

## Loading...

The gaming industry has gone all arty this spring with Microsoft hosting the launch of its Xbox Live online gaming service at London's Tate Modern and Nintendo putting on its own exhibition. We've heard about Microsoft's bid for online supremacy as it takes on the might of Sony's PS2. But we were intrigued by the altogether higher brow Nintendo launch, called Pockets, for its GameBoy Advance SP.

Nintendo used the event to emphasise

the fact that its new flip-top console is the ideal size to fit in a pocket.

Perhaps most of us would be more interested to learn the contents of Kurt Cobain's or John Lennon's pockets when they died, rather than learning about the evolution of the indispensable pouch during the free, week-long multimedia display.



However, there was plenty of space at the Pockets exhibition to demonstrate how, until the past couple of years, many ostensibly pocket-sized technology devices were far too bulky to be called so.

These days, devices are smaller and cleverer than ever and even the teeniest pocket is large enough to conceal a camera, mobile phone or indeed a GameBoy. With so much hype about online gaming – a great idea but a recreation that ties you to your PC – Nintendo's emphasis on portability is so much more appealing.

After all, whether it's a gripping paperback, a MiniDisc player or a games console, you can't beat a bit of pocket-sized escapism. ■

*Rosemary Haworth*

## Rayman 3: Hoodlum Havoc

PC CD-ROM

Debuting back in 1995, Rayman returns in his third action-adventure outing. Hoodlum Havoc sees our do-gooder once again fighting evil. First the history: a good and honest red 'lum' turned into an evil black lum and subsequently converted the rest of his lum

chums into a bunch of miniature hoodlums.

Rayman's best mate,

Globox, somehow managed to swallow the head hoodlum (maybe he was peckish) and it's now the helicopter-haired hero's duty to save his mate, destroy the bad guys and catch the chief.

There are 10 huge worlds to discover – a total of 44 levels – and bonus levels to discover along the way. It took just a few levels for me to realise that Hoodlum Havoc is an extremely straightforward game. It's easy to play and won't challenge the hardened gamer. That's not to say that it's any less fun than the other Rayman titles and, if you're a fan of the series, you won't be disappointed.

As you progress through the plot there are new moves to master such as the grapple hook that enables Rayman to swing through the air, and the rocket-powered sniper fist. Graphics may not be breathtaking but UbiSoft has created a colourful environment.

Overall Rayman 3 provides a enjoyable experience that won't leave you pulling your hair out. It may not surpass UbiSoft's last Rayman offering, but there are plenty of new features to please gamers of all ages. ■

*Justin Vaughan*



↑ Ray of light: the chief lum may look like he's got a sprout for a head but he's a scary evil villain. Honest



### GAMES CHART, ALL FORMATS

- 1 **Metroid Prime**
- 2 **The Sims**
- 3 **Rayman 3**
- 4 **The Getaway**
- 5 **Grand Theft Auto: Vice City**
- 6 **Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers**
- 7 **Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven**
- 8 **Fifa 2003**
- 9 **Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance**
- 10 **Command & Conquer: Generals**

### PC GAMES CHART

- 1 **Command & Conquer: Generals**
- 2 **Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six: Raven Shield**
- 3 **Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell**
- 4 **The Sims**
- 5 **IL2 Sturmovik: The Forgotten Battles**
- 6 **The Sims: Unleashed**
- 7 **Sim City 4**
- 8 **Praetorians**
- 9 **The Sims: On Holiday**
- 10 **Total Club Manager 2003**

*Positions correct for week  
15/03/03-22/03/03*

#### Rayman 3: Hoodlum Havoc

- UbiSoft: 0870 739 7670
- www.ubi.com/uk
- £14.99

#### System requirements

1,000MHz Pentium III; Windows 98 SE/XP/2000/Me; 128MB RAM; 1.7GB hard disk space; GeForce2 graphics card

#### Overall rating





## Delta Force: Black Hawk Down

PC CD-ROM

**W**ar. What is it good for? Quite a few decent games actually. Black Hawk Down is Novalogic's take on events that occurred in Somalia in 1993, where two American helicopters were shot down over enemy territory.

While there are some fictitious scenarios, several of the big set pieces in BHD are re-enactments of historic battles. Novalogic captures something few other war-based shooter games have managed: the absolute chaos of armed conflict. If you can avoid the political implications of US military presence in far-off lands and take BHD purely as a gaming experience then it'll satisfy on all levels.

