



# A BREED APART

You've waited. Oh, how you've waited. And now it's coming. Bigger, better and blastier than ever before. Team 17's Alien Breed 2. The story starts here...

**I**t's hard to believe now but there was a time when if you'd mentioned the name 'Team 17' people would've thought you were talking about some obscure indie pop band. But with their first major release in the May of 1991 the company established an immediate reputation for no-nonsense, arcade-quality games. Since those early days the Wakefield software developers have gone from strength to strength, with a string of games that were major hits with both critics and punters alike. And now, two years down the line, the same team are preparing to create a super-sequel to the game that started it all: Alien Breed.

You could argue that, in a sense, we've already had a sequel, Alien Breed '92: Special Edition, but that was essentially a rehash of the first game, with new map layouts and a slightly tighter approach to the game design. Alien Breed 2, however, promises to completely new in every way, with new gameplay, new graphics, new sound and even a new development machine, the A1200.

**"I'd really like the players to not be able to relax [while playing Alien Breed 2]. I'd love it if a player soiled his underwear while playing!"**

Martyn Brown, Team 17.

Once again Andreas Tadic, Rico Holmes and Allister Brimble, the original Alien Breed coder, graphic artist and music maestro respectively, are in the driving seat, with the whole project being overseen by the irrepressible Martyn Brown. As from next month in *The One*, you can read the EXCLUSIVE Alien Breed 2 development diary which will, month by month and in the team's own slightly-garbled words, detail in full the sweat, tears and sheer hard work that goes into producing a major Amiga game.

This month, however, to kick things off we talked to Martyn about his hopes and - yes! - fears for Alien Breed 2...



Well, here it is then - the first screenshot from Alien Breed 2 in development. Where are the aliens, though?



# FEATURE

The obvious questions (and I slightly stupid one at that, given Alien Breed's success) is: why Alien Breed 2? "Basically because doing Alien Breed 3 would be a silly idea..." Now come on, Martyn, play the game... "Actually we had always wanted to do a full (and by 'full' I mean a complete rewrite) sequel, not like what we did the the Special Edition.

"We've had a massive amount of feedback about the original game and the Special Edition and I suppose we're here to satisfy the demand of players and believe me there's a lot of demand! Also, we're completely sick of non-shoot-'em-ups after spending a year on 'that bloody frog'! Breed has always been one of our favourite projects and it also seems that a lot of people still value it as our best game, although I could disagree easily."

What are you hoping to achieve with Alien Breed 2? "We want the players to get involved and just enjoy it, more so than they did with the original, which - judging by the demand - is going to be tough but I think we have a number of features, particularly on the A1200 version, which will be enough to make people say 'Yes... this is good stuff.' The overall game will be about 500% bigger than the original Alien Breed and three times the size of the Special Edition, maybe bigger. Certainly it's going to be a real challenge to 'Breed' vets!"

Is the plot different, or is it basically more of the same killing things in a space station? "I don't want to go too deeply into the plot just now but we're happy that it's a very good story and will work very well - it's certainly not a case of improving the original and just strapping on a plot," says Martyn. "Basically it revolves around a colonised planet and all sorts of weird happenings. This planet has one centre comprised of three buildings; a civilian unit, a military installation and a science installation."



Hello gorgeous! It's Andreas Tadic, AB2 programmer.

"You have missions according to each and these must be completed before you can access other missions. The buildings are linked by a concourse and one of the buildings provides a bridge over a ravine in the planet's surface which ordinarily cannot be crossed. Once over the ravine you make your way across the planet and then into the actual planet's subterranea. Then a quite shocking part of the plot is revealed and all hell breaks loose!"

What do you feel were Alien Breed's weak points, and how are these going to be rectified in Alien Breed 2? "The original game was far too small and far too linear," admits Martyn. "It had major gameplay flaws, which is easy to say looking at a game which is two years old in design. I think we rectified a lot of the problems in the Special Edition, but we still think there's lots of room for improvement."

"The linear thing isn't an easy case to argue as we've found that a large percentage of players prefer to be 'pushed' through games and not have to think about where to go.

## OH DEAR!

Just to give you an idea of what you can expect from Team 17's Alien Breed 2: Diary Of A Game, Martyn provided us with this example. It's all about the boys' adventures leading up to the first day at the European Computer Trade Show. We would like to remind readers that getting drunk and unruly is neither big, hard or clever, though it can be funny to read about...

**Saturday April 3rd 1993.**

7.45am

Team 17 set off from Wakefield in one car (a Ford Granada) and a big olive-coloured van full of all the techy bits for the show. We arrange to meet at Woolley Services on the M1 so that we don't lose each other on the way down and therefore not arrive at the ECTS at different times.

**8.15am**

At Woolley Services. We have arrived but the van hasn't. Plan A already down the pan. Unfortunately we thought it was fool-proof and we never made a Plan B. Everyone says "Soddit!" loudly and gets in the car. We head off down to London preparing for unorganised chaos.

**9.30am**

After passing the Sheffield area on the M1, I don my Leeds Utd top and practice my hand signals to the many coaches and cars from Sheffield heading towards the Sheffield Wednesday-Sheffield United FA Cup Semi-final. This proves to be sufficiently amusing for the rest of the journey. Stopped for a rip-off £5 breakfast and didn't get any toast. Practised even more vulgar hand signals to the woman serving breakfasts on the way out.

**12.30pm**

Arrived at loading bay for the show, our van full of equipment is nowhere to be seen. We watched Tom Watson of Renegade unload his van (erm, Fiesta).

**2.00pm**

Our van arrives.

**3.30pm**

Our van manages to park near the loading bay.

The maps in Alien Breed tend to do a bit of both so I think that's okay. In the original we had maps that had to be completed in order and although we will have similar in the second there will be parts of the game where you'll be able to go through a building's various levels in any order.

"Lack of variety

was also a weak spot

and this will be improved a lot in the sequel. The player sprites are quite weak and we will improve those too. From a technical viewpoint we can do a lot with the game, add much more action, better weapons and so on so it will look and feel much better and more action-packed than ever before.

So the game isn't going to be divided into levels like the first game? "Some of the missions are open in that you must search a num-



It's Rico Holmes, AB2 graphic artist, trying to strike a cool pose at the European Computer Trade Show last April.

ber of levels/maps to complete the missions," explains Martyn, "whereas as other quests will take you through set maps like the original. Some areas will be open planet areas where you have a set time to activate something or at least reach a departure zone."

What sorts of aliens can we expect? "There will be many different aliens, unlike the original - which was a weakness, I suppose," says Martyn. "Some will be big, some will

**4.00pm**

Watch the Grand National debacle on our stand, surrounded by lots of other software houses who hadn't thought of bringing a TV to watch the National. Swear and chunter for a few hours about the waste of time it was bringing a TV all the way down.

**8.00pm**

Stand is complete, we head back to the hotel... but not for long. We hit the George pub in Hampstead and enjoy its wares. Discover the delights of a local Kentucky then hit the hotel bar...

**Sunday April 4th 1993.**

1.30am

Ernie, the ace 90-year-old barman from Bradford (who works in the hotel), decides to say "Timel" and we have to retire to our rooms.

**4.00am**

Run around the hotel in boxer-shorts making silly noises and ordering £5 breakfasts for unlucky people in random rooms. Attempt to climb onto the hotel roof. Fall. Turn TV volume full up in order to receive a complaint from the people next door. Attempt to use the 6.00am trouser press to straighten my trousers whilst still wearing them. Fall miserably.

**6.30am**

Fall asleep at last.

**7.30am**

Alarms goes. Time to get ready for the first day of the ECTS show...



be fast, some will have Predator-like stealth shields, some will morph from inanimate objects and some will be wall-mounted military hardware. Renegade humanoids, androids and other creatures may also play a large part.

"Obviously how they attack will depend on their own characteristics - they certainly won't be as thick as those in Alien Breed! Those aliens were a bit of a hoot and deserved to be blasted! I prefer to play Alien Breed in the 'fast alien' mode because they're so unpredictable and move very creepily, a bit like spiders. It really sh\*t's you up when you're playing and that's what I want for the sequel - I'd really like the players to not be able to relax. I'd love it if a player soiled his underwear while playing!"

So what sort of impressive technical jiggery-pokery can we hope to see? "On the A1200 (which is the first machine the game is being developed for) it will be incredible," enthuses Martyn. "Andreas is hoping to develop a Sprite Playfield which in layman's terms means that everything is going to move like lightning! It also means we might (and I mean might!) even consider doing parallax and stuff like that, which is odd because we never usually bother with it as it's only a flash effect after all."

"Background colour-wise it's looking like we'll use just 128 colours on the A1200 because we simply don't need 256. Rico's style means that he usually does monochromatic work and there's only so many shades he needs. We might do a 262,000-colour HAM 8 screen just to show off. Using the sprite playfield idea we can use the maximum amount of colours in the background but that would slow things down and also take up lots of disk space and it's very important to get the game playable from disk - but it certainly should be considering the A1200 has 2MB of RAM available."

"We're also planning a neat zoom option for the A1200 only which means you'll be able to zoom out of the surrounding area for mapping purposes and we'll also use this zoom routine for big nasties - you'll see the head of the nasty and then the whole thing will zoom out and your characters will be a fraction of their normal size but the alien will be full-screen or as near as damnit. The effect will be amazing if we can pull it off and we're very confident of doing so!"

"You can expect to see everything move at 50Hz on the A1200 and have three or four times the amount of action on-screen. If you've played the original that means it's going to look amazing!" What about the cut-down version for the A500/600? "On



**The A1200 is very exciting and we want to get ourselves a name for A1200 development. We wanted to hit the machine HARD right from the off...**

Martyn Brown, Team 17.

a standard machine there will two times as much on-screen and it will be much more action packed. The code in Special Edition is basically two years old and there's so much more we can do these days."

So why the shift away from the A600 and onto the A1200? "Well, it's getting incredibly difficult to do much with the A500/600 that hasn't been seen before," explains Martyn. "Techy routines are all very well and good but the game should be (and has to be) more important. The A1200 allows us to improve EVERY aspect of the game, such as colours on-screen, action on-screen, enemies on-screen, amount of sound, music, samples etc."

"The A1200 is very exciting and we want to get ourselves a name for A1200 development. We wanted to hit the machine HARD right from the

off and cannot wait to get into it. There are also other reasons why we've chosen to develop the game primarily for the A1200, but unfortunately I'm not allowed to explain why!"

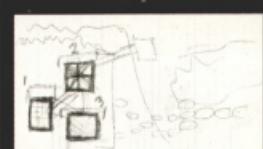
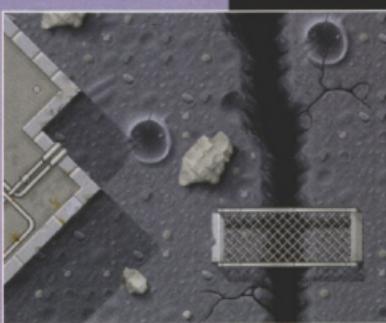
We've seen your so-called 'storyboard' (reproduced down at the bottom of this page) and, well, it's not really up to much is it?" You might scoff at it but it means a lot to us!" laughs Martyn. "It does show the idea of the three buildings, the linked concourses and the ravine with an open area leading to other twist in the plot. We don't like to do everything at once as regards to plot, but we have in mind what we're doing at the end. For the moment we have to be sure about the main segment of the game - which our diagram kindly demonstrates."

"I came up with the plot (includ-

ing the scary twist) after a few beers on April 3rd. I had to sit down and recover because I'd had a bit of a brainstorm and this story I'd come up with gave me goosebumps and stuff. I thought 'Yeah! This is cool, even Rico would go for this'. As for the storyboard we all (i.e. the Team 17 guys - me, Rico, Andreas and Junior, the guy who did the Body Blows code - who were at the ECTS [European Computer Trade Show, see the feature on page 56]) went out for an Indian and, despite getting a plate of rice thrown over me by mistake, it was very productive because the restaurant paid for all the beers - I was just lucky it was rice and not the Chicken Massala that went down my back."

"We went back to the hotel and continued the ale-spree before returning back to my room at about 2a.m. to discuss the Alien Breed plot. We like to get together and throw ideas in and work it out. I'd talked to Rico earlier about my ideas for a story and he was well impressed, which is odd because me and Rico hardly ever agree... Anyway, the piece of paper is the result of about four hours thrashing out the major plot of the game. It may not look much but to us it's as near as we're going to get to a storyboard."

Hmm, yes. What can *The One's* readers expect from the forthcoming Diary, due to start in next month's issue? "Well, judging by our performance in London [at the ECTS] and knowing what we are all like I feel sorry for the readers! But I'm sure we'll manage to keep away from the bar and the Swedish homebrew long enough to get some work done each month. The diary will cover all aspects of game development, from graphics to music, packaging design, you name it... If anyone ever wondered what a game is put together from nothing to the packaged article then this it!"



(Above) It might not look like much, but this scrawled-on scrap of paper is where the basic game design for Alien Breed 2 was thrashed out.

(Left) Here's a view of the alien planet's surface, showing the corner of one of the installations and the ravine. You'll only be able to cross this late into the game, when certain missions have been completed.

# ALIEN BREED 2

**Alien Breed 2** has to be the most eagerly-awaited sequel in development. Last month Martyn Brown, Team 17's project co-ordinator, told you all about his hopes and dreams for the game and now he's your host for this, the first part of the diary itself. Over the coming months you'll share the Team's trials and tribulations as the story slowly evolves of how a super-sequel is born. We don't want to hammer it home but remember - you'll only find this diary EXCLUSIVELY in *The One*. Anyway, take it away Martyn...

