1st Issue

AMERICA'S ONLY AMIGA GAMES MAGAZINE

AMIGA GAME ZONE

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REVIEWED IN THIS ISSUE

PINBALL FANTASIES CD32

OSCAR AGA

HIRED GUNS

ALIEN ATTACK!

ALIEN BREED 2 LEADS THE ONSLAUGHT

SPECIAL CD32 SECTION – TEN TITLES REVIEWED INSIDE!

IT'S ASTEROIDS WITH ATTITUDE.

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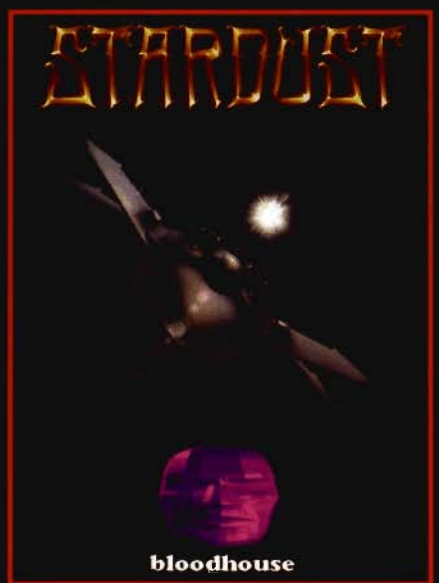
THE ONE FOR AMIGA – 91%



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The beginning...

You remember coming out of the void – a deep, dark nothingness with only the occasional flash of untamed energy to break the monotony. And then it appeared, out of The Nowhere. A not wholly unfamiliar place, but somehow... curiously different. You feel the need to explore, captivated by an unexpected vibrancy at each and every turn. This new world is filled with strange technologies and even stranger philosophies. A world of tycoons and trolls, pirates and powermongers. Of magic and might, mutants and menace. Of gods and goblins, of legends and myths. Of life and of death.

And, of course, lemmings.

WELCOME TO THE ZONE

Amiga Game Zone is written by Amiga gamers for Amiga gamers. Our goal is to give you complete coverage of every Amiga game available in the U.S. as well as to provide timely game news and tips.

Now if the word *game* is appearing a bit too frequently for your taste then maybe you should be reading a mag that does reviews of operating systems that need 16MB of RAM to run *efficiently*. But if you're starving for news and reviews of the latest Amiga games then your appetite has led you to the right place. (Would you like fries with that?)

Now some of you are feeling a little like lemmings because you've considered changing over to a different system. And why? Because you thought you heard *Taps* being blown for the Amiga. Well, we at *AGZ* are here to tell you – very clearly – that the Amiga is alive and doing very well.

Want proof? Let's start with CD^{32}. This is the best game console available on the market today. Period. Ever hear of the AGA machines? The new Amiga graphics architecture surpasses the VGA standard and still retains a reasonable price tag. And there's no need to buy sound cards and video accelerators.

Oh, you say that you know all that but without good software any computer might just as well be vaporware? You're absolutely right. Psygnosis agrees, and that's why the gaming giant is scheduled to release over 20 new Amiga titles this winter. Team 17 thinks so too and is releasing incredible games like Alien Breed 2 and Body Blows Galactic. Publishers such as Ocean, Virgin, Gremlin, and others are also gearing up to release exciting new Amiga software in the very near future.

There are also great titles available for the CD^{32} right now! The CD^{32} format allows these games to include special features like more levels and special animations not found in other versions. And the best news is that there are more CD^{32} games on the way even as we speak...er, write.

And if all that isn't enough, software publishers who have recently dropped out of the Amiga market (Maxis and Sierra) have decided to farm out their games for conversion over to our favorite computer. The Amiga dead? We think not!

So why do you feel so uninformed? The biggest reason is that most of the activity involving Amiga games occurs in Europe first, and then takes its sweet time to travel over here. Sometimes the news doesn't get here at all. Enter *Amiga Game Zone*. Because we are dedicated to Amiga gamers, our goal is to speed up the transfer process and eliminate any information gap. When you enter *The Zone*, you will find all the game info from here and abroad that you need – without the long wait. (Our shameless plug!)

Now all of this good news is not without cost. As if you didn't know, money (mostly plastic) makes the world go 'round. Like it or not, the burden to make the Amiga game market successful in America falls upon you, the consumer, so we're asking you to do a couple of important things.

First, support our advertisers and Amiga game publishers by buy, buy, buying their software. We don't want to see the Amiga go the way of the Edsel. It's simple – buy their games, and they'll make more.

And second, subscribe to *Amiga Game Zone*. In order to deliver all that we promised, your help is vital. We'd do this for free if we could, but let's be real – this can't happen unless *you* make it happen.

Now doing both of the above will not, unfortunately, bring about world peace. Doing so will, however: re-establish the Amiga as the premier game machine we all know it is; bring oodles (oodles??) of great new games to the Amiga user; and cause everyone at *Amiga Game Zone* to bow to their Amigas and chant all of our subscribers' names while simultaneously exercising to the new Cindy Crawford video.

Meet you in The Zone.

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AMIGA GAME ZONE

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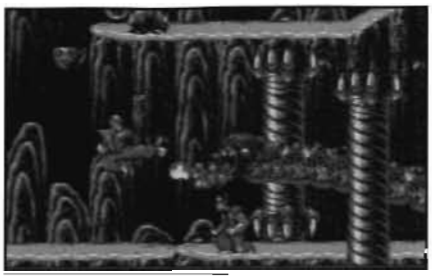
NEWS &

GAME AVALANCHE THIS WINTER FROM PSYGNOSIS



PSYGNOSIS is supporting the Amiga in a big way this winter with more than 20 Amiga game releases. No, that's not a typo – *twenty* games! Those reviewed in this issue include **Bob's Bad Day, Hired Guns**, **Prime Mover**, and **Theatre of Death**. We've also received several more that will be reviewed soon: **Combat Air Patrol** is a fast yet detailed flight simulator; **Globdule** is a game in the Putty mold; **Wiz 'N' Liz** offers extremely quick split-screen two-player platform action; and **Xmas Lemmings** contains 32 new levels all done in a holiday motif.

The Sony-owned software developer has also announced three upcoming titles from well-known programming groups. Digital Illusions, the coding team responsible for Pinball Dreams and Pinball Fantasies, is working on a game called **Benefactor. Brian the Lion** is another platform romp created by Reflections, makers of the Shadow of the Beast trilogy. It uses rotation similar to Mode 7 graphics on the SNES. The follow-up to Vivid Image's First Samurai, the excellent platform beat 'em-up, is aptly titled **Second Samurai**.

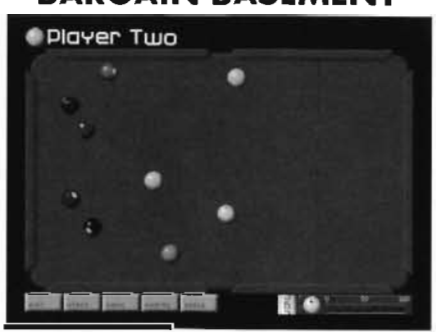
But wait! There's more! Fantastic Voyage fans will love **Microcosm**, a CD^{32} only title that offers some of the most visually impressive graphics ever on the Amiga. **Perihelion** is a fantasy role playing game with graphics in the style of Speedball 2. **Puggsy** is another sickeningly cute character with a game bearing his name. **Creepers** looks like a cross between Lemmings and Bill's Tomato Game. **Superhero** is a beat 'em-up so awful that it may not be released. Keep your fingers crossed. **World Cup '94** is Psygnosis' first attempt at a soccer game. **Innocent Until Caught** is an Indiana Jones style adventure game. Speaking of movies, **Cliffhanger, Dracula**, and **Last Action Hero** are three new licensed titles. And don't forget about **Operation Hellfire**, the sequel to Armour Geddon.

Psygnosis has been pretty busy lately, but as long as the company keeps creating new games, *Amiga Game Zone* will be happy to make room for them. ■

YES, THE NINJA from the Nth dimension is back, and this time he's brought along a few friends. **Zool 2** from Gremlin allows the player to choose between controlling Zool himself or his female counterpart Zooz. Zool and Zooz are joined by the two-headed dog Zoon to battle new villains Krool and Mental Block. The standard Amiga version is available now for around $40 and an AGA-specific version will follow soon at the same price.

Gremlin is also planning to release two sequels: **Legacy of Sorasil** (the follow-up to Hero Quest) and **K240** (Utopia 2). ■

TEAM 17 REMODELS ITS BARGAIN BASEMENT



TEAM 17 is releasing two more titles at a reduced price. **Arcade Pool** is an 8-Ball/9-Ball simulator that uses the AGA chipset. **Assassin Special Edition** is a remixed version of the original full-price title. Both will be available for around $15 each. ■

NOTES!

ASTEROIDS WITH ATTITUDE

STARDUST is the first game ever to use ray-traced animation on an unaccelerated Amiga. The action-packed blaster by Bloodhouse features 33 mind-blowing levels, four hyperspeed tunnel sequences, and two parallax missions. More than just Asteriods, it's Asteroids *with Attitude.* ■

MORE FROM CORE

UNIVERSE is the follow up to Core Design's popular icon-driven graphic adventure Curse of Enchantia. Another anxiously awaited sequel is the isometric action RPG **Heimdall 2**. Other soon to be released titles include **Bubba 'N' Stix**, **Darkmere**, **Darkstone**, and **Skeleton Krew**. ■

NEW FLIGHT SIMS TAKE OFF, EH?

FROM OUR NEIGHBOR in Canada, Seascape Software, comes the first really fun to play flight sim called **Jet Strike**. The game includes 100 linked missions, 40 aircraft, and a two-player option.

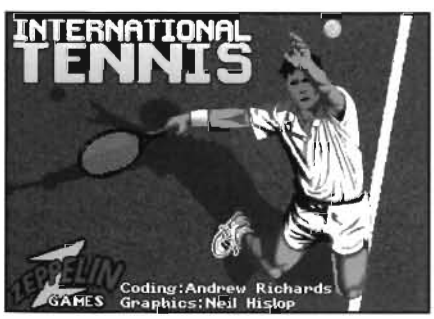
Next on the runway is **Seek and Destroy,** an overhead view helicopter blast 'em-up from Mindscape. Each mission is a challenge, but the intuitive interface allows you to get right into the action.

The last flight out is from Jaeger Software. **Fighter Duel Pro 2** sets the standard for realistic flight simulation. From the detailed aerodynamic model to the lightning fast frame rate, FD Pro 2 is unparalleled in simulating the "feel" of flying. ■

EMPIRE ANNOUNCES THREE NEW TITLES

CYBERSPACE is a new generation of science fiction role playing on the cutting edge of a future dark age. Enter the 3D world of muscle-grafted punks, jacked-in netheads, and cybernetic mercenaries. **Dreamweb** combines the elements of science fiction and adventure in a stylish and compelling game. The black mood that is evident throughout the game roars new life into the role playing genre. For World War II buffs, **Campaign 2** offers an incredibly detailed simulation of land-based warfare. You'll be impressed with its historical accuracy and the strength of its strategic elements. All three games will be available soon for $59.95 each. ■

TEN SPORTS GAMES FROM ZEPPELIN



ZEPPELIN presents **Sport Top 10**, the definitive compilation for the sports enthusiast at the price of a single game (around $45). Included in the 10 titles are Carnage, International Tennis and Ice Hockey, and American Tag-Team Wrestling. ■

GRANDSLAM ADVENTURES

YOU CAN PLAY an important role in one of Grandslam's three new adventure games. Coming soon are **Realms of Darkness**, **The 7th Sword of Mendor**, and **Reunion**, a deep space odyssey where you must be soldier, politician, and economist. ■

AMERICAN TOP 20

A real shocker this month as 688 Attack Sub has finally been torpedoed from its top spot. (Comparison based on the Amiga charts found in *Computer Gaming World* from the past year.) Will it resurface?

DECEMBER 1993

1. **Hired Guns** — Psygnosis
2. **Combat Air Patrol** — Psygnosis
3. **Tom Landry Football Deluxe** — Merit
4. **Realms of Arkania** — Sir-Tech
5. **Pinball Fantasies** — 21st Century
6. **Space Hulk** — Electronic Arts
7. **Dune 2** — Virgin
8. **Civilization** — Microprose
9. **Lemmings 2** — Psygnosis
10. **Sim Life** — Mindscape
11. **KGB** — Virgin
12. **Syndicate** — Electronic Arts
13. **Gunship 2000** — Microprose
14. **Jurassic Park AGA** — Ocean
15. **When Two Worlds War** — Impressions
16. **Pinball Fantasies AGA** — 21st Century
17. **Rules of Engagement 2** — Impressions
18. **Indiana Jones IV - Atlantis** — LucasArts
19. **Overdrive** — Infacto
20. **Global Domination** — Impressions

U.S. charts provided by American Software & Hardware Distributors.

EUROPEAN TOP 20

It's a football frenzy this month as six of the top twenty games are soccer simulations! Those crazy Brits just can't get enough of the sport!

DECEMBER 1993

1. **Cannon Fodder**
   Virgin
2. **Mortal Kombat**
   Virgin
3. **Frontier – Elite 2**
   Gametek
4. **Premier Manager 2**
   Gremlin Graphics
5. **Zool 2**
   Gremlin Graphics
6. **Micro Machines**
   Code Masters
7. **Sensible Soccer 92/93**
   Renegade/Mindscape
8. **Championship Manager 93**
   Domark
9. **Lemmings 2**
   Psygnosis
10. **Alien Breed 2**
    Team 17
11. **Syndicate**
    Electronic Arts
12. **Body Blows Galactic**
    Team 17
13. **F-117A**
    Microprose
14. **European Champions**
    Ocean
15. **Campaign 2 – Global Conflict**
    Empire
16. **F1**
    Domark
17. **Premier Manager**
    Gremlin Graphics
18. **Goal!**
    Virgin
19. **Hired Guns**
    Psygnosis
20. **Simon the Sorcerer**
    Adventure Soft

ELSPA

The UK charts are compiled by Gallup and are copyright © 1994 by the European Leisure Software Publishers Association Ltd.

THE PATRICIAN

GET RICH, get married, get elected... get **The Patrician**. In this complex and involving strategy game from ReadySoft you will become a member of the social elite and begin to trade your way to the top. The road along the way is bumpy, so you must be a skilled strategist if you plan to succeed. ■

STAR TREK 25TH

INTERPLAY lets you explore the final frontier in **Star Trek: The 25th Anniversary** if you own an A1200 and a hard drive. The game combines a realistic 3D space flight simulator with a wide variety of role playing adventures to create a gripping saga of galactic exploration. ■

RAW GOES DIRECT

RAW ENTERTAINMENT has made it easy to order from their Amiga catalog by reducing prices and selling directly to game players. If you're looking for Napoleon I, Spoils of War, Severed Heads, or the upcoming shoot 'em-up titled **Wildfire**, call them at 1-800-323-7878. ■

GET PLAYFIELD!

IF YOU'VE GROWN tired of simply *playing* games, check out PLAYFIELD! This AMOS programmers' newsletter brings you information on how to create your own games, from shoot 'em-ups to role playing adventures. Also reviewed are all the new products from the world of AMOS. ■

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Borodino	Dark Man

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FOR OUR READERS

A GUIDE TO OUR REVIEWS

Our reviewers are truly devoted. They play games until their hands get raw and blistered or until their minds go numb. (For some of us that's about five or six seconds.) Each reviewer then assigns a grade to the game he or she has so painstakingly tested.

To maintain some consistency, each grade is evaluated by the editors. Any major discrepancies between the grade and either the reviewer's text or the opinions of the editors result in debate, re-evaluation, and subsequent adjustment of the grade if needed. This discussion process usually takes place over a sausage and pepperoni pizza at about two in the morning. Take that for what you will. (No, we don't actually levitate over the pizza, I meant... oh, never mind.)

WHAT THE GRADES MEAN

A certified *Amiga Game Zone* hit and a must buy. All gamers should add this to their collection immediately. Violators will be arrested by The Zone police.

An above average game. It is well-designed, but has a few minor problems or does not have mass appeal. Fans of the genre, however, will be very pleased.

Pretty darn average. Nothing to set it apart from others like it. Players interested in this type of game may want to take a peek, though.

Below average. An accident just waiting to happen. Loaded with problems, and only for those dedicated gamers with a masochistic streak.

Forget it. Give this kind a swift three-fingered salute. Buy it only if you're curious, wealthy, and have nothing better to do with your life.

AMIGA GAME ZONE

EUROCHARTS

Listed below are the games reviewed in this issue of *Amiga Game Zone* that have been rated by at least three of the top five Euromags. Their ratings are based on a 100% scale, but frankly we can't differentiate between an 84% and an 86%. Keep in mind that the averages can be misleading since it only takes one extreme rating to distort the overall score. We feel that these charts – in addition to our own reviews – will provide you with an accurate picture of how the industry regards a game.

Game Title	Publisher	Amiga Action	Amiga Format	Amiga Power	CU Amiga	The One	Average
Alfred Chicken	Mindscape	74	62	70	70	86	72
Alien^3	Virgin	78	–	85	92	74	82
Alien Breed 2 AGA	Team 17	91	80	81	83	91	85
Beastlord	Grandslam	53	–	–	51	80	61
Blastar	Core Design	86	44	37	78	81	65
Bob's Bad Day	Psygnosis	85	79	85	80	80	82
Cardiaxx	Team 17	–	40	46	–	66	51
D/Generation CD^{32}	Mindscape	86	65	90	–	86	82
Deep Core	ICE	83	70	54	–	81	72
Donk!	Supervision	83	85	76	34	80	72
Hired Guns	Psygnosis	90	95	88	91	91	91
Morph AGA	Millenium	82	85	–	–	84	84
Nicky 2	Daze	71	72	34	58	66	60
Oscar AGA	Flair	–	67	66	–	79	71
Pinball Fantasies CD^{32}	21st Century	91	85	90	–	90	89
Prime Mover	Psygnosis	78	69	22	–	78	62
Qwak	Team 17	79	85	88	87	88	85
Robocod CD^{32}	Millenium	–	85	45	–	81	70
Space Hulk	Electronic Arts	88	77	76	87	91	84
Theatre of Death	Psygnosis	87	49	61	68	74	68
Uridium 2	Renegade	80	94	78	78	91	84
Wonderdog	Core Design	71	74	73	31	84	67
Yo! Joe!	Kompart	67	91	91	69	84	80

UNDERSTANDING THE BOX

Many items in The Box are self-explanatory. Others require a bit of clarification.

Retail Price – If a game originates from Europe, the cost will be given in both British pounds and the approximate U.S. dollar equivalent.

The Icons – The circles represent both operating system compatibility and hard drive installability. If an icon is shaded gray, the game will *not* run on computers with that particular ROM. A shaded HD icon means the game is *not* HD installable.

