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# FORMAT

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# CHOMP!

Exclusive: **ALIEN 3** - Virgin's fantastic new platformer previewed!

WONDER IF YOU CAN READ THE  
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BEFORE YOU SEE THE ANSWERS  
FOR IT IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE?

**Tape  
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# ALIEN 3

*It's big, it's black, it's boney, and it's back. Your favourite host, the eight foot ant with two mouths, the Alien. Send the face huggers off to bed, and snuggle down with a human carcass and a copy of your favourite Commodore mag.*

## ALIEN

Sigourney Weaver, John Hurt, and a few others go along to a planet investigating a distress beacon. Leaving the main ship in orbit, they whizz off down to the planet to find a huge alien ship which has crash-landed. John Hurt gets attacked by a baby alien, known as a face hugger, but after a while, they chase it off.

While eating lunch, John gets an acute attack of indigestion, and that small piece of indigestion (Dickson's) turns out to be a killer ant who wants his mother. He waddles her through to wipe out all but one of the crew.

And so crew fights alien, alien kills crew member, crew fights alien, alien kills crew member, crew fights alien, alien kills crew member, and returning crew member escapes with a cat, and her life.

## GRAPHICS

The graphics are, to say the least, excellently drawn. The detail is excellent - with the firing of the gun creating white light over Ripley's face, and so many other little effects that really add that extra something to playing. You won't get bored, either, as there're many different backdrops and features to see, which in the process add a nice depth of atmosphere to the game.

The soundtrack is smooth, with sprites mixing of great speeds when necessary, but still looking impressive when they're not belling off over the shop.

## GAMEPLAY

member, crew fights alien, alien kills crew member, crew fights alien, alien kills crew member, crew fights alien, alien kills crew member, and returning crew member escapes with a cat, and her life.

## ALIENS

Said crew member, Sigourney Weaver, gets in space a lot, and gets found after several years. She tells her tale (in max Hollywood style), and

they send a team of marines headed by Ripley (Sigourney Weaver's character) back to stop the mutant alien ant creatures eating.

One by one, the



The planet bases that *Alien 3* is set in have loads of hidden tunnels and walk ways. **Warning!** With poisonous acid rain.



Get too close to an alien and you'll lose your life.

## DIFFICULTY

There comes a time when every writer has to explain a theory. This time, it's difficulty curves. Is it just me, or were games like *Crackin' Egg*, *Asteroids*, and other earlier creations about the only games to get the idea of a difficulty curve perfectly? When you're playing a game, you see, you don't want to feel thrown straight in an impossibly difficult opening level, and have to do several hundred times before you can grasp the mechanics of what you're supposed to actually be doing. It's a much more logical idea to have a nice easy opening level with a gradual increase in difficulty which builds until you achieve the desired level. This process would have lowered the steep lives of many bad games through history.

I'm glad to say, though, that Probe (the team behind the game) have got it right. The opening level lets you slowly get used to the feel of the whole game, rearing up future successes or failures to determine how long you play for.

team of marines the cut, leaving only Ripley, another (Ripley's) child (don't ask), and an android. Android saves the day, but another alien pops in for tea and the film only ends when Ripley's taught the creature inside a metal restricted body suit and was, stuffing it out into space.

## ALIEN 3

Lots of people go back to find the aliens, and just about everybody dies, after lots of suspense and the like. They also write a computer



That old adage about looking before you leap takes on a whole new meaning on these levels.

ALL TIME		
# PERSONS RESCUED	85000	200
# TIME REMAINING	0:00:00	100
# PLASMA BATTLE JAPS	850000	00
# PLAYS THROUGH PAUL	850000	880
# WARE SHREDS	850000	880
# GROUND LAUNCHER	850000	880
DIFFICULTY NORMAL TIME	0:00:00	11000

Make it through a level and you get a run-down on how you did. Only five prisoners saved, 880 down.

## CF VITAL STATISTIC

**GAME**.....ALLEN 3  
**PUBLISHER**.....VIBRANT 3  
**CONTACT NUMBER**.....081 888 3333  
**PRICE**.....£7.99  
**AVAILABLE**.....NOVEMBER  
**OTHER INFO**.....TAPE ONLY, I'M AFRAID

game about it, and it gets sent into CF for a preview. They give it the cover.

## THE GAME

Like all the besters, *Allen 3* is an arcade platform game. The basic plot is you, playing the part of Peeper, have to run round buildings disposing of all aliens, blasting enemies, or a combination of both. The game itself runs across 16 levels, each of which can be either Rescue (just rescuing prisoners), Blastem (blowing every damned thing, or blastem is a bit of both).

Each level has a main section, and is linked to the next by ventilation shafts, which Ripley frequently (and with enjoyment) is wise up even more of the fool alien things.

There are three main obstacles to overcome on each level.

- **Aliens** - loads of 'em. Crawling, running, leaping.

## SOUND

Atmosphere. What more can I say? The sound is sparse, but used to good effect. Custom things weren't included, such as the graying on the proximity detector, but these would probably get on your nerves after a while anyhow.



Jolly happy-go-lucky isn't it. Funny enough William Gibson didn't invent that expression, although he did come up with the virtual term Cyberspace.



## Now while

the aliens have impressive teeth and acidic blood, Ripley's got a jolly large gun.

## IMPACT

Another important feature in a game is its initial impact. This covers several points.

- **Initial Attractiveness** - when you first start to play a game, that first minute has got to have one characteristic - it's got to be fun. Plain and simple, you have to enjoy it. If you don't, you probably won't play past that minute.
- **Ease** - in *Fun* started on about a year ago, I won't talk about difficulty curves, but needs, suffice to say there has to be one.
- **Size** - for one likes to feel that they're not really getting anywhere. Giving the player an initial success is ideal.

I'm happy to be able to tell you that it feels like *Probe* have covered every point here. As for its initial impact gone, *Allen 3* grabs you by the face and stomps a tentacle down your throat almost immediately.

attracting... You name it really! They're all after you, or waste you quick.

- **Geography** - finding your way around and locating each prisoner is a fairly difficult task on a level of the kind of size we've got here. After you've found all the prisoners, you've still got to find the ventilation shaft to escape, which is no



This character from the *Crystal Maze* has got a bit lost and ended up in *Growing*.

easy task in itself. You'll also have to find your way around the shafts in order to get to the next level, as they branch all over the place as well.

- **A time limit** - and while you're trying to get to grips with all of this, there's a clock steadily counting down against you - and you only get a few minutes (if that) on each level. Not making it to the next level within the time limit will lose you a life - No Fun.
- **Bad news** - Occasionally, you will also come up against "guilt-traps". Remember *Alien 3*? Remember that huge mother thing? It's a bit like that, only a bit more mobile, and a bit more able to wipe the floor with you. Weapons like *Beam* throwers really come in handy here, as bullets really don't cut it with this kind of beastie.

## SO...

All that remains to be said, then, is that truth what we've seen so far, this looks like a damn good platform stomp-in - about size-up. We're all waiting with bated breath for the release, and the CF review.