## THE MONTH IN BRIEF

**I**t's been a very strange month. The whole project kicked off approximately four to five weeks behind schedule due to Superfrog running late and this has meant that there haven't been any stunning advances so far. We've been developing the game for about four weeks now. We 'storyboarded' the game at the European Computer Trade Show in early April (see last month's issue of *The One*) and since then it's been a case of progressing with the initial (and rather boring) parts of the game. As to what everyone is doing, it's this...



**RICO HOLMES (Graphics)**

Rico is doing lots of sketches and trial-outs, checking to see if the colour ranges that we're bearing in mind that they should (if at all possible) look very similar on the A500/600. This is proving easier than we first thought because of careful colour selection - check the mock 32-colour graphics examples if you don't believe us!

The easiest way to work has been to take the old graphics and draw over them, gradually improving them and creating a more realistic look. I decided quite a long time ago that we wanted A82 to retain the look and feel of the old game because we felt that as so many people liked the original it would be crazy to make too many drastic changes. Or rather that's what Rico would have been doing all this all month if his Adderall hadn't died...

...Anyway, you can all look forward to many more graphics next month as it's all working fine and dandy now.



**ANDREAS TADIC (Code)**

Besides his continual alcohol abuse, Andreas has been busy writing his new mapping program which will be used for creating the game's maps (some surprise, huh?). He's had to do a compete rewrite, coding the editor on his A1200 so that it will accept his new AA graphics modes - rather important for the A1200 version of the maps.

This has been going slower than anticipated as his shiny new SMB A1230 Turbo card also needs to be developed. The A1230 Turbo card makes the A1200 go a rather splendid 7mips (million instructions per second) which is a pleasing 12x the speed of a standard A500 or 1.5x the speed of the A3000.

I asked Andreas to send us a piccy of the new map editor but unfortunately it was so mind-bendingly uninteresting that we don't feel it's worth showing. Maybe next time we can show it. In the meantime manipulating some lovely AA graphics...

As soon as the editor is finished basic mapping will begin and Andreas will work on his 'sprite playfield' ideas for the A1200. The majority of the routines/code for the A500 version already exist and won't take too long to get running. He will also play with the zooming/scaling ideas and see how far that gets before we decide to implement it.



**ALLISTER BRIMBLE**

(Sound)

At such an early stage there has been nothing for Allister to do except admire his lovely local Devonshire sheep and ride about in his shiny new soucche to a flash. At this point, Rico and Andreas wonder how the hell the sound guy ends up with a flash car while we still use the bus...



**MARTYN BROWN**

(Project co-ordination)

I've had the job of correlating the various teams descended on the ECTS and producing some sort of script and mission ideas to use in the finished game. I'm still in the process of producing this text but after I've done that I'll write a sort of short novella which will tell the whole story from start to end, then it'll be as if we are converting a film onto the Amiga, trying to recreate the unfolding story in the game.

Andrea... I've been plodding along with the ideas so far and I think the game will play much better with a cohesive and constructed plot, with set goals along the way. The atmosphere of the game is everything and we want to create a believable place, where you can visualise all the storylines and really get into it, much more than people did with the original.

We've settled on the players being able to select two characters





from four. Two will be the original Johnson and Stone (you wouldn't believe the affinity people have for these characters) and the others are an advanced robot bio-form and an alien lizard-type creature. Obviously we want each of the characters to behave differently and be able to do different things, much like in the old Gauntlet game. I've also had the joyous task of informing all the press about our AB2 activities and getting this diary thing together.

#### **BACK AT HQ. (Packaging, marketing, etc.)**

It's been all quiet on this front, too. It's far too early to start making noises about the game on the sales front and a little bit too early to start package design. We've had a few thoughts about how we will do

things on the packaging but as soon as we have any preliminary sketches you'll see them first!

We still get calls every day about when the game will be coming out and even received a threat from a guy in Leeds - he had the impression that the game will not be coming out on the A500. This is definitely NOT the case and all Breed fans with A500s and 600s can rest assured that they will be fighting off bugs alongside the A1200 owners. We aim to release both versions of the game at the same time.

This early mock-up, reusing old Alien Breed 1 monster graphics overlaid on top of one of the new backgrounds gives you some idea of how the final game will look, except totally different.

Simon in a flash restaurant (the Islington Kentucky), with Dave seemingly disappointed with Rico's appearances. "I just thought he'd have black hair and be taller," says a disillusioned Dave Upchurch. It's a sad day.

This day, the middle ECTS day, had been hailed as 'the mother of all piss-ups' and the next morning we enjoyed its sequel; 'the mother of all hangovers'. We had always planned to visit the Swedish development team Digital Illusions [Pinball Dreams and Fantasies] when I was in Sweden and it was to some surprise that we bumped into them in The Steam Passage pub in Islington.

The rest of the night is history and Olaf (DI's sound guy) stayed with us and helped us drink the hotel dry. We nearly got thrown out and generally acted like hooligans - oh, how our mothers would be ashamed of us if only they knew...

## **AND NOW... THE DIARY!**

### **Sunday April 4th**

First day of the ECTS at the Business Design Centre in Islington. Absolutely rushed off our feet attending to press demands, business meetings and fending off the rather splendid (if pricey) bar.

Andreas and Rico arrived in the evening and along with the Team 17 guys at the show (Steve, Andy, Junior and myself) have a few beers and an Indian meal in Hampstead. I got a bowl of rice dropped down my back and the restaurant paid for all the beers as an apology. Mighty cheers ring around Hampstead that evening even though I have to spend the following days finding rice in my underwear.

Myself, Andreas, Rico and Junior spent about six hours rolling around laughing into the early hours after drinking half a bottle of potent Swedish vodka, laughing mostly at the expense of Allister (who hadn't arrived yet); we discovered that his hotel room had woolly blankets which gave us excellent value for money with the Allister/sheep jokes.

Despite Andreas and Junior nearly having heart attacks due to incessant laughing and Andy hitting his photo taken clutching a teapot whilst asleep and at the mercy of the rest of us, we had a good evening. Prior to all this we storyboarded Alien Breed 2 and settled on what we were doing, so we did get some work done.

### **Monday April 5th**

Spend the day gathering recruits for our own Team 17 bash to be held around Islington in the evening. We bumped into The One's Dave and

Simon in a flash restaurant (the Islington Kentucky), with Dave seemingly disappointed with Rico's appearances. "I just thought he'd have black hair and be taller," says a disillusioned Dave Upchurch. It's a sad day.

256-colour graphics and it also means he can do some mind-blowing EHAM screens. Andreas's A1230 card starts playing up, GURUING after about an hour. Repeated calls to GVP from the frustrated Swede result in the synopsis that the turbo card is faulty and has to be returned. Gloom drifts upon the land...

### **Friday April 9th**

Having experimented, Rico considers that the best way of working is to do the graphics in 32-colour mode, so guaranteeing that the A500 version will look excellent, then retouching and modifying them for the A1200 version, using Opalvision for perfect shading and smoothing.

### **Saturday April 10th**

Rico's A4000 starts to operate at a slower speed and gradually slows down to such an extent that it's impossible to use. A few calls to Commodore Sweden later and he discovers that it's a design fault in a batch of A4000s. The machine has to go back. Rico is Amiga-less. Doom and gloom drifts upon the land...

### **Sunday April 11th**

Rico and Andreas have to use old machines and use the only AA machine out there (an unaccelerated, 2Mb A1200) on a rota basis. This is a far from perfect solution.

(Nothing much really happened for a while because of machine problems. The machine rota thing kept in operation and Andreas kept on with the map editor, which should be finished in a few weeks.)

### **Monday April 19th**

Decided enough was enough and that it was about time we got the official AA specs from Commodore. The specifications cover all the new modifications to the Amiga chipset and, more importantly, all the new graphic and sprite modes.

### **Tuesday April 20th**

After much searching and probing at Commodore I end up approaching the American head of development - and hurrah! - they're in the post to us. It's a bit of a relief really, as Commodore don't intend to produce any hardware ref-



# Diary of a Game



erence guides to the machine. It's laughable that it's taken so long to get hold of them, though.

## Friday April 23rd

Jubilation! The full AA chipset specs arrive via air courier and much celebration ensues... particularly by our programmers. Much giddiness is caused by the fact that scrolling, for example, can be four times as smooth on the A1200 because the scroll pixels are four times smaller on the A1200. The whole weekend is spent drooling over the spec guide and it's saucy implications for the A1200 version of AB2.

## Monday April 26th

Rico manages to lose all 32-colour work done to date due to the hard drive going down prior to its repair by Commodore. The 128-colour AA backdrops are intact so he had to retouch them all once more into 32-colour mode. This is a very boring job and Rico has to bore everyone else by endless calls to remind everyone just how boring it really is.

## Tuesday April 27th

Andreas still plugs away on the new-fangled map editor beastie, saying it will have all manner of doozy features. For 'saying' read 'claiming'. Rico starts to rework the old graphics into a more modern, better version. It's much better to do it this way so that the graphic blocks fit onto the map clipscreens and therefore can be used much more quickly than before and also the old map editor can be used to produce mock maps for testing. The fact that this mock mapping will not be started for a few more weeks is neither here nor there.

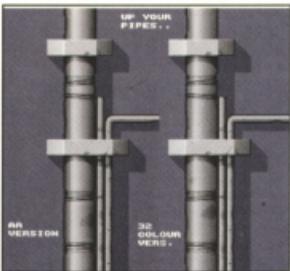
Rico soon discovers that reworking the original graphics is much harder than he first imagined. He thinks it will take a fortnight just getting all the wall pieces together for the interiors of the buildings. Ho-hum...

## Wednesday April 28th

Rico is completely sick of designing interior organic plastic-metal structures already and they're using up far too much graphic space on the clip screen so some sort of compromise will have to be met. You have to realise that you only have so much space reserved for background graphic blocks and with them all being 32 colours it soon gets eaten up. Rico begins to worry about enemies as he is fast running short of colours out there.



Some more of Rico's background graphics, all done in 32 colours. These have all been based on graphics from the original Alien Breed and enhanced for the sequel.



(Above) As you can see, the differences at this stage between the A500/600 and A1200 versions are minimal thanks to careful palette choices.



(Above) This is one of Rico's early mock-ups of the planet's surface, complete with lunar rover type thing. It probably won't get used.



the 32-colour version - yet another compromise will have to be made somewhere. The A1200 version, with its 256-colour palette, presents no such problems.

## Thursday April 29th

I design the initial stages of the game based around our three-building structure in the main colony complex. Parts of the building are undergrounds and can only be reached via lifts and passageways. I don't want to reveal too much of the plot at this stage so I'll shut up now.

This scripting aids both Andreas and Rico in the design stages and helps us to know exactly what we are aiming for. Nothing is final though and all is subject to almost inevitable change at a later stage when we think of other ideas or if other ideas are suggested.

Rico's Opalvision replacement arrives and it works fine... Olofstrom's only pub does brief business (at a staggering £4 a pint, it can only be brief) as a result. The next problem arises from the fact that it's very sunny in Sweden and between the hours of 11am and 3pm Rico can't see his monitor because of it. The search for blinds starts... and is successful, so now Rico can work all day long.

The pub does get more brief business, although Rico declines due to the fact that he has nothing much to celebrate now that he has no 11-3 break anymore.

## Friday April 30th

Rico sketches up some ideas for the exterior of the complex. Andreas continues with woefully unexciting map editor and I have a good idea. Yes, it's not that often that it happens but a new recipe for in-game terminals is born. Add spicy graphics, a dose of vector graphics (both line-drawn and filled), jolly sound effects and a sprinkling of vaguely-interesting text and we have a major improvement to the Intex system (now running a revised version of its original DOS)!

## TO DATE:

### Wednesday May 5th

Myself and Mick prepare to leave for Sweden to spend four days discussing the project. Find out how the trip went and how we fared at the Golden Joystick Awards (we just go the invite today) in the next thrilling Diary instalment. Andreas just phoned and burbled Parodroid noises at me down the phone - the poor soul hasn't quite recovered from meeting his childhood Idol (and previous Diary writer) Andrew Braybrook at the ECTS!

# ALIEN B

Last time was only the beginning... This month Team 17's Martyn Brown tells of being mobbed by fans in a Swedish night-club, accepting the award for Software House Of The Year at the Golden Joystick Awards, the agony and the ecstasy of re-releasing Project-X on budget... Oh, and there are also some more news on the progress of Alien Breed 2, the sequel to one of the biggest games of 1991.

## THE MONTH IN BRIEF

This month has seen a more dynamic number of developments taking place in comparison to the last one, mainly because most of the equipment is working and Rico's been able to work all the ideas into usable graphics. More and more ideas have been thought up and should end up in the final game as they're rather good.

Our development meeting in Sweden went rather well, all three hours of it - but you can blame the freak brilliant weather and beautiful lakes for that. Anyway, what has everyone been doing...?

(Right) Johnson and Stone - back in action! This mocked-up shot should give you an idea of what the new sprites will look like in the final game.



### RICO HOLMES (Graphics)

Since getting his Opalvision into gear and being able to work all day on his shiny new and now working A4000, Rico has been hard at work implementing ideas and upgrading the look and

feel of the game. The result, in my humble opinion, is excellent - we are very happy with it. He's been concentrating on

the Military installation building because it's more fun to draw (big guns and heavy security).

