

\*\*\*check phone numbers and prices <208> virgin is wrong and Accolade is now either Time Warner or Warner Interactive

@h = Discussions

The PC racing game market seems to have gone through something of a renaissance of late with a new wave of quality racing games crashing on to the PC. We at CD Powerplay thought we'd take a look at many of these top new games, but also take a drive down memory lane to see some of the best racing games of the past few years. Games designed to emulate as much of the raw power, excitement and thrill of the auto sports they were simulating as it was possible to achieve. What some of the early games lack in graphical exuberance they more than make up for in playability and, well...wallop! See for yourself...

@sh = Zone Raiders

ZONE Raiders is the excellent new racing/auto battle game from Virgin Interactive Entertainment. The action takes place in a post-holocaust nuclear ravaged world where you represent the only hope to an otherwise despondent world <208> what's left of it that is. Basically an oppressive dictatorship called ECO (Ecological Containment Organisation) has stepped in after the world governments collapsed and seized power. Being oppressive dictators they have to do a spot of oppressive dictating and this generally means killing people and keeping them all in order.

Your task is to collect pieces of the Atomic Power Coupling (APC) in an attempt to teach the ECO a bit of a lesson by blowing them to kingdom come <208> tough times call for tough measure!

Follow your V-Locator, the green radar type device on the dashboard. When the line is pointed up then you are headed in the correct direction. The V-Locator will also beep faster the closer you get. That's about all you need to know really.

The demo also includes a two player option that uses the radar device to locate the other player and allow you to hunt them down and kill them.

The course is and big and you'll need to do some pretty nifty steering if you are to stay on the raised bits and not fall to your doom trying to make those awkward ramps. It's all top stuff, but then you'd expect that from Virgin.

@OUTCOME = Price <163> tbc

@OUTCOME = Publisher Virgin

@OUTCOME = Telephone 0171 368 2255

zone.gif

@cap = A game for real high flyers <208> Zone Raiders

@sh = The Need For Speed

AS auto racing games go, this is one! But more than that, The Need For Speed is simply one of the most splendiferously, pant-wettingly great driving games ever. It doesn't merely ooze class, playability, and quality, oh no... It thoroughly drenches you in it, immersing you completely and leaves you

fighting for breath. <I>So it's good then? <208> ed<D> Yes, basically, yes! It's bloody good and I'm not ashamed to say so.

The full game has had some excellent reviews across the board with virtually every magazine giving it an excellent score, and believe you me it's not difficult to see why. The game features digitally sampled special effects, narration, photography, FMV, accurate handling, modem links, 8 replay views, tournaments, 9 open road segments... The list goes on and on, but all that fancy, frilly stuff aside, at heart The Need For Speed is a damn playable, fast and exhilarating game, that will have you hooked the moment you see it.

So all that remains to be said is to stop reading these comments and get yourself caught-up in the most adrenalised ride of your life in this 65Mb playable demo. The absolute, undeniable business and easily one of the games of the year. Dark room, deep breaths...

@OUTCOME = Price <163>44.99

@OUTCOME = Publisher Electronic Arts

@OUTCOME = Telephone 01753 549442

nfs.gif

@cap = Just check this little beauty out <208> The Need For Speed

@sh = Fatal Racing

THOSE PC owners who may have begun to question the strength of their machine in light of the new super-console releases <208> Daytona and Ridge Racer <208> can breath a sigh of relief. Fatal Racing is a stonkin' full 3-D racing game the likes of which will hound out, laugh, point and probably kick all those doubting Thomas's who for even one moment thought the PC could be matched. Shame on you all!

Fatal Racing is a multiplayer car racing extravaganza (there's even a split screen option so you can have two players on one machine) with loads of great tracks and cars that will keep any die hard driving fan as happy as Larry for a long time to come. Fatal Racing even includes loads of stunts <208> loop-the-loops, and the like <208> that don't add a great deal to the game, they're just incredibly good fun to try and an interesting break from the already frantic gameplay.