### Nostalgic Novalogic

BHD, Novalogic's latest game in the Delta Force series, is the best title by far. The company has really pushed the boat out, helicopter, UN motorcades and humvees for this one. Novalogic has combined its ultimate graphics engine, Comanche 4, with previous games' best features and tweaked everything to perfection.

But it's BHD's style of play that's brand new. Though this title isn't licensed from the recent Ridley Scott film of the same name, it certainly takes its remit from the way the action was so chaotically delivered.

Medal of Honour: Allied Assault's Omaha Beach level was probably the first serious attempt to capture the all-out chaos of war and it succeeded up to a point. Where this title depicted the madness through heavily scripted sequences, BHD chooses a more real-time approach – with remarkable results.

The screen is constantly full of action, taking place all the way from the foreground to the background. It's your job to avoid shooting your

own troops and unarmed civilians while trying to single out the bad guys. While this isn't an easy task, it's hugely addictive and Novalogic deserves heaps of praise for its innovation.

You have several weapons at your disposal and can use guns mounted on cars, although you can't commandeer any of the vehicles. This came as a complete surprise – the Comanche 4 game engine is an arcade helicopter sim and it wouldn't have taken much for Novalogic to implement vehicle driving.

That said, I'm sure the development team probably had heated debates about it detracting from the nature of the game.

### This time it's personal

Some pundits were disappointed by the quality of screenshots before the game was released and BHD can look dated in places. Some of the skins and backgrounds lack the detail of those of its peers, but you have to appreciate what Novalogic manages to achieve on the screen at any one time.

Despite not being the pinnacle of graphical excellence close up, you'll soon be amazed by the fluid character animation and some of the best explosions we've ever seen – not to mention the eerily accurate water effects.

Most of Novalogic's war games take place in vast outdoor arenas. It fits perfectly here, giving BHD the feel of an epic, although there are close-quarter battles in small towns to whet your appetite as well.

BHD isn't a run-and-gun mindless frag-fest so you can't sprint about wildly in the hope of hitting something. But neither is this title a tactical ensemble despite a control system for giving team mates limited orders. BHD is well balanced enough to appease the casual gamer and offers something extra for those who want more out of their first-person shooters. ■

*Spencer Dalziel*

← Action packed: single out the bad guys while protecting unarmed civilians



↑ Don't lose your head: you'll need nerves of steel as BHD recreates the all-out chaos of armed conflict



#### Delta Force: Black Hawk Down

- Novalogic: 020 7324 8900
- www.novalogic.com
- £29.99

#### System requirements

733MHz Pentium III; Windows 98/Me/2000/XP; 192MB RAM; 750MB hard disk space; 3D graphics card with 32MB of RAM

#### Overall rating



# Command & Conquer: Generals

PC CD-ROM



↑ Take on the world: C&C's AI isn't the cleverest so pit your wits against other gamers online

EA has abandoned the comicbook-style war of previous titles and gone for something far more realistic. The first US mission sees you storming Baghdad with a combination of air strikes, tanks and troops. A bit close to the bone, perhaps.

## Attack the issue

The most visible change in this edition of C&C is the graphics. As with many recent point-and-click games, *Generals* has opted for 3D graphics, allowing the player to zoom in and out as well as rotate 360 degrees. This great feature is more than eye candy, as it adds plenty to the gameplay. You can utilise all angles of attack so planning your moves is harder but more satisfying when you see hordes of your men scramble from all sides during an attack.

Unlike the past 2D fantasy-based C&C titles, the three military teams you can control are taken directly from the world's current geopolitical structure, including the US, China and an Arabic terrorist group called the GLA (Global Liberation Army). These groups are all clichéd and come with their own individual sounds and accents.

One of the best aspects of C&C: *Generals* is the balance between the different factions. Although each army is very different you will find that no group is dominant as they all have varying skills. The US are powerful in the air, the Chinese have strong ground units, while the GLA utilise terrorist tactics.

→ Close to the bone: C&C's first mission sees you attacking Baghdad using air strikes, tanks and ground troops

## Risky release

Now there's no denying that this all adds up to a great C&C title but we're still shocked that the biggest games publishing house was prepared to release this content. Many games are based on real-world situations (how many more WWII games can we take?), but only Novalogic's *Black Hawk Down*, set in Somalia in 1993, equals *Generals* in terms of its subject matter.

Don't be surprised if EA gets some stick for this release and we certainly wouldn't recommend buying it for the little 'uns. That said, for the grown-up gamer this addition to the C&C series is an unadulterated joy – it's great utilising each GLA terrorist's different attack methods to achieve your aims.

