

# after hours

Enter a creepy adventureland full of mummies, vampires and other ghouls, slam a few baskets with Michael Jordan and the Looney Tunes cartoon characters, win the FA Cup with Kick Off 97, and enter the Theme Hospital to build a medical kingdom



## Goosebumps: Escape from Horrorland

**PG** Love them or hate them, the *Goosebumps* stories by RL Stine are popular reading for many children – and now the creepy tales take on a new dimension in this double CD-ROM adventure.

Escape from Horrorland is an interactive sequel to the book *One Day at Horrorland*, in which your task is to find your friends and their parents and escape the terrors of Horrorland (a kind of theme park gone mad). Of course, things are never straightforward – you must solve numerous puzzles and collect (in your bum-bag) a grisly array of items such as hammers, whips, mummies' hands and slabs of meat.

The graphics are extremely impressive – a mix of computer-generated imagery, live-action video and 3-D miniature sets. The action was smooth and fast on our test machine – a P90 with an 8-speed CD-ROM. Each area is augmented by a set of creepy sounds that greatly enhance the atmosphere.

Controlling the game is simple – moving the mouse left and right scrolls your view (the images are distorted at the edges creating a wonderful sense of depth), and clicking the mouse moves you forward, picks up items etc. Game-play is addictive and you are soon sucked into the mysteries of Horrorland.

## After hours games

### Space Jam

**U** Like the film of the same name, Space Jam stars Michael Jordan and all the Looney Tunes cartoon characters in an intergalactic basketball game.

In arcade-style action, you can play the Tunesquad, with Elmer Fudd on the same side as Bugs Bunny and the rootin' tootin' six-shootin' Yosemite Sam. Or you can play the Monstars, who are rougher and tougher, preferring to win with dirty play rather than skill.

Until you get used to the keyboard interface (we found it difficult to get a gamepad to work), it's easier and more fun to play the Monstars. Running down other players and shooting are easy, but once you've mastered the intricacies of passing the ball and switching between players, then it's worth playing the Tunes. If Jordan's on your team then your lack of skill shouldn't be too much of a problem.

If you or your team tires of straight basketball, then between quarters you can play extra levels for more pow-



Be warned – this title is scary (it scared us). Werewolves are wont to leap at you when you least expect it, and as for the mummies and vampires... need we say more? If your children are of a nervous disposition, they'd better avoid this game.

Escape from Horrorland has lots of play value. In addition to the main adventure, you will find all sorts of subterranean corridors to explore, with ghoulish arcade games on the way. A nice touch is the numerous different endings to the game, depending on how you play.

If we were to be critical, we could complain that the treatment of objects is sometimes illogical – some items can be put in your bum-bag, for example, whereas others can't be taken away. It can also be difficult to understand some of the American speech, especially that of the all-important riddle wall. These are, however, minor criticisms of a thoroughly impressive title.

The game is aimed at children of eight and above, but some of the puzzles are probably beyond the average eight-year-old – it would be useful to include a hint book for the parents of frustrated children. **SH**

**A superb adventure for the not-too-timid.**

○ £39.99 (inc VAT)

○ Microsoft: 0345 002000

### Escape from Horrorland

**Overall** ★★★★★

Minimum requirements: Pentium 75MHz, 4x CD-ROM drive, 8Mb of RAM, 256-colour display, sound card, mouse, 10Mb of hard disk space, Windows 95.



## games news

**Sub Culture**, from Criterion, is an underwater adventure. Piloting a submarine, you must unite the Trads and the Techs in an effort to save the oceans from pollution.

Continuing the watery theme, **Aqua Tak**, scheduled for later release, is a combat racing game, where you drive power-boats which really pack a punch. As you speed through whirlpools and over jumps, it's vital to keep your enemies in your sights.

Criterion: 01483 406200

**Comanche 3** is being promoted by NovaLogic as the helicopter combat sim for the twenty-first century. This is a revision of the earlier hits Comanche and Comanche 2, and is based on the latest version of the fast attack helicopter from Boeing-Sikorsky.

Meanwhile, **Armoured Fist II**, the latest version of NovaLogic's tank warfare sim, is set for release in early summer. With 3D graphics and multi-player options, the drivers of the American M1-A2 Abrams heavy battle tank can take on former Soviet air and land forces.

