

After hundreds of years of intergalactic wars and such, the universe is finally at peace, with twelve major races sharing the universe in harmony. Each of these races is led by a champion of such supreme hardness that even Mr T would shake in his jewelry were he to face but one of them.

Everything is hunky-dory until the Dark Lord Vasula, leader of the underground world of Dominion makes his presence felt. In the tradition of the Fighting Masters, he challenges each one to single combat and defeats all but the last, that being you. You must now battle your way through the other eleven enslaved Masters to reach Vasula and bring order to civilisation once more.

What this boils down to is a series of one-on-one combats in a variety of planetary arenas. Each Master has a number of individual moves available to him, her or it, depending on the individual capabilities of their race, and these advantages must be tactically pitted against the weaknesses of your opponent to ensure maximum scrapping success.



DIO

HEIGHT: 5'5
WEIGHT: 220 LBS
ATTACK POWER: 5
SUPLEX POWER: 32

You might be excused for thinking Dio is a complete vegetable - because he is! He's also one of the least likely contenders for Fighting Master! His supreme speed and jumping abilities coupled with his jumping root-smash and awesome Venus fly trap chomping move make him a good choice if you don't mind low-power attacks. Take care against Morin though, as even Dio's reach is eclipsed by hers.

EYESIGHT

HEIGHT: 5'7
WEIGHT: 242 LBS
ATTACK POWER: 7
SUPLEX POWER: 24

The blue boxer with the horn is Eyesight. He's the only creature not to have a throwing move, but makes up for it by having one of the hardest regular attacks. And even though his suplex power is low, his extendo-arm punch, rapid-fire face punch and rather hard Asterix-style uppercut will make you think he's twice as strong as he is.

ELPHA

HEIGHT: 6'0
WEIGHT: 353 LBS
ATTACK POWER: 6
SUPLEX POWER: 33

This Elephantine combatant is an expert at trunk-related tomfoolery. If you're caught in the nasal appendage of this guy, you can expect to be thrown against the nearest side barrier quite soon. Either that or be tossed up in the air to meet with the shoulders of Elpha himself on the way down. Unfortunately, Elpha may be quite strong and possess a reasonable reach, but he is slow and limited in his fighting repertoire.

ZRYGUNTE

HEIGHT: 5'6
WEIGHT: 242 LBS
ATTACK POWER: 6
SUPLEX POWER: 33

Insectoid features Zrygunte makes the most of his rock hard exoskeleton by crushing enemies with a spine-breaker similar to Goldrock's, as well as a chunky pile driver and aerial kick! He may sound like an ideal combination of Goldrock, Tomahawk and Flamer, but be warned, his reach is quite short and he's less than agile.

LARRY

HEIGHT: 5'7
WEIGHT: 220 LBS
ATTACK POWER: 6
SUPLEX POWER: 33

Larry is Earth's Fighting Master and learned his trade by watching lots of WWF videos. As a result, he's on a wrestling par with that of Flamer, although Larry sacrifices speed for power.



MEDUSA

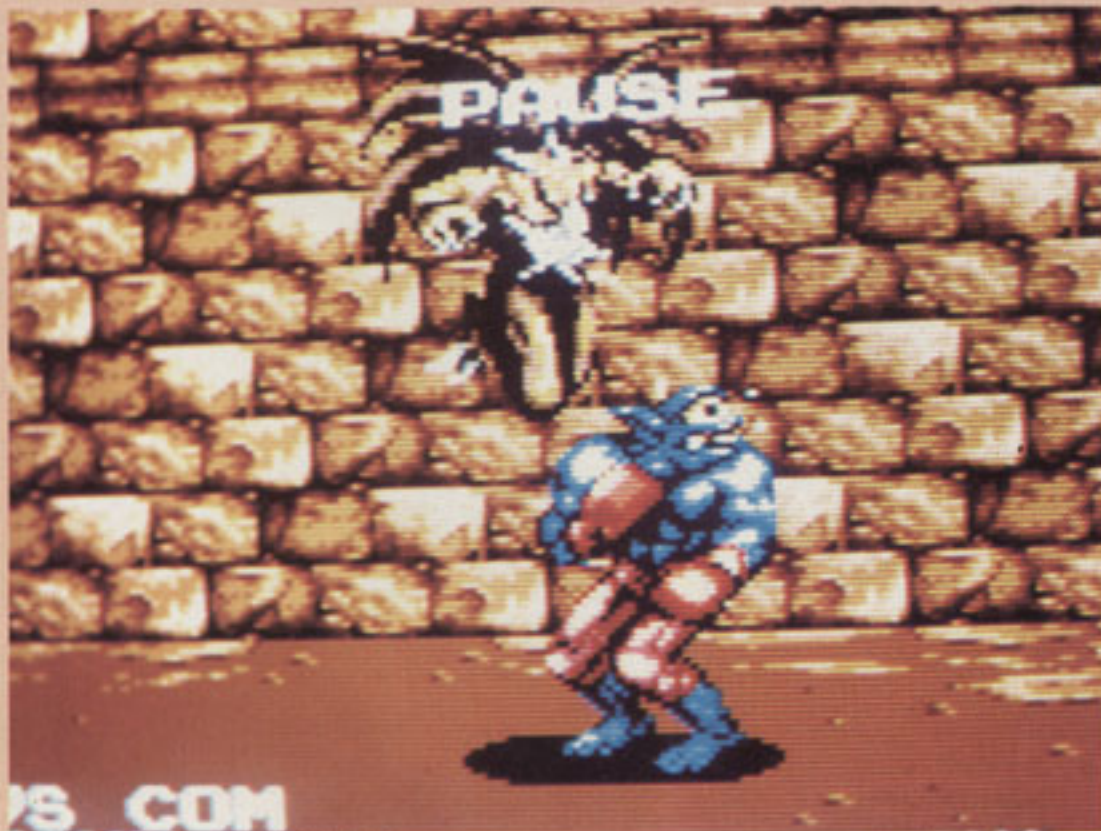
HEIGHT: 5'1
WEIGHT: 397 LBS
ATTACK POWER: 6
SUPLEX POWER: 41

