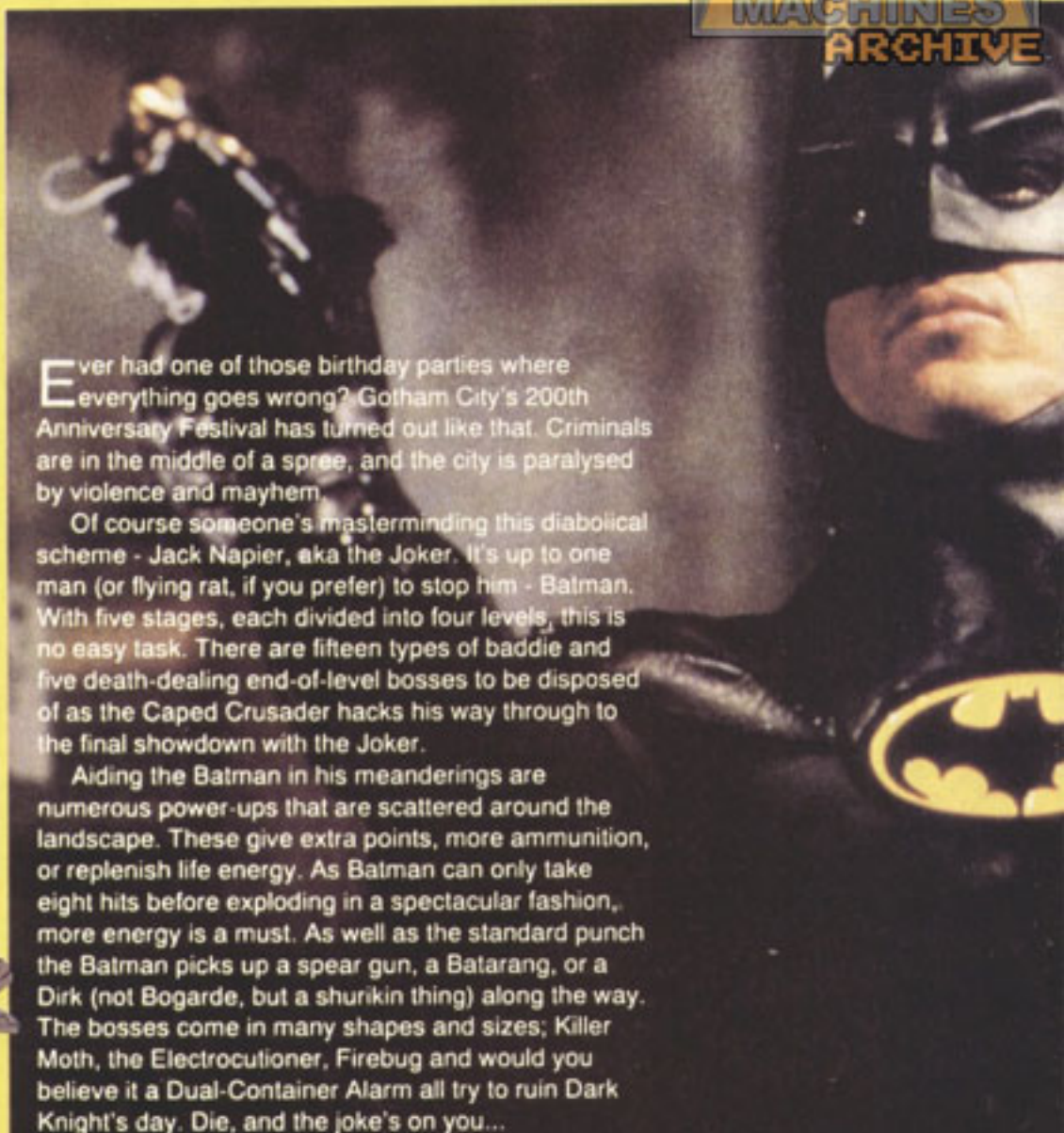


▲ Batman picks up an extra life for tea.



Ever had one of those birthday parties where everything goes wrong? Gotham City's 200th Anniversary Festival has turned out like that. Criminals are in the middle of a spree, and the city is paralysed by violence and mayhem.

Of course someone's masterminding this diabolical scheme - Jack Napier, aka the Joker. It's up to one man (or flying rat, if you prefer) to stop him - Batman. With five stages, each divided into four levels, this is no easy task. There are fifteen types of baddie and five death-dealing end-of-level bosses to be disposed of as the Caped Crusader hacks his way through to the final showdown with the Joker.

Aiding the Batman in his meanderings are numerous power-ups that are scattered around the landscape. These give extra points, more ammunition, or replenish life energy. As Batman can only take eight hits before exploding in a spectacular fashion, more energy is a must. As well as the standard punch the Batman picks up a spear gun, a Batarang, or a Dirk (not Bogarde, but a shurikin thing) along the way. The bosses come in many shapes and sizes; Killer Moth, the Electrocuter, Firebug and would you believe it a Dual-Container Alarm all try to ruin Dark Knight's day. Die, and the joke's on you...