Compatibility – This line refers to video compatibility. Most European games use a different display standard (PAL) than North American games (NTSC). Many Euro games will not work properly in NTSC. To emulate PAL video mode, your computer requires the one meg Agnus chip and a NTSC to PAL conversion program, like Degrader 1.3 by Chris Hames.

PAL ONLY - requires PAL emulation

PAL/NTSC** - PAL emulation is highly recommended. On NTSC systems, video and/or sound problems will occur.

NTSC/PAL - no PAL emulation necessary

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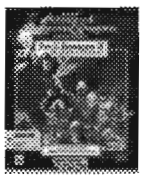

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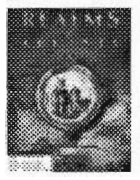

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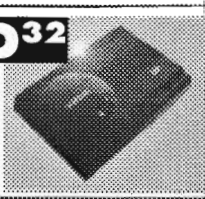

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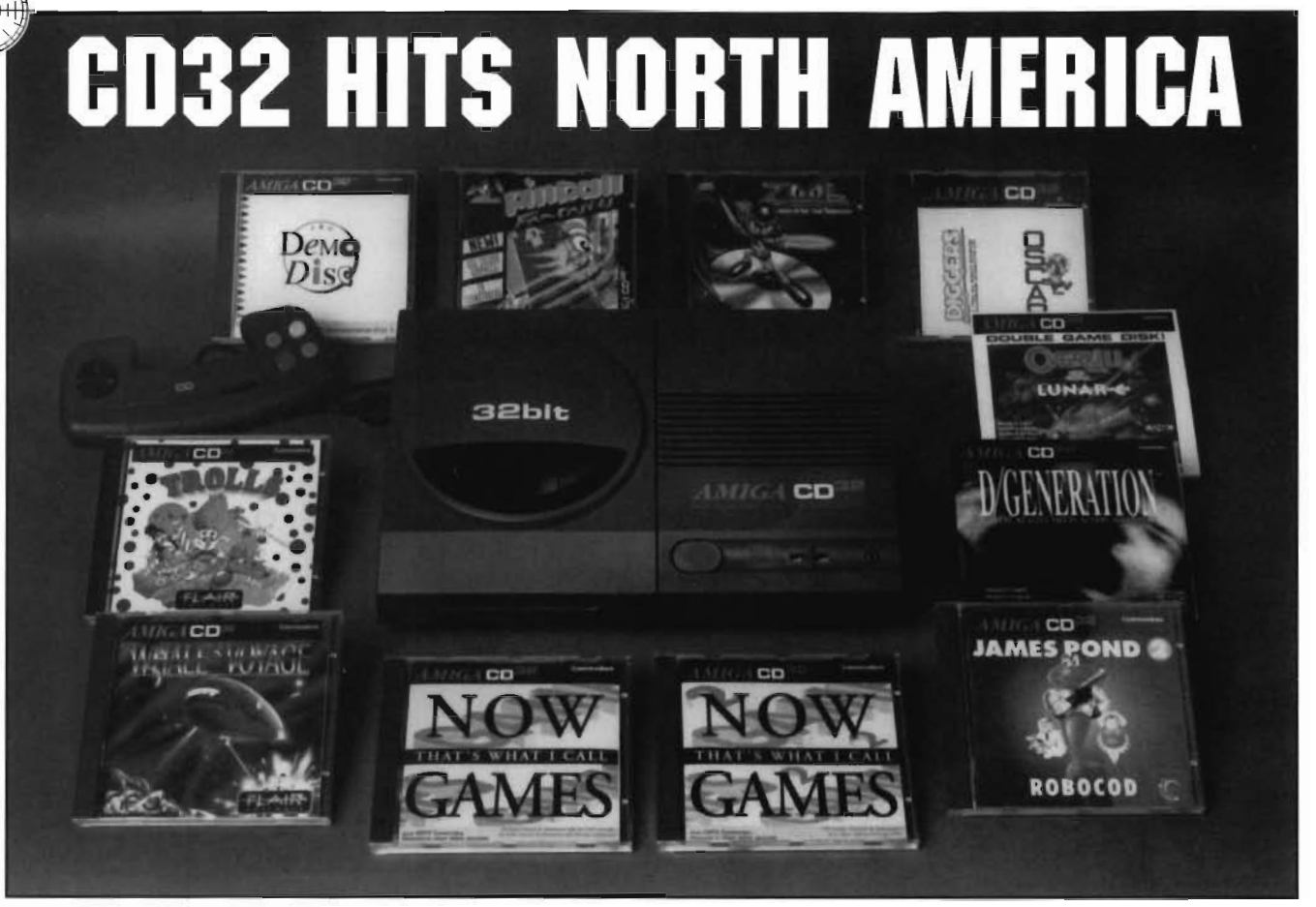
CD32 HITS NORTH AMERICA



Remember the excitement you felt when you first saw the Amiga? You were probably awestruck by a game like Defender of the Crown or Shadow of the Beast. Odds are that you can still remember the one game that hooked you into buying a machine of your own.

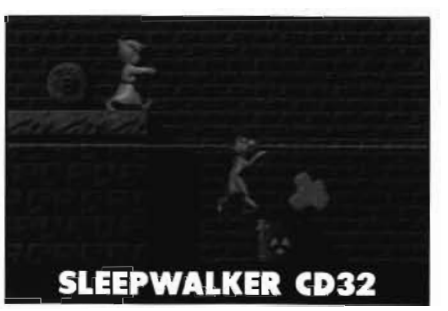
Prepare for that feeling again. With vivid 256-color graphics and crisp CD stereo sound, the new Amiga CD^{32} is definitely a stunner. Commodore is entering the CD console wars with impressive specs, a competitive price, and strong third-party software support. The 32-bit game machine is basically a compact version of the A1200 with a double-speed CD-ROM drive. It will play your current music CDs as well as CD+Graphics discs and most existing CDTV games (Sherlock Holmes and Murder Makes Strange Deadfellows being the only notable exceptions). There is also an add-on that will allow you to play the new Full Motion VideoCDs. The unique competitive advantage of the CD^{32} is that it can be expanded into a full-blown AGA computer.

The CD^{32} has several additional features that have received little attention. When a CD is not being played, the machine cues up a well-animated intro screen with background music that really grabs your attention. And since the console is actually an A1200 in disguise, you can attach a mouse to the second joystick port. By holding down both mouse buttons during a reboot, you can access a screen that will allow you to switch from NTSC to PAL video. This is extremely helpful in playing many European games, but you will have to be using a PAL-capable monitor (like the 1084) to enable this feature. The unit connects directly to any standard television, and RGB video support will be added with the computer expansion unit. The CD^{32} also has multilingual capabilities. An option screen allows you to choose from any one of 15 different languages. Many games already support this feature, including El Defensor de la Corona II, which includes five different languages on the same disc.

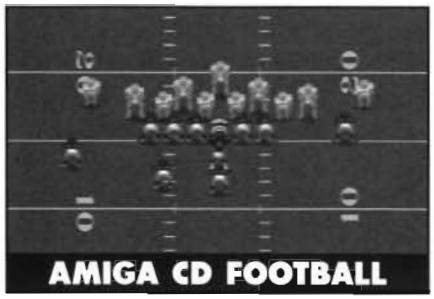
There are a few drawbacks that need to be mentioned. The CD^{32} has a very small amount of flash RAM to save game information. You may find that only a few games will fill most of this memory. The 11-button joypad controller is a step in the right direction, but it may be difficult to get used to unless you have experience with a SNES or Genesis controller. Hopefully third party manufacturers will supply multi-button joystick alternatives, because those made for the Genesis are incompatible. PhotoCD technology is not available for the machine right now, but Commodore is supposedly negotiating with Kodak to add this feature.

CD32 INTRO SCREEN

CD32 DEMO DISC


SLEEPWALKER CD32

LABYRINTH CD32


AMIGA CD FOOTBALL

LIBERATION CD32

The CD^{32} has been selling incredibly well in Europe due to Commodore's $10.5 million dollar advertising campaign. Commodore UK began shipping the CD^{32} in September, bundling it with the Oscar/Diggers CD. Stores in Europe were also provided with a CD^{32} Demo Disc which includes four playable games plus a short CDXL segment. The best part of the disc is the auto-running presentation. It makes a great pitch for the machine with animations of dinosaurs, fighter planes, and a UFO flyby of the White House. Commodore's efforts have paid off in Europe, as reports indicate that over 75,000 units were sold before Christmas. Two additional games, Dangerous Streets and Wing Commander, have recently been added to the CD^{32} bundle to stimulate even greater sales.

People in North America had their first peek at the CD^{32} at the World of Commodore in Toronto on December 3-5. Commodore Canada had a limited number of units on sale at the show, and they quickly sold out. The machines were bundled with a CD containing both Pinball Fantasies and Sleepwalker. They also had CD^{32} units on display that were playing Star Trek VI with the FMV add-in board which will be available early this year. Commodore dealers in Canada are now shipping CD^{32} units on a limited basis.

The official American release of the CD^{32} took place at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas on January 6-9. Dealers will get their initial shipments in February or March, but some enterprising mail order firms have ordered NTSC units from Canada and have them available for sale now. The CD^{32} will retail for $399 and will include the Sleepwalker/Pinball Fantasies CD. The FMV add-on will follow shortly thereafter and will be priced at $250. Two third-party developers have already announced plans to release another add-on that will include all of the ports necessary to upgrade the CD^{32} to a full AGA machine. There will also be CD^{32} upgrades for the A1200 and A4000 in the future. The A1200 unit will fit into the expansion port on the bottom of the machine, and the A4000 version is a plug-in card with an external CD-ROM drive.

The bottom line is whether or not the CD^{32} will be able to crack the already crowded CD console market. With stiff competition from 3DO, Sega CD, CD-I, Atari's Jaguar, and the upcoming Nintendo/Silicon Graphics machine, sales will be determined by price, aggressive marketing, and software availability. While Commodore's U.S. advertising has always been poor, the company does have the most economically priced machine available. There are many European software developers helping Commodore's cause by providing scores of titles. The delayed release in the United States may actually help the CD^{32}'s position against consoles like 3DO because the Commodore product will have a large library of titles available when it debuts.

We here at *Amiga Game Zone* want the CD^{32} to succeed. That's one of the reasons we've reviewed ten of the first titles released. We plan to have even more in our next issue. The first releases are mainly ports over from the AGA versions of the games with CD soundtracks and some graphical tweaks. However, there is a whole new generation of titles coming that will be available only on CD and will utilize the full capacity of the CD medium.

CD^{32} CHARTS

1 Liberation
2 Sensible Soccer
3 Nigel Mansell
4 Deep Core
5 Whale's Voyage
6 Pinball Fantasies
7 Zool
8 Overkill/Lunar-C
9 Arabian Nights
10 Trolls

DECEMBER 1993

The first CD-only game to be released is Liberation: Captive 2 by Mindscape, and it's simply incredible. The game plays like the original Captive, but it now scrolls in *real time*. There are over 4000 missions, and every level is randomized – the potential lastability is immense. Liberation won't be available for the PC until late summer, but we will have a full review of this major CD^{32} title in our next issue.

Liberation isn't the only knockout title for the CD^{32}. Other terrific CD-only games are nearing completion, including Microcosm, Labyrinth, and Amiga CD Football. Another title which should be well received is Mirage's Rise of the Robots. It's a beat 'em-up similar to Street Fighter 2 and Mortal Kombat, but with incredible 3D modeled robots. If these aren't enough to get you interested in the CD^{32}, then wait until you see the two killer flight simulations that are on the way from Ocean – TFX and Inferno.

The dream of cinematic-quality games is quickly becoming a reality as more and more developers utilize the CD medium to its full potential. The CD^{32} has a chance to ride the wave of this new era of gaming. Titles like Liberation are the driving force that will impact both seasoned Amiga owners and potential new buyers. There's no denying this feeling of excitement – it's like seeing the Amiga again for the first time. ■ **GEOFF MILLER**

CD32 SOFTWARE REVIEWS START ON THE NEXT PAGE!

ZOOL

Publisher	Gremlin
Team	In House
Retail Price	£29.99 ($45)
Compatibility	PAL/NTSC**

CDTV | CD32

A killer intro makes this the ultimate Zool... until Zool 2, of course.

B

What the CD32 really needs is a character to associate itself with, just like Nintendo and Mario, Sega and Sonic, and 3DO and, er, Mad Dog McCree? Zool is the closest thing the Amiga has to a franchise player, and he makes an impressive debut on CD.

The most striking part of the Zool CD is the incredible ray-traced intro. The HAM animation shows Zool's ship crash landing on an alien planet. Zool jumps out and performs some trademark ninja acrobatics, culminating with a kick through the screen. Believe me, you won't see this anywhere but on CD. The loading times for this animation and the actual game are very fast, which is a definite improvement over the original.

Zool CD32 is basically the same as the AGA version with one added level. Play is enhanced by a catchy soundtrack that makes you feel like a part of the action. The Amiga CD32 joypad is utilized to full advantage with one button for jumping and another for shooting. There is still a slight slowdown when many enemies appear on the screen at once, but it's not enough to ruin your fun.

The biggest problem that Zool CD32 has stems from the original AGA game. The added parallax background makes enemies very hard to distinguish, and constantly hunting for your camouflaged attackers becomes a chore. I would have preferred that the backgrounds be left out for the sake of speed because they just seem to be in the way.

American CD32 owners will want to make sure they get NTSC-specific version. The version reviewed here has a lock-out feature for NTSC machines. Unless you boot your CD32 in PAL and have a monitor capable of displaying it, you'll be out of luck. Be sure to check with your dealer about this because you won't want to miss the best version of Zool to date. ■ GM

PINBALL FANTASIES

Publisher	21st Century
Team	Digital Illusions
Retail Price	Free w/CD32
Compatibility	NTSC/PAL

CDTV | CD32

Definitely the finest pinball game on any computer platform.

A-

Unless you've had your leg caught in a bear trap for several years, you've probably played or at least heard of this venerable pinball game by now. But just wait until you see the new version. The CD32 game is a whole new experience which still retains the same addictive gameplay. The flippers still flip, the bumpers still bump, and the balls still, er... roll. But now they're all displayed in 256 spectacular colors. Amazingly, the four tables still scroll as fast if not faster than ever. The disc also plays a haunting CD soundtrack when the main menu appears.

It may be hard to believe, but the best enhancement made for this new version doesn't appear on the screen itself. The crowning touch on what is definitely the finest pinball game on any computer platform is in the control system. Pinball Fantasies uses the two buttons on top of the CD32 controller to manipulate the flippers. This allows players to use their index fingers to operate the flippers just like on an actual pinball machine. It may seem inconsequential in print, but this small addition makes the game infinitely more fun to play. Incredibly, the U.S. version is the only one to include this feature! The U.K. version requires the player to use the direction pad for one flipper and a button for the other.

It's hard to fault this game on any attribute – it's all so stunning. However, it wouldn't have hurt to include the Pinball Dreams tables on this CD as well. It's not as if there wasn't enough room on the disc to fit the additional four tables.

Maybe Digital Illusions will include them on their upcoming CD32 version of Pinball Illusions. It's rumored that on the new game the screen will be switched into hi-res mode to enable the unique multi-ball feature. Personally, I can't wait to see it.

Anyone who buys a CD32 here won't have to wait to play Pinball Fantasies, either. Commodore will be bundling this game with every CD32 unit they sell in North America. Now budding pinball wizards and those who have gnawed a leg off will be able to use a controller to do some *serious* flipping on their TV. ■ GM

AMIGA GAME ZONE HIT

DEFENDER OF THE CROWN II

Whenever the staff of *Amiga Game Zone* has a disagreement, it is customary to settle it by dueling with sharp repartée. (Or in a pinch, with sharp Ginsu knives.) Here is a piece of the "discussion" about Defender of the Crown II that is raging around the spacious mid-town office of *AGZ*:

Geoff: ...but DOC 2 is a great CD-only game using real actors' voices.
Brian: It's the same game.
G: It's also got jousting, daring rescues...
B: It's the same game.
G: ...swordfighting, raiding, diplomacy...
B: It's the same game.
G: ...and the graphics...

B: Stop! Have you taken a good look at Robin Hood's campfire? Or the swordfight animations?? Hey, what year is this?
G: 1994. What, are you goofy?
B: Six or seven years ago this would have been the cat's meow. And it was – they called it Defender of the Crown. It was the game that made me decide to buy an Amiga. Don't you think it hurts to see them tack on a couple of Roman numerals and imply that it's something different? After all the progress that has been made in computer gaming there should be a whole lot more to DOC 2 than there is.
G: But it is different. You can't just blindly conquer all the territories or there won't be enough money to pay the £20,000 for the King's ransom. It's like the global economy – you have to use more subtle tactics and help stimulate growth. Then you can catapult the enemies' castles to the ground and overrun the silly sods.
B: There's still not enough depth. It's basically the same game.
G: Well, I like it. If you've never seen the original then you'll love it. I'm giving it a B.
B: Yeah, but if you *have* then the game offers nothing new. It deserves at least one whole letter grade below that.
G: The grade stands. And another thing...

And so on goes the debate. Tune in next time for the further adventures of Wonko and the Kid. ■ **BW/GM (*DUH!*)**

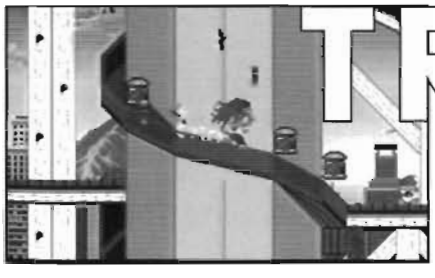
Publisher	CDTV Publishing
Team	Jim Sachs
Retail Price	$39.95
Compatibility	NTSC/PAL

CDTV | CD32

An updated version of the timeless classic. Or not.

B

TROLLS



Trolls is yet another in the long line of platform games similar to Zool. However, the same type of background screen that detracts from Zool's gameplay actually works for this game. The added parallax screen is attractive and does not slow the game down or make the enemies difficult to see.

For the CD^{32} release, Flair has updated the AGA version of the game slightly by adding CD sound and multiple button support. A picture of the sequel's protagonist, Oscar, has even been added to one of the backgrounds. Unfortunately, the Troll's yo-yo is even harder to control with the CD^{32} gamepad than with a joystick on the standard Amiga version, and the gameplay does get tedious at times. There's nothing that really makes Trolls stand out from the crowd, yet it's still enjoyable to play.
■ **GM**

Publisher	Flair
Team	In House
Retail Price	£29.99 ($45)
Compatibility	NTSC/PAL

CDTV | CD32

Everybody's favorite ugly toy in a pretty platform game.

B-

Overkill & Lunar-C

Defender is one of the most often imitated games in the history of the Amiga, and this incarnation of the title has been designed very well. The grinding hard rock intro tune, the great explosions and the flying alien parts all keep the addiction level very high. There are new and nastier aliens on each level and a variety of power ups.