The graphics are absolutely fantastic, and some of the best we've seen for a long time. On a fast PC this game will fly like the wind, but even if you don't have a top end machine this is still a mighty, mightily impressive game and well worth a look in anyone's book.

Well what can we say, a great game with loads of tracks, cars and drivers, tonnes of options and beautiful graphics. Oh yes, and a fully playable demo version on the Powerdisc. Have a look, you'll absolutely love it.

@OUTCOME = Price <163>34.99

@OUTCOME = Supplier Gremlin

@OUTCOME = Telephone 0114 275 3423

fatal.gif

@cap = Negotiating corners can be a very tricky business in Fatal Racing

@sh = Nascar

ONE of the driving games of the decade, if not the definitive driving game of all time. This was one of the most eagerly awaited games I can remember of recent years <208> based largely on the sheer brilliance of its predecessor IndyCar Racing.

Nascar actually turned out to be better than we'd expected and is exactly the sort of game I would imagine to be the choice of actual racing drivers. This fully interactive demo will allow you to rocket your way around a few laps of the Talladega Superspeedway <208> an oval course claimed by many to be the world's fastest race track, and certainly the fastest on the Nascar circuit. With the cars flying around the track in speeds in excess of 200Mph it's a fairly safe bet that this is a seat-of-your pants ride all the way.

The game itself features superb digital sounds, and for added realism the actual cars, drivers, teams, tracks and even sponsors of the Nascar circuit. Of course, should you get bored of those we have loads of new car sets for your game. The OJ Simpson car set with the Ford Bronco may prove a particularly popular choice at the moment. Look out in particular for the realistic crashes, whenever your car hits a wall/other cars, bits will fly off but you can continue to race, albeit in a damaged condition. It is detail like this that makes Nascar one of the finest racing simulations around.

@OUTCOME = Price <163>49.99

@OUTCOME = Publisher Virgin

@OUTCOME = Telephone 0181 960 2255

nascar.gif

@cap = One of the top five racing games of all time <208> Nascar

@sh = Hi-Octane

HI-OCTANE is a game that was universally praised when released around July/August time and with its rather less than subtle blend of addictive gameplay and top notch fluid graphics it isn't difficult to see why. It really is flippin' marvellous.

Now I appreciate that this isn't an auto racing game in the classic genre of say Pole Position. But that's just tough! When you've played the game and screamed around the convoluting tracks, blown some mothers clean off the screen and inflicted major synaptic damage on yourself with all the split second decision making, you'll begin to see why we simply couldn't leave this one off the Powerdisc.

This rather special 20Mb + demo will give you a taster of what this excellent game has to offer, and you'll savour every second of it. The graphics flow like the beers on a good Friday night and the action is even more frantic than the post beer walk home.

This is a game that not only requires nerves of steel, split second timing, and a steady hand, there is also a substantial tactical element that means you must <210>Think before you kill, before you drive<211>.

A few words of warning though, In multiplayer mode the action gets so intense and the gameplay so exciting that you'll run the very real risk of simply bursting into flames. Play the demo and whoop with delight.

@OUTCOME = Price <163>44.99  
@OUTCOME = Publisher Bullfrog  
@OUTCOME = Telephone 01483 579399

hioc.t.gif

@cap = High speed fun and frolics in Hi-Octane

@sh = Slipstream 5000

AGAIN this isn't an auto racing game in the strictest possible sense, in fact it's virtually nothing like games such as Nascar and The Need For Speed, but none-the-less, it is a particularly praiseworthy game that we felt any superior racing game collection couldn't be without.

Slipstream 5000 is a futuristic 3-D racing game from Gremlin. Set in the 21st Century, a time when Formula One has progressed into the skies and become a tad more violent than slugging each other off on TV. All the car/spacehip type things now carry a rather heavy array of weapons for delicately nudging each other out of the way. This is definitely a game for psycho drivers.