He's also done a sample map with the old map editor to try out some of the ideas like the large lazer turrets which you'll have to take out from another area. He also spent a long time animating and drawing the games four characters: Johnson, Stone, Ruffer2 and Zollux, two of which you can select from (each with different capabilities). The result is that the main game characters are MUCH enhanced over the original ones, which should please Gaz Whitta at least - even if he doesn't work on The One anymore. (Sorry about the re-used portraits from last month, AB2 fans. We'll lend Martyn a camera for when he next goes to Sweden! - Ed.)



### ANDREAS TADIC (Programming)

Besides continuing his map editor (which has been put to one side for the moment) Andreas has been rejigging Project-X ready for budget release. We've changed quite a few points of the

game and it's been Andreas's great pleasure in recoding those bits and putting the game



onto our new disk system, the upshot of which is that the 'new' version of Project-X will fit on three disks instead of four like before, which is good news for us and good news for you (less disk swapping).

Andreas also scrapped the idea of a 'sprite playfield' for the A1200 version of AB2 because Rico was moaning that he wanted more than 16 colours for enemies/weapons and besides that there is going to be more than enough enemies on screen anyway - at least two times the amount in the first version and more enemies like gun turrets and other security systems.

All this means that the enemies and stuff on the A1200 version will be 128 colours and be really rather nice. People who are jumping up and

down saying "Use 256 colours!" please be quiet - it looks rather good and using less colours means more action and more graphics! He hasn't scrapped this 'sprite playfield' thing though and will be developing his ideas throughout the game's progress, it's just that the routine will probably see the light of day in another Team 17 product.

We've rethought our options and have decided to develop graphics and routines for both the 16- and 32-bit versions concurrently, meaning that the A500 version remains as close as possible to the A1200 version - and if you take a peek at the graphics you'll spot that the A500 version is looking pretty spiffing, even at this early stage!

### MARTYN BROWN (Chief bottle washer)

It's been a case of continual suggestions, ideas and whatever from my point of view. The char-

acters in the game will reflect their personalities. Johnson and Stone (Federation Corps) are back by demand - we had lots of letters asking for them to be in the sequel, which we never expected, but



# REED 2

we will bow to public demand! The other two, Ruffer2 (a fast alien/lizard-creature working for the Federation) and Zollux (a bio-form robot with special capabilities such as IR vision and heat/motion detection), are newcomers and to be honest it's all a throwback to the days of Gauntlet-style character selection.

The military zone is going well, lots of ideas and stuff going... These zones will have to be cleared one by one as you make your way down to where large motion is being scanned. To get to the military zone you have to bypass the civilian building and the science blocks which are played in a different way. It looks like we will expand the science/military blocks much more than we first anticipated, making for a much larger game. Also people should note that in this game, enemies will be firing back... a subtle difference I think you'll appreciate!

I'm looking forward to the design of the science blocks and the jars of alien-experiments which can be shot open and therefore let loose. We plan to feature the alien lifeforms (some very bizarre) in a subtle way as the game progresses. You'll find evidence in some areas, the odd one or two in certain areas and then the experiments and proof, etc, before confronting them head on later in the game.

## THE DIARY!

### Thursday May 6th

Myself (Marty) and Mick (Robinson, the MD) head off to Sweden for four days, this is to be spent discussing the project with Andreas and Rico, who are both based in Olofstrom, southern Sweden (about 100miles north-east of Malmö). Clutching various duty-free's (notably Southern Comfort and Jack Daniels) and the goodies for the lads (eight Pink Floyd CDs and two rather spiffy PF T-shirts for Andreas and Marmite/Fig-Rolls for Rico) we arrived safely via Copenhagen and the hovercraft.

### Friday May 7th

The weather takes a turn for the worse - i.e. it's absolutely stunning, clear blue skies and about 30°C. This is not good as it means that nobody really feels like doing any work whatsoever. The result is that we all spend the day lounging around sipping beers, chatting about ideas and other points of interest. We take a walk around the awe-inspiring local lakes and then settle down for barbecued steak n' sausages - it's a hard life! At night we hit 'Toddee', a local pizza place that doubles as a pub and enjoy the local specialty, massive glasses of beer at £7 quid a chuck... We stagger home and collapse into bed in the early hours.

I also had the task of attending the Golden Joysticks Awards where we managed to win our selves an award (Software House Of The Year, no less) and get rather inebriated whilst doing so. I also got to call Jonathan Ross "Johnnyboy!" which went down about as well as the Titanic. At the end of the month I'm flying off to the CES in Chicago for a week - which won't please my girlfriend (ey-up Katrina!) much, but I suppose if it has to be done then I better go...

### ALLISTER BRIMBLE (Sound)

Strangely enough, Allister has been to the zoo! Not though, as we had all suspected, to see some equatorial sheep or other warm-bodied woolly creature but to digitise some grunts and animal noises (he ought to take his big DAT recorder around to Gaz Whitta's pad). He's also begun working on a title score and other sound FX. The sound/speech in the A1200 version is going to be really good!

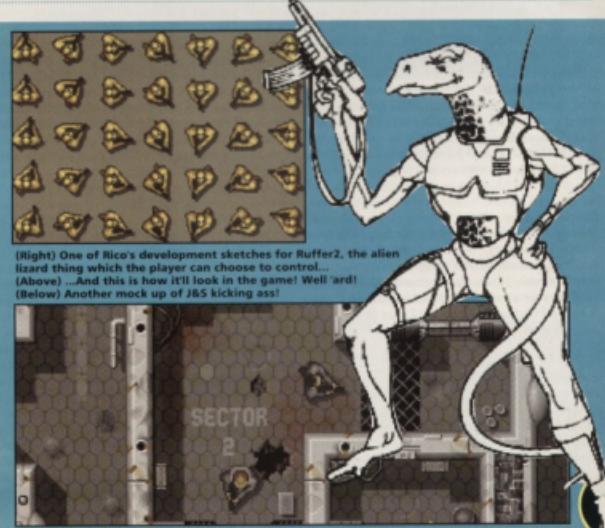


### BACK AT TEAM 17 HQ (Packaging, marketing, etc)

Another quiet month back at base, although the box artwork was discussed and it looks like we'll be going for a similar design to the original, although I thought we would be better off going for an Alien over-shadowing the planet looking really nasty, as if it's just about to take a great big chunk out of it - if you can visualise that. However, I appreciate everyone isn't as warped as myself and that idea has been thrown out.

Yet again the phone has hardly stopped ringing with people asking when Alien Breed 2's going to be out and if it will be coming out on the A500. YES YES YES! For some reason, people got it into their heads that this was an A1200-ONLY version and that's simply not the case.

We also received the ELSPA (European Leisure Software Publishers Assoc.) directives on leisure software contents and we have to bear these in mind when developing the game. This means that we can't show mindless violence, mention vomit, piss or anything remotely disgusting that would aid us in creating an atmospheric and creepy plot. But don't worry, I'm sure we'll be able to do something to give the game a nauseating aspect somewhere along the lines. Anyway, on with this month's diary.



# Diary of a Game

# 2

## Saturday May 8th

Unfortunately the weather hasn't got any better and the shorts are on again. Despite the bad development weather Rico managed to show me the reworked main characters and ideas for the Military zones which went down well.

In the afternoon myself, Andreas and Mick headed up to Vaxjo to see the guys at Digital Illusions. We've been speaking to them for quite a while about the possibility of them working with us, but that's another story and not the one we're talking about now! We spent a few hours with the guys and had a good look at what they were up to - they're a great bunch and we thank them for the visit. Next time they'll be coming down to Olofstrom for a beer session.

The weather took a turn for the better and as we headed off into the rain and thunderstorm, we thought that we would start to get some serious work done... but, as luck wouldn't have it, when we returned back to Olofstrom it was bright and sunny and the barbecue was out quicker than an arctic fire.

Yet more relaxing, eating and drinking before taking in a night-club on a boat in nearby Karlshamn and partying through dawn. Sometimes we think of our jobs and large, smug grins render glowingly across our faces. It was also noteworthy that for the first time we met some actual Team 17 game fans at the night club... it's never happened before and we chatted with the Alien Breed fans about the sequel for a while before hitting the dance floor.

I also managed to have a strange conversation with a drunken Manchester United-supporting Swede who had seen the 'Leeds Glory Years' video and asked me to go through and name the 72 FA Cup winning squad, and with each name he gave a loud cheer... Strange chap.

## Sunday May 9th

After getting up at about four in the afternoon, mainly due to the fact that nobody went to bed before 8.30am, Rico came round with his revised character graphics for the heroes. These were fine although I asked him to put a back-pack on one of the guys, just to distinguish him further. We also found out that the planned green lizardy thing couldn't be green after all because there wasn't enough room in the palette - so the green lizardy character will have to settle for being a rather jaundiced yellow.

## Monday May 10th

Me and Mick reluctantly pack our bags and head home to blighty, leaving behind the lovely weather and the rather tasty Swedish sausages slowly cooking over the barbecue. Back in England, the weather is overcast, cold and there's speed restrictions on the M62 due to fog. Welcome home.

## Tuesday May 11th

Andreas starts work on remaking Project-X for budget release, so the map editor takes a well earned rest in the back seat for the time being. Andreas hates this P/X work but it's got to be done... and he's the man to do it! Rico starts mapping out some of the ideas for the military level, including time-activated security

doors, conveyor belts, security turrets and other stuff.

I spent the day at the Golden Joystick Awards and ended up breaking our award (a bit of welded copper stuff snapped off) and then continuing the party at the Elephant & Castle pub in Kensington, returning home looking pretty dishevelled via a disgusting InterCity 125 at 1.30 in the morning.

## Wednesday May 12th

Everyone spent the day gloating about our award which now has pride of place next to all our others, i.e. it's the only one. But work must continue and Rico laboriously works his way through the mocked-up military zone and spends time reworking more graphics.

## Thursday May 13th

The map is done and it's very useful for us to plan out the sort of traps and things we can do. I'm very happy with the way it's all looking and it makes the old version of 'Breed' look very ancient in comparison. The A500 version's looking much better than we had all imagined, which is great news for everyone with an A500/600!

## Monday May 17th

Rico has drawn what can only be described as a large 'blob'. This blob will form part of the military zone that has been over-run by alien life and features tracks where rotational turrets will run, forming an obvious barrier between you and it. The 128-colour version of the blob looks very nice, but once more - to everyone's surprise - the A500 looks very good too!

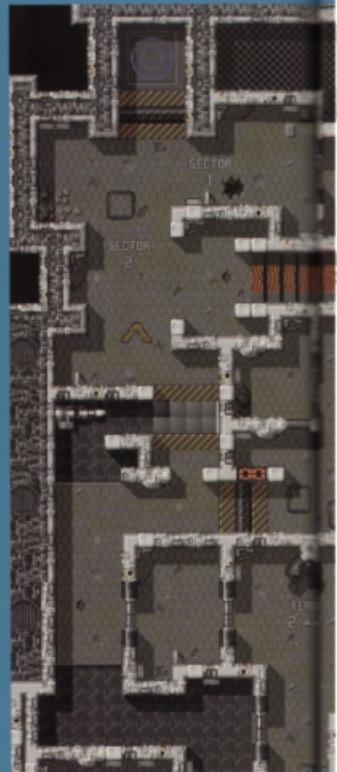
## Wednesday May 19th

We think about exactly what's happening game-wise and decide that we want to put much more emphasis on the roles of the characters as they relate to the plot and missions. At the same time we want to add more action and much of the same sort of stuff that was found in, say, Gauntlet 2, in that each of the characters will act differently. We are aiming to give the robot/alien characters abilities such as infra-red and heat/motion sensing abilities which will affect the display.

## Friday May 21st

Sometimes we wonder if there is some kind of golden halo lurking above our offices. We've been spending a couple of weeks working out exactly what we want from a 3D vector-graphics routine - speed, shading, light-source, etc, then we had been pondering where to get one from (Andreas doesn't have time to do it) and then - hey-presto! - one comes through the post from some Italian guy... and they are just about the most impressive we have witnessed on the Amiga! (You haven't seen Frontier yet, mate! - Ed.)

We ran the 3D planet/terrain demo on a souped-up A1200 (twelve times the speed of an A500) and the result was amazing - super fast, super smooth vectors updating at 50Hz (fifty times a second)! Called the guy up to find out that his English is just as bad as my Italian. We

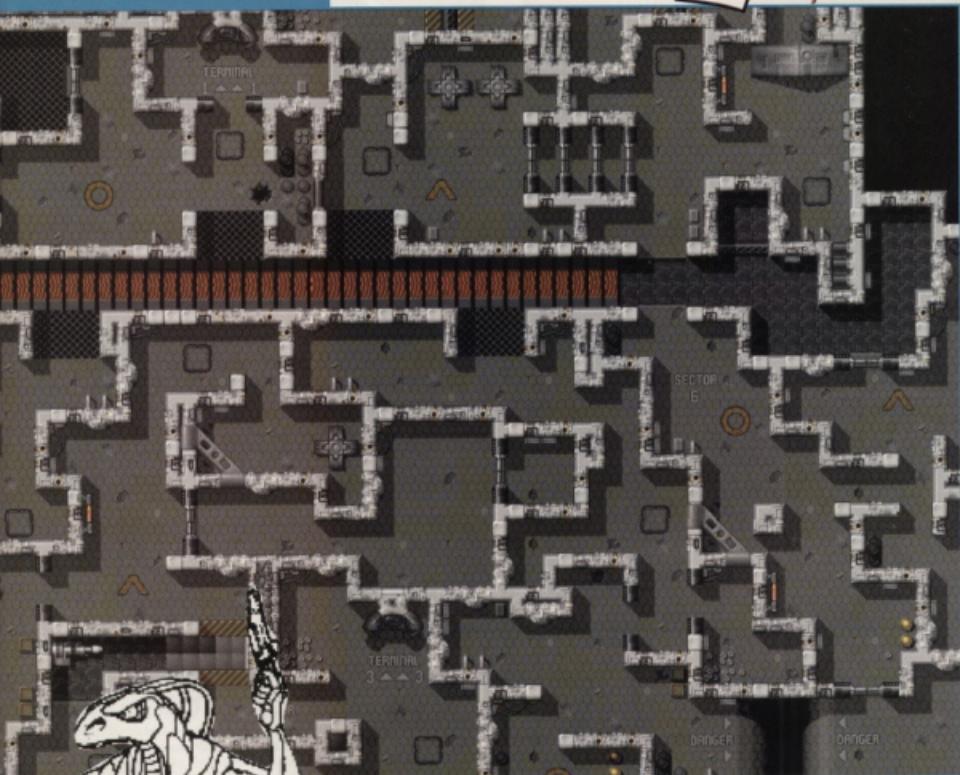


(Above) Just a small section of the provisional map that Rico's put together for testing some of Alien 2's graphics and routines. It's doubtful that you'll see a layout precisely like this in the final game.

