

Konami, The Sources of Smiles!

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Sujet de l'article : Interview (*)

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► Boomshakalaka!



► This is the new Alley Oop move.

Double Dunks, Alley Oops, Fade Aways and Jump Shots. All of which I'm sure mean nothing to most of us Brits. The music is a pretty classy mix of hip-hop and rap songs that suit the game really well, but I couldn't help but think (bearing in mind this is a cart), maybe the memory would have been better used on improving the graphics a bit more. Oh yeah, the original commentator from NBA Jam is still there, yelling and shouting like the demented baboon he doubtless is!

NBA Hangtime is a spot on conversion of the arcade coin-op of the same name. You may view that as either a good or a bad thing. It wasn't so long ago that all console owners craved for perfect conversions of their favourite arcade games and that is exactly what we have here. So what's the problem? Well NBA Hangtime can be considered as the latest and greatest in the NBA Jam series, but frankly it really hasn't evolved that far away from the original game in the series. Sitting here, writing this, I feel a bit of a traitor, because I have always been a fan of the NBA Jam games, due mainly to the sheer playability in multi-player

The music is a pretty classy mix of hip-hop and rap songs that suit the game.

modes and the madcap atmosphere of fun and excitement they generate. I have to admit that I have played NBA Hangtime a hell of a lot over the last couple of days and thoroughly enjoyed it. But the questions that must be addressed here are: Has Hangtime's gameplay or presentation changed that much since I got my

As in the other NBA Jam games, there are all sorts of special features and crazy trick shots to discover. Here are some shots of just some of them...



first console fix of NBA Jam on the Mega Drive? The answer is no. Could NBA Hangtime be converted to a 32 bit machine in more or less the same form? The answer is yes. Should I then recommend that our beloved readers go



► More outrageous dunks.

out and blow £60-£70 on NBA Hangtime. The answer is no. Not unless you are a huge fan of Basketball or the NBA Jam series. Maybe, on the other hand, you're really into multi-player sports games and have lots of cash, in which case you really ought to give NBA Hangtime a try. But I'm pretty sure that most N64 owners want games that totally utilise the N64's hardware to the max and make use of those extra 32 bits of muscle power that puts the N64 in a class that its competitors can only dream of. The sad fact is NBA Hangtime just doesn't cut it as an N64 game. It offers nothing new that



► Yet more outrageous dunk!

Published by: GT Interactive
Release date: 2nd Quarter 1997
Telephone no: 0171 256 3791. RRP: TBA

scores

| | |
|---|----|
| graphics | 75 |
| Best graphics of any of the NBA Jam series, not exactly pushing the hardware, though. | |
| sound | 70 |
| Funky music. Sad commentary. | |
| gameplay | 82 |
| As addictive as ever in multi-player modes, with a good learning curve. | |
| lifespan | 83 |
| A quite ridiculous amount of extra features, such as hidden players and different courts, ensures longevity. | |
| overall | 72 |
| If you want the equivalent of the NBA Hangtime arcade machine in your home, buy it. If you want a truly next-gen Basketball game, you're going to have to wait. | |

Not being one for American sports, I was quite surprised to find that controlling a seven foot black man was actually quite good fun. Still, Basketball fans will love it to bits.

Dave

sets it apart from the previous NBA Jam games which make it worth buying. I fear that this may become a familiar story on many future N64 games. Not exactly bad games, but then again not the sort of software that makes that big step into the heady world of 64 bit gaming that N64 owners are demanding. **Pete** ■

timeout

SHOCK HORROR!
A page that isn't solely about games!

Well, Timeout seems to be quite popular from the responses we got with the competition entries last month, so we're going to continue in the same vein this month, but if you've got any ideas for this page then feel free to send them in.

ALBUM REVIEWS

THE CHEMICAL BROTHERS • Dig Your Own Hole • Virgin LP

'Block Rocking Beats', the title of the first track, sums up the Chemicals' second album perfectly. 'Dig Your Own Hole' is a fusion of techno, house, trip hop, hip-hop, rock and funk, in fact you name the style and you'll find it here in some mashed up form. From the start, you're bombarded by the Brothers' pacy brand of big beat funk action. The album then glides effortlessly into techno territory before 'Lost in the K Hole' calms things down with its tripped out 70's feel. Beth Orton lends her voice to the excellent 'Where Do I Begin?' and 'The Private Psychedelic Reel' rounds off this superb new album in fine style. If you've got just a hint of musical taste, you've got to have 'Dig Your Own Hole' in your collection.