The game features numerous multiplayer options, loads of different players and some excellent gameplay <208> all adding up to an engrossing and enjoyable romp. Of course driving is replaced by piloting but the principles remain much the same and you'll soon begin to really appreciate the attention to detail, excellent graphics and variety of gaming experiences that can be attained from the game.

Slipstream isn't an easy game mind you, in fact it could be claimed to be fairly taxing, but this just means you have to practice a great deal and to my mind that's a good thing. So why not try out the 20Mb demo and get some practice in now, then if you like it you'll be able to paste your mates in no time at all.

@OUTCOME = Price <163> 44.99  
@OUTCOME = Publisher Cyberdreams  
@OUTCOME = Telephone 0181 343 4818

slipstrm.gif

@cap = Full on futuristic 3-D racing game in Slipstream 5000

@sh = Cyclemania

CHECK this out, a 240Mb fair stormer of a demo! This is one of those games that simply endures, a game of such immense playability and excitement that it almost defies belief, and its inclusion on this month's Powerdisc was guaranteed from the moment a racing game was first suggested.

Cycle racing has to be one of the most dangerous sports in the world <208> as Barry Sheen et al will verify. I mean, just check out the angles they get to when cornering on specifically designed race courses. What happens then when you take the race off the designated track and put all that thrill and action in a no-holds-barred unofficial road race? Cyclemania that's what!

The tracks are digitised video of actual roads in Israel where races like this take place, the bikes are some of the meanest mothers you'll see anywhere, and the crashes are easily the most bone crunching, metal-plate-in-your-head-after-six-months-in-intensive-care sorts there are.

Cyclemania is pure unadulterated action all the way and as you rocket around some of the most hairy roads and twisting blind bends you'll wonder how anyone could choose to do this in real life. High speed arcade style racing freaks will kill for this game, so if you know anyone fitting that description who doesn't have this demo version of Cyclemania, don't tell them you do!

@OUTCOME = Price <163>39.99

@OUTCOME = Publisher Accolade

@OUTCOME = Telephone 0151 709 5755

cycle.gif

@cap = Actual road racing courses were digitised for use in Cyclemania

@sh = MicroMachines 2

THIS is one game that really needs very little introduction. One of THE games of all time, MicroMachines (1 and 2) stormed the console charts and successfully made the transition onto the PC market with absolutely no drop off in the playability. It has to be said there was much jubilation all round here at IDG when we got a copy of this game in the office. If ever an excuse was needed to lay down the keyboard <208> which incidentally there isn't <208> and play for hours on end, this was it.

I guess it must be safe to say that Codemasters have virtually cornered the 'tiny-little-vehicles-driving-round-the-toilet-seat' style racing game, but we're not fussing. MicroMachines 2 is simply one of the best and most addictive games available on any format to date.

It's cute, it's playable, it has some of the best multi-player action ever, and, Codemasters allege, it blasts along at a staggering 60 frames per second <208> even on a 486, so it pretty much wellies it in the speed and feel departments as well.

To my mind multiplayer games are where it's at, and as far as multiplayer racing games go MicroMachines 2 is the DB's.

@OUTCOME = Price <163>49.99

@OUTCOME = Publisher Codemasters

@OUTCOME = Telephone 01926 814132

\*\*\*here soon

@sh = SuperKarts

SUPERKARTS is a racing game that seems to be a touch different from the rest of the pack. It has a touch of the Doom's about it <208> presumably something to do with the 3-D engine that's been utilised in the game <208> but it also meant as a serious karting simulation. Most, as far as I'm aware,

have been very tongue-in-cheek Super Mario Kart type affairs with cartoon style graphics and lots of thwacking each other over the head with blunt objects.

SuperKarts is different, and as a result will have more appeal to the true, slightly more technical minded PC racing fan <208> diplomatic description there. The graphical style and accurately proportioned tracks add a certain something, a touch of realism perhaps, to the whole proceedings with sprite scaling that gives a brilliant feel of perspective.

So, with SuperKarts what you get is a fast, furious, thumpin' game that won't let you rest for one second <208> all within a 'serious' racing simulation framework. It may sound a little strange but it's a combination that works extremely well giving something of the 'best-of-both-worlds' feel. But hey, you do of course realise there is no need to merely take our word for it, check it out for yourself...

