deep In The Dead. After killing all the baddies in the more accessible areas, run (hold

down Shift) from point A to B and you'll see that part of the wall has lowered. Stand on that and press Space to open a secret door. Kill the baddies, then run down the toxic waste-filled passage (C). Throw the switch on the platform, and then open the secret door (this is the discoloured area of the wall).

When you now return to point D, a bridge should have appeared. Walk over it to open a secret door. Kill the baddies and make your way to point E. This is the exit that finishes the level and leads to the Military Base. (I promise it'll work for you this time...)



The 911 posse are even now gnashing at the bit, eagerly anticipating your letters, so get writing. The address is: Emergency 911, PC Gamer, Future Publishing Ltd., Bath, Avon BA1 2BW.



# DO IT ALL

Create Your Ideal PC...

You can buy plenty of good off-the-peg PCs, but to have one tailor-made doesn't cost that much more and it's the only way to get exactly the spec you want.

BY SIMON WILLIAMS

Buying a PC for games is no easy task. Although many new machines, particularly those geared up for Multimedia, are more than capable of the task, few are designed specifically with games in mind. However, there is one way of buying a PC which is perfect for your gaming needs – and that's to design or build it yourself. By selecting all the components, you can make sure the machine has the right processor, enough memory, just the soundcard and CD-ROM drive you need, and even the right case. It may not work out cheaper, but at least you'll know exactly what you've got when you finish it.

You need to consider each element of your PC separately, and then how the different components will react to each other once you start connecting them up. The system board must be capable of taking the processor you want and memory modules of the size and capacity you require, for example.

## Processor

This is at the heart of your system, so obviously it's the most important component you have to buy. Don't consider any processor that doesn't begin with the numbers 486. Even a 486 can be a 386 under the surface, so check it's made by Intel. A 486DX is more powerful than a 486SX, and a 486DX/2 is more powerful still. Unless you want to pay over the odds for a Pentium chip, your current best bet is a 486DX/2-66. The 66 indicates the speed it runs at (i.e. 66 Mhz).

A 486DX/2-66 will give you some degree of future-proofing, as new operating systems like Windows 4 (Chicago) and games, particularly those from the US, make greater and greater demands on the technology. Although most current games will run happily on a 486DX-33, and UK-written ones will often run on a 486SX-25, the faster DX/2-66 will mean less upgrading in the long run. Even so, always ask for a system board which is Pentium-compatible. One day soon these new chips will be worth their asking price.

## Memory

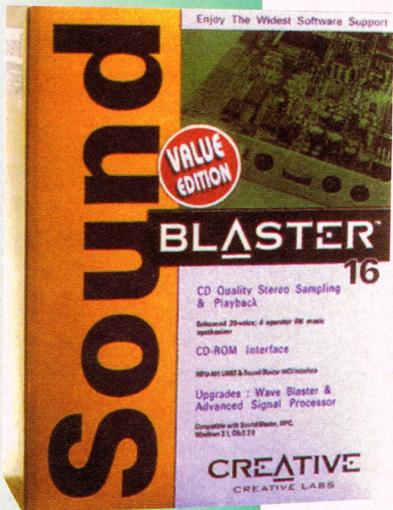
If it's a top-of-the-line machine you're after, don't settle for anything less than 8 Mb RAM. 8 Mb is increasingly becoming the minimum system requirements for real top-end games, like *Strike Commander* and many CD titles. In fact, some people are already upgrading to 16 Mb systems.

All system boards can take different memory configurations and most can use 1 Mb, 4 Mb or 16

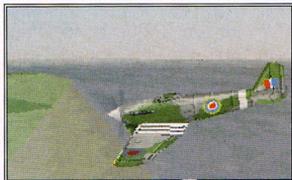
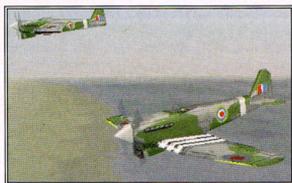
*“Always ask for a system board which is Pentium compatible. One day these chips'll be worth their price”*

Mb Single Inline Memory Modules (SIMMs). If you have 8 Mb in 1 Mb SIMMs, the chances are they'll fill up all the sockets on the system board. If you want to add another 8 Mb, you'll have to throw away four of the 1 Mb SIMMs to add two 4 Mb modules (you can't normally mix and match different capacities). If you want 8 Mb, try and buy two 4 Mb SIMMs rather than eight 1 Mb chips – there'll be less waste.