Unfortunately, playing Overkill on an NTSC screen is nearly impossible. You'll need a PAL display in order to see the people running on the ground below your ship, so make sure your monitor is capable of this before buying the game.

Mindscape has also added Lunar-C to this disc as a bonus game. It's a standard shoot 'em-up with really very little to distinguish it from the crowd. All the usual attack waves and power ups are there, but ultimately it's all very dull.

Overkill is a great game, but as I mentioned before, there are quite a few versions of this type available for the Amiga. Many people will be just as happy with the shareware game Cybernetix or any of a multitude of other PD Defender clones. But if you've already played those to death, Overkill may be your answer. ■ GM

Publisher	Mindscape
Team	DigiSoft
Retail Price	£29.99 ($45)
Compatibility	PAL/NTSC**

CDTV | CD32

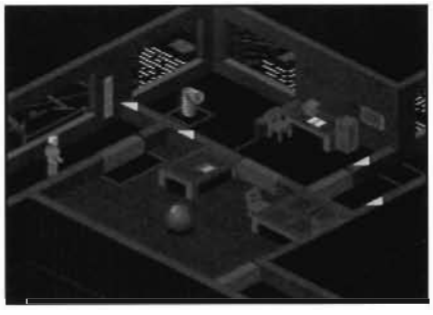
A Defender clone with great parallax scrolling and little extra.

B-

D/Generation

You're a messenger sent to Genoq Biolabs in Singapore. When you enter the building, the main door snaps shut behind you, trapping you in a virtual reality nightmare. You must deliver your package to Genoq's head scientist while avoiding the malfunctioning security system that shoots anything that moves. You must also rescue any survivors you find along the way.

Now wait just a minute. Didn't the main door just snap shut behind you? How can you possibly save anyone if you're all trapped in the same building? Logic aside, D/Generation is a good isometric puzzler that offers a forgiving learning curve, a bit of blasting, and some humorous animation.



The CD^{32} version of the game supposedly has enhanced graphics and sound, but you probably won't be able to tell. The attribute that makes D/Generation really shine is its excellent playability. The puzzles aren't incredibly difficult and maneuvering is easy. Every button on the CD^{32} joypad is used, and positions can be saved. With over 120 rooms to explore and overcome, D/Generation is an interesting departure from the average platform game. ■ GM

Publisher	Mindscape
Team	Robert Cook
Retail Price	£25.99 ($40)
Compatibility	NTSC/PAL

CDTV | CD32

An addictive isometric puzzler with few CD enhancements.

B-

Now That's What I Call Games 1 & 2

Now this is what I call a good idea. MultiMedia Machine has bundled 100 public domain and shareware games on each of two discs and is offering them to CD^{32} owners at a great price. A handy menu with descriptions for most titles is included.

The major problem with the collections is that almost every game that has been included is terrible. Most of the better freely-distributable games like Cybernetix and Llamatron do not appear on either disc. And to add insult to injury, about half of the games will not work on a standard CD^{32} because they require a keyboard or a mouse!

I really wanted to like NTWICG, because the concept behind it is fantastic. The CD medium allows a developer to put an entire library of titles on a single disc. Hopefully other companies will decide to take advantage of this fact. Think of a CD containing every Sierra, Dynamix, or LucasArts game!

If you decide to try one of these, go for the second one since it also includes a few Eric Schwartz animations on it. But if you can wait, Northwest PD is working on a disc that includes over 150 of the popular Assassins game disks! Yow! ■ GM

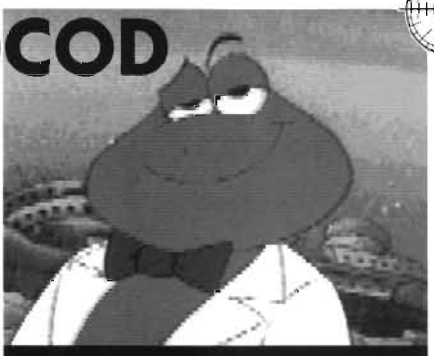
Publisher	Multi Media
Team	Various PD
Retail Price	£19.99 ($30)
Compatibility	PAL ONLY

CDTV | CD32

A great idea that fails miserably in its execution. A shame, really.

D

JAMES POND 2 – ROBOCOD



Publisher	**Millenium**
Team	**Vectordean**
Retail Price	**£29.99 ($45)**
Compatibility	**NTSC/PAL**

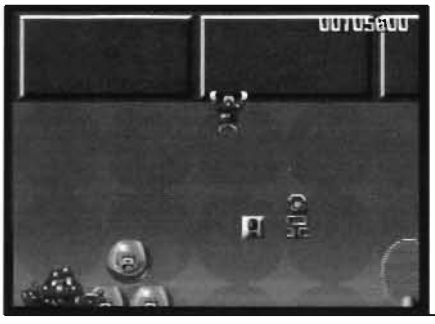
CDTV **CD32**

The cutest platformer to date plays swimmingly on CD. D'oh!

B+

Let me start with a pledge. *I promise not to make any feeble attempts at witty fish references throughout this entire review, so help me God.* See, I was tempted to put one in there at the end of that last sentence, but I resisted. It's not easy to play this game without a smile on your face and an odd fish reference or two thrown in for good measure.

Although its been out for some time now for the Amiga, the CD^{32} version stands up well to current platformers. A new Bond-style soundtrack has been added to the AGA version of the game, and James still dances his little jig to it when you aren't moving him around. Different joypad buttons are used for jumping and stretching, and all the moves, bonuses, and secret rooms are the same as in the original.



The main additions to the CD^{32} release of Robocod are two lengthy cartoon segments featuring the fish himself. In the introductory animation, Pond makes a movie-style cameo. In the second, he stars in a four-minute adventure that sets the stage for James Pond 3: Operation StarFI5H. Kids will love both toons and will probably watch them over and over. Some of us older types may notice that the animations are actually half screen CDXL segments that are increased to full size. The resolution does suffer in this process, and the animations look very grainy.

Others may argue that Millennium should have included the original James Pond and Aquatic Games on the CD to round out the package. However, the rest of us will enjoy the good-natured fun and addictive gameplay that Robocod offers, because we just like playing for the halibut. *D'oh!* Well, I tried anyway. ■ **GM**

WAITING IS HELL.

The editors of *Amiga Game Zone* have obtained a copy of Commodore's list of over 150 confirmed CD^{32} titles. Here's a taste of what you can expect for the machine in the near future...

CONVERSIONS of top Amiga titles like Body Blows 2, Cannon Fodder, Jurassic Park, Mortal Kombat, and Zool 2.

THE BITMAP BROTHERS catalog, including Chaos Engine, Gods, Speedball 2, and their upcoming title Z.

BULLFROG'S new games like BioSphere, Creation, Magic Carpet, Theme Park, & the ultimate hi-res version of Syndicate.

PC GAMES you thought would never make it to the Amiga. Now thanks to the Akiko chip in the CD^{32} you can expect games like Castles 2, King's Quest 6, Lord of the Rings 2, Pirate's Gold, and a 256-color version of Wing Commander.

EAGERLY ANTICIPATED RELEASES like Akira, Dangerous Streets, Dungeon Master 2, ElfMania, Inferno, James Pond 3 & 4, Jungle Strike, Kick Off 3, Pinball Illusions, Putty Squad, Rise of the Robots, TFX, and Total Carnage.

CD-ONLY GAMES like Amiga CD Football, Labyrinth, Lawnmower Man, Liberation, Little Divil, MegaRace, Microcosm, Nick Faldo's Golf Deluxe, and Prey.

ROCK VIDEOS ON CD with groups like Erasure, the Eurythmics, Queen, REM, the Rolling Stones, and U2.

MOVIES ON CD utilizing full motion video technology and featuring hits like Star Trek 6 and Top Gun.

FRONTIER is also on the list. Please, no drooling.

ATMOSPHERE IS EVERYTHING.

ALIEN BREED 2

They say that image is everything. Well, at least Andre Agassi says it anyway. Of course, he gets paid big bucks to say it. Does anyone know why? And now you're saying, "What does this have to do with Alien Breed 2?" Exactly.

Team 17 has acquired quite an image itself lately, and rightly so. With the likes of Alien Breed and Project X, the company has published two of the best blast 'em-ups to be found anywhere. Considering the popularity and quantity of this kind of game (enough to give us our Alien Attack theme), what makes Team 17's alien shooters..uh..a breed apart?

For those who have played the original Alien Breed, the answer is quite obvious – atmosphere. How Team 17 was able to put that much frenzied anxiety into a computer game is, well, a gift. No ordinary shoot 'em-up could exude such a feeling of fear, which was intense enough at times to make for very sweaty palms.

As with most hits, we can expect the inevitable sequel to rear its head. Sequels come in two forms: ones that may equal or even surpass the original in quality, and certainly more often, ones that are complete wastes of effort. So after all the hype, is AB2 the T2 of alien zappers, or is it more like the second Caddyshack movie? The votes are in and...Yes!...it's another chartbuster. Bravo.

Fans of the original AB will feel right at home; newcomers to the Breedlands will be in for a big shock. Beware, there is no warmup level. After selecting one of four characters to send into battle, players are thrown right into the action. The first task is to negotiate your way through the space station landing zones and into the main complex. Finding the building entrance is an effort in itself (make sure to collect the credits and keys), and it's complicated by the fact that there are security choppers attempting to provide your internal organs with a little extra ventilation.

Some choice! Stay outside and battle the choppers or go inside and face the alien horde.

Finding the building entrance is an effort in itself. It's complicated by the fact that there are security choppers attempting to provide your internal organs with a little extra ventilation.

Once inside the station the party really begins, and there are way too many unwanted guests. The complex is divided into three main areas – civilian, science, and military – each with several challenging levels that have a specific task which needs to be completed before moving on. The usual procedure is to destroy some pieces of equipment and then maneuver your way through the corridors to the decklift before the level self-destructs. Of course, along the way there's the odd alien or 50 doing their all-fired best to make you wish that you took that quiet job at the local library.

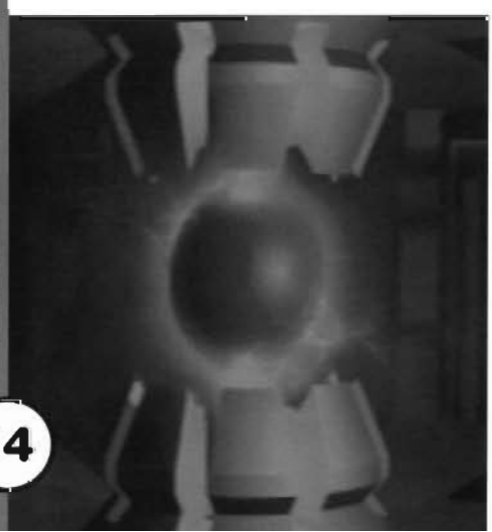
Picking up all the credits along the way can be put to good use once you find one of the Intex 4000 computer terminals. Keys, location scanners, and even extra lives can be purchased here as long as you have enough dosh, as the Brits would say. Investing in better weapons is probably the first course of action. Flamethrowers, machine guns, triple lazers, and homing missiles all come in three power flavors, making the creature hunt that much more efficient. For your information, high powered rebounders are the professional alien-busters' choice of weaponry.

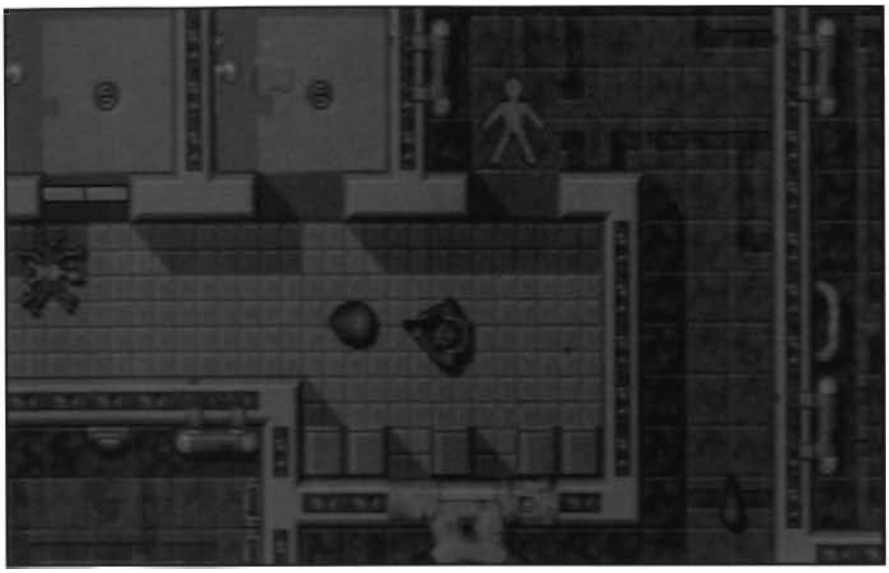
Now all this may seem like a fairly typical Gauntlet-style shooter. But remember, class, the key word for today is *atmosphere*, and AB2 has plenty. Team 17 has created a mood so intense that you'll be reaching for that pause key more times than you'll care to admit.

The complete package can be found here. The graphics are superb with many beautifully drawn touches. (The between-level screens are simply gorgeous.) The sound effects are as good as it gets, from the variety of alien death screeches to the futuristically feminine vocals informing you that you're in need of first aid. (Or have been eliminated. Ouch.) The visuals and sonics are so well-crafted that they draw you into the game, making this much more than an arcade blast-o-rama. Playing AB2 is an experience!

There is also a certain amount of strat-

Single file is the rule when being chased through a doorway in two-player mode.





There's no time for potty breaks. Better hope you're wearing your Depends.

egy involved, giving AB2 more depth than is immediately apparent. It doesn't allow you to just shoot and scoot. For instance, you will need to plan your escape route before triggering the destruct sequence. Trial and error through the maze with the clock ticking down just won't cut it. You will also need to keep track of the number of keys in your possession. There's nothing more frustrating than being trapped in a room or unable to open the exit door because you're keyless. (Or brainless.)

If you pay attention, you will be able to distinguish the "intelligence" patterns in the different aliens. This will give you an edge in avoiding them, or, at the very least, being quicker with that itchy trigger finger. Some will home in on you, and others will fire before they see the reds and whites of your bloodshot eyes. Be particularly aware of objects that don't look like aliens – until you move past them. Tricky buggers, this lot.

A few people are going to say that AB2 is entirely too tricky, and that may be one of its problems. The number of aliens on screen and the short amount of time before the levels destruct make this game very intense even on the low difficulty setting. The original game was criticized by some as being too easy to complete, so it is apparent that Team 17 wanted to give those players their money's worth this time around. Admittedly, AB2 is not for beginner Breed blasters, but experienced players will find the frenetic pace just about right.

The two-player mode is a great feature, but it can also be problematic. There are many areas where the room to maneuver is extremely tight and character positions cannot be swapped without doing "The Bump". Two-player action occurs simultaneously on the same screen, and unfortunately, split-screen independent movement has not been implemented. What this means is that there will be those embarrassing occasions where one player making the wrong directional choice (entering a room with no exit, for example) which will prevent the other from continuing.

This is the space normally reserved for picking some extra nits. However, these have already been anticipated by the programmers. AB2 supports a two button joystick/pad, so the awkward pressing of the spacebar to view the map or access a terminal has been eliminated. And believe it or not, AB2 is hard drive installable! The install program is not included with the original disks, but it is available from Team 17. (Thank you, Mr. Boberg.)

Players of the original are going to fall into two camps. Some gamers will want to call this Alien Breed^2 (as in squared) because there is a lot more of everything – more aliens, more intensity, more challenge – making it the supreme alien-buster game. Other gamers will argue that it should be called Alien Breed 1.2 because there is only a little more of everything – yes, a few more aliens and a bit more intensity, but little extra in the way of gameplay and new features. (All players will be pleased to note, however, that there will be no PC version of the game because the majority of PCs are..um..not powerful enough.)

So in making a decision about which Alien Breed 2 camp you may belong in, think about this: if you enjoyed the high intensity of Aliens more than the subtle terror of the original Alien movie, you're going to love AB2. Beginners who are intimidated by non-stop alien attacks may, however, opt for something a little less frenzied. As for me, I will be pitching my tent with that first group of nerve-wracked campers. ■ **BRIAN WOLSIC**

Publisher	Team 17
Team	In House
Retail Price	£26.99 ($40)
Protection	Disk Based
Features	Two Buttons
Compatibility	PAL/NTSC**

1.3 2.0 3.0 HD

The standard version is intense, challenging, and nerve-wracking.

The ECS version has less detailed graphics and fewer sounds. The number of aliens appearing on the screen at one time has been reduced as well. These differences in no way make for a less challenging game.

To obtain the hard drive install disk for both versions, send an international money order (available at most banks) for £4.99 to:

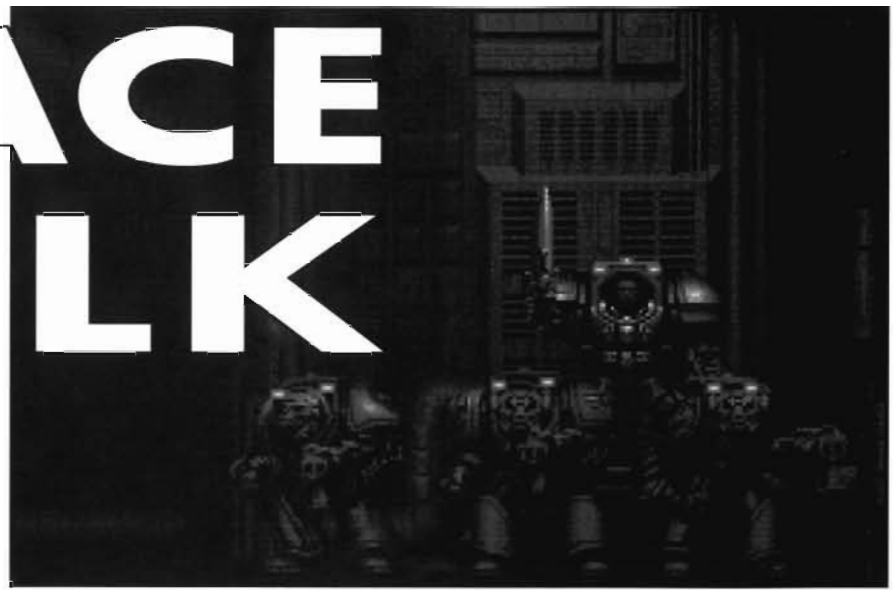
Team 17 Software Ltd.
Marwood House
Wakefield
West Yorkshire
England WF1 1DX

Publisher	Team 17
Team	In House
Retail Price	£29.99 ($45)
Protection	Disk Based
Features	Two Buttons
Compatibility	PAL ONLY

1.3 2.0 AGA HD

Ditto for the AGA version. Only more of everything.