BATMAN

The man himself! ▶

◀ PICTURES (C) TITAN BOOKS

KNIGHT LIFE

The Batman hype explosion can be traced back to one man - Frank Miller. His comics series, *The Dark Knight Returns*, portrayed the Caped Crusader as a middle-aged man, sick of crime-fighting and retired from vigilante activities. The Joker escapes from a mental hospital and wreaks havoc in Gotham, forcing the antihero out of retirement. Meanwhile the senile President sets off a nuclear holocaust which Superman (the only "government approved" superhero) has to contain. Showing all the worst aspects of human nature, *Dark Knight* is a laugh from beginning to end - buy it now!





THE MEAN MACHINES ARCHIVE COMMENT

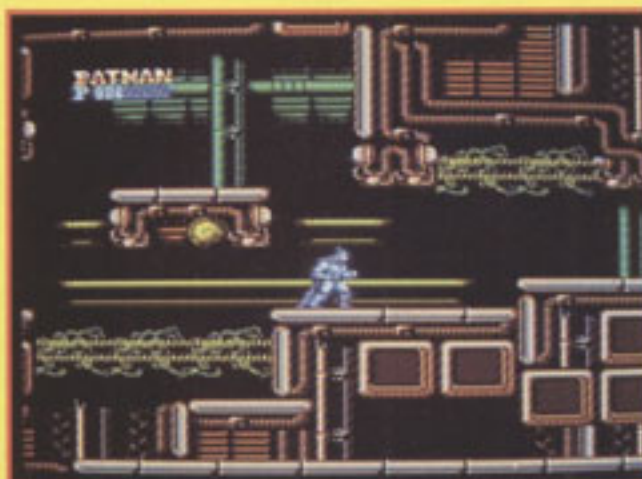


Holy console action! Batman on the Nintendo has turned out to be a real event, with gameplay oozing from every pore (do cartridges have pores?). The graphics are well-defined and rather pretty also; and the array of foes, each with its own form of attack, puts this game way ahead of most NES games being released at the moment. The animated sequences - especially of the Batmobile - left me with my jaw agape they were so good. It's a shame that Batty doesn't have Batarangs from the word go, and has to rely on his fists, but that's just the psychopath in me coming out. For once, the TV advertising has some real muscle behind it, and if you are a Nintendo owner, miss this game at your peril.

MATT



▲ This way's dangerous - go up the wall on the



▲ Mind the electric field above you.



COMMENT

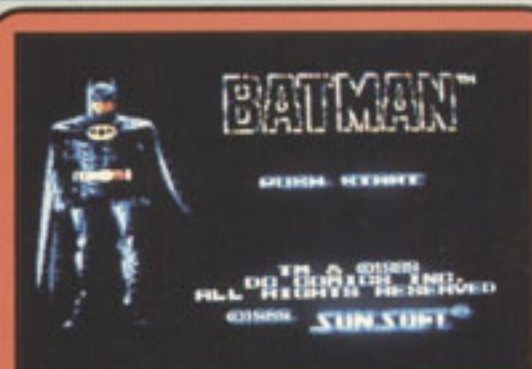


Sporting an extra chip which enhances the graphics, Batman is a visual treat. The backgrounds are sombre-looking, but give the game a dark and brooding atmosphere so prevalent in the film. And it's not just a pretty face. The gameplay is platform-based, with loads of baddies to kapow and extra weapons to collect. There are 20 levels to beat, but the difficulty level is very nicely balanced and the gameplay is addictive enough to keep you coming back time and time again. Batman is expensive, but it's a first class cart that's deserving of any Nintendo owner's collection.

JULIAN

NO MORE MR NICE GUY

The baddies come thick and fast from the very first level: and they've all got silly names! Shakedown's simply run at the hero and are easily zapped; Heatwaves use nasty flamethrowers in an attempt to barbecue the Batman, whereas Enforcers fly in on jetpacks. Later on Jader jumps up and down on our hero while Nightslayer nails him to the floor!



BY: SUNSOFT

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW
 GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
 LIVES: 3
 CONTINUES: 3
 SKILL LEVELS: 1
 RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD



PRESENTATION 90%

Brilliant throughout, with slinky animated sequences between levels. Wow!

GRAPHICS 84%

Clear, crispy and succulent. And doesn't melt in your hand!

SOUND 78%

The only let-down in the game. Not awful, but fails to live up to the high standards of the rest of the game.

PLAYABILITY 85%

Eminently playable in every respect. One snort and you're an addict!

LASTABILITY 83%

Twenty sub-levels in all makes this a meaty product with longevity built in. The fun will keep you coming back too.

OVERALL 87%

A classy licence through and through. If you own an NES you'd be bats to miss this - so there!