(Below) The animation frames for Zollux, the bio-form robot character.

(Below right) All of the animation frames for the non-explosive ones. These are drawn in just four colours but, as Martyn points out, they stand out brilliantly against the grey backgrounds!





spend 20 minutes babbling at each other in our native tongues... it was all very frustrating and I had to end up getting an Italian friend of mine to ring up and speak to him. During the time I spent talking to him all the guy could say was "What?" in a style amazingly similar to the keeper of the bridge in the last bit of Monty Python and the Holy Grail.

#### Monday May 24th

Spent the whole weekend thinking what we could use the vectors for, but I'm not going to say as we want to keep something as a surprise! Rico heads back to England for a short break, spending time with his folks, and Andreas battles on with Project-X. I'm doing some work on some of our up and coming budget stuff, so AB2 development stalls once more.

#### Wednesday May 26th

I called in to see the chaps at The One and pick up a copy of the latest issue at the same time. Laughed at my lager-soaked picture in the news

section (do I REALLY look like that after lots of free beer?).

#### Friday May 28th

Time to get all the diary together for you readers and send it all down to EMAP Towers. Everyone is running around like madmen because we have lots to do and no time to do it in...

#### Monday 31st May (Bank Holiday)

Myself, Mick and Debbie (Sales) fly out to Chicago to the CES show. It's a hard life...

## NEXT MONTH

We might show you some of the vector stuff... More graphics... Even some aliens might make an appearance! And, of course, find out how things went in Chicago...

# ALIEN BREED 2

Please enter and take your seats for the third instalment in our totally exclusive Alien Breed 2 development diary, as related by the boys at Team 17. This month Martyn goes Stateside, Allister gives a no-holds-barred account of his zoo trip and Andrea and Rico go to the funfair. It's all very exciting...

### RICO HOLMES

(Graphics & Fig Rolls)

This busy little lad has been pouring over ray-traced creatures this month. And a good job too because his Opalvision card has packed in, meaning a somewhat stunted growth to the new A1200 graphics. The upshot of all this is that he's been working on the 32-colour stuff more (as well as further game design ideas) and he's currently looking for a 24-bit colour card that really is compatible with his A4000.

He's been putting ray-traced stuff to good use though, as you'll see next month. Ray-tracing will be used for special objects and background animations; the effect should be really nice when finished. He's also been messing around with the computer system and designing new weapons. The weapons in Breed 2 will be MUCH better than the original ones and will have much different properties, such as small grenades, heat-seeking missiles that fly down corridors at aliens, etc, etc.

Rico has been messing around with aliens as well. We hope to get many different types from the sequel. There'll be aliens that fire back, morphing aliens (aliens that can take on the form of everyday items like lockers and then change back into aliens before your eyes), aliens that come through walls, aliens that come through the floor, intelligent aliens, creepy-crawlies, rogue droids, you name it... This month only one alien is pictured - it looks a wee bit 'cute' for my liking but they'll get nasty soon.

### ANDREAS TADIC

(Map Editor, Project-X budget re-release and young girls)

Not a fun month for Andreas. He spent a couple of highly stressful weeks a-tweaking and a-changing Project-X for its budget release. Changing old code is every coder's nightmare (or it seems that way) and young Andreas is no different. But finally it was done, the game made more palatable and easier to swallow for



### THE MONTH IN BRIEF



Another wildly exciting month for everyone around here, although very little of it has Alien Breed 2 connections. All the same, work on Breed 2 is now gathering pace. The aliens have made a somewhat brief appearance, as have the civilian building areas. Of course there have also been the usual hardware failures and drinking sprees, of which will be detailed in the diary itself. I would think that the next diary instalment will reveal more and more about the game.

The vector graphics I spoke of last month have taken a back seat for the moment, just as I imagined they would. It's always the same during development - we get an idea that excites us all very much but it soon wears thin after a couple of weeks. It's all a bit like watching a freshly poured glass of Reslove fizzle and froth all excitedly for a few moments before settling down again! But we are still aiming to use vectors in the game in one form or another, or at least in the revised computer system

the less hard players around and generally tidied up. I think it's good to revise games when we can when we re-release them and the feedback from everyone is very good on that score. Anyway, Project-X is over and out of the way now and currently sitting proudly at the top of the Budget charts - thanks - knocking our own Alien Breed '92 off the top after 31 weeks at Number 1!! Since then it's been a case of wiping the dust off the new map-editor and making sure it's fine-tuned this month for the inevitable hard work ahead of mapping the game. Andreas has taken to working through the night - it's always the same when reasonable weather arrives. During the balmy summer afternoons you'll find him cruising the main street of Olofstrom (for it has but one) in his T-top convertible IROC Camaro viewing the babes and at night you'll find him locked away in a comfortable office lis-

tening to the Carpenters whilst beavering away on the game.

### ALLISTER BRIMBLE

(Sheep, woolly mammals and other creatures)

Despite the sheep jokes Allister still speaks to us, regards us as friends even. Which is just as well because he's a good bloke... As I mentioned last time Allister had been down to the zoo with his DAT player clutched in his little keyboard-ticking fingers, so it's over to Allister to find out exactly what he got up to...

"Got up this morning and thought 'Where hell am I going to find some decent Alien screaming sounds for Breed 2?' At the zoo, that's where. The scream sounds in the original Alien Breed were sampled from newly-born kittens meowing which were then distorted and mutated until they were more or less convincing. [Allister told me that he had to squeeze them to make them mewl





more loudly but asked me not to mention that bit. Readers can rest assured that the cats are fine and called Colin and Molly.] So remember the next time you're blasting alien scum in AB that the noise is all from defenceless little black kittens - shame on you! [More like shame on you, Allister...]

"For Breed 2 I wanted a more powerful and blood-curdling scream and as real animal sounds seem to produce the best results I took a trip to Paignton Zoo with my Casio DAT recorder (shameless plug). The first port of call was the elephants enclosure where the said animals were being fed and steadfastly refused to utter a single sound! [Maybe you should have tried squeezing them Allister!] This was a pity as I was sure that the sounds from the Alien films were elephants...

"Next stop was the monkey house but I think I arrived a little early as they were all sleeping. The zookeeper wouldn't lend me a snoozer cue to prod them with, so they stayed asleep. Not a great start and, as Paignton Zoo isn't exactly the wildlife centre of the universe, I thought I'd give up when a bloody great big peacock strode up and squawked at the top of its voice right into the DAT mike! This was a brilliant sound which I'll be taking back to the studio in the hope of mutating into something tasty later on.

"Back at studio the peacock sound was sampled into an AKAI S950 sampler and a low-pass filter used to take off high-frequency noise. The sound was shortened using the S950's time-stretch feature and a touch of reverb added. This sound was then played on four notes simultaneously and sampled into the Amiga via Audio Engineer. All that's left is to mix an explosion/frying sound with it to lend it more punch and kick and there you have it - one peacock-style Alien Breed 2 sound effect! I just hope the peacock doesn't want any royalty payments, or the zookeeper acting as his agent..."

## MARTYN BROWN

(Erm... what did I do this month?)

A strange old month for me, hardly any of it to do with Breed 2! I spent one glorious week in Chicago at the Consumer Electronics Show (which was brilliant - both Chicago and the show) and I've been dividing the rest of my time between about ten other projects: Body Blows PC, Body Blows A1200, Project-X budget release, F1 Challenge (now to be renamed F17 Challenge), Body Blows 2, Qwak, Cardiax, Alien Breed PC, Overdrive, Assassin remix and Apache. Phew.

It's meant a very busy schedule and I've not had the time to sit and talk through stuff with the other guys as much as I'd have liked to, but it looks like I'll be going over to Sweden in late July/early August with Allister for a large-scale 'brain storming' session. We've also tied up the final details on our console operation with Team 17 games being converted

and developed for that side of things too, so you can expect SNES/Megadrive stuff from us next year. And before anyone starts, of course we are still doing Amiga stuff!

I also had a letter from someone complaining about the lack of A1200 intensive stuff in the diary (and indeed the game). All I'll ask is for people to wait and see the final product before passing such a judgement. I don't want to sound dismissive but people have to realise that apart from a much improved graphics chip and a faster, 32-bit processor, the A1200 has no extra super-fantastic stuff over the Amiga. It's a bit faster but then again you're moving more data around.

I have a feeling that people are expecting something extraordinary from the machine. If

they are then I feel they may be overstating the machine's virtues.

Sure, the A1200 is a fine machine and games are going to look, play and feel much better on it - it's a good leap over the old A500 - but it's not got the sort of hardware in it that some people seem to think it has. We know - we've got the specs! But I can assure you that we will make the A1200 do as much as possible, although until development goes 100% A1200 (which is some time off) then you won't see the best of the machine.

At the end of this month I'll be zipping off to Poros in Greece for a fortnight, the first REAL holiday I've ever had... and I can't wait! Watch out for the tanned piccy next month!

## MISSION OBJECTIVE: CIVILIAN LEVEL

THE GROUND LEVEL OF THE CIVILIAN BLOCK WAS GIVEN OVER TO ADMINISTRATION AND OFFICES. IT IS HERE YOU WILL FIND THE CONTROL COMPUTER TO THE BASE MAINFRAME.

IF YOU WISH TO ACCESS TERMINALS ON FURTHER LEVELS YOU WILL HAVE TO LOCATE THE CONTROL COMPUTER AND ENTER YOUR SECURITY CODE: BXT32

THEN, OR OTHERWISE PROCEED TO DECK-LIFT 2

◀ MAIN MENU

EXIT ▶



## TEAM 17 HQ

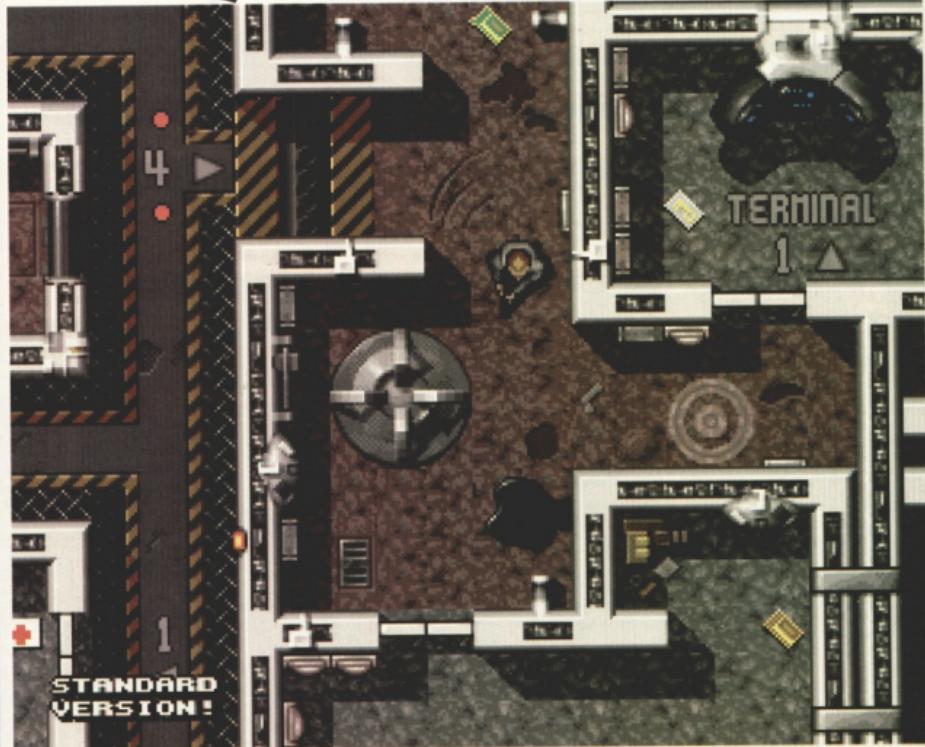
Another quiet month at HQ with regard to Breed 2. Still the phonelines come in asking about its release date and the same old "Back end of the year" replies fly out. Alien Breed Special Edition was knocked off top spot in the budget charts by our very own Project-X after 31 glorious, consecutive, record-breaking weeks. We've had two pieces of artwork sent in for possible use on the covers but both have stolen rather too heavily from a certain film series and therefore there is no way we can use them. Hopefully we'll have sketches to show you next month.