SPACE HULK



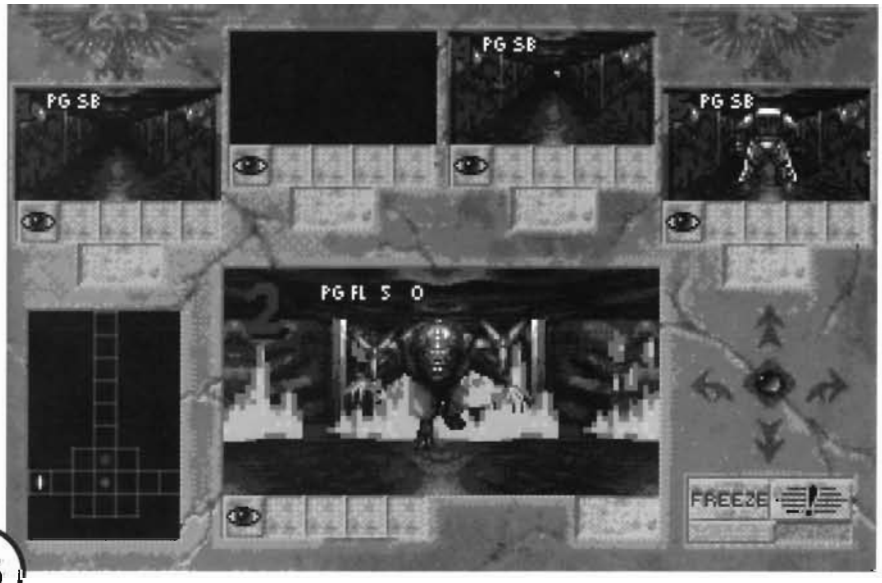
For those who sat through the film Aliens wishing for the opportunity to stomp on a few bug-eyed critters, Electronic Arts offers Space Hulk. Adapted from the Games Workshop board game of the same name, Space Hulk offers you the chance to control a team of power armor-equipped space marines known as Terminators. Your mission is to "cleanse" derelict space ships that have been infested by aliens known as Genestealers.

There are three play options to choose from: tutorial missions, stand-alone scenarios and the massive Death Wing campaign. Being the sort who tends to fall back on instruction manuals only as a last resort, I immediately went right to work. The controls were surprisingly easy to puzzle out. The game offers plenty of tutorial missions to help you get a feel for the controls and to practice giving orders on the planning screen. These practice missions range in difficulty from simple to downright nasty.

The second option gives you a chance to work with either one or two squads of Terminators. That's up to ten, count 'em, ten people that you have to keep alive during aptly named scenarios like Stranded, Swarm, and Fight to the Death.

The Death Wing campaign is a series of twenty-one missions in which gameplay falls more in line with traditional CRPGs. This option allows you to select both the squad leaders and weapons needed for the task, and your characters will accumulate experience points for successful completion of each mission. But when they die, they stay dead. (*What? No resurrect spell? – Ed*)

The Genestealers are rendered in great detail. You'll be treated to a dentist's-eye view more often than you'll care to remember!



The main playing screen contains five windows which provide a first-person view from each member of your squad. A small scanner screen in the lower left is centered upon the currently selected Terminator unit. Located on the right-hand side of the screen are the movement icons, as well as an icon that lets you switch between the two squads under your command. The most useful icon of all, the Freeze button, provides a limited pause function that gives you a chance to catch your breath and rethink your strategy.

Success requires some preparation. By clicking on the scanner display, you can call up the mission planning screen. With careful thought you can construct a series of actions for one or more squad members to perform. The opening of doors, movement to specific areas, and the firing of weapons can all be controlled from here.

One of the game's nicest features is that the Terminators you aren't controlling yourself won't blindly stumble right into the jaws of a Genestealer. When you issue movement orders from the planning screen, your troops

use what is called an "Overwatch" system. If an enemy is detected once the Terminators are en route, they will stop and open fire on the offending life-form. When (and if) the target is killed, they will resume their programmed tasks.

Admittedly, this doesn't mean that the computer will do most of your work for you. It isn't a very good shot, it's not very aggressive, and it sometimes does some suicidally stupid things. At most, it can give the player a little breathing room. The sound of gunfire from one of your secondary monitors means that you will probably want to take over that player to keep him alive. Think of it as an armed car alarm.

Rather than using the typical "hop directly from one square to the next" style of movement, the visuals scroll from one square to the next, heightening the 3D feel of the game. Rendered walls are a great help here: corroded metal and sparking wires are all part of the scenery. The Genestealers, too, are rendered in great detail. You'll be treated to a dentist's-eye view more often than you'll care to remember!

The sound effects, including the all-too-frequently heard death screams of your squad members, also give the game plenty of atmosphere. The roar of your flamethrower, the shrieks of Genestealers, and the satisfying squish they make as you splatter them over the walls make Space Hulk quite an experience.

Carnage is the result of a failed mission.

Genestealers rarely trim their fingernails.

I only have two complaints about the game, but both really affect gameplay. The first is that response to movement commands can be slow enough to get you killed. Once you press a key or use the mouse to move, you can't stop and turn back until the screen stops scrolling. For instance, if you make a turn just as you see a Genestealer appear, you will die. No matter how far away it is, it will close the distance before you can turn back. Not very sporting.

The second problem, which is really bothersome, is that the game is not hard drive installable. There is quite a bit of swapping among the game's three disks, with most of the disk access taking about a minute. While you wait, the worst of the music starts playing. In effect, you're forced to listen to grating "snoozak" while the game puts you on hold. Even if the game was programmed for the European Amiga market, where hard drives aren't as common as in the U.S., Electronic Arts should have had the foresight to make that option available for the American market.

Complaints aside, Space Hulk is a lot of fun to play. The game oozes atmosphere and is a genuine challenge. Your biggest challenge, however, may be in deciding whether or not the wait time is worth the play time. ■ **DAVE FLEMING**

Publisher	**Electronic Arts**
Team	**In House**
Retail Price	**$49.95**
Protection	**None**
Compatibility	**NTSC/PAL**

1.3 2.0 3.0 HD

Atmosphere abounds in this strategic alien safari. Too bad it's not HD installable.

B

U R I D I U M 2

The Uridium 2 box boasts such features as different weapons, multiple players and "the fastest scrolling and most detailed graphics that the Amiga has ever seen." This creates some pretty high expectations, but Uridium 2 lives up to the hype better than most sequels.

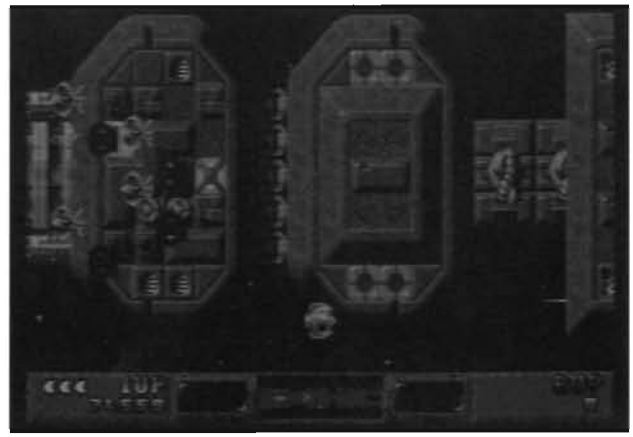
The storyline is based on the original C64 game Uridium. Alien dreadnought ships, known as "Consumers of Worlds", are invading your planet. You, oddly enough, have volunteered to challenge this terrible threat in the only defense available – a small out-of-date fighter known as a Manta.

The player jumps into action immediately, piloting a Manta out of a warp field straight into the path of a dreadnought. Fast squadrons of alien fighters and other dreadnought defenses keep you on your toes as you speed along destroying everything in sight. Flight control is, thankfully, very responsive because even the beginning levels will test your flying prowess.

After obtaining a certain amount of "Victory Points" the game directs the player to land. Landing allows you to enter the main reactor core (Uridium 2's version of an end-of-level alien) and attempt to destroy it. If successful, you are awarded points and new weapons, and then are rushed to attack the next alien victim. However, if time starts to run out before having destroyed the core, the player may choose to leave prematurely. The dreadnought will explode anyway, but no points will be awarded.

Controlling the pilot in the reactor core is definitely a nice twist. Each level throws out some new form of defense. The laser cannon that the pilot totes has quite a kick-back, and maneuvering in a low gravity field makes space life interesting. After destroying the core, you are free to move around and collect points or weapon power-ups. This sounds easy enough but you are being bombarded by falling debris at the same time. You must decide between losing energy and gaining more power-ups.

Uridium 2 provides several player configurations. Aside from single-player, there is a two-player option (alternating and teammates) plus the ability to use a "droid" wingman. The game will also configure itself to the Amiga on which it is running. It takes advantage of extra RAM, cutting down on disk access. If you have an AGA Amiga, you get better visuals and sounds, plus the dreaded Mayhem mode in which everything moves faster.



Little Manta meets Big Dreadnought.

Look familiar? No, it's not the picture from Alien Breed 2 on page 14. You actually get to blast this reactor core.

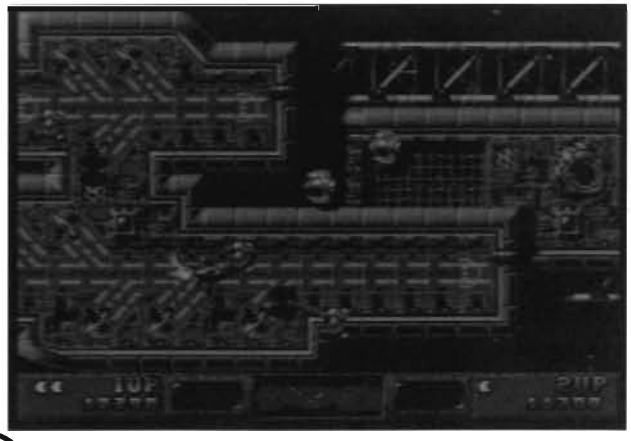
In truth the game may play too fast. The sprites are small and move so quickly that it is difficult to appreciate the detail. You know that you've blown a giant hole in something or that a new type of alien vessel has just zipped by, but there is virtually no chance to see anything. Most of the time it feels as if you're either shooting blindly out of anticipation or simply playing from memory.

While there's no doubt that the graphics and game speed are above average, the effects and music sound as if they were taken directly from the original 8-bit game. We're well past the days of PC speaker beeps and screeches, so it would seem as if sounds were just not given a high priority.

Warning: The disk-based copy protection is truly annoying and makes Uridium 2 an enemy of your hard drive. To compound your frustration, the game also includes a security check that it calls upon at random more than one time per game. This security check takes the form of a three letter code from a specified grid location on a sheet which is painfully difficult to read. This encouraged me to shelve the game because it is simply easier to load up something else.

If you love mindless shoot 'em-ups and don't mind some annoying problems, then try Uridium 2. This is one game that will definitely wear out that joystick fast. And because it's likely that two people will want to play at once, you'd better stock up.

■ **MARK PULOKAS**



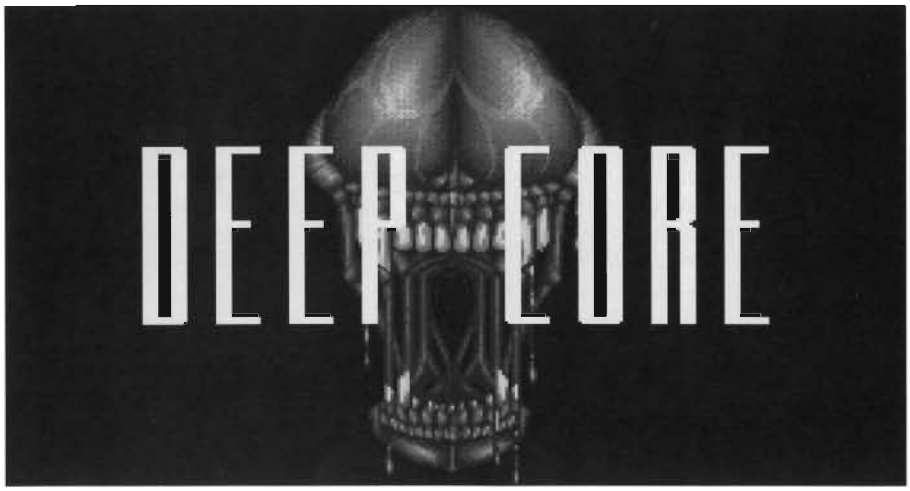
Alien fighters are fast, relentless, and difficult to see.

Publisher	**Renegade**
Team	**Graftgold**
Retail Price	**£25.99 ($40)**
Protection	**Disk/Manual**
Compatibility	**PAL ONLY**

1.3 **2.0** **AGA** **HD**

The speedy sequel to Uridium comes up a little short.

B



The first 1000 copies of Deep Core will lock up after the first level. If you can actually get far enough in the game to confirm this, send your disks to ICE, Bridge House, Merrywalks, Stroud, Glos GL5 1QA, England. They will return a fixed version free of charge.

In the meantime, here are the two level codes:

LEVEL 4 – REANIMATOR
LEVEL 7 – PSYCHONAUT

What do you get when you cross Gods with Alien Breed? The answer: Deep Core. In creating Deep Core, ICE has apparently tried to cash in on the current "monsters take over and have to be eliminated" craze started by the movie Aliens and brought to the Amiga in the form of Alien Breed. The result is a decent platformer in the style of Gods, starring Captain Dawnrazor, a musclebound hero who grunts.

The initial impression of Deep Core is promising. The opening animation is reasonably well done, except for a poorly-drawn section near the end that looks like it was tacked on at the last minute. The game's opening soundtrack is also very good. The tunes are not just your typical arcade rave themes. They have some nice rock effects that set them apart and help create an eerie atmosphere appropriate for alien-blasting.

After being psyched up by the intro and music, the actual game leaves something to be desired. Movement is sluggish, somewhat jerky, and slows down noticeably when there are a lot of objects on the screen.

The graphics are only a little above average and offer nothing out of the ordinary. The reflecting water effect on the bottom of the screen is a nice touch, although I initially thought that jumping down there would dissolve the lower portion of Dawnrazor's body. Happily, this wasn't so. However, walking through the water (apparently in his bare feet) produces an annoying sloshing sound that makes you want to confine Dawnrazor to the upper portions of the screen.

I sure do miss Twisted Sister. Whatever happened to that guy?

The most irritating aspect of Deep Core is the fact that Dawnrazor is quite incapable of jumping or ducking when in front of an elevator. This creates some situations where there is nothing to do but get blasted. The good news is that when Dawnrazor gets killed, he starts off again in the last elevator used, not all the way at the beginning of the level or something equally nasty. You find yourself using elevators often, even if it's to get nowhere at all.

Deep Core rewards achievement by giving passwords for the completion of levels three and six. Unfortunately, the later levels are really not much more difficult or different than the first. However, some new aliens appear and you might want to examine the walls for amusing graffiti. Given a couple of weeks, I imagine that even the average player can have this one licked. All but the most hard core platform players will be bored by that time anyway.

All in all, Deep Core is just another platformer. For about $40 you get an average game when you could be getting something a lot more intense and addictive like Alien Breed 2. Invest in something better.

■ **CHRISTOPHER BURKE**

Looks like Dawnrazor had some hot chili for lunch.

Publisher	ICE
Team	Dynafield
Retail Price	£25.99 ($40)
Protection	Disk Based
Compatibility	PAL ONLY

1.3 2.0 3.0 HD

Gods meets Alien Breed and spawns a barefoot space captain.

ALIEN^3

Alien^3 is a platform game in which the after-two-hit-movies-shaven-head Ripley must rescue human prisoners and exterminate aliens in a subterranean complex. In a series of timed stages, you control Ripley as she runs, jumps and crawls her way to the end of each level, hopefully blasting a few hundred beasties along the way.

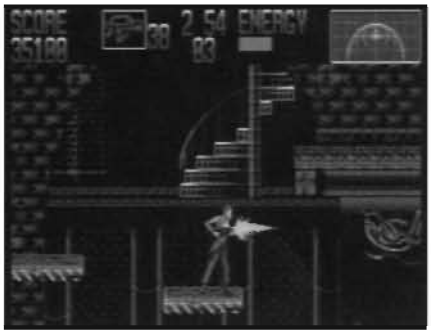
Overall the gameplay is good. The characters move quickly, the scrolling is smooth, and the aliens blow apart quite nicely. The programmers have even managed to create a fairly tense atmosphere with the creatures appearing unexpectedly, either crawling up through the floor or suddenly dropping from the ceiling.

Thoughtfully included are some options to help the player on Ripley's mission, including the ability to adjust the difficulty level and number of lives. And if you're lucky enough to have a Sega gamepad or two-button joystick, you will also appreciate that Alien^3 accepts input from a second button which will make Ripley jump.

Unfortunately the artwork in Alien^3 is drawn in a crude style reminiscent of games released two or three years ago. Frankly, it seems colorless and dull. Perhaps it was done this way to add to the moody atmosphere, but the graphics just appear bland. Possibly it was done for the sake of speed, although many recent platform games come to mind where fast gameplay and good graphics are not strangers.

Other problems include a scanner which really doesn't help you find the aliens very well. It's placed in an awkward location on the screen, and the aliens move too fast for it to be of much use. And speaking of fast, you'll probably wish the level clock would tick just a bit more slowly. Beginners are especially likely to find the pace too quick and may easily become frustrated.

Despite those complaints Alien^3 has a certain appeal, and I found myself playing it a lot, getting all the way to stage 11. Will I finish it? Maybe. But in a world full of so many platformers, it's hard to overcome the nagging feeling that Alien^3 could have been done much better. ■ **JASON CHUNG**



One down, one thousand more to go...

Publisher	**Virgin**
Team	**Probe**
Retail Price	**£25.99 ($40)**
Protection	**Disk Based**
Features	**Two Buttons**
Compatibility	**NTSC/PAL**

1.3 2.0 3.0 HD

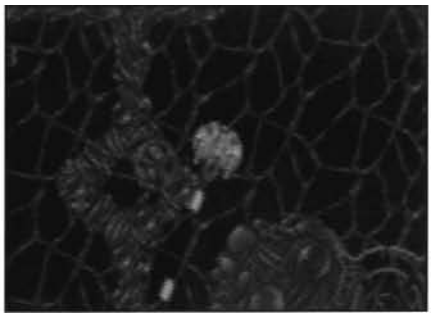
Dull-looking platformer with above average atmosphere.

B-

BLASTAR

Ugh. There are some games that quickly become a real drudgery to play. Blastar is one of those games. What we have here is a very poor rendition of the classic "Save the Earth" arcade shoot 'em-up, with you at the helm of a space-fighter dubbed Blastar. Your objective is to fly around three "space islands" from another dimension and destroy targets that lie on them.