There are two sizes of SIMM, one with 30 connectors and a newer type with 72. Currently, the 30 connector is more common, but in a year or so the 72 will probably overtake it. If you think you'll add



(Above) Creative Lab's superb Soundblaster 16 remains the definitive soundtrack for discerning PC gamers the world over.



(Top) Shows you just how much better SVGA graphics are when compared to their VGA equivalents in *Overlord* (above).

more memory later, 72 connector SIMMs – and sockets on the system board – are your best bet.

## Graphics

Well, there's VGA and there's Super VGA (SVGA). The higher-resolution SVGA is rapidly becoming the standard for games and is certainly the standard for Windows graphics. There are three resolutions – the numbers of dots on the screen – 640 by 480, 800 by 600 and 1,024 by 768. Check your monitor is capable of displaying all three.

There are also three sizes of colour palette available: 256, 65,536 (known as 16-bit HighColour) and 16,777,216 colours (24-bit TrueColour). With 1 Mb of video memory on a card, you should be able to display 640 by 480 in TrueColour and 1,024 by 768 in 256 colours. If you can afford it, add a second Megabyte to the card. This will give you 800 by 600 TrueColour.

Video cards plug into the ISA bus or the newer, faster VL-Bus. Get VL for the extra speed and choose one of the Windows accelerator cards. The whole Diamond range are good buys and the most cost-effective at the moment is the Diamond Stealth 32.

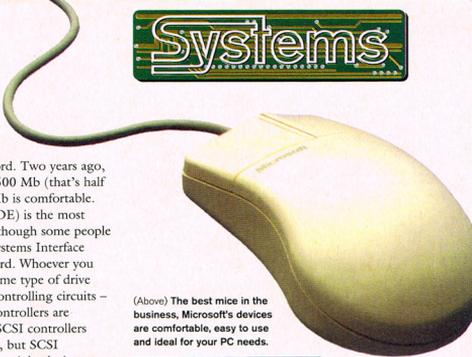
## Hard Drive

There's only one thing to say about hard drives – buy the largest capacity you can afford. Two years ago, 100 Mb was a big drive. Now 500 Mb (that's half a Gigabyte) is big, while 250 Mb is comfortable. Integrated Drive Electronics (IDE) is the most common standard for drives, although some people will tell you Small Computer Systems Interface (SCSI) drives are the way forward. Whoever you believe, you have to have the same type of drive controller – the card with the controlling circuits – as the drive you choose. IDE controllers are relatively cheap (around £20), SCSI controllers aren't (between £70 and £200), but SCSI controllers can 'daisy-chain' up to eight devices, while IDE can only manage two.

## CD-ROM

CD-ROM drives are becoming more important as time goes by. Within 12 months, much – if not most – new software will be available only on CD. You need a drive to run the discs and by far the best buy at the moment is the Panasonic CD56X, also sold in a slightly modified form by Creative Labs – the Soundblaster people. It has a powered tray (not a tacky spring-out affair) and it's also a double-speed machine (300 K/s transfer rate). Don't buy a single-speed drive because they run far too slowly for many modern applications. And remember that, like hard drives, CD-ROM drives

(Above) The best mice in the business, Microsoft's devices are comfortable, easy to use and ideal for your PC needs.



need controllers. You can buy a separate controller card or plump for a soundcard with one built in – that's probably the cheapest route.

## Monitor

There are a couple of changes happening to monitors at the moment, both of which you should be aware of before you buy. First, screens are getting flatter – the Flatter Squarer Tube (FST) technology of televisions is at last percolating through to display tubes. Those same tubes tend to be bigger – 15-inch rather than 14-inch – with the extra size providing a lot more than just an increase in the size of the screen.