Most of the month has been spent in a legal wrangle with Fuji and the FIA (who license and market the Formula One thingies) who have told us that they want lots and lots of money because they say our F1 game infringed their copyrights and that we couldn't use the letters F and 1 together in a title nor use the words Grand and Prix. Humph. Let's hope some aliens don't land and start moaning that we're using their words too...

Everything has stopped over the last few days as the "wolves" (as we call our playtesting squad) have been given numerous copies of Overdrive to test and are going loopy trying to beat each other's track records - which is a jolly good sign as that means they're enjoying the experience. Anyway, onwards...



(Below) The use of varied floor textures and colours makes *Alien Breed 2* look very different to the first game. And yes, this is the standard 32-colour version of the game!



## THE DIARY

### Thursday June 3rd

Fly out to Chicago clutching a camcorder and a number of dollars aiming for the bright lights and the windy city. Leave Andreas/Rico to get on with some serious work while I stuff my face and generally have a good time. The first problem occurs when I get drunk and leave my jacket and passport in a downtown pub. Fortunately I got it back later on but paid for my indulgence with a torturous hangover the next day. Some idiots never seem to learn.

Spend two absolutely awe-struck days wandering around Chicago gazing at the amazing architecture - and I'm not talking about the women in the Baja Beach Club either! Think about Rico and Andreas slaving away on the game back in Sweden for about 10 milliseconds and have another swig of genuine draft Miller at the Hard Rock Cafe... this is the life.

The Consumer Electronics Show is big with a capital "F". There's lots of lovely things to see and do and absolutely no sign of an Amiga

anywhere except for the Video Toaster, which is something only the CU techies would talk about. Saw nothing of major interest apart from some smart tellies, incredible car stereo rigs and the unbelievable "Daytona" Sega arcade game - somehow I don't think we'll see a Spectrum version! Bumped into Gary Whitta, but on the whole it was a good show.

### Monday June 7th

After flying home from Chicago with a tear in my eye and a hole in my wallet, it was back to business. Project-X had to be finished and Andreas was reaching his breaking point, but he came through it and we managed to squeeze it onto three disks.

### Wednesday June 9th

Rico's Opalvision started playing up resulting in its untimely return to the manufacturers. That

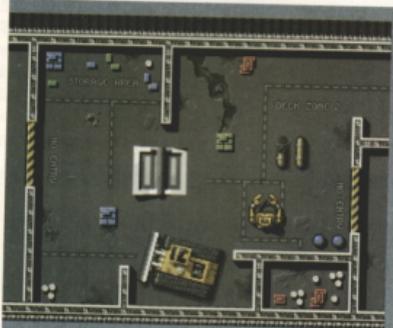
meant that the 128-colour backdrops will have to put to one side until a new graphics card arrives (DPaint AGA is a bit slow really and you cannot get the same sort of effect as with a 24-bit package). But this does mean that work on the standard version has picked up to a great degree (as you can see from the screens).

### Friday June 11th

STOP! There's a funfair in Olofstrom. There I am calling Andreas to see how things are going and I get the message "No work... funfair is in town". I just hope it doesn't come around too often.

### Monday June 14th

Rico starts fiddling with ray-tracing, the results of which you should see next month - be warned that static IFFs will do them little justice. Most of the animated ray-traced bits will be used in the backdrops.



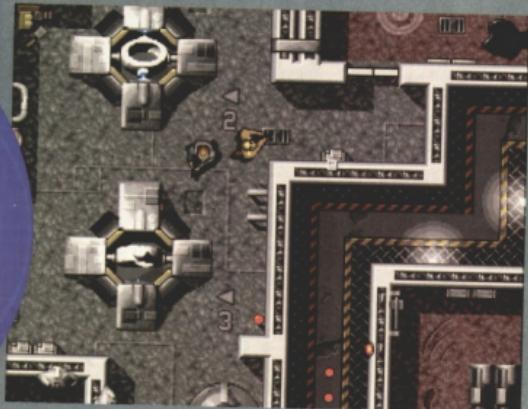
(Left) This is an early version of the level where you have to smash through walls with the tank (shown above in sprite form).



This piece of hardware looks a bit Space Crusade inspired, don't you think?



(Below) Another example of how the 'civvy' zone is looking. Again, this a 32-colour graphic. No, really!



One of the new-look weapons, as displayed by the Intex computer.

### Tuesday June 15th

A day well spent... Get up at 6am and travel down to Merthyr Tydfil to deliver the Project-X masters. Spend two hours testing the copies and announce it all a major success - first time it's taken so short a time. Smile the whole four hours back to Wakefield... Call Andreas with the news and listen to the shouts of glee. We like it when it goes well, seeing as nothing usually does.

### Thursday June 17th

Project-X is released and we achieve record ship-outs for a budget game, double that of AB '92. All fingers and other items are crossed in the hope that it'll be a success. It is. Chickens are cooked; ale is drunk and the workers return home merry.

### Tuesday June 22nd

Rico has been hard at work on the Civilian level and emerges from his pit clutching the provisional

designs for this particular world. In comparison to the military zone it's far less techy and hard-looking, which is just as well because it's where the base workers were meant to be. All the doors here will open on contact and missions will revolve around activating areas for later use.

### Monday June 28th

Rico emerges triumphantly with ideas for a new Intex system including the visuals for some of the weapons. The main display centres around a huge animating sphere in the background and the monitor has a sort of bright line moving down it

- the effect is superb, but it looks a bit tame in static shots. We are hoping to use vectors in conjunction with the new computer system to view the map and show exits and other information in the form of blue-prints and 3D models.

### Tuesday June 29th

Andreas and Rico start work on a new section of the game which features the two characters driving a huge tank through a military zone in order to smash down the wall so that they can gain entry to another part of the complex - you can see it in its rough form here.

Okay, that wraps up another fulfilling instalment of the Alien Breed 2 diary. Thanks to Dave, Simon and Matt for having us and presumably using the same old 'orrible piccies once more [sorry! - Ed.]. We promise to send some more interesting ones next month...

# ALIEN BREED

**It's only four months into development and already the Alien Breed camp is buzzing with ideas for packaging and teaser ads! Oh, and Starsky and Hutch. Read on...**

## THE MONTH IN (VERY) BRIEF...

It's been yet another disjointed and strange month of AB2 development, with all sorts of weird and wonderful events taking place. But before all is revealed, let's see just what everyone has been doing.

### ANDREAS

Andreas spent the month doing all manner of things. Fortunately Project-X was completed last month so he finally, finally managed to finish off the AB2 map editor. This editor has taken ages but it's well worth the time, as it makes mapping much less of a hassle than it was previously. All the game's maps have to be put together by hand and it's far easier when you've got the right tool for the job.

The new map editor boasts several wonderful features such as the ability to load two maps into memory at once, meaning that we can have a spare map clipscreen consisting of basic building blocks and whip new maps together very quickly. This, I can inform you, is VERY good news indeed as it'll mean more maps in the final game.

Andreas also ripped the Superfrog code to bits, reworked the scroll routines, wrote a really nice 24-bit colourfade for the AGA version, cel-

brated his birthday in fine style (happy 22nd by the way, mate) and started work on getting the Alien Breed 2 heroes marching impressively around the screen.

At the end of month Andreas hit a brick wall when a hardware limitation of the A1200 was met but we've managed to dislodge his skull now and overcome the problems. A nod to Dean Ashton at Millennium for confirming our theories on CIX. (Hmmm, absolutely fascinating - Ed.)

Andreas is presently completely disturbed at the notion of me sending a really old picture of him to The One team where he looks like an extra off some 70s show like Starsky and Hutch. Revenge will be sweet or so he reckons... but I've still got a few more ludicrous and strange photos up my sleeve so he'd better behave!



(Above) Embarrassing old photo time! This is a piccy of Andreas from a few year's back - look at that hair! And that 'tache!

### RICO

Rico spent a few weeks juggling with Imagine2 and Real3D 2 to see if their effects could be used in the AB2 project. I was surprised and impressed that after just a week of meddling the results were excellent - see if you can spot some of these rendered objects in the new graphics.

Armed with the new map editor, Rico has been hard at work mapping out the game's many levels. At the



moment these are in rough form, utilising many of the new ideas and twists, and they'll be edited later for the final version. Rico has been a bit glum since his Opalvision card went back so he went out and got a new 24-bit card (I forget which type) - the problem now is that, unlike the Opalvision, there's no decent software available for it. If anyone knows of a place that'll supply TVPaint then give us a call!

### ALLISTER

A quiet month for Allister on the AB2 front - he's had no time to do anything this month due to the pressures of doing so much other work. Not to worry though, as we aim to have a big production meeting shortly which'll include Allister. It should see all the game's sound FX sorted and completed within a month. Like the original game, we are hoping to build an awesome atmosphere, very moody and very daunting.

### MARTYN

I spent the first two weeks of the month on holiday in the island of Poros in Greece, and mighty bloody fine it was too. I certainly didn't want to come home - two weeks of nothing but glorious 110-120° sun and cheap wine/beer with not a phone or TV, let alone an Amiga, in sight. Despite the heat I still didn't manage to get a tan although I'm a darker shade of white than I was. I did hire a scooter and beezed about in the mountains for a few days, which was terrific.

Unfortunately time passed extremely quickly and all to soon I had to face the harsh realities of getting back to normal and



(Below) From left to right it's Rico, Martyn and Andreas enjoying their favourite pastime.

Andreas indicates how many bottles he's drunk.





same alien creature featured on the first box but in a different perspective. The results should be sensational. I hope to have this artwork ready and available for exclusive unveiling in next month's diary!

Apart from that, the marketing team have started getting into gear and - shock, horror - a series of small "teaser" ads is planned for the game... We're not quite ready for full-page ads yet, but it's a start. People might like to realise that apart from a freebie ad we got in another mag, we haven't placed a single advertisement for a Team17 game... Coo. Anyway, on with this month's events.

(Left) See what the pressures of programming can do to a man? At least it earns Andreas enough cash to afford a nice car (shown top).

the absolutely crap weather that goes with it. It was actually my first REAL holiday in 10 years, believe it or not, and I can't wait until the next - in fact, I'm ready for one already because while I was away the work piled up which meant I've been even busier than I usually am.

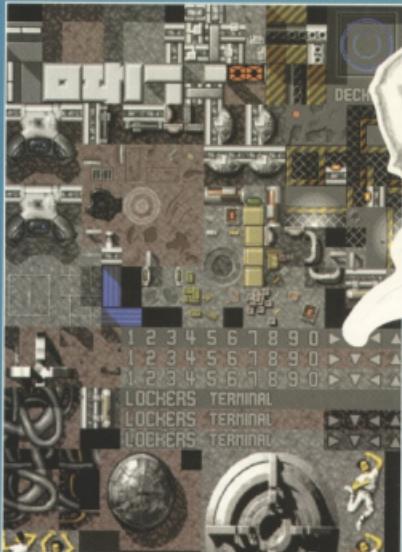
Back at work it's been a case of trying to get Overdrive, F17 Challenge (as it's now known), Qwak!, Body Blows PC and Alien Breed PC finished on time, which has left me little breathing space for work on Breed 2... again!

With all these games the 'wolves' (our playtest squad) have had their work cut out recently. Watch out for our forthcoming Qwak! because it's just soooo playable and smart. The wolves have also been getting into Overdrive, which is also jolly playable, even if we did find that 95% of all known reviewers couldn't handle its speed! (We could! - The One boys.)

This month I also had the task of providing you with some lovely (ahem) photos for the diary, as the old ones were wearing a little bit thin and none of us were completely chuffed with them, especially as the geezer who took them used some sort of disfiguring fish-eye lens at about 2 inches away from our faces... not nice. Hope you like them, whichever Dave and the gang decide to use!

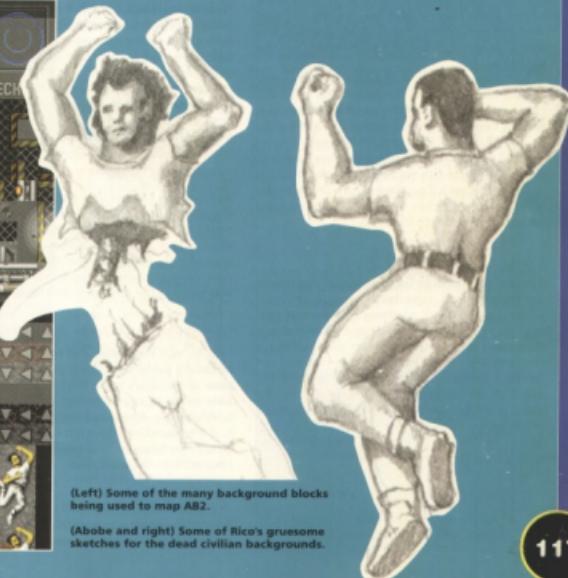
### AT TEAM 17 HQ.

This month saw the start of the first box-art ideas coming in from our illustrator, Kev Jenkins. Kev's been working with us since we signed him up at the ECTS in April. His first work for us will be seen on the boxes for F17 and Overdrive, both of which are very, very nice - much better than most of our previous box-art. We've had three sketches submitted and we liked the last one most. We wanted the



(Left) Some of the many background blocks being used to map A82.

(Above and right) Some of Rico's gruesome sketches for the dead civilian backgrounds.



