AMERICA'S ONLY AMIGA GAMES MAGAZINE

2

AMIGA GAME ZONE

MAY/JUNE 1994
USA $7.95
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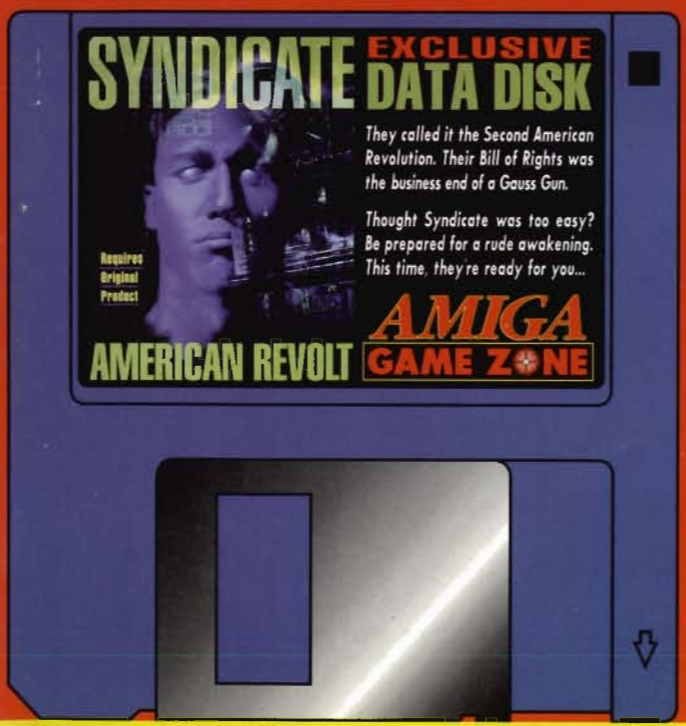
REVIEWED IN THIS ISSUE

MICROCOSM CD32

PROTECT AMIGA GAME ZONE STAFFER MERI CUNNINGHAM FROM A RIVAL SYNDICATE IN THIS FULLY PLAYABLE MISSION FROM BULLFROG'S NEW AMERICAN REVOLT DATA DISK!



LIBERATION

MINDSCAPE RELEASES ANOTHER CAPTIVE

PLUS THE BEST OF 1993 AND A NEW COLUMN BY PETER OLAFSON!

"Wow. No, let me try that again. WOW. No, that still doesn't quite say it. Can we roll a bigger typeface in here?

WOW.

Asteroids was never remotely like this."

RATED

A

PETER OLAFSON
AMIGA WORLD
APRIL 1994

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IN OUR SIGHTS

THANK YOU for making the launch of *Amiga Game Zone* magazine a success! We're striving to provide you with the best Amiga, AGA, and CD^{32} games coverage this side of the pond, and we've been listening to your comments and suggestions on how to improve the magazine. Please keep those letters and reader service cards coming in!

The most apparent change you will notice is that we've improved the brightness and contrast of all the screenshots (we *hope* – only our printer knows for sure!) Many of you have also urged us to go full-color, and we would love to do just that. However, color ain't cheap, folks. We *were* able to print color screenshots of the most popular games reviewed in this issue on our back cover, and we hope to integrate more color pages and screenshots into future issues.

We've received many positive comments, especially about our CD^{32} coverage, game compatibility info, Eurocharts, and tips section. In this issue, we've enhanced and expanded on each of these aspects to give you more of what you've requested.

Now for the big news. By a margin of over 2 to 1, readers favor receiving a cover disk with each issue. Though we were somewhat reluctant at first, we finally arrived at a solution that will satisfy both groups. In the future, you will find *Amiga Game Zone* on the newsstands and in computer stores with a cover disk packed with great demos like this issue's Syndicate: American Revolt mission! And if you don't want the cover disk, we give you the option of subscribing to the magazine with *or* without the disk. We think you'll like our picks for future coverdisks – we've vowed to accept nothing less than top-notch games. Now for those of you saying "yeah, whatever" to that statement, please stop reading and boot up this issue's disk. We guarantee you won't be back to this column for at least half an hour. We like to think of our coverdisks as the ones that our readers don't feel the urge to reformat!

And now that we've addressed most of your gripes, we've got a few "friendly suggestions" of our own...

HEY, COMMODORE! GET RID OF YOUR "STEALTH MARKETING" CAMPAIGN FOR THE CD^{32} IN AMERICA – ADVERTISE!

And we don't want to see that dopey kid levitating his house again. Sheesh! Take a lesson from the aggressive television, print, and outdoor marketing campaign that has proven to be effective for Commodore U.K. You have the best hardware, the largest software library, the best price point... but unless you let people know about it over here, the CD^{32} will ultimately fail in the U.S. market.

HEY, CD^{32} DEVELOPERS! YOU'VE GOT OVER 600MB TO PLAY WITH – TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF THE MEDIUM!

Too many CD^{32} releases just reek of blatant shovelware – why do we have to be subjected to a picture of a floppy disk when a CD game is loading? Microcosm is a step in the right direction, but we'd like to see more of that storage devoted to gameplay instead of graphics and sound. Another route is to bundle complete software catalogs on a single disc – personally I'd love to see a Sierra/Dynamix, Cinemaware, or LucasArts compilation CD.

HEY, AMIGA GAME PUBLISHERS! THIS IS 1994 – GIVE US HARD DRIVE SUPPORT!

Look at Star Trek – 25th Anniversary from Interplay. It's AGA only and *requires* a hard drive. And, amazingly enough, it's among the top selling AGA games both here and in the U.K. *It's time that software publishers realize that hard drive installability is a necessity.* As a general policy, *Amiga Game Zone* will not give a straight "A" rating to any game that cannot be installed.

It looks like I've run out of space for my tirade. And just when I was about to jump up on my soapbox again to campaign for more Amiga sports games (sorry, soccer doesn't count). I realize that neither *Amiga Game Zone* nor the Amiga industry in general will ever be perfect, but that doesn't mean we can't keep improving. ■ **GM**

REVIEWS

Body Blows Galactic....12
Bubba 'N' Stix....42
Burning Rubber....39
Cannon Fodder....15
Combat Air Patrol....34
Dinosaur Detective Agency....43
Disposable Hero....37
F-117A Stealth Fighter 2.0....35
Frontier – Elite 2....10
Fury of the Furries....38
Jet Strike....33
Jurassic Park....16
Liberation....33
Mortal Kombat....12
Rise of the Robots – *PREVIEW*....14
Seek & Destroy....41
Settlers....11
Simon the Sorcerer....36
Suburban Commando....41
Turrican 3....32
When Two Worlds War....40
Winter Olympics....44
Zool 2....17

AGA GAMES

Body Blows Galactic....12
Burning Rubber....39
Chaos Engine....37
D/Generation....39
Ishar 2....35
Jurassic Park....16
Overkill....43
Pinball Fantasies....44
Simon the Sorcerer....36

CD32 GAMES

Alfred Chicken....27
Alien Breed SE / Qwak....26
Arabian Nights....23
Bubba 'N' Stix....25
Castles 2....29
CD Sports Football....22
Chambers of Shaolin....30
Chaos Engine....27
Chuck Rock....23
Dangerous Streets....30
Deep Core....25
Disposable Hero....24
Donk!....26
Fire Force....27
Frontier – Elite 2....24
International Karate Plus....24
John Barnes Soccer....24
Labyrinth of Time....28
Liberation....20
Lotus Trilogy....25
Microcosm....21
Nigel Mansell's World Championship....27
Oscar....23
Pirate's Gold!....22
Prey – An Alien Encounter....25
Project-X SE / F17 Challenge....26
Seek & Destroy....23
Seven Gates of Jambala....30
Super Putty....26

AMIGA GAME ZONE

MAY/JUNE 1994

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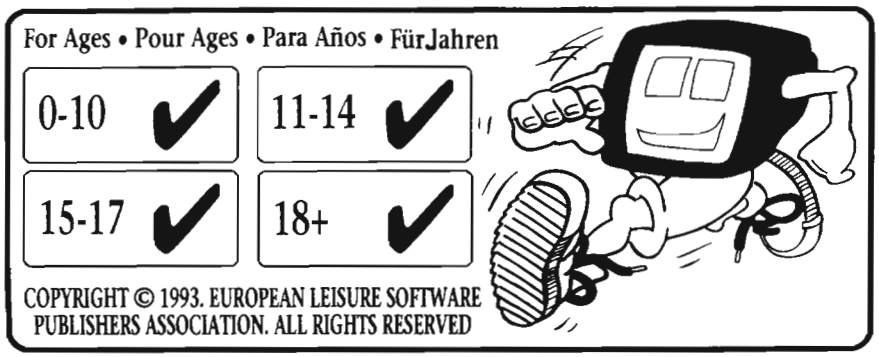
NEWS &

NEW U.K. RATINGS SYSTEM



THE U.K. has been in a frenzy during the last few months as the tabloids and other media have increasingly blamed the playing of computer games for a myriad of social ills. Parents and politicians alike have been calling for regulation. In an attempt to avoid government mandate, the games industry has announced its own ratings system advising consumers of computer game content.

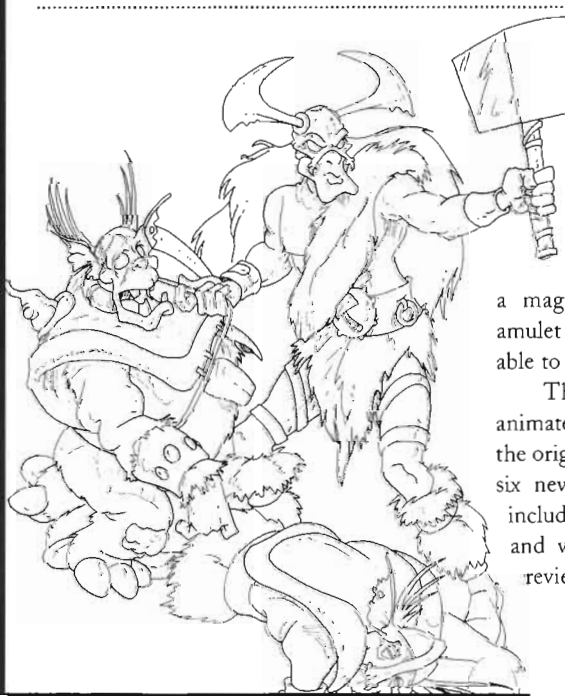
The European Leisure Software Publishers' Association (ELSPA) has approved a system whereby each software publisher rates its own games. Four age categories have been chosen: 0-10, 11-14, 15-17, and 18+. Beginning May 1, every disk, cartridge, and CD game is supposed to show all four age groups with checks next to the appropriate age ratings. A cartoon logo (Monitor Man) was also proposed as part of the rating illustration but has since been dropped due to industry disapproval.

While this self-regulatory system was accepted unanimously last year by the complete ELSPA membership, the games industry seems to be reluctant to actually implement it. Some publishers question the use of all four ratings on every product and suggest using a method similar to that of the film industry by simply listing only the appropriate rating for each particular game. There is also concern that some software houses may include irrelevant violence or sex scenes in a game in order to obtain an 18+ rating, making it off limits (and therefore more enticing) to younger consumers.

The biggest drawback of this system is that ELSPA has no real power to enforce its directive. Nintendo and Acclaim, current ELSPA members, have already made it clear that they plan to ignore the new classification system. Both companies would rather see a universally accepted plan in place and are anxiously waiting to see what kind of ratings standard the United States devises.

While other companies are also hoping for something better to appear, most publishers have agreed to use this system. Most grudgingly concede that self-regulation beats government legislation any day.

How long will it be before we here in the U.S. face the same situation? ■



HAMMER TIME *AGAIN*

CORE DESIGN is set to pound the competition with **Heimdall II**: *Into the Hall of Worlds*. This time Heimdall sacrifices his divinity in order to search for the six pieces of a magical amulet. With this powerful amulet in his possession, Heimdall will be able to imprison Loki, nemesis of the gods.

The sequel retains the smoothly animated cartoon-style sprites that made the original game so popular. Now there are six new lands to explore, each of which includes stunning background animations and visual effects. Look for a complete review in our next issue. ■

NOTES!

GRAPHIC ADVENTURE SHOWDOWN

HARD DRIVE owners, rejoice! Two new multi-disk adventure games are gunning for the top spot held by Monkey Island 2.

Beneath a Steel Sky (about $50, see above) from Virgin is first out of the gate and spans an incredible 15 disks. With visuals designed by *Watchmen* comics artist Dave Gibbons, this cyberpunk adventure looks like a real winner.

King's Quest 6 (about $50, see below) from Sierra is the long-awaited conversion from the PC adventure of the same name. KQ6 has 8 disks for your installing pleasure.

Ironically, both games were produced by Revolution Software, the team responsible for Lure of the Temptress. Expect true conversions, not just PC ports! ■

STRATEGIC PLANS FROM R.A.W. ENTERTAINMENT

IF YOU are alarmed about the plethora of platform games available for the Amiga and the distinct lack of true strategy games, R.A.W. Entertainment's plans for 1994 should be welcome news. R.A.W. is one of the few remaining games publishers for the Amiga that sells exclusively in the U.S. Currently, four new releases are planned for spring, three of which are strategy titles.

Suez '73 ($34.95) is a modern day strategic simulation based on the GDW board game of the same name. The game's setting is the Israeli-Arab conflict of 1973.

Step aside, Ghengis! Take control of the Mongol hordes in **Mongol Commander** ($34.95), the detailed simulation of the battles of Ghengis Khan. Do battle with an array of infantry, archers, and light and heavy cavalry.

B-29 ($29.95) allows you to play the role of any one or all of the crew members of a B-29 on a series of detailed missions. Ten man years in the making, R.A.W. claims this one to be one of the most detailed flight simulations produced.

Finally, for shoot 'em up fans, **Wildfire** ($29.95) offers a unique game save feature. It eliminates the frustration of dying at the start of the final level and then having to play all the previous levels again! Why can't every game include this ability?

R.A.W. Entertainment is different from traditional games publishers in that it sells directly to customers. To inquire about these titles, call (713) 286-2386. ■

BETTER CONCEPTS GOES PUBLIC!

PUBLIC DOMAIN, that is. The guys at Better Concepts announce that after 8 years, they are now the "leading" Amiga PD company that sells only the very best public domain software. They have literally thousands and thousands of disks and packages available, as well as a large supply of CD-ROM titles. They also publish their own line of CDs, including the only Amiga-format adult entertainment CD (for those of you over 18). **Sexual Fantasies** ($59.95) is compatible with all CD-equipped Amigas, including the CD^{32}. For more information on their full line of PD software titles, call (914) 639-5095. ■

PLATFORMER WITH A SOCIAL CONSCIENCE?

PINKIE EMBODIES the spirit of the caring 90's with its unique pallette of pastel colors. Millenium has given us a most unlikely hero who is afraid of heights, can't run very fast, and refuses to kill anything. Yet Pinkie vows to search the universe for the last few remaining dinosaur eggs. What a guy! ■

AMERICAN TOP 20

This month we've broken down the charts into two lists, one for standard Amiga releases and another for AGA-only games. Look for the American CD^{32} charts in the CD^{32} section at the center of the magazine.

AMIGA GAMES

1 Frontier - Elite 2
2 Mortal Kombat
3 Cannon Fodder
4 Settlers
5 Liberation
6 Innocent Until Caught
7 Wing Commander
8 Second Samurai
9 Stardust
10 Jurassic Park
11 King's Table
12 Puggsy
13 Syndicate
14 Space Legends
15 Tornado
16 F-117A Stealth Fighter 2.0
17 Fly Harder
18 Cool Spot
19 Award Winners
20 Blue and the Gray

AGA GAMES

1 Star Trek - 25th Anniversary
2 Second Samurai
3 Civilization
4 Jurassic Park
5 Ishar
6 Morph
7 Ishar 2
8 Ryder Cup Golf
9 Pinball Fantasies
10 Naughty Ones

American charts provided by

bmd

British Magazine Distributors

EUROPEAN TOP 20

Cannon Fodder continues to dominate the U.K. sales charts with stellar reviews from all 5 major Euromags. The most surprising entry has to be the original Zool (#18) with no mention of its successor, Zool 2.

AMIGA GAMES

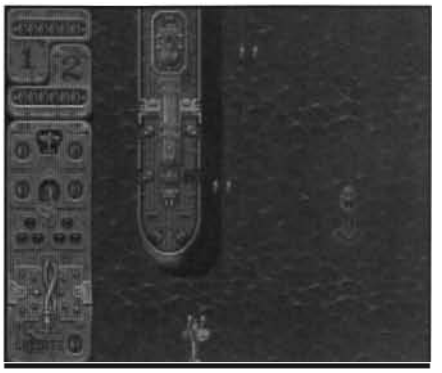
1 Cannon Fodder
2 Frontier – Elite 2
3 Premier Manager 2
4 Settlers
5 Skidmarks
6 Winter Olympics
7 Liberation
8 Championship Manager 93
9 Mortal Kombat
10 Award Winners - Gold Edition
11 Sensible Soccer 92/93
12 Championship Manager Italia
13 Jurassic Park
14 Blue and the Gray
15 Simon the Sorcerer
16 Second Samurai
17 Micro Machines
18 Zool
19 Syndicate
20 Superfrog

AGA GAMES

1 Ryder Cup Golf
2 Simon the Sorcerer
3 Sim Life
4 Star Trek – 25th Anniversary
5 Brutal Football
6 Civilization
7 Jurassic Park
8 Alien Breed 2
9 Burning Rubber
10 Diggers

European charts provided by ELSPA (European Leisure Software Publishers Association Ltd)

AGA-ONLY SHOOTER



THE YEAR is 1999. The place is Earth. But it is the Earth of a different timeline, where the last two world wars were never fought and where technology hasn't advanced beyond the propeller-driven fighter plane.

When Blardax Maldrear decides it's time to take over, only one man with his incredible fighter plane has the guts to stand in the way... but do you really care about the plot? I didn't think so. All you really need to know is that **Banshee** from Core Design could very well be the next SWIV for the AGA crowd. CD^{32} owners get an enhanced version with a FMV intro sequence! ■

PROGRAMMER WANTED

COULD YOU program a chess game? One of the most interesting concepts we've heard in quite a while was submitted to us in hopes of finding a suitable programmer.

Armageddon: Doomsday Chess is a unique four-player chess variant with rules similar to the original game. The project is still in the design stage, but it looks very promising from the screenshot shown here. Many options could be implemented, but we think support for a four-way null-modem link would put this game over the top. Interested coders should contact Gerald Welch at (903) 685-2698. ■

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Campaign II heralds a new generation of War Simulations

Campaign II heralds a new generation of War Simulations with more depth than ever before and fabulous real-time 3D action.

The depth to Campaign II is provided by the all new strategy. Expert Military consultant, Wilf Owen, from recent conflicts has brought his knowledge to bear on computer gaming with an end result that looks and feels more realistic than ever before. All aspects involved in the running of an army have been considered, so that now you can place yourself in command of either side, at any level in the chain of command. Over 130 templates of the most significant military forces from 56 different nations of the last 50 years have been included to gain an insight into real conflicts such as Korea, Vietnam and Operation Desert Storm.

The action takes the form of fast 3D graphics if you choose to enter the battlefield in one of the 152 types of military vehicles. APCs and Mobile Artillery, utilise weapons ranging from wire-guided missiles, rockets, homing missiles, and machine-guns supported by laser rangefinders to tracer rangefinders, night vision, and gun stabilizers.

- **Campaign II has emerged as the most comprehensive simulation with new improved strategy, at any level in the Chain of Command (C.o.C.), closely resembling that of a real military situation.**
- **Hands-on action as you fly helicopters in air-to-ground or air-to-air attacks.**
- **Deploy the animated infantry during fierce battlefield action in a new improved 3D environment.**
- **Featuring all the modern weapons systems: guided missiles, rockets, homing missiles, laser rangefinders, gun stabilizers and night sights.**

CAMPAIGN WAS BIG CAMPAIGN WAS GOOD
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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.

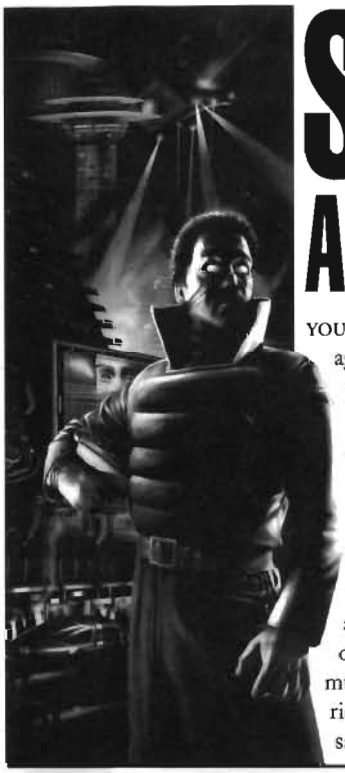
Forget it. Give this kind a swift three-fingered salute. Buy it only if you're curious, wealthy, and have nothing better to do with your life.

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 CD^{32}	Mindscape	76	64	75	86	87	77.6
Arabian Nights CD^{32}	Krisalis	–	88	88	90	–	88.7
Body Blows Galactic	Team 17	84	88	79	57	87	79.0
Bubba 'N' Stix	Core Design	87	85	84	90	91	87.4
Burning Rubber	Ocean	58	78	79	41	78	66.8
Cannon Fodder	Virgin	94	95	94	93	93	93.8
Castles 2 CD^{32}	Interplay	46	76	45	63	54	56.2
Chaos Engine AGA	Renegade	–	89	91	–	90	90.0
Combat Air Patrol	Psygnosis	84	84	88	88	89	86.6
Dangerous Streets CD^{32}	Flair	53	48	3	–	22	31.5
Dinosaur Detective Agency	Alternative	84	38	60	20	–	50.5
Disposable Hero	Gremlin	80	70	77	79	83	77.8
F-117A Stealth Fighter	Microprose	89	92	86	–	80	86.8
Frontier	Gametek	93	90	65	97	96	88.2
Fury of the Furries	Mindscape	86	55	77	81	90	77.8
Jet Strike	Alternative	75	71	68	50	84	69.6
John Barnes Soccer CD^{32}	Krisalis	–	49	56	45	–	50.0
Jurassic Park AGA	Ocean	88	70	71	87	89	81.0
Labyrinth of Time CD^{32}	Electronic Arts	87	69	47	69	81	70.6
Liberation	Mindscape	–	90	89	96	92	91.8
Liberation CD^{32}	Mindscape	90	91	91	90	94	91.2
Microcosm CD^{32}	Psygnosis	84	87	44	86	86	77.4
Morph CD^{32}	Millenium	79	78	78	–	–	78.3
Mortal Kombat	Virgin	91	74	86	93	89	86.6
Nigel Mansell CD^{32}	Gremlin	90	73	50	–	81	73.5
Overkill AGA	Mindscape	86	84	84	80	89	84.6
Pirate's Gold CD^{32}	21st Century	90	82	74	64	79	77.8
Prey CD^{32}	Almathera	–	66	37	45	17	41.3
Seek and Destroy	Mindscape	85	85	73	83	78	80.8
Seek and Destroy CD^{32}	Mindscape	83	83	79	82	–	81.8
Sensible Soccer CD^{32}	Renegade	90	93	90	–	–	91.0
Settlers	Kompart	89	94	88	90	90	90.2
Simon the Sorcerer	Adventuresoft	88	84	69	90	89	84.0
Suburban Commando	Alternative	58	23	62	68	45	51.2
Turrican 3	Renegade	81	77	62	85	79	76.8
When Two Worlds War	Impressions	85	79	–	45	80	72.3
Winter Olympics	US Gold	85	70	48	79	55	67.4
Zool 2	Gremlin	79	93	86	76	90	84.8



SYNDICATE
AMERICAN REVOLT

YOU FOUGHT tooth and nail, sacrificing countless cyborg agents to gain control of the American territories. But now the natives want them back! The citizens of North and South America, tired of punitive tax rates and streets that aren't safe to walk, are taking up arms against the syndicate and looking to gain autonomy. If you let this happen, not only will it jeopardize your position as syndicate executive, but it will also bring your stay on planet Earth to a premature close. Be warned, rival syndicates look upon the American revolt as the ideal opportunity to gain an upper hand in the ongoing struggle for supremacy. In 21 new missions you must protect syndicate interests in the American territories, regain control from the unruly masses, and at the same time neutralize enemy syndicate activity. ■

THEY'RE GUNNING FOR MERI – CAN YOU SAVE HER FROM A FIERY DEATH?