NovaLogic: 0171 607 9707



**Plane Crazy** is a racing and stunt flying flight sim built around a Direct 3D game engine. In your quest to join the daredevil Crazy Aces, you must race them over a string of courses – and beat them every time. With a range of multi-player options, including Internet play, it's the first in Inner Workings' planned Fearsome games series and is due for release both on the PC and in the arcades later in the year.

Inner Workings: 0141 552 4451  
www.innerworkings.co.uk

The latest arcade-style shoot-'em-up from Hasbro is **Beast Wars**, due out in late summer. Tying in with a new *Transformers* TV series, *Beast Wars* pits Maximals against Predacons in a bid to ensure either intergalactic domination or universal peace.

Hasbro Interactive: 0181 569 1234

Strategy gaming die-hards will be pleased to know that **The Next 70 Levels for Warcraft II: Tides of Darkness** has been released, priced at £19.99.

Ablac Entertainment: 01626 332233





er-ups. Between Yosemite Sam's Shoot-Out and Lola Bunny's Hall of Hijinx it's possible to get more points and boost your skill.

Basketball's a fast-paced game, and Space Jam is no exception. It was very playable, with all the action very smooth on our Dell test machine. Unfortunately, although the graphics were good, they weren't of as high a resolution as we've come to expect. It is a DOS game though, so you should be able to play it on a lower powered machine.

If you want to play with friends, then up to six can share the same computer, two on the keyboard and a further four using the Gravis GrIP gamepad. Six players can also join in across a network. Although it's unlikely to make much of a hit in offices, playing with others adds to the challenge.

JS

**It's fast and good fun. If you're looking for an arcade-style basketball game, then Space Jam certainly doesn't suffer from being a film tie-in.**

○ £34.99 (inc VAT)

○ Acclaim Entertainment:  
0171 344 5000

#### Space Jam

Overall



Minimum requirements: 486DX2-66, 8Mb of RAM, 3Mb of hard disk space, 2x CD-ROM drive, DOS 5.0 or greater, SVGA graphics. Gamepad and sound card recommended.

#### Kick Off 97



What do Delia Smith and Norwich City Football Club have in common? Well, the most obvious answer is that the culinary genius owns a hefty share of the kings of East Anglian football scene. However, there's more too it than that because the second thing that Delia and the Canaries would find to chat about at dinner parties

is that neither of them makes an appearance in the new Maxis football simulation, Kick Off 97.

In case you've not come across the mysterious sport of football before, the plot goes something like this: two 11-player teams take a gentle 90-minute jog around a large field, while occasionally trying to kick a ball into the opposing team's net. At the end of the game the referee blows his whistle, the crowd applauds his action and all the players take off their shirts and start kissing one another. So how well does Kick Off 97 simulate this?

Like most games these days, everything in Kick Off 97 is depicted in 3D. You can view the game from lots of different angles, and the detail and animation of the players is mostly very smooth. This is a big departure from the earliest versions of Kick Off but predicting that the purist fans of the original



would dislike the 3D views, Maxis has included an option to revert back to the basic overhead view.

Either way, playing Kick Off 97 takes some getting used to – although the controls are few, the 'after-touch' ball effects are many. You can do everything from passing the ball to a team mate to getting it to dip in flight after a lob – it's all very confusing to begin with.

As far as choosing your team goes, there are plenty of predefined internationals, including all the participants of Euro 96. However, if you've had your fill of Seaman and the rest of England's Euro 96 squad, you can choose your own 'dream team' from a selection of more than 5,000 of the very best international players.

SC

**Kick Off 97 is not a stunning football game by any means, but it's playable enough and it has the added bonus of very realistic commentary by the one and only Jim Rosenthal.**

○ £44.99 (inc VAT)

○ Maxis: 0171 505 1500

#### Kick off 97

Overall



Minimum requirements: DOS (8Mb of RAM) or Windows 95 (16Mb of RAM), Pentium 75MHz (133MHz recommended), 50 to 60Mb of free hard disk space and a 2x CD-ROM drive.

