

# after hours

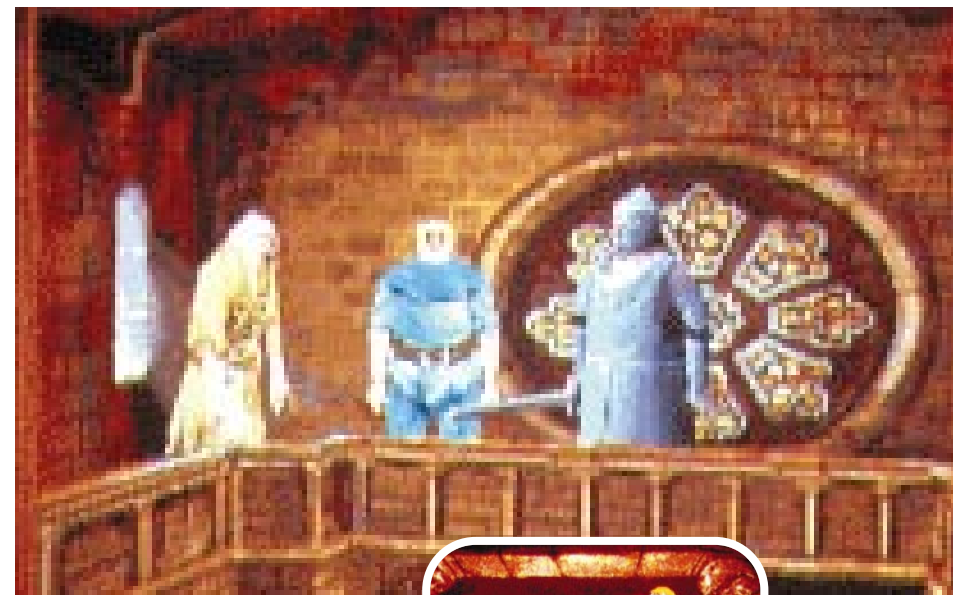
Yet again, we've hunted down and rounded up some big game goodies to whet your appetite: there's the adventure game *Time Gate*; the high-speed action of *Big Red Racing*; *Abuse* – the hair-raising platform game; and *Timon and Pumbaa's Jungle Games* – an enjoyably playable and visually attractive collection. In addition, we provide more family fare and our regular trawl of the Internet



## Time Gate

This enjoyable adventure game from Infogrames is the first part of a new trilogy which follows on from *Alone In The Dark*.

The main character (you) is



William Tibbs, an American law student, who comes to Paris to study international law. His girlfriend, Juliette, disappears one night. The game is based on William's attempts to track her down. Some lateral thinking, curiosity, a certain amount of time travel and a touch of violence are needed if you're ever going to rescue your damsel in dis-

stress. It's essential to collect as much information and as many objects as you can from each place you visit as it'll save having to make a detour later.

*Time Gate* is definitely an improvement on *Alone In The Dark*, whose main pitfall was that it needed a very powerful PC and heaps of memory – we nearly gave up, using a P90. *Time Gate* loaded first time with no hiccups and, more importantly, once running it was smooth, fast and very responsive to keyboard strokes. When you walk into a different room, there's no delay while the screen redraws, and the 'unconvincing gait' of *AITD3*'s hero has

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been replaced by Tibbs' manly stride. Also, the headbutts, kicks and punches are quite gutsy. Unfortunately, the graphics are a bit patchy, with faces resembling blobs rather than the detailed rendering of other games. RS

**Playability has improved since *Alone In The Dark* and we'd give up a bit of graphical detail any day for a game that runs this well.**

£44.99

Infogrames: 0171 738 8199

**Time Gate**

**75%**

Requirements: 486/DX2 66MHz, 8 Mb of Ram, Soundblaster-compatible sound card, CD-Rom, MS-Dos. Recommended: P90, 16Mb Ram, quad-speed CD-Rom, AWE32 sound card.

## Big Red Racing

There's no shortage of racing games that put you behind the wheel of a turbo-charged sports car or the fairing of a 200mph motorbike but *Big Red Racing*, from Domark, is perhaps the only game that gives you the chance to throw around a snow plough or inflatable motor boat.

Like all racing games, *Big Red Racing* requires you to fight your way through the rankings by winning races. Nothing new there, but the fun starts once you get on the starting grid. Rather than have you just tear around a tarmac oval, *Big Red Racing* puts you through your paces on everything from the waterways of Shanghai, muddy ruts of a Chilean quarry, the streets of Turin and the surface of Mars. Obviously, ►



## games news

There is a new on-line service – **E-On** – now available, which is dedicated to PC entertainment. For a monthly fee of around a fiver, you can download games or multimedia products which expire after 30 days of use. Entertainment Online: 0116 224 0000



From LucasArts this winter we'll see *Jedi Knight* – sequel to *Dark Forces*, *Outlaws* and *X-Wing vs TIE Fighter*. Also, a children's game called *Mortimer and the Riddles of the Medal*.



