
BRUTAL
Paws of Fury
Fredrickson

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BRUTAL
PAWS OF FURY

Soon to be available on the following systems: SNES, Genesis, and Sega CD
Release dates: SNES and Genesis in November 1994, Sega CD July, 1994.
MSRP per product as follows: SNES- $69.95, Genesis- $64.95, Sega CD- $59.95

Brutal is a game of cartoon martial arts. The characters in the game each have special traits attributed to them and like all true heroes, these traits are both their strengths and weaknesses.

Brutal has real depth of game play, enhanced by the ability to qualify for fighting belts of higher rank as the player progresses through the game. Greater fighting belts give the player a greater array of combat moves and special abilities.

There is a humorous element in Brutal unrivaled by any other "beat-em-up" and this is derived from the game characters who are seen to take themselves very seriously indeed and embody personal important virtues, despite the fact that they are still just cartoon animals.

Brutal has a moral message, but a subtle one, and it is hoped that this should help appease the "anti-violence lobby" who are currently knocking the video game industry at every available opportunity. Each character represents a different philosophy and personality types. Players will benefit more from identifying with "Kung-Fu Bunny" and his quiet wisdom than from the blood-thirsty characters in current "beat-em-ups" which are a cause of concern to many parents.

THE GAME

Every four years the Dali Lama travels the world searching for the greatest warriors. He judges them not only on their martial art's prowess, but also on how much of the "warrior spirit" they truly possess. They are all invited to his peaceful island where they compete against each other, to decide who is worthy to wear the coveted "Belt of Heaven."

Brutal-------let the tournament begin.

BRUTAL FEATURES

* **Instant Replay:** Allows players to gloat over their victories by watching the whole fight frame by frame at a variety of speeds.

* **Cartoon Animation:** In game animation use "cartoonist techniques" to enhance the humorous and wild special moves, for example, by having heads knocked back at obscure angles, "rubber" face pulls, and lightning runs, etc.

* **Belt Qualification System:** Players do not start with their full variety of moves. Higher grade belts are awarded by defeating opponents and as these are awarded, so to are a greater assortment of "fight" or "special" moves. This unique system gives you access to more and more moves the more rank you earn. **Kata's or series of moves are available to black belt players.**

* **Level Passwords and Save Game Option:** The game stores the characters tournament information, including belt grade and the number of victories and losses, as well as the players name so each password is individualized.

* **Interactive Play on the Sega Genesis Version:** The game supports the **PF Magic AT&T modem device**, allowing players all across the country to link up and play against each other.

* **Three different speeds from Normal to Turbo Nutter.** (This speed is VERY fast.)

* **Beautifully worked backdrops. 150 Megabytes of animation** for the Sega CD and **300 megabytes of music**. There are **1,500 frames achievable** in the whole game at the grand master level for the Sega CD with **13,000 frames of full screen animation. The Genesis and SNES are 16 megabit cartridges.**

* **Taunts** that each character learns to help increase their power and energy levels.

* **A great industrial hard-core soundtrack** written by the famous musician P.P. Dix.

* Sega CD has the choice of ten characters each with their own individual special moves.

* Sega Genesis and SNES has the choice of eight characters.

* **No blood or "death" shots. Brutal is a game of cartoon martial arts.**

Brutal Advertising

Brutal Sega CD

Electronic Gaming Monthly: May 1994
Game Fan: May 1994
Video Games: May 1994
Game Pro: May 1994
Sega Visions: June 1994
Electronic Gaming Monthly: June 1994
Game Fan: June 1994
Video Games: June 1994
Game Pro: June 1994

Electronic Gaming Monthly: July 1994
Game Pro: July 1994

Electronic Games : August 1994
Electronic Gaming Monthly: August 1994
EGM 2: August 1994
Game Fan: August 1994
Game Players: August 1994
Game Pro: August 1994
Video Games: August 1994

Brutal Advertising Continued:

Electronic Gaming Monthly: September 1994
EGM 2: September 1994
Game Fan: September 1994
Game Informer: September/October 1994
Game Players: September 1994
Game Pro: September 1994
Video Games: September 1994
EGM Fighting Guide: September 1994
S.W.A.T. Pro: September 1994

Brutal Combined Ad of Sega CD, Sega Genesis & SNES

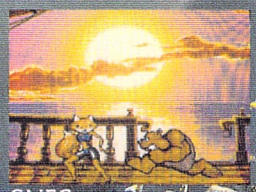
Electronic Games: October 1994
Electronic Gaming Monthly: October 1994
EGM 2: October 1994
Game Fan: October 1994
Game Players: October 1994
Game Pro: October 1994
Video Games: October 1994

Electronic Games: November 1994
Electronic Gaming Monthly: November 1994
EGM 2: November 1994
Game Fan: November 1994
Game Informer: November 1994
Game Players: November 1994
Game Pro: November 1994
Video Games: November 1994

Electronic Games: December 1994
Electronic Gaming Monthly: December 1994 **GATE FOLD**
EGM 2: December 1994 **Inside Front Cover**
Game Fan: December 1994
Game Players: December 1994
Game Pro: December 1994
Video Games: December 1994

BRUTAL®

Paws of Fury



SNES



SEGA GENESIS



SEGA CD

Soundtrack available on Uno Mundo Records

Available at your local retailer or call 1.800.GAMETEK. Phone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Visa and Mastercard accepted.

Primal power. Ancient wisdom. GameTek unleashes tournament beasts of the martial arts in cinema-style, full-screen animation. Focus strength. Transcend weakness. Jam with the wild things. Get your paws on this cool new game. It's so cool, it's Brutal.

CYBERSOFT

OFFICIAL SEGA SEAL OF QUALITY

This official seal is your assurance that this product meets the highest quality standards of SEGA™. Buy games and accessories with this seal to be sure that they are compatible with the SEGA™ GENESIS™ SEGA CD™ SYSTEM.

GAMETEK

Official Nintendo Seal of Quality

Rated by V.R.C.

MA-13

Parental Discretion Advised.

Mature Audiences

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Fredrich

Brutal Promotional Push

*Complete Press Release Mailings to Reps, Buyers and all Store Managers

*Television coverage on Video Game Slams in California

*8 pages of coverage in Strategy Guide by Brady Publishing to be distributed into the mainstream market. I.E. book stores ect.

*Complete Advertising backing in all major gaming magazines

*Possible licensing deal of the Brutal characters

*Attempting to put Brutal characters on retail store t-shirts

*First GameTek fully developed In-House CD product

*Brutal trading cards to be distributed in magazines and at the store level

*Brutal Press Kits to be major retailers and buyers

*Possible "Happy Meal" deal with **Burger King Restaurants**

*Brutal character to be made up to travel to various shows

Previews

Brutal Sega CD

Game Fan: December 1993
Electronic Gaming Monthly: January 1994
Game Fan: January 1994
Video Games: February 1994
Game Pro: February 1994
Mega Play: February 1994
Electronic Gaming Monthly: March 1994
Electronic Games: March 1994
Electronic Games: May 1994
Sega Force: July 1994
Game Players: August 1994

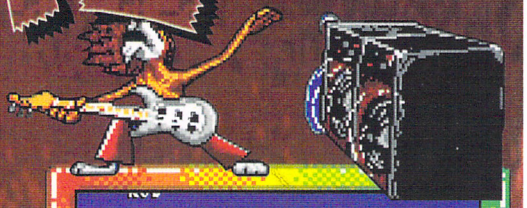
Brutal Super NES

Electronic Gaming Monthly: August 1994

GAMETEK
FIGHTING
2 PLAYER
SEGA CD
TBA.

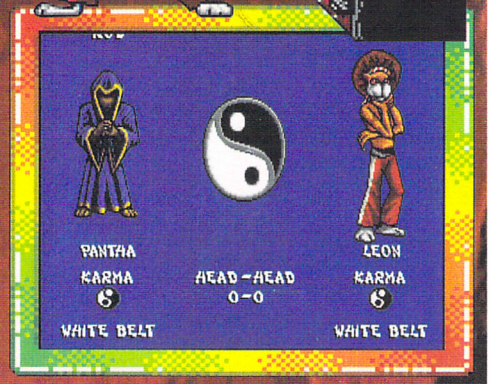
BRUTAL



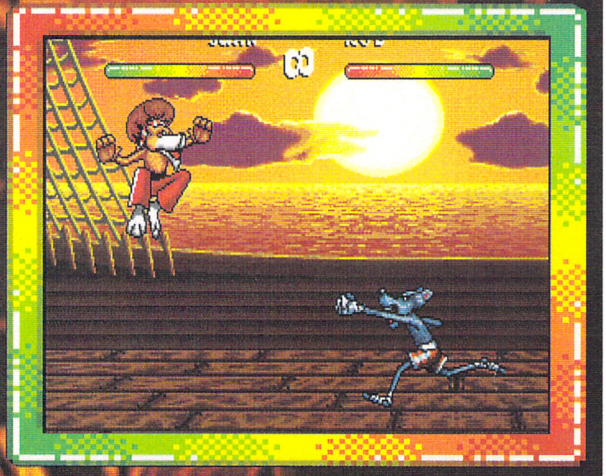








Every four years the Dali Lama travels the world searching for the greatest warriors. He judges not only on martial prowess but how far they truly possess the "warrior spirit". Inviting them all to his peaceful island they compete to see who is worthy to wear the belt of heaven. The contestants do battle in a series of locations all around the island and inside the castle.



Here's a first look at Gameteks "Brutal", Their new one on one fighter that breaks the mold. Brutal is a game of cartoon Martial arts. The characters in Brutal all have special traits and the ability to earn higher belts of rank, each giving the character access to a new special move. Brutal features; instant replay, a tournament system, cartoon animation like rubber bodies, a belt system, and can be played over the PF Magic AT&T modem. So this is truly the first interactive fighter! We'll have more on this awesome new fighter next month.. -E. Storm









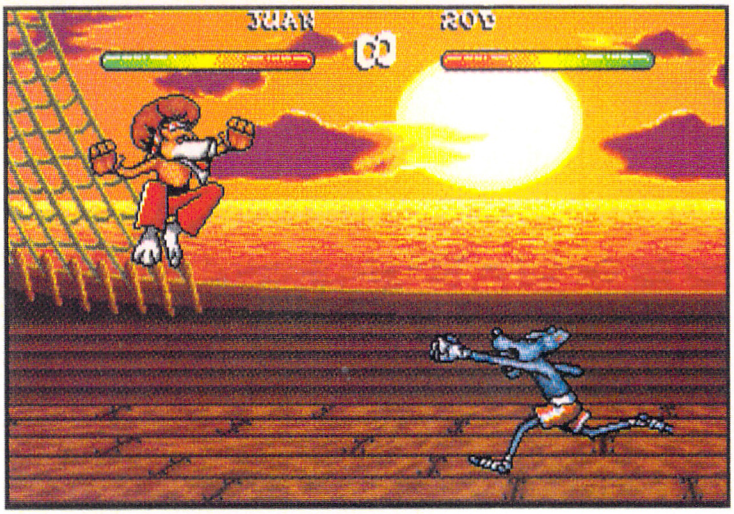
GameTek

Brutal

Sega CD	Fighting

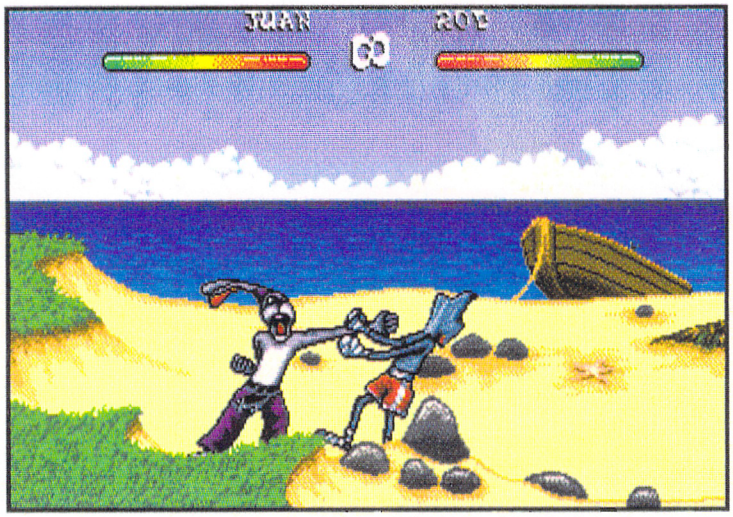
An unusual fighting game is making its way to the Sega CD (and Genesis later on.) It's called Brutal and it takes cartoon characters and puts a story around each one. The fighters range from Tai Cheetah, to Rhei Rat the Kick Boxer. Each has his own path and way of life. The winner of the tournament will go on to face the Dali Llama in a test of skill. Can you defeat the famed warrior?

Brutal looks really good, and there are plenty of cinemas to show the aspects of each fighter. The plots behind each one are great, and the moves are really cool. This cart stands out from the rest.



The graphics of this game are simply stunning. Drool over it.





Kung Fu Bunny smacks Rhei Rat with a real wallop of a punch!



The panther has mastered the secret arts, and he has some special skills.

AVAILABLE MARCH • 2 PLAYERS • FIGHTING • N/A • GAMETEK • SEGA

BRUTAL





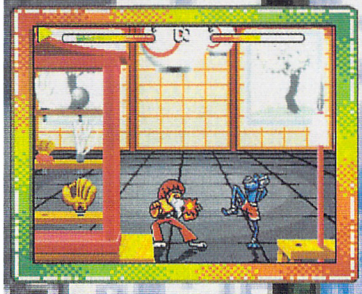


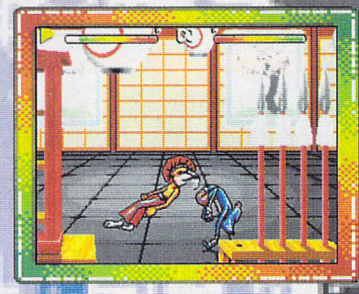




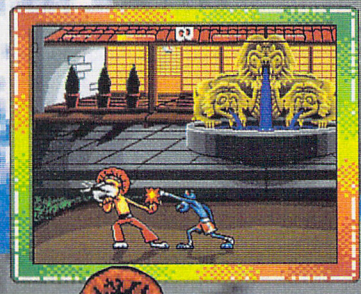
Here are some more early shots of Gameteks upcoming cartoon fighter, Brutal. Last month we received only slides, however this time around we were able to get our hands on an early ROM and feel the characters. This title shows a ton of promise. Each character animates smoothly and the control feels very responsive, even without the final moves in. You can always tell if a game is going to be good early on by looking at the work put into the titles, option screens and the demo's and judging from what we have seen so far this is going to be a great game. Allot of work is going into it. Brutal is also different enough that even if you already own a couple of fighters it is still a must have. The characters actually gain spirit and become better fighters as the game progresses, which is an exclusive feature to this title. The backgrounds in Brutal are very colorful, animated and line-scroll beautifully and, in some you will find the characters moving smoothly behind forward objects. Basically everything is here to make another great fighter for the Genesis. Look for more on Brutal as it becomes available.
E Storm





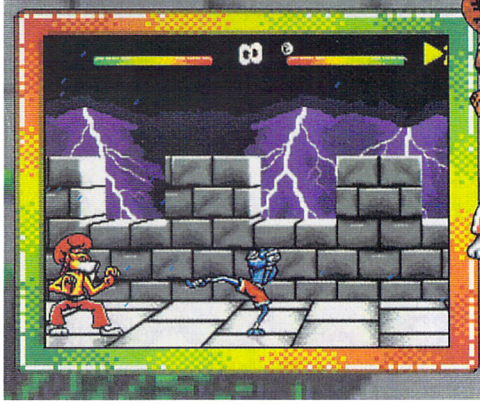


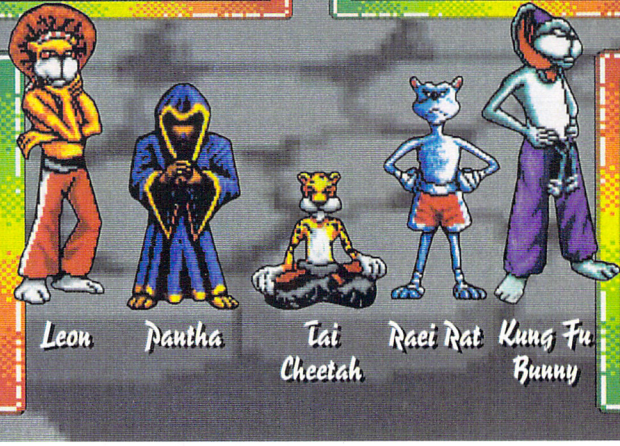










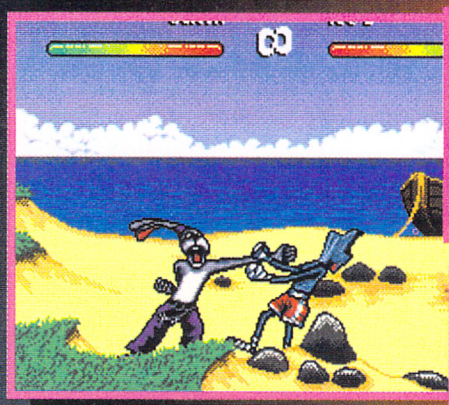




BRUTAL

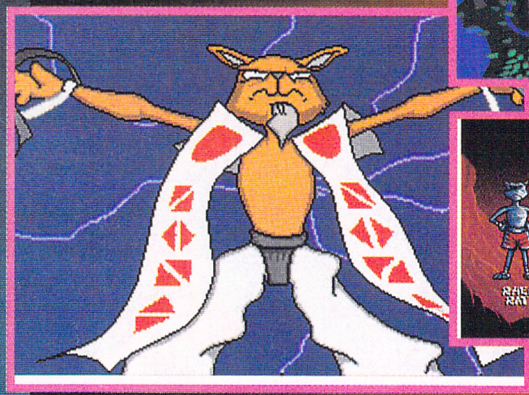
GAMETEK
For the Sega CD with Genesis
AVAILABLE: MARCH 1994













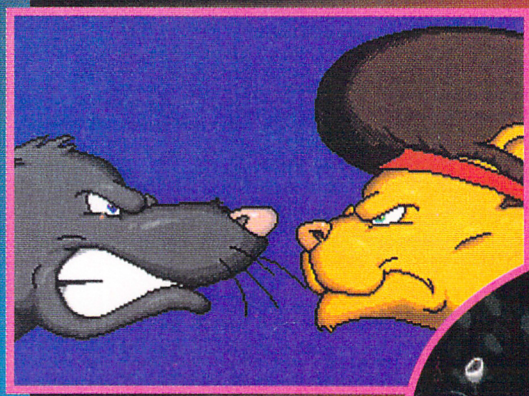
"Sometimes the fastest blow is the one delivered last." —Dali Lama

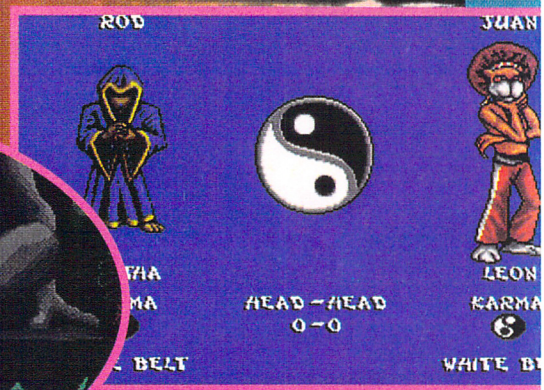
This is GameTek's first Sega CD game, featuring cartoon martial arts. Each player has to earn higher belts of rank, and higher belts of rank mean more moves and many more abilities for each character.