## Theme Hospital



If you've ever had the misfortune to spend time sitting in a hospital's casualty department, you've probably asked yourself some key questions: Why aren't there more doctors? Why aren't there enough seats? And where's the vending machine?

If you still don't know the answers to these questions, get hold of Bullfrog's Theme Hospital. Just as Theme Park put you in charge of a make-believe Alton Towers, Theme Hospital gives you your very own Holby General to manage.

Played from a 3D isometric perspective (similar to Diablo and Civilisation), Theme Hospital opens with a plot of land. Your first job is to get some basic medical care facilities up and running before the hospital is opened and you're given a limited budget to get things in place.

Most important is a reception area, as this is where new patients are fielded. Add a few benches, radiators and a drinks machine, and patients will happily wait to be treated. Basic diagnoses are taken care of with a GP's office and general diagnosis room, and treatment is handled by a pharmacy, wards and various clinics. Rooms are built by selecting them from a menu and dragging the pointer to select an area. Space is limited so you need to plan carefully to make everything fit.

Fortunately, Theme Hospital's point-and-click interface is very simple to use, making building rooms, depositing items and rearranging furniture an easy business. With the basics in place, the hospital has to be staffed and there's a choice of doctors, nurses, receptionists and handymen, each with different skills and, more importantly, salary expectations.

But you can't afford to waste time here because the countdown to the hospital's opening has started. You'll barely have the last pot plant in place before patients start stumbling through the door, moaning about the cold and being sick on the floor. Ailments range from the unlikely to the ridiculous (think 1970s children's game Operation)

**Age ratings:** We have assigned viewing suitability ratings for each game. U = Universal; PG = Parental Guidance; 15 = suitable for viewing by 15-year-olds and above; 18 = suitable for viewing by 18-year-olds and above.



Figures for both charts from Chart Track Ltd - month ending 31.3.97



and patients and staff are humorously animated as they go about their business. Apart from the odd hiring, firing or pay rise, things are mostly self-running, until patients start arriving with other conditions.

Theme Hospital is a constant battle to manage resources. Research must be done to discover new treatments; new clinics must be built to dispense them. Visiting dignitaries can vitally boost the hospital's reputation, bringing in more patients and meaning you have to buy more land for building.

Handle things badly and your funds go down and the grim reaper will start stalking the corridors. With success, you're promoted to bigger and bigger hospitals and things start to get very hectic indeed. So hectic, in fact, that it's a great pity you can't check yourself in for treatment. JP

**Wildly addictive and superbly implemented, Theme Hospital is a frantic combination of strategy and quick thinking. Although it rewards extended playing, it can easily be played in the odd half hour and the attention to detail is so precise that the only thing that seems to be missing is Charlie Fairhead.**

£39.99 (inc VAT)

Electronic Arts: 01753 549442

### Theme Hospital

Overall



Minimum requirements: MS-DOS version - DX2/66 or higher, 8Mb of RAM, 2x CD-ROM, 25Mb of free hard disk space, Windows 95 version - Pentium, 8Mb of RAM, 4x CD-ROM, DirectX 3-compatible sound and video cards, 25Mb of free hard disk space.

### TOP TEN CD-ROM GAMES/LEISURE TITLES

Last month	This month	Title	Label
1	1	Red Alert	Virgin
3	2	Tomb Raider	Eidos Interactive
2	3	FIFA 97	Electronic Arts
5	4	Championship Manager 2	Eidos Interactive
4	5	Encarta 97	Microsoft
6	6	Flight Simulator 6.0	Microsoft
-	7	Theme Hospital	Bullfrog
8	8	Rally Championship	Europress Software
-	9	Formula 1 Grand Prix 2	Microprose
-	10	Total Insanity - triple pack	Europress Software

### TOP TEN DISK GAMES/LEISURE TITLES

Last month	This month	Title	Label
1	1	Return of Arcade	Microsoft
2	2	Scrabble	US Gold
3	3	Aladdin	Virgin
5	4	Best of Windows Entert.	Microsoft
4	5	Jungle Book	Virgin
7	6	Worms	Ocean/Team 17
10	7	Premier Manager 3 Deluxe	Gremlin Interactive
-	8	Fatal Racing	Gremlin Interactive
-	9	Quicken 6.0	Intuit
6	10	mini OFFICE	Europress Software