*lion* will hit the shelves. Virgin: 0171 368 2266

**Diamond** has brought out a new graphics card called **Stealth 3D 2000** designed to improve full-motion video, give photo-realistic 3D animation and fast 2D graphics acceleration. Several games companies have already said they'll support the card. It will cost around £230 with bundled software. **Diamond Multimedia**: 0189 444400

The release date of **Quake** is still uncertain, while extra levels for **Hexen** are now available, as is a version of **Ultimate Doom** optimised for Windows 95. **GT Interactive**: 0171 258 3791

Games from **Viacom Newmedia** this autumn include *Beavis and Butthead* – *Little Thingies*, *Joe's Apartment* – *the Quest to Infest* and *AEon Flux*. Meanwhile, **Gremlin's** releases include *Realms of the Haunting*, *Fragile Allegiance* and *Actua Golf*. From

**Warner Interactive**, look out for *Pitball*, *Star Control 3* and *MIA*, all available around September. **CIC Interactive**: 0181 846 9433, **Gremlin Interactive**: 0114 275 3423 and **Warner Interactive**: 0171 391 4300

The successful American quiz-show game **You Don't Know Jack**, famed for its humour and sound quality, is to be localised for an English audience. The release date is to be confirmed. **Focus Multimedia**: 01889 570156

**Animal** is a new game starring Peperami from the TV commercials.

Also featuring characters like *Pepereinstein* and the *Terminutter*, the game will be released in the autumn, distributed by Ocean. **Ocean Software**: 0161 832 6633

The lucky winner of the April After Hours competition is Mr S J Lee of Ramsey, Huntingdon. Congratulations on winning







a feeling of frightening speed, even on a 486DX2/66. JP

**Racing game aficionados would do well to check out Big Red Racing. Although it may be lacking in the realism department, it more than makes up for it with its sheer variety and enjoyability.**

○ £44.99

○ Domark: 0181 780 2222

**Big Red Racing**

**85%**

Requirements: 486DX8Mb of Ram, double-speed CD-Rom drive, VGA graphics card, Mouse, supports MS-Dos, Windows 3.1 and Windows 95.

you're not expected to succeed in anything as straightforward as a simple car, but instead, in vehicles more suited to the differing terrain.

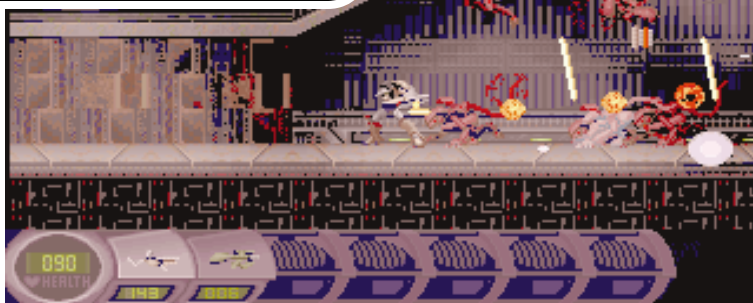
Each track has a choice of two vehicles, each with their own pros and cons. The Anderson Inflatomatic motor boat, for example, has poor acceleration (a relative term) whereas the Delpy Swamp King hovercraft can traverse both land and water but is not particularly manoeuvrable. Other vehicles include a Mini, dump truck, six-wheeled amphibious vehicle and a jet-propelled hover ship.

Races can be viewed in-vehicle from behind the steering wheel, or from a more useful external perspective. The tracks are rarely flat and maintaining a steady course (and all wheels on the ground) takes some practice. This isn't helped by the fact that when you wander off-course, you keep on going, possibly for ever. But should you get hopelessly lost amidst the lava flows of Venus, you'll find that hitting control drops you back on track.

Although adequate for a game of this type, *Big Red Racing* is not what you could call graphically stunning. The vehicles are blocky and at times it can look more like you're racing over a huge patchwork quilt than the middle of Sydney. Still, it all goes smoothly enough and it evokes

## Abuse

Abuse is a platform game – but don't turn the page yet, because despite this, it does have a lot to commend it. For a start, it installs and runs under Windows 95 as well as MS-Dos and it doesn't make crazy demands on memory or force you to make a special boot disk. In fact,



once you've installed the game, you don't even need the CD in the drive to play it – Abuse ran perfectly well on the recommended DX2-50 class of computer with 8Mb of memory.