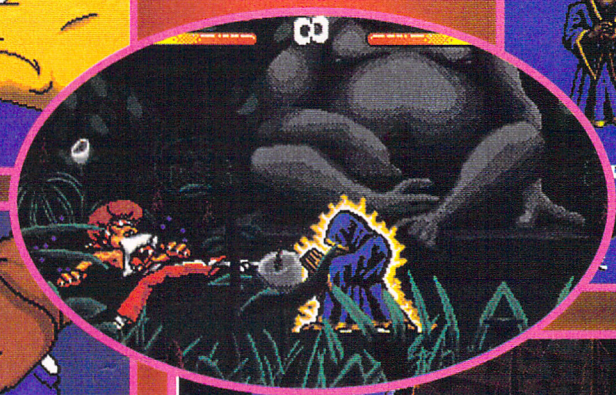
The characters embody certain virtues and philosophies. Each represents one of the paths of wisdom, like Right Understanding, Right Resolve, Right Meditation, Right Action...so you can choose the character that suits your temperament and fighting style. There are six characters in all (and 200 sprites per character).

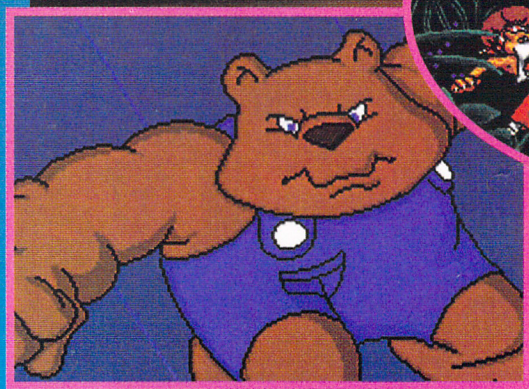
Brutal has a tournament system in which up to eight players can play in a single tournament or in teams.

Brutal also features instant replay and a password entry capability that saves your game (your character's belt level and victories and losses). There are also ten locations, with different music for each location and character, plus sampled character voices.







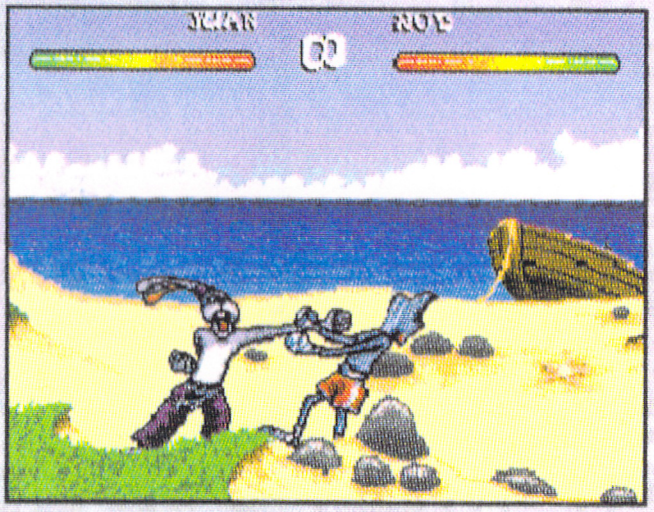


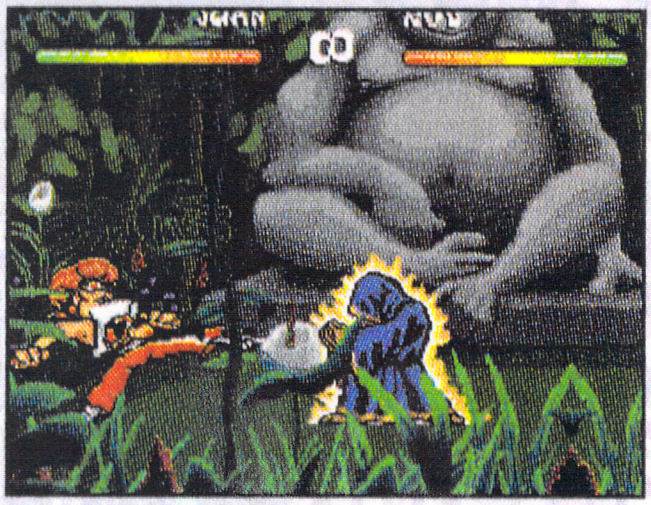




Sega CD

Brutal
(Gametek)





Kung Fu Bunny, Tai Cheeta, and Kendo Coyote are three of the six cartoon critters that have martial arts skills in this



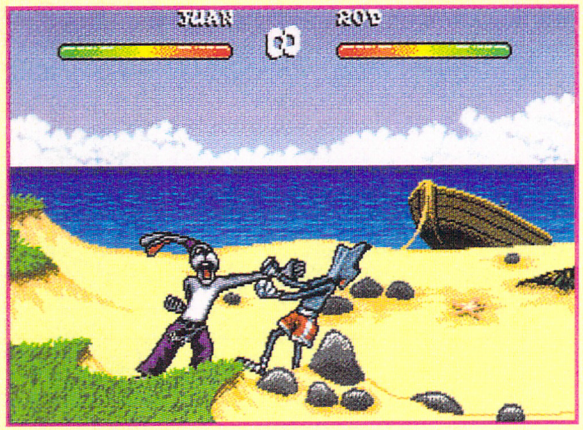
new beat-em-up, which is coming first to the Sega CD and later to the Genesis. The fighting action gets a humorous flourish in this game – heads flail back at impossible angles and bodies bend like they're made of rubber. As players improve they're awarded higher belts, which are saved with a password feature. You'll be able to relive your victories at the ten locations with the game's instant replay. Up to eight players can compete in a single tournament.

(Available March)

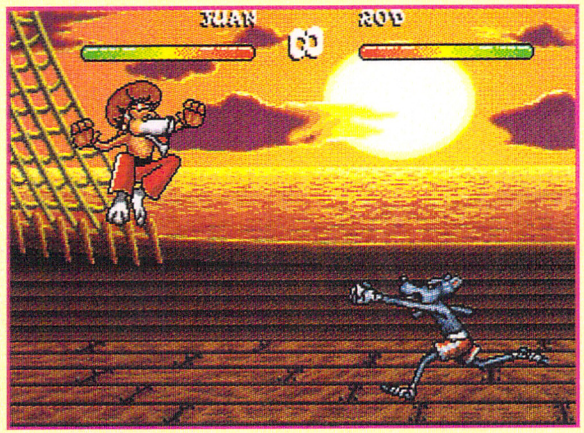
Brutal
Sega CD / GameTek

GameTek is readying a brand new fighting game that combines clean animation with characters of discipline to make a wholly cool CD. Brutal has a number of fighters competing in a tournament against the famed Dali Llama. The contestants range from Kung Fu Bunny to Rhei Rat (a nasty kickboxer). All of the fighters appear with detailed backgrounds and cinemas around them.

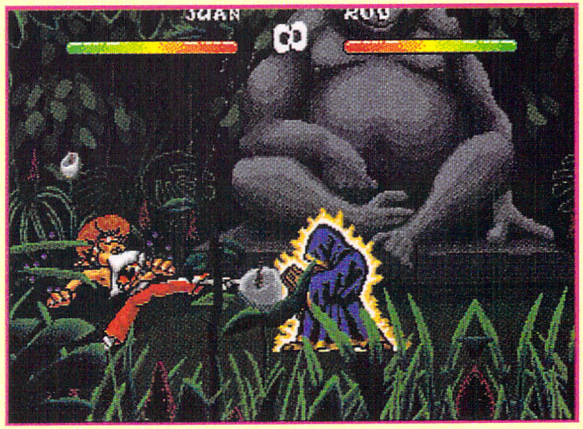
As you can tell by the pictures to the right, this game looks stunning. Each character has a lot of frames of animation to make him or her smooth in action. Everyone has special moves to dazzle their opponents. And being a CD game, the music is great. Brutal is a fighting game for the Sega CD that shouldn't be missed.



Choose from weird fighters like Kung Fu Bunny to Rhei Rat kickboxer.



Brutal is based on some principles which may enlighten you.



The most secretive character, the Panther has some really cool moves.



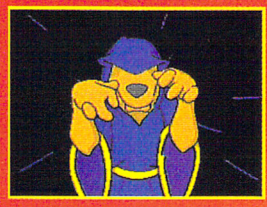
Brutal utilizes cartoon graphics that are smoothly animated.

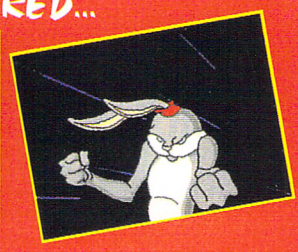


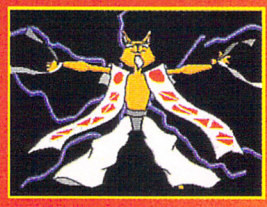
BRUTAL

ACROSS THE GLOBE INVITATIONS WERE DELIVERED...










COOL CINEMAS!

The Deli Lama is hosting a tournament and sending out private invitations to each of the participants. Every character has his/her own unique motives for entering and trying to win.

Cute characters with loads of adorable animations fill this new fighting game. Look for tons of special moves and strategy involving the accumulation of Karma. Each character actually becomes a better fighter as he/she continues to win. You will start with a white belt. And if you continue beating other opponents, you will receive a higher ranking belt. Fight against the best in the world for the title.

MANY STAGES!



THE GOOD

Many characters to pick from and awesome cinemas really got my attention.

THE BAD

Gee, where's the blood? Hey Congressman, this one's for you.

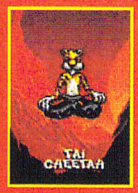
THE UGLY

What would happen if they made a chicken fighter? Hmm ... Sumo Chicken...



KUNG-FU BUNNY

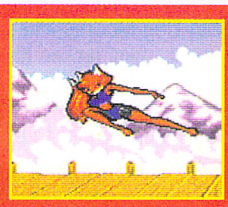
TAI CHEETAH

KENDO COYOTE



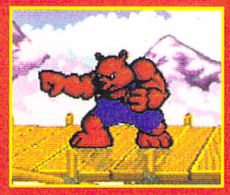




FOXY ROXY







IVAN







LEON



FACT FILE

BRUTAL

MANUFACTURER	# OF PLAYERS
GAMETEK	1 OR 2
DIFFICULTY	**AVAILABLE**
MODERATE	2ND QTR '94
CARTRIDGE SIZE	**NUMBER OF LEVELS**
CD-ROM	10
THEME	**% COMPLETE**
FIGHTING	50%




PANTHA










RHEI RAT

BRUTAL BEASTS BATTLE FOR THE BELT OF HEAVEN

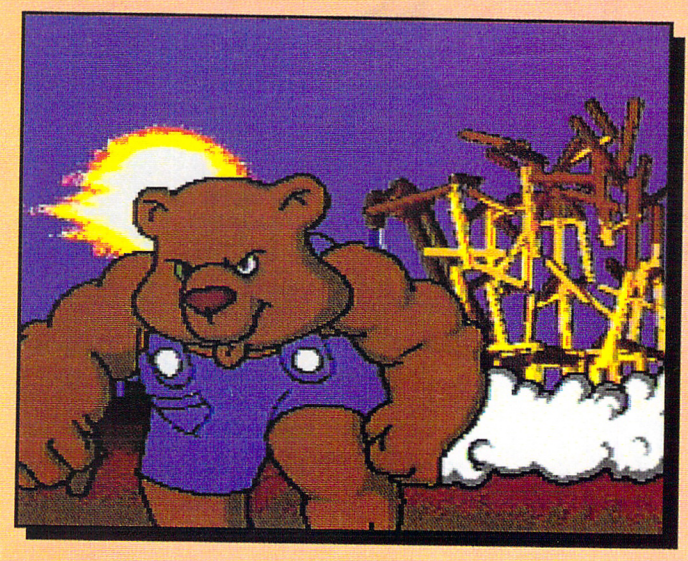
EG previews Brutal: Paws of Fury

Gametek's maiden voyage into the Sega CD world is **Brutal: Paws of Fury**. This cartoon martial arts game thrives on subtle humor, as the animal characters take themselves seriously and embody important virtues.

The Deli Lama travels the world every four years seeking the greatest warriors. However, the belt of heaven can only be won if the victor not only possesses fighting prowess, but also has the warrior spirit.

This year the Deli Lama has sent invitations to eight contestants: Kung Fu Bunny, Rhei Rat, Kendo Coyote, Tai Cheetah, Prince Leon the Lion, Foxy Roxy, Penjat Panther, and Ivan Bear. Each participant embodies one aspect of the Eight Paths of Wisdom: Right Understanding, Right Speech, Right Resolve, Right Mindfulness, Right Effort, Right Livelihood, Right Meditation and Right Action as well as a different fighting style: relaxed paw, Thai Boxing, Kenjutsu, Tai Chi Chuan, Tan Ku (The Iron Rage), Penjat Silat, Chin Na and Soviet Military.

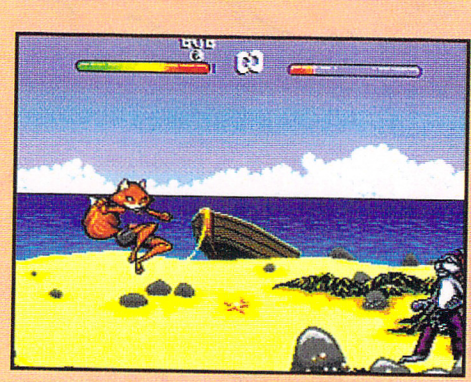
Each contestant is also being driven by his or her own personal demons and have their own reasons for wanting to win the Belt of Heaven from the Deli Lama, ranging from personal greed to revenge.



Brutal's graphics are very good. On the select screen, the player is treated to not only the color character graphic and a brief description (including height, weight and fighting style), but, on a background mesa, an animated silhouette performs the character's moves.

The fighters are standard anthropomorphic animated animals. The fight scenes look very good, with the combatants' bodies moving at exaggerated, cartoonish angles.

While the music tracks weren't available, they and the sound effects are being programmed by Doug Brandon, who did fantastic work on Disney's **Stunt Island**.



This is not your average kitty! The animal fighters use authentic moves and the plot line is intense!

The fighting is conducted using a unique play mechanic. Players do not start off with all the moves available to them. They must instead work up from a white belt to a black belt by defeating their opponents. Only after beating the other seven does the victor meet the Deli Lama in the dojo. With each new belt, the character earns new moves. There is also a password system which retains not only the belt level, but also the gamer's victories and losses.

Brutal features instant replay which permits players to watch the whole fight, frame by frame at a chosen speed. There is also a Tournament Option allowing up to eight gamers to play against each other. There will also be the capability for interactive play. **Brutal** supports the Pf Magic AT&T modem device, and plans to offer network features if the Sega Network becomes a reality.



Players can compete over modem lines via the Pf Magic AT&T modem device for more playability.

Gametek's first venture into the Sega CD world is an ambitious one, but if it meets the standards set by the developers the resulting product could kick some serious tail.

—Laurie Yates

What makes Brutal special?

Part of **Brutal**'s charm, according to programmer Dave Lincoln, is that the game doesn't take itself seriously. "The player is supposed to have a sense of humor about the game. The finishing moves are going to be as cartoonish as possible. For example, Ivan will run forward and bounce his opponents off from his belly.