EXCLUSIVE PLAYABLE MISSION ON THIS MONTH'S DISK

DEBRIEFING

Bullfrog has designed an exclusive special mission from its new data disk for *Amiga Game Zone* readers.

The cover of new *AGZ* staffer Meri Cunningham has been blown. You must protect her from enemy agents so she can safely deliver important documents to our spacious mid-town office. Just take a peek at the inside back cover of this very issue, and you'll have a pretty good idea of why we'll be *very* disappointed if she ends up as a charred pile of ashes.

Syndicate can be played on any Amiga with a mouse, but the speed of the game is determined by your system. Note: A4000 owners should disable CPU caches before loading the game.

CONTROLS

You control your 4 agents by clicking on their windows. To control all 4 agents at once, select the team bar. Click on any point in the city to send the agent(s) to that location.

The three bars below each player are adrenalin, perception, and intelligence indicators. See the player's guide in *AGZ* #1 for info on these. By pressing both mouse buttons at once, these levels will go to Panic Mode (use this often!)

After selecting a weapon icon with a left-click, you can fire with a right-click. Right-click on a weapon icon to drop it and left-click on dead agents' guns to pick them up.

Click on a car to board it and click on any section of the road to drive to that location.

Be sure to watch the scanner to monitor Meri's location.

ATTENTION SYNDICATE OWNERS

ELECTRONIC ARTS WILL NOT BE PUBLISHING THE DATA DISK.

THE AMIGA VERSION WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE IN COMPUTER STORES.

THE DATA DISK IS AVAILABLE ONLY THROUGH THIS EXCLUSIVE SPECIAL OFFER DIRECT FROM BULLFROG:

The Syndicate: American Revolt data disk replaces the fourth disk of the original game and contains 21 all-new missions. To order, send $19.95 (postage paid) to:

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C/O AMIGA GAME ZONE
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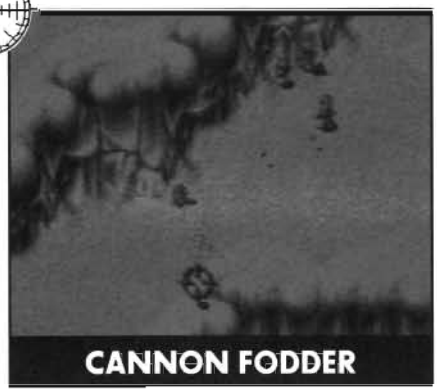
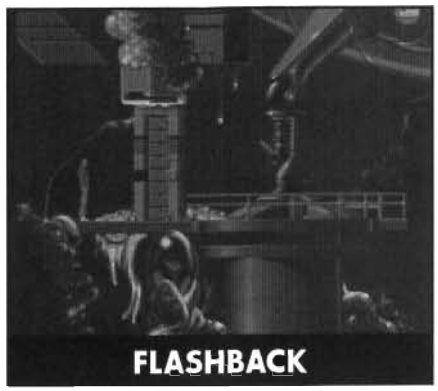
NOTE: *The original Syndicate disks are required to play the new missions.*

ANY SYNDICATE EXECUTIVES WHO HAVE LET SUCCESS IN THE ORIGINAL MISSIONS GO TO THEIR HEADS ARE IN FOR A RUDE AWAKENING. SYNDICATE: THE AMERICAN REVOLT IS A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT PROPOSITION. YOUR CYBORGS WILL SOON BE FACING ENEMY AGENTS WHOSE REACTIONS ARE AT LEAST TWICE AS FAST AS ANYTHING ENCOUNTERED BEFORE. THEY ARM, AIM, AND FIRE WITHOUT HESITATION AND WITHOUT MERCY. IF YOU CANNOT WITHSTAND THE INITIAL ASSAULT, FAILURE COMES QUICKLY. CRUSHING THE AMERICAN REVOLT WILL TAKE ALL OF YOUR SYNDICATE EXPERIENCE AND CONSIDERABLE SKILL. THE LINE BETWEEN SUCCESS AND FAILURE IS THIN – THE RESULT OF FAILURE IS TERMINAL. STILL THINK YOU'VE GOT WHAT IT TAKES FOR SYNDICATE: AMERICAN REVOLT?



CANNON FODDER

SYNDICATE



FLASHBACK

THE BEST OF 1993

IT'S AMAZING that game programmers can still push the limits of a computer that is basically 8 years old. 1993 was another banner year for the Amiga in terms of new and innovative games, and we'd like to showcase the cream of the crop. We've listed practically every Amiga game released last year on these two pages, and we've also included the composite percentage ratings they received from the five leading European magazines.

Many worthy contenders were vying for the top spot, but Cannon Fodder emerged the victor with an impressive 93.8 percent combined rating. Close behind were Lemmings 2, Soccer Kid, Flashback, and Syndicate. One title deserving special mention is Frontier, which would have grabbed the #1 position had it not received a 65% rating from one reviewer.

Equally (if not more) interesting are the Big Losers of 1993. Doofus, Dangerous Streets, International Rugby Challenge, and Dennis were all torn to shreds by reviewers. We hope you bypassed these lame excuses for entertainment and made some good software buys last year.

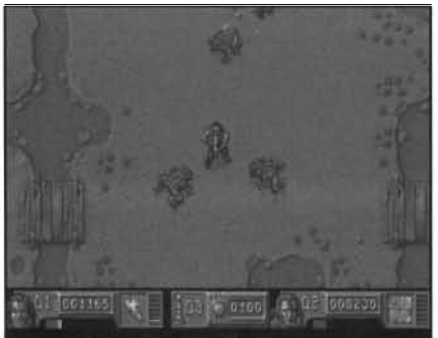
1. Cannon Fodder 93.8
2. Lemmings 2 . . . . . 92.4
3. Soccer Kid 92.0
4. Flashback 91.4
5. Syndicate 91.4
6. Liberation CD^{32} 91.2
7. Desert Strike 91.0
8. Hired Guns 91.0
9. Sensible Soccer CD^{32} 91.0
10. Soccer Kid AGA 91.0
11. Body Blows 90.6
12. Settlers 90.2
13. Chaos Engine AGA 90.0
14. Civilization AGA 90.0
15. Pinball Fantasies CD^{32} 89.0
16. Dune 2 . . . . . 88.8
17. Arabian Nights CD^{32} 88.7
18. Gunship 2000 . . . . . 88.6
19. Goal! 88.4
20. Frontier 88.2
21. Micro Machines 87.8
22. Skidmarks 87.6
23. Chaos Engine 87.4
24. Alien Breed 2 . . . . . 87.0
25. Superfrog 86.8
26. F-117A Stealth Fighter 86.8
27. Zool CD^{32} 86.7
28. Combat Air Patrol 86.6
29. Mortal Kombat 86.6
30. Lionheart 86.4
31. 1869 AGA 86.0
32. Lost Vikings 85.8
33. Sleepwalker AGA 85.7
34. F1 . . . . . 85.6
35. Ishar 2 AGA 85.5
36. Pinball Fantasies AGA 85.5
37. Qwak 85.4
38. Stardust 85.4
39. Worlds of Legend 85.4
40. Alien Breed 2 AGA 85.2
41. History Line 1914-1918 . . . . . 85.2
42. Sleepwalker 85.0
43. Zool 2 . . . . . 84.8
44. Legends of Valour 84.6
45. Overkill AGA 84.6
46. Christmas Lemmings 84.5
47. Sleepwalker CD^{32} 84.3
48. Robocod AGA 84.3
49. Arabian Nights 84.2
50. Uridium 2 . . . . . 84.2
51. Graham Gooch - Second Innings . . . 84.0
52. Nippon Safes Inc. 84.0
53. Premier Manager 2 . . . . . 84.0
54. Simon the Sorcerer 84.0
55. Trolls CD^{32} 84.0
56. Chuck Rock 2 . . . . . 83.8
57. Space Hulk 83.8
58. Morph AGA 83.7
59. Walker 83.6
60. Brutal Sports Football 83.5
61. Diggers CD^{32} 83.5
62. Fantastic Dizzy 83.5
63. Trolls AGA 83.3
64. Ishar 2 . . . . . 83.2
65. War in the Gulf 83.2
66. Battle Isle '93 . . . . . 82.8
67. Overkill / Lunar-C CD^{32} 82.7
68. Ishar AGA 82.4
69. Zool AGA 82.3
70. Alien 3 . . . . . 82.3
71. Bob's Bad Day 81.8
72. D/Generation CD^{32} 81.8
73. One Step Beyond 81.4
74. Campaign - Scenario Disk 81.3
75. Ryder Cup AGA 81.3
76. Jurassic Park AGA 81.0
77. Championship Manager '93 . . . . . 80.8
78. Seek and Destroy 80.8
79. European Champions 80.5
80. Yo! Joe! 80.4
81. Demo II Collection CD^{32} 80.0
82. Krusty's Fun House 80.0
83. B17 Flying Fortress 79.8
84. Diggers AGA 79.7
85. Mean Arenas 79.7
86. Switchquiz 79.5
87. Patrician 79.2
88. Body Blows Galactic AGA 79.0
89. Blade of Destiny 78.8
90. Abandoned Places 2 . . . . . 78.6
91. Blob! 78.6
92. Morph CD^{32} 78.3

LEMMINGS 2

LIBERATION CD32

DESERT STRIKE

SETTLERS



CHAOS ENGINE AGA

PINBALL FANTASIES CD32

93. Beavers 78.3
94. Genesia 78.3
95. Reach for the Skies 78.3
96. Scrabble 78.3
97. Caesar Deluxe 78.0
98. Cool Spot 78.0
99. Globdule 78.0
100. Disposable Hero 77.8
101. Fury of the Furries 77.8
102. Pirate's Gold CD32 . . . . . 77.8
103. Wiz 'N' Liz 77.8
104. Alfred Chicken CD32 . . . . . 77.6
105. Woody's World 77.5
106. Global Gladiators 77.4
107. Turrican 3 . . . . . 76.8
108. Space Crusade – Voyage Beyond 76.4
109. Campaign 2 . . . . . 76.2
110. Global Domination 76.0
111. Deep Core CD32 . . . . . 75.0
112. Mean Arenas CD32 . . . . . 75.0
113. T2 - The Arcade Game 75.0
114. Whale's Voyage AGA 75.0
115. Goblins 3 . . . . . 74.8
116. Sink or Swim 74.4
117. Sim Life AGA 74.2
118. Star Trek – 25th Anniversary 74.2
119. Overdrive 73.8
120. Nigel Mansell CD32 . . . . . 73.5
121. Humans – Jurassic Levels 73.0
122. Morph 73.0
123. Simon the Sorcerer AGA 73.0
124. Alfred Chicken 72.4
125. When Two Worlds War 72.3
126. Deep Core 72.0
127. Transarctica 72.0
128. Magic Boy 71.8
129. Donk! 71.6
130. Graham Gooch Cricket 71.0
131. Bard's Tale Construction Kit 70.8
132. Oscar AGA 70.7
133. Labyrinth of Time CD32 . . . . . 70.6
134. Robocod CD32 . . . . . 70.3
135. Dogfight 70.0
136. Oscar 70.0
137. Jetstrike 69.6
138. Cyberpunks 69.0

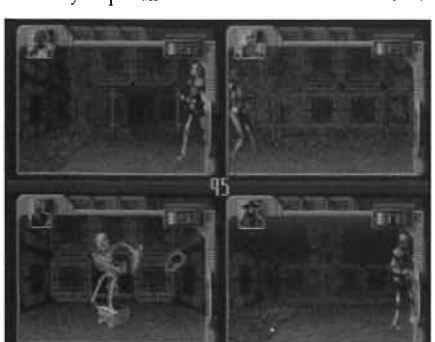
PICK YOUR FIVE FAVORITE AMIGA GAMES OF 1993 & WIN YOUR CHOICE OF ANY AMIGA GAME EVER MADE!

THE GAMES pictured across the top and bottom of these pages are the *Amiga Game Zone* nominations for Game of the Year. But we're leaving the final decision up to you. We need your votes to determine America's favorite Amiga game for 1993.

Simply fill out the insert card on this page and list your five favorite Amiga games published in 1993. We'll tally the results and determine the winner. You may choose from any of the 183 games listed on these two pages. Entries listing games from other years will be disqualified (no Lemmings, Tetris, Monkey Island, etc.)

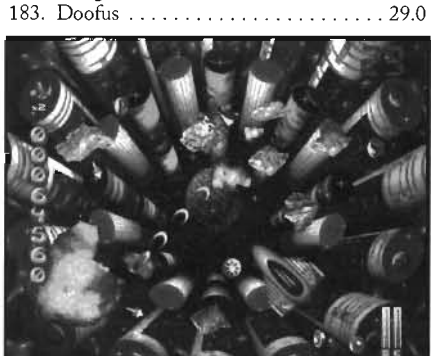
The best part is that we will be choosing five entries at random to receive the Amiga game of their choice! You can list any Amiga game ever published, from the first Amiga game (Mindwalker) to any current release! So whether you've been looking for Little Computer People for years or you'd just like to have Microcosm for your CD32, now is your chance to enter and win! Contest ends and the winners will be drawn on July 1, 1994, so send in your entry right away!

139. Nigel Mansell AGA 69.0
140. Now That's...Games CD32 . . . . . 69.0
141. Transarctica AGA 68.8
142. 1869 . . . . . 68.2
143. Gear Works 68.2
144. A320 Airbus – American Data 68.0
145. Whale's Voyage CD32 . . . . . 68.0
146. Theatre of Death 67.8
147. Burning Rubber 66.8
148. Cosmic Spacehead 66.8
149. Wonderdog 66.6
150. Tornado 66.4
151. Fatman AGA 66.0
152. Blastar 65.2
153. Ancient Art of War in the Skies 64.5
154. Oscar CD32 . . . . . 63.0
155. Kingmaker 62.3
156. Whale's Voyage 62.2
157. Prime Mover 61.8
158. Beastlord 61.3
159. Entity 61.3
160. Fatman 61.3
161. D-Day 60.2
162. Nicky 2 . . . . . 60.2
163. Creatures 59.0
164. Airforce Commander 58.7
165. Fire Force CD32 . . . . . 56.0
166. Rules of Engagement 2 . . . . . 56.0
167. International Open Golf AGA 55.3
168. Crystal Kingdom Dizzy 54.6
169. Firehawk 54.0
170. Piracy on the High Seas 53.3
171. Cohort 2 . . . . . 52.8
172. Allo 'Allo 52.3
173. Suburban Commando 51.2
174. Cardiaxx 50.7
175. Dinosaur Detective Agency 50.5
176. John Barnes Soccer CD32 . . . . . 50.0
177. Super Cauldron 49.0
178. Super Sports Challenge 39.4
179. Napoleonics 36.7
180. Dennis 35.3
181. International Rugby Challenge 31.8
182. Dangerous Streets CD32 . . . . . 31.5
183. Doofus 29.0



HIRED GUNS

FRONTIER



STARDUST

FRONTIER

ELITE 2

Some years back, a game called Elite hit the market. When it first came out, it was thought to have everything ever wanted in a game. You had complete freedom to roam the galaxies, to trade goods, and to eliminate scum from the universe. Enjoyable at first, but the more you played Elite, the clearer it became that there should be something more to the game. You could never land on a planet. Stations all looked the same. It was even annoying at times, as you crashed into the space station and died. Despite these problems, we still loved Elite.

Now the much awaited sequel is out. Frontier: Elite II has arrived, sporting numerous improvements. As before, you have a whole universe to explore, but not the same one as in the original Elite. In the original there were seven galaxies, and you needed a hyperspace drive to get from one to another. The stars and planets, though different, seemed the same. In Frontier, you are now in one large galaxy, and it is divided into Federation, Empire, and Independent space.

The first improvement you notice in Frontier is that you can now land on planets as well as dock at space stations. If your ship can survive the gravity, you can land on any planet in the galaxy. If you want to come screaming down to a planet's surface (and you will), you'll find atmospheric shielding to be a necessity.

You start out with a Eagle Long Range Fighter MKIII with goodies like auto-pilot, radar scanner, atmospheric shielding, and some adequate weaponry. There are many differences between the ships in Elite and Frontier. In Elite, you had your trusty Cobra MKIII and that was it. In Frontier, you can buy any type of ship you want (or can afford) ranging from interplanetary shuttles to Panther clipper ships. There are also all new weapons and interstellar drives. Now there are 8 classes of engines, and depending on the size of your ship, you can get bigger drives which can make longer jumps in shorter time, but at increased fuel cost. There are also military drives, which are improved drives that are more efficient and smaller, but they use military fuel that is expensive and leaves radioactive by-products. The extra weapons are way cool. You can get varying sizes of pulse and beam lasers, as well as plasma accelerators (Oooh, baby!) which are very powerful. There are also four classes of missiles from which to choose. Besides all of the original equipment, there is a bunch of new equipment to fill up that empty space in your ship: naval ECM systems, hyperspace cloud analyzers, automatic hull repair systems, mines, passenger cabins, auto-refuellers, radar mappers, and more.

The entire method of flight has been redone. Now, spaceflight is true to life. If you accelerate in one direction, you will keep going in that direction until you apply reverse thrust to stop. This will take some getting used to, but it is better than the old "stop on a dime" method used in Elite. Frontier allows you to turn your ship while Elite used only rotation. If you really *like* to rotate, there is an option for it too. You can also use your autopilot (highly recommended) by going though successive levels of system charts and clicking on the planet you want to reach.

As in the first Elite, you have your choice of career paths. You can ferry passengers and packages, you can be a trader (in legal or illegal goods), you can work for the military (the Federation, the Empire, or the Independents), or you can be a bounty hunter (but this time with real missions instead of just shooting anyone who flys by). The secret to making the game as interesting as possible is to do a little of everything.

By now you are saying, "Enough already, so how does it play?" That depends on the speed of your computer. On a unaccelerated Amiga with Workbench 1.3, you will cry and demand your money back. However, with 2.0 or 3.0, the game plays much faster. On a 68040 you will think this is one of the greatest space flight sims around. If you don't have the best money can buy, trying turning off the sound effects – it really does help. Detail abounds in the game from spinning radar dishes to individually numbered ships. Some have commented that the music could be better. True, it is no 32 voice soundtrack, but I still liked it.

However, there are some troubles in paradise. The person who thought up the copy protection scheme should be killed on sight. Never before have I come across a more annoying scheme in my life. Every once in a while it will ask you to type in the first letter of a word from a page in the manual. If it asked once or twice I wouldn't mind, *but continually throughout the game*? Once I know a game I usually put the manual away, or at least have it buried under a pile of notes, but to have to drag it out every time... arrgh! There are also some glaring bugs left in the code. The most annoying I found was on my Boa. The bottom turret would not shoot at the enemy, but at my own ship instead! How could this have gone unnoticed?

Overall I truly enjoyed this game, bugs and all. I would not hesitate to recommend it to anyone (well, except someone with a 68000 and WB1.3). Mr. Braben should be praised, honored, and generally well-liked for getting so much fun and excitement into a 646K executable. I salute you! Now, please reconsider that copy protection. ■ **BB**

FRONTIER – ELITE 2

GAMETEK ■ £34.99 ($50)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
NTSC	YES
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
YES	MANUAL

If you have an accelerated Amiga, you'll love this huge open-ended space epic!

A-

THE SETTLERS

This is the Game of the Year for 1994. Does that sound a bit pretentious? Maybe so, but The Settlers has just the right mix of gaming ingredients, and the result is a flawless product. If anything bad can be said about this game, it is that you can't just load it in and start playing without some background information. If you lack a basic understanding of the complex structures involved in creating and supporting a viable settlers economy, the game is relegated to the level of a pretty "ant farm". But even as simple wallpaper, it excels.

Imagine a Lilliputian computer kingdom complete with fully animated inhabitants that go about their business while you watch and listen: a construction worker builds a new home, hammering on the wooden frame; a geologist hunts for precious mineral deposits, flipping head over heels and letting out a whoop of joy when his labor pays off; and a farmer does his Chubby Checker impersonation while he reaps his crop. There are twenty different occupations for settlers to assume, and every single one of them is fascinating. Even something as mundane as the moving of material from point A to point B is done with flair, as a tiny carrier hefts the load on his shoulder and strides down the roadway. Watching the settlers develop a community on their own is intriguing, and one could certainly spend hours doing just that, but eventually you'll want to actually play the game yourself.

The interface is completely mouse driven and the actual control is fairly intuitive, with a single exception. Some actions require a "special click", which is to hold down the right mouse button while clicking on the left. Without knowing when this is appropriate, controlling the game can be a bit confusing. However, once it is understood what actions are initiated with a "special click", the interface is quite transparent and very simple to navigate. The controls which are most commonly used

together are located near one another, so complex actions are easy to accomplish. To simplify things even further the game includes six training scenarios. Each training mission focuses on a different aspect of the settlers' economy (from how to acquire new land to constructing new buildings and accumulating food, minerals, tools, and weapons), and every level teaches you something new about gameplay. There is even an explanation of how to tell your knights to attack the enemy. Even though these are very simple models (and very easy to complete), the lessons they teach are invaluable. All six training scenarios are explained fully in the extensive manual, which offers even more insight into the gameplay than can be gleaned from the actual teaching missions alone.

However, while the manual is very complete, the information is not presented in a clear fashion. Part of this problem could be attributed to the fact that the manuscript was originally written in German and translated to English. There are many building names on the included reference card that are different from the building names in the manual. Given the complexity of the game, this inconsistency can present a stumbling block to new players. Luckily, the game itself is so engaging that it provides ample encouragement to stumble through the documentation until enlightenment occurs.

While The Settlers is a natural for modem play, unfortunately this option is not included. Luckily, there is a spilt-screen two-player option. If a human opponent is not available, there seems to be an unlimited supply of random games with up to three computer players and no less than thirty one-player missions to complete. Each of the strategic missions offers a variety of computer opponents, skill levels, and maps. In addition to multiple save game positions, upon completion of each level the player is awarded a password which allows access to the next level. The difficulty of each scenario is preset and rises as successive missions are completed. The rate at which the game becomes more challenging is as close to perfect as possible. This allows the player to learn how the economic structures in the game interact. The Settlers is an exciting strategy game that provides not only an enchanting aural and visual feast, but also a very structured economic simulation. The core of the settlers' economy is based on two "chains", food and material. Each has diverse inputs and end products. This variety is both a blessing and a curse. Since there are so many options, a new player may feel overwhelmed. But by choosing the systems which best suit his personality, each player is allowed to develop a different style of play.

As it stands now, The Settlers is a game which will give many hours of enjoyment to just about any Amiga gamer. This is an outstanding game even though the documentation could have been a bit better written. It combines some of the best elements of many past award winning games: the animated antics of the tiny settlers themselves (Lemmings), the strategic goal of dealing with a variety of computer opponents (Populous), and an involved socio-economic system (SimCity). This game is so good, it almost made me miss my review deadline! ■ EP

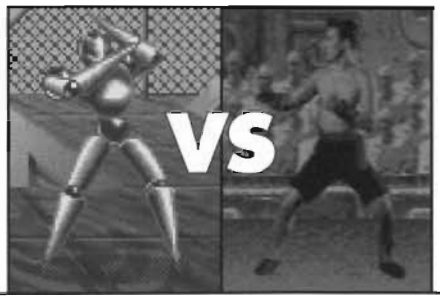
THE SETTLERS

KOMPART ■ £34.99 ($50)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
PAL	YES
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
YES	MANUAL

Controlling little computer people has never been this much fun!