FREDDY FRESH • Accidentally Classic • Harthouse LP



From the moment 'Accidentally Classic' arrived in the office it's rarely been out of the CD player and with its genre busting mix of techno, acid, electro and hip-hop, it's not likely to be for a long time. All of the tracks ooze quality and seeing as though Freddy records everything live, this is something of an achievement. 'Accidentally Classic' is mainly an

album for lovers of techno and electronic music, but it will appeal to almost anyone who is prepared to listen and I strongly suggest that you do.

APOLLO FOUR FORTY • Electro Glide in Blue • Sony Music Entertainment LP

Instead of going for an album's worth of radio hits like 'Aint Talkin' Bout Dub' and 'Krupa', Apollo Four Forty have given us an eclectic mix of everything from blues to Jazz to Drum 'n' Bass. From the excellent guitar led hip-hop sounds of 'Altamont Super Highway revisited' to the mellow drum 'n' bass of 'Vanishing point' Apollo Four Forty have proven that they don't have to depend on the formula of their success on daytime radio to create an excellent album. If you're open minded, you'll love 'Electro Glide in Blue.'



WEB SITE OF THE MONTH

JACKIE CHAN'S HOMEPAGE • www.jackiechan.com



This month, after hours of pointing and clicking we have come across a wicked site dedicated to that master of all things martial arts, Jackie Chan. That's right, you can now find out everything you want to know about the man who can kick high and talk out of sync. From the opening page you can tell it's Jackie Chan simply by the corny welcoming messages you get. Anything you want to know about our Jackie can be found here from a filmography to a list of his achievements and awards. There are also plenty of extremely corny images to check out and facts about his fan club. Some of the site is still under construction but you can bet, once it's finished, it will be more popular than any Pam Anderson or Terri Hatcher site.



TURBO INJECTED CD DRIVES

The fastest CD drive in the world is a 15x drive designed by electronics giants Toshiba. Compare this with the slow drives found in Sony and Sega

VARIOUS • Jumpin' • Harmless Compilation



A collection of twelve original disco tunes didn't appeal to me at first, but I can safely say that I am now hooked. Jumpin' is packed full with disco underground classics such as Musique's 'Keep on Jumpin' (which you may just recognise) and Dinosaur L's 'Go Bang'. The tracks go from funky dance floor stormers to mellow, laid-back vibes giving the uninitiated a lesson in pure disco and house! This may not sound like your thing but believe me, after you've heard it you'll soon be donning your flares and getting down to that funky 'D-I-S-C-O' beat.

VARIOUS • After Hours 2 • DJ Compilation

Mixed by Jay Chappell, the latest in the Journeys by DJ series is a seriously groovy collection of the most laid-back house