Plus, we added a learning aspect to the game. **Brutal** has a belt system (white to black) so that as the player becomes better, and earns higher belts, so too does the opponent. The gamer will learn with the game, and has the opportunity to enter the Training Session Mode to improve his skills."

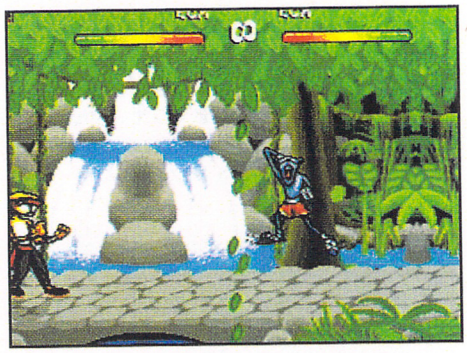
Mayhem In Multimedia

by Bill Kunkel

Multimedia has been somewhat slow in jumping on board the fighting game bandwagon, but thanks to the increasing interest in the Sega CD format, several interesting titles are either already available or soon will be.

Positively Brutal

Gametek was an early adopter on the Sega CD with **Brutal: Paws of Fury**. Despite its rather harsh-sounding title, **Brutal** is not an especially violent game. It is, in fact, a rather gentle satire of fighting games and the bogus mysticism that surrounds them.



Brutal takes a light-hearted poke at fighting games satirizing characters and their actions.

Using anthropomorphic animals as its characters, the game begins with the Deli Lama, the big ham, sending out invitations to eight great fighters. These characters have names like Kung Fu Bunny, Penjat Panther, and Foxy Roxy, and each has his/her own reasons for entering the tournament on Brutal Island.

Unlike most fighting games, characters do not begin the tournament with a complete repertoire of moves. Instead, they work their way up through the martial arts ranks in realistic fashion, from white belt to black, by defeating their opponents. Only after overcoming the other seven participants does the fighter meet the Lama in the dojo and receive a new belt. There's even a password system for retaining fighters' records.

Perhaps the lightweight nature of **Brutal** will turn off blood-seeking hardcores, but for most gamers, it should prove an entertaining entry into the fighting game genre.

Similarly mild-mannered fighting action can be found in **Battle Fantasy** (Absolute Entertainment/ Sega CD). With its bizarre sound effects and humorous animations, this is another non-intimidating access point to a normally violent game category.



Which Way, Warrior?

For those hardcore street fighting fans we mentioned earlier, however, the most interesting of the multimedia entries is definitely Naughty Dog's **Way of the Warrior**, a **Mortal Kombat**-inspired punch-out for 3DO compatible systems.

The characters are based on digitized models and the animation is nearly flawless. The game is also extremely violent, and without apologies. The development group/publisher doesn't call itself "Naughty Dog" for giggles, after all.

Way of the Warrior also features a number of cool, 3DO-based features, including an automatic camera zoom for close-ups when the characters get up close and personal, and an auto-pan that kicks in when the fighters back off.

The game offers 10 different fighters, each consuming two MB of graphic space. Every character has a minimum of 15 moves and a pair of fatalities in addition to a base of approximately three dozen primary maneuvers.

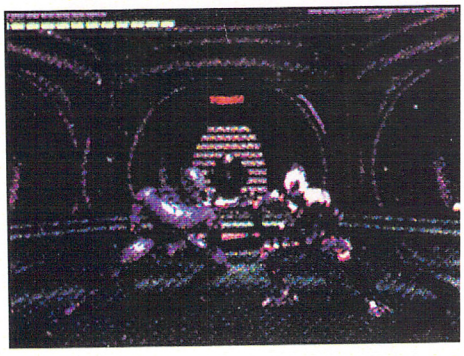
Way of the Warrior's bosses are also appropriately special, including a well-rendered dragon and a demonic skeleton. The sprites are huge, with characters capable of moves never executed before in any electronic fighting contest.

No entertainment system is truly ready for the mass market until it has its very own street fighting game. Well, the 3DO should now be ready to roll, because **WotW** looks like one hot property.

Ninjas, Robots, and Mortal K

Perhaps the most unorthodox fighting game in the history of the genre is also on its way to the Sega CD. Renovation's **Revenge of the Ninja** is a cross between a martial arts game and **Dragon's Lair**. The plot is as conventional as the execution is offbeat: A princess has been kidnapped and it's up to the ninja player-character to rescue her from the ominous sounding Castle of Evil. The presentation, however, involves a variety of unusual camera angles with player commands executed entirely by pushing the right button at the right time. The ninja can cling to the ceiling, scale walls, and attack with the silence of a cat.

While far from an ordinary fighting game, **Revenge of the Ninja** is nonetheless an interesting sneak peak at what multimedia martial arts contests may offer down the road.



Ice blue backgrounds and a steel-like atmosphere add to the scene of metallic beasts going toe-to-toe.

Rise of the Robots will also be making an appearance on the Sega CD courtesy of JVC.

Acclaim's **Mortal Kombat**, has finally been completed by the folks at Probe who created the Genesis version. The Sega CD Edition (with blood codes) is largely a reproduction of the Genesis SKU with the addition of a cool introduction (based on the famous "Mortal Kombat!" TV commercial) and souped-up sound that is markedly superior to the audio on any other home version.

Brutal

By: Gametek
For: Sega CD



You want fighting games with animals? You got it with Brutal: Paws of Fury. Lots of cuddly creatures wielding deadly special attacks and killer combos is the premise of this fast-paced fighting game. Defeat all the oppo-nents who are in your way to meet up with the final Boss!

AHEAD of the GAME

Brutal: Paws of Fury

No blood or clay — but lots of ink!

The Dali Llama has invited Kung Fu Bunny, Tai Cheetah, Kendo Coyote, Rhei Rat, Foxy Roxy, Ivan Bear, The Pantha, and Prince Leon the Lion to compete in a tournament on his island (you can also play as Karate Croc, a privilege you must *earn*). The Dali Llama himself awaits the winner of the tournament.



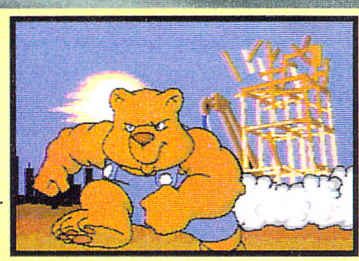
***Brutal* is a minefield of bells and whistles. The Sound Test even features a special look at The Brutal Band!**

Brutal is chock-full of cool features such as instant replay, six-button compatibility, excellent CD music, huge animated cinema sequences, and a funny behind-the-scenes look at the game's outtakes. As you climb higher in the tournament, you also learn new moves and techniques, which you can save along with your name and records on a password. Compatibility with the upcoming Edge 16 modem is in the works, and Super NES and Genesis versions are scheduled for an October/November release.

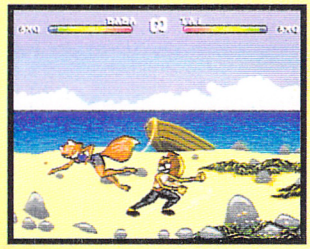
Our first impression is that GameTek's first in-house release looks pretty darn good. Check out our review next issue for our final word on the matter.



It can be tough to choose a character — especially when each has a screen this cool.



Lengthy animation sequences such as these make good use of the massive CD memory capabilities. Here Ivan Bear trades in his blue collar for a chance to fight the Dali Llama.



Now to the action! Foxy Roxy takes on Tai Cheetah. The backgrounds look cartoony in the Sega CD and Genesis versions, but expect more shading and realism when the SNES cart arrives.

SEGA CD info

PUBLISHER	GameTek
DEVELOPER	GameTek
DATE	September
GENRE	fighting

Blackthorne

Blown away any mutants lately?

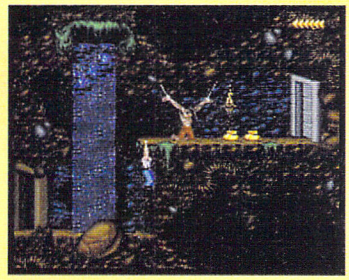
Take *Prince of Persia*, make it cool, and you've got *Blackthorne*. It's not that we didn't like the *Prince* (in *aallllll* its formats), but the shades-wearing, shotgun-toting hero of *Blackthorne* rates much higher on the ol' macho meter.

As Kyle Blackthorne (dontcha wish *you* were born with a name that cool?), it's up to you to save the peaceful Androthi people from evil mutants known as the Ka'Dra'Suul. Each level is a well-laid-out puzzle, requiring you to find items needed to open passages to new areas.

The best feature is Kyle's shotgun. You can pump and fire single bursts, rapid-fire, and extremely cool behind-the-back no-look shots. You can even blow away your own people just for fun (Whoops — I probably shouldn't sound quite as enthusiastic about that. You really shouldn't kill your own guys. It isn't right. No, no, no. *Tee-hee!*).

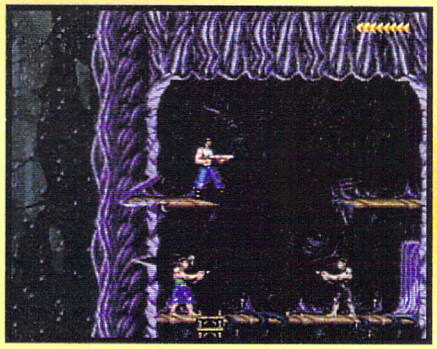


Highly immoral players might find some kind of sick, perverted pleasure in blowing away defenseless prisoners. Uh — not me, though.

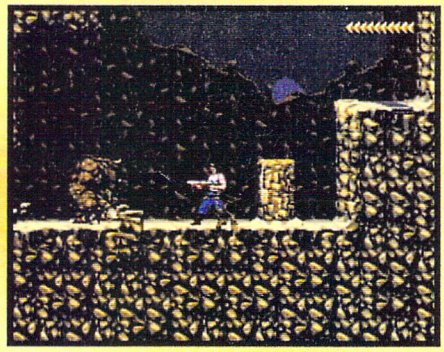


If this scene looks familiar, you've probably played one of the million or so *Prince of Persia* games.

Blackthorne definitely looks very, very cool. Check back next month to see how it holds up after 30 days of rigorous testing.



The rainforest level is the coolest looking stage. At this point, the prisoners begin taking up arms against their Ka'Dra'Suul oppressors.



The mountains in Area 3 make for treacherous terrain — and those nasty Rock Beasts don't help much, either.

SNES info

PUBLISHER	Interplay
DEVELOPER	Blizzard
DATE	September
GENRE	action/strategy



BRUTAL



FACT FILE

BRUTAL

MANUFACTURER	# OF PLAYERS
GAMETEK	1 OR 2
DIFFICULTY	**AVAILABLE**
MODERATE	OCTOBER
CARTRIDGE SIZE	**NUMBER OF LEVELS**
16 MEG	N/A
THEME	**% COMPLETE**
FIGHTING	50%

Stand back Street Fighter! It's the battle of the furry forest creatures in this new cart for your Super NES—Brutal. Why is it called Brutal? Well, the word brutal seems to best describe the idea of a bunch of animals duking it out with a blistering array of punches and kicks as well as special attacks (and all the other 'nifties' fighting game characters get). One thing is certain ... after you play this game for a while, witnessing the prowess of these animals, you'll never look at Rover or Fluffy the same way again!

THE GOOD

I like the idea of the cute little fluffies tearing into each other with Street Fighter-type moves.

THE BAD

Another fighting game? Could we at least start inventing new special attacks?

THE UGLY

The looks on the faces of the animal rights activists when they start proclaiming it's teaching animal violence.

FURRY LITTLE FOREST CREATURES?

Stance/ Special | Punch/ Strong P. | Kick/ Strong K.

IVAN



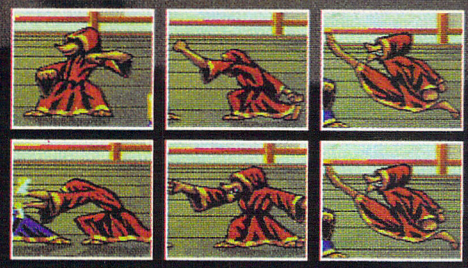
Stance/ Special | Punch/ Strong P. | Kick/ Strong K.

KUNG FU BUNNY

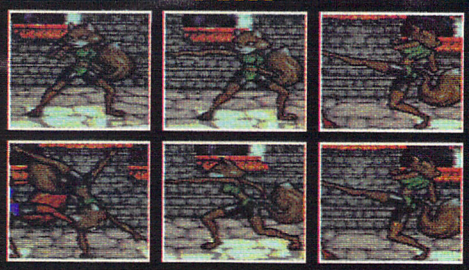


Stance/ Special | Punch/ Strong P. | Kick/ Strong K.

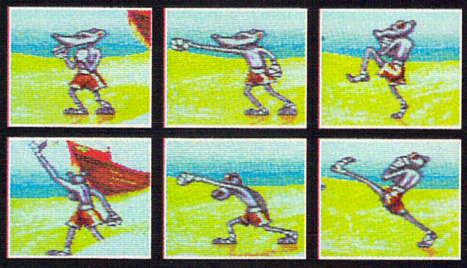
PANTHA



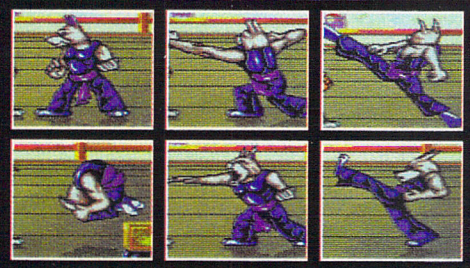
FOXY



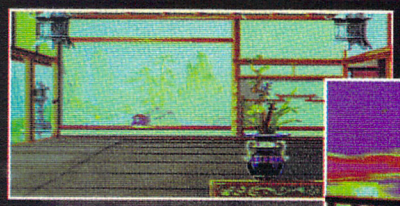
RHEI RAT



KENDO COYOTE



Where does this conflict between the animals take place? Check out the backgrounds...



DOJO



BOAT



BATTLEMENTS



BEACH

Reviews

Brutal Sega CD

Electronic Gaming Monthly: August 1994
Game Fan: August 1994
Sega Visions: August/September 1994
Game Players: September 1994
Video Games: September 1994
Game Pro: September 1994
Electronic Games: September 1994
Game Informer: September/October 1994

REVIEW CREW

MAJOR MIKE'S GAME ROUNDUP

Stunt Race FX
Nintendo/Super NES

Nintendo's second FX-chip based game isn't as good as I expected. It just didn't seem to have the overall fun that StarFox did. It features four racers that have noticeably different handling characteristics so the purists among you will be happy. The variety of tracks also prove to be challenging. However, the game feels awkward with the touchy steering and the feeling of speed just isn't there. Overall, there are better racing games on the market. It's just too bad since I had high expectations for it.

ED	DANO	AL	SUSHI	MIKE
7	7	6	6	7

Art of Fighting
Sega/Genesis

One of the key features of the Neo•Geo version of this fighting game was the scaling in and out during combat. That effect isn't in this version (I didn't notice it was gone until it was pointed out to me), but otherwise this is identical to the arcade (even the cinemas between fights are kept in). Most of the moves are easy enough to execute, and there are some nice options like being able to fight five rounds instead of the standard three. In the Versus Mode, some fighters have an unfair advantage (like karate), but overall, this is an earnest conversion.

ED	DANO	AL	SUSHI	MIKE
6	5	6	6	6

Fatal Fury 2
Takara/Genesis

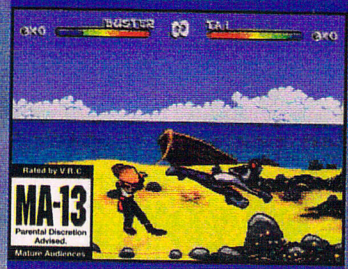
All the fighters, all the stages, and extra options not in the arcade (like a speed setting) make this another fine conversion of a Neo•Geo title. Little details (like the guy you can knock off the motorcycle in Kim Kaphwan's stage when you switch lines) are retained, as have the last-ditch finishing moves. However, the sounds could be improved (especially the dizzy sound effect and some of the voices). This is the type of game that can truly be appreciated with a 6-button controller. Excellent opening cinema, though.

ED	DANO	AL	SUSHI	MIKE
9	7	7	7	8

Sega CD — GameTek

Brutal

Fighting	Release: Now
Levels: N/A	CD-ROM



Brutal is visually very impressive, using lots of colors and detail to make it stand out. The music is terrific, and the cinemas are the best for the Sega CD. I like the way your characters build up their abilities as they progress through the game. The story is very well thought out. The actual fighting isn't all that hot, making you rely on jump kicks, rather than techniques. Still, Brutal is a cool game that has unique elements.

Brutal throws some new ideas into the over-crowded fighting game world. The concept of having to defeat opponents to learn special attacks is cool, but may be too strange for die-hard fighting game lovers. The CD music is simply incredible and the cinemas are cartoon-like for added fun. Alas, the game suffers from quirky timing. What could have been a hot contender, will have to settle for a lower rank.

From the get-go, I was in total awe of the opening cartoon sequence and other cool details of the game, like the various animations of each character through the Player Select Screen. Very original! But once I got to the game, I was really let down by the poor play control. The fighters moved like molasses and it seemed unresponsive. Maybe this whole CD should have been a cartoon from the beginning.

I have to admit to loving the look of this game. From the opening cinemas to the cute animal fighters, the game is an eye-pleaser. It only got better when I learned the strategy of earning special moves and the elaborate story and philosophy behind the game. The problem is that it plays a bit sluggish and the reaction time needs to be a bit tighter. It plays like a real sparing match, but gamers may not be used to this.