BODY BLOWS GALACTIC



MORTAL KOMBAT

Comparing Body Blows Galactic to Mortal Kombat is like being a judge at amateur boxing night. Both contenders are lacking, but you *still* have to come up with a conclusion as to which one is better. Both Mortal Kombat and Body Blows Galactic are mediocre at best, but one of them does comes out the winner when compared side by side.

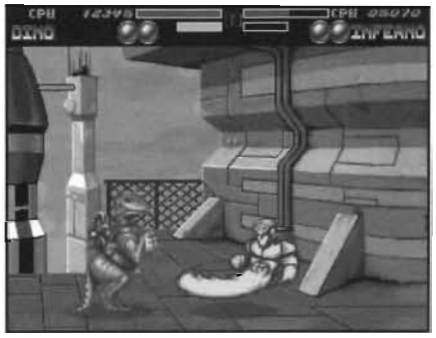
BODY BLOWS GALACTIC

Team 17's original Body Blows was a quick, fast-buck attempt to capitalize on the Streetfighter II mania that has been sweeping the planet for the last couple of years. Shortly after release, it got lost in a sea of substandard fighting games. Although it was one of the few SFII clones for the Amiga, it still was nothing special compared to one-on-one martial arts contests on other platforms. The crew at Team 17 has now updated Body Blows with more characters, better graphics, tweaked gameplay, and even an AGA version. But, is it any good?

After Dan and Junior took out Max in the original Body Blows, they made the logical decision (hey, why not?) to take on the entire universe to see who's the best intergalactic martial artist. They travel to 6 planets, each populated with 2 street fighters of varying strength and ability.

While an assortment of characters does lend variety to the game, Body Blows Galactic still falls short in many areas. Gameplay is the biggest weakness. Street Fighter II (the arcade version, at least) had a near perfect balance of strength, speed, and ability among the cast of characters. But it seems that the abilities of the characters in Body Blows Galactic vary. Sometimes, even if you're a better player, it's hard to win against someone who commands a faster or stronger character.

Play control is another severe problem with BBG. First, the game only supports a single button joystick. We all know that fighting games require mass buttonage, but Team 17 decided to cram everything into one button. This greatly limits the number of moves each character has. Also, when in a tight situation, it's difficult to rattle off quick moves and combos because the play control is so sluggish. Even with simplistic one button maneuvers, the game does not seem to be in sync with the joystick's movements.



The graphics in Body Blows Galactic are very good. In particular, detail on the backdrops is fantastic. The characters themselves have decent animation and also are well drawn. Yet, the enhanced version of Body Blows Galactic seems like another one of those "me too" AGA games. It has minor adjustments for the speed of AGA machines and a few eye-candy and sound enhancements, but it's nothing new. It's disappointing to find the AGA version is just the ECS version with some tacked-on modifications.

In the sound department, Body Blows Galactic is average. The background music can get annoying, but it's really not too loud or too noticeable during gameplay. BBG also contains the standard host of grunts and groans found in this type of game. The victory shouts of the characters are often unintelligible, but that seems to be a trademark of martial arts games.

Body Blows Galactic is not a bad game, it's just not very good either. The gameplay leaves a lot to be desired, and the AGA version is a disappointment. There are sufficient options for tournament modes and difficulty settings, but overall it's merely a slightly above par production. I do have faith in Team 17... hopefully in Body Blows III they'll finally get it right.

MORTAL KOMBAT

When Mortal Kombat hit the arcades, it was among the first of the wildly popular Street Fighter II clones. What it lacked in gameplay was made up for in the graphics department. All the characters were digitized from actual video footage using real actors, and there was a ton of blood and gore (something most teenage males at the arcades seem to relish). Now, after the hoopla over the arcade MK has died down a bit, the home versions have been making the rounds. The Amiga conversion, programmed by Probe, is a gigantic letdown. It is Mortal Kombat in name only.

The basic plot of Mortal Kombat (plot? who needs plot?) is that the spirit-like Tsang Sung has been holding a gigantic martial arts tournament for the last 5000 years or so. Seven contestants are currently entered in the tournament, and whoever rises up the ranks to the top position must fight the half-human/half-dragon, Goro, and finally Tsang Sung himself. But beware, the stealthy Reptile wanders into and out of the tournament, popping up when he's least expected. This should all make for one tough, frantic, action-packed game, right?

WRONG. While it's not exactly fair to compare an 8 MHz A500 to the hardware found in the coin-op, even in its own right, Mortal Kombat is a disappointing game. It's mostly due to the control factor. While the problem created by compressing the 5 buttons of the arcade into just 2 buttons on the Amiga is understandable, it is tough to pull off many maneuvers with these simplified controls. It's almost as if the computer is struggling to keep up with the player's joystick movement, executing the desired moves only after considerable delay. This not only ruins the game's flow, it also makes performing standard MK combinations nearly impossible. This is a major gripe since using combos on enemies is what keeps one-on-one fighting games fun. It's the discovery of new and exciting ways to cripple the opponent with lightning speed that piques interest in these contests.

The graphics are fair at best. The visuals may look good in still pictures – but when seen in action, the jerkiness and poor animation is immediately apparent. Backgrounds lack parallax scrolling, are devoid of any animation, and fail to provide

much detail or color. While there are full-motion video clips included from the arcade version, they look particularly bad when viewed in such a limited color palette. Most arcade fans will quickly notice such shortcuts as using the same frames of animation for Scorpion and Sub-Zero with a mere color change from yellow to cyan.

Mortal Kombat's sound has to be its only strong point. The music is fine, as it does contain a lot of samples from the arcade. However, it takes quite a while just to load up the simple sound-test to hear the various tunes and samples.

Other Mortal Kombat failings include the lack of hard drive installability and the existence of many system-hostile features. It barely ran on my A4000/030. Even using the varied settings on Degrader, I still encountered constant software failures. Though it will run on a 1MB A500, the wait is worse than ever because it won't load the extra data into RAM for quicker access. This really hurts a game in my book.

Arcade MK fans will be disappointed. While it's not fair to directly compare the home version to the arcade game, even people just looking for a good fighting game on the Amiga should look elsewhere. Unless you're completely desperate, *avoid this game*!

So, who comes up the winner? Isn't it obvious? While Body Blows Galactic AGA has marginal playability, it is still head and shoulders above the dismal Mortal Kombat. Even the ECS BBG wins in comparison. There is a CD^{32} version of MK on the way, and it looks great – hopefully the designers at Probe can redeem themselves. ■ **RB**

ON THE OTHER HAND...

Please note that the grades given to these games are solely from the perspective of the reviewer and not those of the AGZ staff. While we generally assign grades based on the review and our own evaluation, we chose to print both points of view this time since there was such a discrepancy. Having never played Mortal Kombat at the arcade, we at AGZ prefer MK to BBG by a wide margin. The digitized actors, responsive play, and special moves made us keep coming back to MK while BBG sat collecting dust. If you've never tried it, MK is worth a look. – Ed

MORTAL KOMBAT DEATH MOVES

JOHNNY CAGE POWER PUNCH	SUB-ZERO HEADPIECE
TOWARD TOWARD TOWARD FIRE	TOWARD DOWN TOWARD FIRE
KANO HEART ATTACK	**SCORPION HELLFIRE**
AWAY AWAY FIRE	DOWN DOWN FIRE
LIU KANG SPIN KICK	**RAYDEN ELECTRICITY**
DOWN AWAY UP TOWARD DOWN	TOWARD AWAY AWAY AWAY FIRE
SONYA BLADE KISS OF DEATH	**TO FIGHT REPTILE:**
TOWARD TOWARD AWAY AWAY FIRE	In the pit level, perform a double flawless victory and finish with a fatality move!

BODY BLOWS GALACTIC

TEAM 17 ■ £26.99 ($40)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
PAL	YES
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
NO	DISK-BASED

Great graphics but limited controls make it only slightly above average.

C+

BODY BLOWS GALACTIC AGA

TEAM 17 ■ £29.99 ($45)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
PAL	3.0 ONLY
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
NO	DISK-BASED

A few minor enhancements, but basically the same as the ECS game.

C+

MORTAL KOMBAT

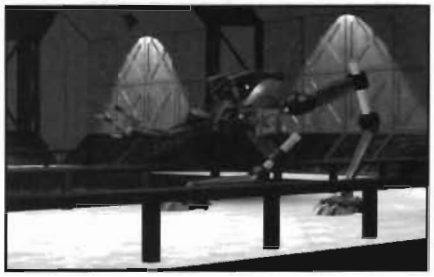
VIRGIN ■ £29.99 ($45)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
NTSC	YES
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
NO	DISK-BASED

This version of MK pales in comparison to its arcade counterpart.

D

RISE OF THE ROBOTS



PREVIEW

THE ROBOTS are coming. Mirage's highly-anticipated combat game Rise of the Robots is set to be released this spring with separate versions for CD^{32}, AGA, and standard Amigas. The entire game was created using high-end 3D modeling software that produces incredible ray-traced graphic images, resulting in some of the most realistic animation ever seen on the Amiga.

Each robot character is modeled element by element from the original blueprint designs and shaped to exact dimensions. Some of the more spectacular effects in the game include the morphing of a liquid metal robot and the shattering sequences when a robot is defeated.

The entire project is being headed by ex-Bitmap Brother Sean Griffiths, so we expect the playability to be as refined as the graphics! ■

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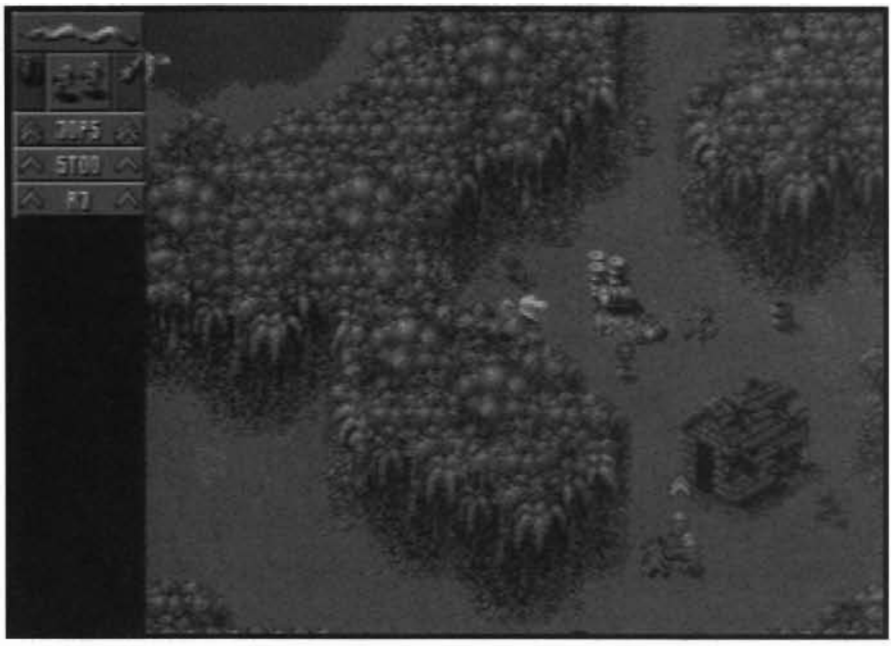
CANNON FODDER



Lately, a new style of game has come of age. It's sort of a cross between a god-game and a military strategy affair. Recent releases sharing these characteristics include Syndicate, Theatre of Death, and now, Cannon Fodder. Cannon Fodder is Sensible Software's attempt at this interesting new genre. Cannon Fodder is a solid product, but it doesn't quite dethrone Bullfrog's mighty Syndicate.

In Cannon Fodder, the main characters are a rag-tag bunch of individuals, who think they are in for a few weekends of military training and free college tuition, but instead end up engaged in deadly combat. Sneaking through terrain as diverse as steamy jungle and frozen tundra, they constantly face off against the nameless enemy. The guiding principle is "shoot first and ask questions later".

The mouse is used to control all of the movement and offensive functions of the soldiers. Clicking on a specific point on the screen will command the tiny infantry to march to that area. The other mouse button fires one of the weapons in the arsenal consisting of machine guns, grenades, and rockets. To make the journey a bit easier, the troops can be packed into vehicles such as armored cars, hovercraft, tanks, or choppers. When a mission requires several small attack groups, your forces can be split up and the weapons divided accordingly. Smaller parties present a more difficult target for the all too accurately aimed enemy rocket or gunfire.

While the military is constantly taking on new recruits, the number of available soldiers is still limited. Each mission is divided into several levels which must be completed before the next round can be entered and more recruits can sign up. If all of the available troops are eliminated before the next round starts, the game is over. At the beginning of the game, this really isn't a problem. As the stages get tougher, there are noticeably more casualties, and the supply of troops gets dangerously low. It is for this reason the later levels cannot be treated as an all-out blastfest. Strategies must be carefully planned out, weapons must be conserved, and troops must sneak around rather than just running with guns blazing into open areas. The few soldiers that are left when the smoke clears get promoted depending on how many of the enemy they have killed. Only the best of the best are posthumously placed in the hall of fame.

Cannon Fodder's graphics are very good. Each of the backgrounds has been drawn with amazing care and features great detail and appropriate use of color. The characters, albeit tiny, are also well drawn and skillfully animated. The occasional graphic glitch does pop up, but it's really not a problem. Not only are the visuals good, but so is the audio. Sound effects such as rushing wind, chirping birds, and flowing rivers abound. Of course, there is the standard array of explosions, gunshots, and death cries as well, with the full benefit of stereo.

From a gameplay standpoint, Cannon Fodder is a great challenge – but not in the way you might think. The challenge is in staying interested. It starts out very easy, but the difficulty ramps up quickly. Completing the game takes quite a while, even for the experienced gamer. However, the length of the game doesn't make up for the fact that there isn't much to it. I quickly grew tired of the repetitious levels and the frustrating difficulty of some scenarios. There just isn't enough variety from level to level. It's the type of game that needs to be taken in small doses. Getting totally mangled during hours of combat can really frazzle the nerves. Not only that, but the average gamer probably won't feel like going through all of the tedious disk swaps. For some reason Virgin felt it necessary to release a game on three disks, yet did not make it hard drive installable (*Not too "Sensible", eh? – Ed*)

All things taken into consideration, Cannon Fodder is pretty good. It's a very long game with a difficulty level that should keep any gamer busy for awhile. It does lack variety, but on the whole, Cannon Fodder is definitely an above average production. Comparatively, it falls a little short of some of the better games in this genre such as Syndicate – but still, you won't regret buying it. ■ **RB**

CANNON FODDER

VIRGIN ■ £29.99 ($45)

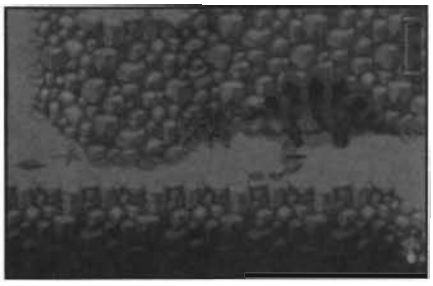
VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
NTSC	YES
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
NO	DISK-BASED

Lots of good stuff – just too much of the same stuff.

B

JURASSIC PARK

After fifteen or so years of game playing experience, one rule I've learned is to never to trust a movie license. Most of the time, software houses will take a popular (and sometimes not so popular) movie title and slap a sub-par game behind the name in hopes of selling a less than stellar product on the name alone. In the first place, it's very hard to make a decent game out of a film. Since the gameplay has to adhere to the plot of the film, room for creative design becomes fairly cramped. As a result, most movie-to-game conversions end up as uninspired platformers or those god-awful collections of sub-games that relate to certain parts of the movie. Jurassic Park from Ocean is no exception to this rule. While it has the same name as the biggest film hit in history, the actual game is tired and average at best.



In Jurassic Park the player assumes the role of the famous archeologist, Dr. Alan Grant, who has been invited on a tour of the newest amusement park/biotechnological breakthrough called Jurassic Park. Jurassic Park, as if you didn't know, features the flora and fauna of the dinosaur age reconstructed from preserved prehistoric DNA. Of course, the novel plan is complicated by drawing on the "fly in the ointment" device. In an attempt to escape the island with stolen dinosaur eggs, the head computer programmer of the facility has turned off the security systems which keep visitors to Jurassic Park safe from the rampaging monsters. Now Grant has to gather up all the people he came with and escape the island unscathed.

While the game sounds exciting, hiding behind the giant film license is a drab, overhead-view search and collect game with a few nice texture-mapped 3D sequences and a variety of irritating puzzles. Throughout most of the levels, Dr. Grant has to complete a series of tasks in order to advance to the next section of the park.

Some of these tasks are truly annoying. For instance, in the second section Grant must pick way too many microscopic berries scattered throughout the entire level to feed to a rampaging Triceratops, thereby stalling it so he can sneak by. This takes an inordinate amount of time, but that's the not the worst annoyance. If you actually get past the

berry section and die shortly thereafter, the sadistic developers have arranged that you must *repeat* the berry gathering, complete with more awful disk accessing.

Once one of the buildings has been entered, the game goes into a decent texture-mapped 3D sequence not too dissimilar to the much ballyhooed Wolfenstein 3D on that, erm, other computer. The scaling is nice and quick (on AGA machines), and it's refreshing to see developers trying new things. However, that's about it for visuals.

Aside from the 3D sections, Jurassic Park's graphics are disappointing. The scrolling is inexcusably jerky. It almost appears as if the player is running ahead of the scrolling and has to wait for the computer to catch up. Also, when a mere two or three enemies are on the screen, the game slows down horribly and flickers for no apparent reason. This is really inexcusable, especially in the AGA version. The actual overhead level graphics are well-drawn, but that's little compensation for the awful movement of the game.

The soundtrack, on the other hand, is very atmospheric. The eerie tunes really add a lot to the game, but seem to have the nasty habit of fading in and out, resulting in a very uneven musical score. Overall, the music is actually very good, despite the minor shortcomings.

The crowning irritation is the fact that the game comes on four disks, yet is not hard drive installable. With that much data and the horrific disk access, it should not have disk-based copy protection. Compounding the problem is the fact that even though the game is run off of floppy disks, game positions cannot be saved. Instead, Ocean has provided us with the all too console-like password system. It would have been much more convenient to offer disk saves instead.

Jurassic Park isn't a total loss. It's just too bland, and with the many shortcomings of this game, I can't really give it a high rating. It does have lastability, though. The levels are large and difficult which will keep even the most experienced gamers busy for awhile. That is, if they don't become fossilized from boredom after the first few tedious stages. ■ **RB**

JURASSIC PARK

OCEAN ■ £25.99 ($40)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
PAL	YES
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
NO	DISK-BASED

Middle of the pack search and collect game with a catchy name.

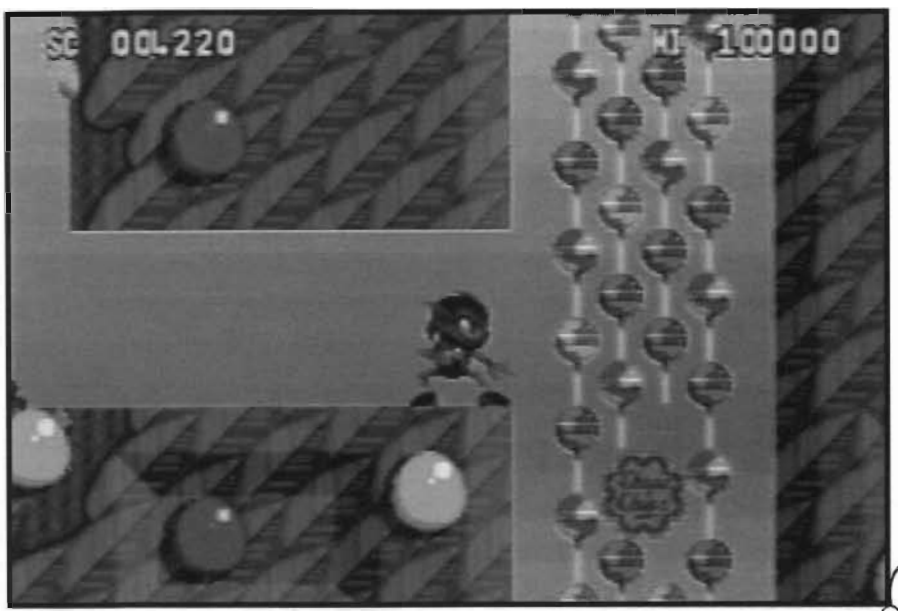
JURASSIC PARK AGA

OCEAN ■ £27.99 ($45)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
PAL	3.0 ONLY
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
NO	DISK-BASED

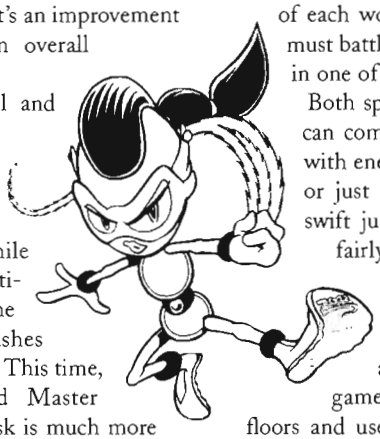
Faster 3D sections, but not the T. Rex of a game we were hoping for.

ZOOL 2

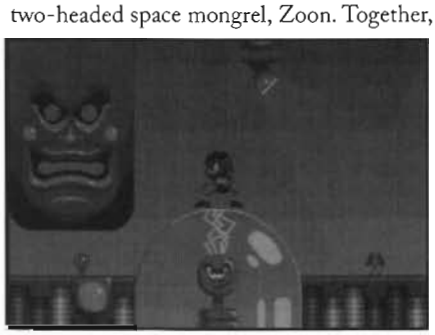


In 1992 Gremlin brought out perhaps one of the most sucessful Amiga platformers to date. Accompanied by plenty of hype and stellar reviews, Zool rose to the top of the charts. Was I the only guy who didn't like Zool? Well, right on schedule, Gremlin has brought out Zool 2 as the sequel to its overrated original. However, Zool 2 isn't all that bad. It's an improvement on the original and an overall better game.

In Zool 2, the evil and tyrannical Krool has once again invaded several worlds, sending the mind lines of imagination into peril. While traversing through a multitude of areas, Zool, the intergalactic ninja, bashes baddies and grabs tokens. This time, Zool's superior, Grand Master Rool, has decided the task is much more dangerous than before. To aid in Zool's quest, Rool has called upon the services of an able-bodied female Ninja, Zooz, and a two-headed space mongrel, Zoon. Together, they must battle the various enemy forces all commanded by Krool's super powerful lieutenant, Mental Block.



Gameplay-wise, it's your standard platformer. Each of the six worlds is split up into 3 sub-levels. To complete each sub-level, 99% of the tokens scattered around must be collected. Once the third sub-level of each world is reached, the player must battle it out with Mental Block in one of his many different forms. Both space ninjas Zool and Zooz can combat the horde of enemies with energy shots, air spin attacks, or just by crushing them with a swift jump. Zool and Zooz have fairly similar abilities, but Zooz has a few additional tricks up her sleeve. While Zool has all his same abilities from the first game, Zooz can drill through floors and use her laser-whip for close range attacks. Also, there are many power-ups like smart bombs and power shots throughout the game that can help move the player along.

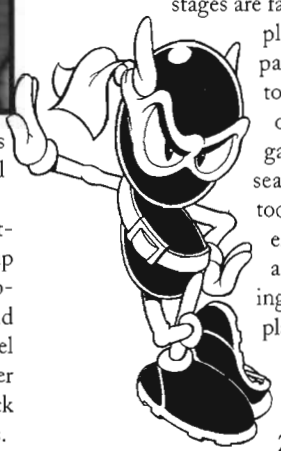


In this sequel there are several entertaining bonus levels. After a level has been completed, if 3 Zoon icons have been collected, the game will enter the bonus round. These bonus rounds involve Zoon in several different sub-games such as a Breakout clone and the like. Bonus points, extra lives, and other useful items can be gained during these mini-games.

The graphics in Zool 2 are a step above the original. The scrolling is still fast, but doesn't seem to be as jerky as the former, and there doesn't appear to be much flicker and slowdown when many objects fill the screen. Also, the animation of the various characters is decent, and the actual level graphics are fairly detailed.