For starters, the control system is awful. To move Blastar around this eight-way scroller, right and left on the joystick spins the ship, forward accelerates, and back slows down. This system is really awkward to use. Even if you get used to it, maneuvering around the hordes of aliens that come flying at you is extremely difficult.



Find the targets and win a prize.

The graphics have one good point and a whole lot of bad points. The good point is that the background indeed looks very alien. The programmers really achieved the effect that was intended – that you're flying over a living, breathing, extradimensional mass.

Now, here are the bad points. Because the aliens and the background are done in the same color scheme, it is a formidable task to identify important objects. The nice "breathing" effect of the background makes it tough to tell if a moving object is really an alien target or not.

Since all of the background generally looks the same, it's very easy to get lost searching for your objectives. The scrolling wraps around on itself, too, so you can fly over the exact same point about thirty thousand times and not realize it. And it would be nice if the radar would actually show where the main targets are located. It doesn't, so it's pretty useless.

It seems like Core Design spent a great deal of time on graphics and almost none on gameplay. Blastar is a perfect example of style with no substance. ■ **CB**

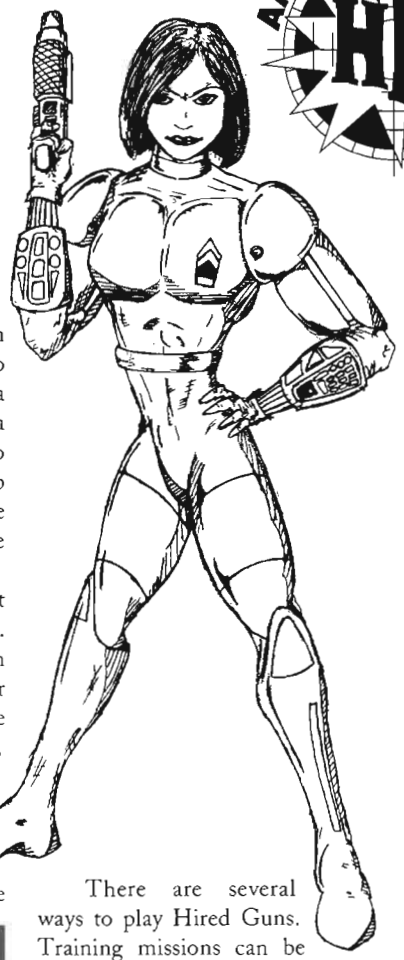
Publisher	**Core Design**
Team	**In House**
Retail Price	**£25.99 ($40)**
Protection	**Disk Based**
Features	**Two Buttons**
Compatibility	**PAL ONLY**

1.3 2.0 3.0 HD

Awful controls plus indistinguishable graphics equals a lousy shooter.

D+

HIRED GUNS



In the past, Psygnosis was known for its near-impossible shooters, lavishly-detailed yet virtually unplayable platformers, system hostile programs, and heavy disk-based copy protection. Now in the '90s, Psygnosis has responded to scores of Amiga users' complaints and has not only diversified its game styles, but has made its games more OS friendly and hard-drive installable. It took a while, but now Psygnosis is not only producing hard-core action blast-fests, but also intriguing graphic adventures and mind-bending strategy games while retaining the slick production and incredible graphics which have been the company's trademark for years.

Hired Guns is a prime example of the new Psygnosis. Developed by DMA Design, this game combines strategy, action, superb graphics, great sound, and lots of gameplay all in one package. The game also has a lot of options and is very customizable which gives this title some lastability.

Inside the box are several manuals. One of these is dedicated to explaining the history of the area in which the game takes place, and another is a novella of sorts which rambles on about some sci-fi tale of intergalactic war, conspiracy, and a bunch of rebels stealing a shuttle. Basically, the game is about a group of criminals who were sent to some planet as part of a military force to take over the area for their homeland. However, they deserted their army when it was massacred and then hijacked a vehicle which just happened to carry a timed chemical explosive. To make a long story short, they commandeered a battle-mech robot and stole a shuttle to escape from the planet before the bomb detonated. Now they are wanted because they are the only few that knew about the bomb...blah blah blah. Same old stuff.

Anyway, the actual game is reminiscent of Captive, the old classic from Mindscape. The screen is split into four sections, each showing a first-person view from one of four selected characters. When the mouse pointer is moved over one of the windows, there are several actions that can be performed. If the mouse pointer is left in the center of the window, the character can fire a weapon, use a held device, or push against a moveable block. When the mouse is at the extreme edges of the window, the character can be moved by clicking on the desired side of the window. In addition, there are several icons along the sides of each window which can be selected for different functions, such as making certain characters follow each other, examining the stats of each player, using the auto-mapping computer, and so on.

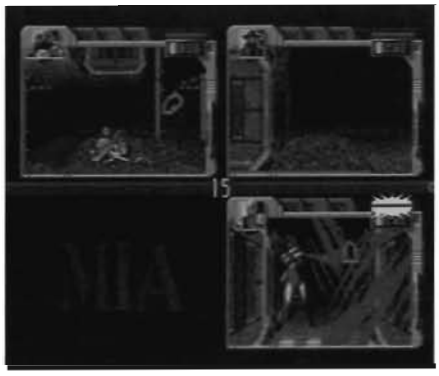
One of the unique features of Hired Guns is the ability to create new characters. Sure, games have had this feature for a long time, but the way Hired Guns does this is very different. All the animation frames can be drawn in IFF format and then imported into the game.

The general concept of Hired Guns is to run through the mazes killing enemies, picking up items, and escaping the level after achieving a specific goal. Some goals are just basic "all must escape" types, but others can get quite complicated. The strategy for each level must be thought through completely in order to finish without any casualties.

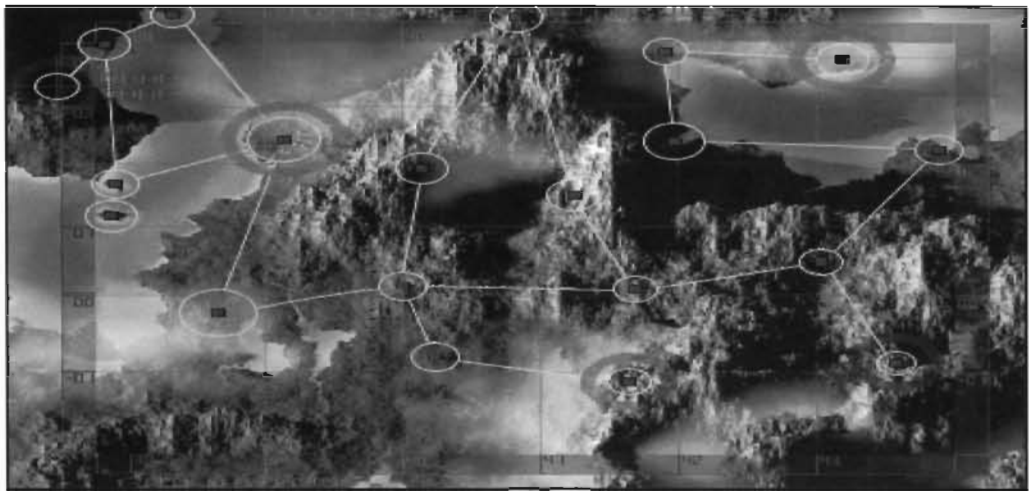
There are several ways to play Hired Guns. Training missions can be selected as a way of familiarizing yourself with the control system, movement, and other basics of the game. Each mission allows the player to concentrate on a certain aspect of gameplay, such as moving blocks around or maneuvering through mazes. If the full game scenario seems too daunting to try next, the small action missions can be selected. These are short scenarios designed for one through four players in which each one has a special theme. A few of them even involve blasting through constant hordes of killer lemmings!

The last option is to play the full game.

Cheule likes warm fires, long walks on the beach, and blasting the bejeezus out of anything that moves.

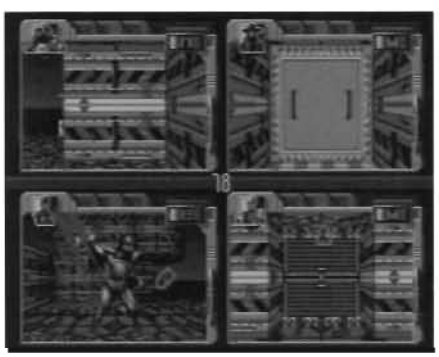


Pain, agony, and death are all just a part of your job description in Hired Guns.



This is a large scenario filled with interconnected levels that will keep any player busy for quite a while. Levels contain logic puzzles and tough enemies, and many require some degree of war strategy as well.

One of the unique features of Hired Guns is the ability to create new characters. Sure, games have had this feature for a long time, but the way Hired Guns does this is very different. All the animation frames can be drawn in IFF format and then imported into the game. (However, it will take quite an artist to match the new graphics with Psygnosis' top-notch artwork.) Only the appearance of the included characters can be edited, but no stats or attributes can be assigned. Even though the lack of stats is a big letdown, the ability to customize characters can extend the life of the game.



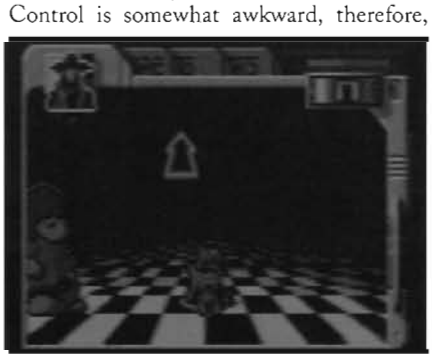
Let's make a deal. I hope there are better prizes behind doors #1, 2 or 4.

Another feature that adds to the game is the multi-player option. Up to four players can move through each level simultaneously using a variety of control methods. Two mice, a custom adapter to connect four joysticks, the keyboard, or other control methods can be used to get the multi-player action going. On some of the short missions players can race to the exit to see who can survive, or they can work in cooperation with each other to complete the complex logic puzzles of the larger scenarios.

The graphics in Hired Guns are fantastic. Psygnosis has proven once again that the Enhanced Chip Set is capable of some stunning visuals. One thing I missed, however, was the flashy opening sequence that Psygnosis games are known for. For some reason, DMA Design didn't produce one for this title. It would have provided the player with a good introduction to the plot.

The sound is also great. If two megabytes of chip RAM are present, extra sound effects are added. I only tested this on an A4000/030 so I didn't get to hear what "normal" sound was like (*It's good. – Ed*), but the enhanced sound was pretty impressive. During the levels there are no musical themes. Instead, there are background noises such as chirping birds, rustling leaves, and clanking robots. Using a hi-fi sound system is definitely recommended.

For all its excellence, Hired Guns is not without problems. While the gameplay is extremely involving, it can also get boring. Constantly moving blocks, shooting at enemies, and running out of ammo can get tedious after a while. Also, the play control needs to be tweaked. I found myself frequently shooting my own teammates by mistake. This happens because both firing a weapon and moving a character use the same button, only the mouse pointer has to be in a different position for each function. Control is somewhat awkward, therefore, and can result in a little unwanted "friendly-fire". (*Is there ever any "wanted" friendly-fire? – Ed*) Perhaps Psygnosis could enhance the mouse controls a bit to make the shooting and moving actions a bit more distinct.



In Hired Guns, you'll face hordes of killer lemmings. And puppy dogs?

Hard drive installation and system friendliness are very welcome additions to this superbly designed game. The hard-drive installer is a tad bit quirky, but it works, which is all that counts. Also, if you need to do some system work, the game can be paused and you will return to Workbench. When you're finished, the Workbench can be closed, and the game can be continued.

There are two other pleasant surprises in Hired Guns. Instead of drive-grinding disk-based copy protection, a simple, painless enter-the-code system is used. The other convenience is a prompt that lets you know in advance which floppy disk will be needed by the program. This notice allows you to place the required disk in the drive while the program is still loading data from a different disk.

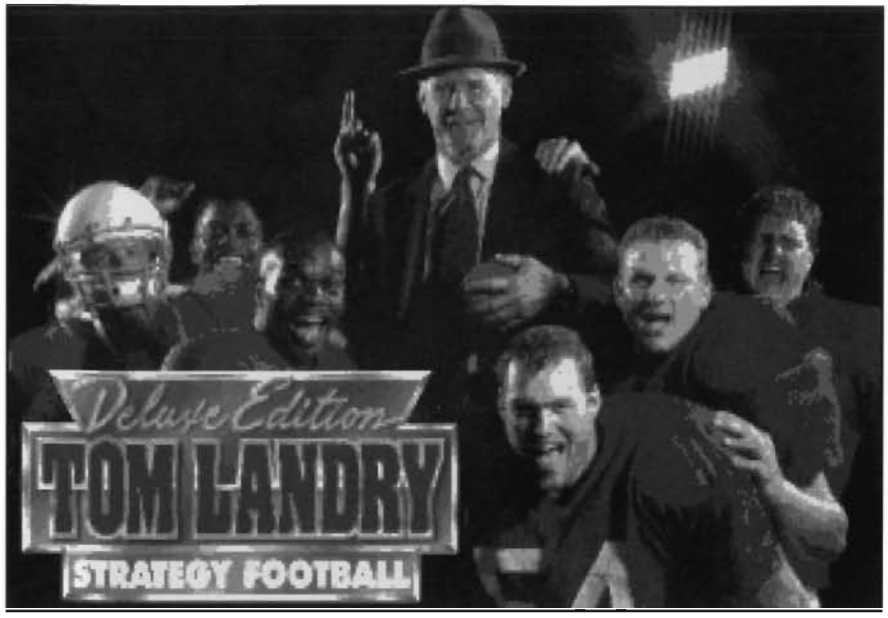
Overall, Hired Guns is an impressive package. Whether you like strategy, adventure, or action, you will find it in this game. In short, Hired Guns has something for everybody. This is definitely one title that should be in every Amiga owner's library.

■ **RALPH BARBAGALLO**

Publisher	Psygnosis
Team	DMA Design
Retail Price	$59.99
Protection	Manual
Features	4 Player Option Two Buttons
Compatibility	NTSC/PAL

1.3 2.0 3.0 HD

Hired Guns is possibly the best computer RPG to date.



One cannot deny that there is a plethora of platform games and shoot 'em-ups available for the Amiga. With the exception of soccer titles, quality sport sim and action games are sorely lacking. There certainly is a need for Amiga sports games, but is there a want? I would think so, considering the popularity of this kind of game on other systems. Are Amiga owners that different? Well, we are, but that's another story.

Deluxe Tom Landry Strategy Football (DTLSF) looks to fill part of that need with an improved version of TL Football. The original TLSF was a strategy (no joystick-waggling) football game which met with moderate success when released a short time back. TLSF was praised for its score of features, including an easy-to-use interface, understandable penalty screens, modem play, and helpful advice from Coach Landry.

The new editor uses the slick interface from the original game.

All of the great features are still available in the new version, so what's the deluxe in DTLSF? The biggest addition is an editor (Hurray!) which allows you to customize your own league, create new schedules, and edit team statistics. Needless to say, this is an invaluable tool. Armchair commissioners can choose to set up a college league (with college rules) or one of two kinds of pro leagues: the familiar two conference/six division type, or a combination of current and great teams of the past.

The editor will also create new playing schedules for the normal pro league. The computer can randomly rank teams, or you may manually adjust the rankings to reflect relative team strength. A simple click will produce a new league schedule.

Perhaps the single best part of the editor is the ability to change team and player data. For each team, you can select whether the default coach will be human or computer. If a computer coach is chosen, you can select the style – gambler, conservative, or balanced – that reflects how that particular team will be directed. To further simulate a specific coaching style, playcalling tendencies can be edited by down, distance, and field position. Other options for set-up include uniform colors, penalty percentage, and type of weather at the home stadium.

Because there was no agreement with the NFL Players' Association, real player names were not included in the default league provided in DTLSF. No problem. The editor allows you to alter not only the names, but important player attributes as well. (You may get lucky enough to find current league data on a local BBS.)

There is still more to be found in DTLSF. On offense you will now have more formations, pass patterns, and motion options at your disposal. On defense you can adjust your linemen in three additional ways, and can assign individual players to blitz the opposition silly. The computer can now quickly simulate games (and save league stats) so that an entire season can be played, hopefully ending with your team in the Landry Bowl. And topping it all off is a print option.

Despite all of these improvements, DTLSF is far from perfect. The angled side-view and somewhat dulled graphics make it difficult to view the action on the field clearly. (I guess that's why there's a possession arrow and a fluorescent football option.) The sound samples are in need of an overhaul; the commentator's voice is especially flat and muddy. Something also needs to be done about reading samples off the disk each time they're needed. It feels too much like an afterthought, when you already know the result of the play, to hear "Incomplete *(pause)* third down *(pause)* penalty." There is also a small bug (currently being fixed) that has the computer substitute a player with a major injury (like a broken leg) with a player who has a minor injury (twisted ankle).

These negatives should in no way deter football fans from buying this game. DTLSF combines all of the great features from the original with many new ones. Dedicated sport gamers, including myself, will cite the lack of a general manager option (rumored to be in the works) and a somewhat restrictive "play editor" as things that prevent it from delivering the big hit.

Tampa Bay vs. New England – This must be the Toilet Bowl.

However, even with the flaws it's still the best football game available on the Amiga. (Yes, I think it's better than John Madden.) Now, it's time to edit the Chicago offense for the playoffs. ■ **BW**

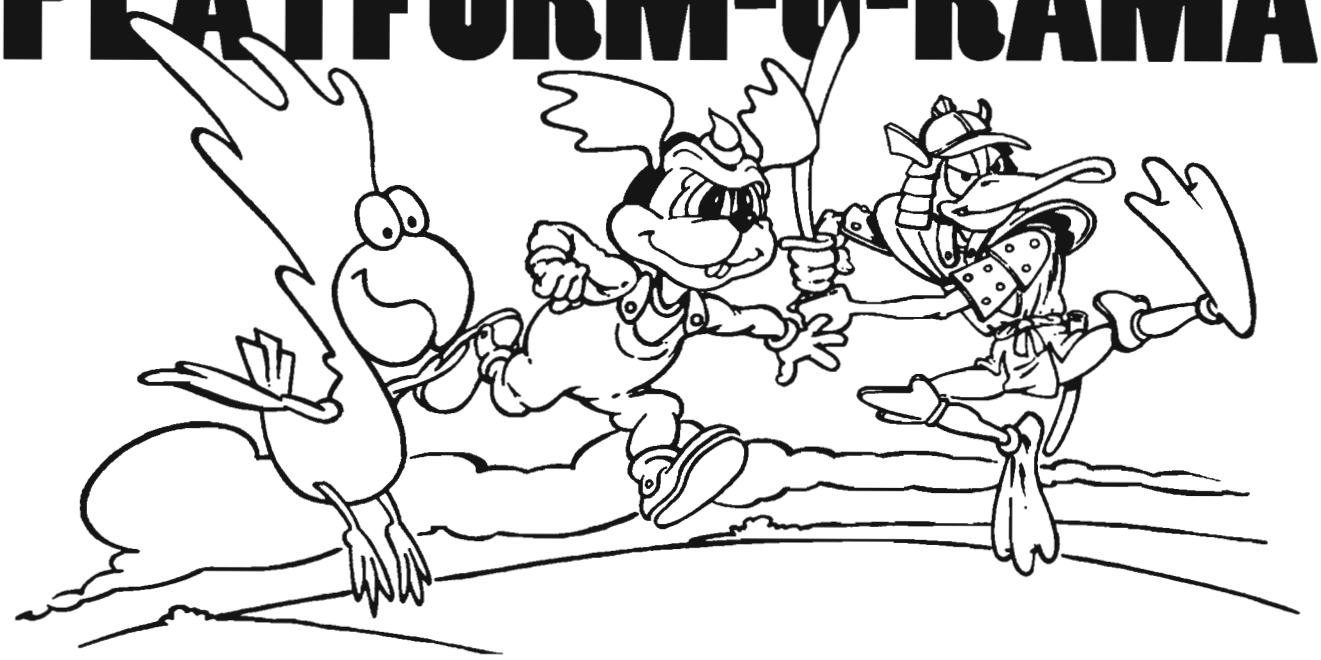
Publisher	**Merit**
Team	**Kerry Batts**
Retail Price	**$49.95**
Protection	**Manual**
Compatibility	**NTSC/PAL**

1.3 2.0 3.0 HD

The best strategy football game available for the Amiga.