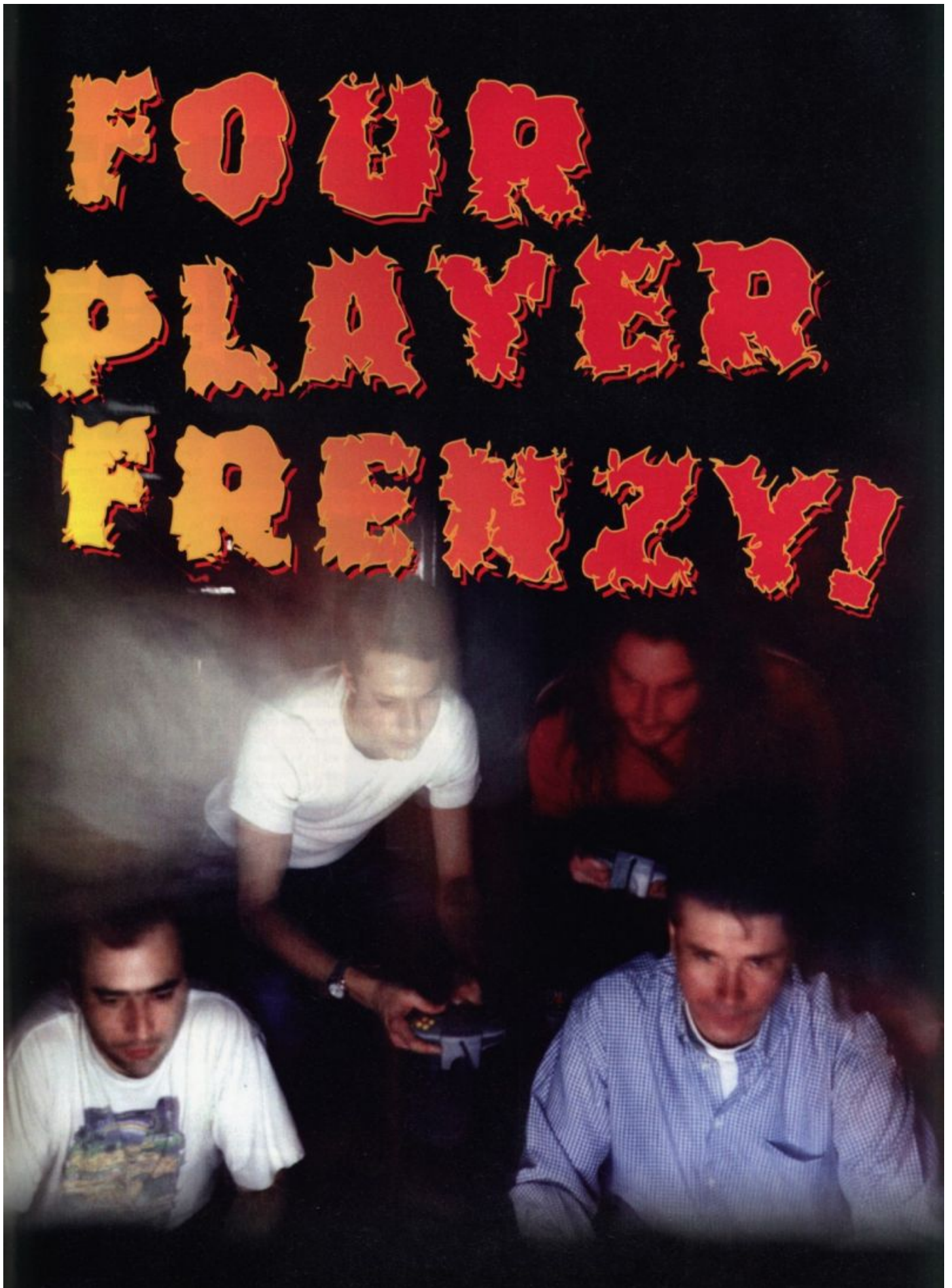
music you're likely to hear. Featuring tracks by artists like Josh Wink and Deep Dish, you know that you're going to be in for a quality ride through the realms of quality music. If you're looking for a fromage free, perfectly mixed, funky and mellow house collection then look no further than After Hours 2. Pure Quality, also...

There are a couple of singles we highly recommend. Firstly, there's 'Chupacabre' by Freddy Fresh on Harthouse. One of the best tracks off the album is remixed by The Propellerheads and the Bassbin Twins for maximum effect. There's also a progressive house stormer by Golden. Called 'BMF', it's out on Fourth and Broadway and features the vocal, 'Dance Bitch' amongst others. One for the ladies then...

consoles and you can see how out of date Nintendo's competition are already. Nintendo shouldn't sit back and relax though because the next generation of CD based consoles might be as fast as cartridges. Now there's a thought.

PLAY AGAINST A FRIEND, IN MONGOLIA!

Wireplay via the internet is catching on big time around the world. Some games have been specifically written or altered for wireplay, such as the flight simulator EP2000, but many games can be played over the net. The most popular seem to be Duke Nukem and Doom but Quake doesn't work very well on the net. Of course, at the moment, you'll need an expensive PC to join the wireplay revolution but it is possible for consoles to take advantage of this situation. Nintendo have already released a modem cartridge in Japan which allows you to play Mijhon against another player miles away, although this isn't exactly wireplay as it's a direct link up. Just think of the possibilities of wireplay N64 though. You could have real International Superstar Soccer matches with a living team of Germans. That's something I'm looking forward to but lets just hope that Nintendo see the possibilities.



FOUR-SIGHT

When Nintendo were developing the N64, they cleverly had the vision to include two extra controller ports. This was to encourage developers to make more four player compatible games (nothing to do with selling more control pads at all!). We thought we would take a look at the whole concept of four-playerology and see if it is all it's cracked up to be.

