



BY SEGA

RELEASE

AUGUST

PRICE

TBA

GAME TYPE BEAT 'EM UP

1

PLAYERS

24

MEG

BREAK DOWN



ORIGINALITY



CHALLENGE



ACTION



STRATEGY



REFLEXES

BEAT THIS

12800

OPTIONS

CONTROL JOYPAD

GAME DIFFICULTY MEDIUM

CONTINUES NO

SKILL LEVELS 1

RESPONSIVENESS GOOD

ORIGIN

A unique hybrid of platformer, beat 'em up and strategy game, with the emphasis firmly on the more violent element.

GAME AIM

Employing lateral thinking, a personal armoury and sheer brawn, escape from your surreal comic book prison.

Longtime fans of Sweden's (Norway acth — Gus) premier popsters A-ha will remember the cringe-inducing video for Take On Me. You know, the one where the fresh-faced young lads get mysteriously transported into the pages of a giant comic book and promptly fall in love, look dreamy, have hit singles etc. Comix Zone is a bit like that, except our hero is dragged onto the printed page only to have seven bells of crap knocked out of him.

One stormy night in New York, an artist creates a character so powerful that it leaps from the page, reversing roles with its creator. For the artist, Sketch, to regain his place in the real world, he must take on the threats in an ultra-violent comic strip. Everything from deadly ninjas to slobbering alien life forms pit their might against our hero, who needs his wits about him to gain entry to rooms, amass useful objects and simply stay alive. The reward of success is returning to reality. Failure brings condemnation to a comic book with some of the worst dialogue you've ever heard...

## TAKE YOUR PICK

A couple of the junction points which occasionally appear when you've trounced the baddies. Whatever direction you choose, you soon arrive back on a fixed path.



The frames of each picture prove no obstacle.

## BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD

As if having to work late at night wasn't bad enough, our long-suffering artist finds himself on the wrong side of a decidedly uncivilised labour relations squabble. This impressive intro sequence, showing how the artist and his comic book villain swap places, sets the scene for the mayhem to come.



NEW YORK CITY, PRESENT DAY





**SPAWN**



**MUMSY**



**ALIEN NATION**

A selection of the unpleasant extra-terrestrials you'll encounter in your travels. Whether they've dribbling through the ceiling, cracking through the walls or generally looming at you menacingly they're enough to put you off your dinner.

**FANDOM**

To avoid a shredding in the whirling blades of these giant air conditioners, bombs or the ever-present crates prove useful in clearing the way.



**BOX FRENZY**

Puzzles often involve using objects to hand in clever ways. In order to get what you want, remember that even the most ordinary seeming objects can have dual purposes.



Your commanding officer's intuition isn't always to be trusted.



This particular crate can give you some much needed extra height when pushed into position.



When you've pulled the lever that opens the trap door, push the crate through the whole through the floor...



...and on to the radioactive barrels which lie in wait underneath, thus avoiding a nasty scalding. Hurrah!



## STRIP!



The many snags thrown up in comic book land include dull conversationalists...



...hastily drawn opponents to take the place of those you've just clobbered...



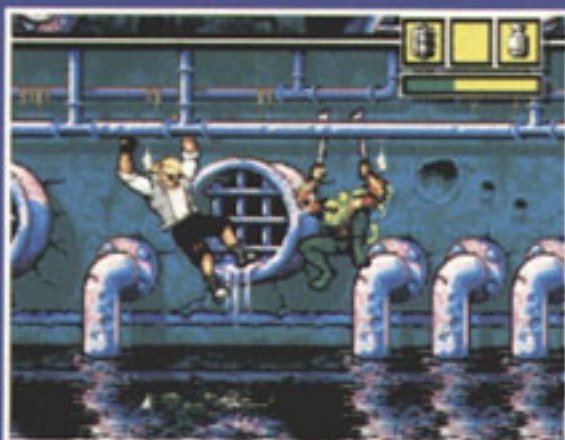
...and embarrassing noises.



Successful level completion brings a charitable moment of ego massage from your all-seeing manipulator.

## SEWER STYLE

The turtles have obviously cleared off, leaving their gear for these blokes. If things get difficult, this is a good moment to seek reinforcements from your pet rat.



Hanging out with the teenage mutant ninja tortoises.

## COMMENT

Our preview promised something stunning in Comix Zone. What we got was a great twist on a sturdy theme. Being able to leap from frame to frame and choosing where you'd like to jump makes a refreshing change from more linear games of this type. The strategy elements also add an extra dimension, even if it can get a bit tedious going through the motions of manoeuvring crates and flicking switches on repeated plays. The cheeky comic book speech bubbles are another element with a shelf life shorter than the action, and they can become plain annoying when they obscure an important piece of action. Add some greebly aliens and 'Pow!' exclamations into the mix, however, and the pros are well and truly tipped against the cons. This is a game that deserves to win over the most jaded beat 'em up practitioners. All of which leaves you wondering how many genuine superhero licenses would have been livened up by such an original treatment...



MARCUS

## COMMENT

In some ways, Comix Zone is completely original, in others much of the same old malarkey we've seen in beat 'em ups since the Ice Age. But it's impossible not to like this most quirky of recent Megadrive titles. From the crooning on the title page, to the cheesy cartoon dialogue, this game has class. Okay, Marcus comes from the heady world of comics and can see some of its shortcomings, but basically I love the new slant on the beat 'em up it offers. The game's not bad either, with plenty of foes, and a range of moves augmented by interacting with the scenery - swinging kicks whilst hanging from pipes etc. If you want the most 'different' thing on console this year, Comix Zone is it.



GUS

## TIME BOMB

Well-timed lever pulls align the dials, leading into the next room.



### GRAPHICS

88

▲ Detailed and complex, even if your hero does look like Michael Bolton.

### ANIMATION

86

▲ Smooth, even with bombs blasting through the edge of comic frames. Paper tears and flaps about after explosions!

### MUSIC

82

▲ Plenty of choice - just go for jukebox in options.

▼ None of it's particularly memorable.

### EFFECTS

86

▲ The comic book noises give the game the appearance of an old episode of Batman.

▼ You can't turn them off.

### PLAYABILITY

91

▲ Enough of the platform and strategy elements to keep you hooked if you don't go for the beat 'em up sections.

### LASTABILITY

90

▲ Quite addictive, with enough going on under the surface to keep you going for quite a while.

## OVERALL

This novel new spin on three old themes is well worth a look.

89