

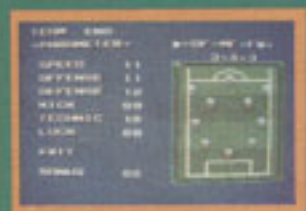


# HYPER SOCCER

Picture if you will, a pig farming genius from the 19th Century. While his contemporaries were happy to eat bacon for breakfast and roast pork for supper, this chap dreamed of creating something magical from a pig's bladder. And then one day it hit him - "I know, I'll cut the bladder into strips, stitch it together, and inflate it!" Fellow pig farmers were not impressed, and complained that the roundness of the object meant it kept rolling off the frying pan. Quite understandably, the concept of football took some getting used to.

Back in the here and now, Konami bring Hyper Soccer to the NES, and there isn't a pig's bladder in sight. Instead, there are 24 teams representing as many nations, each with their own strengths and weaknesses. Players can slide tackle, attempt diving headers, and even try for an overhead kick. When such skills have been acquired, a player can try his luck in the tournament.

Should this fail to provide enough tension, there is always the penalty kick competition to test nerve as well as skill. On top of that, the two-player option opens up the chance to thrash a friend. Developing passing skills to utilise strikers, quick reflexes to save goals, and intelligent middle of the park strategy are all important in unlocking the key to soccer success. And to think all this started with a pig's bladder! It's a funny ol' game!



## YOU'VE GOT TO EXPERIMENT

Once a team has been picked, an options screen appears with information on the teams' strengths. It gives the player the opportunity to improve on their side's speed, offensive and defensive capabilities, kicking power, overall technique, and (very sensibly) luck. Bonus points are awarded with which to do this, so deciding on what areas to improve depends on the teams weaknesses and the strengths of the opposition. There is also the chance to chose the teams formation here.



▲ The Hun decides on how to humiliate opponents.



## COMMENT



**ROB**

Being a keen football player as well as football fan, I naturally looked forward to this Konami soccer sim. Unfortunately, like a lot of its predecessors, this game fails to present a

realistic impression of the game. The worst and most frustrating aspect is the game logic. I was impressed with the choice from 24 teams, each of varying skill, but once you're in the game there is no real difference. Teams like Japan are remarkably good against a side like the Germans. This is because the computer is perfect at tackling, even playing as the worst sides. This means that a lot of games end up goal-less and boring. Oh, and be warned about the penalties afterwards - the computer has an uncanny knack of reading where you are going to place the ball every time. Where I did find entertainment was in the two-player mode because playing a friend cuts out many of the problems I encountered playing the computer. Players still might kick for no reason at times, but you feel a bit more in control of the proceedings. The variety of options in Hyper Soccer promised much, but at the end of the day it's let down by poor logic and poor playability.



▲ More ruthlessly efficient German football.



## SUDDEN DEATH

If a game becomes a load of goal-less middle of the park scraping, or if there is a score draw, the game goes to penalties. Each team has five attempts to score, and if things are still square after that it goes to sudden death. Basically, a player chooses where to place the ball and the goalkeeper has to take a guess at where he thinks the kicker has chosen. Unfortunately goalkeepers can't use Grobelaar tactics to put the penalty kicker off!



THE RIGHT MOVES

Anyone who plays football knows that good control and a fine repertoire of moves is important to get the better of the opposition. In Hyper Soccer there are a number of such moves to master.



THE HEADER

Controlling the ball in the air is an important part of any football game. Mastering the ability to head the ball in the box is essential if a team is to capitalise on crosses. If the ball is in the air but a little too far to head on the spot, it's worth trying for a diving header.



THE BICYCLE KICK

Not easy to do and it rarely comes off, but it's just about the most impressive kind of goal to score. It also proves useful when sweeping the ball out of your own half.



THE VOLLEY

This move, like the bicycle kick, depends on timing and position. It is often safer to attempt a header, but if caught right it's likely to hit the back of the net before the keeper knows what's hit him.



▲ England launch an attack on the Dutch.



▲ Taylor's donkey tactics pay off!



▲ Keepers ball! Keepers ball!

COMMENT



I was really hoping that I wouldn't have to write another comment that says, "Oh no! Not another disappointing Nintendo soccer game". But here it is. Oh no! Not another disappointing Nintendo soccer game. It's not quite as bad as Nintendo World Cup and Goal!, but Hyper Soccer is still poor. It's well presented, but sadly it's let down by flawed gameplay and dreadful player logic. Your men just don't make themselves available for moves and always seem to be in the wrong place at the wrong time, which makes the proceedings frustrating. The graphics and sound are also very average, and the end result is a soccer game which provides little in the way of fun - even with two players.

JULIAN



▲ High scoring game between Germany and Columbia(!).



BY: KONAMI  
PRICE: £29.99  
RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW  
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM  
LIVES: N/A  
CONTINUES: N/A  
SKILL LEVELS: 1  
RESPONSIVENESS: NOT BAD

1-2 PLAYERS

PRESENTATION 87%

An excellent range of options presenting an opportunity to mould the team and introduce more tactics.

GRAPHICS 68%

The still screens are well drawn but the in-game animation and graphics are very mediocre. There is no in-game clock either.

SOUND 55%

The game tunes begin to grate very quickly. The sound effects are utterly useless.

PLAYABILITY 66%

The game logic makes for frustrating play. Moving players into tackles can be an awkward business.

LASTABILITY 67%

The two-player option may entertain for a while, but playing the computer proves frustrating and boring.

OVERALL 66%

A disappointing game which has some good options, but is ultimately let down in the all-important playability stakes.