The second change is the switch from analogue (turn the knob) to digital (push the button) controls. Although analogue adjustments are easier to use, digital ones have fewer moving parts and should be more reliable. Monitor prices escalate wildly as the screen size increases, though, and while there's no doubt that an outside 20 inch plus monitor has a great effect on graphical impact you're still talking big bucks here. If you're feeling particularly flush, though, have a shop around – there's nothing that's more guaranteed to blow your mates away.

## Sound And Speaker

Creative Labs' Soundblaster card remains the top standard for PC games. You'll often hear about cards being "Soundblaster compatible," as indeed many are, but, as we've said before, there's



(Left) The 15-inch CTX SVGA MPR11 monitor comes in at just under £300 and is perfect for crystal-clear gamingplay.

## Assembly Lines

One 500 word lightning course in PC assembly coming up. This isn't all you'll need to know, but it will give you a rough idea of the work and skill involved when constructing your own PC. First, you don't need to be able to solder – PCs are assembled with nothing more technical than plugs, sockets and screws. The main thing to check is that the right ones are plugged into the right places – and the right way round.

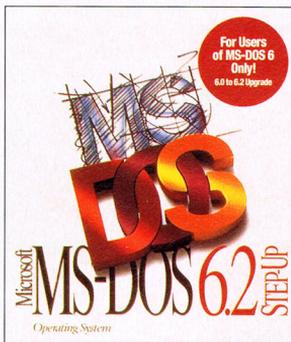
1. Open the case, usually three or more screws around the edges of the back panel – sometimes some along the sides too. The power supply unit (PSU) is normally supplied fitted at the rear right and has skeins of red, yellow, black and white wires coming from it. They supply power to the main circuit board and the drives. Now fit the little plugs for the speaker, LED indicators and switches. They'll be dangling from the front of the case (inside).

2. Add the system board by fitting little stand-off pillars, usually Nylon, through holes in the base of the case and screwing the board to the tops of them. The long plastic sockets on the system board should line up with the thin vertical metal plates in the case's back panel. Connect two of the power cables to the near identical sockets at the right rear of the system board. Check which way they go in the system board manual.

3. Fit the hard drive, CD-ROM drive and floppy drive between the metal brackets at the front right of the case, in front of the PSU. Fit one of the other power leads from the PSU to each drive as you fit them in. Also fix one of the ribbon cables to each of the sockets on the backs of the drives – each drive has a different cable, which should all be keyed so they only fit one way around, remember. As a help, the red-spotted lead on each cable goes to pin one in any socket.

4. Fit the expansion cards into the long sockets on the system board by first removing the corresponding plates in the case back panel. If either your video card or the drive controller are VL-Bus cards, they fit in the special slots with an extra socket at the front. The other ends of the ribbon cables from the drives fit in sockets on the drive controller and soundcard (in the case of the CD-ROM drive). The video card has no cables running to it, so don't worry about that.

5. Plug the monitor into the socket on the back of the video card. Plug the keyboard into the round socket on the system board, through the hole in the back panel. Plug the mouse into the corresponding socket on the Multi-I/O card. Plug the speakers into the jack sockets on the soundcard. Switch on. Fans should start to spin, lights come on, the hard drive should spin up and messages should start to appear on the monitor. Now you can install the software...



(Above) The latest and greatest version of MS-DOS remains version 6.2. Don't be conned into buying anything less...

nothing as Soundblaster compatible as a Soundblaster card itself. Creative Labs has recently released the Soundblaster 16 Value card, which offers full 16-bit, higher quality sound – don't buy the 8-bit Pro – and has an in-built Panasonic CD-ROM controller. Even better, it sells for under £80. Definitely good value for money.

Speakers are very much down to personal choice. Some come free with Soundblaster cards, but they're generally tinny and rather pathetic. The Soundblaster card can produce some stunning noise, so why filter it through a weedy tin can? The increase in performance you get when running it through a decent speaker stack is amazing, so it's well worth investing in a good set of woofers and maybe even a separate amp to drive them. On the other hand, you can simply run PC sound through the AUX input of your audio hi-fi and use your regular music speakers.