B

PLATFORM-O-RAMA



I'm 23 and I feel like a grumpy old man. Back in my day, we didn't need no whole megabyte and no fancy schmancy multi-color graphics to play a computer game. We had 16K and any color we wanted as long as it was either black or white and we liked it. We made do with what we had. Back in my day, a single dot on a screen could be a fighter plane, an attack sub, or an alpine skier. We didn't know and we didn't care 'cause we were young and we were simple and we liked it.

Call me a dullard, but I miss those days. Back then games were designed with the sole purpose of being fun. Programmers had so little to work with that they had to spend a lot of time tweaking the gameplay, and the end result was usually a blocky game that was highly addictive. How could it be that games that all looked the same were so unique?

Today it seems that the main character of a game is more important than the game itself. Marketing types determine the viability of a new character first and then construct a game around it. The game is only a necessary step in the merchandising of the cute main character. The same platform game engine can be used for any number of animated characters.

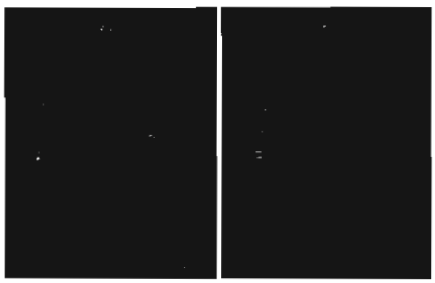
Three new characters are competing for the possibility of adorning t-shirts, cereal boxes, and becoming plush toys. They all hope to achieve the ultimate in licensing – the 30-minute advertisement disguised as a cartoon. But first they must display their unique selling abilities while jumping around bizarre, platform-filled worlds and on the heads of numerous enemies.

The character with the best chance for commercial stardom in this bunch is Alfred Chicken. Amazingly enough, the program itself was converted from the Gameboy, and accordingly, the graphics are all very large and simple. The game is also very forgiving, which makes it less of a headache to play. Alfred has his own inimitable style that makes the game hover slightly above the crowd.

Wonderdog, on the other hand, has very little going for it. The game engine from Chuck Rock 2 was recycled for this one, and the sprites for both games are very similar. Wonderdog jumps, runs, and throws stars, but he's missing that critical likability factor. The game is slick but easily forgettable.

The final made-for-TV character is Donk. Now originally this character's name was Dong, and he didn't look like a doorbell. Pressure from some stores resulted in a quick name change. The game offers a nifty simultaneous two-player mode and enhanced graphics for AGA machines. However, the necessary pixel-perfect jumps and the incredibly annoying quacking sound made each time Donk does so makes the game border on psychological torture.

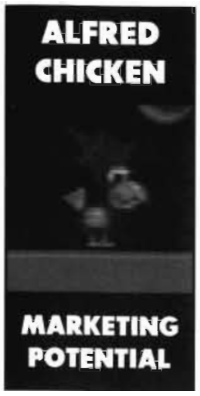
Hopefully this trend for character-inspired games will decline in the future, if only because we're running out of different types of funny looking animals to exploit. The market has become saturated to a point where uninspired platformers will no longer automatically sell. Maybe this will force game designers to concentrate once again on gameplay instead of this new-fangled platform-o-rama mentality. I want to feel young again. ■ **GM**



No, there is no two-player mode in AC. These are just gratuitous before and after shots.

Wonderdog learns a valuable lesson on the dangers of second hand smoke.

Everybody knows that two Donks are better than one.



Publisher	Mindscape
Team	Twilight
Retail Price	£25.99 ($40)
Protection	None
Compatibility	NTSC/PAL

1.3 2.0 3.0 HD

Cute, but shouldn't this have been called Alfred Rooster?

Eggsellent. Doesn't Hardee's need a mascot for their chicken dinners? Alfred is the perfect choice!

Publisher	Core Design
Team	Dan Scott
Retail Price	£25.99 ($40)
Protection	Disk Based
Compatibility	NTSC/PAL

1.3 2.0 3.0 HD

Wonderdog is more mutt than pedigree.

Howlingly bad. I think kids liked Wonderdog better back when he was known as Chuck Rock 2.

Publisher	Supervision
Team	The Hidden
Retail Price	£26.99 ($40)
Protection	Disk Based
Compatibility	PAL ONLY

1.3 2.0 AGA HD

The AGA graphics & two player mode can't save this samurai duck from drowning.

No chance. Could you picture typical parents reacting to their kid begging for this stuffed animal?

Courtroom

Legal Affairs Game

THE PLACE: FairView
THE TIME: October 16
THE CRIME: Narcotics

Police Blotter:

"At approximately 10 P.M., the evening of October 16, Officer Owen Tracker stopped a late model sedan because only one headlight on the vehicle was working. Officer Tracker, after a radio check, ascertained that the driver's registration and license were in order.

"However, he became suspicious when he observed that the rear license plates were fastened to the car by wire.

"Officer Tracker sought further identification of the vehicle and its occupants. He opened the front car door and looked for the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) imprinted on the side of the door. As he opened the door, he smelled the odor of marijuana.

"Officer Tracker then ordered the occupants out of the vehicle, searched the vehicle, and found half a marijuana cigarette in the front ashtray.

Officers Tracker and Joe Lebaron subsequently searched the trunk and found $4800 in cash and 24 one-pound bags of marijuana. They arrested the driver, one Juan Merry, for possession of narcotics.

"The defendant claims that the police had no 'probable cause' to search his vehicle, and that the evidence should be supressed because it is the result of an illegal search."

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* English Audio Gallery translates into German, French and Spanish. Ask for French or Spanish manual. Also available English/Oriental, with Chinese/Japanese translations.

Digital Orchestra

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SA03 Reeds - Clarinet, Oboe, Saxophone, Bassoon, etc.
SA04 Strings - Violin, Viola, Cello, Orch Hits, etc.
SA05 Guitars - Acoustic, Electric, Lead, Jazz, etc.
SA06 Pianos - Piano, Electric Piano, Honky-Tonk, etc.
SA07 Latin Percussion - Timbale, Conga, Bongo, etc.
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SA09 Drums 2 - Hi-Hat, Cymbal, etc.
SA10 Percussive - Steel Drum, Taiko, Bell, Woodblock, etc.
SA11 Organs - Cathedral, Electric, Pantoneon, Reed, etc.
SA12 Ethnic - Sitar, Koto, Bagpipe, Kokyu, Banjo, etc.
SA13 ChrPerc - Marimba, Xylophone, Celesta, etc.
SA14 Pipes - Flute, Piccolo, Recorder, Whistle, etc.
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I know what you're thinking, and the answer is no – this game has nothing to do with G.I. Joe. Instead, it's the story of a graffiti artist that looks like Elvis gone punk (before he got fat) trying to save the world from the evil Professor X and his minions. And it's all wrapped up in a well-designed platform game.

The game has a great look due to the sharp graphics. It also includes many nice touches, like the ability to grab a ledge and pull yourself up when you find that you've jumped just that much too short, and a manual chock full of stories that make excellent bathroom reading.

Street kids like Joe have foresaken knives and guns these days for the more politically-correct weapon, The Chainsaw.

Power-ups and weapons ranging from throwing stars to chainsaws are easy to find, though extra lives require more looking. This is not to say the game is easy; the difficulty level increases at just the right rate to make Yo! Joe! hopelessly addictive.

The game has only two faults. First, it lacks passwords, and second, turning the music off doesn't insure that it will stay off. But these minor complaints don't take much away from a marvelous example of the platform genre. ■ **CB**

Publisher	Daze
Team	Play Byte
Retail Price	£26.99 ($40)
Protection	Disk Based
Features	Two Buttons
Compatibility	NTSC/PAL

1.3 2.0 3.0 HD

If Elvis was alive, would he endorse this game?

B+

OVERDRIVE

*This is **not** a review of Overdrive by Team 17.*

I received information about the release of Overdrive from Infacto about four years ago. Time has definitely not been good to this game. Overdrive more closely resembles a SEUCK game than one of the current crop of shoot 'em-ups.

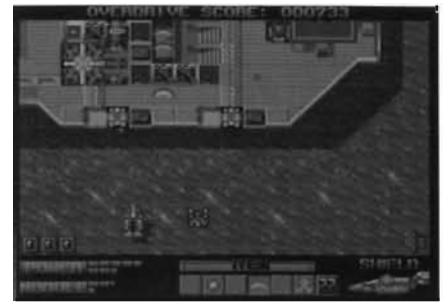
The game box is covered with hype – 600 screens, 128 colors, multi-directional scrolling. It should have read: the graphics are unimaginative, the sounds are lame and often irritating, and game play requires more effort than running a marathon.

Apparently the object of Level 1 is to overcome your struggle with controlling the ship while being "directed" around the screen. Forced is more like it. It felt as if my ship was being towed and I was riding shotgun. Many times when a power-up was available for the taking, my ship was scrolled away from it. Playing tug-of-war with a computer game is not my idea of a good time. (There is a way to alter the scrolling but I did not find it particularly effective.)

Picture this scenario: Your ship doesn't rotate. It is being "nudged" around by the program. Objects are attacking from all directions. Weapons basically shoot in one direction. Several enemies have you targeted from the rear. And you have no rear-firing weapon. The result? Projectiles up your tailpipe. And guess what happens when you need to destroy the big-mutha nasty without a "directionally-correct" weapon?

The later levels improve. Somewhat. The graphics are marginally better and the screens (thankfully) only scroll vertically. But the controls still aren't smooth enough, weapon allocation is a mystery, power-ups remain elusive, and there are way way way too many bad guys to deal with given your ship's limitations.

The nice introductory screens give no warning of the nightmare that awaits you.



I've got a spaceship, right? How come I just can't fly over this thing?

Words truly cannot describe my aggravation with Overdrive. I could not load either of two copies on any of three one meg A500s even though it is supposed to run on all Amigas. Amazingly the program informed me that it needed one meg for this version. Like I said, on three ONE MEG A500s! It finally booted on a A1200 with two meg. I'm still wondering why the game needs all that memory anyway.

My editor said that I couldn't write that this game is crap. Hey, wait a minute. I am the editor. Ok, this game is crap. This would have been rated a little higher if it was a budget game, but there are dozens of better shooters to spend money on. Games are supposed to be fun – this one isn't.

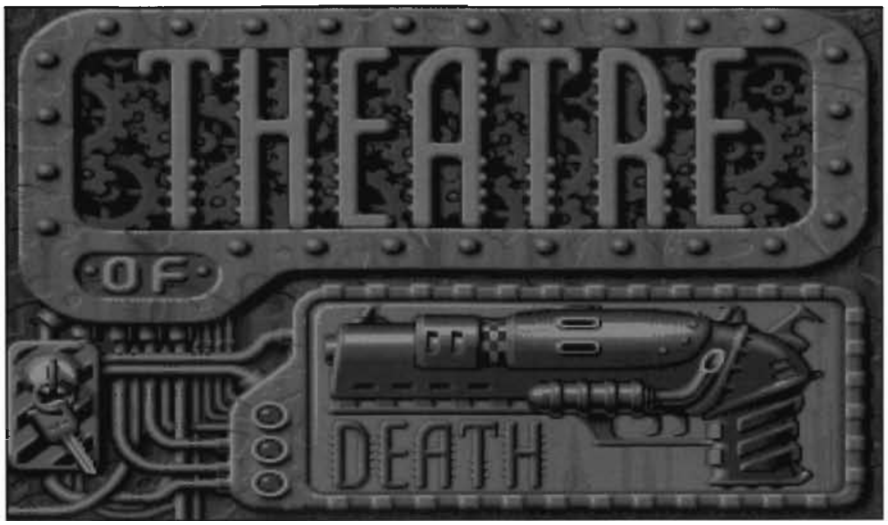
One last thing. The game box also boasts of over three hours of continuous play. Overdrive will test your patience three minutes into the game. But remember that I played it so you don't have to. ■ **BW**

Publisher	Infacto
Team	In House
Retail Price	$59.95
Protection	Disk Based
Compatibility	NTSC/PAL

1.3 2.0 3.0 HD

An undertaking that is underachieving and underwhelming.

F



Winter, the season to settle down by a nice warm fire and cuddle with that special someone. A time of peace, a time of love. Well, not for me. For me, this is the time to sit back and indulge in one of my little pastimes. That's right, death and destruction. Now since most modern societies frown upon such behavior (officially, anyway!), I have found a good substitute for wiping out my hometown in a cloud of nuclear doom – the aptly titled Theatre of Death.

As with many games from our British buddies, there is a thinly woven veil of a plot to lend justification to the ensuing carnage. In this case you are the commander of a heavily armed combat force. Standing in the way of world domination are four of the most ruthless warlords this side of Armageddon. Computer controlled, of course. As you wage unholy havoc across the world, you will engage the enemy in four different environments: grasslands, desert, arctic wastelands, and the ultimate conflict on the moon. Included are all the basic ingredients for a recipe of chaos – tanks, helicopters, rocket launchers, flame throwers. A commander's dream.

TOD puts you in the general's chair as you command small units (platoons) of men on various missions. You will view the action from two different screens. The first screen gives a bird's eye view of the action below, putting you up close and personal to the battle. Here is where you assertively take control and lead your troops forth into glory or to an early grave. This mode is played on a par similar to the most heated action games. The gameplay is fast and furious – waves of enemy soldiers race across the screen looking to add to their body counts.

While running over someone with a heavily armored vehicle, do you say "Tanks"?

By switching to the map mode, you will get an overall picture of the battle. Here you can give out orders to individual platoon leaders and they will follow them as best they can. The orders available are simple yet comprehensive enough to allow for some serious tactics. This is the only mode where the entire battlefield is displayed. A wise commander will often access this map screen to better define his or her position in the battle.

Each battle zone has over a dozen missions, and they vary greatly in difficulty and composition. You may be ordered to attack a convoy with but a squad of four men. Later in the campaign you may have to free some beleaguered POWs with but a lone survivor. The playability factor is high, and I found myself returning time after time to complete a particularly tough mission.

The graphics are fairly well drawn, and there are several nice (if not disturbing) touches. As soldiers die in a hail of gunfire their heads sometimes disintegrate in a plume of gore. Blood splotches mark the ground where many a brave soldier were crushed by an armored onslaught. If you enjoyed running people over in FirePower, then you will love this.

There are sounds galore in this binary battlefield. When you call in an airstrike (Did I forget to mention the airstrikes?!), you are treated to a familiar digitized tune. Men scream out in agony when gunned down and all this to the accompaniment of a rousing military score. Actually the manual states that there is a way to shut off the music, but I couldn't get it to work.

As with any game, this one, too, has shortcomings. The satellite cameras are difficult to use effectively. In many of the scenarios, the play is so fast that during the order phase, the battle will already be well out of hand. TOD loses a lot of entertainment value when things progress so rapidly that there is no time to react.

In addition, the enemy is very aggressive and will not hesitate to take huge losses to achieve a victory. On the other hand, your units are somewhat dim-witted. This becomes the game's biggest disappointment. Without taking direct command over your units, you cannot efficiently or effectively control them. While they follow the issued commands, they do not show any initiative of their own. They will, like lambs to the slaughter, mill around as the enemy forces flank them and wipe them out. Because of this flaw in the artificial intelligence, TOD becomes a glorified arcade battle-rama. This is not necessarily bad, just a missed opportunity to make a good game great.

Theatre of Death has a lot to offer but doesn't know which direction it wants to take. While not a joystick jockey's dream game, it does contain many elements that are arcade in feel. There is also no sense of an overall grand strategy, but you will find that sound strategic and tactical thought will lead to victory.

Visually and sonically the game gets good marks, and the large number of scenarios and variants will keep you coming back for some time. If the thought of playing a game with little people running around shooting each other appeals to you, get Theatre of Death. You won't be sorry.

■ **MATT FOWLER**

Editor's Note: Matt really loves this kind of game. Your actual mileage may vary.

Publisher	Psygnosis
Team	Dave Anthony
Retail Price	£29.99 ($45)
Protection	Disk Based
Compatibility	PAL/NTSC**

1.3 2.0 3.0 HD

Like playing Syndicate using a team of dullards.

B-

PRIME MOVER

Psygnosis makes another attempt at qualifying in the motorcycle racing scene, this time using an arcade-style game named Prime Mover as its entry. The company is hoping that this sprite-based racer will make gamers forget the Red Zone tragedy.

The best way to describe Prime Mover is to say that it's competent. It does everything well enough, but it doesn't offer anything new or different. The graphics are only a little above the norm, although several people, while watching the game being played, have commented on how really nice they thought it looked. The sound effects are adequate, but certainly nothing more.

All of the basics are included – choice of racing machines, several race tracks, season stats – but there aren't any of the niceties that turn average games into good ones. However, the true test of an arcade racer is speed, and there's no doubt that Prime Mover plays at a reasonable pace. Unfortunately, it seems to be missing one important ingredient – excitement. It's pretty dull stuff, and it felt more like a leisurely ride than racing. All I really wanted to do was get to the finish.

If the review seems apathetic it's because my attitude is basically take-it-or-leave-it. Prime Mover is not the first motorcycle game I'd pull off my shelves to play. As far as arcade types go, I would much rather take a few laps with RVF Honda. And for pure white-knuckled, strap-on-your-helmet racing action the champ is still Thalion's No Second Prize.

In the world of computer motorcycle racing, Prime Mover is competitive, but too many horsepower short of getting to the winner's circle. ■ **BW**

Race around a track that has really big pylons.

