



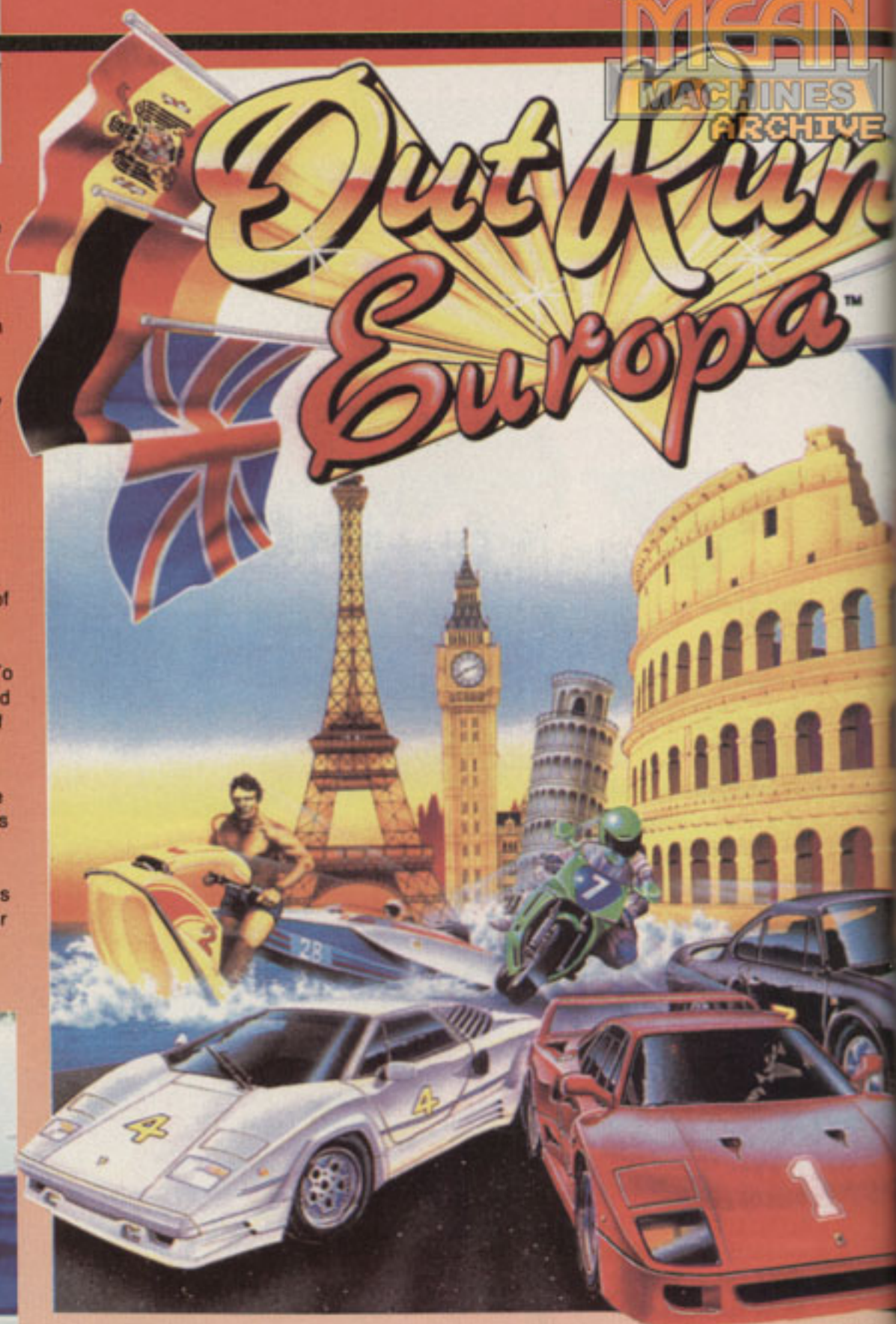
REVIEW

Life as a secret agent usually involves dangerous assignments in sunny countries, ending up in bed with some exotic, curvaceous female(s). In your spare time you usually infiltrate some big crime lord's castle/apartment/undersea base, crack his safe and take photographs of his secret plans with your mini spy-o-matic camera, before escaping in your 202 mph Ferrari F40.

However, in the deadly assignment dramatically dubbed "Outrun Europa", things have gone drastically wrong. The endless supply of ready 'n' willing women has suddenly dried up and your Ferrari's been purloined by the evil crime lord who wants his secret plans back (and doesn't mind getting a limited edition Ferrari into the bargain).