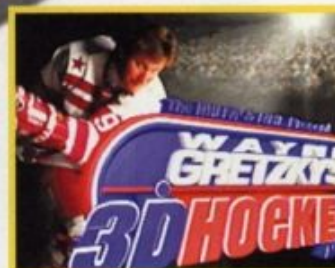
We keep on hearing stuff about network gaming and multi-play modem wireplay technology, that will be coming to our consoles very soon. Well, that's a crock. It isn't going to happen. Well, not for a while anyhow. There are numerous reasons why, but, without getting too long winded, the technology just isn't there yet that can bring home an affordable and practical console based network system. Simple as that really, so whether your current console is an N64, Sega Saturn or Sony PlayStation, for at least the next three years or so, we are limited to four player games. Yes, I know it is possible for two PlayStation to be linked together and play two player games on two different screens. I have owned a PlayStation (and Saturn) since launch and I have only played a PlayStation link up game twice. The reason I have hardly used my link up cable is not because the link up games are bad (Doom and Ridge Racer Revolution), it's just that the whole system isn't practical. You need two TV sets, two consoles and two copies of the same game. Sega haven't even released their link up cable in Europe, due to lack of software and I'm beginning to doubt they ever will.

So it's pretty much four players on one screen or nothing for a bit of multi-player action on your home console, and our lovely N64 already comes complete with four control ports. So all we need are four controllers then? Well, let's not forget the small matter of the software, which is what this whole feature is all about. The following are all forthcoming N64 titles that, at the time of going to press, will feature a four player option:

- FIFA Soccer 64 - Electronic Arts**
- Mario Kart 64 - Nintendo**
- Hexen - GT Interactive**
- NBA Hangtime - GT Interactive**
- Wayne Gretzky's 3D Hockey - GT Interactive**
- International Superstar Soccer - Konami**
- Starfox 64 - Nintendo**
- F-Zero 64 - Nintendo**

And on import, with no confirmed UK release dates:

- Bomberman 64 - Hudsonsoft**
- King of Pro Baseball - Imagineer**



- Mah Jong Master - Konami**
- The Glory of St. Andrews - Seta**
- Pebble Beach Golf Links - T&E**
- NFL Quarterback Club 98 - Acclaim**

There will be loads of others but these are the ones that have definitely been confirmed as four player titles. As you can see, most of them are sports titles, which is no surprise, as no self-respecting sports game would dare to be anything less. Still, there are some less obvious titles there such as Starfox 64 and Hexen.

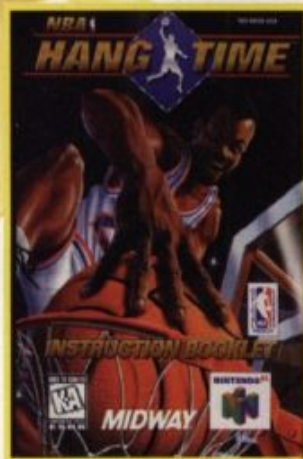
Some games really come to life in four-player mode but can be a bit dull in one player. Bomberman and the classic Micro Machines series

in particular come to mind. So the big question is how will these upcoming N64 titles play in four-player mode compared to the more conventional one or two player? Will a four player option be included for its novelty value or be a really great addition? We will try to answer these questions in our occasional 4-Player Frenzy features, kicking off this month with FIFA 64 and the hotly anticipated Mario Kart 64.

TOP TEN all time excuses for being crap at multi-player games

No four-player session would be complete without the losers of the game(s) coming out with an endless stream of excuses. I've heard 'em all. Below are my top ten:

1. My control pad isn't working properly.
2. Have we started yet?
3. I haven't played this game for ages/before/naked.
4. I'm so bored of winning, so I lost to see how you felt.
5. You cheated/farted/stuck your tongue in my ear.
6. I let you win because I feel sorry for you/I'm a PR rep for this game/I want to shag you.
7. I thought I was the other vehicle/ the other player/Jeremy Beadle.
8. It's my time of the month (females only).
9. This game is so s**t, that I can't be bothered to play it properly.
10. Who cares about video games when there is so much poverty in the world?



FOUR GO MAD IN DORSET



7:30PM - Dave, Dazza, Russ and Nigel (our ace photographer) arrived at my home, flophouse for burnt out writers. I, being the responsible Editor type that I am, explained that in the interest of research we were going to have a full-on, four-player games session. "OK, how do these evenings usually get started?", I asked. "Down the pub", was the quadraphonic reply.