The sound isn't as good as the original, however. In the first game different background themes could be selected. In Zool 2 only sound effects, silence, or the single incessant background tune can be toggled. The problem with the music is not only the fact that it is rather bland, but that it stays constant throughout every level and doesn't change according to the game action as in other similar titles. It's best to play with sound effects on because it gives more of a solid feel to the game since the sounds actually coincide with the on-screen action.

Zool 2's gameplay is what makes it a lot better than the first installment. While the stages are fairly linear, there are plenty of hidden passageways leading to prize rooms and other areas. If the game is too easy for seasoned gamers or too hard for the less experienced, there are options for varying the difficulty of play.



With all of this taken into consideration, Zool 2 is one of the better Amiga platformers. It has a lot going for it over the first Zool, and with options like 2-player action and the greatly enhanced gameplay, I'd recommend this to the action game fan. Plus, a game that comes with free candy in the box can't be all that bad. ■ RB

ZOOL 2

GREMLIN ■ £25.99 ($40)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
PAL	YES
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
NO	DISK & CODEWHEEL

Definitely an improvement over the original, plus free candy.

B+

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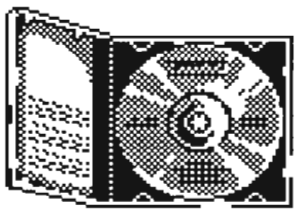

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CD32 ZONE

Guess who bought the billboard outside Sega's European corporate headquarters...

STATE OF THE CD32

COMMODORE HAS officially released the CD^{32} to Amiga dealers in the United States! However, Microcosm and Chaos Engine (the games supposed to be bundled with the machine) were not included in the initial shipment and are promised "real soon now". Additional joypads are currently available, and the Full Motion Video units should be on sale in mid-May. The SX1 computer expansion unit ($199.95) from Paravision should also be available by the time you read this. The specs are impressive: floppy, serial, parallel, and RGB video ports, FMV pass-thru, internal IDE and external SCSI hard drive connectors, and an optional AT keyboard ($29.95) and memory card ($29.95) that supports up to 8MB. ■

THE PAL PROBLEM

THE AMERICAN launch of the CD^{32} is being hindered due to the fact that almost 40% of the 60 titles currently available for the machine require the European-standard PAL video mode. Luckily, many CD^{32} users already have a PAL-compatible monitor (like the 1084) and a mouse. By plugging the mouse into the second joypad port and holding down both buttons while turning on the CD^{32}, a PAL/NTSC boot menu can be accessed. However, the PAL problem does affect every potential buyer who wants to connect his CD^{32} to a standard TV. Make sure you check video compatibility in our review boxes before you buy a game that will cause your TV screen to roll. We hope game publishers will address this problem soon. ■

EUROPEAN CD SOFTWARE SALES

1.	AMIGA CD^{32}	38.6%
2.	PC CD-ROM	31.3%
3.	SEGA MEGA CD	27.6%
4	PHILIPS CD-I	1.8%
5	ALL OTHERS	0.7%

AMERICAN TOP 10

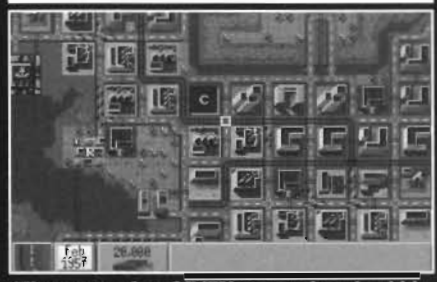
1. Labyrinth
2. Liberation
3. International Karate Plus
4. D/Generation
5. Robocod
6. CD Sports Football
7. Pirate's Gold
8. Nigel Mansell Racing
9. Diggers
10. Summer Olympix

EUROPEAN TOP 10

1. Microcosm
2. Nick Faldo's Golf
3. Liberation
4. Zool
5. D/Generation
6. Whale's Voyage
7. Bubba 'N' Stix
8. Sensible Soccer 92/93
9. Seek & Destroy
10. Super Putty

CDTV DISC OF THE MONTH

SIM CITY



There are a few CDTV games that should be in every CD^{32} owner's collection. Sim City was specifically rewritten for CDTV to include new graphics and the Medieval, Western, and Future cities. Unfortunately, Sim City is a PAL-only title and CD^{32} owners will not be able to save their games. But while you're waiting for Sim City 2000 to make its way to the CD^{32}, why not try this diamond in the rough?

CD+G DISC OF THE MONTH

JIMI HENDRIX SMASH HITS

The CD plus Graphics format never really took off, but there are still some great titles to be found in record store bins. This Jimi Hendrix CD is arguably the best example of the genre, but it is very difficult to find. Play this combo of psychedelic graphics and music at your next party and watch the reaction!

FMV DISC OF THE MONTH

THE FIRM

We knew that the Philips CD-I machine was good for something other than filling up TV infomercial slots. Philips has released over 30 Full Motion Video titles that are all compatible with the CD^{32}. You can get great movies like The Firm for just $24.98 – not bad for 3 compact discs and near LaserDisc quality!

LIBERATION

Four *thousand* levels to complete! Liberation could be described more accurately as a second way of life instead of just a game. The plot is so intriguing, the character interaction is so fascinating, and the world is so immense that the player is immediately consumed by it. You may want to reserve a few weeks on your calendar to play this game.

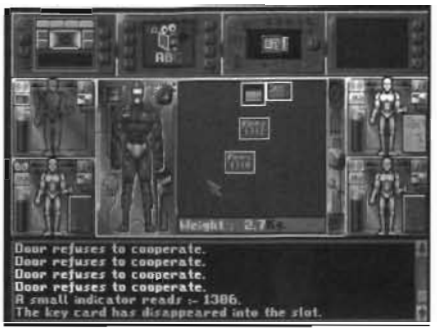
Liberation is the sequel to Captive, a Dungeon Master-style role playing game that appeared on the Amiga a few years ago. Trill, the original captive rescued in the first game, stumbles upon a major conspiracy. It seems that renegade droids are going on a killing spree, and the government is framing innocent people for the murders. Trill calls upon his own droid team to save these new captives. Trill's droids offer a first-person view of the action and are controlled by laptop computer from Trill's remote hideout in the mountains outside the city.

The player can control the four droids individually or as a team to explore the immense city. One of the most welcomed features of the game is a completely customizable interface that can be tailored to fit your individual style of play. You can use the CD^{32} controller to perform all the available functions, but using a mouse results in more efficient play.

The futuristic city is beautifully rendered with texture-mapped walls, and it is inhabited by machines and a diverse population who function independent of your direction. Each being has a unique personality and fully digitized speech. The heart of the game consists of moving around the city and talking with different residents. These two actions are tightly interwoven as you must extract useful information from several sources in order to make your next move. Some people are willing to help while others are downright hostile – it takes a bit of negotiating at times (which can take the form of a bribe or a threat). You must also be constantly aware of thieves and attackers who can short circuit your plans.

Many different items necessary to your success are scattered around the city and other useful goods can be purchased from black market traders on the lower level. Outfit your droids with some heavy firepower or opt for chip implants to enhance their abilities. The inventory system used in Liberation is unique – all items procured must be arranged so that they fit in your droids' backpacks.

Not everyone will be as enthralled by this game as I am. You must be willing to devote a significant amount of time to get oriented to the interface and to the task at hand – arcade players may be turned off initially. You can't just wander around aimlessly in hopes that you stumble upon the captive hidden in each level. The open-ended architecture of the game will require you to follow specific leads. Otherwise you'll become lost in the huge city. The city mapper is invaluable here, and the taxis can also be very helpful in locating your desired destination. Another drawback is that Liberation takes up the majority of your CD^{32} save game memory – several people have reported being unable to save their games due to lack of free flash RAM space.



Minor annoyances aside, Liberation is the type of game that perfectly complements the Amiga CD^{32}. It's a sprawling adventure that you can enjoy without having to wait while the game installs or asks you to switch disks. It has a movie-style introduction, digitized speech, and background music that flows to reflect the action in the game. When it comes to depth of gameplay, Liberation is unparalleled. This game retains its value weeks after you purchase it – you'll probably never finish it.

This is exactly how CD technology should be utilized. ■ **GM**

DOES THE INTRODUCTION ON YOUR COPY OF LIBERATION REMIND YOU OF A BADLY-DUBBED JAPANESE MOVIE?

Liberation has a great seven-minute opening sequence, but unfortunately the digitized voices are not synchronized with the graphics on U.S. machines. Mindscape U.K. told us that they didn't have NTSC units to test the game in pre-production, and there are no plans to fix the problem. But don't let this minor flaw keep you from enjoying a fantastic game.

LIBERATION CD32

MINDSCAPE ■ £34.99 ($50)

VIDEO	CDTV
NTSC	NO

Without a doubt – the best Amiga CD^{32} game to be released so far!

MICROCOSM

We here at *Amiga Game Zone* couldn't be more thrilled that Commodore has decided to bundle Microcosm with every CD^{32} sold in America. This may seem like an odd statement if you've already snuck a peek at the mediocre grade we've given the game. Don't be alarmed – there's a good explanation.

Remember back a few years ago when Psygnosis released another graphically-stunning game called Shadow of the Beast? It sold Amigas by the truckload even though it was crushed by reviewers and players alike for its high difficulty curve and lack of gameplay. But the real beauty of the game was that it made people who were considering a PC or a Nintendo think twice. Up to that point no one had seen such fluid animation or multi-level parallax scrolling outside of the arcade. It was one of the main reasons I decided to buy my first Amiga 500.

Now you're probably asking, "What does this have to with Microcosm?" The answer is simple – Microcosm will sell the CD^{32} just like Shadow of the Beast sold the Amiga 500. The animation is simply some of the best I've ever seen – it was rendered on high-end graphic workstations and then converted to the CD^{32}. The inimitable Psygnosis intro lasts over 5 minutes, mixing live actors with a futuristic cityscape (in full stereo sound, I might add).

The game itself is based on the plot of the movie Fantastic Voyage (or Innerspace, for the younger set). You must pilot a microscopic ship through a human body to destroy Grey M, an evil droid that is controlling the human's brain. Your miniaturized ship is equipped with a variety of weapons to fight the body's natural defenses and ultimately destroy Grey M.

Traveling through the body for the first time is a dizzying experience – cell walls rush past your ship at high speed and there are hundreds of enemies to shoot. But after the initial fascination of the game wears off, it quickly becomes apparent that this is just another Space Harrier style shoot 'em-up. There is little variety among the 5 levels, and, like Shadow of the Beast, the difficulty curve is high. It should be noted that the gameplay *is* better than the original FM Towns version, which sported a first-person view instead of a third-person one. (That's why you can still see the interior *as well as* the exterior of your ship. Go figure.)

So why are we so glad Microcosm comes free with the CD^{32} bundle? This is the type of game everyone should have to show off his machine. Believe me, jaws will drop, gasps will be heard, and your friends will inevitably ask if you have the Full Motion Video cartridge (no, you don't need one for the game). But the real beauty of the situation, again, is that they too will want a CD^{32} after seeing Microcosm. And you didn't have to pay the outrageous $70 price tag that Psygnosis is asking for the game – gee, SNES and Genesis owners regularly pay that much for cartridges. ■ **GM**

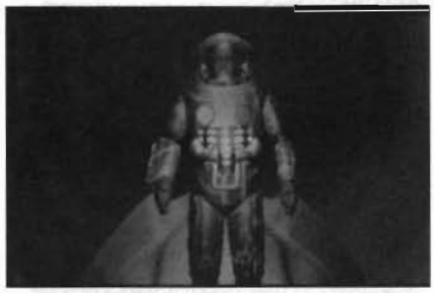
MICROCOSM SECRETS

There are a few undocumented features in Microcosm that are vital to the game:

Pressing the top left button will bring up a map during the game – but be careful, the game is *not* paused! From here you can press the blue button to choose different junction points and the green button to immediately travel to them.

Press the green button when you see the Microcosm title for a full-screen intro!

And, oh yes, there *is* a cheat mode. We feel that simply giving it away would severely cut into your enjoyment of the game – but anyone who pauses to recall that old electronic game Simon should be able to find the cheat.



MICROCOSM CD32

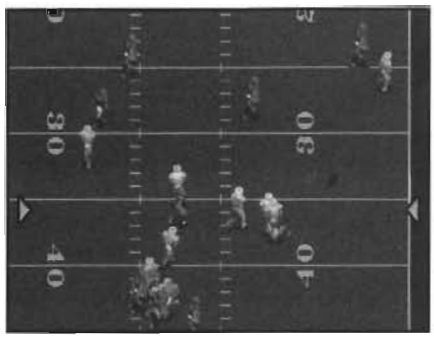
PSYGNOSIS ■ £44.99 ($70)

VIDEO	CDTV
NTSC	NO

THE title to show off to your friends, but not worth the high price.

CD SPORTS FOOTBALL

I first saw CDTV Sports Football (the original title) at the Consumer Electronics Show three years ago when Commodore was pushing its doomed $1000 "home multimedia machine". Touted as the improved sequel to the venerable TV Sports Football, it showcased quarter-screen CDXL movie clips for announcers, referees, crowd shots, and the post-game show. Various delays in production kept pushing back the title's release. Now it has finally appeared as a CD^{32}-only game. Funny, I can't find any improvements over the game I saw long ago. It's even kind of irritating to hear the announcer say "CD (pause) Sports Football" now because the "TV" part has been clumsily edited out.



Another letdown is the omission of actual N.F.L. players' names. It's difficult to get into a game where a guy named "Brian Brian" keeps making plays. My biggest gripe, however, is that you can't switch your defensive player to the man closest to the ball. This reduces much of the game to a spectator sport.

The actual gameplay offers no real improvement over TV Sports Football. Your receivers still disappear off the top of the screen and are then represented by arrows – but there's no real way to tell the amount or type of coverage they're facing. Running is next to impossible without a lot a practice.

But don't despair, sports fans – there are a few bright spots. The computer player isn't quite the pushover you faced in TV Sports Football. Over 100 different plays can be selected from detailed on screen diagrams, and the locker room interviews after the game are pretty funny. The CDXL movie segments are a definite plus. Stats are displayed after every game, but they're rendered meaningless since they can't be saved for an entire season. I wish I could recommend this one if only because of the severe lack of quality sports games for the Amiga. Unfortunately, CD Sports Football is just another good-looking game that's boring to play. ■ **GM**

CD32 SPORTS FOOTBALL

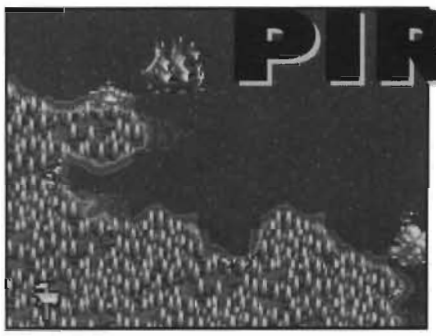
COMMODORE ■ $59.99

VIDEO	CDTV
NTSC	NO

Top-notch presentation can't disguise mediocre gameplay.

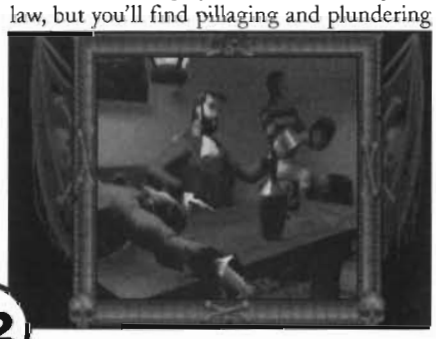
C-

PIRATES! GOLD



Prepare to take command of a motley crew of men and sail the high seas in search of adventure and wealth. Pirates! Gold blends elements of strategy, action, and adventure into one satisfyingly complete production.

The game centers around traveling to different ports and trading goods with the locals. You can play without breaking the law, but you'll find pillaging and plundering to be a much more lucrative lifestyle. If you decide to take the latter route, you'll have to become skilled at arcade-style swordfights as well as land and sea battles. You'll also need some navigational skills to complete secret missions, search for treasure, and rescue lost relatives. A well managed journey will result in fame and fortune.



Many of you may remember the original Pirates! game released several years ago on the Amiga. This new CD-only version offers updated 256-color graphics and enhanced sound effects while retaining the same addictive gameplay that made the first game so popular. There's also a fully-rendered introduction and an in-game map (finally!) It would have been even better if the map was printed in the manual as well so you could consult it without interrupting play.

The only real drawback, some will argue, is the lack of variation in play. True, most of the arcade sequences are repetitious, but that never really bothered me. I was too consumed with completing my mission.

Microprose has taken a proven concept and enhanced it with all new graphics. Pirates! Gold is recommended to everyone from first time players to seasoned captains who enjoyed the original game. ■ **GM**

PIRATE'S GOLD CD32

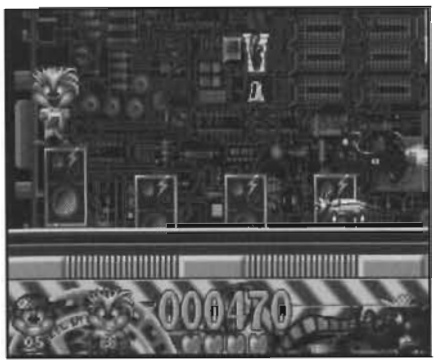
MICROPROSE ■ £29.99 ($45)

VIDEO	CDTV
NTSC	NO

An excellent blend of strategy, action, and adventure.

B+

OSCAR



THE AGA version of this colorful platformer was reviewed last issue. It is pleasing to find some nice additions on the CD version. A full MIDI soundtrack has been included as well as two additional levels exclusive to the CD^{32}. One new level is "Commodore World" in which you are treated to disks, chips, monitors, etc., all displaying the CBM logo – neat!

Play consists of avoiding enemies and searching for little Oscar statuettes. This can get repetitive at times, especially since enemies are resurrected after being killed – I hate that. However, the graphic detail is so good that you can't help but like Oscar. ■

OSCAR CD32

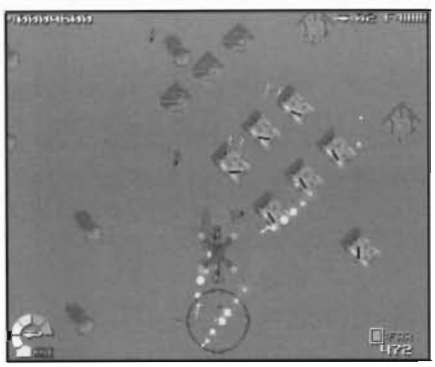
FLAIR ■ £25.99 ($40)

VIDEO	CDTV
NTSC	NO

Standard platform game with lush graphics and backgrounds.

B

SEEK & DESTROY



IMAGINE PLAYING Desert Strike from an overhead perspective, and you'll have a good idea of what to expect from Seek & Destroy. The Apache helicopter you control remains stationary at the bottom of the screen while the ground scrolls underneath it in a circular pattern. There is a wide assortment of weapons and missions, plus a great gravelly-voiced commentary that follows your actions.

The main problem with Seek & Destroy is that there isn't enough variety in the missions to keep your interest. The graphics are passable, but I'd suggest waiting for a CD version of Desert Strike. ■

SEEK & DESTROY CD32

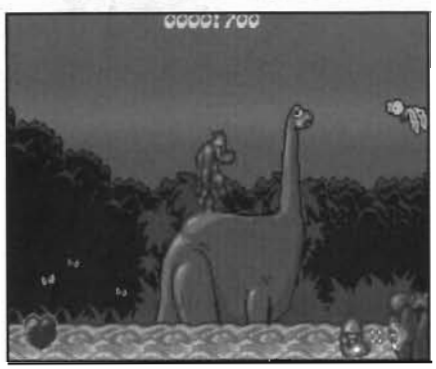
MINDSCAPE ■ £29.99 ($45)

VIDEO	CDTV
PAL	NO

360° overhead helicopter arcade game with good sound effects.

C+

CHUCK ROCK



POOR CHUCK. How can he hope to contribute to evolution when his wife Ophelia has been kidnapped by Gary Gritter, Chuck's old nemesis? It looks like another hard day of scrolling platform action for our Cro-Magnon hero.

Chuck must belly-butt oncoming enemies to reach the end of dozens of short levels. The humorous animation adds a great deal to the enjoyability of the game. Multiple button support is also included.

It's good to see that Core Design is releasing a series of older Amiga titles at reduced prices. No, it's not state of the art, but it is priced right. ■

CHUCK ROCK CD32

CORE DESIGN ■ £14.99 ($25)

VIDEO	CDTV
PAL	NO

Prehistoric platform romp at a budget price.

C+

ARABIAN NIGHTS

BEARING FEATURES similar to Chuck Rock (budget-priced platformer in which you must rescue the girl from the evil dude) and almost every other game of this genre, Arabian Nights is actually well-programmed and includes some puzzles that keep you on your toes. This is probably the closest you'll come to finding a Mario-style game on the Amiga CD^{32}.

If you've seen Soccer Kid by Krisalis and think the main characters of the two games look like brothers, you're right. Both were developed concurrently by the programmers at Krisalis using the same game engine. ■

ARABIAN NIGHTS CD32

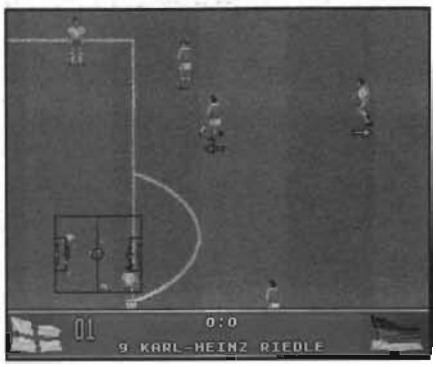
KRISALIS ■ £14.99 ($25)

VIDEO	CDTV
NTSC	NO

The closest thing to Mario style action without buying a Nin...

B–

JOHN BARNES SOCCER



WE ASKED *AGZ* resident soccer guru Meri (see inside back cover) about John Barnes Soccer because we're just not too knowledgeable about this thing the Europeans call football. Curiously, she just started giggling uncontrollably when we mentioned the title. We decided Meri must not think too much of this one.

Our favorite tagline on the case reads "*CD quality* sound effects". WOW! How do you think they managed that on the CD^{32}? Actually, the sounds are limited to poor crowd samples that cycle over and over and over. If you like soccer, you should spend a little extra and buy Sensible Soccer. ■

JOHN BARNES SOCCER CD32

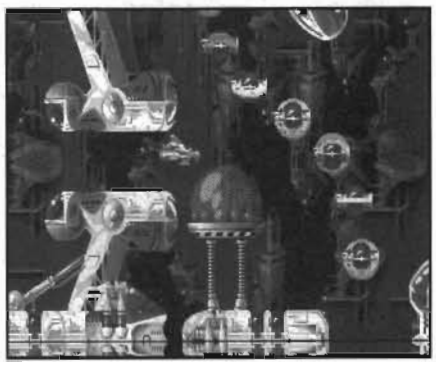
KRISALIS ■ £14.99 ($25)

VIDEO	CDTV
NTSC	NO

Why would anyone buy this when Sensi Soccer is available?

D

DISPOSABLE HERO



GREMLIN'S LATEST sideways-scrolling shoot 'em up doesn't really break any new ground, but it does have some tasty visuals and a pumping soundtrack. Five large levels full of the obligatory mayhem and carnage await you.

A great feature of this game is the variable difficulty settings. Most shooters have easy, medium, and hard modes which give you 3, 5, or 7 lives, respectively. However, Disposable Hero varies the number of enemies you have to face depending on which setting you choose. This makes for an enjoyable experience for everyone, regardless of ability. ■

DISPOSABLE HERO CD32

GREMLIN ■ £29.99 ($45)

VIDEO	CDTV
PAL	NO

Well done R-Type clone but doesn't break any new ground.

B–

IK+

WHEN IK+ was released many, many moons ago, it was hailed by critics as one of the best fighting games ever. Well, gaming has come a long way since that time, and there are now many heirs to the beat 'em up crown. IK+ was long forgotten until it was recently re-released on CD^{32}. Playing it again reminded me of how far games have actually progressed on the Amiga.

