

THE MAKING OF

MEAN MACHINES

How did the World's greatest console magazine ever come into existence? Jazza Rignall reveals all (oo-er), from the very messy birth in a seedy Farringdon stable called Priory Court to the naughty behind-the-scenes happenings in this, the exclusive, never-before-told true story. The names have been kept to reveal the guilty...

IN THE BEGINNING

It was a bright day in July 1990 when three furtive-looking individuals trooped into the Studio Cafe in Farringdon to discuss top secret plans for a new magazine launch. Julian Rignall, editor of C+VG, Gary Harrod, a complete nobody who had design talents coming out of his every orifice and EMAP Publisher Graham Taylor ordered some coffee, sat down and began to put together their plans. After some hours (and the fact that the cafe owner threatened to take the table away) the blueprints were finalised - MEAN MACHINES was go!



GRAHAM



JULIAN



GARY

WHY ISSUE ZERO?

To launch MEAN MACHINES, we needed heaps o' cash. And since our money man, good old Lord EMAP, has purse strings that are marginally tighter than a kipper's backside, we needed to show him exactly what a totally skill idea MEAN MACHINES was. So Jaz and Gaz spent weeks producing the legendary Issue 0, a one-off special to show what the magazine would roughly look like. A very limited number of these were printed, and were shown to Lord EMAP and his cronies. They thought it was dead brill (in their own words) and immediately dispatched a minion to the EMAP coffers to bring us a very large suitcase stuffed with enough used fivers and tenners to enable us to launch MEAN MACHINES!

DROP THE PC ENGINE AND GX4000



When we originally came up with the MEAN MACHINES concept, we included the PC Engine/Turbografx and the crappy Amstrad GX4000 console in the line-up of machines it covered. However, once we began to put the magazine together, we realised that we simply didn't have enough room to cover everything, and the PC Engine/Turbografx and GX4000 were dropped, making MEAN MACHINES a Sega and Nintendo only mag.



CH-CH-CH-CHANGES

When you read through Issue 0, which follows immediately after this feature, you'll see that it's almost the same as the MEAN MACHINES you read now. Tweaks were made between finishing the "dummy" issue and the "real" Issue 1 to things that we didn't like. Most noticeable is the cover logo, which was just too boring and straight. Also on the cover, we decided include pictures of the machines the magazine covered, rather than just write what they were along the top. Inside, the logo for the news pages was changed to make it bigger, the Megagame logo was redrawn and the ratings box was tweaked to make it look nicer.



MEAN MACHINES

THE BEST

MEGAMAN II (NINTENDO)

MACHINE: NINTENDO
REVIEWED: ISSUE 4
OVERALL MARK: 95%
JAZ: "One of the finest platform games ever seen."
MATT: "One of the greatest NES games."



CHESSMASTER (MINDSCAPE)

MACHINE: GAMEBOY
REVIEWED: ISSUE 8
OVERALL MARK: 96%
JAZ: "More portable and flexible than dedicated chess machines costing five times as much!"
MATT: Hooray!



EA ICE HOCKEY (EA)

MACHINE: MEGADRIVE
REVIEWED: ISSUE 11
OVERALL MARK: 95%
JAZ: "An utterly essential purchase."
RICH: "One of the greatest sports sims ever produced."



JOHN MADDEN'S FOOTBALL (EA)

MACHINE: MEGADRIVE
REVIEWED: ISSUE 3
OVERALL MARK: 95%
JAZ: "The best Megadrive game yet."
MATT: "This game stunned all of us."



SUPER MARIO 3 (NINTENDO)

MACHINE: NINTENDO
REVIEWED: ISSUE 13
OVERALL MARK: 98%
JAZ: "The finest videogame I've ever played."
RICH: "A truly brilliant game, combining a massive amount of depth with totally superb playability."



THE COVER THAT NEVER WAS

Recognise this cover? Of course you don't - it never appeared! It was originally scheduled to appear on Issue 2, but at the last moment we all decided the Strider illustration just wasn't strong enough and changed it for Robocop!