## THE DIARY (AT LAST)

### Friday July 2nd

While Andreas, Rico and co. are left pondering on the next AB2 activities, I jet off to Greece for a well deserved (so it says here) break in Poros. I arrive at 3.30am Greek local time and was like walking into a sauna, the air was so hot. In the early hours of Saturday morning, myself and my girlfriend arrived at our apartment and forgot all about Rico and Andreas... (insert big, satisfied grin for effect).

### Sunday July 4th

While finishing off a glass of ice-cold Retsina, I pop a bundle of postcards into the mailbox to remind everyone that I'm sat in the sun and they're not... I even sent one to Dave, Simon and Matt - too kind by far! (Cheers-ears, you lucky sod! - The One boys.)

### Monday July 5th

Back at the Swedish ranch Andreas begins to disembowel the code framework from Superfrog. It's obvious that there's little point sitting and rewriting lots of code all over again and, besides, the scroll routine in Superfrog was an advanced version of the original Alien Breed one anyway. The sprite system was completely overhauled for Superfrog, though, which will mean much meatier action when it's used in AB2 due to the scroll being far slower.

After a few hours, Andreas has managed to rip all the bits out he wants and he's got a library of routines all ready for the game to be written around. He'll have to do quite a bit more work on the scroll routine as it only handles a finite map size and doesn't handle AGA graphics, but that's his menu of fun and excitement over the next few days.

Rico beavers away mapping out some early civilian block levels of the game. The guys discuss having sections of the game like a fast and furious Commando-style game where aliens fly at you like crazy. This should be easily implemented as we can have maps that are long and thin now (due to the marvels of the map editor).

As for me, well, I'm relaxing on a cruise to the golden sandy beaches of Agistri, sipping Amsel beer and grinning like crazy!

### Wednesday July 7th

Andreas continues to work on structures ripped out of Superfrog, especially the audio routines which are the result of about 4-5 years of evolutionary coding. Now we've got a great driver that takes up hardly any raster time, takes up less memory, can go in fast or chip ram and can be used perfectly (with a priority system) for sound FX on one or more interruptable channels. This means we can easily mix sound and music in any game, but we prefer to use sound FX only in games like Alien Breed as a moody atmosphere suits it perfectly.

### Thursday July 9th

A slightly disgruntled Rico trudges back to his pad with his latest ideas for a level of

the game that would see the characters get into a tank-like vehicle and smash their way through a security zone. The reason for the disgruntlement is that Andreas reckoned that he just wouldn't have time to implement the ideas before the deadline hit. Ah well, if we can't do something completely then it's not worth doing at all!

### Friday July 9th

Rico buys a flatbed scanner, enabling him to sketch ideas on paper and scan them into his paint package. The result is that everything gets speeded up as he can realise his ideas much quicker! Some examples of scanned drawings should be on these pages. The first roughs to get included in the scanning process were the disembodied civvy workers lying scattered around the complex. Unfortunately we don't think we can keep them in as the ELSPA (European Leisure Software Publishers Association) directives say that they do not condone such gratuitously violent graphic images... Me? I say it's a load of old bol...

### Saturday July 10th

Andreas spends the weekend reworking the scroll routine. The new routine needs to allow flexible map sizes and scroll speeds. The routine in Superfrog only had a set size and speed, as did each of the earlier games we produced. Andreas struggled away right through the night but emerged triumphant, if a little bleary eyed, in the early hours of Sunday morning. Now we can have large outdoor maps, some small indoor ones and fast paced Commando-style maps in AB2! Good work that Swede!

### Monday July 12th

Andreas got himself into a spot of trouble with the scroll as the routine has to reserve enough raster time to cater for it running at maximum speed. This isn't good because the routine should only ever take the raster time that it needs and not what it possibly might need if it was running flat out. Andreas' headache starts.

### Wednesday July 14th

Two furious days later and the scroll routine is behaving perfectly, taking only as much raster time as necessary to do the job in hand. It's also able to go in any direction and at any speed. Luvvly-jubbly. A wrecked Andreas crawls into his bed after working 48hrs flat out... Cut to picture of Martyn lying on the beach sipping a tall, cool drink in the lovely sun.

### Thursday July 15th

Apart from some system routines Andreas hasn't taken that much of a good look at the new AGA



scroll/BOB routines to work with AGA graphics, blaming himself for never ever coding the facility into the routine when it was first written.

### Wednesday July 21st

It's raining very heavily in Wakefield and I'm sat here all gloomy, dreaming of endless beaches, warm sunshine, topless women and cheap beer (and, of course, you Katrina, if you're reading)... It's not fair - I want to go back to Greece. I spend the next week in the same gloom as there's lots of work and hardly any time to do it in. Simon from The One calls me up, trying the agony aunt routine.

Meanwhile, Andreas optimizes all the update routines for BOBs, scroll, etc., and begins work on a rather dishy 16-million colour fading routine. Rico is still rushing around like a mad man trying to get a decent 24-bit paint package for his new graphics board, without success.

### Thursday July 22nd

Andreas's 24-bit colour-fade routine works great, leaving him with a smug grin on his face. "Cor, it's much better than I thought it would be!" he says. Sad how a 22-year-old man can get giddy at the prospect of perfectly smooth 24-bit fades. His next step is to replace all the old 12-bit colour fades with the new code - this will not and does not take long.

### Saturday July 24th

Andreas begins ripping the old hero control routine from Alien Breed. The control worked well in the game but getting it to behave in the new code framework is another task altogether! Bits of it need tweaking though as we thought it took a wee bit too long to twist around from one direction to the opposite. Speeded that up and popped it into the code - it won't be too long before we have guys running around under control.

### Tuesday July 27th

Have a crash on the way over to see the guys doing the PC development! Poor Craig (one of the Wolves who took me) had his VW Beetle badly dented in the accident. We survived, though - good job really!

### Wednesday July 28th

Andreas began work on the new hero animation. There will be four different characters, with screen-independent 16 colours each (which looks MUCH better than Breed 1). Animation has been improved too and the results are looking great.

### NEXT MONTH

Okay, that wraps up another turbulent month of development. Things are gathering pace now and next month should see the first moving demos of the new characters in action. See ya'all next month!



hardware. Armed with the hardware specs and an inquiring mind he digs in. The first thing to do is to get all the scroll and BOB routines running happily in 7 or 8 bitplanes (128/256 colours). Easy... Took a couple of hours... Right, let's pop that up on screen and have a look at it... GURU. Erm, well, maybe let's not. At least, not yet.

### Friday July 16th

Me and my girlfriend Katrina pack our bags and head for Athens airport after 14 wonderful stress-free days. The whole of Greece sighs a relief that the nutter on the scooter is leaving the country. Me? I shed a tear, if only because I'll never see Gertie, the 50cc Automatic Scooter I hired, ever again... sniff. Pick up lots of little bottles of Uzo for the office lot and the wolves, plus some cheap Greek brandy for my parents. Leave the sun and head back to the miserable weather back home.

But not before taking in the "Spectacular sound and light show" at the Acropolis. If you're ever there give it a miss! Okay so the Acropolis is pretty well smart but this sound and light show is completely crap. It's just a scratchy old record of Richard Burton and his mates gabbling on about ancient Greek soldiers while some sad Greek shines his torch up at the ruins. Highly interesting I don't think - and I paid money to see it! Me and the girlfriend play "spot the pillocks" for a while and everyone points at us.

### Saturday July 17th

In the early morning (7.30am) we arrive back at Manchester airport. Unfortunately, we still had shorts and T-shirts on (it was 120° when we left Greece) and it was about 50° and raining in Manchester. All the same it's nice to be home, although Manchester isn't right cracking.

### Sunday July

#### 18th

It's Andreas's 22nd birthday. I called him up to say I'd got back and wish him happy birthday. A semi-conscious Swede answered the phone but due to the unintelligible utterances I guessed it was Andreas and he'd begun celebrating rather early so I hung up, preferring to speak to him when he'd rejoined the rest of the universe.

### Monday July

#### 19th

I'm back at work and staring at the pile of work that has built up. Despite Mr Hangover knocking on his door Andreas recovered by finally getting the

# ALIEN BREED 2

Martyn's ill in bed, Andreas has nearly finished all his work, Rico has been fiddling with a ray-tracing package and Allister is miffed because he didn't get his mug in last month's diary instalment. Yes, it's all par for the course in the crazy lives of the Alien Breed 2 team. You just never know exactly what they'll get up to next...

**(Programming)**

life. This will look much better than the first Alien Breed's, as we're using tons of stunning colours, some new copper effects and putting in loads of graphics. Instead of the text used before, we're using an icon control system which will make the menus much easier and faster to handle. This will also give the player an impression of perfection and generate a greater atmosphere. (Andreas is deeply concerned to get the atmosphere and the quality of the game just right - as we are all.)

One other thing Andreas has been furiously working on is the handmap. If you remember the handmap from Alien Breed you'll recall it was a bit limited. The one in AB2 is a lot more sophisticated, allowing you to zoom in and out to three magnifications. This is down to the fact it's drawn using real-time resized graphics rather than just blocks as before. It all gives the player much better control and - that word again - atmosphere.

Over the next few days the computer system should be finished, and after that all there's left to do (apart from a bit of tweaking here and there) is the putting in of the loading pictures, the menu graphics and effects. Almost there now!

### RICO HOLMES (Graphics)

This has been one of the most productive months for Rico, so much so that he's even managed to write his own bit of blurb about what he's been up to. Saves me a job, if nothing else. Over to you, Rico...

"I've spent most of the last few weeks building the level maps for the game. (Remember last month we told you how we'd finally got the map editor up and running?) Everything is going well as the editor is making this normally tedious job a little less painful.

"Although I've only had the editor for a relatively short period of time I've already managed to put together nine level maps - though there's no time for resting on my laurels as there's still a long way to go yet! The maps I've completed so far are the most complex ones in the game so the rest should be a little easier and faster to do.

"Also completed are all the alien graphics. In the original Alien Breed careful players may have noticed that there are really only two types of alien that differed only slightly from level to level. On AB2 I've spent a lot more time on the alien design and have finally arrived at nine different alien types ranging from squat, hard-shelled lobster-things to robots left by the colonists which can fire an assortment of weapons!

"As a side note I have to mention that Andreas has nearly completed the weapons for the game and BOY are they looking nice. [Rico is mega-impressed as you can tell from this over-the-top endorsement.] I've spent a while doing the graphics and with the new build-up system things are really smoking. You gonna love 'em!



"I've spent a while ray-tracing turrets. These turrets look just like normal floor panels - until you walk over them. Then the panels suddenly split (sort of)

and the central circular portion flips over to reveal a turret which tracks you and fires at you. They took some time to get exactly right (you can't just stick ray-traced images from Imagine2 or Real3D directly into the game - they have to be cropped, recoloured and centred first) but the

end results usually turn out a damn sight better than if you attempted to draw them by hand.

"Also completed are the leisure centre level map and graphics. This is to be the 'find and rescue the scientist' level. Also finished (finally!) is the first level - this is the outdoor scene where the player must locate the entrance to the civilian building. I was quite concerned about getting the right graphic feel for AB2 after having looked back at the first Breed, which I now think looks quite weird graphically and too rushed. Breed 2 now has an opening level with graphics different to any other level in the game.

"Last but not least I've drawn some character pictures. As mentioned in earlier instalments of the diary we now have two additional player characters in the game, an alien (but

friendly, all the same) and a war robot. We have the option in the menu of viewing all the characters individually, which gives you a full-screen picture of each along with their statistics (so you can see who's the strongest, whose backpack carries the most, who starts the game with the best weaponry, etc). All these graphics are drawn in super hi-res 24-bit (in case we do a possible CD version of the game) and then processed down to the best resolution on the Amiga.

"I'd like to do similar graphics for each alien in the game. These would appear in the form of holographic information displays accessed from the INTEX computer system. I think if the graphics of the aliens were incorporated into the game it would give the player much more of a feel for them and how they look, as it's sometimes a little difficult to picture them when you're only looking at a small sprite from above... [Rico is buzzing with ideas.]

"Anyway, enough of that - back to the real world. Work work work..."

### ALLISTER BRIMBLE (Sound)

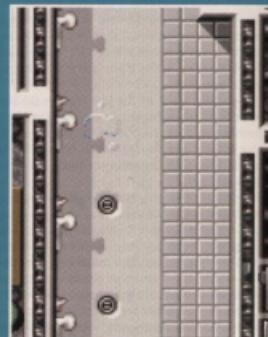
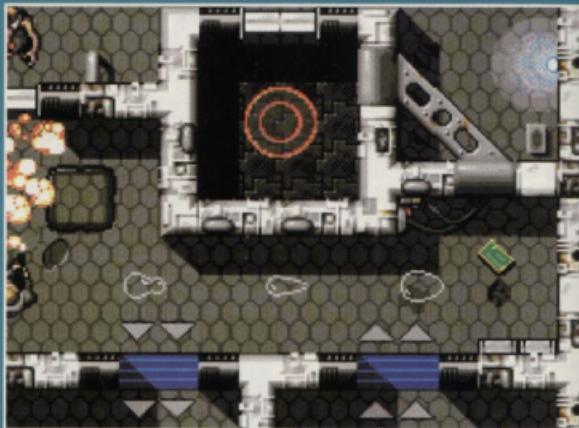
It's not been a good month for Allister. He's deeply upset after seeing that Andreas got a picture of himself and his car in last month's issue. I promised that next month we'd print a picture of him with his Porsche (paid for by sales of his CD - plug, plug).

