Deep Fighter
Interview with Gruffydd Jenkins – Project Manager, Criterion Studios

What is *Deep Fighter*?

Deep Fighter is an epic tale of action, strategy, exploration and conquest set in the depths of the ocean. The game's overall objective is to build *The Leviathan,* a mothership and to escape from the current area and thus save the underwater civilization. As a private in the special defense force called *The Deep Fighters*, players are thrust into the throes of battle. You work your way up the ranks as you command other subs and pilot the numerous sub-aquatic vehicles at your disposal. Do your utmost to defend the mining installations, fend off predators and ultimately help save your race.

Who developed the game and how many people worked on it?

Criterion Studios, creators of *Sub Culture* and *Redline Racer*, developed the game. The *Deep Fighter* team consists of 10 people who began work in January 1998.

What are the technical innovations of the game?

There have been a number of innovations including the physically modelled environment, sound, life-like environments, state-of-the-art special effects, plus of course, network capabilities for multiplayer action and force feedback technology for an added real-feel to the game!

How would you describe *Deep Fighter*?

Although *Deep Fighter* is very much action orientated, the game requires the player to think strategically and use their exploration skills to successfully complete missions, thus adding an extra dimension of realism to the game. An example of this, are the strategy and resource management skills required to keep the mining installations running at full efficiency.

Can you describe the overall structure of the game?

Ahh…that is really cool! Like scenes in a movie the game will be structured around different chapters. Each of these segments will involve specific missions and you will only reach the next chapter once you have successfully reached your mission's objectives. So as you battle your way through the game you feel like you are living out a movie!

Also as you move towards the end of the game, the game structure tends to become more free…less rigid. It is very directed at the beginning but by the end it will be about using your mind to unravel the enigmas of the game to get through the different landscapes!

Remember, you are a fighter in *Deep Fighter* so all of the action revolves around the intense energy of the mission. You have to stop thinking like a civilian and start thinking like a soldier. For instance, the game provides different general purpose and specialty vehicles for every possible situation. Each one is fitted with a standard set of tools as well as their own separate set of weapons, often unique to that particular craft. Examples of different vehicles include the *Standard Attack Sub*, the *Military Fighter*, the *Stealth Fighter* and more. These will come in handy as you face pirates, sea creatures and other menacing underwater elements.

Tell me a bit about the atmosphere of the game?

Further developing the cinematic style and movie-like atmosphere of the game, we have created a sense of pressure…tension…drama. Picture yourself under water, being attacked by deadly enemies and struggling to save your entire civilization…now that is pressure! We have tried to recreate this sense of pressure within the game.

This is achieved with an array of special effects, dynamic context sensitive music - which changes depending on the current environment and action, plus a number of cut scenes that help create a totally immersive experience. This is further emphasized with the living, breathing, gorgeous, ultra-realistic, non-linear environments that allow you to go anywhere and do whatever you like.

What is special about *Deep Fighter's* Artificial Intelligence?

We have implemented a sophisticated AI model that affects the behavior patterns for every living creature in the game from a baby fish following its parents to the threatening pirates that cross your path! Imagine - each one of your enemies will attack differently from one another. Each enemy reacts differently to every situation, which leaves you to think on your feet and be prepared for an array of different styles of battle!

Is Deep Fighter a multi-player game?

Absolutely! There are four different network modes available in *Deep Fighter* including the *Standard Deathmatch*, the *Resource Deathmatch*, *Free Willy* and the *Rockball*. Each mode has its own unique style and dynamic features that players are sure to enjoy!

When is Deep Fighter scheduled for release?

Deep Fighter is scheduled for a Q1 2000 release on the PC.