Blubber-boy Medusa has a suplex power rivaled only by Drason. This is used to best effect by pressing B whilst in a hold. The opponent will then be smashed repeatedly over Medusa's head and then be thrown into the nearest barrier. Wicked stuff!

BARRIER SHEEN

During a fight, to ensure that neither of the contestants can chicken out and escape, barriers have been placed all around the fighting ring. Throwing an opponent into it gives them a severe electric shock and is a great way to reduce their life bars further than normal, so position your moves carefully to rack up the damage!

▶ *Morin's incredible tonfas of power rip into a bemused Beowulf! Morin is a fast mover, with a long-range attack.*



▶ *There's plenty of high-flying kicking action as Tomahawk unleashes a devastating attack!*



COMMENT



JULIAN

Fighting Masters is one of those games that provides a moderate amount of entertainment with single-player action but really comes into its own as a multi-player game. With two contestants battling it out it's fun, fun, fun all the way as you indulge in a veritable violence fest! Each of the twelve fighters has his or her own moves and characteristics, and experimenting to find which one suits your playing style best is fun - my favourite is Dio (from the planet Tree). In one-player mode the game is easy (except the final boss, who's rock hard), but as I've said, the two-player mode is where this is best appreciated and if you've got plenty of opportunity to indulge in multi-player action, this is a must.



▲ Beowulf's spinning attack slaps straight into a bewildered opponent who can't block the stunning.



▲ Tomahawk grabs his prey and chucks him straight into the wall! Owww!



COMMENT



RAD

Fighting Masters is a classic example of one of those games you have to "get in to". To begin with, the shambling sounds, seeming lack of moves and comparative ease of the one-player mode make the going quite dull. However, there's always the compulsion to see what the other characters can do, and this sustains interest for long enough for you to get a feel for the controls. Once you get the hang of how to perform all the special attacks and such, Fighting Masters becomes much more fun. Even better is the two-player mode, which pits you against another human in a battle of both reflexes and tactics. If you're going to be playing on your own, forget it. Even on hard level the road to Valgasu is too easy, until you reach Valgasu himself, who is nigh on invincible. If you're usually going to have a second player around to beat up though, nab a copy now.



BY: TRECO
 PRICE: £34.99
 RELEASE DATE: NOW
 GAME DIFFICULTY: EASY
 LIVES: 1
 CONTINUES: 3
 SKILL LEVELS: 3
 RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD



PRESENTATION 84%

Animated title and intro screens. In-depth character selection screens.

GRAPHICS 72%

The sprites are original and well-drawn and the animation is reasonable.

SOUND 67%

Ooh! Ghastly tunes and weedy effects make Fighting Masters and aural graveyard.

PLAYABILITY 85%

Control of each character is easy, although in the heat of battle some of the direction controls and button combinations can be

LASTABILITY 78%

One-player mode lacks challenge, but with two players around, you should be kicking each other in for some time to come.

OVERALL 81%

An enjoyable streetfighter II style game which provides excellent two-player fun, but is severely lacking as a one-player game.