7:38 PM - The Rising Sun in Purewell - On the way to the pub, Dave played his usual game of 'hide and seek.' He hid his money in a bush, then seeked out some mugs to buy him drinks all night!



into a lock-in, we sensibly opted to have a kebab and return to my games emporium.

11:48 PM - At last we get down to the serious business of games playing. First game up was FIFA 64, which is the only four player game released in the UK until June. After the usual confusion about what button does what and who's on which side in the practice matches, we finally play through a tournament. The final is England (Pete and Dazza) versus Holland (Dave and Russ). After a scoreless first half, the second half explodes into action. England get a free kick 45 yards from the Dutch goal. "No chance of scoring from here", I thought. "I'll lob it into the penalty area and hope Dazza gets on the end of it." The ball loops into the air and drops into the net behind the Dutch keeper.



"Remarkable goal by the boy Neville", as David Coleman would say.

The Dutch immediately reply with two fantastic goals from Patrick Klivert. Then in the dying seconds of normal time, 'Shaggy' scores from a corner. That's Liverpool's Steve McManaman's nickname by the way, not Dazza, his nickname is Swampy.



Extra time saw frantic goal-mouth action at both ends until Ian Wright made a break into the Dutch penalty area and was ruthlessly chopped down. "Let

Southgate take it", shrieks the freshly cider lobotomised Russ! Thankfully, we had no such choice. Alan Shearer calmly slotted the ball into the back of the net and England had won. VERDICT - FIFA 64 is hardly outstanding as a one player game, but can get pretty exciting as a four-player game. Could this be true of all soccer games? Maybe, but FIFA 64 is your only option until June.

01:15 AM - MARIO KART 64 - This is it, the big one. The game that we all thought we were champions at. To be honest, over the course of many races, it was pretty much honours even, it soon became obvious that the best way to win a race was to deliberately lag behind for the first lap or so and collect the best power-ups, then catch up with the leading pack. With half a lap left, activate your power-up or weapon and nip



into the lead before the chequered flag. The reason this tactic is effective is because the CPU lends assistance (such as more speed and the best weapons) to players in last position. This kinda spoils the racing element of the game, but it certainly keeps the races tight and unpredictable, even if a novice plays a Mario Kart master.



2:45AM - Incredibly, four teenage girls turn up asking to see Russell. They then seductively strip each other down to their wispy underwear and take down Russell's boxer shorts with their teeth.

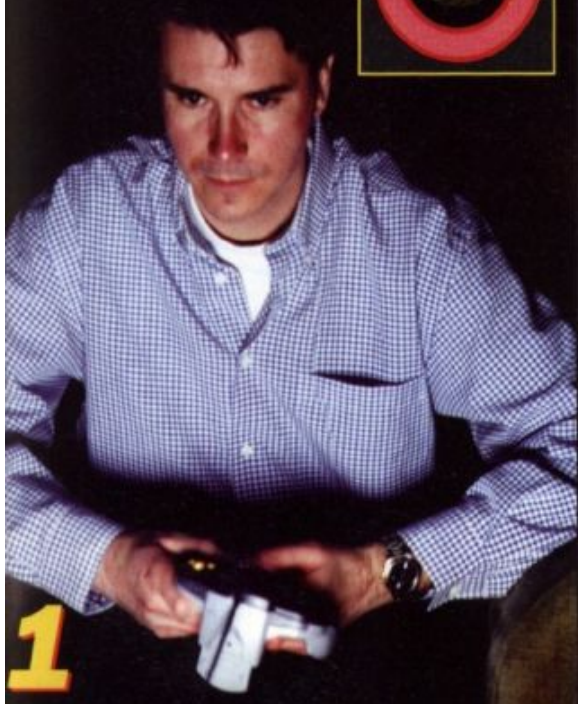
2:46 AM - Russell wakes up from his cider induced stupor to find his Donkey Kong character is two laps behind everybody else and appears to be trying to drive through a brick wall!



3:00 AM - VERDICT - It may have been late and maybe we were all a bit tired and emotional (or something) but we all voted Mario Kart as the best four-player game in the universe. Perhaps we all got carried away with the blood oaths to call our next born Bowser and vows to have tattoos done of Princess Peach in intimate places, but we meant it at the time!

