

April '98

## PRESS RELEASE

### ***Empire Interactive Goes Out to Bat with Wisden***

Empire Interactive's forthcoming cricket management game, ***International Cricket Captain***, will be released in association with the ultimate international cricket authority, John Wisden & Co.

The first cricket management game to be developed for the PC, ***International Cricket Captain*** is scheduled for release in May, at the height of the cricket season, and the deal with Wisden will ensure that the product enjoys enhanced credibility in the eyes of the consumer, lending an increased motivation to purchase. Wisden branding will be included not only on pack, but on all point-of-sale materials and advertising, as well as in the code of the game itself, where Wisden, the Wisden Cricketing Almanack, and Wisden Cricket Monthly will all be featured on billboards around the on-screen pitch.

Despite having been approached by different companies on a number of occasions previously, this is the first time that Wisden have agreed to allow their valued brand name to be associated with a computer game product, which reflects well on the quality of the game. Indeed, Wisden were so keen that their name be attached to a quality product that a representative of the company visited the Empire Interactive development office and made independent assessments of ***International Cricket Captain*** before agreeing to allow the Wisden name to be added to it. Wisden have also stipulated that they will be involved in fact-checking throughout the development process to ensure that ***International Cricket Captain*** is the most accurate, credible cricket game in the market.

Empire Interactive are delighted with the arrangement. As Empire's Group European PR and Marketing Manager Terry Shuttleworth adds: "We're very proud to be able to release ***International Cricket Captain*** in association with such a respected brand as Wisden. Obviously, we have to ensure that we uphold the values and reputation that Wisden has built over more than a century of business, and we're confident that ***International Cricket Captain*** will deliver the quality that both Wisden and Empire expect."

Naturally, marketing activities will flow from the association. Empire will be running a major advertising campaign in the Wisden Cricket Monthly, as well as in the usual specialist gaming press. There will be a direct marketing campaign for the game to subscribers of Wisden Cricket Monthly, and potentially to buyers of the famous Wisden Cricketers' Almanack. Wisden are also allowing links from their website (co-hosted by *The Guardian*) to the Empire Site, and the ***International Cricket Captain*** demo will be available for download from both sites. Added to the advertising campaign Empire have planned in conjunction with *Cricinfo*, the other online cricket resource, this will guarantee several million consumer impressions over the promotional period.

Lastly, BBC TV and Radio commentator Jonathan Agnew, who supplies the in-game commentary for ***International Cricket Captain***, will be recording a piece to camera on behalf of both Empire and Wisden, which will be made available for promotional purposes.

The Key Selling Points of ***International Cricket Captain*** are:

- Commentary by Jonathan Agnew, of BBC Radio
- Uses real match data from actual County Championship teams, grounds, and players
- Features every major first class and one-day competition
- 8 “real” International teams to challenge: India, Pakistan, Zimbabwe, Sri Lanka, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and the West Indies
- Control every element of cricket strategy, both on-pitch and off, game-by-game, over-by-over, even ball-by-ball
- High-quality real-time animation puts you right in the middle of the action

For more information, call **Kate Johns** at Empire Interactive on 0181 343 7337 or e-mail on: [kate@empire.co.uk](mailto:kate@empire.co.uk)