Publisher	Psygnosis
Team	Interactivision
Retail Price	$49.99
Protection	Disk Based
Compatibility	NTSC/PAL

1.3 2.0 3.0 HD

An average race sim that offers little excitement.

C

It's usually the case that a computer game sequel offers more levels, more gameplay, or a new goal. Nicky 2 offers... a goose. Very few of you out there have probably heard of the original Nicky Boom, a standard platformer that received (and deserved) little attention. The sequel offers nothing new, and the graphics are actually worse than the original. The main character looks awful in the game – his constant dopey grin is enough to drive even Mr. Rogers into a swearing fit of rage. (Admit it, you'd all like to see that guy crack just once.)

Nicky is able to fly around the screens with the aid of a magic goose which can be found on each level. In the first game Nicky did away with the evil witch, so he now has to find her equally diabolical sister. It seems that evilness and witchery run in the family, and Nicky has a score to settle with the sibling. With the aid of his feathered friend, Nicky has to find the evil witch's lair. To defeat the enemies, Nicky can jump on their heads (of course) or lob all sorts of bizarre things at them, including apples and logs (logs?).

Nicky downs yet another villain with his patented "log drop to the head" move.

Bored yet? You will be after five minutes with this tired take on the platform genre. All the usual elements are here: a mindless storyline, an irritating background tune, and the same monotonous gameplay as so many others before it. In fact there is not one novel idea implemented in the game. We here at *Amiga Game Zone* have not-so-affectionately subtitled the game Nicky 2: *A Geek and His Goose.* ■ **GM**

Publisher	Daze
Team	Microids
Retail Price	£25.99 ($40)
Protection	Manuel
Compatibility	NTSC/PAL

1.3 2.0 3.0 HD

Nicky 2 fails to surpass its dismal predecessor. A sorry excuse for a full price game.

D

Bob's Bad Day

Bob's Bad Day is an action/puzzle game that is a little on the odd side. Bob is an everyday Joe who happened to be turned into a bouncing ball by an evil wizard. You must guide Bob through numerous mazes where precious coins must be collected before time expires.

This may seem simple enough, but a major difficulty arises in guiding Bob. Since Bob is now a ball, he must abide by the laws of evil wizard physics. He always falls in the direction of gravity, but the direction of gravity changes throughout the levels! To compensate, you must rotate the maze and get Bob to bounce around it safely.

So do a lot of people, Bob, but they don't brag about it.

Fighting gravity isn't the only problem. There are assorted power-ups located throughout the levels which also affect Bob's movement. They can make it either easier or more difficult to maneuver him around the maze. Switchers, which change the direction of gravity, are also dispersed throughout most levels as well. To complicate things even further, there are nasties like rotating spikes, killer balls, and plungers that must be avoided.

In this game Bob only has one life, and there are multiple ways for him to have a really bad day. As time ticks away, a picture of Bob at the bottom of the screen turns greener. When time expires, he will throw up and die. (*I wondered what Linda Blair was doing after the Exorcist. – Ed*) And if Bob is unlucky enough to touch the various nasties, he loses a certain amount of coins previously gathered on that level. If he doesn't have any coins left, he sputters around the screen like a popped balloon.

Controlling Bob is the major part of this game, so the first 25 levels are designed to help you learn how to guide him. There are 100 levels in all, and if you progress far enough, Bob's body (the Body Ball) will be introduced. You must then guide both Bob and the Body Ball through the levels. Each level has a password, so you do not have to replay all previously completed levels the next time the game is booted.

While the maze rotates smoothly and quickly, the graphics are not the usual eye-popping stuff I am used to seeing from Psygnosis. Even the cover art for the packaging and manual is sub-par. The music is ok, but I could not find a way to turn it off. The sound effects are sufficient, but nothing spectacular.

Bob's Bad Day is very similar to the bonus level in Sega's Sonic the Hedgehog. The game is cute and challenging, but the concept just didn't hold my attention. Each new level seems too much like the last with only minor modifications.

This game will not appeal to everyone. If you really liked the bonus level in Sonic and wished there was an entire game based on that, well, here it is. Otherwise, playing Bob's Bad Day may bring about a fairly unpleasant day of your own.

■ **JASON LOWE**

Publisher	Psygnosis
Team	The Dome
Retail Price	£29.99 ($45)
Protection	Disk Based
Compatibility	NTSC/PAL

1.3 2.0 3.0 HD

An offbeat puzzler for those with an adequate supply of Dramamine.

C+

BEASTLORD

Imagine a game which combines arcade action, the challenge of puzzle-solving, and character interaction. Sound good? Now imagine that Beastlord actually makes this promising combo work because frankly, it doesn't.

Beastlord is your standard arcade adventure fare in which you run about the lands collecting objects that when used properly will lead you to the end-of-game encounter with The Dark One. Along the way you will also need to fight the baddies for food and money (which is positively annoying, by the way). So much for depth and originality, what about the rest of the game?

Here is a case where the whole is less than the sum of its rather mediocre parts. There just isn't anything particularly good about Beastlord. The puzzles are ok, the graphics and sounds are poor, and the parallax scrolling is somewhat slow and jerky. And what else can you say about a game in which the main character, during friendly conversation with the locals, gets punched in the kidneys by the bad guys?

Kids, don't wish for a job as a game reviewer. You may get stuck with games like Beastlord.

Now imagine that playing Beastlord was just a bad dream, and boot up Shadow of the Beast III.

■ **BW**

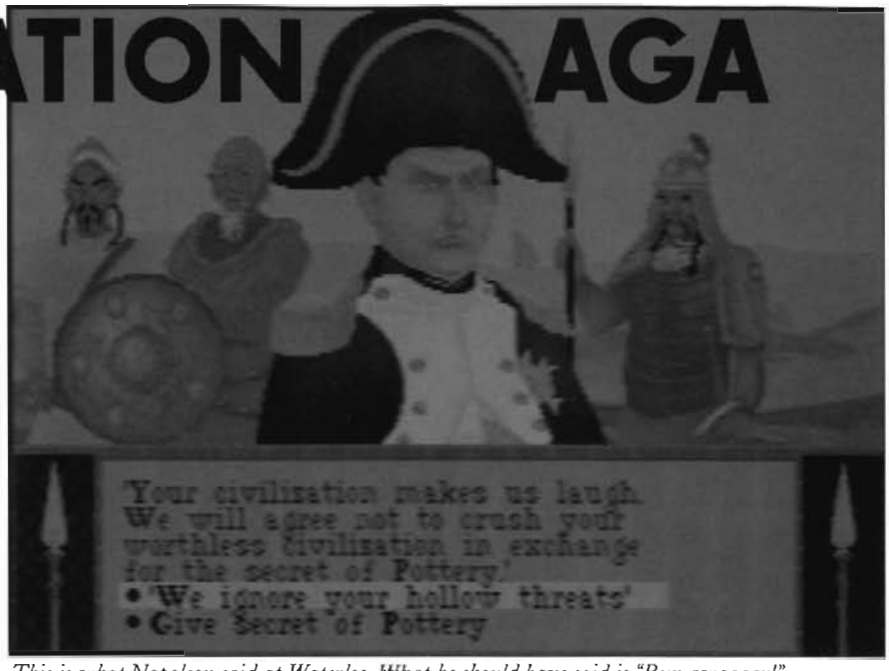
Publisher	Grandslam
Team	WJS Design
Retail Price	£19.99 ($30)
Protection	Disk Based
Compatibility	PAL/NTSC**

1.3 2.0 3.0 HD

A poor attempt at ripping off the Beast trilogy.

D

CIVILIZATION AGA



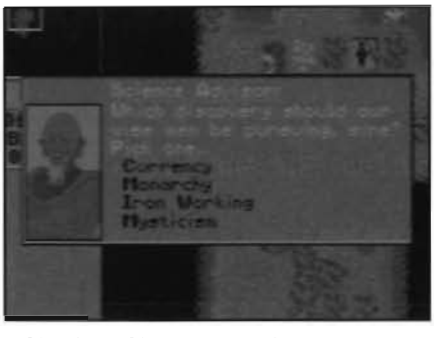
This is what Napoleon said at Waterloo. What he should have said is "Run awaaaay!"

Been living in a cave or praying on the mountains of Tibet lately? Those of you whose hands aren't raised have no doubt heard of Sid Meier's conquer-the-world game called Civilization. The first Amiga version was released about a year ago and was well-received. Many players, however, had a few gripes, mostly having to do with the look-and-feel of the game. As is too often the case with PC-to-Amiga ports, Civilization suffered from "conversionitis", the dreaded result of not optimizing the program for the Amiga.

Civilization AGA is MPS Labs' reply to those complaints. This new version was designed to take advantage of the AA chipset found in the latest Amigas. Has it succeeded? Before giving the answer, let's review the basics of Civilization for our readers who may be cavepersons or monks.

Essentially, Civilization is one of the now fashionable "god sims" which has you become a leader of the tribe of your choice. You are totally responsible for your people's destiny. This not an easy task, especially when there are up to seven computer historical leaders attempting to ruin your plans. All of the major components that will alter that destiny are yours to control, including economic, political, and the obligatory military factors.

But the twist in this game – the "hook", if you will – is that much of your success (or failure, in my case) is based on obtaining new technologies. What advances do you direct your scientists to research? Religion? Medicine? Gunpowder? The technology level of your tribe, as well as the specific areas of acquired knowledge, directly affects your strategy in all other facets. This puts extra emphasis on making the correct research decisions. The real beauty of Civilization is that all of these interrelations are nearly invisible to the player. You are free to enjoy the game without getting bogged down by the details.



Choosing which scientific advancements to research is critical to your success.

So, does Civilization AGA offer an improved product? Well, yes and no. The AGA version is certainly more aesthetically pleasing. (*It looks better. – Ed*) There are more colors and more sounds, and the animations are smoother and more detailed. The map screen even shows waves lapping up on the shore. You would be hard pressed to tell it apart from the VGA version.

But not everything is well in CivAGA land. It seems that all of those graphic enhancements have come at the expense of speed. The screen fades are agonizingly slow. When there is a lot of activity during the game (about 1400 AD or so), the time between turns increases dramatically, at least on a standard 1200. I loaded a saved game position into both the regular and AGA versions, made the same moves, and timed the wait. It took nearly three times longer (about a minute) to resume play in the AGA version. It may be that the computer is taking longer to "think", but I didn't notice any significant difference in its strategy. Curious, eh?

In addition, the problems that irked me the most about playing the regular version have not been remedied. The AGA version still does not use Intuition for menu selection nor a hardware sprite for the mouse pointer. The program insists on making you wait for it to recognize a *left* button press to view the menu and when making a selection. Plus, the mouse pointer flickers as the screen is updated. AARGH! I hate that. (*Calm down. – Ed*)

So what to do about a recommendation. Without doubt Civilization is the recognized champion of the god sims. There is no denying its completeness, from making decisions on technological advances to negotiating peace treaties. The best part is that playing is just so much fun that it's addictive. You will find yourself thinking "just one more turn", and before you know it 500 game years have passed.

If you don't already own Civilization and you have an AGA machine, you should probably get the AGA version, keeping the above caveats in mind. For those of you who are thinking of upgrading, you must decide if the enhanced graphic displays are worth the decrease in speed.

Now if you will excuse me, I have some pressing business with the Babylonians. Take that, Hammurabi. ■ **BW**

Publisher	**Kompart**
Team	**MPS Labs**
Retail Price	**£39.95 ($60)**
Protection	**Manual**
Compatibility	**NTSC/PAL**

1.3 2.0 AGA HD

The best god sim with better graphics but longer waits.

B+

OSCAR AGA

There are many mysteries in this world that may never be solved: Who built Stonehenge? Where is Jimmy Hoffa? Was that really Elvis that I ordered the burger and fries from? But the biggest mystery of all may be, "What is Oscar?" We know for sure that he's neither hedgehog nor plumber, but he's ready to jump into the platform fray with Sonic and Mario.

The plot in this platformer has a Hollywood twist. You must guide Oscar around seven worlds with different movie themes collecting little Oscar statues, and then find the exit. There's nothing new to the gameplay – you run around and jump from platform to platform and onto the heads of anything that gets in your way. The control system is on par with other platformers, though jumps require practice and prayer.

Oscar is the best-looking platform game I've ever seen. Flair did a superb job with the AGA chipset, bringing us beautifully detailed backgrounds that scroll smoothly behind the gorgeous foregrounds. (*The detail does make the enemies difficult to see at times, however. – Ed*)

If the game's biggest strength is its looks, its weakness is its sounds. The music is okay, but the in-game effects are irritating, especially the "boing" whenever Oscar jumps on a baddie. This annoyed one of our editors so much that he became violent and had to be sedated. (*No, I was sedated after hearing the little weasel-thing say "Thanks, everybody" for the 167th time. – Ed*)

All things considered, Oscar isn't a bad buy. It's a nice platformer to show to your friends, but you just might want to turn down the sound. ■ **CB**

Publisher	**Flair**
Team	**In House**
Retail Price	**£25.99 ($40)**
Protection	**Manual**
Compatibility	**PAL/NTSC****

1.3 2.0 **AGA** HD

A great-looking platform game with the sounds from hell.

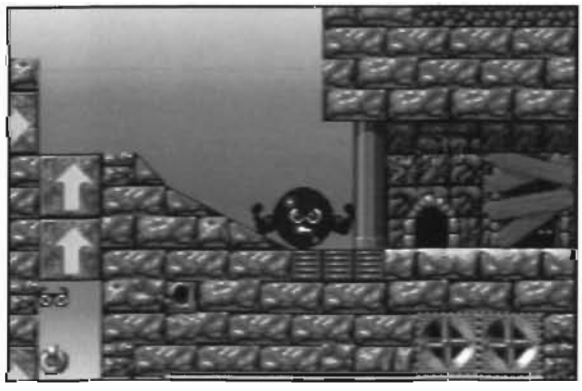
B

MORPH AGA

Are you bored with today's gaming scene? If you see another platform, do you think you're going to jump from one? Well, don't cut that bungee cord just yet – Morph may be the game for you.

Morph is the victim of an experiment gone awry. In the game you must guide him to find the parts of the machine that will reverse the effects of the experiment. In the meantime, he can "morph" into four different states: a cannonball, an inflatable ball, water, and (we hope odorless) gas. Each state has its own particular advantages and disadvantages. In order to solve the level, the player must decide when each should be used. To make matters more difficult, Morph has only a limited number of these transformations.

This game isn't purely a puzzle game á la Lemmings – some joystick coordination is required. This is by no means detrimental to the game, since it adds to the challenge by forcing the player to move quickly in order to beat the two minute timer.



Brains, not muscles, will help you solve the puzzles.

In the AGA version, some levels and sound effects were added. Unlike some AGA enhanced games that look cluttered, Morph's screens are very clean and look great.

The game's only major flaw is that it doesn't have a password system. This is a serious detriment to a puzzle game, especially one with forty-eight levels that Mother Teresa wouldn't have the patience to complete in one sitting. The demo sequence is also a bit unstable, sometimes locking up for no apparent reason.

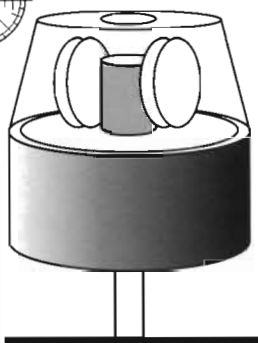
With that said, Morph is a game that's pleasantly different. It's a good buy for the platform weary or for others looking for something out of the ordinary. But because of the lack of passwords, the easily frustrated should probably pass this one up. ■ **CB**

Publisher	**Millenium**
Team	**Peter Johnson**
Retail Price	**£25.99 ($40)**
Protection	**None**
Compatibility	**NTSC/PAL**

1.3 2.0 **AGA** HD

A pleasantly different puzzler for the patient gamer.

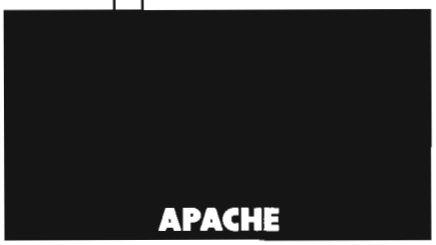
B+



Blue Light Specials

Games reviewed in the Blue Light Specials section are budget priced, and the grade given reflects this fact. Today's bargains are all from Team 17.

BY BRIAN WOLSIC



APACHE

Apache is an arcade helicopter game in which the object is to rescue the hostages while blasting the enemy. This may sound familiar, but Desert Strike it's not. Actually it's more reminiscent of the 8-bit classic Choplifter, but with a zero fun quotient.

There's not much to like. Joystick control feels unresponsive, the nasties are difficult to destroy (you're better off avoiding them), and there seems to be a lack of power-ups. The graphics and parallax scrolling are ok, but not nearly good enough to overcome the repetitive gameplay. And, of course, there's a bonus level that has you collect hearts. Hearts??

Apache is a little like Project X in a helicopter suit. Think of it as the local garage band doing its rendition of your favorite song. You're far better off playing the original. Save your money on Apache and buy Project X instead.

Apache is included as a free bonus in some Alien Breed 2 and Body Blows Galactic boxes.

Publisher	Team 17
Team	D. Broadhurst
Retail Price	N/A
Protection	Disk Based
Compatibility	PAL ONLY

1.3 2.0 3.0 HD

Team 17 is thinking of releasing this on budget. Why, oh why?

D

CARDIAXX

The claim that Cardiaxx is fast is definitely true, but that really doesn't matter in this horizontal scrolling shooter. Gameplay is confined to such a small area at one time that speed, if anything, is a detriment.

The graphics are very plain, almost colorless, and the alien nasties look all too familiar. I could live with those complaints if there was a reasonable way to control the ship while shooting. It is by pure luck that you can manage to stop long enough to get off a good blast or two. And while trying to outmaneuver the bad guys, you will inevitably fire your weapon in the opposite direction. Each level also has a time limit so while you're fighting the controls you're also fighting the clock.

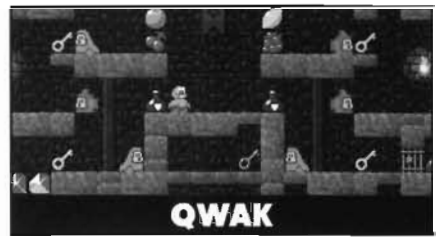
The only thing even mildly arresting about Cardiaxx is the '70s rock sound of the music. And with a name like Cardiaxx, shouldn't the hearts have been in this game?

Publisher	Team 17
Team	Eclipse Design
Retail Price	£9.99 ($15)
Protection	Disk Based
Compatibility	PAL ONLY

1.3 2.0 3.0 HD

A Defender-like game that loses control.

D



QWAK

Here's an example of why budget games don't have to be "fowl". Qwak is about a duck (surprise!) who must travel through eight magical worlds to reach..uh..the end. Admittedly that's not much of a plot, but you don't need one to enjoy this Bubble Bobble-like platformer.