SNK — Neo•Geo

Top Hunter

Action	Release: Now
Levels: 5	110 Meg



Top Hunter is a spectacular looking game loaded with lots of techniques and power-ups. This game gives you the opportunity to play in both the foreground and the background, similar to Fatal Fury. The graphics and sound are simply too cool for words. The only real flaw with the game is that you can breeze through it rather quickly. However, it's great as a one-shot deal. It's fun, but too expensive.

As with all Neo games, it's easy to get suckered in by the outstanding graphics and sound. But Top Hunter required little brain power to blow through it, making it a less than ideal choice for purchasing. You will, however, find lots of techniques to learn, strange Bosses to defeat, and excellent play control. But the difficulty, even on the hardest setting, is still way too easy. It's a good quarter muncher, though.

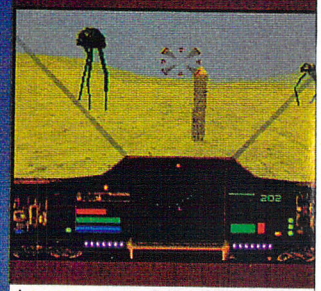
Hey! A Neo•Geo game that isn't a fighting game! Anyway, the graphics are awesome and superbly drawn with plenty of color and detail. The background music is cute and is orchestrated well to match the game. The sound effects, especially the explosions, will rock your speakers! The control is very responsive. Even though it has these things going for it, the whole concept wasn't original enough.

This game looks awesome. The characters, Bosses, and backgrounds are well drawn. To accompany its good looks are high quality sound effects and almost orchestral music. There is plenty of technique, like fireballs and dragon punches, to keep the play fresh. It also boasts the famous 3-D hopping like the Neo fighting games. I especially like the two-payer simultaneous action.

3DO — Electronic A

Shock Wave

Shooter/Sim.	Release: No
Levels: 12	CD-ROM

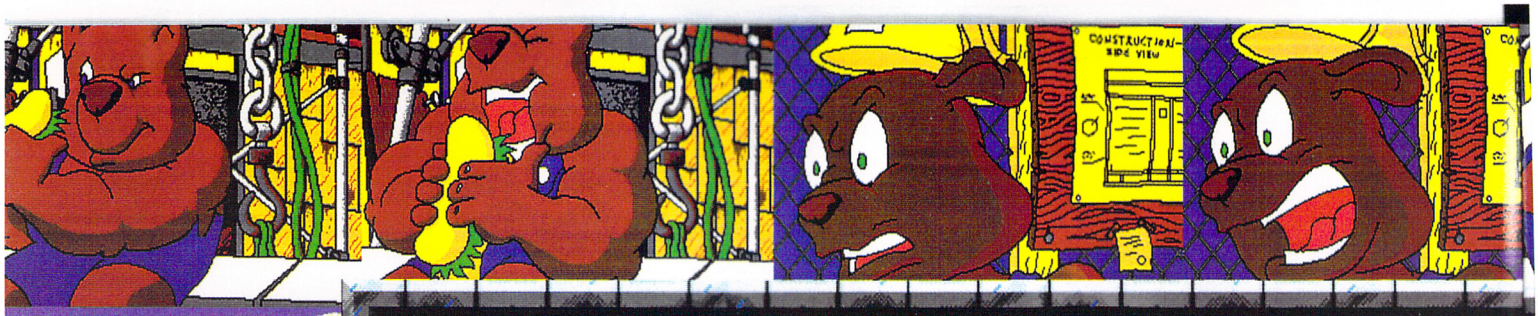


I was amazed by this game. been expecting some cheesy fu motion game, but this is one h title. The cinemas make it see like a movie, and the graphics the actual game have to be see Plus, you can go where you wa ... well almost. The video smooth, and everything gives t game a dramatic feel. This gan is a must if you have a 3DO think you'll be as surprised as was. It's an experience!

Here's another wild shooting fre zy for the 3DO! The first thi anyone will notice is the attenti to detail in the opening cinen with, dare I say it, good actin The game itself has a nice no linear feel to it with action ar intensity to keep you coming ba for more. As with many of th 3DO flight sims, it had touch controls (maybe it's time for a after-market controller), but it nothing a little time can't solve.

Shock Wave is an impressiv title. Even though I don't like fu motion video in games, I reall liked how it was used in this titl It became more of an addition the game instead of the who emphasis. The graphics are ve good as are the music an sound. What do you expect fro CD? The one thing I don't like the sensitive control when flyin your ship. It takes some time t get used to, but it's not bad!

I normally don't get into the fligl simulator types, but this one di have impressive texture mappin and good sounds. The live-actio video clips were done quite we and really added to the hype o the game. My only complaint i that the control seemed too ser sitive and hard to master. Yet, does play well and has the abilit to scroll, unlike a linear one-direc tion flight sim. The game's grea for its category.



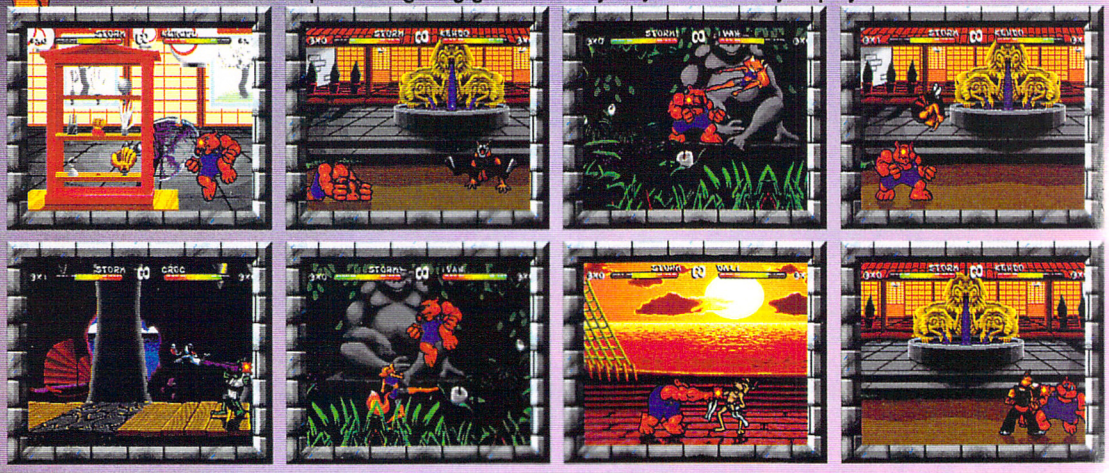
SEGA CD • GAMETEK • FIGHTING • 2 PLAYER • AVAILABLE SEPTEMBER

BRUTAL



Once a year the Dali Llama travels the world in search of the greatest warriors. He judges not only on martial prowess but how far the warriors truly possess the "warrior spirit". He invites them all to his peaceful island, where they compete to see who is worthy to wear the Belt of Heaven. This year you're invited, if you own a Sega CD.

Brutal is a unique new fighting game in every way. From how you play to the moves and strate-





gies themselves, Brutal is a new twist on a format that is becoming increasingly tiresome. A new twist is just what this category needs.

The story begins with some brilliant opening animation as one character, 'Ivan Bear', gets his invitation to the tournament. This is the best intro I have seen on the Sega CD. While I'm talking about Ivan—if you want to beat the game quickly, he is the character of choice. All the others are well balanced, but Ivan can rock just about anyone with two strong punches.

During the action itself, after winning two battles you enter a training room. Here, a new move is highlighted on a controller. You must then mimic that motion to gain that move. However, even after you learn all the moves, you will find that straight martial arts takes center stage in each battle. The computer attacks fast, and there isn't nearly enough time to execute many of the complicated functions to get off a move. Try pressing up-up-down-down-up-up, then 'A', while a crazy rat is coming at you at a break neck pace—not 'gonna happen. Take off as much energy as you can to cause your foe to retreat, then finish him with a special. The last enemy, the Dali Llama, is almost unfairly tough to beat—his Smoke attack is fierce! But once you do you can use him in battle. You will find yourself winning a lot with the Dali Llama in your corner.

The graphics in Brutal are excellent. Each level line scrolls perfectly and all 64 colors are beaming at you in every round. The CD soundtrack is also orchestrated very well, and fits the game like a glove. In the end, I would call Brutal an alternative fighting game. Rather than ripping of heads and spraying blood you get animals that fight for honor and dignity. When defeated they mourn their loss and vow to improve. It doesn't copy any other game in the category. Instead it offers new strategies exclusive to itself. Going through every Street Fighter controller motion will render absolutely nothing. You'll have to play to learn.

Great care was obviously taken in every aspect of this game, and Gametek is to be commended for that. This is their first completely in-house project and it is the best game they have ever released. That says something. I look forward to a Brutal Sequel on the 32X. My only advice to the designers is to make the move commands a little less complicated. Other than that they have a big winner. - *E. Storm*

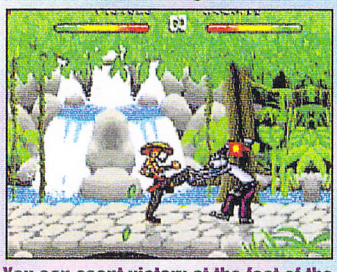
Sega GAME Feature

SEGA CD
GENESIS

BRUTAL
Paws of Fury

Animated, Animalistic Martial Arts

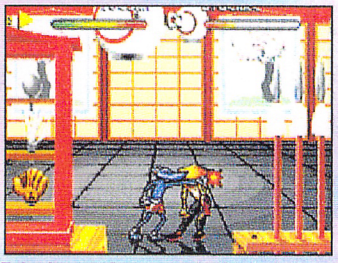
Here's your invitation to the tournament. Only gamers with warrior spirit need enter. *Brutal* for the Sega CD from Gametek is a martial arts title starring some fierce furry fighters. One or two players choose from ten characters and must earn special moves from the Dali Llama. With tons of great intro and cinematic animation, wonderful island fight locations, and controllable instant replays, this game has humor and depth. Sharpen your claws — the tournament has begun.



You can scent victory at the foot of the Waterfall. Jump and leaves fall.

Tai Cheetah vs. Kung Fu Bunny

The Dali Llama wanders the globe every four years in a search for the greatest warriors. He judges them on martial arts prowess and what he calls the warrior spirit. Those found deserving are invited to a tournament on Brutal Island, where they compete for the right to wear the Belt of Heaven. The combatants are Kung Fu Bunny, Tai Cheetah, Kendo Coyote, Foxy Roxy, Rhei Rat, Prince Leon, Ivan



Take it muzzle to paw in the Dojo.

the Bear, The Pantha, Karate Croc, and of course, The Dali Llama. May the best fighter win.

A CD Chock-Full Of Fun

For starters *Brutal* has more than 200 sprites (animations) per character, ten fight locations, musical scores for each character and location, sampled voices for the fighters, and at least four unique special moves per fighter. Two unusual features set this title apart from the rest. First, there's a Belt System in which the fighters earn new belts by proving themselves. Second, the Learning System gives fighters who have performed well a chance to grasp a new and special move. The Dali Llama gives you three chances to learn and properly replicate the move. If you haven't gotten it in three tries, he becomes weary of your incompetence and departs.



The furred fighters fight it out in the Courtyard. Nice fountain.

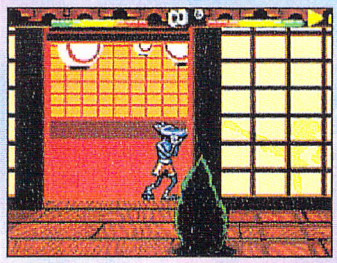
Light on Carnage, Heavy on Fun!

A Fist Full O' Fun

Feelin' frisky, Fight fans? There's a great crop of nontraditional Fighting games coming to Sega owners. These titles have all the depth and strategy of fatality-filled games without the gore. Plus they've all added a weird little twist or two that you won't find elsewhere.

Good Fighting titles can be a fist full o' fun without all the sensationalized violence. Cartoon characters are a kick, and the bad boys require top-notch technique to beat. Take a look at *Brutal* from Gametek for the Sega CD, *ClayFighter* for the Genesis from Interplay, and *Ballz* for the Genesis from Accolade.

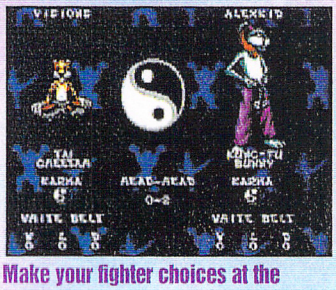
Yup. They have fist-in-face Fighting action, but the worst you'll see is a flattened furry thing, some scattered spheres, or pounded play-dough. There's not a drop of blood or a humanoid-looking fighter in the bunch. But that doesn't mean they're simplistic or easy. They're serious Fighting carts.



In the Screen Room, fighters are visible only in the center of the room. The rest of the time, you must fight while watching their shadows on the screens.

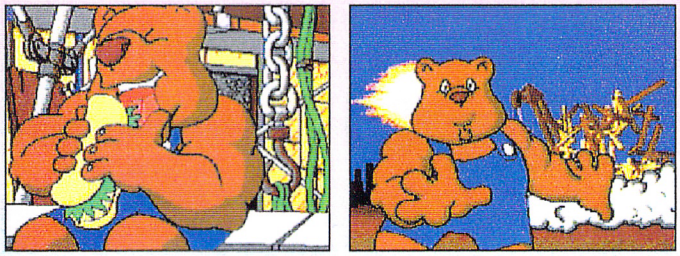
You keep the special moves you have learned in previous games through the use of a password. As an added gloat feature, the instant replay shows the whole previous bout if you wish. The winner controls the replay.





Make your fighter choices at the Match Up screen.

Fantastic Intro Animation

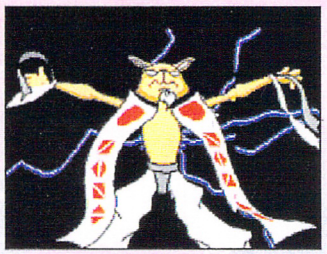


Check out the great animated intros! In this one, Ivan the Bear gets his invitation to the tournament.

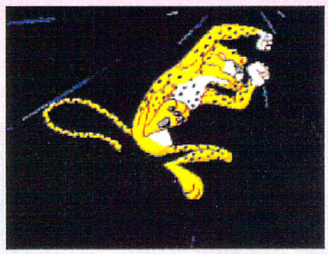
A Few Fur-Bearing Fighters



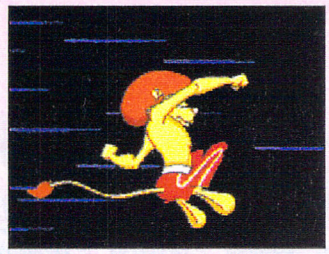
Foxy Roxy's style of fighting is Penjat Silat. An abandoned orphan, she eventually became President of the U.N. Children's Fund.



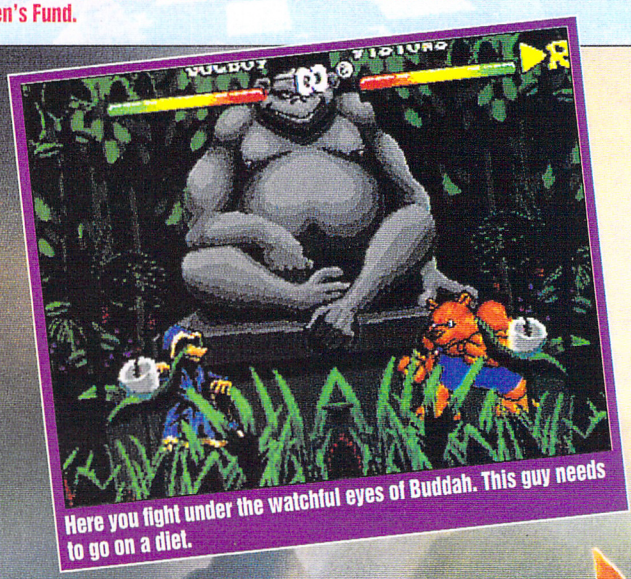
The Dali Llama invites fighters from all over the earth to battle for the right to wear the Belt of Heaven.



Tai Cheetah searches for spiritual rather than financial riches in his quest for the Belt.



Prince Leon the lion fights for his pride. He is certain that he'll receive the Belt on prowess alone.



Here you fight under the watchful eyes of Buddah. This guy needs to go on a diet.



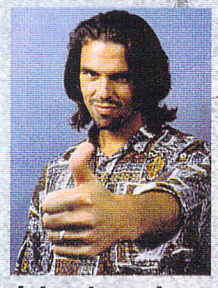
Welcome to the Landing. Use the instant replay to make your opponent view the losing performance again.



Publisher & Developer: Gametek • available now • $59.95

BRUTAL
PAWS OF FURY

SEGA CD info	
GENRE	fighting
PLAYERS	1 or 2
LEVELS	10 different fighters
DIFFICULTY	medium
SAVE FEATURE	password
MEGS	16



*Da Plane, Boss! Da Plane! **Mike Salmon** arrives at the small island vowing victory and looking to accessorize!*



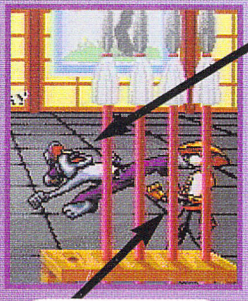
Ever been drop-kicked by a 300 pound bear or karate-chopped by a mystical llama? Well, here's your chance. You've been invited to a small island to battle for the Belt of Heaven (gee, I hope it goes with my new shirt). You travel to various scenes en route to your final confrontation with the Dali Lama himself.