## Keyboard And Mouse

Keyboards are again a matter of personal taste – I like a clicky one; my mate Fred likes a spongy one. Fred's wrong, of course, but then so may you be. The best advice is try before you buy, if you can. Only you'll know what feels right. Advice on mice is simpler: always buy Microsoft. The company makes the best mouse available.

## Case

You can opt for a slimline, desktop, mini-tower or full tower in which to house your system. Don't buy a slimline. It's no slimmer than a desktop, albeit lower, and restricts your expansion options. Don't buy a mini-tower either. It takes up more space on your desk (you can't put the monitor on top of it). Take your pick between the other two.

(Above) For that final professional touch, splash out on the case of your choice.

## Component List

Taking our own advice (fools to the end, but there you go), we priced up a DX/2-66 system with all our favourite components. This is how it pans out:

486DX/2-55 system board, 256K cache, VL-Bus	£439.00
8 Mb memory in two by 4 Mb SIMMs	£278.00
270 Mb Western Digital IDE hard drive (AC1270)	£195.00
Panasonic CD56X CD-ROM drive	£138.00
3.5-inch floppy drive	£27.00
Diamond Stealth 32VL video adapter	£175.00
VL-Bus HD controller/Multi I/O card	£19.00
Soundblaster 16 Value soundcard (inc. CD56X controller)	£79.00
Deluxe desktop case	£49.00
15-inch CTX SVGA MPRII monitor	£298.00
Cherry G80-3000 clicky keyboard	£36.00
Microsoft mouse	£43.00
MS-DOS 6.2	£45.00
Windows for Workgroups 3.11	£90.00
	£1,911.00
	Plus VAT At 17.5% £334.42
	<b>Total £2,245.42</b>

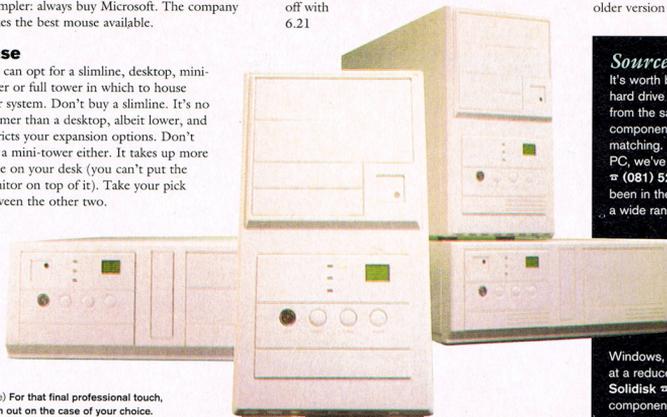
If you get Simply Computers to build a machine to this specification, it'll cost you **£2,010.42** (£1,711 plus £299.42 VAT), and you get a one-year on-site warranty for your money.

## Other Bits

There are at least two bits of software you'll also need for your perfect PC set-up, apart from the games you run, naturally. One is MS-DOS, the operating system. The latest version is MS-DOS 6.2 – don't be fobbed off with 6.0, it has dodgy disk compression. Don't be fobbed off with 6.01

either. It's had the disk compression removed. Above all, don't be fobbed off with DR DOS or Novell DOS; your supplier's just trying to save a few bucks.

When it comes to Windows, buy Windows for Workgroups 3.11, the latest and greatest. You don't need to have a network to use it and there are plenty of useful extras that you don't get in the older version of Windows (3.1). **CCC**



## Sources And Prices

It's worth buying at least the system board, hard drive controller and video adapter card from the same supplier, because these components are the most likely to need matching. In pricing the parts for our ideal PC, we've quoted from **Simply Computers** ☎ (081) 523 4020, a company which has been in the business for years and provides a wide range of different components. You'll probably find it's cheaper to buy a built-to-order system, where you specify the components and **Simply Computers** builds the machine for you, than it is to build your PC up from scratch, though. You then get DOS and

Windows, plus a 12 month on-site warranty, at a reduced price. Other suppliers, such as **Solidisk** ☎ (071) 700 0090, can also supply components and built-to-order systems.