The graphics, while good for their time, look terribly dated now. You basically fight against two opponents (*ad nauseum*) on the same static background. If you bought this game, don't get mad – try pressing the blue button for a good laugh. ■

INTERNATIONAL KARATE PLUS CD32

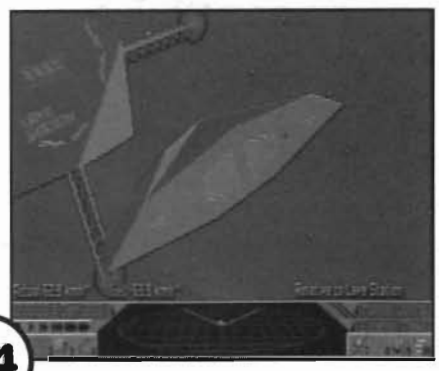
SYSTEM 3 ■ £14.99 ($25)

VIDEO	CDTV
NTSC	NO

Terribly dated fighting game for one or two players.

D+

FRONTIER



FRONTIER ADDICTS: The CD^{32} version of Frontier has been released! Now you can fly missions as a space trader or intergalactic mercenary and visit the outer reaches of the galaxy with your CD^{32}! And unfortunately... that's it.

Huh? You ask how we can make such a bold statement and end with "that's it"? Well, it's simple, really. Frontier for the CD^{32} is exactly the same as Frontier for the Amiga (you can read the complete review on page 10). No CD soundtrack. No 256 colors. No gourand shading. They didn't even include the saved game positions from the disk version! We were robbed! ■

FRONTIER CD32

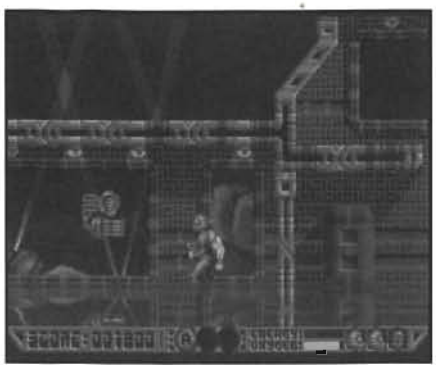
GAMETEK ■ £29.99 ($45)

VIDEO	CDTV
NTSC	NO

The original version was great, but we expected more on the CD^{32}.

B+

DEEP CORE



ICE'S CROSS between Alien Breed and Gods falls far short of attaining the heights reached by either of those two games. Deep Core is a standard platform game in which you control Capt. Dawnrazor as he grunts his way through 9 levels of mindless play.

We have no problem with converting Amiga games for release on the CD^{32}, but it really yanks our chains when companies don't make a single change in the software to take advantage of the CD^{32}'s capabilities. It would have been easy to add support for a second button for jumping, but instead we're stuck pressing up while 5 buttons on the controller remain unused. Skip it. ■

DEEP CORE CD32

ICE ■ £25.99 ($40)

VIDEO	CDTV
PAL	NO

Mindless platformer that belongs on the bottom of the pile.

D+

PREY

PREY PULLS you into the game with a great storyline and an intriguing opening sequence. It seems a mining colony on an alien world has been having some strange problems lately, and it's your job to evacuate the base. You know what comes next... the game's subtitle is "An Alien Encounter".

This game was originally released for the ill-fated CDTV, and unfortunately the graphics don't appear to be enhanced at all for the CD^{32} version. Play consists of simply walking through the monocolor halls, finding colonists, and fending off aliens. You'll be bored after a few tries. It's really a shame there isn't more to it. ■

PREY CD32

ALMATHERA ■ £29.99 ($45)

VIDEO	CDTV
NTSC	NO

Loads of atmosphere but minimal and dull gameplay.

D

BUBBA 'N' STIX

AN ODD feeling comes over you as you start this game... *a tree is following you.* But soon you'll come to accept this sort of bizarre logic when attempting to solve the puzzles facing you in Bubba 'N' Stix.

This is a platform game with puzzles galore. The cartoon-style graphics look incredible, and the CD^{32} version has an animated introduction not included on the floppy version. You control Bubba on his journey with Stix, a multi-talented alien life form. Stix acts as both a weapon and a tool for Bubba, and you'll need to figure out how to utilize him effectively to get out of many "sticky" situations. You'll like this one. ■

BUBBA 'N' STIX CD32

CORE DESIGN ■ £29.99 ($45)

VIDEO	CDTV
PAL	NO

Great cartoon graphics and fun puzzles make Bubba a winner.

B+

LOTUS TRILOGY

THE LOTUS series of racing games on the Amiga was one of the best collections ever produced for the machine. The speed junkie in all of us should be thankful to Gremlin for packaging the three games together on one CD. A CD soundtrack was added to complete the bargain.

These games are fun if you're playing alone, but with a second player they really get going. Each game also has its own unique qualities. Lotus 1 is the best of the three and features circular courses. Lotus 2 gives full-screen views and timed stretches. Lotus 3 offers both styles of racing. Definitely a good buy. ■

LOTUS TRILOGY CD32

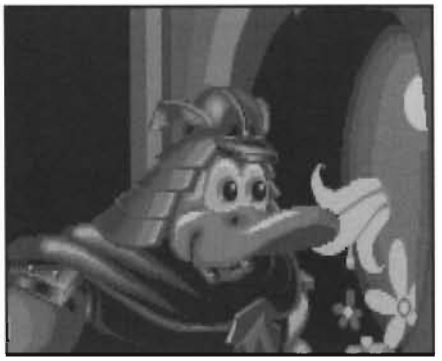
GREMLIN ■ £29.99 ($45)

VIDEO	CDTV
NTSC	NO

Great racing action in this collection of all three Lotus games.

B+

DONK!



YOU'VE GOT to respect The Hidden, the programming team behind Donk! They really tried to spice up the CD^{32} version of this tired Amiga platformer. However, their cosmetic additions did nothing to improve the substandard gameplay. There is a new rave soundtrack and some animated linking sequences, but the same impossible pixel-perfect jumps still have to be made.

Whoever created the sound effects for Donk! needs to be caned. The original Amiga game had a terrible quacking noise every time Donk jumped, but in this version it's been changed... for the worse! Sounds like regurgitation to me. Erm, sorry. ■

DONK! CD32

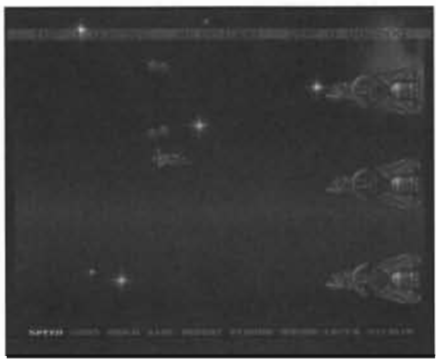
SUPERVISION ■ £29.99 ($45)

VIDEO	CDTV
PAL	NO

Mostly just annoying, Donk leaves a lot to be desired.

C-

PROJECT-X



PROJECT-X WAS one of the three best shoot 'em ups ever released for the Amiga (Blood Money and SWIV being the other two), so it comes as no surprise that we're recommending it highly. Project-X has formidable enemies, multiple power-ups, digitized speech, and a good difficulty curve – everything you could ask of a classic shooter. The only real drawback is that you'll have to play the game in PAL to really enjoy it.

Also bundled on this CD is F17 Challenge, an average racing game. You won't be playing it for long... because you'll want to have another go at blasting the bejeezus out of Project-X! ■

PROJECT-X / F17 CD32

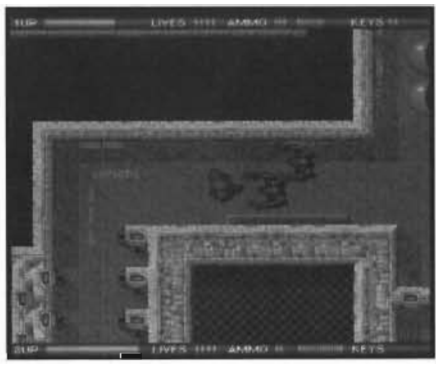
TEAM 17 ■ £24.99 ($40)

VIDEO	CDTV
PAL	NO

This is the best shoot 'em up for the Amiga CD^{32}.

A-

ALIEN BREED



TEAM 17 is well known in the Amiga community for creating some great examples of certain genres. While none of these games are extremely innovative, all are highly polished and playable affairs.

Alien Breed is a Gauntlet-style overhead shooter that oozes with atmosphere. You must fend off the persistent alien horde and escape alive. This game can be scary at times, but we tend to prefer the onslaught that greets you in Alien Breed 2.

Qwak is a lighthearted tribute to Bubble Bobble and is very playable. The two-player mode is great fun. Don't miss out on this great two game combo. ■

ALIEN BREED / QWAK CD32

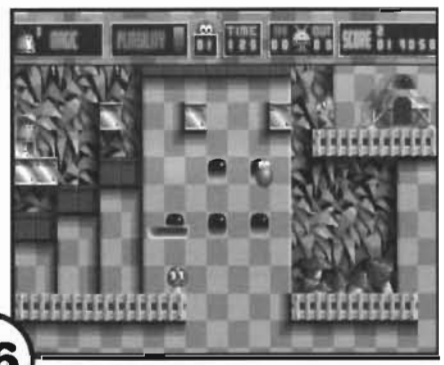
TEAM 17 ■ £24.99 ($40)

VIDEO	CDTV
PAL	NO

The best Gauntlet and Bubble Bobble impersonators money can buy.

B+

SUPER PUTTY



MOST PLATFORM game heroes use weapons or dispose of adversaries by jumping on their noggins (I'll never truly understand why they do that). Breaking the mold, Putty has a unique way of dealing with his enemies – he absorbs them.

Putty must stretch and bounce his way across a multitude of levels, escorting robots to safety. The thugs standing in Putty's way are a varied bunch – sort of like the motley crew from Monty Python's *Search for the Holy Grail*. You'll face evil incarnate in the form of Mutant Chinese Chicken, Old Man Spitoon, and Terminator Carrot. Don't miss this, um, absorbing game. ■

SUPER PUTTY CD32

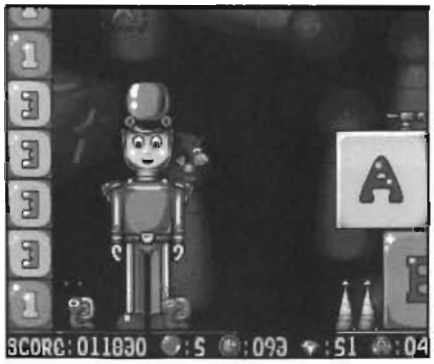
SYSTEM 3 ■ £14.99 ($25)

VIDEO	CDTV
PAL	NO

Pliable performer in a playable platformer.

B+

ALFRED CHICKEN



IF YOU have young children and most of your CD^{32} games are too complicated for them, Alfred Chicken offers a gentle learning curve. Each level has big platforms (no pixel-perfect jumps here) and few surprises (enemies never attack you directly). A bouncy tune that kids will enjoy plays in the background.

The CD^{32} version of Alfred Chicken has been updated with new background graphics that are pleasant and unobtrusive – no day-glo Zool backgrounds here. While grownups will quickly tire of the simplistic platform action, the younger set will find hours of enjoyment from this one. ■

ALFRED CHICKEN CD32

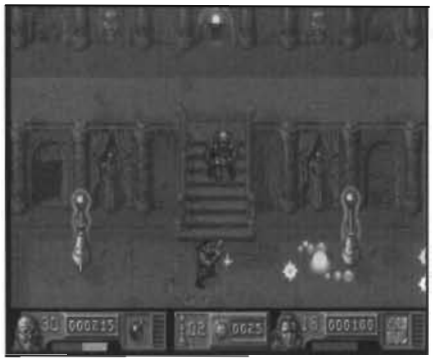
MINDSCAPE ■ £25.99 ($40)

VIDEO	CDTV
PAL	NO

A forgiving platform game that is great for the kids.

B-

CHAOS ENGINE



THE BITMAP Brothers know how to make great games. Period. Presentation, graphics, music, gameplay – every aspect of The Chaos Engine has been tweaked to perfection. Choose from 6 hardened mercenaries and lay waste to mutant upon mutant.

The most intriguing feature of this game is the one player option – you play with an intelligent computer controlled player. You'll find yourself depending on him to get you out of many tight situations! The Bitmaps have also included CD sound effects *in the game itself.* The chirping birds on the first level were so realistic that I swore they were right outside the office! ■

CHAOS ENGINE CD32

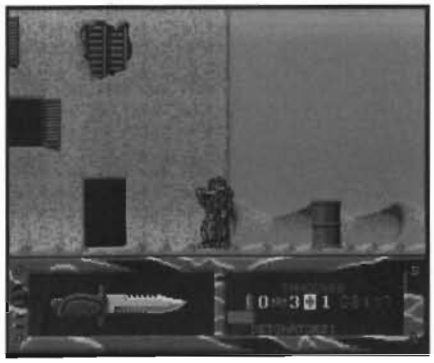
RENEGADE ■ £24.99 ($40)

VIDEO	CDTV
NTSC	NO

Many of you will get this free with your CD^{32} bundle – you lucky dogs!

A

FIRE FORCE



KILL! KILL! Kill! (Oh, sorry.) That's the basic premise for Fire Force. Lots and lots of mindless killing. We can understand why some of you might be getting a big grin on your face – we too have played Syndicate. But Fire Force doesn't really offer much depth in terms of variety or playability. You basically run from right to left, slaying all who stand in your path.

Yes, all the grizzly realities of war are here: enemy soldiers scream out in pain and blood oozes from their freshly-slit necks... but is that really what you want from a game? We have a difficult time justifying time spent playing this game. ■

FIRE FORCE CD32

ICE ■ £25.99 ($40)

VIDEO	CDTV
NTSC	NO

Killing game for those with one track minds.

D+

NIGEL MANSELL

GREMLIN IS the undisputed king of racing game production. The company's output on the Amiga has been nothing short of prolific. That's why it seems odd that this was the first of the publisher's driving games to be chosen for re-release on the CD^{32}. Team Suzuki and both Super Cars games were better than this. Ah, well...

NMWC lets you race any course on the F1 circuit. However, scrolling is not as smooth as in many games of this type, and it is darn near impossible to pass cars without some contact. Nothing against Nigel, though. At last year's Indy 500 I was there rooting for him to win. Ah, well... ■

NIGEL MANSELL'S WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP CD32

GREMLIN ■ £25.99 ($40)

VIDEO	CDTV
NTSC	NO

Decidedly average racing game in a field of speedier contenders.

C

LABYRINTH OF TIME

It's very seldom that art merges successfully with video game design. Cyberdreams' Darkseed and Activision's now ancient Portal are two of the few examples that come to mind. Now there is also Labyrinth of Time, a new visual trip for the senses. It's slow and methodical, stylish, intense, and *very* mysterious.

Labyrinth is unusual in that there are no enemies to conquer and no treasure to unearth – virtually everything in this game has a very specific purpose. All the graphics were created in the Amiga's HAM mode and the results are truly stunning. There is a powerful background soundtrack in addition to excellent sound effects.

The plot of Labyrinth could have been taken from a stylish modern-day fantasy novel. Your role is that of an average guy coming home after another day of mundane existence. Suddenly your world changes when a mysterious apparition arrives, pleading for your help. The vision is Daedalus, the greatest architect of ancient Crete. Now, in bondage to the evil King Minos, Daedalus has been forced to build a labyrinth. Minos has ordered a labyrinth so twisted and powerful that it can meld time and space, allowing it to exist in all places at all times. Using this construct, Minos hopes to gain ultimate power. You are the chosen one, because you are the only mortal that Daedalus could reach in time. It is your job to unravel the secrets of the Labyrinth and then to destroy it.

It's not easy. Labyrinth is a first person RPG, with two-thirds of the screen devoted to the gameworld view and the bottom third showing the command icons. The heart of Labyrinth is interaction, and there are of plenty of items included in the game with which you can accomplish your goal. A lot of game time will be spent just figuring out in what order to do things (deciding what to do with the quarter is the first big test), and it is a fascinating environment in which to play.

Neither the soundtrack nor the graphics could have been done on floppy – Labyrinth is first generation CD software in the truest sense. So, some problems are to be expected. The main flaw is the perspective. Instead of a real 360 degree environment like other first person games (Liberation and the Eye of the Beholder series), the rooms in Labyrinth are comprised of four different screens. Move in a new direction or into a new room, and the game doesn't scroll – it just loads up a new screen and displays it. As a first generation effort, this small flaw is acceptable, but in the future I expect better design.

My only other complaint with the game is the lack of digitized voice, particularly at the beginning when Daedalus appears. He talks to you, but the words are simply displayed at the bottom of the screen, instead of being piped through the speakers. Disappointing, but tolerable nonetheless.

Labyrinth has no action in the traditional sense of the word. It's a true exploration, problem, and puzzle solving expedition. The atmosphere it conveys is undeniable as you travel through not just stone wall mazes, but an old west town, a Mayan temple, film noir city scenes, and even a space station. Labyrinth is a welcome addition to the CD^{32} because it is one of the few titles that utilize the immense graphic storage capabilities of the CD format. This type of game is becoming more prevalent on the MPC and Mac CD formats, but thus far, Labyrinth is the only one of its breed on the CD^{32}. That's unfortunate, because after tasting some of what's possible with this machine, a person will only want more. Maybe something better will arrive in the future, but Labyrinth is way ahead of any adventure currently available on disk. ■ **JD**

LABYRINTH CD32

ELECTRONIC ARTS ■ $39.95

VIDEO	CDTV
NTSC	YES

You could easily lose yourself in this game.

B+

CASTLES 2

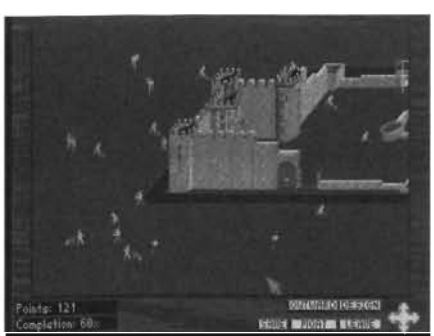
Many of you may remember one of the first BASIC computer games to appear back in the early eighties: Lemonade Stand. In this game, it was your charge to manage a simple stand that sold lemonade. You were in control of what supplies you would buy and how much profit you could make on each sale. Factors such as weather, friendliness, and location all affected the success (or failure) of your new business. Castles II – Siege & Conquest is another in a long line of games similar to the early Lemonade Stand. However, this time the goal is much grander and more complex than selling lemonade.

It is the time of The Hundred Years War. The mythical King Charles of Bretagne has died without leaving an heir. The countryside is in chaos as the lords scheme, battle, and build – trying to win favor with the Pope, the only one who can name one of them the new king. You are one of the five lords vying for the royal title.

The primary way in which a lord gains power is by controlling as many territories as possible. Territories are obtained by starting (and winning) bloody battles. These ill-gotten lands are then unified by building massive castles.

When the gameplay begins, you have but one territory. Through shrewd use of your military, political, and administrative skills, you must forge an empire. Like the early Lemonade Stand, you have control over many resources in your domain. By sending out scouts, you can find out what valuable resources are available in surrounding territories. Based upon your scouts' information, you may decide to go into battle with a given province. But be careful! If you haven't gathered up enough raw materials to outfit your armies, you'll end up with a bloody defeat instead of a victory celebration. Remember to keep your political network active. Your chances of being crowned king by the Pope diminish if you've upset one of his allies. There are many factors that you must consider in order to successfully rule your realm. From feeding your soldiers to picking the proper location for building your castles, you must be quick, decisive, and efficient.

Once you have enough territory, you need to build a castle. Castles II allows you to literally create your own castle, from selecting the thickness of the walls to placing turrets and spires. Want a moat around your castle? No problem. But no matter how large a castle is, poor design can often lead to a quick death for the soldiers inside. When you've conquered enough land and built enough castles, you may petition the Pope (assuming you haven't angered him) to crown you king. If he accepts your petition, the game is won.



Castles II was originally written for the CDTV, and there is even a reference to the CDTV's optional FDD (Flash Disk Device) for saving games. Surprisingly, Interplay decided to make the release version compatible only with the CD^{32}. There was really no reason for this move since there are no AGA images on the disc.

The opening 16-bit audio is fantastic and really creates a medieval mood, but the imagery is a basic ECS slideshow. Subsequent gameplay audio is a rather poor sounding music track using just the CD^{32}'s standard 8-bit audio. The movie clips included to segue important events are also disappointing. Taking up only an 1/8 of the screen, they are very choppy – about 7 frames per second. Both the CDTV and the CD^{32} are capable of much smoother animations. Finally, the use of a mouse in the second game port is a must for this game. The standard joypad controller just isn't up to speed for this pointer-intensive game. Interplay keeps the pointer control very slow and frustrating.

While not a standout CD^{32} title, Castles II is a worthy successor to the original game. There is more than enough strategic gameplay to justify its purchase. The interface is easy to use, and the fact that it appears to be originally designed for the CDTV is a testimony to the amount of time expended in creating the Castle universe and extending the variety of outcomes. ■ JG

CASTLES 2 CD32

INTERPLAY ■ £29.99 ($45)

VIDEO	CDTV
NTSC	NO

Aspiring stone masons might want to give this one a look.

B-

SEVEN GATES OF JAMBALA

ORIGINALLY RELEASED for the Amiga over 5 years ago, this incredibly lame excuse for a game was shoveled on to CD recently *at full price* apparently to cash in on the demand for CD^{32} titles. Ironically, this was one of the first games programmed by Thalion, the team responsible for such quality titles as No Second Prize and Lionheart.

Seven Gates of Jambala is a scrolling platform game with one of the most irritating soundtracks I've ever heard – no, it isn't a CD track, folks. Play is limited to avoiding enemies, purchasing items, and avoiding more enemies. Since this game wasn't reprogrammed for a two-button joystick, jumping is ridiculously difficult. Hey, why bother? A quick death is *needed* here. ■

SEVEN GATES OF JAMBALA CD32

GRANDSLAM ■ £25.99 ($40)

VIDEO	CDTV
NTSC	NO

Severely dated platform game with bland visuals and no real appeal.

F

CHAMBERS OF SHAOLIN

JUST READ the introductory paragraph from the previous review again. Sadly, everything written there also holds true for Chambers of Shaolin. *Hey, I'm all for capitalism, but not at my own expense!* How can they expect us to even consider buying these hopelessly dated titles at full price?

Chambers of Shaolin is a beat 'em up that could have just as easily been an old C64 game. The sprites are that blocky, the music is that poor, and the gameplay is just plain non-existent. Even the additional subgames could easily pass for PD software.

To be absolutely fair, Chambers of Shaolin isn't *quite* as bad as Seven Gates of Jambala. However, *Amiga Game Zone* just doesn't give the mythical "F+" grade. ■

CHAMBERS OF SHAOLIN CD32

GRANDSLAM ■ £25.99 ($40)

VIDEO	CDTV
NTSC	NO

Severely dated beat 'em up with bland fighters and no real gameplay.

F

DANGEROUS STREETS

ONE OF the most poorly designed beat 'em ups of all time, Dangerous Streets pits you against 8 characters who possess some truly bizarre fighting moves (one combatant turns into a box!) The static screen shown above is misleading – there are ridiculously few animation frames for each character and you can usually defeat your opponent by just moving forward while pressing the button. My favorite fighter is Tony – he lights up a Lucky every time he wins. What a great message for the age group this pathetic game will inevitably attract! Hey kids, don't smoke... unless, of course, you want to be cool. Don't show this one to friends who've played SF2 or MK on other machines – you'll be a laughing stock. ■

DANGEROUS STREETS CD32

FLAIR ■ £29.99 ($45)

VIDEO	CDTV
NTSC	NO

Don't even consider it – wait for Team 17's Ultimate Body Blows.