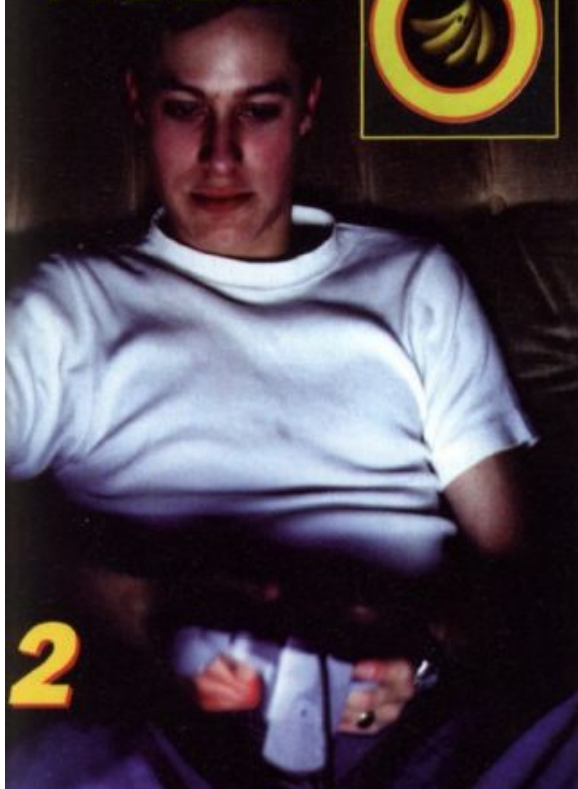


PETE



1

RUSS



2

MARIO KART 64

More fun in 4-player? Definitely. The programmers have obviously put a lot of work into making it a real buzz to play in 4-player, with the different course layouts and obstacles.

How could it be improved? To find out who is really the best driver, there should be an option to disable the CPU from assisting the players who are losing. The CPU helps those lagging behind by speeding them up and giving them the best power-ups, thus the early back markers often come through to win the race by luck rather than skill.

Any sneaky ways of cheating? During a race, pause the game, preferably when everyone is about to take a particularly nasty corner. Then suddenly restart the race and watch the mayhem and confusion! This little 'tactic' can be passed off as an accidental fumble with your pad or done brazenly if you are feeling quite brave/drunk!

How does it compare to the original 16 bit version? The different styles and personalities of the drivers are not as noticeable in Mario Kart 64 as they were in the original SNES version.

Overall comment and score out of 100 Fantastic. I doubt if there are any games that play as well in four-player as this. 95%

FIFA 64

More fun in 4-player? Depends on whether you're lumbered with a lamer of a team mate. It only becomes fun when all four-players are accustomed to the game.

How could it be improved? At the end of every match an assessment of how well each of the four-players had performed as well as a man of the match award would have been fun.

Any sneaky ways of cheating? Using the 'jinx factor' by making comments like, "he can't possibly miss from there", every time the opposition is about to shoot. Deeply aggravating!

How does it compare to the original 16 bit version in 4-player mode? No major differences, apart from the fact that you don't have to bother about fiddling with one of those 4-player adapters.

Overall comment and score out of 100 Quite a laugh once everyone knows what they are doing. All four of you playing against a CPU controlled team is a bit boring though, probably because you can't gloat and take the piss out of a console when you're winning, unless you're Russ of course! 80%

4-PLAYER FOR THE MASSES

4-Player games, essential part of next-gen gaming or overrated? Essential, especially in sports games. Programmers should implement them into a game wherever possible.

Drinking and playing video games, nice cocktail or bad trip? I do enjoy a drink while I'm playing, but I must admit, even a couple of pints can seriously affect my standard of play, which can be frustrating at times.

All time favourite 4-player game Mario Kart 64/Madden 97 (Saturn).

Good night or what? The night was a hoot. Sadly the next day was a write off!

FOURTH

MARIO KART 64

More fun in 4-player? There's no doubt that the game is wicked in four-player mode. The graphics stay sharp and there's no slow down, so the game loses none of its magic. Saying that though, it's only really fun when I win.

How could it be improved? Perhaps an option to turn off the special weapons would have made it better in multi-player mode. The CPU tends to help the stragglers which really makes it less competitive.