December 1993 Volume 1, Number 1  
CODE: PGM BOO1

COVERDISKS: *Beneath A Steel Sky*, *Micro Machines*, *SubWar 2050*...  
REVIEWED: *IndyCar Racing*, *TEF*, *Frontier: Elite II*, *Kasparov's Gambit*, *Star Trek: Judgment Rites*...

March 1994 Volume 1, Number 4  
CODE: PGM BOO4

COVERDISK: *Sid & Al's Toons*.  
REVIEWED: *SimCity 2000*, *Archon Ultra*, *Evasive Action*, *Unnecessary Roughness*, *Quantum Gate*, *Genesis*, *Nomad*, *Wizkid*, *A-Train*...



January 1994 Volume 1, Number 2

CODE: PGM BOO2

COVERDISK: A superbly playable demo of *The Terminator: Rampage*.  
REVIEWED: *Sam & Max*, *SubWar 2050*, *Bloodnet*, *Rebel Alliance*, *Flight Sim Toolkit*, *The Labyrinth of Time*...



February 1994 Volume 1, Number 3  
CODE: PGM BOO3

COVERDISK: Fascinating and fun *NFL Coaches Club Football* demo.  
REVIEWED: *Alone In The Dark 2*, *Pinball Fantasies*, *Micro Machines*, *Kyrandia 2*, *Speedball 2*...

May 1994 Volume 1, Number 6  
CODE: PGM BOO6

COVERDISKS: *Good To Firm*, *Invasion Of The Space Bats*, *MVP 3-Point Basketball* and *Club Football*.  
REVIEWED: *Pacific Strike*, *Ultima VIII*, *The Elder Scrolls: Arena*...



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June 1994 Volume 1, Number 7  
CODE: PGM BOO7

COVERDISKS: *Theme Park* demo, plus *Slicks 'n' Slide*, *Star Hammer* and a *Doom Party Pack*.  
REVIEWED: *Theme Park*, *The Settlers*, *Ravenloft*, *Detroit*, *1942: The Pacific Air War*, *Dragon's Lair* and many, many more...  
TIPPED: *Ultima VIII*, *UFO: Enemy Unknown*, *Kyrandia 2* and *Gabriel Knight*...  
PREVIEWED: *Creature Shock*, *Space Simulator* and *Flight Of The Amazon Queen*.



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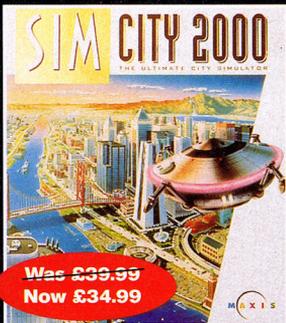
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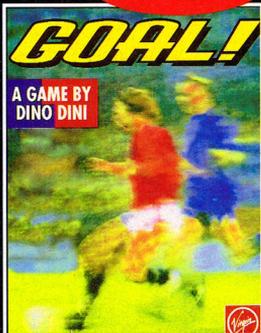
"A unique and fabulously entertaining game that earned itself 94% – the highest rating we've ever awarded a piece of software. Takes the original *SimCity* format, but updates it with stunning isometric 3D visuals and even more astonishingly intricate gameplay. Our reviewer reckoned it was, 'the most detailed and involving computer game on any computer ever' – and he was right. A seminal title."

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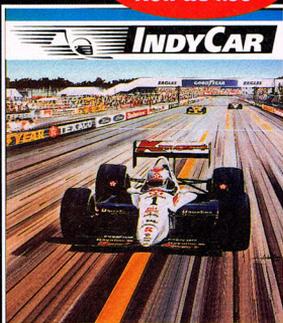
"We've seen plenty of fine sports sims on the PC, but few can rival Virgin's *Goal!* for sheer pick-up-and-play accessibility. Packed with options – you can play either horizontally or vertically, for instance – and boasting a nifty control system, it's great in both one and two-player mode. It was, of course, going to be called *Kick Off 3*, which should give you some idea of the quality."