Apart from getting all upset, Allister's been working on some nice squelching sounds for when the aliens get hit. I won't mention how he got these, due to possible complaints from the 'How could you possibly use poor defenseless black kittens!' brigade (regular readers will know what I'm on about). Believe me, Breed 2 is going to sound completely sick! Anyway, who better to tell you more about what Allister's up to than the man himself...

"This month I've been working out a way of improving the speech quality obtainable on the Amiga and I think I have come up with an absolutely unbeatable solution. First I sample the speech from Lynette Reade (remember the sexy voice in Breed 1?) into my Kurzweil K2000 synthesizer/sampler. From there I can use the on-board DSP chips to add special effects such as reverb and echo! Hope you like the results when you hear them.

"The really good news for all you Breed fans is that Andreas has just told me I can have an extra 200K for sound on the A1200 giving me twice as much memory for sonics as I had in the original Breed. This means I can record all my sounds at a much higher sample rate and also include reverb to add atmosphere.

"I've also been working on my sound/music routine to make life easier for Andreas when he comes to include my speech, music and effects into the game. Andreas usually has to muck about joining speech samples together to create whole sentences but my new routine



work for the box and posters - and it's fantastic! It's based on the alien from the packaging of the first Breed, except this time he's grown up and looks a LOT meaner. Unfortunately this artwork is currently at our printers getting ready to go on the boxes so we can't show it to you at the moment - sorry!

August has been pretty crazy here at the HQ what with releasing Body Blows on the PC and also F17 Challenge which is currently No. 1 in the UK budget chart, followed by Project-X at No. 2 and, after almost ten months, Alien Breed '92 still at No. 3. We have also been getting Overdrive ready for release. I'll be glad when this game is released as our hotline is non-stop with calls about it (hope you enjoyed the demo on last month's coverdisk, by the way).

In addition we're getting our next budget release Qwak! ready. This is going to be one of Team 17's biggest surprises of the year - get ready for loads of sleepless nights! We've also decided to put all our budget titles onto the CD32 at a very low price - watch out for these around mid-to-late October.

Now the plugs are out of the way, back to AB2. On the marketing side you should by now have seen the teaser ads which are running all over the Christmas period. We are also

starting to production of some demo disks for retailers to run in their shops. Competitions are also being set up with the press so get ready to win lots of Team 17 goodies.

## AND NOW... THE DIARY

Or not, as the case may be. Sadly the mighty voice of Team 17, Martyn Brown, has been silenced by a mystery bug all this month which laid him up in bed and meant that he wasn't able to write the day-by-day diary. We suspect that it could be the delayed effect of his ECTS beer binges but we may be wrong. Either way, hope you're feeling better soon, Martyn.

So, in Martyn's absence, special thanks this month go to Debbie and the rest of the gang at Team 17, without whom you wouldn't have had any text to read or nice pictures to look at.

Normal service will be resumed as soon as possible.

### TEAM 17 H.Q. (Marketing, packaging, all the other bits)

This month we finally got the art-

(Above) The black-and-white images you see scattered about are some of the rough box-art ideas Team 17 have had. Just thought you'd like to know...



will do this for him. [Andreas was quite pleased about this as it'll give him more time to concentrate on the game.]

"I've also nicked a rather good heart-beat sound from [CENSORED] - We don't want any law-suits do we?] although I don't know where it can be used as yet - perhaps on an end-of-level alien?

"The biggest problem this time around has been the music. With a title as big as Alien Breed 2 everything has to be just right so I have to come up with something new and different. Andreas wants something like Terminator 2-style music, but we'll see..."

**TEAM 17 H.Q. (Marketing, packaging, all the other bits)**

This month we finally got the art-



# ALIEN BREED

## THE FINAL CHAPTER

**And now the end is near. After six gruelling months of hard work Alien Breed 2 is almost ready to be unveiled on the eagerly-awaiting world. Martyn Brown wipes a tear from his eye in this, the final instalment of our need-we-remind-you-TOTALLY-EXCLUSIVE Diary Of A Game...**

### THE MONTH IN BRIEF

Hi and welcome to the very last part of the Alien Breed Diary. Things are really hotting up now. The beta test version is now being playtested and tweaking is commencing. There are only a few things left to do - the box is already done, the speech is in there and everyone can't wait to play the final version... It's amazing but by the time you read this, the game - barring any excruciating last minute catastrophes - should be actually on the shelves!

Besides that we've spent much of the month taking the p' out of Andreas due to the fact that we've heard that Sweden has begun exporting jewellery made out of... moose droppings! We haven't laughed as hard for ages. It reminds me of that episode in Black Adder 2 when Percy invented Green! "And it is with trinkets such as these, and here - a ring..."

Anyway, here's a round-up on what's been going on down on the Alien Breed 2 farm. There's been no real need to give a day-by-day account (getting lazy, Martyn? - Dave) as development has been solid all month and best described in detail by each person.

### ANDREAS 'MR CODE' TADIC

Who's been a busy beaver this month then? YUp, Andreas has been working his little cotton socks off in order to get AB2 in by deadline - a word which everyone despises. But if we didn't have a deadline, we wouldn't have a game this side of Chrimbo - and let's face it, you've waited long enough!

Most of the month has been spent getting both players up and running about, firing off their assorted weaponry, compiling all the levels together, inserting the weird and wonderful speech and soundfx and a-tweakin' 'n' a-testin'. The results of all this is that the game is bordering on 'nearly finished' and we're all looking forward to hitting the deadline date and getting the game on the shelves. We can only hope that you really enjoy what we've come up with.

Andreas has managed to banish all of the major bugs that had been causing him

no end of stress. The return of the ancient scroll bug wasn't fun but was soon found and exterminated resulting in relief all round. The sound FX and speech insertion took around three days although it'll probably be a few more days before we are completely happy with it, but that's down to playing it and tweaking various volumes, priorities and so on.

AB2 has double the number of aliens on-screen compared to the original and this time they move quicker and some even fire at you. Add to this the various laser systems and wall-mounted turrets and you have some amazing action! Add to that increased sprites for player weapons and you have arcade quality blasting! And with all this going on, there's no slowdown at all... The end-of-game doo-dah is over half a screen wide and 112 pixels high and that's some BOB!

Not that all this work has kept our Andreas from his hectic social life... Oh no! Far from it! Despite dallying with the fairer sex (or women, as they're more commonly known), he's also been interviewed on Swedish radio and managed to wake up in many different homes all over the south-eastern region of Sweden. I just don't know how he does it. Worse thing is, he's coming over to blighty for a week when all this is over to spend a week with us in Wakefield, so look out West Yorkshire. Lock up your daughters - the Vikings are coming!

Oh, and a little dicky bird told me that Andreas, whilst under the influence of Olof-

strom's pizza-shop brew, said that apparently some guys at IBM's technical labs in the USA have actually managed to teleport mice around the office... Ha-ha! Andreas apparently sees this technology as the future of video gaming... Oh dear...

This story was completely taboo and not to be mentioned in the Diary at any costs. Sorry mate - it was too good to miss. Cries of "You what!", "What's he been on?" and "Is he right in the head?" have been echoing around here for some time, I can tell you!



2



### RICO 'MR LOOKS' HOLMES

Rico has also had his work cut out this month, mostly due to the fact that he's been enhancing the graphics for the AGA version. Notice that most of the screenshots seen in this diary have been the 32 colour versions - amazing, huh? Well, we think so. This has been done and the AGA edition features nice floor patterns, better colours, smoother shading and general improvements all round. He's also been working on the different character portraits and several of the level intro graphics such as the one for the Civilian level featured in the Diary this month.

Rico's been forced to use his 24-bit TVPaint package to do the AGA graphics as he reckons that DPaint AGA just isn't up to the job (sorry about that, EA). [Rico went on to give me a full report of why he didn't use DPaint AGA but I won't bore you with it and I'll pass it on to the techies at EA.]

He's also been busy rendering 3D images and then touching them up (if you'll excuse the phrase) with his 24-bit paint packages ready for suitable inclusion in the game. A1200 owners needn't get excited, though, as we aren't using any hi-res HAM 262,000 colour images. They're a tad disk/memory expensive at 300K+ so A1200 owners will just have to jolly well make do with 256 colour versions instead!

I called up Rico to get the low down on the month's juicy gossip and all that he'd been up to, but when he answered he'd just got out of bed and the best I'd got was "eh... wot? hummm..." Oh well never mind - that's what you get for waking someone up at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. Lazy git.

Rico also took a week off to help us out with some graphics for Body Blows Galactic because our Norwegian artist, who did all the backdrops for the PC/A1200/CD32 version of Body Blows has vanished down the fjords. But he's back on the Breed case now and hoping to have everything completed shortly. He'd better do. (That's Martyn being menacing.)



### AL 'MR TUNES' BRIMBLE

Allister has been tweaking his Breed 2 sound effects and messing around with the speech - which is more or less all complete now. The speech is of fantastic quality on the A1200 - absolutely crystal clear and all the sounds, including speech, feature reverb (a flash name for echo) on the A1200. A500 sound FX will have to be cut down somewhat, although we're confident that they'll be at least as good as the original effects. The speech will have to be chopped a little, so it looks like the super reverb effects will be dropped on the A500 too, but it's all down to available memory at the end of the day.

I'd also like to say that Allister has done us proud once again, as is always the case on our stuff, and we would like to thank Lynette Reade, the original voice of the Intex system, for once more providing us with stunning vocal effects.

The sound FX sound brilliant within the game but some need minor tweaking and changing as some volume levels are too high, some too low and others have got the incorrect priority. (All sound FX have a priority value which tells the soundplayer how important it is to play them, so if two FX are requested at the same time the most important one gets played - this is crucial when we only have four sound FX channels and we want optimum sound quality.)

Allister has been doing all manner of spectacular things in order to achieve the

effects, for instance, the splat sound of ammo hitting an alien was gained by lobbing a hot water bottle at the wall! I won't go into how he got some of the weirder effects, suffice to say he used his aural exciter quite a bit.

### MARTYN 'MR BUTTKICKER' BROWN

Yep, I'm okay now, well, er, sort of. After suffering from some kind of "kick-back" exhaustion or whatever from the September ECTS, I'm busy trying to get everything together for Breed 2, amongst a glut of other things.

I'm in the middle of moving house too, which is always a stressful experience and with three or four major titles of ours nearing completion and requiring my undivided attention, it's been a real go-go-go month.

The ECTS was good fun, our stuff going down very well, what there was of it to see, and the nightlife was great, as usual - a big thanks to Ian and Paul at Ocean for the ticket to that smart rave-up... I won't go in to all the gory details, but suffice to say that a number of influential editors, deputy editors, staff writers and so on got rather carried away and resorted to stripping off... I'm just pleased that no cameras were on hand - and so do Dave, Simon and Matt methinks...

Apart from waking up fully clothed in the bath in our nice West End hotel, the highlight of the show was undoubtedly the new EA Soccer on the Mega Drive. Cor! (Whoops, I'm not supposed to like consoles, am I?) Back in the office we've had no end of calls about the CD32 and what we'll be doing on it, when we're doing it and what colour CDs we'll use. I suppose buyers will be in a dilemma with the shortage of software knocking around... but don't worry, we'll get some done and we won't let you down.

We're also going to convert AB2 to the Mega Drive - note convert. The Mega Drive won't be able to handle all the lovely digitised speech/sfx and the A1200 will be a much better version (as you would expect), but it won't be available for quite a while.

I also read a letter in *The One* regarding our gratuitous violence in the shape of mutilated bodies. We still haven't decided whether to include these or not. I still don't regard computer graphics as particularly graphic and liable to cause kids distress, but if people are going to take exception to it then we will remove them - we certainly aren't into doing something for cheap coverage or publicity (well, I am but that's another story).

It's a funny thing but I've been working with the PC guys converting the original version of Breed to the PC and we're really happy with the way it's going. But when I look at Breed 2 on the A1200 it looks pretty dated! We've got up to 16 aliens on-screen at once on AB2 (there are 6 at most on the PC to avoid slowing down on less powerful machines) and this time they fire, speed up, slow down and so on... It looks like we won't bother to convert AB2 to PC

as it just couldn't hack it - although you'll get some PC owner saying that his 50 MHz 486 with super fast 1meg VGA 24-bit Super-Gravis-Wotsits sound doo-dah will be able to do it. Okay, so it probably could, but because a rig like that would set you back about £1,500, no-one in their right mind would pay that kind of dosh to play AB2 when you can go and buy an A1200 for 20% of that price!

### TEAM 17 H.Q.

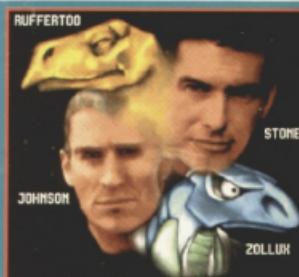
The atmosphere at HQ is reaching fever pitch, with AB2 nearing completion and the ad's doing their stuff in all the popular Amiga mags (I never thought we'd ever do any ads - still, they're only small ones).

The box is more or less finished, although there's been some debate about the use of roman numerals in the title rather than the digit 2 - it looks like the roman numerals will be stay-

ing though. The artwork we've settled for is an updated version of the original, only much brighter, wetter and much more slimy. You'll see it clearly on the shelves, believe me, it's a nice bright blue!

Everyone's gearing up to launch and we're getting close to taking the game around the magazines and sorting out demo versions. We're also all giddy because our latest budget release, Qwak, managed to make it a Team 17 1, 2, 3 and 4 in the Gallup budget charts - something we're really proud about. Thanks to everyone who supports our budget range!