Qwak offers nothing new – you collect the keys, open the doors, avoid the baddies – but the presentation is wonderful. It's cute and colorful, and is full of bonuses and power-ups. (Your weapon is "eggs"-tra special.) It also offers a simultaneous two-player mode which adds even more to the playability. Certain scenes include a special feature which makes for more of a challenge, like flying ghosts and...oh, you'll just have to find out the rest for yourself.

Qwak is sure to be entertaining for the kids – or the kid at heart. (Ok, I'll stop with the heart thing.) ■

Publisher	Team 17
Team	J. Woodhouse
Retail Price	£12.99 ($20)
Protection	None
Compatibility	PAL/NTSC**

1.3 2.0 3.0 HD

Qwak is better than many full-priced platformers.

B+

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CHEATS & TIPS

BODY BLOWS
CHEAT

On the options screen, hold player one's joystick to the left and player two's joystick to the right for a few seconds. A cheat menu will appear.

CHAOS ENGINE
CHEAT & LEVEL CODES

To start level 1 with loads of money, enter all Ts, Xs, or Ys on the code screen.

Or try these configurations:

Level 2.....XJKSOMH1Z92V
Level 3 .....C4HQY0Q4NJ3M
Level 4 .....V7YRZK8D13GS

DESERT STRIKE
LEVEL CODES

Level 2 .....BQOQAEB
Level 3.....KLJLTOE
Level 4.....WEIVVJT

FLASHBACK
CHEAT & LEVEL CODES

To pass through a closed door, walk up to it and turn around. Now hold the fire button and tap the joystick away from the door (like you were running), but quickly move back to the door and release the fire button. Like a ghost, you will pass through the door!

Level	Easy	Normal	Expert
1	WIND	FIRE	MINE
2	SPIN	BURN	YOUR
3	KAVA	EGGS	NEST
4	HIRO	GURT	LINE
5	TEST	CHIP	LISA
6	GOLD	TREE	MARY
7	WALL	BOLD	MICE

LEMMINGS 2
CHEAT

On the options screen, press load, then cancel to stop the music, then click on all four corners of the screen. A lemming will say "let's go". Now you can play any level from any tribe.

LOST VIKINGS
LEVEL CODES

Level 1 .....STRT
Level 2.....GR8T
Level 3 .....TLPT
Level 4 .....GRND
Level 5 .....LLM0
Level 6.....FL0T
Level 7.....TRSS
Level 8.....PRHS
Level 9.....CVRN
Level 10.....BBLS
Level 11 .....VLCN
Level 12.....QCKS
Level 13 .....PHR0
Level 14 .....C1R0
Level 15 .....SPKS
Level 16 .....JMNN
Level 17 .....SMRT
Level 18.....V8TR
Level 19.....NFL8
Level 20.....WKYY
Level 21 .....CMB0
Level 22.....8BLL
Level 23 .....TTRS
Level 24.....JLLY
Level 25 .....PLNG
Level 26.....BTRY
Level 27.....JNKR
Level 28.....CBLT
Level 29.....H0PP
Level 30 .....TRDR
Level 31.....FNTM
Level 32.....WRLR
Level 33.....TRPD
Level 34.....TFFF
Level 35.....FRGT
Level 36.....4RN4
Level 37 .....MSTR

SUPERFROG
LEVEL CODES

Level 1-2 234644
Level 1-3 447464
Level 1-4 787822
Level 2-1 392822
Level 2-2 446364
Level 2-3 984448
Level 2-4 477444
Level 3-1 343522
Level 3-2 882311
Level 3-3 992344
Level 3-4 091332
Level 4-1 467464
Level 4-2 818234
Level 4-3 182394
Level 4-4 298383
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Level 5-4 093152
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Level 6-2 981122
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Level 6-4 398112

SYNDICATE
CHEATS

Try these company/team names:

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Allows you to research quickly.

NUK THEM
Allows you to play any country.

OWN THEM
Allows you to own all countries.

ROB A BANK
Gives you 100 million credits.

MARKS TEAM
Gives you the ultimate team.

(Compiled by Joe Palmer)

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SYNDICATE PLAYER'S GUIDE

BULLFROG'S ALEX TROWERS EXPLAINS INTELLIGENCE PERCEPTION ADRENALIN

One of the major gameplay features in Syndicate is the use of the slider bars to affect each agent's performance. It is possible to complete the game without altering the bars at all, but this is not recommended.

Each bar has three values: the Actual level (lighter bar), Grabber level (darker bar) and Natural level (white line). The level that you set is the **Actual level**. This value affects the agent directly. Moving the Actual level to the right of the Natural level raises the amount of fluid in the body, while moving it to the left lowers the amount.

The **Grabber level** is the agent's natural bodily defense system. Overdosing on any fluid will cause damage to the body, so various systems will try to counter this. The Grabber level will work its way towards the Actual level. When they meet, the Grabber begins to drag the Actual level back towards the Natural level.

The **Natural level** is the base amount of fluid in the body. Adding extra fluid will raise the Natural level in the body and thus reduce the body's capacity for more. With a high Natural level, an agent will not be able to gain as much from a fluid boost because the Grabber level will react more quickly.

What all of this actually means is that you cannot turn an agent into a superhuman indefinitely. Boosting all of the values at the start of a mission and trying to keep the agent running at full throttle for the whole game is impossible. There are two times when you should consider resting your agents. If you are expecting to have a prolonged period of extreme fluid use, then rest the agents beforehand. A second time occurs after boosting your agents' levels due to major activity. It is advisable at this point to find a quiet spot (if possible) in order to return your agents to their normal states. Resting means decreasing fluid levels to their lowest amounts. For example, if you expect a situation to demand high perception, then reduce the agent's perception level beforehand. This will trick the body's defenses (the Grabber level) and give the agent a longer period of higher perception.

Here's a more detailed description of what the three attributes do:

In its simplest form, the **adrenalin** level alters the agent's speed. The higher the amount, the faster the agent will run. If the adrenalin level is reduced to the minimum, the agent enters "rest" mode. The body reacts to the fluids quicker and tries to balance itself. It also allows enhanced chest modifications to conduct spot repairs on the body more quickly than normal.

Perception governs how aware the agent is of his surroundings. When it comes to weapon use, a high perception will result in very accurate shooting (excellent for sniping). Low perception results in shots going wild. Perception is best used in conjunction with intelligence to allow the agent to react to threats in a wider area. Of course, if you don't want the agent to react, then lower the perception so that he cannot see them. (This is useful for *not* shooting people that you want to keep alive.)

The **intelligence** of an agent affects how he responds in certain situations. With high intelligence, he reacts to people considered to be threats. A threat is defined as someone trying to shoot the agent. If the agent has a selection of weapons, he will pick the best available weapon to eliminate the threat. This is very useful for letting the agent clear out hostile buildings as you cannot see the targets. If the agent doesn't have a weapon or he is out of ammo, a high intelligence ensures that he will run away from the threat. Unfortunately, having a high intelligence means that the agent is unlikely to make a mad dash for a gun on the floor when it is surrounded by armed psychos. There are also times when you don't want the agent to whip out his weapon and start blasting (e.g., when you are surrounded by police officers). You will want to lower his intelligence level for these types of situations.

As you can see there are many different combinations of Intelligence, Perception, and Adrenalin levels. Experimentation is the order of the day.

Next month we'll print walkthrus for what Alex affectionately calls "The Bastard Levels".

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Photo by Dana Simmons

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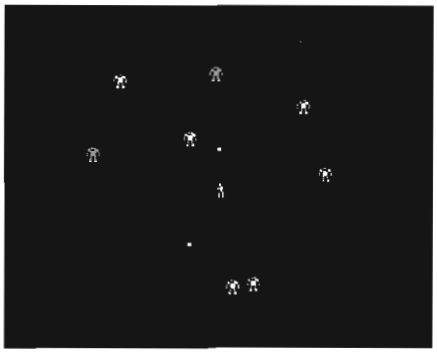
PD ARENA

BY RALPH BARBAGALLO

Public Domain and Shareware programs are vital to the Amiga gaming community. While many major developers may be more than reluctant to produce software for our beloved computer, there is a large group of Amigaphiles out there who will spend many hours hacking away at their own game projects for little or no reward. However, the payback for these true Amigans is the knowledge that others get enjoyment from the fruits of their labor. (And, of course, getting the occasional registration check in the mail.)

This section is dedicated to those intrepid souls who choose to take the Amiga software situation into their own hands by producing quality games using their skills. Hopefully, we will continue to see extremely strong support in the freely-distributable software arena.

ZERBERK 1.3



One good thing about PD/Shareware/Freeware games is that a lot of authors choose to go back to their gaming roots. They often seek out the video game classics that built the electronic gaming industry and attempt to replicate them, or even improve them on the Amiga. Matthias Bock has done just that with his fabulous game, Zerberk.

Zerberk, as you can probably guess by the name, is a '90s version of Stern's classic arcade game, Berzerk. In Zerberk, you must travel through a never-ending world of

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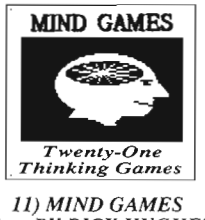

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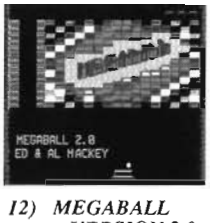

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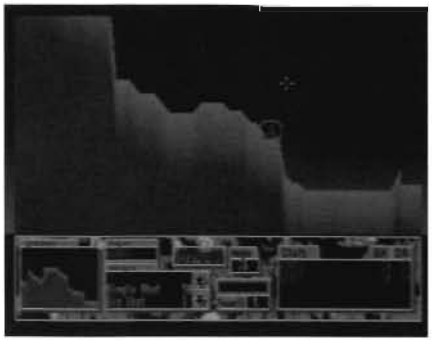
mazes, dodging bullets and destroying enemies. Matthias has changed around a bit of the game for the '90s. Instead of just fighting Robots, there are also other enemies like Elexereions and Neuronics. Of course, Evil Otto is in this rendition as well. In addition, many mystery bonus icons are randomly scattered about the levels. These bonuses could be lucrative – or fatal. The game also contains several difficulty levels and a 1-4 player option.

With Zerberk's classic gameplay, improvements, and multitasking abilities, Matthias has created one of the best Freeware games in quite a while. Make sure you set aside some time because Zerberk will eat up a lot of it.

SCORCHED TANKS 0.95

In computer gaming's primitive days, one of the earliest wargames was called Artillery. In Artillery, the players commanded two gun turrets placed on a randomly generated mountainside. Each player adjusted the angle of the gun and the amount of gunpowder for the shot according to obstacles, wind, and other elements in



an attempt to destroy the other player.

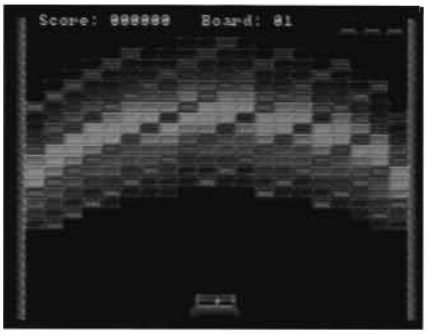
In the 1990s, gamers have become a bit more sophisticated. People want more options and better graphics to go along with the gameplay that made the classic games so much fun to play. This is where Scorched Tanks comes in.

The first difference veteran Artillery players will notice is the large amount of weapons that can be purchased. They range from full-scale nuclear bombs to strange morphing walls and rolling balls of dirt. Each weapon can be very effective depending on the scenario. Also, up to four players can compete at once, which makes the action quite frantic at times. Not only that, but ST is divided into rounds where the best out of the desired number (five and up) wins the game.

ST is loaded with slick graphics and great sound. The interface is also quite a jump from the old days of Artillery. The entire game is mouse controlled, so no typing is necessary. It's coded in AMOS, but you really can't tell. It also runs on most Amiga configurations.

If the game is registered, the author will send out his version 1.0 which features many enhancements. The registered version has computer players (hence, a one player mode), many extra weapons, and will have AA graphics in the future. I highly recommend this game.

MEGABALL AGA 3.0



The MegaBall series has been a staple in Amiga PD for quite a while. The gameplay is simplistic yet addictive, and the level editor (in the registered version) extends playability far beyond the range of most games. Ed and Al Mackey have finally updated MegaBall with AA graphics and many other improvements that will surely make this edition another classic in Amiga shareware.

MegaBall is your basic Breakout game. You control a paddle at the bottom of the screen from which you must bounce a ball into a wall of bricks at the top. The object is to destroy all the bricks by hitting them with the projectile. However, this has more of an Arkanoid flavor to it. There are many power-ups, special bricks, and other features that actually make this better than Atari's original.

The AA graphics allow the game to be played on any type of WB screen, and it is also compatible with many third-party graphics boards. Not only that, but there are all-new boards and a new soundtrack. Overall, this is a solid package. Definitely one of the best Shareware releases this year.

■

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ON TARGET

It looks like *Amiga Game Zone* magazine was already controversial before this first issue was even printed. These two letters were taken from the comp.sys.amiga.games newsgroup on Internet:

It's great that there is finally another Amiga magazine in the States, but unfortunately it's sad that it is based on Amiga *games*. And promoting the game perspective is not helping Amiga's image as a productivity machine. It's so sad. I am seriously thinking of leaving the Amiga world because it lacks the software and support I need for school. But alas, I suppose there will always be people playing games.

David Isham
San Luis Obispo, CA

I hate to disagree with you, but, personally, I've been waiting for an Amiga gaming magazine for a *long* time. Euromags are great, but $10/issue is more than I want to spend. Right now I subscribe to *Computer Gaming World* and *Computer Game Review*. They are both great magazines, but they are both so PC oriented that they rarely mention when a game is out for Amiga, even if the Amiga version was out first! *CGW* is especially notorious for this. It's so frustrating that it makes me want to get a PC, even though, in my humble opinion, my A500 is still superior to most PC's. I am overjoyed that a U.S. based Amiga-only gaming magazine is coming out!!!

Richard N. Cacace
Shalimar, FL

And from some of our other fans:

At last someone in America isn't afraid to mention the "G" word.

Dave Matthews
McCook, NE

Glad to see someone finally got enough balls to publish an American Amiga games magazine.

Mike Conklin
Peekskill, NY

We don't usually get involved in Dr. Ruth's territory, but..uh.. thanks anyway.

***Amiga Game Zone* encourages letters on various topics from different points of view. Let us know what you're thinking, good or bad.**

ATTENTION!

TO CLIFF FROM PHILADELPHIA

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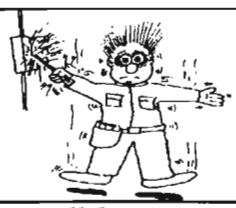

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Games described in this section are great ones you may have missed the first time around. The gang at *Amiga Game Zone* wants to make sure this doesn't happen again. If there's an Amiga game you think that may have passed other readers by, please let us know.

Putting No Second Prize in competition with other motorcycle games is like entering a Kawasaki Ninja in a mini-bike race – it's no contest. NSP is fast and furious racing fun in 3D polygon style that'll make you feel a little like Wayne Rainey on a Saturday afternoon.

Now *this* is a motorcycle racing sim! You can choose from six riders/superbikes, each with differing levels of ability in speed, handling, and strength. You can practice on any of 20 international racetracks (with or without opponents) or start a full racing season with the ability to save season stats onto a blank disk. You can even adjust mouse sensitivity to suit your particular "riding" style.

The best thing about NSP is the feeling you get roaring down the straights or exiting a quick right-hander. Isn't that what race sims are all about? And if you want to replay that pass you made on the leader while flying through the chicane (or that nasty spill in Turn 1 caused by a rank amateur who blocked your path), four cameras will provide the view.

But the real test of any racing sim is the amount of body English used while negotiating that tricky hairpin. Suffice it to say that you'd better make sure that your chair is secured firmly to the ground. And wear your helmet!

No Second Prize finishes first in a romp. Can't wait for NSP 2. ■ **BW**

Publisher	**Thalion**
Team	**In House**
Retail Price	**£25.99 ($40)**
Protection	**Disk Based**
Compatibility	**NTSC/PAL**

1.3 2.0 3.0

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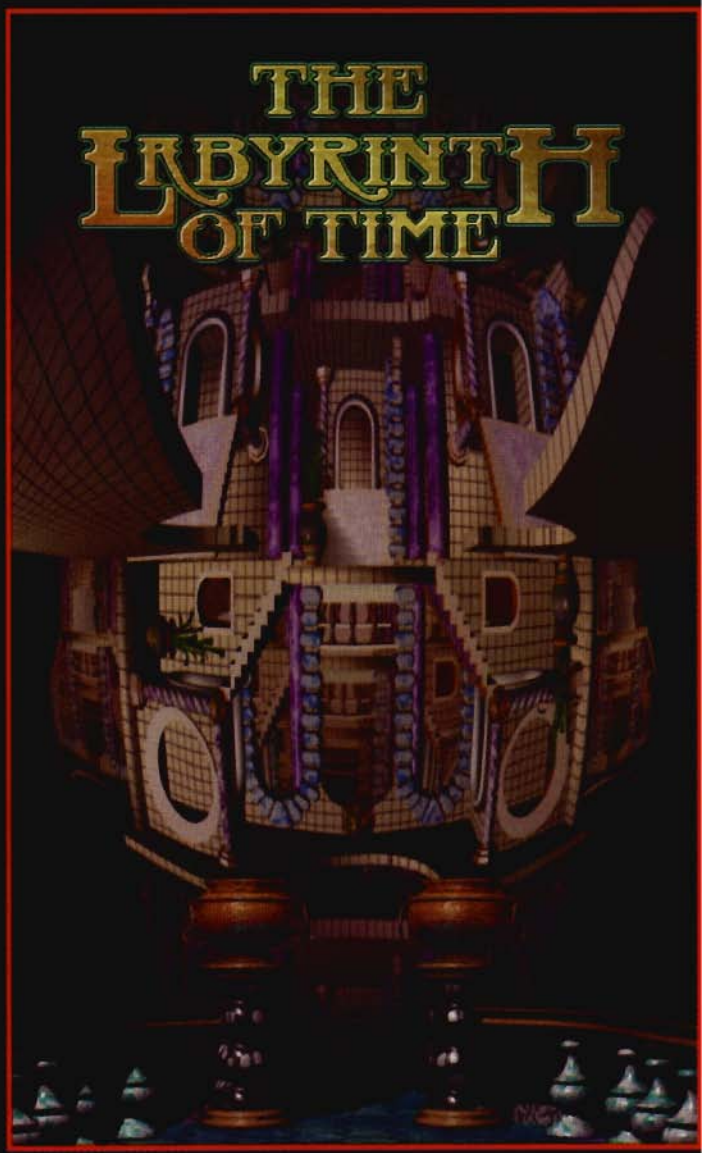

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