GARY WHITTA

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"Boasting even better graphics than the best of the old driving school driving games, plus superlative gameplay, *IndyCar Racing* easily snaps pole position from its predecessor *Indianapolis 500*. And if you thought the Action Replay was good in Papyrus' first game, just wait until you see what *IndyCar Racing* has to offer... I don't think I'll ever get bored of it. This game deserves to sit high, very high, on your Must Buy list."

MATT BIELBY

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Sierra



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"The follow-up to *Red Baron*, *Aces Of The Pacific* is a flight simulation set in the Pacific during World War II (so you get Americans versus the Japanese). It's vast in scope and packed with pleasing attention to detail (take a look at the cockpit view and you'll see what I mean), but you'll need a 386, at least, to run it. A 486, however, is ideal."

GARY WHITTA

## CANNON FODDER



## Cannon Fodder

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"An action-cum-wargame with the emphasis firmly on the blood and the violence. Guide your squad of soldiers through 72 danger-packed missions set deep in enemy territory and shoot your way out against incredible odds. Beautiful eight-way scrolling, frenetic gun-toting activity – and an addictive factor that'll have you foaming at the mouth. This is the most enjoyable wargame I've ever played. It's just bloody brilliant – 93%."

GARY WHITTA

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# Win!

## *A Pen System*

*Right*, no messing about. We're getting serious now. This is, without question, the best competition prize PC Gamer or, indeed, any magazine, has ever given away. In association with Intel, those nice microchip people, we're offering a **complete Pentium PC system** as this month's stupendous first prize!

Based around the jaw-droppingly fast and utterly state-of-the-art **90 Mhz Pentium processor**, this dream set-up from Dell comes complete with a **17-inch flat-screen SVGA monitor**, **CD-ROM drive**, **500 Mb hard drive**, **16 Mb RAM**, **Soundblaster Pro** with **Multimedia stereo speakers**, plus all the other bits (3.5 inch drive, DOS 6.2, Windows, microphone, keyboard, mouse and so on) you could ever need. To buy in the shops, a system like this would set you back a staggering **£2,799 plus VAT!**

In fact, this prize is so sexy we're rather upset about having to give it away. So if you'd like to do us a favour and not enter this competition, we can raffle it off in the office and that'd be great. We'll give away something we don't want next month... *(Look, I'm sick of this. We're giving it away and that's that. - Ed)*



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## THE 'FIVE EASY PIECES' QUIZ

Because Intel's Pentium technology represents the fifth generation of PC (after the original XT, 286, 386 and 486), we've decided to go easy on you this month and give you just five questions to answer. And by a bizarre coincidence all of them have got something to do with the number five. Uncanny, eh? So get the answers right, pop 'em in the post – **PC Gamer Quiz 8, PC Gamer, Future Publishing Ltd., 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW** – and within a few weeks you could be the owner of the most powerful PC on the block. Not bad.

1. What five events comprise the modern pentathlon?
2. By what other name is Whit Sunday sometimes known?
3. Where in the USA is the Pentagon?
4. Name five members of The Magnificent Seven. Except Yul Brynner.
5. What was the name given to the 19th century group of Russian composers, founders of the nationalist school of music that drew on Russian history and literature as well as folk music. (Hey, no-one said this was going to be easy.)

Once you've got all five answers (including number five) sorted out, write 'em down on the back of a postcard/sealed envelope (or photocopy the coupon and fill that in) and then bung it to: **PC Gamer Quiz 8, PC Gamer, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW**. The closing date for entries is **Monday 25 July**.

### SMALL PRINT

The employees of Future Publishing Ltd., Dell and Intel Corporation are not allowed to enter.

The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into concerning the results. So if he says he's won it himself then that's that.

## The PC Gamer Quiz 8

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The address to send your answers to is, as always, **PC Gamer Quiz 8, Future Publishing Ltd., 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW**. The closing date is **Monday 25 July**. If your entries arrive any later you won't get put into the hat. Ever.