F

COMING SOON

ULTIMATE BODY BLOWS

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LIBERATION

Now Amiga owners don't have to buy a CD^{32} in order to play Liberation! In a surprise move, Mindscape has released the stormer of a game on floppy format *for all machines*. No, you don't need an AGA Amiga (but you do need *at least* 1.5MB of RAM and a hard drive is strongly recommended). Liberation detects AGA machines and enhances its graphics and sound accordingly. Depending on the speed of your computer, you can choose to install up to 11 megabytes of wall map graphics on your hard drive! Be prepared to wait a long time for all of these images to render, though – even on a speedy machine it will take about an hour.

So what did Mindscape have to cut from the CD^{32} version of the game to make it all fit on five disks? Not much, actually. The only missing feature is digitized speech. The intros and conversations are no longer narrated, but that's to be expected from a disk-based game.

There are so many locations to explore and so many people to meet that this game can be daunting to the uninitiated. But those who persevere and learn how to navigate in this strange world will be rewarded. Did I mention that Liberation won't be out on the PC until late summer? ■ **GM**

LIBERATION

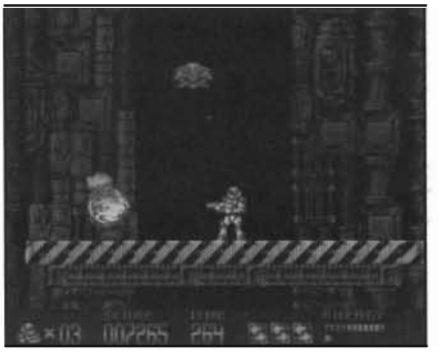
MINDSCAPE ■ £29.99 ($45)

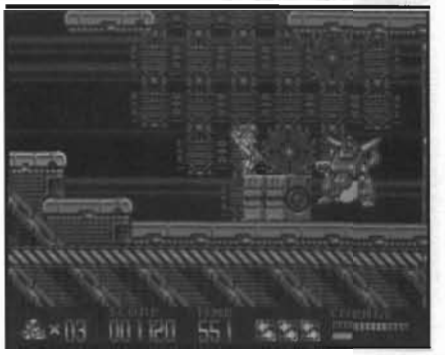
VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
NTSC	REQ. 1.5MB
HARD DRIVE	PROTECTION
YES	MANUAL

Floppy version of the CD^{32} epic still shines even without the voiceovers.

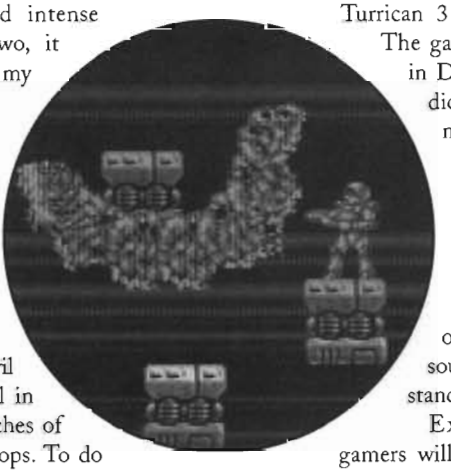
A

TURRICAN 3





The Turrican series has always represented the pinnacle of speed, lavish graphics, and tremendous playability in the action genre, no matter on what platform it has appeared. Despite various threats from Rainbow Arts claiming that this game would never see the light of day due to Amiga games piracy, Turrican 3 has finally made it to the Amiga scene. While it has the great visuals and intense action of the first two, it comes up a bit short in my estimation.



In Turrican 3 the "Machine" is back, wreaking havoc upon the universe once again. Ben McGuire must don the high-tech Turrican suit to destroy the forces of evil and rescue the damsel in distress from the clutches of the Machine's evil troops. To do this Ben has to blast his way through 15 levels of non-stop enemy carnage.

Turrican has most of his standard capabilities from the first two installments. He can use a variety of weapons found in each of the levels including the standard "smart-bomb", the combat roll technique in which he tumbles along the ground dropping mines everywhere, and the plasma rope for those hard-to-reach areas. In the later levels, effective use of the plasma rope is a must.

The problem with Turrican is that it's too easy. Too easy? Yes, you heard me right, a Turrican game that is EASY! The manual says that the game has 15 levels, but I breezed through all of them in one sitting on the "normal" difficulty mode. Some of them really gave me a workout, but with piles upon piles of power ups, only a few levels really presented a challenge.

Turrican 3's graphics are above average. There are plenty of sprites and bobs flying all over the place with minimal flicker. If an accelerated Amiga is used, the flicker is totally eliminated. The colors seem a bit limited, though. On the more dark and monochromatic levels the palette used gives a nice effect, but on other stages it seems as if not enough color was used. There is extensive use of parallax scrolling and large end-of-level bosses as well.

The music and sound effects in Turrican 3 are also well done. The game says the sound is in Dolby Surround, but I didn't have the equipment to test that out. Apparently the game uses a special 7 voice format for the music, but I still heard the musical instruments getting overlapped by the sound effects as in other standard 4 voice games.

Experienced Amiga gamers will find Turrican 3 too easy. However, don't rule it out completely. If you're looking for a nice quick action game that is fun to play and not too daunting for the average game player, then Turrican 3 is it. ■ **RB**

TURRICAN 3

RENEGADE ■ £25.99 ($40)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
PAL	YES
HARD DRIVE	PROTECTION
NO	DISK-BASED

Action-packed game that's just too easy for experienced players.

C+

JET STRIKE

Jet Strike from Rasputin Software (distributed in North America by Seascape Software) doesn't readily fall into any particular game category. It's kind of like a sideways-scrolling shoot 'em-up, in that you fly left and right and do massive amounts of property damage to enemy equipment. It's kind of like a flight game, in that you fly planes (and the occasional mythical winged reptile... go figure) to inflict said property damage. And it's kind of like a platform game, in that you can use level codes to skip around a bit, not to mention the little bonus packages you can sometimes pick up when you explode an enemy plane in mid-air. These several parts make an enjoyable, albeit frequently frustrating, whole.

The premise behind Jet Strike is that the evil organization SPUDD ("Society of Particularly Undesirable Dastardly Dudes – a secret organization made up of arms dealers, mad dictators, psychopaths, and traffic wardens") is about to make its big push for world conquest. SPUDD already has many governments in its hip pocket. You and your mechanic, Harry, have to save the world by "borrowing" aircraft and munitions from local air forces. Although you have a wide variety (but limited quantity) of planes and helicopters from which to choose, you have only one life (your own) to lose. Better keep your finger on the "eject" button...

Once loaded, you can choose among training, practice, combat, and aerolympics. The training option lets you select any of ten missions which allow you to work on specific aspects of flying (night flying, landing, dogfighting, bombing, etc.). Practice lets you run through ten training scenarios which are set up much like the full missions. The main portion of the game, combat, consists of 100 missions.

"Half of the fun in the game is the ability to choose your active aircraft from a wide array of jets, prop planes, and helicopters. You can even pilot a flying boat or a dragon (which, amusingly, can run out of gas). All that are missing are paper airplanes and a certain doghouse."

Jet Strike will load on accelerated Amigas, but is equally as playable on standard machines. Accelerator owners take note, however: unless you have the reflexes of a chipmunk on speed, select the fast Amiga option in the game's options page. This will slow the game down and add more animation frames to make the game scroll more smoothly.

Even though its odd control system causes the dive/climb commands to be reversed when you change direction (*Rasputin promises to fix this problem soon – Ed*), Jet Strike is a breeze to play. Not easy to complete the missions on the first go, mind you, but you don't have a lot of key commands to keep straight. Just about everything can be controlled from the joystick. The only keyboard command that you will have to use a lot is the space bar, which activates your plane's ejection seat. Trust me: the ejection seat is your friend.

Half of the fun in the game is the ability to choose your active aircraft from a wide array of jets, prop planes, and helicopters. You can even pilot a flying boat or a dragon (which, amusingly, can run out of gas). All that are missing are paper airplanes and a certain doghouse. Of all the craft available, I find myself using high-speed, agile attack helicopters such as the Werewolf or Apache time and time again. They're much easier to control than the jets in the menu, and they pack quite a wallop (and the Apache's cannon sounds so cool).

Jet Strike is certainly a game that will keep you coming back for more (kind of like a masochist scheduling appointments with the dentist). The early missions are easy enough to make you cocky. "Look at all the fun explosions I can make," I said. "I think I'll go make a crater-pocked wasteland of that island over there," I said. But something happened when I wasn't looking, and before I knew it, I was flying missions in which I was the one who was doing the exploding. And I kept trying on 'em again and again!

Only 80 more to go. Here's SPUDD in yer eye, Rasputin. ■ **DF**

WIN A FREE COPY OF JET STRIKE!

It's quite simple really, and if you're truly interested in flight games, you will probably know the answer to this question (or at least know where to find it):

WHAT TYPE OF AIRCRAFT DID THE CANADIAN AIR FORCE USE IN DESERT STORM?

Send the answer with your name and address to: Jet Strike Contest, c/o *Amiga Game Zone*, 103 W. California, Urbana, IL 61801. One lucky winner will be drawn at random from all correct entries received before July 1, 1994.

JET STRIKE

SEASCAPE SOFTWARE ■ $44.95

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
NTSC	YES
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
YES	NONE

Combination flight sim and shoot 'em up that strikes a good balance.

B

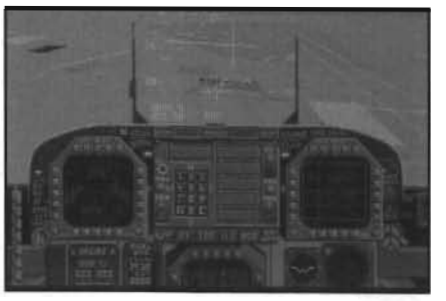
COMBAT AIR PATROL

Combat Air Patrol, Psygnosis' first attempt at a straight flight simulator, is set in the Persian Gulf during the Gulf War. You can play single missions in an F-16 or F-18 against land or sea targets. If you prefer the full campaign, you can assign your pilot to a specific squadron for the duration of his career. The full campaign version also offers you the novel option of directing ground forces and creating your own missions.

about being bogged down with details. Just boot the game from floppy or hard drive, punch up the instant flight option, and you'll find yourself armed to the teeth in the proverbial target-rich environment.

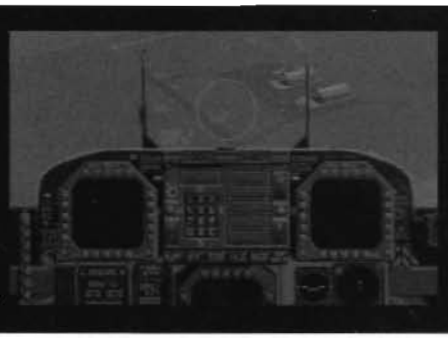
After you're comfortable with the controls, you can go through the usual array of training scenarios, ranging from mid-air refueling to the much-dreaded nighttime carrier landings. You are also offered a wide range of combat practice runs over land and sea, in which you can go with a default weapons selection or pick your own instruments of destruction.

Combat Air Patrol's graphics, however, are what make it really stand out. This thing is fast. Psygnosis' 1991 game Armour-Geddon showed what could be done with a traditional filled-polygon sim (a lot, for those who haven't seen it), and the programmers put in another two years worth of work



information given isn't what the game's protection system wants. As it turns out, the tables you need are located on the chapter heading pages... close to the binding... in small, hard-to-read print. And there's even a typo: the computer sometimes asks for information on an "AIM" system – it should be "AGM". Very stupid, guys.

The copy protection problems aren't enough to bring this game down, though. Once you figure out how it works, you won't



...the programmers put in another two years worth of work to come up with Combat Air Patrol. It shows. On a standard Amiga, it's fast. On an accelerated machine, WOW!

There seem to be two types of flight simulators: one concentrates on realistic flight and controls; the other is more concerned with having fun, flying around, and blowing things up. Older titles like SubLogic's Flight Simulator II fall into the former category, while game-like sims such as F-18A Interceptor and Microprose's F-15 II are typical of the latter. Combat Air Patrol, without a doubt, falls into the second category. Sure, it's loaded with little extras like being able to shut down one engine in case of a fire, but you don't have to worry

to come up with Combat Air Patrol. It shows. On a standard Amiga, it's fast. On an accelerated machine, WOW! There is a "constant speed" option in the preferences screen that generates more in-between frames on accelerated machines to keep the game from becoming uncontrollably fast. The result is amazing.

I think the night missions are the high points of the game. The palette the designers chose makes everything look, um, dark. Everything is in silhouette. The only ways to visually identify ground targets are to use your pylon cameras or to zero in on the areas that have the most anti-aircraft cover. Waves of tracer bullets show up quite well. And there are *so many* of them.

The only complaint I have is with the game's copy protection. After loading, the game asks you to supply certain statistics for a given plane or weapons system. The problem is, the manual doesn't tell you where to find this information. There are schematics scattered throughout the manual, but the

run into any problems. The graphics and sound effects are first-rate, and the gameplay is fantastic. Hopefully, they'll make some add-ons for arenas other than the Persian Gulf. Variety is, of course, the spice of mayhem. ■ **DF**

COMBAT AIR PATROL

PSYGNOSIS ■ £29.99 ($45)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
PAL	YES
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
YES	MANUAL

You'll find yourself armed to the teeth in a target-rich environment.

B+

F-117A

STEALTH FIGHTER 2.0

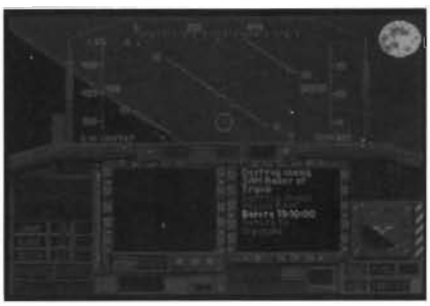
I suppose there are two ways of looking at this game. The first is for people who have played Microprose's F-19 Stealth Fighter, and the other is for those who haven't. I'll start with the latter.

For those unfamiliar with F-19 (or any other Microprose flight simulator, for that matter), there is plenty to do in F-117A Stealth Fighter 2.0. Once you create a pilot, you decide where you want to fly, how realistically you want the plane to handle, and how nasty you want your reception committees to be. This lets you set the overall difficulty of your missions from "Cakewalk" to "Hot Flaming Death".

As with most Microprose games, you will need to go through the tome that is passed off as an instruction manual, mostly to figure out which keys do what. Be ready to keep track of a lot of keys.

Once airborne, the gameplay is pretty straightforward: fly to your primary target without getting blown out of the sky, fly to your secondary target without getting blown out of the sky, and make it back to base without getting blown out of the sky. The trick is, of course, to use your plane's stealth capabilities properly. This is another area that the manual spends a great deal of time explaining – how pulse and doppler radar work and what you can do to sneak past them.

As it turns out, evading enemy radar is the only real challenge in this game. Your missles and bullets have an improbably accurate hit-ratio in all but the highest of difficulty levels. It isn't quite as silly as Microprose's earlier shoot 'em-up, F-15 Strike Eagle II, but it's still a little too easy to take out enemy targets in F-117A.



And now, for those of you who have played F-19 Stealth Fighter, I can honestly say that the two are very similar. The major difference is that all of your missions are at night in Stealth Fighter 2.0. Also, the target-bearing indicator in the camera display is conspicuously missing in the sequel, making it a real pain to locate targets. The manuals are practically identical, right down to the equipment-ID copy protection. The keyboard commands are the same, and there haven't been any improvements in the blocky 3D models. It's like seeing a sky full of Saabs.

All in all, there isn't anything that makes this game stand out. The graphics are okay, the gameplay is okay, and the sound is okay – but there's nothing that would make anyone want to rush out and buy it. ■ **DF**

F-117A NIGHTHAWK

MICROPROSE ■ £34.99 ($50)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
NTSC	YES
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
YES	MANUAL

Evading enemy radar is the only challenge in this game.

C

ISHAR 2 AGA

While movie sequels usually aren't better than the original, the opposite seems to be true of many computer games, including Ishar 2. (*Many people mistakenly call this game Ishtar 2. Now there's a movie sequel I couldn't handle, let alone a game based on it. – Ed.*) This AGA role playing game picks up where its predecessor left off. After the fortress Ishar was freed from the evil Krogh, it became prosperous under new leadership. But now in Ishar 2, a new evil threatens the kingdom.

The real improvements are not in the plot, but in the game mechanics. Many of the icon controls have been rearranged or redesigned for greater efficiency, particularly the fighting icons which are now grouped together. The interface is one of the slickest I've seen. Furthermore, Ishar 2 is three times larger and features a day/night cycle. Saves no longer cost any money. And, yes, there's finally a useful online map to prevent the frustration of getting lost.

Fortunately, all of Ishar's great features are still present in Ishar 2. Most notably, members of your modifiable party have their own personalities, unlike the mindless puppets of many RPGs. The graphics are beautiful, although they don't take full advantage of AGA. The only downside is that it's sometimes difficult figuring out what your next move should be. Really good stuff. ■ **HV**

ISHAR 2 AGA

DAZE ■ £29.99 ($45)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
NTSC	3.0 ONLY
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
YES (KEYDISK)	NONE

Lush graphics populate this better than average role playing game.

B+

SIMON THE SORCERER

Grab your sense of humor and take a little trip with Simon in a graphic adventure that is one of the newer ports from the IBM-compatible world. Be sure to bring at least one keen eye, your funny bone, and a little patience.

The first thing you notice about this game is that it is *huge*. I was truly stunned by the size of it all. Both the standard and AGA versions each come packed on 9 compressed disks. Too bad this results in a lot of time listening to the floppy drive spin. Thank goodness it is hard drive installable, and a hard drive is *strongly* recommended. Fully installed, the game takes up about 8MB. The game will run off floppy if you like, but I pity anyone who tries it.

Simon the Sorcerer is fairly entertaining with its humorous animations and many activities to complete. The main goal is to rescue Calypso the High Grand Wizard by defeating the evil Sordid. During the adventure, Simon encounters everything from woodworms to a pair of valley demons. Problems are usually solved with a little wit and creativity. The animations of Simon, including everything from his facial expressions to his being spit naked out of a frog, are sure to bring a smile to everyone's face. It would appear that developers of the game had humor as their top priority. Unfortunately, this does not equal a terrific game. The graphics are well drawn and the attention to detail is appreciated, but Simon the Sorcerer is only skin deep. While there are plenty of background or mood music pieces to spice it up, they get boring after awhile. Sound effects are missing from the game, and in my opinion, this omission is an unforgivable oversight as there are supposed to be sound effects on "some versions" and the Amiga is a more than capable candidate. The game's playability is good, as the interface and movement are easily understood. At the bottom of the screen there is a list of action words that the player utilizes in order to interact with the other characters and objects in the game. Next to the list is a scrolling display of all the objects that are being held by Simon. One of Simon's most useful possessions is a map that shows the places he has been. It will take him to any of these spots when the player clicks on the desired location. A postcard is used for the save, load, and quit options.

Simon the Sorcerer held my interest only on the level of "I want to finish the game." All a player has to do is collect everything and use it somewhere else. There are no outstanding puzzles other than searching for objects. I took much longer to finish the game than I should have because I could not find objects on the screen. In some cases the pointer must be exactly on an object, and if the mouse is moving too quickly – well, tough luck. (*The AGA version has a much richer color palette, making the objects easier to see.* – *Ed*) Simon is led through all the conversations, so there's no challenge here either. In one case a response is, "I don't know, I hoped something would appear." While humorous, there is no real threat here because any response the character chooses

will be accepted. There is no element of danger, and you can count on not being able to screw up. All in all, I would like to have been kept on my toes. Even at the end, where I expected the greatest challenge of all, Simon got lucky and disposed of his nemesis too easily, and that was it. Big deal! The game is supposed to be an adventure, not a walk through.

In my opinion, Simon the Sorcerer is a step back in the graphic adventure scene. Get it if you must have this type of adventure game, but if you want a "destined to become a classic," keep looking. ■ **MP**

SIMON THE SORCERER

ADVENTURESOFT ■ £34.99 ($50)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
PAL	OK
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
YES	MANUAL

There are too many better adventures out there to make this one special.

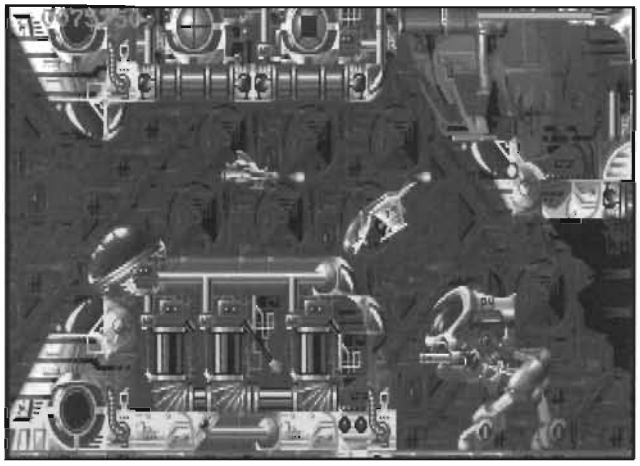
SIMON THE SORCERER AGA

ADVENTURESOFT ■ £39.99 ($60)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
PAL	3.0 ONLY
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
YES	MANUAL

256 colors make objects easier to see, cutting down on click-itis.

DISPOSABLE HERO

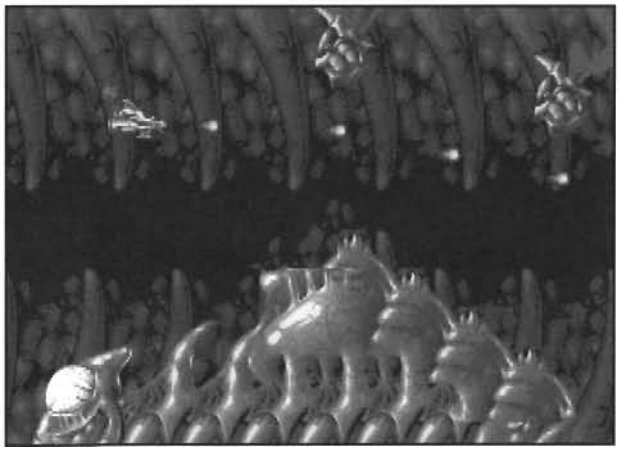


The year is 2867. After a large scale galactic war, technology has reverted to that of the 20th century. Obviously, somebody needs to do something about this situation. That somebody is you – go out and kick alien butt.

Bad introductions aside, Disposable Hero is a standard horizontal shoot 'em-up. You must navigate and blast your way through five levels of various alien nasties. As with many shooters, this game requires you to earn power-ups as you progress in order to stay alive and defeat the huge boss alien at the end of each level.

You start out in a ship equipped with only a single front pulse laser. As you continue your quest for carnage, blueprints can be picked up that lead to the development of new weapons and ship enhancements. Factories appear intermittently along the bottom of the screen which allow you to place the newly developed enhancements on your ship. Stopping at these factories also gives the player a chance to catch his breath and rest a bit.

The number of enhancements that can be placed on your ship is limited by the ship's engine power at the time, as most enhancements also draw power from the ship's engine. Not all enhancements are weapons. More powerful engines, shields, and thrusters are among the non-destructive items that can be added to your ship. The range of weapons is the best part of the game, as there are quite a few combinations that can be effective against the baddies. Weapons include various multiple direction lasers, homing missiles, bombs, sonic disrupters, spray missiles, heavy cannons, etc. Some of the weapons can be added to the ship several times in different areas of the vessel.



In addition to the myriad of weapons that can be added, a second type of ship is made available later in the game. Some enhancements can be placed on only one of the two types of ships, so it can be hard to decide which weapon combinations work best for each ship.

Another nice feature of the game is the variable difficulty level. As the difficulty level increases, aliens are harder to kill and there are more of them. More than once I was surprised by a new wave of aliens that wasn't on the previous difficulty setting. This made each difficulty level harder than just battling tougher aliens.

Disposable Hero is a well done shoot 'em-up with catchy music and smoothly-animated graphics – a good addition to anyone's game collection. ■ JL

DISPOSABLE HERO

GREMLIN ■ £25.99 ($40)

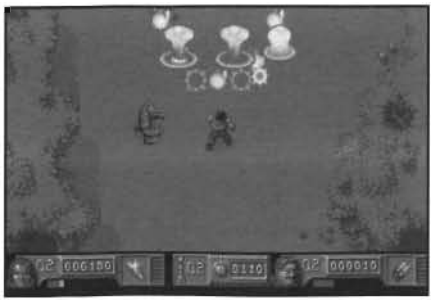
VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
NTSC	YES
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
NO	DISK & CODEWHEEL

An R-Type clone for the 1990's.