@OUTCOME = Price <163>44.99

@OUTCOME = Publisher Virgin

@OUTCOME = Telephone 0181 960 2255

sprkarts.gif

@cap = The all action karting simulation <208> SuperKarts

@sh = Quarantine

ANOTHER game that racing game traditionalists could argue the toss over, but what the hell, we really like it. You play a taxi driver in the city of Kemo. This isn't a particularly nice place to live and you're fairly keen to get out of this hell hole of a dump as soon as possible. When the option to undertake missions for the resistance movement in the city becomes available in return for freedom, you don't need asking twice.

Normally, as a Taxi driver of undisputed morals, you'd be more than happy to just charge extortionate rates, talk crap all the time and rip-off unsuspecting tourists. However with your role for the resistance comes a certain amount of, now how shall we put this? Hmmm... violence, mutilation, death, and gore probably sums it up quite well. This resistance movement isn't heavily into peaceful protest and you are reduced to running over pedestrians, and killing and maiming <208> either with guns, vehicles, or subtle combinations of the two <208> other road users. Don't worry though, you'll soon acquire a taste for it and who knows, maybe you'll even come enjoy it.

Gametek once described Quarantine as 'Doom on Wheels' and that seems like a pretty fair description if you ask me. It's a fine game in its own right however, and with quality graphics, cool sounds and enough mindless violence to shock even Quentin Tarrantino. It is without a doubt excellent entertainment for the masses. Oh, by the way, you'll need 565K of free ram to run this excellent demo, so get 'MemMaking'; it'll be worth it in the end, we promise!

@OUTCOME = Price <163>39.99

@OUTCOME = Publisher Gametek

@OUTCOME = Telephone01753 553445

q1.gif

@cap = Road kill is the name of the game, well actually it's not. It's Quarantine!

@sh = MegaRace

LANCE Boyle (ho ho), MegaHost of one the most exciting Virtual television shows ever, and all round cheesy slime ball introduces you to a virtual speedway <208> a vomit inducing roller-coaster ride of a racing game designed to inject some real excitement into your otherwise drab, lonely existence.

As if strapping yourself into a hyper fast virtual vehicle and subjecting your body to huge gravitational forces wasn't enough, there are also one or two very violent punk speedgangs that rule the race track <208> and hey, they're not afraid to outwardly express their feelings, generally leading to someone's, or should we say your, imminent demise.

What the hell, we only live once right? So strap yourself into the MegaRace virtual suit and get ready to kick some punk butt in one of the exotic, heavily tooled-up enforcement vehicles.

Simply install the demo from the disc, sit back and enjoy the guided tour of the game, get yourself properly psyched-up, and then venture forth into one of the waiting vehicles. Once strapped in you have to use every ounce of your driving skills to negotiate the tracks, but be prepared to make some split second decisions in order to catch up with the speedgangs who control the highway. When you find 'em, stop 'em by whatever means you deem fit. Shoot, ram, shunt, crash <208> the choice is yours, but hey don't forget, absolutely no mercy!

@OUTCOME = Price <163>POA

@OUTCOME = Publisher Mindscape

@OUTCOME = Telephone01444 246333

megar.gif

@cap = kick the punk speedgang butt in the high flying MegaRace

@sh = BC Racers

I'M not quite sure as to the when's and where's of the invention of the wheel but I can tell you that the go-kart was probably invented very shortly thereafter. I can also tell you that wildly amusing simulation of these prehistoric no-holds-barred motor races was quite a long time in the making, about 50,000 years, give or take the odd ice age. But it eventually made it, and we're mighty glad it did.

BC Racers is a racing game for the less serious minded race fan. It's a split screen two player riot in the same mould as the superb Super Mario Kart on the SNES. In other words you have to race around various tracks against a variety of opponents whom you must beat, and beat up, in any way possible.