# next month

## “You talking to me?”



Direct from the investigative team of *PC Gamer* USA, a behind-the-scenes look at the making of Origin's *BioForge* leads a special line-up of previews in the August issue. We'll be taking the wraps off some of the biggest games of 1994 and beyond, including Westwood Studios' groundbreaking *Command and Conquer*, *Star Trek: Starfleet Academy*, *Jungle Strike* and Bullfrog's amazing *Magic Carpet*. If you want to know what's going to be B-I-G over the coming months, you can't afford to miss it.

PLUS! Much delayed but here at last – we'll be bringing you reviews of two of the year's most eagerly-awaited titles: *TIE Fighter* and *Inferno*. Also reviewed: *Harvester*, *D-Day: The Beginning Of The End*, *Tactical Manager*, *World Cup '94 Challenge*, *Wargame Construction Kit 2* and a host of others.

PLUS! PLUS! The first part of our massive *Theme Park* and *Reunion* players' guides, the continuation of the definitive *Ultima VIII* solution, all the regulars you've come to know and love and, affectionately affixed to the front cover, a fully-playable demo of one the year's biggest games.

# PC GAMER

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in steps to help you buy from any mail order company, it's worth following these very simple guidelines:

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2. Always read the small print on adverts.
3. Be wary of companies that do not include their address on their adverts. Also, avoid companies who do not answer or return your phonecalls.

4. By far the best method of payment is by using your credit card. It's the most secure and you can get a refund if you're not happy.
5. If you're paying by credit card, pay by cheque. Never send cash – and avoid using money orders.
6. Keep records. If you are buying by credit card keep a note of the time of the order and ask for an order number. When ordering anything over the telephone, always double-check the price.
7. If you are sending a cheque, keep a note of the cheque number, the date and the exact

value. Make sure you know the exact terms of sale. If you are buying by credit card, check them carefully. If anything is missing or faulty, contact the supplier immediately.

9. Always order from the most recent issue of *PC Gamer*.
10. If a problem does arise, contact the supplier in the first instance. Clearly and

politely tell them your problem. Most problems can be solved by a simple explanation of the misunderstanding that can easily be resolved with just a friendly chat.

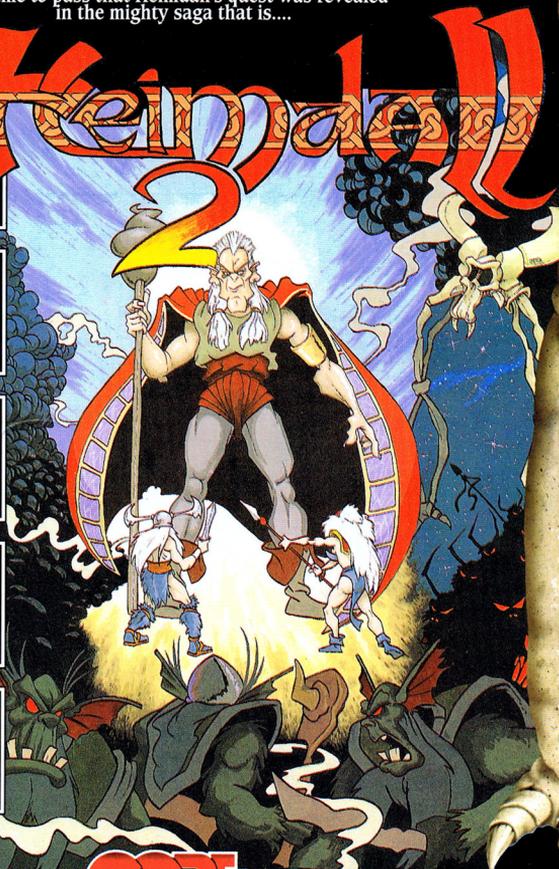
However, if you think you have a genuine grievance, contact your local Trading Standards Officer – the number is in the phonebook – and give them all the details. They should then be able to help you out.