B

CHAOS ENGINE AGA

If all the games we reviewed were as addictive as The Chaos Engine, you wouldn't be reading this magazine. You see, we've spent an incredible amount of time "play testing" this game to which we can devote only third of a page for its review.



The game is just an update from the original Amiga version, but it really deserves high praise.

Colors and detail on all the characters have been enhanced for AGA owners, but the real treat is the artificial intelligence of the computer player. While you can play with two human players, it is just as fun to play with the computer since he makes smarter decisions and isn't quite as greedy! He'll cover your back or cut a path for you through heavy enemy resistance.

The only flaw to this otherwise perfect game is the lack of a hard drive install option. We know we'll be "play testing" The Chaos Engine for a long time. ■ GM

CHAOS ENGINE AGA

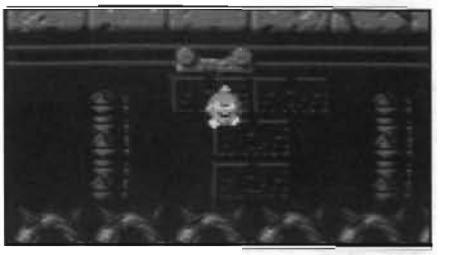
RENEGADE ■ £25.99 ($40)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
PAL	3.0 ONLY
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
NO	DISK-BASED

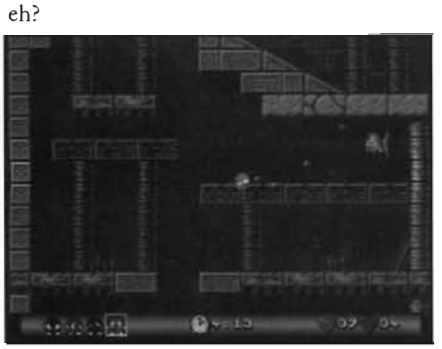
Killer graphics, sound, and playability – it's definitely time for chaos.

A-

FURY OF THE FURRIES



When I was given the task of reviewing Fury of the Furries by Ed (oh, you know Ed... he's the guy who always puts "– Ed" after wisecracks in game reviews), I was under the impression that in lieu of an intro for the game, I'd have to endure the entire membership of the NKOTB Fan Club chanting "Fury of the Furries" over and over and over, until I morphed into one of the little day-glo furballs. Thankfully, this ugly incident never happened. Phew! I still hate the title, even without the Freudian armageddon. (*We don't have a clue as to what Robert's talking about, folks. – wisecracking Ed*) It's a name only a mother could love (and only the mother of a Furry). This brings up another point – sure, they're furry and furrious... er, furious. But genetically they're just Tinies. And as you might suspect, you take control one Tiny at a time and guide them collectively on a world-saving mission. Just like in real life, eh?



Oh, those sweet, loveable, 3-toed beasties that look like a cross between Cool Spot and the Beatles. Just look at the screenshots... not un-Lemming-like, don'tcha think? Well, think again! These cats have a real task at hand! In a nutshell, our fluffy, freaky friends from the planet Sklumph must find and rescue their king who has been abducted by a different gaggle of Tinies. Evil ones. Right. As fate would have it, you are pitted against these Tinies gone bad in an effort to restore this world to silliness. Ironic, isn't it?

This is a job that will require more skills than a mere single Tiny possesses. To accomplish various tasks, FOTF offers four different Tiny types (shades of Lemmings) located at the bottom of the screen on the status panel. Pulling down on the joystick transforms the Tiny into a different type, a concept seen previously in games like Morph, and most recently, Donk! Since they are color-coded Furries, this process is quite easy to do.

The attributes assigned to each "furry" are thus: the yellow Tiny is able to fire off rounds of fireballs, the red Tiny gobbles his way through platforms, the blue Tiny is able to swim underwater, and the green Tiny (everyone's favorite) is able to shoot a rope to the upper scenery and do his best impression of Tarzan / Spiderman / George of the Jungle (take your pick). To expand on our green guy a bit, I'd like to say that the control system for this aspect of play was done with sheer brilliance on the part of the programming team. The Amazing Spiderman offered nothing this slick, nor did Batman – The Movie, although the latter game was on the right track. What makes this move truly unique is the ability to skip-jump across particularly nasty ground. Let's face it, he's a fun character! As the game progresses, you'll need to be more prepared for your furry-swapping since things get quite a bit trickier. This is not a bad thing, for it is this quality that makes the game challenging.

The characters' animation is really a joy to watch, and the game is loaded with atmosphere. The look and feel of the entire game is enchanting and is further enhanced by the warm jazz soundtrack. The boisterous, cartoony sound effects complement the music score.

Other little details offered by the game are a PAL/NTSC toggle, auto game save and replay, and even an amusing manual look-up screen. Finally, being able to skip the intro presentation from disk one and boot straight into the second disk is a practice I wish was more prevalent, since it's truly a waste of time to wade through that every time. The remaining four disks pack enough gameplay to keep you buzzing for a long, long time. ■ **RV**

FURY OF THE FURRIES

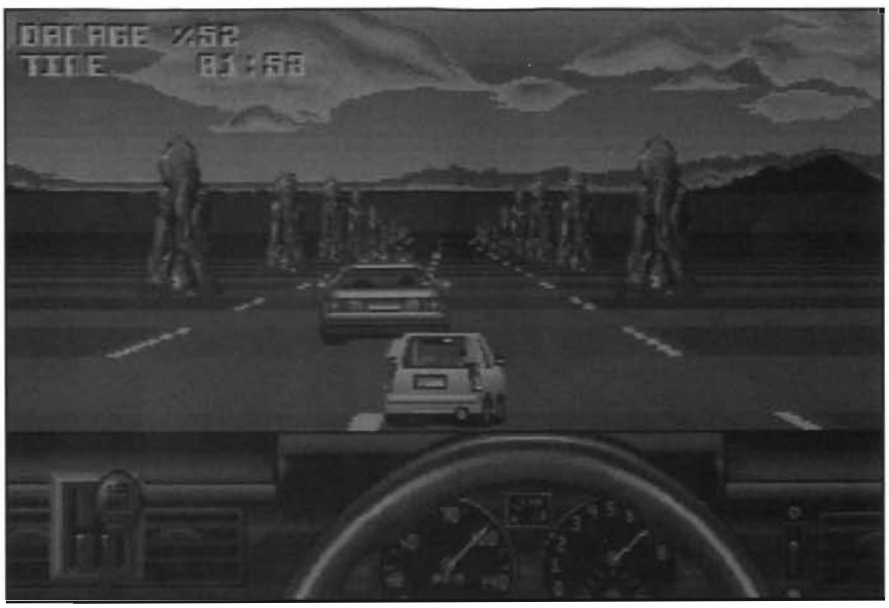
MINDSCAPE ■ £25.99 ($40)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
NTSC	YES
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
YES	MANUAL

Don't let the name fool you: Fury of the Furries is a great game.

B+

BURNING RUBBER

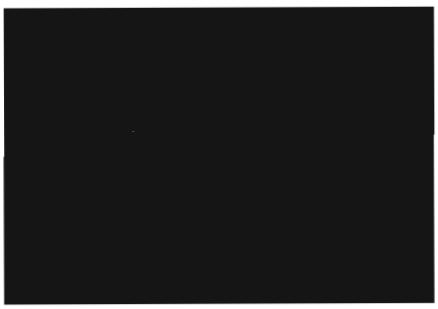


There are lots of arcade racing games out there (Jaguar XJ220, Lotus 3, Crazy Cars 3, etc.) The basic premise is to win the race, earn more money or points, buy cool stuff for your car, and then continue on to the next level. Burning Rubber is exactly that and really nothing more. The concept is that you are in a series of international road races, and your goal is to get the most points by winning each race and, ultimately, the championship. You pick your car from a wide selection of European models, choose automatic or manual transmission, and then select the difficulty level. You can make improvements to your car in the speed shop, as well as fix any damage you receive during the races. There are 12 courses on which to race, and each is in a different country (in Europe) or city (in the U.S.). Each course becomes more difficult with the addition of increased police patrols, inclement weather conditions, sharper turns, and even pedestrians (*Pow! Ten points for a road kill! – Ed*). You plan your route as in F40 Pursuit Simulator, but if you are on easy or medium difficulty, flashing arrows will appear to tell you when to turn. Be warned that you really have to go slow to turn onto another road.

You can load the intro disk (a fancy Euro demo), or you can just boot from the main disk. The game does have cool music. For AGA machines, there are some minor enhancements, including the option to have music playing instead of sound effects. I personally think that the graphics could have been better on both versions.

In summary, there were times while playing this game that I thought to myself, "Haven't I played this game before?" There is nothing wrong with Burning Rubber, but it just doesn't offer anything new. ■ **RH**

D/GENERATION AGA



Some three decades into the future, a secret genetic engineering project at Genoq Biolabs in Singapore has gone awry. It seems that an artificial organism named D/Generation has taken over the building, trapping the occupants inside. You, a hapless courier delivering a package to the scientist Derrida, must rescue the employees while finding a way to destroy D/Generation before it escapes to the outside world.

Gameplay amounts to getting through 120 rooms on the upper ten floors of the building while dealing with its killer (literally) security system and solving some simple puzzles. Talking to various people and using the computer terminals help in developing the storyline.

When I first loaded up this isometric action adventure, I almost thought I was having a Nintendo flashback. Regardless of the AGA enhancement claim on the box, the graphics are decidedly 8-bittish. However, the animation and sound effects (mostly consisting of laser blasts and explosions) are adequate. Despite poor graphics and a disappointing ending, this game is fun and playable. Its addictive quality kept me hooked for hours. ■ **HV**

BURNING RUBBER

OCEAN ■ £25.99 ($40)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
PAL	YES
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
NO	DISK-BASED

Did you ever smell burning rubber? Well...

D+

BURNING RUBBER AGA

OCEAN ■ £25.99 ($40)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
PAL	3.0 ONLY
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
NO	DISK-BASED

This version even shows you each driver's position during the race. Yawn.

D+

D/GENERATION AGA

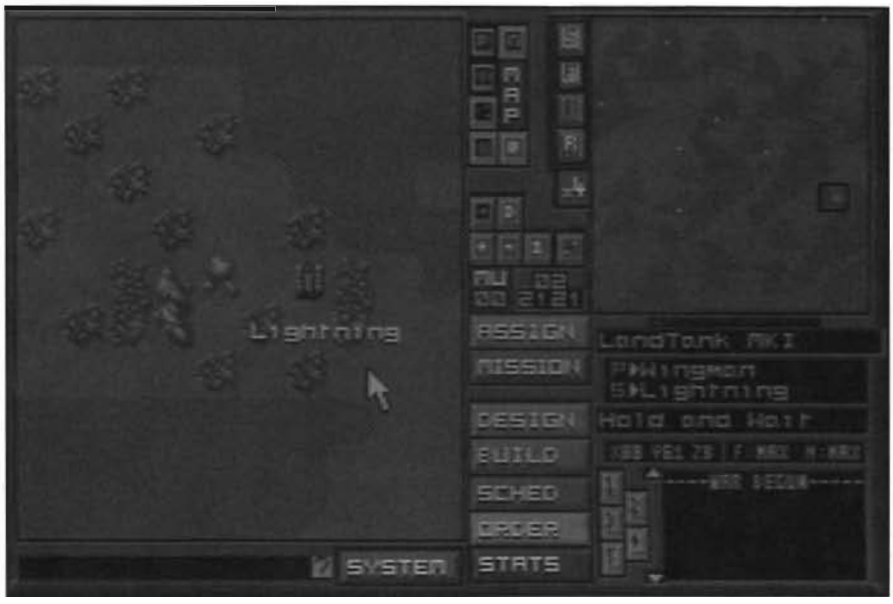
MINDSCAPE ■ £25.99 ($40)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
NTSC	3.0 ONLY
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
YES	NONE

Addictive gameplay but inadequate graphics for an AGA game.

B–

WHEN TWO WORLDS WAR



When Two Worlds War is set in the year 2121. War is no longer conducted on battlefields. Instead, military strategists are put in control of a simulator with which bloodless victory is decided. You are one of the strategists and may choose to play the computer or a human enemy. You and your enemy take control of your respective worlds, and more specifically, the military logistics which will orchestrate your triumph (or defeat).

You are in command of several facilities: labs (used for research to develop more sophisticated weaponry), mines (needed to build equipment), power plants (needed during the equipment building process), and farms (needed to support each military unit, or MU, you create). These features determine your world's military capability.

The game revolves around development of your MUs. These military units come in four varieties: land, sea, air, and space. All the parameters of your MUs, including the level of sophistication of their engines, the quality of their armor, the range and power of their missles, etc. are based on the level of technology you are able to achieve. While building MUs you may gain a new technology that might give you an edge or at least make you even with the enemy. So, at any point you can discontinue production of technologically inferior units and concentrate on production of the more advanced units.

MUs battle in all of the conventional arenas: on land, in the air, and at sea. Missle-carrying satellites and starfighters under your command can operate in both your world or your opponent's world. The space between the worlds eventually becomes another battlefield, even though the surface of the planets is where most of the action occurs. Transport ships are a great help in such situations as they are able to carry MUs anywhere.

All operations are facilitated using a series of "windows". Some windows perform simple functions like viewing the two worlds. Others, such as the one used for mission input, involve much more complicated procedures.

Some screens have cool graphics, but generally speaking, the graphics in W2WW aren't anything special, just clean. Most strategy game lovers would forego stunning graphics for great play anyway. Ah, but therein lies the rub. W2WW is such a mixed bag of engaging strategy and mundane operations. For instance, building facilities is an important aspect of the game, but there isn't a whole lot of strategy involved in building labs, mines, etc. However, if you spend too much time building facilities, you're likely to have enemy MUs blowing the bejeezus out of your bases. And, if you ignore technological advancements, your MUs will be like pens without ink, unable to make a mark on the enemy. It also seems that land, air, and sea MUs are virtually unnecessary. Enemy bases are the only target of consequence, and technologically advanced starfighters can handle the whole job of destroying them.

W2WW's biggest drawback is that much more effort is expended in preparation for battle rather than during the actual battles themselves. There are some good ideas to be found here, but W2WW tends to divert the player away from war and strategy with too many operations that aren't important enough for the time they consume. The second game I played lasted about 10 hours, of which the last four seemed painfully long.

If you like building worlds, my suggestion is that you stay with Sim City or Sim Ant. If you prefer war games, the strategy of battle is far more focused in Perfect General or Harpoon. W2WW is not a bad game to own, just surprisingly limited when considering the intricate, ongoing setup necessary to play it. ■ **RM**

Editor's note: Impressions has included both the standard and AGA versions of When Two Worlds War in the same box. Great idea! If you upgrade to an AGA machine you won't have to buy an additional AGA version of the software.

WHEN TWO WORLDS WAR

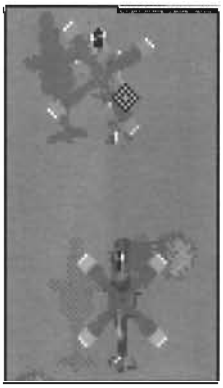
IMPRESSIONS ■ £34.99 ($50)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
NTSC	YES
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
YES	NONE

A mixed bag of engaging strategy and mundane operations.

SEEK & DESTROY

Seek & Destroy from Mindscape is a smooth helicopter arcade game supplied on four copy-protected disks. You look straight down on the action from an overhead perspective as you fly about the landscape shooting at anything that presents itself. Depending on the mission, targets can include tanks, ground soldiers, or other helicopters. Your weapons are guided and unguided air-to-air and air-to-ground missiles, a machine gun with an unlimited ammo supply, and napalm. You can also call in an air strike for those really hardened ground targets.



You choose to control your Apache chopper with either the mouse or a joystick. Weapons are selected via the function keys, and the spacebar will bring up a large scale map of the battlefield. This is handy since the ever-present short range scanner at the bottom of the screen covers only a small area. Also shown on screen are a fuel gauge, the number of remaining choppers, your score, and a graph showing shield strength. *Shield strength?* What is this, the Starship Apache? The shields, of course, protect you from damage up to a point, and can be recharged by finding a shield icon. Shield icons and fuel icons are sometimes revealed when you destroy an enemy building.

Seek & Destroy has some nice touches. I liked the radio voice at the end – after trying unsuccessfully to contact your downed chopper, it reports "There's no response, sir."

Perhaps I've been spoiled by another recent helicopter arcade game, but I felt a bit let down by Seek & Destroy. Being forced to wait through the entire loading sequence after losing your last chopper is a real bummer (hard drive installability would have prevented this annoyance). Still, this arcade game has smoothly animated graphics and certainly enough action to keep the old joystick sweaty for a few hours. ■ **RH**

SEEK & DESTROY

MINDSCAPE ■ £25.99 ($40)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
PAL	YES
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
NO	DISK-BASED

A decent overhead helicopter game, but it's no Desert Strike.

C

SUBURBAN COMMANDO

It is probably safe to assume that the kind folks at Alternative Software are gluttons for punishment. They are responsible for the latest game you'll love to hate called Suburban Commando. An arresting title, for sure, but if it sounds somewhat familiar, it's time for the shrink in me to bring to the surface the thoughts that have been buried deep in the inner recesses of your mind. I admit that it's true – I tried to bury any recollections linked to that name as well. If I had to be reminded of it, then you too must suffer.

It's that Hulk Hogan thing. That miserable, dismal attempt at action and comedy. Suburban Commando was as much a stinker at the cinema as it is on the Amiga. Not that I ever had any doubt that this was gonna be the verdict, but there's always the outside chance that a Body Blows will surface (yeah, right) or a Zool (oh, puuhleeze!) or even a WWF Wrestlemania (bingo!).

The space section is played out in the first sub-level and is a horizontally scrolling shoot 'em-up that is merely unimpressive. It's a wannabe R-Type, yet the only *successful* steal I could find was the difficulty curve. This may be fine for frustration enthusiasts, but it left me in a bad mood. At any rate, it sets the stage for the "crash-to-Earth" storyline, with the remaining handful of levels reserved for the usual platform shenanigans.

The graphics make a go of looking like a console game, but the game itself is simply flawed. Hulk looks absolutely ridiculous with his big head and Peter Max mustache that is as cornball as it is kitsch. If this is high camp, then I'm gonna go buy some old Jerry Vale albums for entertainment during the few moments I can tear myself away from this cult classic (oh, brother!).

Suburban Commando is such a stupid idea for a license in the first place – a dud film that bombed at the box office (and subsequently on home video) begets a dud game that... Even as a budget game, this is still tired stuff. But guess what – it's NOT a budget game!

Hulk Hogan seems like a likeable guy, but let's leave him in his deodorant commercials and out of video games. To date, I have seen Hulk licensed out to three games (WWF Wrestlemania, WWF 2, and now this), and while this is the best of the three, that's like picking the best looking of The Three Stooges. So help me, if they make a game out of Mr. Nanny, I'm gonna find a new career! ■ **RV**

SUBURBAN COMMANDO

ALTERNATIVE ■ £24.99 ($40)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
NTSC	YES
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
NO	DISK-BASED

This one's as good as the movie – and that's not a complement.

D

BUBBA 'N' STIX

Yup! He's dumb lookin'. Good ol' boy, though. But dumb lookin' as they git. Born an' raised deep in the heart of America's southland, Bubba knows a thing or two about survival. He's a truck drivin' man on a mission. An' what better tool for a country bumpkin on a mission than... a stick! Yuck, yuck, yuck! I'm serious, y'all! Dangitall, this ain't no normal stick! It's magical an' can do thangs y'all wouldn't believe! No redneck in his rat mind would try to make his way back to Earth wit'out one. Back to Earth?!?! Yup! Been kidnapped by them thar alien E.T.s and gotta git back to Earth b'fore the li'l green guy finds ol' Bubba. Since Stix is an alien too, this might be poss'ble. It's true, dag-nabbit!

Phew, I'm glad that paragraph is over! Not since Moonshine Racers has the screen been so illustriously blessed with stereotyped representations of Southerners! Where are all the activists screaming "Politically incorrect!" when you need them?

Arcade fans may be disappointed when they discover that to succeed in this game will require a peripheral known as the brain.

At first glance, Bubba 'N' Stix appears to be just another platformer with highly comic overtones. You are Bubba, zapping oncoming enemies by whopping them in the head with Stix. But you soon realize that you have some major puzzle solving to do if you're going to avoid running smack dab into seemingly unobtrusive trees and mountain walls. Arcade fans may be disappointed when they discover that to succeed in this game will require a peripheral known as the brain. In all honesty, I too was annoyed at the fact that I had to think in order to continue with the game. But upon realizing the wealth of animation used for the Bubba sprite alone (a staggering 170 frames!), I knew the puzzles were gonna have to be solved one way or another – I simply couldn't miss out on this gorgeously constructed piece of software.

The puzzles look simple, but they are anything but easy. The key to keep in mind when attempting these workarounds is that Stix is a very multi-talented kinda guy, particularly when compared to his feeble-brained companion (which could be you or Bubba, depending on how you want to look at it). Keep an open mind when it comes to Stix's capabilities. He is a very slick stick and can double as a balancing tightrope pole, ladder, pool cue, javelin, or snorkel (to name just a few things).

Once you grow accustomed to the nature of the puzzles, the game should become easier. NOT! Just when you become comfortable with the controls and complexities, the puzzles get tougher with an increasing number of obstacles and enemies. Thankfully, bonus levels provide some comic relief or you might be driven to the temporarily satisfying (but ultimately embarrasing) act of monitor destruction.

Should you have the skill to get to the part of the game where Glik (he's the alien who kidnapped you in the first place) returns to claim his victim (that's you, of course), get ready for some huge guffaws. Glik's not the smartest extra-terrestrial in the universe, you see, and outwitting him provides the game with slapstick sequences that counter the frustrating trial and error methods you must use to defeat his alien-ness.

If the scenario appears too limited for you in the opening level (the alien forest), some nice surprises are in store in the concluding four levels. Loads upon loads of

enemies lie in wait ahead of you, and it is really worth the work it takes to complete the game. The graphics perfectly complement the gameplay with their cartoon quality and color slapdash. Amazingly, this wealth of images and superb music comes on a mere two disks! No shortcuts appear to have been taken in the animation department and this is the game's strongest point.

Bubba 'N' Stix takes a fresh approach to the platform game genre, and the result is long-lasting paydirt! A game with only five levels may not seem very impressive, but I can already tell I'll still be playing this game come this time next year. Unlike most platformers, Bubba requires a lot of calculation and thought. Rather than sticking with the tried and true linear format of jumping, running, stomping, power-upping, etc.-ing, Core Design has managed to successfully expand the game into several additional areas that should extend its shelf life considerably. ■ **RV**

BUBBA 'N' STIX

CORE DESIGN ■ £25.99 ($40)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
PAL	YES
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
NO	NONE

Not politically correct, dag-nabbit, but an entertaining platform puzzler.

B+

DINOSAUR DETECTIVE AGENCY

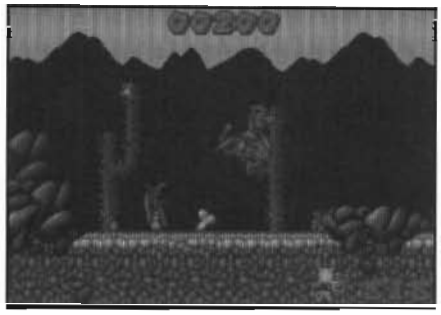
Ahh, those adorable platformers are still flowing in full force! After a bank is robbed, Sherloch Ness (the cute prehistoric sleuth that you control) is called upon by the manager of the bank to do what dinosaur detectives do best (er... whatever, guys). Donning your spiffy outfit (token plaid jacket and painfully English cap) and grabbing your trusty ol' camera, you're off on a trek across levels that appear not unlike a console arcade game. Why the camera? Elementary – you must snap a picture of the suspect in this most heinous crime! There will be clues and bits of evidence to gather along the way during your journey. Jump right in – it's all really very simple. But you'll have to be smarter than the average Neanderthal in order to maneuver your way through this and three other baffling cases to which you have been assigned.