There's no blood, there are morals, and you have to earn your moves one belt at a time. There's no double-death-blood-guts-decapitate options, all you can do is beat your opponent senseless with a combination of kicks and punches not nearly violent enough to be blamed for some kid going on a tri-state murder rampage. Yet I still came back for more! Maybe a solid game with good graphics, a good story, and fast action is more important than the amount of blood on the screen... *Naah!*

The road to the Dali Lama is a ho-hum ride only kept interesting by the belt system and scenery changes. In *Brutal* each time a fighter gains a belt he or she learns a new move. The progressive belt idea is a dandy; I kept playing just to see what other moves I could get under my belt. I might as well have kept these moves under my belt however, 'cause no matter how wonderful these moves are in practice, in a fight against your computer they're about as useful as that McDonald's sign that reads, "Braille Menus Available" (think about it). There simply isn't enough time to pull off any of the moves, except for the useless "taunt" move. This sensationally stupid move allows you to point a finger at your opponent until he whacks you on the head knocking you senseless and leaving you on the ground — though it does help you revitalize your character when you're running low on health. If the whizzes at Gametek can add to the moves, the characters, and make the special attacks workable, they could very well overtake *MK* and *MKII* as the most popular fighting game... *Naah*, gotta add some blood too! Lots of blood! Because, as every one of you out there knows, blood sells!

GET TO KNOW THEM!

Here's a look at some cartoon characters who take themselves very seriously. Pick one, and prepare to get Brutal.



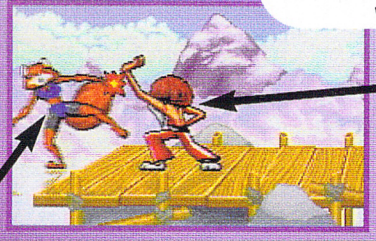
Even loveable ***Bugs Bunny*** can't pull off a back kick like ***Kung Fu Bunny***. This thoughtful bunny has broken his vow of non-violence to partake in the competition! Careful with this waskelly wabbitt or he breaks more than vows!



Soap Opera star ***Kendo Coyote*** looks to send ***Rhei Rat*** to a "general hospital" with a powerful chop to the head!

This rat usually fights for money, but at this competition he's fighting for respect, which is something he won't show you when you're down!

Tai Cheetah may be on the receiving end of this blow, but give this wise teacher an opening and he closes the book on you!



Beware of ***Prince Leon the Lion***. One royal uppercut can put you over the edge.

Foxy Roxy may be falling for ***Prince***, but she's not likely to do the same for you unless you watch out for her high flying moves.

Ivan Bear may not be the prettiest fighter but his brute strength carries him through most matches.



The Big Guy, The Boss, The Head Honcho, The Big Cheese, ***The Dali Lama***. The road stops here! Ya gotta beat the master to get the Belt of Heaven!



The ***Pantha*** may look like he's wearing a bathrobe, but take this cat lightly and you're sent to the showers.



A *Brutal* blow to the legs sends any opponent to the ground. Keep them on the ground with mighty back kicks and mighty punches.



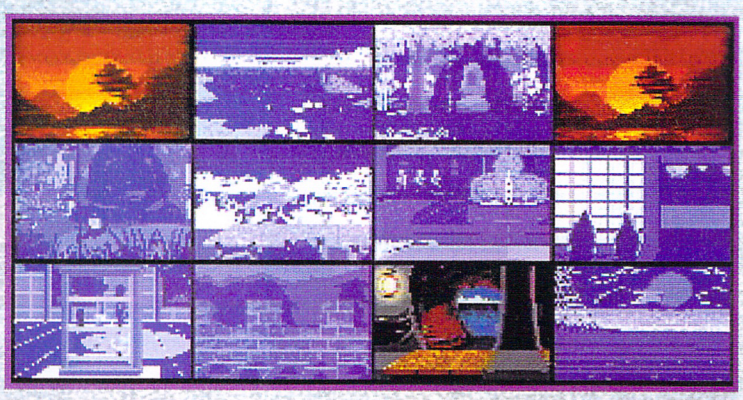
Time to learn the "taunt" move. Trouble is, it's not a lot of use in battle... though it does help revitalize your character.



Want to know exactly how you lost or won? After each match, get a detailed rundown of all the action.

The Dali Lama is one tough (and ugly) opponent, but once he is finally defeated there is really no need for the solo player to continue. If, however, you've got a friend you really want to knock the snot out of, the head-to-head fights never grow old.

Overall I was quite impressed, frustrated, intrigued, confused, amused, and undecided about *Brutal*. All I know is I spent enough time playing this stupid game to lose my tan, my girlfriend, and most of my patience. As usual, those are all the signs of a good game. So if you're afraid the ozone layer's gone, and you'd prefer that your girlfriend was too, get *Brutal*, tell her to pay for her own damn movie, and give this game a rent! **GP**



In two player mode you can choose from 10 different scenes to fight in, each with their own little twists.



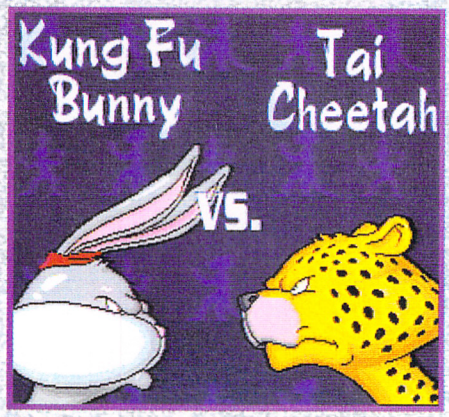
Don't quit the day job! The *Brutal* gang could be the worst lip-synchers since Milli Vanilli. Enjoy, er, this and other outakes from the Fun Room.

A SECOND OPINION

Well Mike cerainly seemed to enjoy the game. Let me step in and say that I found *Brutal* to be one of the most innovative and just plain fun fighting games ever. Sure, it's difficult to pull off the special moves, but with just a little practice, you'll soon be using them like a pro. The graphics are solid, and the soundtrack is simply unbeatable. If you're a fighting game fan — and not quite as bloodthirsty as our buddy Mike — then go to the nearest store and demand your own copy of *Brutal*.

— Trent





Face to face, neither Kung Fu Bunny or Tai Cheetah Bunny blinks an eye as they stare each other down just prior to the fight.

RATINGS

GRAPHICS

9

↑ The backgrounds are rich in detail; animation is top-notch.
↓ More background interaction would be a pleasant change.

MUSIC & SOUND FX

8

↑ CD-quality music and sound give this game a polish most games don't have.
↓ High-pitched 'Keeyaps!' and other sound effects can get a bit annoying.

BELLS & WHISTLES

8

↑ Belt system, fight stats, and mental make-up are the icing on the cake!
↓ Too few belts, and useless moves, like the "taunt", leave you wishing for more.

CONTROL

7

↑ Six-button pad gives full control of moves, kicks, and punches.
↓ Nearly, if not impossible, to play on a three-button control pad.

REPLAY VALUE

6

↑ You won't put down the controller until you've bested the Dali Lama.
↓ The solo player is likely to use the disk as a frisbee after beating it.

OVERALL 77%

GameTek, Inc • 2999 N.E. 191st Street, Suite 500, North Miami Beach, FL 33180 • (305) 935-3995

SEGA CD

FIGHTING



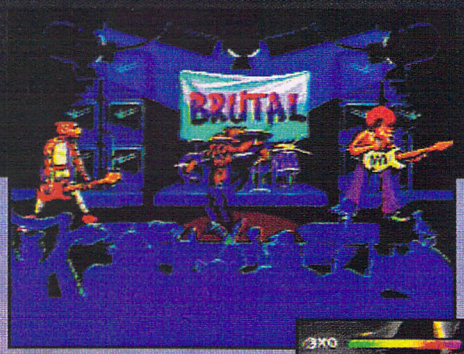
GAMETEK

1-2 Players

CD

Developer:

GameTek



Have you ever wondered what it would be like if some crazy programmer crossed the *Bugs Bunny/Road Runner Show* with Bruce Lee's classic *Enter The Dragon* film and tossed in liberal amounts of *Street Fighter* to add some spice? Sounds like a recipe for one hell of a game, huh? Imagine: Kung-Furry. Bugs Bunny gets Tao, Pepe Le Pew learns Savate and Speedy Gonzales masters Muy Thai. What a wonderful world that would be....

Brutal, a new Sega CD fighting game, tries to make this world a reality, and it succeeds and fails at the same time. Subtitled *Paws of Fury*, it brings something new and sassy to the crowded-as-a-Chinese-bus genre of fighting games, but also seems to have a few problems. More on these later.



The plot of the game is pure Hong Kong circa 1973: Elite fighters from around the globe are called to far off Brutal Island to participate in a contest of strength and skill, a contest to see which animal is the fiercest. It's like *Animal Farm* without the politics but with ten times the violence. You have your choice of a host of combatants: Leon, the Lion Prince from Kenya (who, as Nikos pointed out, looks a lot like the character Williams from *Enter the Dragon*), Kung-Fu Bunny, The Pantha, Foxy Roxy and others. "Warner Brothers meets Jackie Chan" is how one of our staffers describes it.

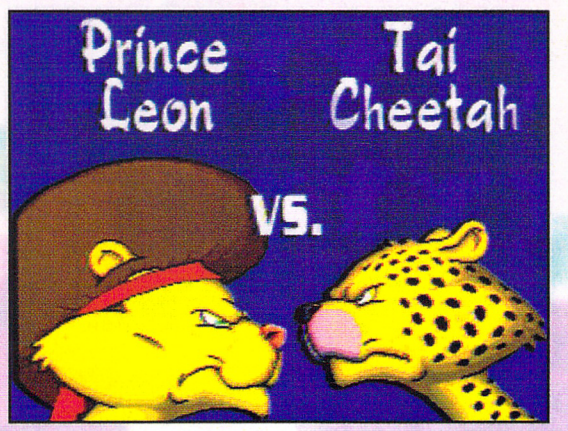
This alone would qualify *Brutal* for the originality hall of fame, but it also adds a few new dimensions to what is considered the standard for fighting games. Each character starts off as a white belt, the lowest of the low, and as they progress they can obtain new levels of skill. As you gain levels, the computer takes on the role of Sensei and teaches you about the special moves your character possesses. During these little teach-ins, the game will drill you until you're able to dazzle the opposition with your mighty kung-fu knowledge. Imagine getting into a street fight, beating your enemy into mashed pomegranates and then going home to learn some more moves so you can turn your next enemy into marinara sauce. I think I like this new idea. Play, learn and then play some more. What's more, you are prevented from using the moves until you have "earned" them; that is, if you've played through the game and know all of your favorite character's moves, they won't work in the first battle of a new game. Which is pretty cool.

After your lesson in martial arts, you get promoted to a new belt level. As in real martial arts training, you have to

The fur flies in *Brutal*, GameTek's first in-house development project for the Sega CD.













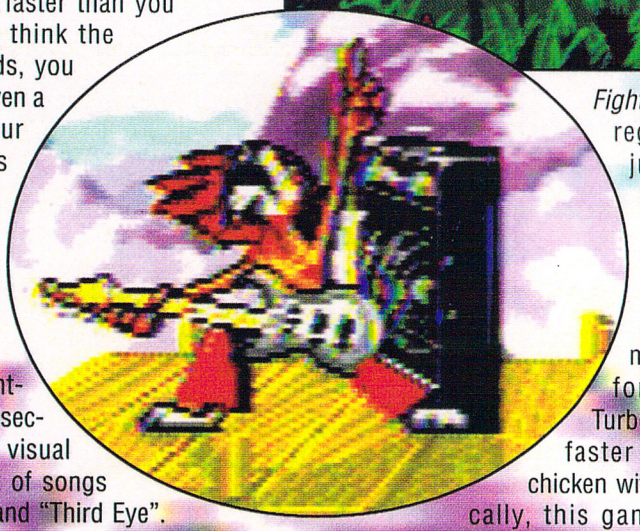






work your way up to a 6th degree black belt. It might take you months, and then you're doomed to fight the bosses.

You may think that fighting as future fur coats is condescending, but these cartoon zoo animals are tougher than leather. If the normal level is too easy, there are two faster levels: Turbo and Turbo Nutter. These levels are faster than you can move. Also, if you think the white belt is for little kids, you can start as a yellow or even a black belt. You'll get your butt nicely kicked, but it's all experience, right? Otherwise, play against one of your friends in the no-frills two player mode and claim victory of your house.



In addition to the fighting, there's a "Fun Zone" section in the menu with a visual music test. The long list of songs includes "Tokyo Ghetto" and "Third Eye". But the best part of the Fun Zone is the ability to view outtakes which—like the endings of Jackie Chan movies—give you funny bloopers and pencil-test animations of the competitors.

All is not chummy and well on Brutal Island, however. While the full-screen introductory and intermission animation is incredible, the movements of the characters in the game are not *Street Fighter*-quality. In the regular mode, the jumping is slow and unresponsive. Fortunately, choosing the Turbo mode makes the action much more comfortable and the Turbo Nutter speed is faster than a running chicken with no head. Basically, this game needs to be played in Turbo mode; otherwise it just feels like Game Boy action.

Brutal will definitely quench your fighting fits of need. Overall, the game is fun and its innovative features will probably get ripped off by future games, which is always a definite measure of quality.

—Gabe Soria & Eric Nakamura



GRAPHICS 8

The graphics are rad—it's like watching Looney tunes, except punches are thrown. The cartoons in the intro are high quality and the characters look like they should have been in *Watership Down*.

SOUND/MUSIC 8

There's a long list of songs to jump around with and you can even see the animal house band play the tunes. The sound quality is high and the music is nice, but it's not something that would sell me this disc.

PLAYABILITY 7

One of the biggest drawbacks to this game is the funky controls. If you're used to *Street Fighter* fluidity then you'll be tripped out with *Brutal* because everything moves a little strangely. But it's something you can get used to.

EASY MEDIUM DIFFICULT

EDITORS' RATINGS

GORE	CHRIS
8	8
NIKOS	BETTY
8	7

BANG FOR THE BUCK 7

THE LOWDOWN

The controls may bug you out, but *Brutal* is a pretty good game with some new features. Learning moves while you go is a great idea. This prevents you from kicking butt on everything and everyone right away. Your characters must be cultivated to reach the black belt. The sound and graphics are pretty good. The characters are butt-kicking animals that look like Saturday morning cartoons. Check out the fun zone, there's stuff there that'll make you laugh.

Sega CD

BRUTAL
Paws of Fury



By Scary Larry

A new fighter has to be something special to survive. On one hand, Brutal has several features that make it unique. But on the other hand, Brutal is ultimately just another average fighter.

Strange Bru

Now that we've seen fighting games made with robots, clay, turtles, and even balls, it's only natural that somebody turned to the jungle for inspiration. Brutal uses a variety of kombat kritters to spark some interest in a jungle jam. Each character has deep roots in real martial arts ideology (for instance, Kung Fu Bunny is characterized as Right Thinking), and this attention to martial arts detail is evident throughout.

Each of the ten fighters has their own regular moves, but special moves have to be earned. You can play against the computer, where the object is to fight until you reach the Dali Llama, or against a friend, where you fight in a best-of-three match.



PROTIP: Keep your opponent in the corner and repeatedly nail them with leaping kicks. They have to come up for air eventually, and when they do, you'll be there to nail 'em.



PROTIP: Mix up your attacks. Use a fierce punch at the end of a series of kicks and vice versa.



PROTIP: Use the special moves you've acquired as soon as the match starts. Most opponents will be unprepared.

Control is a problem. In the regular mode, the game is so slow, it's hard to tell whether you're playing or watching the slo-mo replay. In faster modes, the moves are difficult to pull off in comparison to other games (like MK's Sub-Zero moves).

Lookin' for a Fight

The game's graphics deliver but don't dazzle. Each character is well drawn and has cute, cartoony reactions to hits, but the backgrounds often get in the way of the action. This effect is intentional, but after a while it detracts from the fights and leaves you frustrated that you can't see what's hitting you.

The sounds are good and deliver some jacked jungle jams. Brutal's music is a house sound that's been around, but you'll groove. The sound effects are typical roars, groans, and smack attacks.



PROTIP: You can knock your opponent off the edge of this bridge.

Martial Laws

Additional perks include outtakes of eliminated scenes, detailed bios on each character, and a Brutal band that cranks the tunes. But these perks don't pop when compared to the game's flaws – somebody's got to be Brutal about this. G



The Brutal band rocks!

Sega CD Game ProFile

Brutal

(By Gametek)

Rated by V.R.C. MA-13 Parental Discretion Advised. Mature Audiences

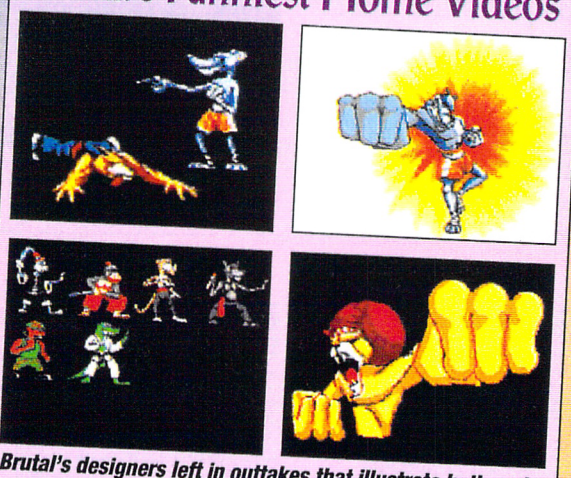
Another day, another fighting game. Although Brutal has a few things that set it apart from the herd, the herd eventually catches up with its lackluster game play.