This is a genuinely amusing game <208> just watch the pedestrians fly when you hit them. The handling of the vehicles is excellent and the feel of whizzing around the prehistoric courses is both exhilarating and extremely addictive. Because of the noticeable attention to humour, playability and superb two-player options, this game gets a huge thumbs up from the CD Powerplay team. It's had us in stitches and we just know it will do the same for you. Try out the demo and try to tell us you don't absolutely love it.

@OUTCOME = Price <163>34.99  
@OUTCOME = Publisher Core Design  
@OUTCOME = Telephone 01332 297797

bcrace.gif

@cap = Split screen racing action in the prehistoric BC Racers

@sh = Power Drive

MANY of you will have thrilled to the spectacle of super charged mini metro's flying round dirt tracks and disappearing down rabbit holes in the New Forest <208> or some other equally dense, hazardous woodland. This is the sport of Rallying where grown men and women relive their childhood races on their death-trap BMX or 50cc motorbike in some old quarry or field. Except this time, the crashes often mean slightly more than a slightly grazed knee and a good telling off from your mum.

Power Drive sits you at the wheel of a souped up road car and lets you battle it out with the computer on a series of tortuous tracks and road surfaces <208> actually road is a little bold, most of these 'roads' would be totally unsuitable terrain for even an AT AT from The Empire Strikes Back.

Basically your task is to fly around the courses at break neck speed, avoid any inanimate objects, and any animated ones for that matter, and make your way to the finish line in the flashiest, most hand-break turningly extravagant ways possible. It's some of the most enjoyable gameplay you're gonna find in any PC racing game, and it really doesn't take itself anywhere nearly as seriously as some of the more straight racing sims do.

Great fun, great game, great demo.

@OUTCOME = Price <163>39.99  
@OUTCOME = Publisher US Gold  
@OUTCOME = Telephone 0121 625 3366

pwrdrv.gif

@cap = Off-road mini-mania in Power Drive

@sh = Speed Racer

SPEED Racer is based on the classic American cartoon series <208> Speed Racer. You know all that <210>Go Speed Racer, Go!<211> stuff. No? You mean you don't know or remember it? Well okay, I'll let you in on a little secret, I had absolutely no idea who this character was either, so there.

Anyway Speed Racer was apparently a classic American cartoon character who drove this interesting 60's sports car, pulled loads of girls and generally saved the world from a fate worse than death at the hands of some lunatic or other.

The game puts you at the wheel of said 60's sports car and lets you loose on the open road to track down your evil arch enemies. This demo version is just a sample of the game, with only a few of the roads, features, menus, etc., but it should give you an ample taster of the this rather nifty little racing simulation. Of course being a superhero sort the car is also fitted with a whole range of fine little gadgets, helicopter blades, guns and the like, all of which will have to be used to defeat the road bound enemy.

To drive use the following controls: Arrow keys for steering, acceleration and braking, and use the ',' '.' and '"' keys to operate Auto-jacks, Extra-turbo and Chopper blades respectively. It doesn't have the depth of some of the other racing games but by heck if it isn't a smart looking, superbly playable game and just perfect for the Powerdisc.

@OUTCOME = Price <163>POA  
@OUTCOME = Publisher Accolade  
@OUTCOME = Telephone 0181 788 0200

spdracer.gif  
@cap = <210>Go Speed Racer, Go!<211>

@sh = Road Hog  
THIS is a really neat demo. The game looks very similar to Street Racer from Ubisoft <208> the cars are low and wide and the graphics very cartoon like. This playable demo version will allow to have a bash at one of the courses, but it will also give you a few non-interactive glimpses of the things you could be doing should you buy the game.

You must race your vehicle in several locations around the globe and at each perform a task. It is total arcade racing fun <208> there isn't even a whiff of true to life racing game technicalities, and that makes a welcome change. For example, in the North American course you must collect Yeti cubs before they become road kill.

The full game features 45 tracks in nine different countries each with a theme and a different task. There is also a large section dedicated to editing and designing your own custom tracks so the game can last as long as you can think up new and exciting tracks.