THE HARROD FACTOR



Gary Harrod over in the art department also had a nightmare time. First of all he spent days drawing up a special custom layout sheet for MEAN MACHINES and had 1000 of them printed... only to find he'd got the measurements wrong! It was redrawn a second time (correctly), but unfortunately the printers printed them all wrong and they had to be done a third time! And when the correct ones finally arrived, the boy Harrod suddenly realised he'd drawn up the basic page artwork (such as the review boxes and the top right/left hand corner flashes) using the first custom layout sheet - the one with the wrong measurements - so he had to do them all again! And finally, two rough draughts of the MEAN MACHINES logo were drawn up, one with fat letters and one with thin letters. It was decided that the fat letter version would be used, and Gary started work with his airbrush. After a weekend's work he suddenly realised that he'd been working on the thin version, and that he'd have to start all over again! Doh!

THE HIGHS AND

We've reviewed tons of games since MEAN MACHINES started - some of them brilliant, and some of them complete

MICKEY MOUSE (SEGA)

MACHINE: MEGADRIVE
REVIEWED: ISSUE 5
OVERALL MARK: 95%
JAZ: "Has an addiction that's as you eating your meals while you play."
MATT: "This game is of a quality rarely seen."



SEGA



MEGADRIVE



GX4000



NINTENDO

WOT NOT
ASK YO
NEWSAG
FOR I
GAMEBOY



MEAN MACHINES

£1.75
 NO 2 NOV



THIS MONTH'S SPECIALS:
 GAME GEAR PICS!
 GAME BOY REVIEWS!
 ROBOCOP II PREVIEW!
 SIX PAGES OF TIPS!



**STRIDER!!!
 SO HOT
 IT BURNS!**

FIRE+FORGET II



**THUNDERBOLT
 DEATH AND DOOM
 ON SEGA AND GX4000!**

RAINBOW ISLANDS

**AMAZING!
 AUDIO TAPE!
 IT'S THE OFFICIAL
 SEGA MASTER SYSTEM!**

THE AMAZING NEW CONSOLE MAG!

MEAN MACHINES

NO 2 NOV

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ROBOCOP II
 PART MAN, PART MACHINE!
 ALL ACTION!!!

FIRE+FORGET II
 FROM SPEED TO DEATH AND DOOM ON SEGA AND GX4000!

RAINBOW ISLANDS

AMAZING FREE AUDIO TAPE!!!
 IT'S THE OFFICIAL SEGA MASTER SYSTEM!

THE LOWS

stinkers. Here are the five best and five worst, complete with some the things we wrote about them...



GOAL (NINTENDO)
 REVIEWED: ISSUE 12
 MACHINE: NINTENDO
 OVERALL MARK: 33%
 JAZ: "Goal is another Nintendo footballing debacle, a dire travesty purporting to be a simulation of our top national sport."
 RICH: "Goal is a crippled, retarded excuse for an NES football game."

THE MAKING OF

MEAN MACHINES

GOODS

KEY 4
 BING 3

IT'S A SAD THING THAT YOUR ADVENTURES HAVE ENDED HERE!

THE WORST SHADOW GATE (NINTENDO)
 MACHINE: NINTENDO
 REVIEWED: ISSUE 11
 OVERALL MARK: 26%
 JAZ: "Aaaaaaaggh! I hate this game. It's so-o-o frustrating I want to smash it up."
 RICH: "A hideous attempt at producing an NES adventure."

ACE OF ACES (SEGA)
 MACHINE: MASTER SYSTEM
 REVIEWED: ISSUE 12
 OVERALL MARK: 29%
 JAZ: "Poor quality, fuzzy graphics and amazingly naff sounds are the nails in the coffin, and the tediously slow gameplay hammers them well and truly home."
 RICH: "A sad, shambling parody of a flight sim."

ESTABLISHED: The Daily Sun

LET'S TAKE A MOMENT TO PAPERBOY CALLS IT QUILTS

IT'S A ROUGH JOB, BUT...

PAPERBOY (MINDSCAPE)
 MACHINE: NINTENDO
 REVIEWED: ISSUE 6
 OVERALL MARK: 30%
 JAZ: "A sick mockery."
 MATT: "Dear oh dear."

Shoot Competition

HANSEN
 ROKO
 JUAREZ

NINTENDO WORLD CUP (NINTENDO)
 MACHINE: NINTENDO
 REVIEWED: ISSUE 6
 OVERALL MARK: 33%
 JAZ: "There's nothing like a good football game, and Nintendo World Cup is nothing like a good football game."
 MATT: "Nintendo World Cup takes football games to a new low."

STAGE 03

TIME 1:15

ALLEYWAY (NINTENDO)
 MACHINE: GAMEBOY
 REVIEWED: ISSUE 2
 OVERALL MARK: 33%
 JAZ: "What a bore."
 MATT: "Bleugh!"