Graphics	Sound	Control	FunFactor	Challenge
4.0	4.0	2.5	3.5	INT. (Intermediate)

$62.99
CD
Available now
Fighting game

2 players
Side view
Passwords

Brutal's Funniest Home Videos



Brutal's designers left in outtakes that illustrate both early concepts and design flaws. They'll be interesting if you want to design or produce video games!

BRUTAL: PAWS OF FURY

Fantastic furry fighters of the animal world

As the video game market becomes saturated with fighting games, designers have to go farther afield to find a new angle, some twist that will set their product apart from the competition. Gametek has produced such a title. **Brutal: Paws of Fury** is a distinctly different game, loaded with loving detail, wry humour, and enough fur-flying fighting to make it the best original fighting game currently available on the Sega CD.

As readers might have guessed from the title, **Brutal** is an anthropomorphic animal fighting game. Eight fuzzy, animated combatants have been invited to a remote island to compete in a secretive martial arts tournament that occurs every four years. The plot might not turn much new ground but **Brutal**'s designer Rod Humble has labored successfully to give all of the fighters a personality and some character.

Each of the eight characters embodies one of the Buddhist paths of wisdom. In order of appearance the fighters are: Kung Fu Bunny–Right Understanding, Tai Cheetah–Right Mindfulness, Kendo Coyote–Right Resolve, Rhei Rat–Right Speech, Prince Leon (a lion, natch)–Right Effort, Foxy Roxy–Right Livelihood, Ivan the Bear–Right Action, and The Pantha–Right Meditation.



There are two characters that players can't immediately play. They are the organizer of the tournament, the Dali Llama, and an uninvited guest, Karate Croc. Despite being animals, these characters have a lot more personality than most fighting game drones.

The animals each have their own, real fighting style, augmented by appropriately cartoonish special moves. Character development is emphasized here, unusual for a fighting game, unheard of for a fuzzy animal fighting game.

Designed with input from a second degree black belt, **Brutal** uses the martial arts belt system for character advancement. Like all novice martial artists, new fighters start off with a White Belt. New players have to compete to win all of the special moves available to them.

After winning two matches in a row, the Dali Llama teaches the player to complete one special move, then gives the player three tries to get it right. Two successful matches later, the player is taught another special move, and so it goes until the player has learned all the special moves for that character.

Even if the player has seen the move before, it can't be done until the fighter has won the required number of rounds to be taught that move. A Password Option that saves wins, losses, belt level, and name allows a unique character to develop over many gaming sessions.

Pains are taken to show that the fighters have a life outside of the tourney. Each has different motivations for fighting, and they react to losing in different ways. Ivan smashes a tree in rage; Kendo mourns that he'll have to work in daytime TV for four years before he can return to the tournament; while Kung Fu Bunny smiles stoically, knowing there are more important things in life than winning or losing.

Interestingly, the female character, Foxy Roxy, is given the deepest background. She has a real name (Indhra Prashmet) and a career helping starving orphans.

There's not really very much information here that isn't presented in other fighting games, but it's presented in such a fresh format that, added to the rest of the detail, it feels quite rich. Stats are shown at the end of every battle showing number of hits taken by each fighter, number of each type of blow thrown, plus overall accuracy. A running line of text summarizes the battle in appropriately descriptive terms (if the match was short, the text says "...in a lightning fast fight...") while two boxes show the contestants executing the moves they used in the fight.

The graphics are not cutting edge; there are no battling polygons here, though shaded polygons are used in some cut sequences. The characters and backgrounds are quite detailed and handsomely rendered, and the head-to-head profiles before each fight are just excellent. The sound effects are good, if a little repetitious, but the techno-industrial soundtrack more than makes up for any deficiency in sound. Each screen has its own theme and there are more than a couple of radio-worthy tracks here. It's worth a listen.



Brutal is *the* configurable fighting game. Rounds can be set for single match, best of three, best of five, best of seven, first to two, first to three, first to four, first to five, first to six, or first to seven.

There are 14(!) levels of difficulty, equal to the progression of belts in the martial arts, from White Belt to sixth Dan Black Belt. There are three speeds; Normal, Turbo, and Turbo Nutter. Turbo Nutter is stupefyingly fast and the characters zip around the screen like, well, like cartoon characters.

Brutal has a few flaws. Most annoying: no pause feature. What's the player to do when the phone rings while he's kicking the stuffing out of some critter? The yips and the yelps during combat are kind of uninspired. The 10 second access time before each round can be a moment for meditation or an annoyance, depending on the player. Some stuff feels like padding. Do we really need 14 levels of difficulty?

Whatever. Additional spiffs like instant replay and a Fun Room wherein the player can view game outtakes and early character concepts, plus a group of real animals (Team Brutal), make **Brutal** a great value-added game.

Team Brutal had a lot of fun making this game and that seems to be infectious, because **Brutal** is a lot of fun to play.

A- *(John Wesley Hardin)*

TECH SPECS

PUBLISHER:	**Gametek**
DESIGNER:	**Rod V. Humble**
SYSTEM:	**Sega CD**
THEME:	**Fighting**
HD SPACE:	**N/A**
PLAYERS:	**1 or 2**
LEVELS:	**N/A**

BRUTAL
Paws of Fury



Learn your special moves from the Dali-Llama.

- *Cart Size:* CD-ROM
- *Style:* 1 or 2-Player, Head-to-Head Tournament Fighting
- *Special Features:* Passwords Compatible With SNES & SG, AT&T Edge 16 Compatible, Special Moves Acquired Throughout Gameplay, 3 Playing Speeds, Instant Replay
- *Created by:* GameTek, Inc.
- *Available:* Now

GameTek has long been known for publishing video game versions of Family Feud, Jeopardy and other game shows. Their first game designed and programmed entirely by their own development team, GameTek has produced a unique fighting game for the Sega CD. Brutal: Paws of Fury has a storyline very similar to the classic Bruce Lee film, Enter the Dragon. Fighters have been called to a remote, yet peaceful island by the Dali Llama. On this island the Dali Llama holds a competition to determine who the ultimate warrior is. Only the greatest warrior will be worthy to wear the belt of heaven.

Ten characters comprise the game. Eight characters can be controlled from the start, and two characters, Dali Llama and Karate Croc, that can be accessed after beating the game or by secret passwords. Each of the eight participating characters have different personality profiles that are made to represent one of the eight paths of wisdom. To put it another way, this game has very strong elements of the martial arts philosophies. Word has it that a member of the design team is either a black belt or a person who watched too much Kung Fu on T.V.

All characters are equipped with three punches and kicks: light, medium, and hard. There are special moves you must learn from the Dali Llama as you win matches and earn belts. The belts start at white and progress to different degrees of black belt. None of the special moves can be used unless the Dali Llama has taught them to you. The password feature lets you store your character moves and also keeps track of wins and losses. The passwords store your name and will also be compatible with the SNES and the Genesis versions.

Brutal joins the growing number of head-to-head fighters for all systems, but Brutal CD is one that may tower over other Sega CD titles in this genre. It can be a pleasant relief from the typical blood, gore, and guts present in many games.



Brutal's Backgrounds have animated elements and also include foreground art for added depth.



Andy, The Game Hombre

Concept:	8
Graphics:	8
Sound:	8
Playability:	4
Entertainment:	4
OVERALL:	6.5

"This game is weird. It looks great, it sounds great, but plays soooo slow. It seems to have the right elements for a fighter, but still misses out on some of the basic play techniques that it needs. Though I would say this is the best fighter on Sega CD, that really isn't saying much. Luckily, GameTek is very committed to making this a great title, and with time it could be just that. It's just not there yet."

Rick, The Video Ranger

Concept:	8.5
Graphics:	9.5
Sound:	8
Playability:	7.5
Entertainment:	8
OVERALL:	8.5

"Brutal is a graphic animated masterpiece that offers some excellent new ideas in fighting games. I like the way you start with no special moves and have to earn them as you go. The game teaches you how to do each move through VCR style on-screen programming. After each fight, the game charts all of your punches and kicks. The oriental theme music and voices are pretty good too. The control could be a little better, but it's not bad. If you don't have to rip your opponents head off to have a good time, you will probably like Brutal."

Paul, The Pro Player

Concept:	7
Graphics:	8
Sound:	8
Playability:	5
Entertainment:	5
OVERALL:	6.5

"First off, this has to be the best Sega CD fighter I've played. The belts and the learning of moves as you go are really cool, although many of the moves take too long to execute. The opening cinema sequences and overall look of the backgrounds are very well drawn, with serious depth. Brutal has some good animations of character moves, but the control is not as precise as I would have liked. I would recommend this to people who are just starting with fighters and have trouble with executing moves, or to those who are squeamish at the sight of blood, like Rick."

Strategy Guides

Brutal Sega CD

Game Players: September 1994

WHAT kind of ANIMAL are you?

BRUTAL: Paws of Fury

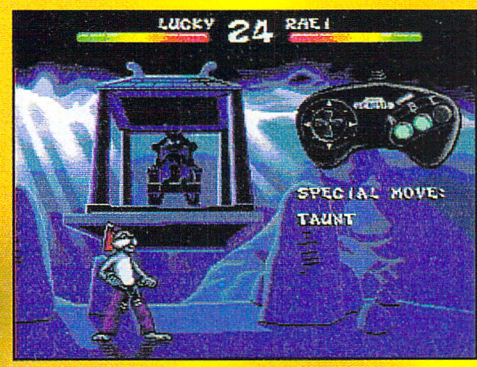


***So many fighting games, so little time. Jeff Lundrigan scratches behind the ears of those cute, fuzzy, fighting warriors of* Brutal.**

Deep in the heart of every beast that walks the earth lies the urge to enter a tournament of the greatest fighters of all time — right? Must be true, 'cause the Dali Llama is holding a contest, and only the best are invited to join. How can you get in on it? Well, just take a listen....

Herein you'll find passwords and secret moves for roughly half the characters in the game — well, all right, exactly half! We've come up with five passwords for each character — four so you can use as many of the moves as you'd like — and a fifth that gives you the rank of Grand Master with access to all that character's moves.

However, keep in mind as you play that *Brutal* is paced differently from most fighting games. You can't just mash the control pad; it takes a steady hand to get the moves off. Anyway, sit back, relax, and get ready to knock the stuffing out of a few critters! **GP**



Normally, you're given moves as you defeat the opponents. This is still the best way to learn them, since timing is critical, but you can use the lists below and cheat if you feel compelled to do so.

IVAN THE BEAR

Ivan is big and slow, but he's also incredibly strong! Three punches from his massive fists are enough to topple just about any opponent, so Ivan makes a good character for all beginners.

F2T!3PGDAIAAACEEAK:
Taunt
F2T!3PEHAQAAACEGMK:
Big Belly Attack
F2T!3PGHAYAAACEK0L:
Earthquake
F2T!3PELBAAAACESNK:
Strength of the North Kata
F2T!3PGPB2CAACESRN:
Grand Master



TAUNT: A+B, then release. All characters can Taunt. It recharges your energy bar (yay!) but leaves you standing there defenceless (boo!). When an opponent taunts you, smack 'em down hard!



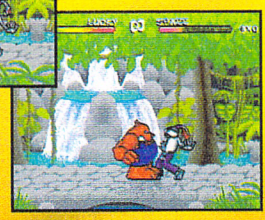




BIG BELLY ATTACK: Back, back, down, down, back, back. Ivan charges clear across the screen and slams the opponent with his massive bulk! Ouch!

STRENGTH OF THE NORTH KATA: Hold A for two seconds, B, B. Long name, smashing move! After two walloping punches, Ivan follows up with a Big Belly Attack — do it in close and no one can stand against it!









EARTHQUAKE: Down, back, down, down. Ivan leaps into the air and hits the ground so hard it shakes! This hurts the enemy no matter how far away they are — cool!

INFO

SEGA CD

PUBLISHER
Gametek

DEVELOPER
Gametek

SUGG. RETAIL
$59.95

GENRE
fighter

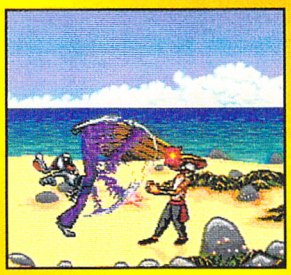
KUNG FU BUNNY

Agility, speed, and three different versions of the same kick. Kung Fu Bunny takes some patience to master, but his devotion to his art can pay off big time.

F2T!3PPCAAIAQACEEJK:
Taunt
F2T!3PBIBEFAACEGEK:
Hi Flash Kick
F2T!3PDIBMFAACEKSL:
Flash Kick
F2T!3PBMBUFAACESEM:
Double Flash Kick
F2T!3PCMBYFAACESJM:
Grand Master



TAUNT: A+B, then release. The Bunny makes a "bring it on big guy" sort of gesture.



HI FLASH KICK: B, B, while holding forward. The Bunny flips right over and cracks his opponent across the bridge of the nose — how unkind!



FLASH KICK: C, C, while holding B. This is basically the same move, it's just a little more powerful and easier to do.







DOUBLE FLASH KICK: Back, back, C, back, down. The Bunny flies clear across the screen, kicking everything in his path — woo-hoo! It's best to hang back a bit, since it takes a second or two to pull this one off correctly.

FOXY ROXY

She's fast, she's lean, she's frightenin'! If you like speed, you're gonna love Foxy!

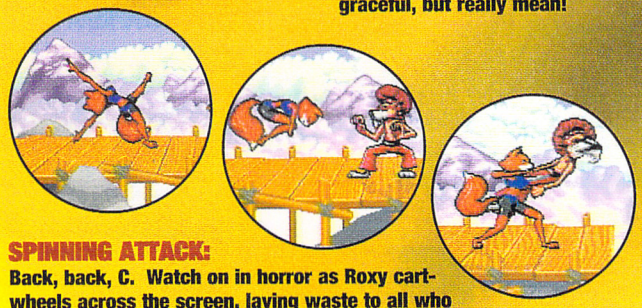
F2T!3PGCAIAAACEESJ:
Taunt
F2T!3PEGAQAQACEG1L:
Whiplash Kick
F2T!3PGGAYBQACEKKM:
Spinning Attack
F2T!3PFKBEBQACESCM:
Rolling Attack
F2T!3PGOBYCAACESMM:
Grand Master



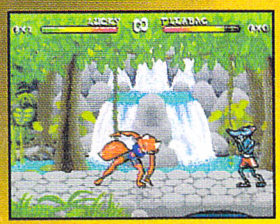
TAUNT: A+B, then release. Roxy pats her hiney — an unmistakable gesture of contempt.



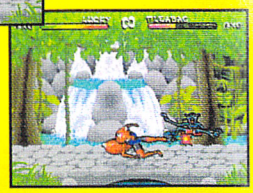
WHIPLASH KICK: B+C, then release. Foxy whips her legs over and kicks you in the head — graceful, but really mean!



SPINNING ATTACK: Back, back, C. Watch on in horror as Roxy cartwheels across the screen, laying waste to all who would oppose her — you gotta like this girl!







ROLLING ATTACK: Hold down for two seconds, then A, A while still holding down. With the agility of certain hedgehogs, Roxy rolls into the opponent, knocking him down.

KENDO COYOTE

Combining skill and power, Kendo is a master warrior. His moves are strong, and he's quick too.

F2T!3PGBAIAAACEE4J:
Taunt
F2T!3PFFAUAAACEGPK:
Slam Punch
F2T!3PGFAYAAACEKYL:
Headbutt
F2T!3PGNBYAAACESJM:
Cannonball
F2T!3PGNB2AAACESNM:
Grand Master



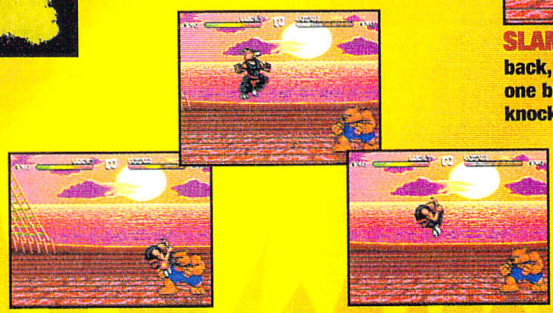
TAUNT: A+B, then release. "You! You can run, but I know where you park your car!"



SLAM PUNCH: Back, forward, back, forward. Got to put it all into one blow — this heavy punch can knock an opponent silly!



HEADBUTT: B+C, then release (stand very close). This is a real insult — slammed in the head a half-dozen times, then thrown in the air. When Kendo doesn't like a person, he really doesn't like them!



Cannonball: Forward, down, back, B, B. "I want you, coo-coo!" — oops, sorry... Anyway, this is Kendo's ultimate move. Up in the air, and down into a world of hurt for the other guy.

Brutal Mentions

Brutal Sega CD

Electronic Games: February 1994: Top Video Game Mentions
Electronic Gaming Monthly: March 1994: Table of Contents
Game Fan: March 1994: Most Wanted List
Video Games: September 1994: Why We Fight Article

American Laser Joins Publishing Partnership

American Laser Games is the first company to sign on with Crystal Dynamics' Publishing Partner Program, which will provide distribution and marketing services for ALG's hit games **Mad Dog McCree**, a sharp-shooter, and **Who Shot Johnny Rock?**, a gangster game.

ALG, based in Albuquerque, started in the coin-op business in 1990 with the first real motion picture interactive games, and is expanding into the home market with CD-ROM software for PCs, Sega CD and the 3DO system.