It also comes with a level editor so you can create your own games. There is a comprehensive booklet explaining how to do this, and once you've designed a masterpiece, you can enter it in a competition which is running until August 30 this year. The fifteen creators of the best levels submitted will each receive \$1,000.

Another twist on the old 'run, jump and blast' scenario is that the mouse is used to control the firing of any of the seven available weapons. Moving the mouse controls the direction of fire through a full 360 degrees and pressing one of the mouse buttons pulls the trigger. This means you can run using the cursor control keys while firing in any direction, even behind you.

There is a scenario, but, as in most platform games, it's irrelevant because the idea is to negotiate the corridors killing everything in sight until you find the way out, and then do the same thing again on the next level. You'll meet a varied array of enemies, including Juggers, Drillbots, Fliers and Mutants, as well as having to surmount obstacles like air mines, lava and falling boulders.

Some of the situations you find yourself in can be extremely hair-raising and it's advisable to save your game frequently so that when you inevitably get killed you don't have to start all over again. Unlike some of the 3D games that let you save your game at any point (we call it cheating), you can only save games at designated safety points, which means you have to develop a high degree of skill in order to make it through the harder sections of the game.

Finally, there's a network version of the game where you can play head-to-head against your friends or against colleagues at work. PW

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**It's a platform game with some interesting twists. Devotees of the genre will love it, but the graphics and game-play can't be compared with many of the 'virtual world' games currently dominating the games scene.**

£39.99

Electronic Arts: 01753 549442

**Abuse**

**75%**

Requirements: Intel 486/DX2-50 or better (DX2-66 for network game), Dos 5.0 or higher or Windows 95, 8Mb of Ram, 400Kb of free conventional memory, 13Mb of hard disk space, 1Mb 256-colour VGA video card, mouse, CD-Rom drive.

### Timon and Pumbaa's Jungle Games

Until now, Disney Interactive has stuck to either the animated storybook, screen scenes or activity centre. This is the first CD-Rom game released by Disney and again it exploits that classic, *The Lion King*. It's made up of five games – Hippo Hop, Jungle Pinball, Sling Shooter, Bug Drop and Burper. Some will complain that these are no more than stylised versions of old standards, but who's complaining when they run this well, look this good and are this playable?

The idea of Hippo Hop is to cross the stream by jumping on different moving objects. You have two minutes to go back and forth as many times as possible. Bug Drop works on the same principle as Tetris but, as the name suggests, bugs are dropped rather than blocks. Our favourites were Jungle Pinball and Burper. If you'd like a burp-em-up rather than a beat-em-up, you'll love the latter. Various objects drop from the trees above and you must burp at them before they drop on your head. The sound effects are realistic and the green slime you produce is the most gory thing on the CD. RS

**The games are simple but will keep children occupied for ages and they make a refreshing change as many games now contain sex, violence or both.**

£39.99

Buena Vista: 0171 605 2400

**Timon and Pumbaa 80%**

Requirements: 486/33 MHz, 8Mb of Ram, CD-Rom drive, 18-bit sound card, 256-colour SVGA, Windows 3.1 or later. Dos 3.3 or higher.

**Age ratings:** We have assigned viewing suitability ratings for each game. PG = Parental Guidance; U = Universal; and 18 = suitable for viewing by 18-year-olds and above.



### TOP TEN CD-ROM GAMES

Last month	This month	Title	Label
–	1	Theme Park	Electronic Arts
–	2	Magic Carpet Plus	Electronic Arts
–	3	Little Big Adventure	Electronic Arts
1	4	Civilisation 2	Microprose
4	5	Encarta 96	Microsoft
9	6	Fifa International Soccer	Electronic Arts
7	7	Worms	Ocean
–	8	Worms: Reinforcements	Ocean
–	9	Deep Space 9: Harbinger	Viacom New Media
3	10	Command and Conquer	Virgin

### TOP TEN DISK GAMES

Last month	This month	Title	Label
3	1	Sim City 2000	Maxis
8	2	Sim Tower	Maxis
4	3	Autoroute – UK and Ireland	Microsoft
6	4	Jungle Book	Virgin
9	5	Doom 2	Virgin
–	6	Toy Story screensaver	Disney Interactive
5	7	Best of Windows Ent.	Microsoft
–	8	Flight Sim v5.1	Microsoft
7	9	Worms	Ocean
–	10	First Steps	Mindscape



Figures for both charts from Chart Track Ltd – week ending 04.05.96