Any sneaky ways of cheating? Staying at the back of the field until the last lap is good. You'll get the best weapons to shoot you into the lead just before the line.

How does it compare to the original 16 bit version? At the end of the day, Mario Kart is Mario Kart, so whether it's 16-bit or 64-bit it's still the dogs cohones. 'Nuff said.

Overall comment and score out of 100 Four player fun only comes better with 8 pints and 3 lovely girls, but if you're not into that sort of thing, Mario Kart 64 is the only other option. 97%

FIFA 64

More fun in 4-player? Let's face it, most games are better in four player (even Scrabble), but FIFA 64 makes for a particularly exciting experience.

How could it be improved? Not really much scope for improvement because it's a very good multi-player game as it is. Barring little things like stats and making up your own names for players, it's ace. The only real thing lacking was that I didn't win a match.

Any sneaky ways of cheating? Making raspberries when the opposition is about to shoot is a good one. That and telling your opponents that West Ham are a good team to select!

How does it compare to the original 16 bit version in 4-player mode? The game itself has stayed much the same, apart from the obvious 64-bit face lift. Cracking multi-payer mayhem, all the same.

Overall comment and score out of 100 Knowing the game helps, but four novice players can still have a laugh of the first order. FIFA 64 is not just a game for football fanatics, it's a game for everyone with a competitive streak in them. 87%

4-PLAYER FOR THE MASSES

4-Player games, essential part of next-gen gaming or overrated? Definitely essential. More non-sport orientated games are needed though.

Drinking and playing video games, nice cocktail or bad trip? Yes, in moderation. It makes for a great excuse when you start losing (as long as you don't mind looking like a light-weight!).

All time favourite 4-player game It's got to be truth or dare. Stupid question really.

Good night or what? It was as much fun as you can decently have with an N64. Same time next week boys?

MARIO KART 64

More fun in 4-player? Unconditionally. Two player mode is competitive but four player can really make the blood boil, especially if you're losing.

How could it be improved? With the exception of add-ons, i.e. new circuits (64DD?), I don't think it could be.

Any sneaky ways of cheating? No not really. I know of a few short cuts here and there and the obvious turbo start but nothing that advantageous. Using the power-ups at the best possible time and place can make quite a difference, like using the lightning power-up to shrink your opponents just before they're about to fly off a jump or leaving dummy power-ups next to real ones. It's these sort of crude tactics that can send a player from first place straight to the back of the pack.

How does it compare to the original 16 bit version? The first thing to mention would be the four player option, the second would be the graphics. Apart from that, I don't think there is much of a difference. The 16bit version is a classic and the only way Nintendo could make any real improvements, without losing the originality, was to include a four player mode.

Overall comment and score out of 100 A very good game. The gameplay is simply, additive, competitive and above all else, fun. Mario Kart 64 has the magic that'll appeal to the masses. 94%

FIFA 64

More fun in 4-player? Yes, but only because it's more boring in one-player mode, unless you're one of those football freaks!

How could it be improved? By providing the players with some fast cars and a few demanding circuits to race them on, know what I mean!

Any sneaky ways of cheating? Try pressing the reset button three times, then the start button on controller two to access a new game!

How does it compare to the original 16 bit version in 4-player mode? It's more expensive.

Overall comment and score out of 100 This is not the worst game I've seen or had to play by a long shot, but it does fall short in terms of N64 expectations and would be more suited to the 32 bit consoles. 64%

4-PLAYER FOR THE MASSES

4-Player games, essential part of next-gen gaming or overrated? 4-Player games are an essential part of the world's basic social structure, the more interaction the better.