Crystal Dynamics will now be marketing ALG's game titles.

Interplay Eyes New Horizons

Interplay President Brian Fargo sneak-peeked a pair of titles now in development that should hit the market before summer. **Nightmare** (working title) is an action adventure for the SNES that Brian described as "...a sort of Out-of-This-World, Flashback-style of interactive adventure, with rotoscoped animation." For PC players, the licensed **Official US Chess Federation Chess** (w.t.) is an advancement of Interplay's **CheckMate** game. It goes previous programs one better since it allows the player to actually earn points toward entrance requirements for Federation chess tournaments. Interplay is also working on **Star Trek** (w.t.) for the SNES, and their first licensed Genesis game, **The Lost Vikings.**

The company also made an agreement with Philips that gives Interplay exclusive rights to develop DOS and MAC CD-ROM versions of three CD-I games. **Voyeur** stars Robert Culp and Grace Zabriskie in a Hitchcock-styled thriller; **Caesar's World of Gambling** simulates casino games, and **Zombie Dinos from the Planet Zeltoid** combines camp and science in an evil plot.

Top Video Games

As of October 25, 1993

The following figures are provided courtesy of Babbages.

Super NES

1. *Mortal Kombat*, Acclaim
2. *Secret of Mana*, Square Soft
3. *Top Gear 2*, Kemco
4. *Super Mario All-Stars*, Nintendo
5. *Street Fighter II Turbo*, Capcom
6. *The 7th Saga*, Enix
7. *Boxing Legends of the Ring*, ElectroBrain
8. *Super Caesar's Palace*, Virgin
9. *The Ren & Stimpy Show*, THQ
10. *Super Star Wars*, JVC

Sega Genesis

1. *Disney's Aladdin*, Sega
2. *NHL Hockey '94*, Electronic Arts
3. *Mortal Kombat*, Acclaim
4. *Bill Walsh College Football*, Electronic Arts
5. *Street Fighter II*, Capcom
6. *Ms. Pac Man*, Tengen
7. *Shining Force*, Sega
8. *Splatterhouse 3*, Namco
9. *PGA Tour Golf II*, Electronic Arts
10. *Jurassic Park*, Sega

Game Boy

1. *Mortal Kombat*, Acclaim
2. *Super Mario Land*, Nintendo
3. *Legend of Zelda Link's Awakening*, Nintendo
4. *Kirby's Dream Land*, Nintendo
5. *Super Mario Land 2*, Nintendo
6. *Baseball*, Nintendo
7. *Final Fantasy Legend III*, Square Soft
8. *Tetris*, Nintendo
9. *Jurassic Park*, Ocean
10. *Star Trek The Next Genera tion*, Absolute

NES

1. *Tetris 2*, Nintendo
2. *Jurassic Park*, Ocean
3. *Kirby's Adventure*, Nintendo
4. *Caesar's Palace*, Virgin
5. *Tecmo Super Bowl*, Tecmo
6. *Bubble Bobble 2*, Taito
7. *Star Trek:The Next Genera tion*, Absolute
8. *Dragon Warrior IV*, Enix
9. *Tetris*, Nintendo
10. *Joe and Mac*, Data East

Sega Game Gear

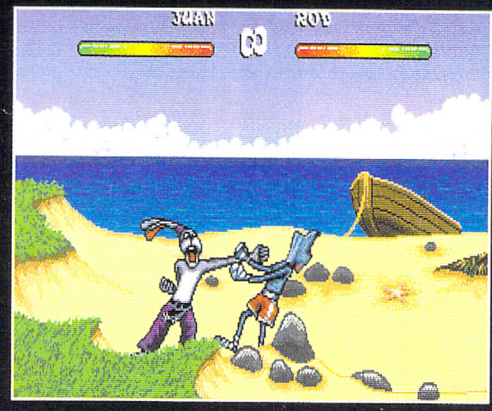
1. *Mortal Kombat*, Acclaim
2. *Jurassic Park*, Sega
3. *Columns*, Sega
4. *World Series Baseball*, Sega
5. *Sonic the Hedgehog 2*, Sega
6. *Streets of Rage 2*, Capcom
7. *Tom & Jerry*, Sega
8. *T2-The Arcade Game*, Acclaim
9. *Jeopardy*, Gametek
10. *Land of Illusion*, Sega

Sega CD

1. *Joe Montana's NFL Football*, Sega
2. *Silpheed*, Sega
3. *Spider-Man vs. The King pin*, Sega
4. *Ecco the Dolphin*, Sega
5. *Night Trap*, Sega
6. *Batman Returns*, Sega
7. *Road Avenger*, Renovation
8. *Final Fight*, Sega
9. *Jaguar XJ220*, JVC
10. *Time Gal*, Renovation

Animals Get Brutal On Sega CD

Gametek is putting the finishing touches on **Brutal**, a cartoon martial arts game with a pointed difference from other titles of the genre. Instead of having human combatants,



Brutal stars fighting animals, such as Kung Fu Bunny, Kendo Coyote, Foxy Roxy, and more characters that bash and bean each other.

The characters each start with a few moves, then earn more by winning belts. Humor comes from the characters, and the unlikely cartoon fights with impossible angles and rubber bodies.

The game should be ready for Sega CD play in March.

Top Software Sales

October 1993

The list of top-selling computer software was compiled by PC Data of Washington, DC., based on units sold by ten retail chains, representing over 1300 stores.

TOP MS-DOS Games

1. *Lands of Lore*, Virgin
2. *X-Wing Mis.#1, Imperial Pur suit*, LucasArts
3. *X-Wing*, LucasArts
4. *Sim City*, Maxis
5. *The 7th Guest*, Virgin
6. *Betrayal at Krondor*, Sierra
7. *Warlords II*, SSI
8. *Stronghold*, SSI
9. *HardBall III*, Accolade
10. *Links - 386 Pro*, Access

Top CD-ROM Titles

1. *The 7th Guest*, Virgin
2. *King's Quest VI*, Sierra
3. *Romaterial*, Moon Valley
4. *MPC Wizard*, Aris
5. *Lord of the Rings*, Interplay
6. *Day of the Tentacle: Maniac Mansion*, LucasArts
7. *Dune*, Virgin
8. *Just Grandma and Me*, Broderbund
9. *Ind. Jones & The Fate of Atlantis*, LucasArts
10. *Compton's Encyclopedia Upgrade*, Compton's

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Ground Zero, Texas	98	Super Battletank 2	34
Hotel Mario	158	Super Bomberman 2	78
Jurassic Park	36, 94	Super Metroid	122
Kether	38	Super Off Road	164
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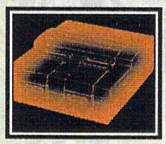
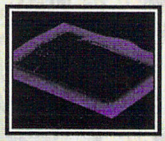


SUPER NES TIMES

If the groundhog sees his shadow, there's no need to worry—you'll stay warm by playing the hottest Super NES games including Pirates of Dark Water, Fire Striker, Super Metroid, Moto X, Stunt Race FX and Super Pinball.

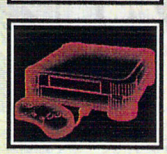
118-128



OUTPOST SEGA

Work yourself into a Fatal Fury 2!

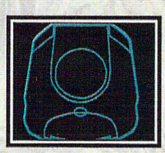
130-148



PLANET 3DO

Conquer evil in Escape from Monster Manor.

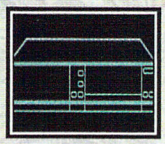
150-151



JAGUAR DOMAIN

Spring into action with Alien vs. Predator.

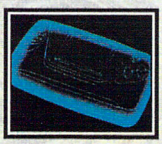
152-153



CD-I

Rescue the princess in Space Ace!

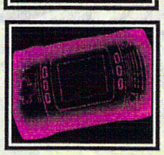
156-158



SUPER GEAR

Let Game Gear show you the world—Aladdin.

160-162



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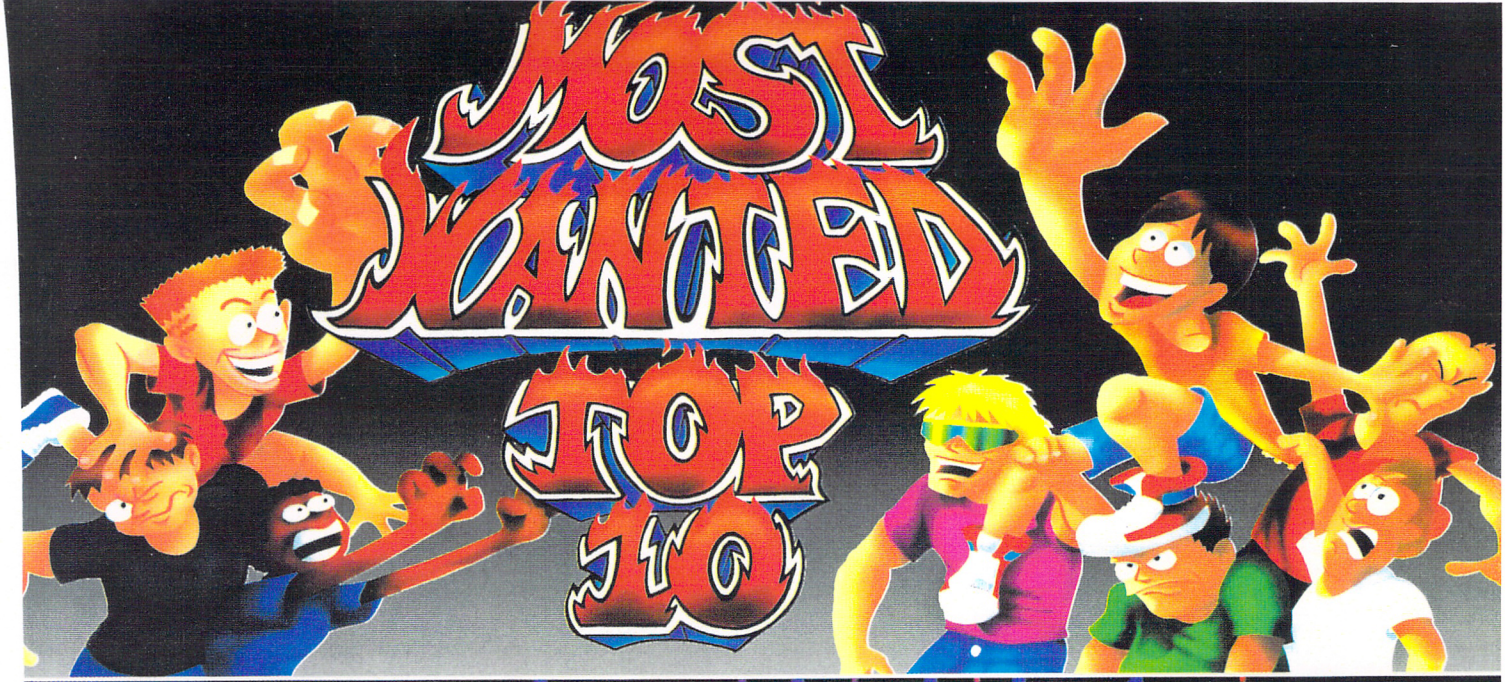


Here's your chance to let all the game companies know what you're playing and what you would like see in the future, so drop us a postcard. If your name is picked from our monthly drawing, you will the lucky recipient of one of the fabulous prizes listed below. So, what are you waiting for? Start writin

TOP TEN

1 SF 2 (GEN)
2 Mortal Kombat (GEN)
3 SF 2 (SNES)
4 Eternal Champions (GEN)
5 Mortal Kombat (SNES)
6 Samurai Shodown (GEO)
7 Starfox (SNES)
8 Aladdin (GEN)
9 Tournament Fighters (SNES)
10 Gunstar Heroes (GEN)

MOST WANTED

1 Mortal Kombat 2 (GEN)
2 NBA Jam (SNES)
3 Castlevania Bloodlines (GEN)
4 Super SF 2' (GEN or SNES)
5 Streets of Rage 3 (GEN)
6 Mortal Kombat (SCD)
7 Virtua Racing (GEN)
8 Mortal Kombat 2 (SNES)
9 Brutal (SCD)
10 NBA Jam (GEN)

3/14 Game FAN

First Prize: Your choice of a core SNES, GENESIS, or GAME GEAR.
Second Prize: Your choice of one of the Picks of the Month in Viewpoint.
Third Prize: A *FREE* year of Game Fan!

Congratulations to the following winners of last month's contest:
First Prize: Wes Keaton of Evanston, IL • Second Prize: Benjamin Johnson of Tallahassee, FL
Third Prize: Thomas Diehl of Navasota, TX

All you have to do to enter the drawing is write down a list of your top 10 favorite games and the 10 games you want the most that aren't out yet, on a piece of paper or a postcard then send them to:

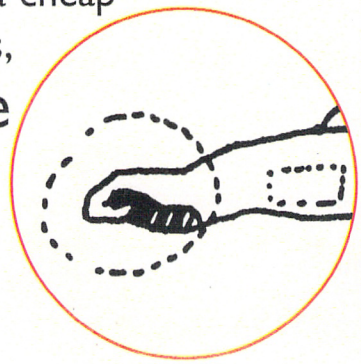
GAME FAN TOP TEN 6400 Independence Ave., Woodland Hills, CA 91367

Drawing is limited to One (1) entry per person per month. Hope to hear from you soon.
Drawings will be held on the 21st of each month. The three (3) winners will be notified by mail and listed on this page.

WHY



There comes a time in every gamer's life when the question must be asked: Why do we fight? What is it about a devastating *Street Fighter II* combo that sends thrills up our spines? How can we explain the appeal of a brutal *Mortal Kombat II* finishing move? What compels us to to engage in hours of nerve-wracking game play to finally feel the sublime satisfaction of defeating our adversaries? Are we bloodthirsty animals looking for a cheap thrill? Are we diverting aggression into a harmless, fun outlet? Why do we fight? Why do we play fighting games?



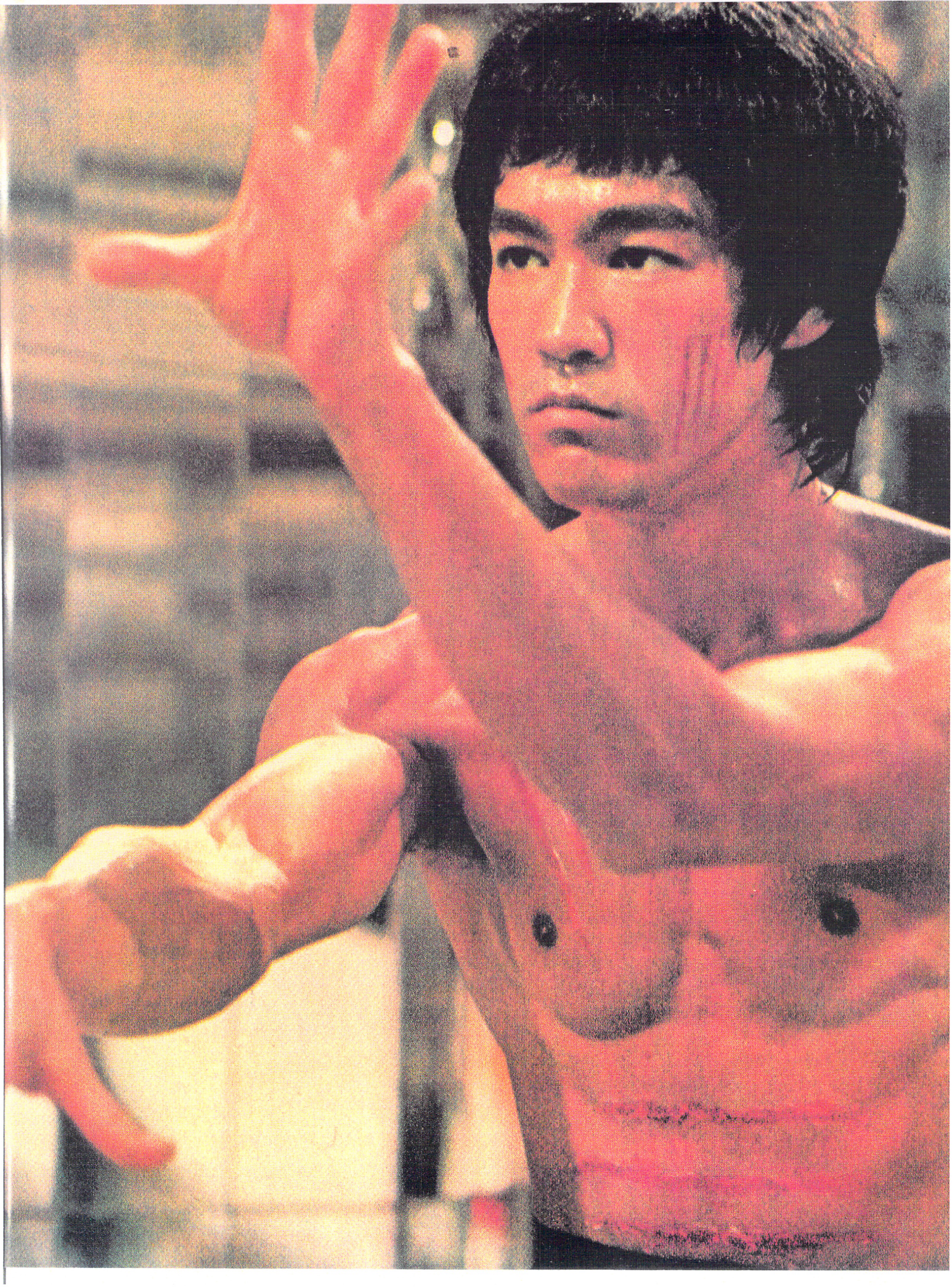
WE



'Cause they're bitchin', that's why! It feels damn good to see Chun-Li take out a sucker with a well-timed high kick. A flawless victory over a powerful opponent in *Samurai Shodown* is far more satisfying than a Big Mac. The endless stream of fighting games flooding the video game market, the cry of "*Mortal Kombat*" being screamed by both elementary school kids and drunken college students...both are examples of our obsession with these electronic odes to mayhem. They're everywhere! They're multiplying like proverbial rabbits, too, so there must be something in them that strikes a nerve and keeps us coming back for more punishment in new and varied forms.