Dinosaur Detective Agency is a truly smashing affair – with just a few reservations. Let's look closely at the evidence. Now where is that bloody magnifying glass?

Clue number one shows us an unimaginative intro that, in the final analysis, doesn't really matter after all. Who really CARES about long, drawn-out primers that drag the disk loads into a time warp? Short and sweet... to the point, that's the ticket!

Our next bit of evidence, affectionately referred to herein as clue number two, finds us at the options screen. Hmmm... not much to go on here either! Music toggle, sound effects toggle... YES, a game that lets us have both tunes and F/X! All right, it's not *that* big of a deal. Oh, the rigors of hyping a budget game.

Next on the agenda (I know, I know... number three) is the gameplay itself. There is a distinct cartoon look to the game that gave me a rather comfortable feeling. None of the jump-on-the-heads-of-bad-guys stuff here. Your weapon is your camera, which uses flashbulbs to blind the beasties you encounter along the way. You'll see scattered items throughout the levels that you'll obviously want to collect, such as gold coins, flash bulbs, etc. Their uses are realized along the way. You will need to ball up to sink into the soggy earth or jump to return to upper levels in some places. More confusing puzzles are bestowed upon you in later levels.



DDA appears to have been aimed at younger players who are still mesmerized by Barney and Jurassic Park. But even those kids will be disappointed by both the fact that you are only given one life and that you must return to the beginning of the game should you err. It's too bad such a frustrating event occurs in an otherwise enjoyable kiddie adventure. ■ **RV**

DINOSAUR DETECTIVE AGENCY

ALTERNATIVE ■ £16.99 ($25)

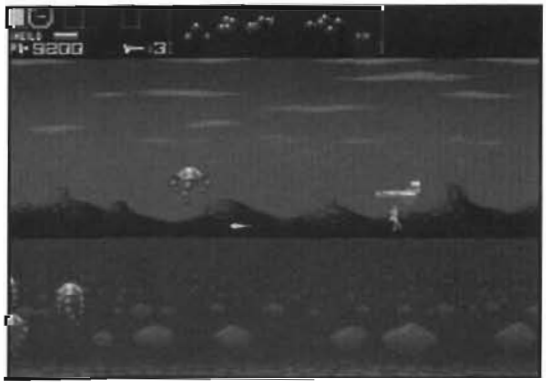
VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
PAL	YES
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
NO	DISK-BASED

A decent non-violent game for kids... only pictures are shot here.

C+

OVERKILL AGA

OVERKILL, AN AGA-only shooter from Mindscape, uses the Defender model of gameplay. It relies more on arcade skill than memorization of attack patterns. The action gradually becomes more intense and the graphics, while not earth-shattering, are decent. Probably the most outstanding graphic details are the excellent perspective warping and extensive parallax scrolling in the background. In a time when shooters are few and far between, Overkill is a welcome sight. ■ **RB**



OVERKILL AGA

MINDSCAPE ■ £19.99 ($30)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
NTSC	3.0 ONLY
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
NO	DISK-BASED

Defender clone with nifty parallax scrolling routines.

B-

PINBALL FANTASIES AGA

No matter which computer or console system you own, you won't find a smoother, more colorful, or more playable pinball game than the Amiga's own Pinball Fantasies (at least not until the sequel, Pinball Illusions, is released).

21st Century has recently released an AGA-specific version of the game that sports 256 color tables and optimized scrolling. You'll spend hours and hours playing Partyland, Billion Dollar Game Show, Speed Devils, and Stones 'N' Bones. The best feature of this update is that it is now hard drive installable and NTSC compatible!

If you own the original Amiga version of Pinball Fantasies, then it probably isn't worth buying this updated version – the gameplay is almost identical. However, if you own an AGA machine and have yet to try the game, I urge you to pick it up. ■ **GM**

PINBALL FANTASIES AGA

21ST CENTURY ■ £29.99 ($45)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
NTSC	3.0 ONLY
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
YES	MANUAL

Gorgeous update of this smooth and highly playable game.

A

WINTER OLYMPICS

I'll make no bones about it: I put Winter Olympics at the bottom of my stack of games to review for this month. I do enjoy sports sims and grew up on the myriad of track & field games from the glory days of the C64 and Apple II. But let's face it, most of those games suffered from the same problems: too much joystick waggling, too much slow disk accessing, lousy control, and poor implementation of physical events that must be translated to a handheld control device. (Yeesh! I volunteered to review *this* game?)

However, after actually playing it, I must personally tip my hat to U.S. Gold for sanitizing the genre with this superb 3 disk sports simulation. Now I can cancel my trip to the freezing Norwegian shores, nestle up to my Amiga, and become a part of the action. Okay, so I have a fertile imagination.

You can opt for full Olympics, mini Olympics or practice. I strongly recommend practice rounds before jumping into the icebox. This will help you adjust to the varying control methods that each event uses. Practice options also offer time trials, elimination, and pursuit modes. When competing in the Olympic modes, you are offered a choice of club, national and Olympic (for the purists, I suppose). There are a total of 14 disciplines which comprise the 6 Olympic events, so you can rest assured that there is plenty to do.

The presentation is flawless with delightful segue pages displayed during load times. Although some minor disk swapping is necessary, I was never bothered by it. Another nice bonus is support for 1-4 players. The graphics are irresistable and make the game that much more enjoyable to play.

The Olympic events available include skiing, bobsled, luge, ski jumping, short track speed skiing, and biathlon. Don't despair over the indulgence in skiing events; each really holds its own charm. Downhill skiing is especially exciting, particularly when compared to previous torturous implementations of the sport. The omission of skating events is offset by the inclusion of bobsledding, which became a cult item last year with the release of Disney's splendid sleeper hit Cool Runnings. Anyone who saw that film will want to have a go at manning his own missile-shaped sleigh. Joystick waggling is used to get your running take-off under way, followed by simple clicks of the fire button to load the sled with the racers. From that point, it's all control of the curves in the track that lies ahead. Competence will surely require much practice, but it's never really tedious.

Another favorite event is the 120 meter ski jump. Again, a bit of waggling gets you going and increases your speed. After making the jump, watch your shadow nearing the snow below to time your landing move. It didn't take much time before I became quite good at this.

An event with which you may not be as familiar (I wasn't) is the biathlon, involving both skiing and shooting. After the obligatory waggling sequence, you are presented with a magnified circle hovering over distant targets. You must hit key areas within each target. This sequence, as well as all others, is explained sufficiently in the manual to allow you to be an effective competitor. (You may want to keep the manual handy for reference when getting started in the game.)

The in-house programming team at U.S. Gold has warmed my heart with this slick new release. It's a package that is loaded with the needed elements of addictiveness and ease-of-use that will keep me in cool company for months to come. The cost is a bit pricey, but you can feel secure knowing that it's packed to the brim with quality gaming (not to mention being cheaper than the real thing). ■ **RV**

ON THE OTHER HAND...

We feel this game deserves two letter grades lower than it received. When you combine six mediocre games, it doesn't result in one good one.

WINTER OLYMPICS

US GOLD ■ £32.99 ($50)

VIDEO	1.3/2.0/3.0
NTSC	YES
HARD DRIVE	**PROTECTION**
NO	MANUAL

An Olympic - calibre rehash of the Winter Games. Or not.

B

CHEATS & TIPS

ALIEN BREED 2 *level codes*

Level 2 353828
Level 3 108383
Level 4 370101
Level 5 982822
Level 6 847464
Level 7 737373
Level 8 928112
Level 9 267364
Level 10 193831
Level 11 090921
Level 12 309383
Level 13 101221
Level 14 103992
Level 15 998112
Level 16 125332
Level 17 091233

ALIEN BREED 2 *cheat*

10 Lives.....000000
50 Keys.....378829
50,000 Credits.....736363

BOB'S BAD DAY *level codes*

Level 10 .....XCKCKXPE
Level 20 .....VDPEFWNG
Level 30 .....SEAGGUPH
Level 40 .....QEAIIVNJ
Level 50.....NDPKKWPL
Lelel 60 .....LFFMLUNM
Level 70.....IDPONWPO
Level 80 .....GFFQPUNQ
Level 90 .....DEASQVPR
Level 100 .....BEAUSVNT

CANNON FODDER *cheat*

Type JOOLS when saving a game to access the cheat mode.

DISPOSABLE HERO *cheat*

Type the word EUPHORIA while pressing the left mouse button on the high score screen.

DONK! *cheat*

Type ABLE TO CHEAT when the screen turns red. Then use F1-F4 keys for power-ups.

JURASSIC PARK *level codes*

STANDARD VERSION
Level 2 .....8EB75C3
Level 3 .....DE5FB8C5
Level 4 .....EEE7740D
Level 5.....BEB75C25
Level 6.....AEA7542D
Level 7.....BEA7542D
Level 8.....CE5FB0C5
Level 9.....FE6FA8DD
Level 10.....EE77780D
Level 11.....9E074035

AGA VERSION
Level 2.....B5A48352
Level 3.....E54C67AA
Level 4 .....D5F4AB62
Level 5 .....95B48B42
Level 6 .....85A4834A
Level 7 .....85B48B42
Level 8 .....F54C6FAA
Level 9.....C57C77B2
Level 10 .....D56C7FBA
Level 11 .....A5149F5A

HIRED GUNS *cheat*

Type AMIGA during play for infinite energy and ammo.

MORTAL KOMBAT *cheat*

Type in Wombat or Vampire in the intro sequence when Goro appears. (This cheat only works on early versions of the game.)

SETTLERS *level codes*

Level 1 .....START
Level 2 .....STATION
Level 3 .....UNITY
Level 4 .....WAVE
Level 5.....EXPORT
Level 6.....OPTION
Level 7.....RECORD
Level 8.....SCALE
Level 9 .....SIGN
Level 10 .....ACRON
Level 11 .....CHOPPER
Level 12.....GATE
Level 13.....ISLAND
Level 14.....LEGION
Level 15 .....PIECE
Level 16.....PASSIVE
Level 17 .....RIVAL
Level 18 .....SAVAGE
Level 19.....XAVER
Level 20 .....BLADE
Level 21.....BEACON
Level 22.....PASTURE
Level 23.....OMNUS
Level 24 .....TRIBUTE
Level 25.....FOUNTAIN
Level 26 .....CHUDE
Level 27 .....TRAILER
Level 28 .....CANYON
Level 29.....REPRESS
Level 30 .....YOKI

STARDUST *level codes*

Level 2 ....BGSUAAAAAIOM
Level 3....CDSSUAAAAMGL
Level 4 ....DLSUVQATALMK
Level 5.....ELSUVXRRAJLL

THEATRE OF DEATH *cheat*

Type SHED SOFTWARE as a password for unlimited ammo.

WONDERDOG *level codes*

Level 2 .....LEMONADE
Level 3.....PHARMACY
Level 4.....ULTIMATE
Level 5 .....DANIELLE
Level 6.....LUCOZASE

ZOOL 2 *level codes*

Level 2.....SESAME
Level 3.....RONSON
Level 4 .....FUNKYTUT
Level 5.....HISSTERIA
Level 6 .....7SLURP
Level 7.....PLUNGER

ZOOL 2 *cheat*

Type these on the title screen or options screen, and the screen flashes. Hit return to skip levels.

Skip levels .....BUMBLEBEE
99 items .....ALCENTO
20 lives.....VISION
Infinite bombs .....KICKASS
Infinite time .....OLDENEMY
Infinite energy ..TOUGHGUY

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PD ARENA

BY RALPH BARBAGALLO

This month, I have searched high and low for the PD/Shareware Amiga games that I think warrant mention. While not all of them may be exactly new... I think they are some of the best picks as of late. If you can't find these on your local BBS or on the Internet, don't hesitate to support mail order shareware companies.

ASTERIODS II 0.92

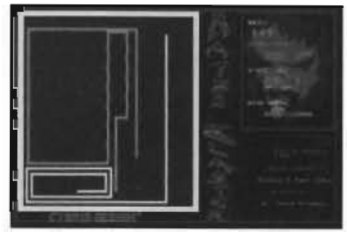
What do you get when you combine Asteroids, Sinistar, Mine Storm, and just about any decent Asteroids derivative into one game? Why, you get Mike Seifert's Asteriods II, of course. (Note the difference in spelling and pronunciation. – *AGZ* legal dept.) Not only does this game have all of the elements that made the aforementioned titles good, it has its own unique flavor that makes it distinct from the other hordes of Asteroids clones on the scene.

Asteriods II actually gives you two different games, the original Atari version of Asteroids and Seifert's own recipe for action, Asteriods II. We all know how to play Asteroids, so let's concentrate on Asteriods II. Let me tell you this, you've never seen firefights as intense as the ones in this game.

Take the original game, throw in power-ups, enemy fighters, motherships, and the classic vector graphics of the arcade original, and you have Asteriods II. This game has some of the hottest action around. It ranks right up there with most any commercial shooter these days. The game looks simple at first, but you'll soon find out it will keep you occupied for hours.

The game is also stuffed with options. It can be set for different game speeds for different processors, and the level of play can be boosted or lowered. There is even a two player mode – both players can brave the universe as teammates, or they can fight as bitter opponents while they also blast invading forces. Asteriods II receives my highest recommendation.

MATRIX BLASTER 1.00

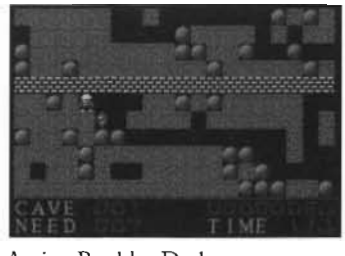


One of my all-time favorite arcade games has to be the 1982 classic Tron. It's a little tough to find Tron these days, not only because it's an old game, but because a lot of arcade owners have converted the cabinets to Two Tigers. However, many Tron enthusiasts have ported the most famous of all the sub-games in the coin-op and perhaps the film's most remembered scene (the light cycles) to various computer formats.

The latest version for the Amiga is a team effort called Matrix Blaster. This fine rendition of the arcade sequence was coded in AMOS by Sami and Nadeen Cokar along with W. Jared Brookes who also did the graphics for the game. It plays just like the arcade and even has some nice samples taken directly from the movie.

Matrix Blaster is completely system friendly and provides decent entertainment for short gaming sessions. While the concept does wear thin... hey, it's a classic. Don't complain. Tron fans will love this one.

AMIGA BOULDER DASH 1.909



Boulder Dash clones are a staple in the Amiga shareware arena. It seems almost every day a new Boulder Dash clone pops up from somewhere. One of the better clones is Jeff Bevis' Amiga Boulder Dash.

Amiga Boulder Dash features not only the original game with the levels and gameplay of the 8-bit classic, but a set of all new caves and even a level editor for endless playability. All of this is topped with sharp graphics true to the original game and a new, modern version of the Boulder Dash theme song. This is the perfect combination of action and strategy – keep an eye out for it. ■

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ON TARGET

SEND YOUR LETTERS AND COMMENTS TO AMIGA GAME ZONE, 103 WEST CALIFORNIA, URBANA, IL 61801

I THINK you need to cover less platform games and more role playing games.

Brenton K. Mosser
Hagerstown, MD

In order to provide readers with timely information, we only review games that have been recently released for the Amiga – so we're at the mercy of the game publishers. Our first issue was arcade-heavy because that's all that was available at the time. In this issue we have a better balance – we're hoping this continues.

This one's for you, Brian.

BEST CAPTION THAT DIDN'T MAKE IT INTO OUR FIRST ISSUE:

The year is 2127. Fantasy Island has returned to television... this is Tattoo in full body armor.

REVIEW GAME related hardware...

Pedro Aguiar
Fall Rover, MA

INCLUDE INTERVIEWS in your mag...

Andre Phillippe Reavis
Walla Walla, WA

Next issue we'll have an in-depth interview with Jaeger Software, and we're working on a comprehensive joystick roundup as we speak!

ALL I can say is that it's about time. Every where I looked computer stores were discontinuing Amiga products. And then, just as suicidal thoughts were beginning to cross my mind, I decided to pay a visit to my local computer store. That's when I saw it. Hidden behind a stack of *Compute* was the very last issue of *Amiga Game Zone*. I quickly darted across the store and leapt over the counter to secure this new treasure. " I am not worthy," I thought as I went for my wallet. Never have I been happier to shell out 5 bucks, except for that time in Mexico when... (Well, that's a different story). Thank you *Amiga Game Zone* for giving me a new lease on life.

Steve Fesnandes
Saint John, NB (Canada)

Thank you for this month's obligatory "Amiga Game Zone is great" letter!

I DIDN'T agree with your review of Hired Guns – personally it is boring on one player mode.

B.J. Weiss
Fleetwood, PA

We didn't say it wasn't, and you may be right. My advice is to buy a four player adapter and then make some friends. Or maybe the other way around.

I WAS reading a magazine called *Diehard GameFan* and they ripped apart the Amiga CD^{32}. They claim that Amiga CD^{32} is not even in the same class as the 3DO and Jaguar. They also stated that it is starting to annoy them because it is so terrible. I was thinking that maybe your readers could write letters to them stating how ignorant they are. The address is as follows:

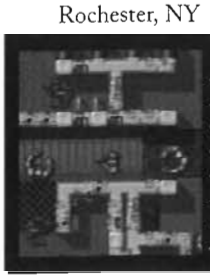
THE POSTMEISTER
6400 Independence Ave., Woodland Hills, CA 91367

David O'Connor
Rochester, NY

I AM greatly interested in your products. Would you please send me your catalog full of your products? Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Signed

Sadly, this letter was left unsigned even though the word "Signed" was scribbled on the letter. Mystery writer, why do you taunt us so? Our policy is that we don't publish unsigned letters, but we were so touched by your sincerity. We would absolutely love to send you a catalog "full of our products" if we only knew your name... ***Cliff from Philadelphia, is that you?***



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If you don't have our premiere issue, you missed out on Alien Breed 2, Hired Guns, and 10 CD^{32} reviews; a Syndicate player's guide; plus cheats to some of the best games of 1993 (Body Blows, Chaos Engine, Desert Strike, Flashback, Lemmings 2, Lost Vikings, Superfrog, and Syndicate). Order this back issue from AGZ at the address above (quantities are limited).

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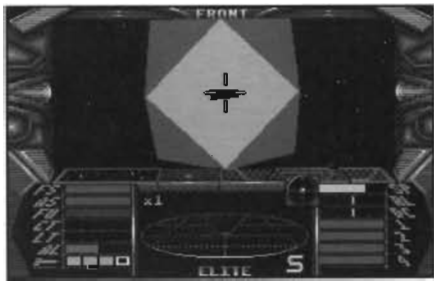
THE O-ZONE

BY PETER OLAFSON

It is a short list, as lists of Amiga games go, but it is written in golden script.

David Braben has never been especially prolific in his published work – Frontier took five years to complete – and his games to date haven't even been notably Amiga-specific. (Frontier is the first Braben game to initially appear on the Amiga). Nevertheless, the handful of Braben-authored Amiga games that exist – and most of those to which he has contributed – have the pure and simple scent of greatness.

Actually, that is the least tangible of a number of common bonds. All the games are 3D. All are bound up in some fashion with polygons. All are vaguely open ended, destination: where-you-will. All are sim-like, and yet not quite sims. And all are quietly, intuitively playable, without any broken-dam torrent of features. The list starts with ...



ELITE (RAINBIRD, 1988)

Well, that about says it, doesn't it? I could just shut my big mouth and end this section right here. Had Braben done nothing else, he would be remembered for Elite.

This is the game that launched a thousand spaceships... 999 of which probably crashed and burned while trying to dock with a space station. This space trading game – playable to a fault in its day and influential beyond telling after it – inspired "Braben = The Lord Thy God" devotion from gamers who occupied small lifetimes doing things the hard way.

Which, as it happens, was also the only way, as Elite – a stripped-down Frontier, in many respects – was not nearly so well supplied in handy-dandy, universe-in-my-pocket tools as Elite II. I have read accounts of people playing this game for 10 years, and I believe them. After all, when you have to work hard at something to be good at it – a quality too rare in present-day games – familiarity and love come easy. For some folks, Elite was a night job, and a tough one at that.

There's no denying its popularity, or that it set the standard for games like Federation of Free Traders that followed. And yet there seem to be two schools of thought on Elite Amiga these days.

1) How dare you say, "There are two schools of thought." We were put on Earth to play it.

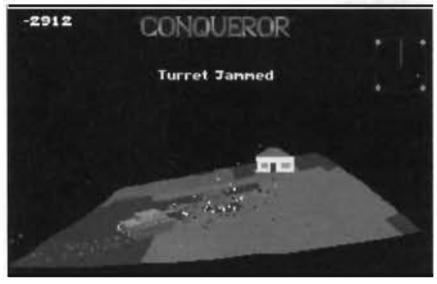
2) It is more like an affable elder statesman who's not quite in the loop anymore. It has some charm and some good stories to tell, but once you've heard its stories and experienced the charm, you'd be better off hanging with one of its proteges.

That second reaction (mine) is doubtless in some measure a product of the game's age. Released first in 1984 for the BBC Micro, Elite came to the Amiga late in its own history but rather early in the Amiga's, and six years later, in the wake of Frontier, that fateful combination makes it something of a museum piece. The music – Strauss' Blue Danube waltz – remains peerless, but not much else was done to it, and the newcomer may now find the game feels like a visitor from a different era.

VIRUS (RAINBIRD, 1988)

Almost anything that Rainbird released in its late-'80s heyday is worth a good look – look for a Rainbird diskography in a future O-Zone – and so it is with this odd bird. Imagine Britannica's Archipelagos as an external-view flight sim instead of a strategy/puzzle game, or a Thrust 3D, and you'll start to have a clue. At its heart, Virus is an action game. Aliens are attacking – aliens always seem to be attacking somewhere – and spreading an unpleasant red virus. You have to zap 'em before they pollute the whole landscape.

The controls are elusive at first – it's easy to go ballistic when you just meant to go – and the hoverplane's wedge shape always made me wonder which way it was going to head. But the game has a decided eye for detail (what with houses, palm trees and fish jumping in the seas), the 3D engine can't be faulted (Virus runs like a demon on the most basic machine) and the game has an effortless appeal. You'd swear there was more to it than shooting. Cheap at twice the price.



CONQUERER (RAINBOW ARTS, 1990)

Often attributed to Braben, this WWII-era tank game (the precursor to Campaign) is actually the work of one Jonathan Griffiths. But it does use the 3D graphics routines that Braben devised for Virus – you'll identify the connection right off the bat – and that contributes in no small measure to the game's slow-burn appeal. It's like playing in a thick fog.

So what's on the other side of the Frontier? More Frontier, it looks like. In a phone interview from the UK, Braben indicated an A1200 version of Frontier is likely and a CD^{32} version was just released. Modules for the original are also planned for "some time in the future" – including the alien races much-sought (and not found) by Frontier devotees.

Don't look for the bitmapped polygons of the IBM version on the A1200, however; Braben indicates the Amiga's method for bit mapping would slow down the the game too much. The principal changes there will instead be speed – the code optimized for the '020 processor and the blitter used differently. (The game on an unaccelerated 1200 is stodgy.) The detailed polygons may surface on the CD^{32}, but Braben indicated that, even with the console's chunky-to-planar graphics conversion chip, the speed still might suffer.

Either way, even with a little tarnish, gold is still gold. ■

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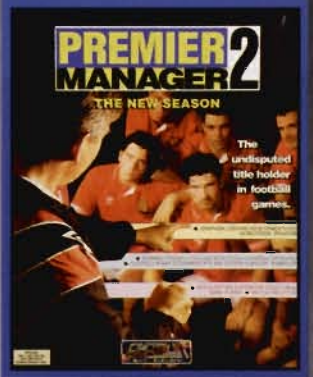

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