The single-player missions in *Generals* are good fun but this game only truly springs to life when you're pitting your wits against foes online – the computer AI (artificial intelligence) simply can't compare to playing with real people. You'll soon be deep in adrenaline-fuelled battles with players from all over the world trying to adopt strategies to knock you out.

This is one of the best C&C releases yet. Admittedly, if you're a diehard fan of the series then *Generals* will take some time getting used to. Once you do, though, you are guaranteed a ride. From the breathtaking explosions and sound effects to the fully interactive battlefields, C&C: *Generals* constantly impresses with an extravagant audio visual display.

All these aesthetics come at a cost with *Generals* demanding a meaty 1.8GB of hard drive space, a high-end graphics card as well as a 2GHz processor to get the most from this fantastic game. ■

*Simon Alveranga*



### Command & Conquer: Generals

- EA Games: 01932 450 000
- www.eagames.com
- £29.99

### System requirements

800MHz Intel PIII (2GHz rec);  
Windows 98 SE/98/Me/2000/XP;  
128MB RAM; 1.8GB hard disk  
space; 32MB nVidia GeForce2 or ATI  
Radeon 7500 AGP-based graphics  
card with DirectX 8.1-compatible  
driver; DirectX 8.1-compatible 16bit  
sound card

### Overall rating



## Eingana

If you've ever dreamt of being an astronaut and seeing for yourself what Earth looks like from space, then Eingana will appeal. With it, you can travel from continent to continent at the click of a button, alighting anywhere you fancy on the 3D globe.

Continental geographical features are accurate to the nearest kilometre or, in the case of Europe and the US, to 200 meters. Even the ocean floor is mapped to 10km and, if you use the satellite images, large cities are reproduced to an accuracy of 10m. Weather, celestial and seasonal changes are represented too – just for good measure.

It's impressive enough that the developers have mapped out the entire globe but you aren't restricted to enjoying geographical and satellite relief views of the planet. Eingana challenges you to find items relevant to your travels and pick up related objects for inclusion in a virtual scrapbook or photo album.

### Whole world in your hand

Your favourite weekend break destination might not be featured in depth, but Eingana recognises 40,000 different towns and cities so you can explore many of the world's recognisable sights. Cities such as Paris are partially recreated, but the emphasis of this package is on the world as a whole rather than the minutiae of a specific location.

For a start, there's a phenomenal amount of detail devoted to the natural world. As well as picking your way through forests, you can



↑ World of discovery: once you've learnt about cheetahs head to the Himalayan glaciers and search for the mythical Yeti

encounter indigenous animal species, experience the thrill of standing atop a mountain range, peering into the Grand Canyon or taking a dive to explore underwater ecosystems.

Since the premise is exploration and the acquisition of local knowledge about wherever on Earth you pitch up, there is some license over the objects of fascination you come across. For example, you might end up face-to-face with the Yeti or searching Loch Ness for its elusive monster.

### Plenty of power

All this detail inevitably comes at a price: high specifications including a huge amount of hard disk space. In fact, Eingana provides the perfect opportunity to find out whether your allegedly top-spec PC is up to scratch.

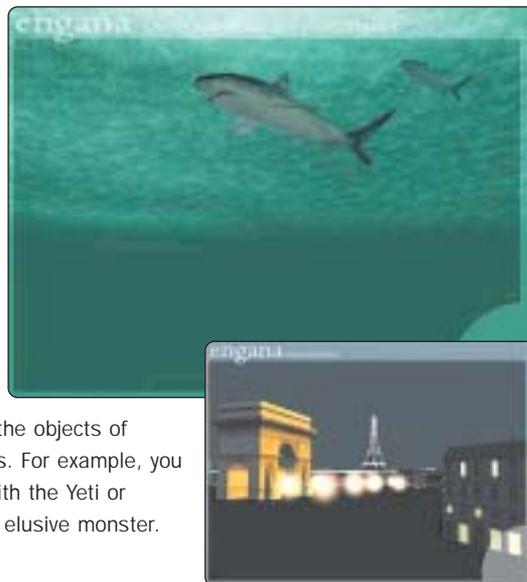
Our test PC had an AMD Athlon 2000+ chip which is just under a year old. Even so, we were amazed at the processing power this game required – at times it suffered extremely low frame rates even with a Radeon 8500 graphics card with more than enough memory for this type of software.

And don't take the prescriptive OpenGL driver support requirements lightly either. Having spent a good hour installing the content from Eingana's two discs, you'll be disappointed if it doesn't then perform. This is probably the biggest problem about this software.

