

HORROR CADE

ALIENS AND OTHER ATARI ACTION By RUSS CECCOLA

After a series of columns in which I mixed games from different companies, I decided to do something unique and survey titles from one company whose system I haven't covered before. It's a catch-up thing—the company is Atari. If you've never seen the Atari Jaguar in action, it's definitely a system to check out, a real gamer's machine. Jaguar boasts 64-bit games, a decent supply of software (although this wasn't always the case) and a unique controller that combines standard buttons with a keypad for added functionality. Each title includes an overlay for the keypad à la Intellivision (remember that system?). Atari also has a CD-ROM attachment on the way and an impressive supply of Jaguar merchandise available. (Ratings are from one to five skulls.)

Alien vs. Predator Atari Jaguar

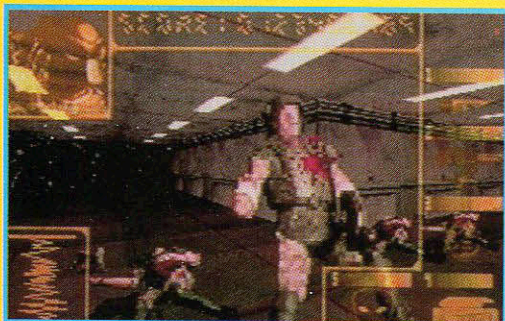
Fright: ☠☠
Gore: ☠☠☠☠
Fun: ☠☠☠☠
Graphics: ☠☠☠☠
Sound: ☠☠☠

Don't let the title confuse you with Activision's similarly named release, which is nothing more than a glorified fighting game with Aliens and Predators as the combatants. You *don't* want to make that mistake!

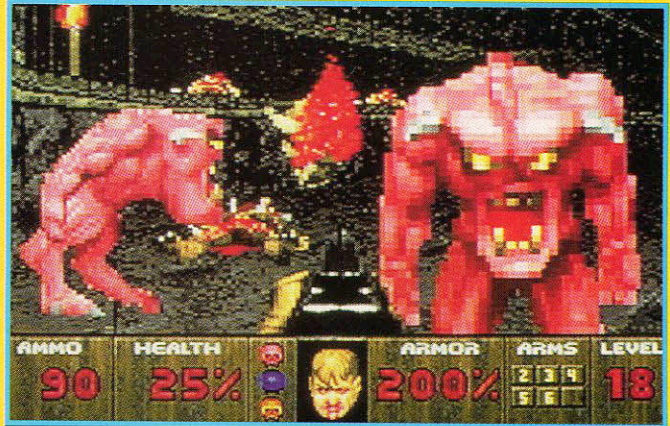
Atari's *Alien vs. Predator* is instead a creative and exciting

first-person action game in which you can play an Alien, Predator or colonial Marine, each with different goals, weapons and necessary strategies; most people will initially choose to control the Marine. Your goal in this scenario is to reach an escape pod and blow up the infested space station, dodging both the Alien and Predator ships along the way. This is the most challenging of the three scenarios. In the Alien game version, you have to rescue the Queen, who's captured on the Predator ship. Finally, in the Predator version, you must kill the Alien Queen and claim her head as a trophy. In this last version, you gain additional Predator skills and weapons as your score increases, so you almost have to be extra hostile to survive and succeed in your mission.

Atari has done an admirable job of capturing the spookiness of walking down long corridors and peeking around corners as you avoid your enemies in each scenario. The animations are nice, although the Alien movements are a bit clunky. The sound FX and music are the elements that really set the game's pace, from the tense score to the sound FX such as Alien screeches and gunfire. The variety in game play for each character is particularly interesting, because you can use an extended jaw or tail as an Alien and the invisibility skill as a Predator. The charac-



Alien vs. Predator allows you to take the creatures' side and eliminate those pesky humans.



Your Doom will be no less nasty on the Atari.

ters, gory violence and first-person perspective format will attract players to *Alien vs. Predator*, and they won't be disappointed. Atari spent a lot of time and money to get this title right, and the game delivers the goods.

Brutal Sports Football Telegames Jaguar

Fright: ☠
Gore: ☠☠☠☠☠
Fun: ☠☠☠☠
Graphics: ☠☠☠
Sound: ☠☠

Telegames is one company that has stood by Atari over the years and produced a number of titles for the Lynx and three so far for the Jaguar. *Brutal Sports Football* will appeal to Fango readers because it is football without rules and with a whole lot more violence and blood. You can win a game by either outscoring your opponent or slaughtering six of his seven team members. Some power-ups affect the game's flow, but others (sword, bomb, ax) have only one purpose—murder. Forget all you know about football before you try this; it's more of an arcade game with football as its basis. The graphics are very cartoonish,

as are the animations during "brutal" plays. This title is a great two-player game and tests exactly how dirty and underhanded you can be.

Doom id Software/Atari Jaguar

Fright: ☠☠
Gore: ☠☠☠☠☠
Fun: ☠☠☠☠☠
Graphics: ☠☠☠
Sound: ☠☠☠

When I first heard that *Doom* was on the way for the Jaguar, I cringed. *Doom* is one of those games that you don't want to reduce in size or scope, or mess with its graphics and sound FX. Fortunately, Atari did none of that and, in fact, made the game quite exciting and enjoyable for Jaguar owners. The main reasons for the game's successful translation are the straight port of the graphics and sounds and the use of the keypad to select the weapons and map—functions that require a few extra keys not available on standard game controllers. Cooperative and deathmatch modes for two players are also built into the game so you and a buddy can enter the world of danger together. *Doom* for Jaguar is a successful conversion of a game I previously thought would only work well on a computer. ☠