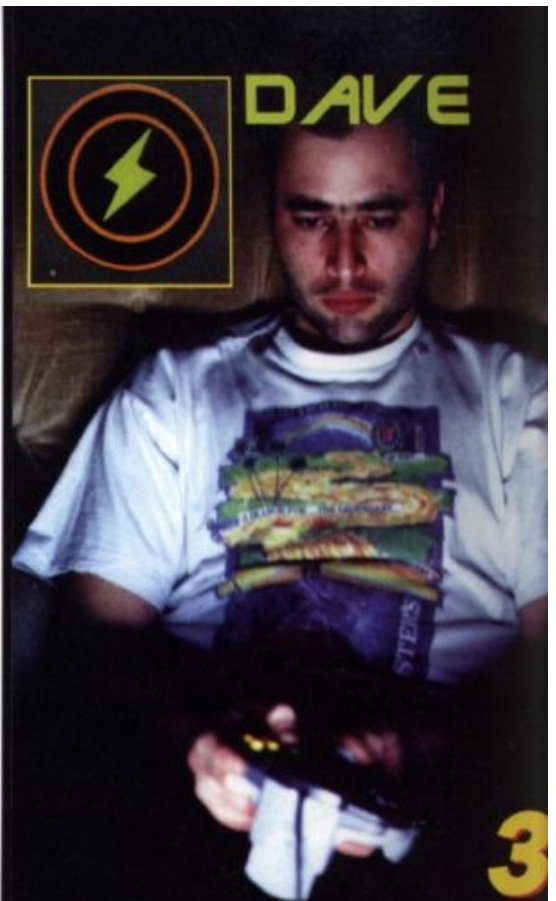
Drinking and playing video games, nice cocktail or bad trip? Drink can seriously ruin your chances of winning but as they say, "It's the taking part that counts".

All time favourite 4-player game Mario Kart 64

Good night or what? A good evening was had by all, even Russell and Pete who decided to play 'who can fall asleep first'. (Russ won! - Pete.)



DAVE



3

DIMENSION

MARIO KART 64

More fun in 4-player? Yes, if the other three you are playing with are Pamela Anderson, Jenny McCarthy and Ginger Spice.

How could it be improved? Replacing the Italian git and his brother with better characters!

Any sneaky ways of cheating? When placing your card down, keep your hand on it for a split second. So even if your opponent shouts 'snap', he or she still can't grab the pile!

How does it compare to the original 16 bit version? I prefer the 16bit gameplay, but the added 4-player option does improve the game's lastability.

Overall comment and score out of 100 92% for the 4-player mode, 96% for the SNES version!

FIFA 64

More fun in 4-player? No, 2 player's better.

How could it be improved? It would be nice if the commentary included the players' names.

Any sneaky ways of cheating? When your opponents are arguing about who let the last goal in, slip a couple of drops of Spanish Fly into their drinks. They'll retire to the bedroom for some hanky panky, and you can win the game, steal the console/game and spread the gossip.

How does it compare to the original 16 bit version in 4-player mode? I

preferred the original overall, not just in 4-player mode.

Overall comment and score out of 100 80% - only due to the actual team names and players.

4-PLAYER FOR THE MASSES

4-Player games, essential part of next-gen gaming or overrated?

It's human nature to want to share an experience with another person or persons.

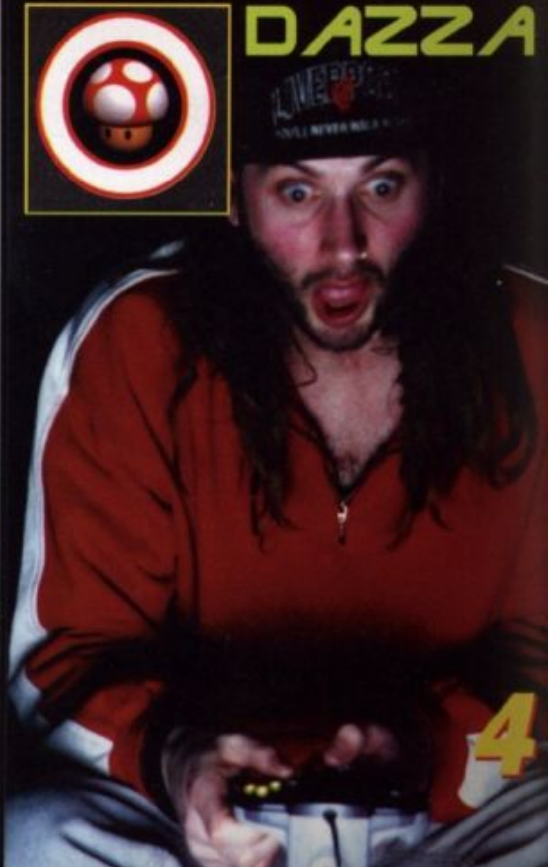
Drinking and playing video games, nice cocktail or bad trip? I definitely prefer drinking nice cocktails and taking bad trips before playing a video game.

All time favourite 4-player game Ludo.

How did you enjoy the night? By drinking lager and illuminating exotic matter.



DAZZA



4