Once you get through the lengthy installation process and start up Eingana your journey begins. Red dots pinpoint particular areas of interest on the map or you can simply set the co-ordinates for wherever you choose and take pot luck as to the creatures and terrain you encounter. If your PC is up to it, Eingana is definitely worth investigating and you'll find yourself staring in amazement at the impressive amount of detail.

Once you've found your little slice of heaven on Earth, a novel twist is that you can go online, bag it and claim it as your own piece of virtual turf. With so many millions of acres to explore, it's unlikely other Eingana users will have got there first. ■

## PC CD-ROM & DVD-ROM



↑ Backseat traveller: visit Paris without even leaving your desk

### Eingana

- online sales only
- [www.interactiveideas.com](http://www.interactiveideas.com)
- £34.99

### System requirements

1GHz Pentium; Windows 95/98/Me/2000/NT/XP; 128MB RAM; 1.4GB hard disk space; 32MB 3D graphics card; OpenGL drivers; DirectX 7.0 software drivers; SoundBlaster-compatible sound card

### Overall rating



Justin Vaughan

## War and Peace

PC CD-ROM

This RTS (real-time strategy) offering from Canadian developer Microids is an ambitious effort that puts you right in the thick of the Napoleonic Wars. On a fully 3D map, you control the political, economical, militaristic and diplomatic tactics of your chosen nation against a detailed historical backdrop.

Being a huge fan of Command & Conquer and World of Warcraft, I require both impressive visuals and plenty of action. Disappointingly, only the static images look any good with this game. The units' movement is stiff and the battles that take place are rather

uninteresting. It also doesn't help that the 179 modelled

← Choose wisely: decide on a winning nation



cities are just various sized octagons filled with buildings.

War and Peace has plenty of features that many fans of this genre would find appealing, but I don't feel that Microids pulled off the RTS/war game blend smoothly enough. This is surprising considering the company's excellent work developing the adventure game Syberia.

If you want an easy ride when storming the fortresses of Badajoz and Almeida then this game is for you.

If, on the other hand, you're after streamlined and intuitive RTS combat with graphics that properly utilise the capabilities of your expensive graphics accelerator, then look elsewhere.

Of course, if you have nothing but time on your hands then why not crack open Tolstoy's *War and Peace*? If you don't make it more than 20 pages into the novel then it will always come in handy as a doorstop. ■

Ben Worcester



↑ What a bore: The battles failed to impress our reviewer

### War and Peace

- +33 146 015 401
- www.warandpeace-game.com
- £29.99

### System requirements

800MHz processor; Windows 98/Me/2000/XP; 128MB RAM; 800MB hard disk space; SoundBlaster-compatible sound card; 32MB 3D graphics card

### Overall rating



## Anne Frank House: A House with a Story

PC CD-ROM

### Anne Frank House

- online sales only
- www.interactiveideas.com
- £29.99

### System requirements

120Mhz Pentium or faster; Mac and PC; Windows 95 or better; 16MB RAM; 50MB hard disk space; 16bit sound; DirectX-compatible graphics card

### Overall rating



This dual-format CD-ROM provides a fascinating tour of the hideaway that was home to 13-year-old Anne Frank, her family and friends for more than two years before they were discovered and sent to concentration camps.

It opens with a view of the canal-side house on Amsterdam's Prinsengracht and a selection of contemporary photos of the area accompanied by a narrative

explaining how, during its 350-year history, the building had been

extensively rebuilt. In Anne's time, it was a mass of stairways and halls that formed a confusing labyrinth. This, of course, made it an ideal hiding place for the family and was the reason Anne's father, Otto, plotted to use it to protect them.

← Turn back time: this excellent learning aid provides an in-depth tour of Anne Frank's hideaway house in Amsterdam

The program's 3D feature lets you have a panoramic view of the Franks' street. As you quickly learn, though, the only view of the outside world Anne had was the courtyard garden separating the front and back sections of

the house. A combination of narration and spoken excerpts from her famous diary allow this CD to bring Anne and her fellow family members' home back to life. The museum has painstakingly restored the office and other rooms with furnishings of the time with the aid of Anne's diary.

There are short biographies of each of the office employees who befriended the Franks as well as the family and other Prinsengracht interns. You can click on the 3D mockup of a room to find out about its inhabitants and an impressive amount of background information is also contained in the CD's booklet.

For schools, students and those interested to learn more about a fascinating but traumatic life, this is an excellent accompaniment to Anne's personal diary. ■

Rosemary Haworth

