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Finally. FINALLY! Command & Conquer for the Mac is coming in September. While this game has been out on the PC side for over a year, the dreaded Mac stigma has once again reared its ugly head. The two CD set has dominated the PC market as one of the best games ever, yet it has taken too long to reach the Macintosh. Computer Gaming World called it the "Best Strategy Game of 1995."

Run to your nearest friend with a PC and see if he has C&C. If he doesn't, make him buy it. Watch as the story unfolds in the near future with two sides, the Global Defense Initiative and the Brotherhood of Nod, battling for control of the world's deposits of Tiberium. Try to defend the world against the terrorist Nod and their guerrilla style tactics. Or go on the offensive and try to smash the more powerful GDI. Either way, you are in for a wild and mind numbing ride.

[What Am I In For?](#)

If you are a fan of Warcraft, you will love C&C. I guarantee it. The concepts are similar but the play is vastly different. In C&C, you look upon the world in a real-time, "God" mode, 45 degree view. The world is based upon a new fuel named Tiberium which nobody really knows that much about except that it is extremely valuable. You need to harvest Tiberium which is transferred into credits. These credits enable you to purchase structures, men and machinery. There are twenty-five different units and men, and nineteen different structures (not including three different types of walls which are a definite factor in battle.) From flame-thrower toting soldiers and a gruff, cigar chomping commando to battle cycles and mammoth tanks, the action is non-stop.

When I say game play is different than Warcraft, hold onto your head. The two sides are vastly different in strategy and tactics. There are a total of thirty-five different missions in all and in both scenarios you have bases which need to be recaptured, commando missions with one guy (my favorite), and the standard build a base and attack the opponent. But what is so great about this game is that both sides need to be played very differently. The NOD is nowhere near as powerful or massive as the GDI just as the speed and defensive capabilities of the NOD overmatch the GDI. You need to plan and strategize an attack using your mind as well as your muscle.

One of the main complaints about Warcraft was that the computer was not smart enough. The AI (artificial intelligence) kept sending one or two pieces to attack you, and they always attacked in the same place. Not here. This is one smart computer. The AI will test your defenses and send the appropriate troops to try to conquer you. And not just with one troop but many and sometimes even in a two—pronged coordinated attack.

[How Does It Look and Sound?](#)

The intro and cut-scenes are phenomenal. They set up and keep the action moving with live actors and a believable plot. The endings for both sides also do a credible job. The sound is also admirable. The game has 25 original scores and the ability to add new music, if you choose. No reason to turn off the music here. The graphics are low res on the PC version but the Mac version will sport beautiful high-resolution graphics. But what is noteworthy is watching the soldiers as they wait around for you to order them somewhere. These are not lazy, unmotivated soldiers. They do push-ups, stretch, and even break down and clean their weapons. Watching them is hilarious, if not for the first hundred times. The Commando is priceless and his comments even better.

id You Say Network?

Probably the greatest part of C&C is the ability to Network. After completing both sides, Tuncer (former editor of IMG) and I played a couple of network games over a modem. While the setup was a bit difficult (hopefully cured by Plug and Play), the gameplay was even better than the scenarios. After about three hours, we called it quits and were both thoroughly impressed (and yes, I whopped his butt). The play was fast and furious. You can choose the number of players (up to four), the amount of credits you start with, the kind of board, bonuses, color, and if you want bases and computer players. Have a strategy and know your weapons. If you don't, it is time to barbecue. Oh, and by the way, networking will be supported across platforms and over the Internet.

Put It On Back Order!!!

If you haven't had your appetite whetted enough, take a look at Westwood's Web site (www.westwood.com) or browse on over to one of the PC computer gaming magazines. Westwood has released "Covert Operations," an expansion set with more scenarios and network boards, and "Red Alert," the much anticipated follow up to Tiberium Dawn, on the PC side. There are no plans to release either of these unless Mac sales do well. Mac stigma rises again.

This is one of the hottest games around if you like strategy games. From storyline to gameplay, this will become a Mac legend.