Now it's your job to grab the nearest form of transport possible and begin a trans-European road chase to catch up with the thieves behind the wheel of your Ferrari. Once the car and the plans are safely re-appropriated, it's time to head towards Secret Service HQ and successfully complete the mission. To help you in your escapades, you're able to make good use of the in-built weaponry featured in each mode of transport (even the jetski in this game has an in-built rocket launcher!). Aiding your mission still further are the extra shields and fuel canisters dotted around the landscape. Simply by running over these, the goodies are collected.

However, things aren't looking good. The crime boss has massed together all the crim-driven vehicles he can, and he's sent them all chugging along in your general direction. Suffice to say that giving your monkey ass a good dusting is top of their list of priorities!



▲ It's Jetski time! Watch out though, danger is close at hand!

THE HISTORY OF...

Outrun Europa was originally planned to be US Gold's home-grown sequel to their massively successful conversion of Sega's Outrun coin-op. However, the company had to think again when Sega released Turbo Outrun - because it was almost exactly the same game! Literally years later, US Gold dug up the Europa name, added in all of the different vehicles and locations and created the game you see before you. Marvellous!





HIGHWAY HIGH JINKS

Plenty of great forms of transport are lined up for you in Outrun Europa. Starting out on a high-power motorbike speeding along to Dover, it's not long before you hit the English Channel, where a nice jetski is just waiting for some fun and frolics. Once over on the continent, plenty more high speed fun awaits. In Germany, a super turbo-charged Porsche awaits you and if you're really lucky and reach the last level of the game, you get to drive your fabbo Ferrari F40!

COMMENT

I must admit that I was very disappointed by this offering. As you can see from the screenshots, Outrun Europa isn't really too bad in the graphics department - but all the effort on the visual side of things should have been directed more towards the playability of the product. Rather than concentrate on the action (which is most important after all), the

RICH

programmers have spent a lot of effort on the massive roadside obstacles. The gameplay itself suffers in that there isn't actually much to do - the graphics may be different in each level, but your activities remain much the same. Also, the more eagle-eyed among you may notice that there's never more than one enemy vehicle on the road at one time! Another gripe I have concerns the pick-ups. Collecting these for extra fuel and shields is all-important, but the jerky scrolling makes it virtually impossible to tell when they're coming until they've zoomed by. Outrun Europa isn't a disaster - it's just a shame that more effort wasn't spent on tightening up the gameplay.

▼ Explosionsville, Arizona! Your jetski comes with rocket launchers as standard - but ammo is short!



▲ Dodge those rocks! Obviously the English Channel is shallower than we thought...



▲ An open road ahead of our Outrunning chum!





REVIEW

▼ Only one other car on-screen at the moment, but the cops are close behind!



Launch some explosive stuff and blow up that speedboat!

COMMENT



JULIAN

This certainly had plenty of potential - the idea of different modes of transport, each sporting deadly weapons is great - but unfortunately the game is let down by jerky 3D and lack of variety. The roadside objects, although large and impressive, are completely unnecessary. They should have been dumped and replaced by more enemy cars and faster, smoother 3D. The main problem, however, is that there are basically only two different levels: water and road. The bike, Porsche and Ferrari levels are all identical except for the main sprite and roadside objects. The same fault is apparent in the jetski and speedboat levels. If it's racing thrills and spills you're after, check out Fire and Forget II, Chase HQ, Battle Outrun or Outrun - they're all much more exciting than this.



CAR 54, WHERE ARE YOU?



Being barged off the road, shot or bombed by enemy helicopters isn't the limit to your troubles. Owing to your careless high speed travel, the cops have been alerted to your presence and are in hot pursuit! Arrest, by the way, leads to the game finishing immediately.



BY: US GOLD

PRICE: £29.99

RELEASE DATE: DECEMBER

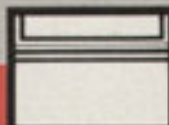
GAME DIFFICULTY: TOUGH

LIVES: 1

CONTINUES: 0

SKILL LEVELS: 1

RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD



PRESENTATION 65%

A couple of interesting presentation screens, but not a whole lot more.

GRAPHICS 75%

Quite nice roadside obstacles and okay-ish sprites, but the 3D effect is jerky.

SOUND 65%

Good, though repetitive tunes and quite annoying effects (like the police siren).

PLAYABILITY 61%

Initially addictive, but the lack of variety soon makes itself apparent.

LASTABILITY 60%

It's a tough game, but the action isn't varied or rewarding enough to sustain long-term play.

OVERALL 63%

Potentially good, but unfortunately the lack of variety and poor 3D effect puts this racer at the back of the starting grid.