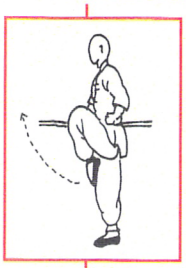
FIGHT

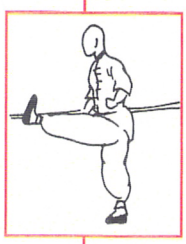
By Gabe Soria and Nikos Constant



What is Wing Chuing?

"It has been quite a number of years that I have indulged myself in Wing Chuing, the School of Artlessness; my mind is no longer distracted by the opponent, "self," or formal techniques, etc. I have made my opponent's techniques my techniques; my task is simply to complete the other half of the "oneness," and my action is that of Wu-Wei (spontaneous act), which is according to the circumstances, without pre-arrangement. The training of mind and imagination, imagination and Ch'i (breath), breath and energy, etc., are all gone. There is nothing to "try" to do; everything simply flows."
—Bruce Lee
From Chinese Gung Fu: The Philosophical Art of Self-Defense





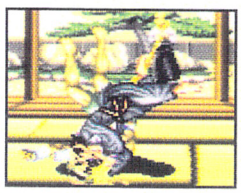


Fighting games are mutating and changing with every wave of new releases. No longer are we limited to what is now considered the generic style of game, involving a Rainbow Coalition of butt-kickers coming together to tap dance on each other's heads. The popularity of games like Interplay's extremely innovative and hilarious *Clay Fighter* showed that the battle royal didn't have to take itself so seriously. GameTek's new Sega CD game *Brutal* plays like the mutant child of *Watership Down*, *Animalympics* and *Street Fighter II*...and don't get us started on the popularity of the *Street Fighter* and *Mortal Kombat* franchises and their many imitators.





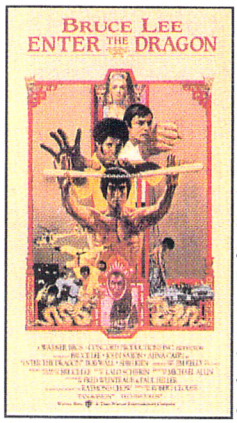


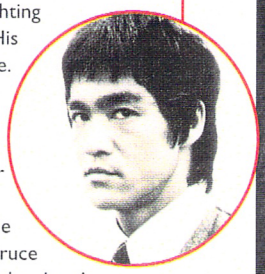




"But they're so violent," your mom hisses in disgust, and you answer, "Well...yeah." It would be pointless to deny that the human race has a long history of violent behavior. Fortunately, we live in an era in which we have the means to defuse these violent tendencies in other, more constructive ways. Violence is fascinating, but can't the critics give us some credit as thinking human beings who can tell the difference between reality and fiction? Can't the critics see the—dare we say it—beauty of these games? Martial arts are visual poetry, an elaborate dance; those who have mastered these games should pat themselves on the back for admiring a time-honored art. Well, maybe you aren't that cool. There's a deeper level you might need to go to....

Our infatuation with one-on-one fighting video games certainly goes hand in hand with the worldwide fascination with martial arts. You might take it for granted, but *Kung Fu Theater* came from *somewhere*. One man is almost single-handedly responsible for the popularity of disciplines like Kung Fu and Jeet Kune Do; his films have also served as the inspiration—the über text if you will—of almost every fighting game there is. His name: Bruce Lee.





In 1966 Bruce hit the television airwaves as co-star of the ABC series *The Green Hornet*. Lee played Kato, the Green Hornet's personal servant. Though Bruce received second billing under Van Williams, the show's star, all eyes were focused on Kato's mad style and the killer moves that brought martial arts into the American mainstream. From his initial career in Hollywood, Bruce moved on to star in a series of Hong Kong action movies, culminating in the 1973 release of the Kung Fu epic *Enter the Dragon*.

But Lee's path to legendary status started way before his acting career. For him, martial arts was a lifestyle that he developed through years of training. Though TV and movies brought him fame and fortune, the art of Jeet Kune Do—his own personal form of Kung Fu—brought him inner peace.

Born Lee Jun Fan on November 27, 1940 in a San Francisco hospital, Lee's parents were members of a Chinese opera that was visiting the city for a series of performances. A nurse called him Bruce, and the nickname stuck. As a child, Lee starred in over 20 movies made in Hong Kong. At the age of 13, he started training under the teacher Yip Man in the Wing Chun style of Gung Fu. Bruce later became the youngest teacher of Gung Fu ever. In 1959 Bruce moved back to the States to pursue his dreams and get a college education. Though he never graduated, he later published his first book on his art, titled *Chinese Gung Fu: The Philosophical Art of Self-Defense*.

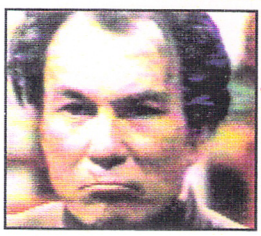


In 1964 Bruce opened up his own school of Kung Fu (that's the Americanized word for Gung Fu.) The school flourished, but Bruce quickly moved on to bigger and better projects. After his stint on *The Green Hornet*, he developed a show for television called *Kung Fu*. Unfortunately, the show's starring role was taken from him and given to actor David Carradine; the studios felt that

What is Jeet Kune Do?

"The art of Jeet Kune Do is simply to simplify."
—Bruce Lee
From Tao of Jeet Kune Do, Ohara Publications Inc., Santa Clarita, California

"Jeet Kune Do is an American art. It evolved here and took on a lot of American ideals and philosophy—you know, like "let the best thing work." That's a very American thing. That's American pragmatism and can-do, the whole thing of adaptability and innovation. I think those are very American values that Bruce incorporated into the philosophy of his art, and that's one of the things that made his art successful. And I think that's the legacy that he gave us here in America. We should be proud of it, cherish it, and cause it to continue to grow."
—Kareem Abdul Jabbar
Former Los Angeles Laker and student of Bruce Lee
From an interview in the Fall/Winter 1993 issue of Grand Royal Magazine, P.O. Box 26689, Los Angeles, CA 90026



What is Gung Fu?

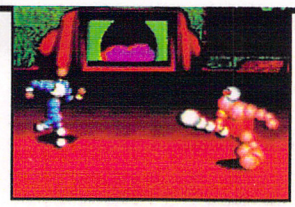
"Its philosophy is based on the integral parts of the philosophies of Taoism, Ch'an (Zen), and I'Ching (Book of Changes), the ideal of giving with adversity, to bend slightly and spring back stronger than before, and to adapt oneself harmoniously to the opponent's movements without striving or resisting. The techniques of Gung Fu emphasize not just power but also conservation of energy and moderation without going to either extreme (Yin and Yang). That is why a true Gung Fu man never opposes force (which will create reaction) or gives way completely; he is simply pliable, as a spring. He seeks to merge harmoniously with the oncoming force of the opponent—to be the complement, and not the opposite of the opponent's force.

—Bruce Lee

From Chinese Gung Fu: The Philosophical Art of Self-Defense, Ohara Publications Inc., Santa Clarita, California

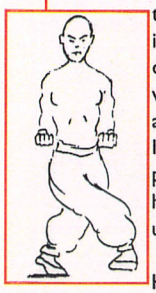






an Asian actor might not hold the public's interest. Though the show was a success, we can only imagine what it would have been like with Bruce Lee lending his martial arts skills and experience to every episode.

After this experience, Bruce decided to pursue other interests outside of Hollywood. It was during this period that he started re-evaluating Gung Fu, taking notes on how it could be further developed. Though he was planning to write a complete book on his new martial arts style—Jeet Kune Do, the "Way of the Intercepting Fist"—the lure of movies pulled him away from the project. After his death, Bruce's wife published the notes under the title *Tao of Jeet Kune Do*.



In 1971, Bruce moved his family to Hong Kong and was hired by film producer Raymond Chow to star in an action movie called *The Big Boss*. Released as *Fists of Fury* in the United States, the movie made a ton of money and Bruce Lee became a superstar. He made two more highly successful Hong Kong action films, *The Chinese Connection* and *Return of the Dragon*, which led to his first English-speaking role in his best and most famous film, an American production called *Enter the Dragon*.

Bruce began work on *Enter the Dragon* in 1973, and to this day, the influence of this feature is still felt—particularly among video-game designers. Bruce plays Mr. Lee, a teacher of Kung Fu who is hired by the British government to infiltrate the island fortress of the criminal warlord Mr. Hahn. The government suspects that Hahn's island is the center of Asia's slave and drug trade. Every year Mr. Hahn holds a martial arts tournament to find the best fighter in the world. (Does this sound familiar?) Lee agrees to go to the island and qualify for the tournament, but he also has an ulterior motive: Revenge. A year before, some of Hahn's men killed his sister.

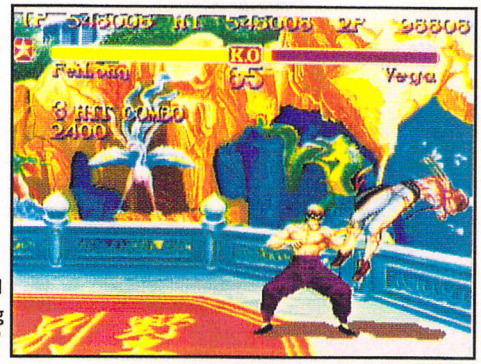
Other participants in the tournament include veteran character actor John Saxon as Roper and real-life karate champion Jim Kelly as Williams. The film ends with a battle scene between all of the contestants that makes a WWF Royal Rumble look tame. All forms of fighting are represented in the movie: Karate, judo, tai kwan do and of course, Gung Fu. This gives the movie an international flair, a feel mimicked in most fighting games.

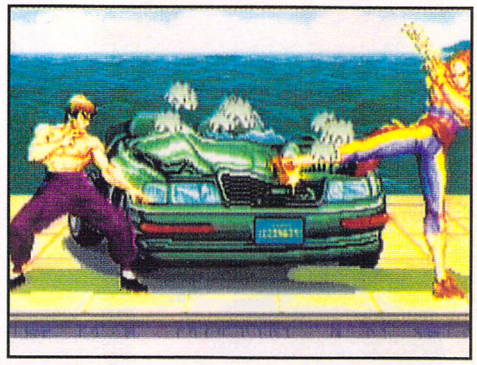
Surprisingly, there has never been an *Enter the Dragon* fighting game, but that doesn't mean that it hasn't been influential. In all of the most popular games, from *Super Street Fighter II* to *Mortal Kombat*, there is a taste of *Enter the Dragon*. *Super Street Fighter II* has participants from all over the world facing off, *Mortal Kombat* has an evil leader organizing a tournament and the *Fatal Fury* games have kidnapping and mafia overtones. Technos' popular *Double Dragon* series features a pair of brothers named Lee facing off against characters named—among others—Roper and Williams! GameTek's *Brutal* is perhaps the most heavily influenced *Enter the Dragon* descendant yet; we spoke with the game's designer, Rod Humble, who freely admits that the game's island tournament and characters are based on fighters and scenarios from the film.

Most of these games try to match the excitement of *Enter the Dragon* by creating an interactive playfield for players to face off on. These fighting games are part of a history, one made up of the practice of martial arts. Just as the movies were an outlet for people in the 1970s to experience their subtlety and choreography, so fighting games bring the same beauty to the interactive game machines of the '90s.

Obviously, with such an extensive hidden history behind them, fighting games are much more complex than most people give them credit for. They take inspiration from a multitude of influences, from famous people and events, and—perhaps unconsciously—at their core they also draw from both spiritual theory and philosophy. This is not to say that they are limited to drawing from these ideas; the genre is not so easily defined. We wouldn't be kidding anyone if we said that the upcoming *Clay Fighter* sequel was a "true to the ancient masters" kung-fu game; nevertheless, it shares a common bond with a game like *Way of The Warrior*. Even *Ballz* has martial arts stylings mixed with futuristic play perspective.

Perhaps violence isn't really the true link between the games in the genre. Sure, they're violent—and we like 'em that way—but look beyond that: The discipline and skill are just as important as the virtual carnage. The hours of concentration and dedication you spend trying to master a character's moves are just as pleasurable as seeing Scorpion take off his hood and unleash a lethal jet of flame to light up an adversary.





SEPARATED AT BIRTH?

You can tell that video game designers got a lot out of those long Saturdays spent watching Kung Fu Theater, as evidenced by these striking "coincidences" in appearance:



Bruce Lee...



...and Fei Long from Super Street Fighter II



Jim Kelly as Williams...



...and Brutal's Prince Leon



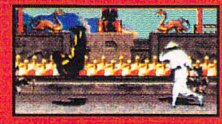
Lee's screen sister Soo Lin...



...and Street Fighter II's Chun-Li

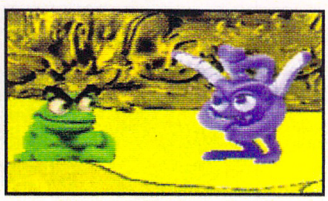


Enter the Dragon's red-robed crowd...



...and the mad monks of Mortal Kombat





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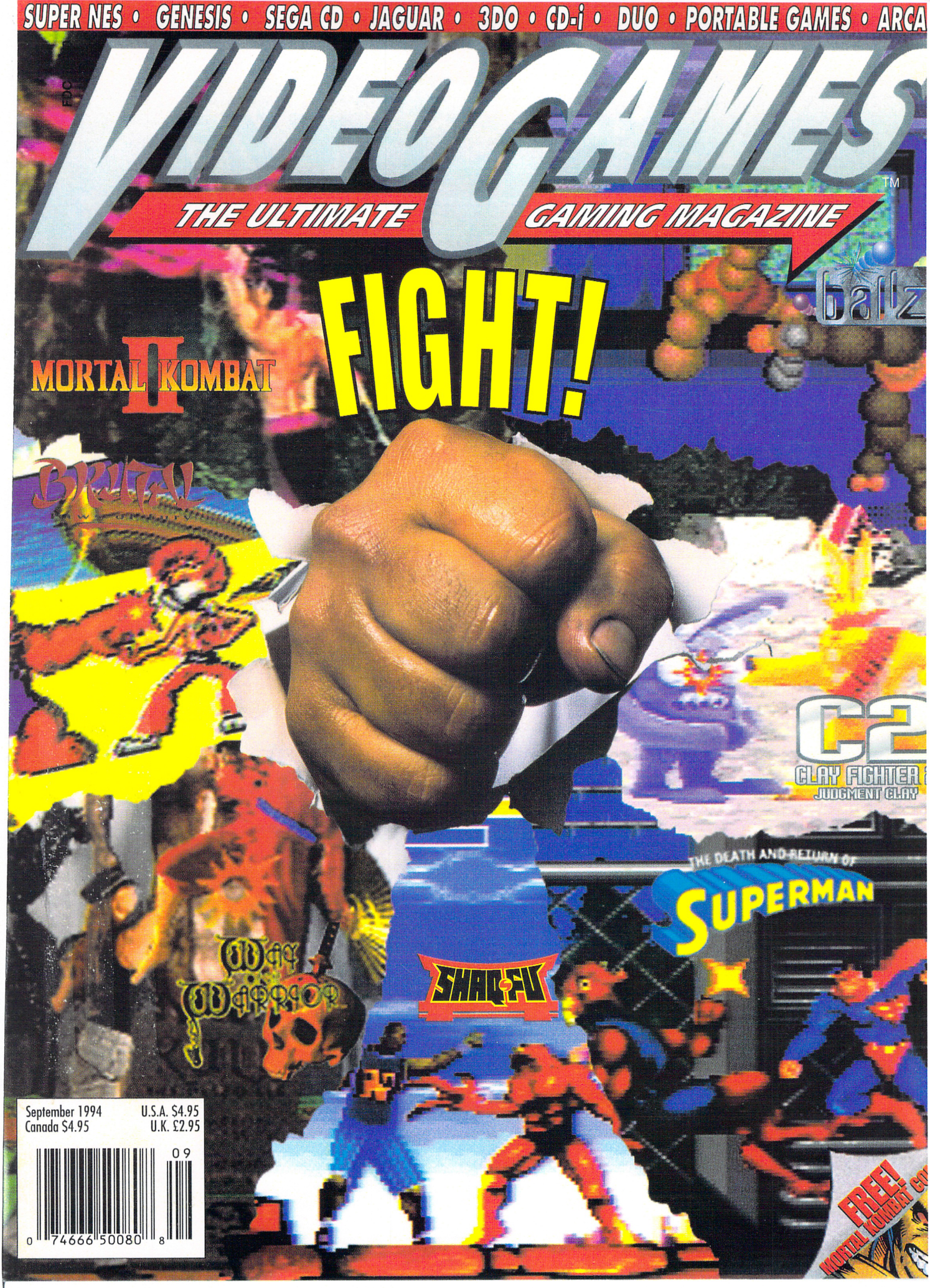

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