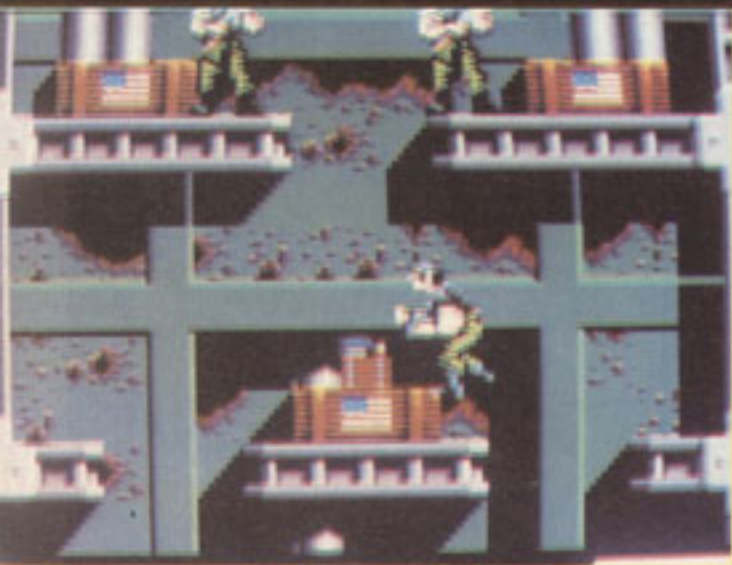




Nope, not a game about paramilitary sea mammals clapping and catching fish, the Navy SEALs are the US Navy's equivalent to our SAS - and they don't even smoke Embassies. Based on the Charlie Sheen film (yet to be released in the UK), the game involves a team of SEALs infiltrating a Middle Eastern country to rescue hostages, killing, maiming, and blowing things up on the way.

The action takes place over six levels, each based in an exotic location, such as a harbour, barracks, and a radio tower. Each team member can jump, somersault on to platforms, crouch and crawl - as well as shoot, of course. The idea is to travel through the level, planting bombs and splattering Johnny Arab Terrorist all over the landscape within the tough time limit. Eight lives are all you get, and the time isn't reset when a SEAL dies, so there's no hanging around!

Luckily power-ups are liberally dispersed through the levels, usually in the form of weapon upgrades including machine guns and flame throwers. Not an easy game, lots of effort is required to free the hostages for truth, justice, and the American way!



▲ The places to plant bombs are cunningly disguised with American flags.

COMMENT



MATT

Whoops! Guess who's made their game too difficult? There's no problem with a hard-to-beat game, but this Ocean offering's just plain awkward to play. That's a shame, as there's a good game in there struggling to get out; and after the poor showing of Robocop II, I was hoping this would be the platform game to buy for the Amstrad. Still, it has its redeeming features; the animation of the hero swinging onto an overhead platform is superb, and it has that "just one more try" quality - although sometimes frustration makes you want to get the cartridge and bung it out of the window. If you're not the most patient of players, think twice before buying.



SEALED WITH A KILL

The Navy SEALs movie stars Charlie Sheen, best known for his performances in Platoon and Wall Street, and Michael Beihn, remembered as Reece in Terminator. The plot concerns a Navy helicopter that is shot down while on a jaunt through Beirut. The SEALs are sent to rescue their compatriots, and when they discover that the baddies have got their mitts on some nasty weapons (I wonder who sold the missiles to them?), they decide to annihilate the terrorists and escape. Unfortunately, the film hasn't been released yet in Britain - but it's expected to appear sometime in early next year.



GX4000

REVIEW



▼ The ladder's your only choice.



▲ A good tactic is to quickly leap up from behind crates, gun blazing.

COMMENT

Navy SEALs features some brilliant graphics - the backdrops are nicely drawn and the animation is truly superb. The presentation is also very good, with a stunning title screen and good intermission screens. Even the basic game concept is exciting, requiring the player to sneak around



JULIAN

Arab-infested buildings laying bombs and avoiding getting shot. However, the big problem is that the game is hard. Frustratingly hard. Even though the game is always the same each time you play it (so it's just a case of learning exactly what to do in each situation) it's still amazingly tough since you've got an incredibly tight time limit and your men die or lose virtually all their energy if they fall even short distances. It's a great shame that the playability hasn't been properly balanced, because with a few tweaks to the basic gameplay this could have been an absolute stunner. As it is, it's a very tough and frustrating game which only very, very experienced players will enjoy.



▲ The second level - a Radio Tower.



▲ Back on the chain gang!

▲ A SEAL's flamethrower cuts swathes through the enemy.



BY: OCEAN

PRICE: £24.99

RELEASE DATE: DEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: HARD

LIVES: 8

CONTINUES: 0

SKILL LEVELS: 1

RESPONSIVENESS: SLOW



PRESENTATION 80%

An opening screen displays all the levels, and the layout of the game is strong throughout.

GRAPHICS 82%

The main sprites are all are cleverly animated, and the backgrounds are atmospheric.

SOUND 76%

Rather unimpressive effects. The intro music is jolly, however, and adds atmosphere.

PLAYABILITY 71%

The main sprite moves in a lethargic way, and the difficulty level makes it very hard to progress.

LASTABILITY 77%

The game's big and tough, but the massive frustration level might mean you'll give up long before you reach the end.

OVERALL 76%

A brilliant-looking game which has plenty going for it, but is marred by frustratingly hard gameplay.