As this is the last part of the diary (which is really jolly good news for me, I can tell you) I'd like to thank Dave and co. for having us over the last 6-7 months (it seems like years) and most of all, thanks to you for reading and hopefully enjoying all this useless banter. All that's left is



for you to go out there, grab yourself a piece of our alien action and get blasting - but give us at least a month before you start calling and asking for Alien Breed 3, because we're not doing that next and we currently have no plans to (although we've thought about Alien Breed 3D!).

I've just about enjoyed compiling this diary and it certainly makes for interesting reading on our part, although it's been a struggle meeting the deadline for the last few months. Fortunately the game should be available by the time you read this and only then will we know what your reaction to it is, but judging by the people I've spoken to, you should all be well chuffed with it.

We've more or less stuck at what we set out, we have had to make a few compromises along the way, but nothing that's detracted from the fast moving action game you all expected - we're all very happy with it!

On behalf of the Team 17 Breed 2 team and all the backroom boys'n'girls at Team 17 HQ, thanks, goodbye and have fun.

"As the shadow lifts from the dropship, you find yourselves on the barren landing pad in the middle of the troubled base. You must find your way into the Civilian building (Entrance 1), directly north of your present position. Negotiate your way around the fences and supply conduits to reach your goal. Automated security choppers have been alerted. Take care!"

See that mission? That's your first mission, that is!

Seeya!





REVIEW

# ALIEN BREED

I don't know why you're reading this bit - you're going to buy the bloody game anyway, whether Simon Byron likes it or not.

For seven long and tortuous months we've slobbered over the stunning-looking screenshots, laughed at the hilarious in-beer- and sheep-related jokes, and shared the Team 17's ups and downs as they've struggled on what must surely be the most eagerly anticipated games of all-time since, er, Frontier or Uridium 2. Yes, Alien Breed 2's diary certainly made damn good reading and its final chapter last month ranks as the saddest occasion The One has ever witnessed, not least because it was three or four easy pages that we didn't have to write. We were going to leave a quartet of empty pages at the back of this issue as a mark of respect but we felt we should continue our now empty existences as best we can. The diary would have wanted it that way.

It's not often we get genuinely excited about a particular game - after all, it takes a lot to impress us hardened-types nowadays - but I really can't describe the emotions we all felt when the package post-marked 'Wakefield' was delivered

by Mr Grumpy, our postie. Within twenty seconds of its arrival the box was ripped open and the enclosed disks hastily inserted into our Amiga.

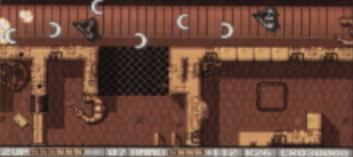
Thirty minutes we waited. And if Jenny hadn't pointed out that we needed an A1200 to run this particular version then it would have been a damn sight longer, I can tell you. So after we clipped Matt around the ear for being so stupid (someone has to be a scapegoat, you know), we were treated to the most... nah, I'll save the opinions for later.

Instead, let's talk about sex. Or the sexy plot, to be more precise. I'm sure you're not that interested, but let's do things properly or not at all. Deep breath, here we go: It's been nine years since Johnson and Stone thwarted the first alien invasion. But now the Federation Colony Alpha-Five has been attacked and it's up to two members of the Inter Planetary Corps to sort them out. Blah, blah, blahdy, blah.

Right, now you're all clear on the storyline, let's make our way via the captions to the Verdict. But I do get the impression it's going to be nothing more than stating the obvious.



(Above) Alien Breed 2 is far more strategic than its prequel, with most levels requiring some fairly harsh decision making. You can't just barge through opening all the locked doors willy-nilly unless you want to end up key-less and stuck, and most sealed rooms are just out of view so you're never quite certain what contains loads of bonuses or is merely a dead-end. You'll often find yourself torn between the lesser of two evils: is it really worth sacrificing a key for an extra thousand credits?

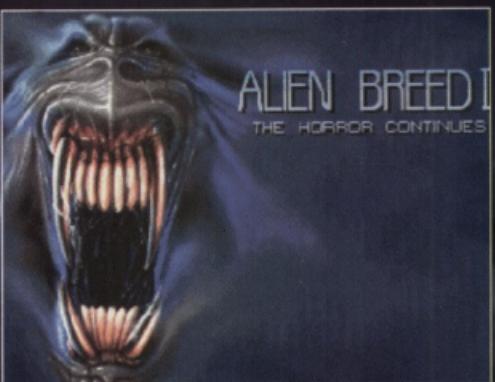


(Above) The game is at its best when two players are participating. Team work is absolutely essential if you intend to do well - there's absolutely no room for egos here. In fact, you'll find that there's no room for much at all because many of the walkways don't allow one character to pass another. Whoever's in front usual takes the most damage, but they also get to pick up any bonuses on the way. It's swings and roundabouts, really.





2



(Left) From this screen you can access the various options that Alien Breed 2 offers. There are two difficulty levels (easy and hard, naturally), and two types of credit options (shared or individual). You can also input a level code, but there's more about that over the page. Also over the page you'll discover some more words and a few more pictures.



(Above) Any icons you come across during your adventure can be walked over and collected, increasing either your health, money or ammunition supply. If you're playing on your own then you can happily snap up everything you find (much like a trolley-dash) but if a friend is joining the action then you'd be advised to ration everything, taking it in turns to boost your health or ammo. You can opt to put all your money in a collective pot, which saves a few arguments, or you can keep two separate totals.



Alien Breed 2 features some frightening alien life-forms, all of which attack - and should be attacked - in different ways. Some of them home in on you as soon as you approach them, while others remain out of view until you walk past a certain object from which they'll launch a surprise attack. A few even fire at you but thankfully you can blast their lasers if your reactions are quick enough.

**INTEX TOOL SUPPLY MENU**

	AMMO CHARGE	3000 Cr.
	FIRST AID KIT	3000 Cr.
	KEY PACK	4000 Cr.
	EXTRA-LIFE CLONE	25000 Cr.

CREDIT LIMIT: 16000      MAIN MENU  
STATUS: OH

If your heart fluttered at the sound of the lovely feminine vocals of the first game then you'll positively collapse when you hear what the new souped-up Intex system sounds like. These terminals are dotted throughout most levels and give access to a host of brilliant aids, from medical kits to key packs, as well as some visually-impressive and destructive weapons. As in life, most things don't come cheap so collect as many credits as you possibly can.

(Below) For what is essentially a shoot-'em-up, Alien Breed 2 has surprisingly few end-of-level guardians, most of the time your overall objective is to destroy a piece of equipment and then make it to another deck lift before the level self-destructs. The guardians that do pop up, though, are right blighters to deal with - this one in particular is guaranteed to take at least two lives off you before its inevitable demise.

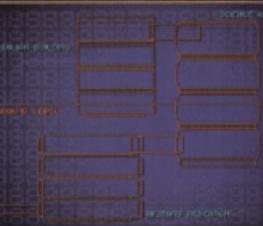




# REVIEW



As yes, doors. The trouble I've got at the moment is this: I feel obliged to mention them because they do form an integral part of the gameplay but, let's face it, you all know that you can only open them by using your plasma gun or blasting at them with high-powered weapons. You also know that there are hundreds of the sods and that many lead to dead ends or solitary rooms that weren't worth entering. So what's the point in wasting a whole caption on something as basic as doors. Answers on a postcard, please.



Level codes are given after every three or four missions so that once you've progressed some way into the game you'll not need to replay the earlier levels. Alien Breed 2 features over 20 levels - which is more than Alien Breed 1 and the Special Edition put together! And not only that, the initial batch of AB2 contains an Overdrive demo and a previously unreleased game called Apache (a chopliftery shoot-up) thrown in for free. VFM or what?



There are four characters you can select and each has his (or its) own advantages and disadvantages. Johnson and Stone are back, but they're joined by two aliens. Let's take a brief look at them, shall we?

#### JOHNSON

This rugged geezer makes a welcome return and if selected proves to be a good all-rounder. He starts his quest with a machine gun (stage 2), an RM Scanner (useful for glancing at the level layouts), 5000 credits and 5 keys.

#### STONE

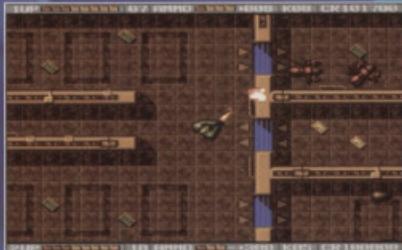
Oh yes, Stone. There's not that much to say about the other human in the game as he'd identical in every way to Johnson. If for the record, he also begins the game with a machine gun (stage 2), an RM Scanner (useful for glancing at the level layouts), 5000 credits and 5 keys.

#### RUFFERTOO

If you're after a machine gun (stage 1), and RM Scanner (stage 2) and 5 keys then Ruffertoo is most definitely the alien to select. However, it's worth bearing in mind that he begins the game with no keys, which is a bit of a downer.

#### ZOLLUX

Of the four, this alien starts the game with the most impressive weapon - namely, the triple lazer (stage 1). On top of that he's carrying 10 keys and although he doesn't commence his mission with any credits he's still the best one to start the game with.



There are a few 'passage' levels which don't contain that many aliens. Instead, these areas are made up of loads of interconnecting doors, most of which are one-way, with the challenge consisting mainly of working your way through the maze within the very strict time-limit. These sections are particularly frantic in two-player mode as both participants usually arguing over which way to turn. At least that's what happened when Matt and I were playing, anyway.

Most levels self-destruct after a specific task has been carried out and a dreamy female voice will announce how much time is left every ten seconds. The routes back to the deck lifts are never straightforward - the best thing to do is work out how to get exit the level before you initiate the destruction sequence. If you fail to make it back in time then the game is over immediately, no matter how many lives you've got left.



Here's where the differences between AB2 and its predecessors becomes apparent. The weapons in this sequel range from the ordinary machine guns to these visually impressive three-way lasers and homing missiles. There are three levels of power, with the highest being the most destructive (obviously). Homing missiles are a real bonus - you can hide behind corners and clear entire rooms within seconds.

### KILLING ALIEN SLIME BASKETS

The original game had a variety of weapons but they were nowhere near as visually impressive as these 'uns'. Each has three 'stages' - the higher the stage, the more destructive they are. Here's what you can pick up if you've got the cash.

#### MACHINE GUN

Although they aren't as pretty as some of the other weapons, the Machine Gun stage 2 is very powerful and not as limiting to use as you might imagine.

#### TRIPLE LAZER

Three-way shot is the what this little beauty is all about. You can spray an entire corridor with one press of the firebutton, although some of the alien's bullets can still sneak through.

#### HOMING MISSILES

These are perhaps the handiest of all - just stand outside a room with your finger on the firebutton and the homing missiles will seek out any alien life-forms, chasing them round corners if needs be.

#### FLAME THROWER

Although the Flame Thrower only has a limited range, its close-up work is almost second to none. It's also necessary to weld up any gas leaks you come across.

#### REBOUNDERS

These Rebounders are completely ace. You can run in any direction you fancy and these will take out anything around you by bouncing off all the walls. Get a high-powered one of these and you'll become virtually invincible.

#### HAND GRENADES

Nah, I don't like these. It's not that they're completely crap, it's just that they don't compare too favourably to the other weapons. Spend your money on better things.

#### RMS

The Remote Location Scanner isn't a weapon as such, but it proves invaluable on certain maze-like levels. By tapping the 'M' key you can call up a map of the level, and pressing the Space Bar zooms in.



## THE VERDICT

We all knew this was going to be something rather special and I'm more than happy to report that our initial expectations have been well and truly exceeded. Once past the first level it's back into familiar alien-killing territory, albeit with tons of incredible sound effects, graphics and subtle gameplay variations, so fans of the first game are going to feel perfectly at home. Newcomers to the Alien Breed world are going to be in for a shock, and that's a gross understatement. Atmosphere-wise it's got to be one of the most tense and genuinely scary games you'll ever come across, with scary set pieces galore and tactical decisions a-plenty. In one-player mode it's bad enough but when you're covering the back of a mate it's even more demanding, especially on the levels where only one of you is carrying the weapon needed to complete the particular deck you're on. However, there are a few niggles which although don't detract too much from the overall excellence, still prove to be frustrating in times of trouble. I accept that Team 17's intention is to hurl the players into a claustrophobic world where the odds are most definitely stacked against you, but many walkways are so narrow that they don't allow you to swap the current leading character. Another gripe is that Alien Breed 2 is too damn tough. The decks requiring hasty departure once you've performed a specific task do prove to be some of the most satisfying when you manage to complete them but ending the game just because you don't make it back in time is just a little bit too much - surely a chance to restart that deck would have been far more tolerable. Still, when all's said and done, Alien Breed 2 truly is one of the best arcade blasters available and terrific fun to play.

**A500/600**

**CDE2**

The A500 version will retail for three quid cheaper but you'll get not as many colours on-screen and the sound effects will be reduced in both quantity and quality. But fear not, it'll still be well worth buying, as the demo and next month's Update will no doubt prove. A CD32 version is on its way, but whether or not it'll have any specific enhancements is unclear at the moment.

**A1200**



Publisher: Team 17

Developer:

In-house

£29.99 Out Now

Not Hard Disk Installable

Joystick

Memory 2MB

Disks 3

**GRAPHICS**

**92%**

**SOUND**

**91%**

**PLAYABILITY**

**90%**

**LIASTABILITY**

**89%**

**OVERALL**

**91%**