



COMMENT



JULIAN

Presentation-wise, this is superb. The tournaments, save mode and general options are all out of this world. Sadly, though, the gameplay isn't of the same high standards. There are several sloppy points which mar the action, namely the poor collision detection, low player intelligence and very awkward controls which make putting together passing moves very tricky and frustrating. It's a shame these are present, because had the game been more rigorously tested and these irritations removed, Euro Club Soccer could have been an outstanding soccer game - especially with its excellent graphics. As it is, its flaws means that most players will get more frustration than joy out of this.



▲ Lots of midfield action as the ball is kicked out.



▼ The strip select screen. Using the joypad, all manner of kit combinations are possible.



Euro Club Soccer from Virgin is based on their home computer footy sim Manchester United Europe, but with a whole host of updated options. It adopts a horizontally scrolling grandstand-view style of play, with the ball sticking to the players' feet as opposed to being a free-rolling spheroid. The object of the game is to pick your favourite team from the one hundred and seventy on offer and take them all the way to the finals of the European Cup championship by trouncing fifteen other randomly-selected computer teams. Up to seven tournaments in which up to nine players may participate can be saved on a battery back-up to make the lengthy campaign more palatable.



COLOURFUL STRIP SHOW

Probably the most important aspect of modern football is the strip. Undoubtedly today's league structure would collapse if teams were to play in the wrong colours. Fortunately, Euro Club Soccer saves frustration of the colour mis-coordination kind by including a full kit-design option for each of the one-hundred and seventy different teams on offer. Everything from shirt and shorts to sock and trim are selected from a palette of eight colours. This allows you do dress your least favourite teams in humiliating brown strips and your top team in stylish black with this season's top accessory - purple trim.



Use the crosshairs to position the throw-in.
Watch out for opposition players though!



DEPECHE MODES

Euro Club Soccer has two play modes to challenge would-be champions. The first is Arcade, which is more reminiscent of games such as Tecmo World Cup than real soccer. The ref is a little lax in this mode, the ball travels unfeasible distances and players have a tendency to slide huge distances when they tackle another player. Only friendly matches are played in Arcade mode - for European Cup jiggery-pokery, Simulation mode is the one to choose. As you may expect, things are a little more realistic, with a slower play speed and plenty of rule violation-related horseplay.



THE
MEAN
MACHINES
ARCHIVE

Fans of corners, free kicks and throw-ins will be cock-a-hoop at the very sight of Euro Club. As opposed to having the usual tri-directional aiming system for these essential aspects of football, Euro Club operates on a more free-form basis. When faced with a corner, throw-in or free kick, the player in question is allocated a crosshair sight with which to specify the desired landing point of the ball. Each team has their own throwing and kicking abilities which dictate how far up and around the pitch the sights can be moved.

TOSSING YOUR BALLS

EUROPEAN CUP
FIRST ROUND





▼ Cor! What a shambles! The players are clean avoiding the ball.



9 HATS HERNERSSON



▲ The first round match up.



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▲ An original style of goal-keeping...



▲ Select your formation to make the maximum use of your team's strengths.



COMMENT

The home computer game, Manchester United Europe wasn't all that bad and this Megadrive version promised to make any number of improvements. Sadly, for the poor state of Megadrive footie titles, European Club is in fact worse than its ST predecessor! The graphics aren't all that bad, with some small but colourful, detailed and fairly well animated sprites and a plethora of

fine intermission screens to gaze at. Sadly, there are a number of gameplay upsets which spoil things. Firstly, the collision detection is very poor, which puts the dampers on activities such as tackling, passing, shooting and generally moving the ball about. Secondly, the players seem to have all the footballing abilities of the Baboon All-Stars second XI, with their passes and goal attempts being particularly feeble, not to mention those frustrating huge slides which masquerade as tackles. This combined with the coma-inducing slow pace produces a piece of software as disappointing as they come.

RAD



BY: VIRGIN

PRICE: £TBA

RELEASE DATE: AUGUST

GAME DIFFICULTY: EASY/MEDIUM

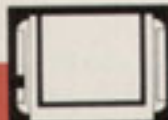
LIVES: N/A

CONTINUES: N/A

SKILL LEVELS: 3

RESPONSIVENESS: POOR

1-2
PLAYERS



PRESENTATION 94%

More options than the human mind could possibly comprehend, plus some groovy intermissions.

GRAPHICS 86%

Smart sprites and animation all-round. Shame about the backgrounds though.

SOUND 42%

Dull tunes and insipid, sparse effects.

PLAYABILITY 75%

Frustrating collision detection problems and some sloppy gameplay points make getting into this tricky.

LASTABILITY 65%

The tournament certainly takes a long time to win, but will frustration be the only winner on the day?

OVERALL 69%

A superbly presented soccer game which is sadly let down by some awkward gameplay points.