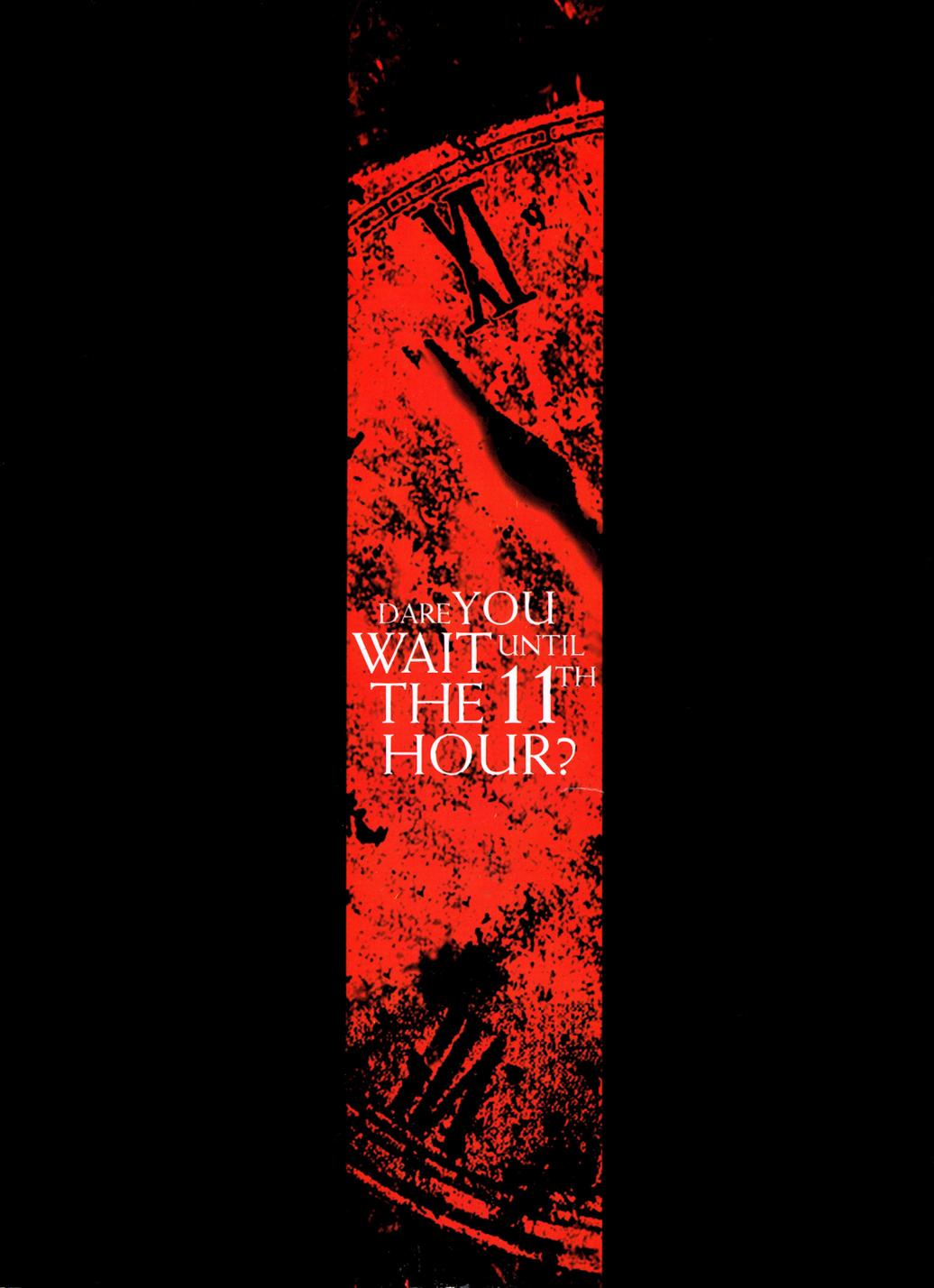
And so it was that during the age of Ragnarok, Heimdall, beloved of the Gods, came to Earth from Valhalla to find the pieces of a Sacred Amulet - the power of which would banish the evil Loki from the viking lands.

It came to pass that Heimdall's quest was revealed  
in the mighty saga that is....

# Heimdall 2



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WAIT UNTIL  
THE 11<sup>TH</sup>  
HOUR?