Road Hog is a lot of fun to play, and while it's not going to be everyone's cup of tea it certainly should have enough to entertain the majority out there.

@OUTCOME = Price <163>  
@OUTCOME = Publisher  
@OUTCOME = Telephone

rdhog.gif

@cap = The cartoon style kart racing game <208> Road Hog

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@h = Shareware

THERE are an extensive range of shareware racing games available if you know where to look. To save you the time and bother though we've pulled together a selection of some of the better shareware games available for racing fans. Now although these are often not quite so polished as the full price game demos they do represent an important part of the PC games market and many have a great deal more playability than their more professional counterparts. You see what you think...

@sh = Alley Driver

ALLEY Driver is a fun, fast-paced driving game the object of which is relatively simple; drive as fast and as far as you can. Simple enough?

The racing all takes place in an alley so your car's sideways movements are rather limited by each of the walls. In addition to the narrow racecourse, you have to contend with several difficulties like empty trash cans, the odd oil spills and several other cars vying for position. You'll also have to get gas at regular intervals or stop dead in your tracks and lose. This is a fun game that although not advanced in any shape, way or form still has a great deal to offer the racing game fan.

@sh = Dragcity USA

YOUR uncle has died and has left you his dragster <208> a very cheery thought. Anyway, the tight fisted old git only had a manual 3 speed job with the engine in front of the driver, and lots of people pushing very hard behind! But throwing caution to the wind you decide to strap yourself in to this auto death-trap and burn some rubber.

To drive, you need an accelerator and a clutch. And a car, and the ability to drive of course. Grab your mouse <208> the right button acts as the accelerator, the left button is your clutch <208> tapping them will allow you to change gears, accelerate etc.

Drag city is all about timing and reactions <208> much like actual drag racing I guess <208> and at the completion of the quarter mile course, your reaction time, elapsed time, and total time will be displayed. The game is simply to be the quickest between two points and this will require you to time gear changes and acceleration to a split second. It's all quite exciting and you'll undoubtedly love it.

dragcity.gif

@cap = Timing is the key to success in Drag City

@sh = MotoX

THIS, as you'll probably have gathered from the name, is a motocross simulation/game. It's painfully simple in format and a little light on the ground in high res SVGA graphics! But, beauty's only skin deep anyway right? And in all fairness it's amply proportioned in the playability department.

Simplicity is the name of the game, you control the throttle and brakes and bank to turn left or right as you race around one of four race tracks. What else is there left to say except give it a try. It's fun, it's fast and it's accessible and you can't ask for great deal more than that. Well, you can, but you won't get it.

MotoX Requires a 486DX or better processor, and let's be honest, most of you have one of those, so lets get MotoX-ing.

@sh = Off Road

OFFROAD is, as the name would imply, an off road (well desert actually) racing game. For a shareware game this is surprisingly good with exciting gameplay and hours of enjoyment from what at heart is a relatively simple concept.

You control a four-wheel-drive truck in a race across the desert and basically, you must drive faster and better than everyone else and win. The game has eight levels of play and if you manage to win one level you'll gain access to the next, each having its own set of obstacles, dangers and required techniques to complete it.

Use the cursor keys and the space bar to control your 4WD vehicle and to fire at obstacles. Don't worry, this will all be explained when you start the game. So for a speedy, tactical racing game why not check Off Road out.

offroad.gif

@cap = It may look pants but Off Road plays quite well really

@sh = Slick 'n' Slide

SLICK 'n' Slide is an all time classic shareware driving game and still has some of the best gameplay of any racing game ever. The players <208> there can be up to four <208> get a bird's eye view of the whole course and must steer around the twisting and turning tracks, nudging opponents and avoiding the walls.

The game flies along at crazy speeds, particularly on a high end machine, and it is one long laugh riot all the way. It's one of the most addictive games around and we dare you to play it and not enjoy every second.

slick.gif

@cap = Four player crazy racing in Slick 'n' Slide

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