» EXPOSING RETRO GAMES THAT ARE PROBABLY BEST LEFT IN THE PAST

PREDATOR

In terms of duff movie-to-videogame translations, Activision's *Predator* ranked as one of the most infuriating offerings to find release. Based on John McTiernan's 1987 blockbuster movie, in which a group of hardened commandos led by Dutch (Arnold Schwarzenegger) find themselves hunted by an alien warrior through the jungles of Guatemala. The videogame tie-in was your typical run-and-gun game that featured promising ideas marred by messy gameplay, a weird love for reloading, and some over reliance on the colours brown and green.

Here is the *Predator* experience summed up in a few paragraphs. You spot the cool looking game box, remember how cool the film was, and immediately part with whatever the shop seller is asking in order for you to take the game home and experience its obvious potential. You plonk it into your Amstrad, and wait patiently for the game to load, as it slowly draws you something that looks like a melting Arnold Schwarzenegger. The game starts, you're treated to a pointless introduction showing the Predator ship landing on Earth, and then finally the action begins.

On the first stage you and your identical-looking brown soldier friends jump out of a helicopter and head straight for an enemy base. As you would expect, legions of soldier enemies dressed in brown fatigues run at you - so many, in fact, that their corporeal shapes

A WORD FROM THE HERO

" DILLAN! YOU SONOFABITCH, it's Dutch here. I hate whining computa geeks. I just heard some SONOFABITCHES from **Retro Gamer** trashing my game because it was too hard. STOP WHINING! They said the graphics were poor, and every time you died you had to wait for the game to reload. I WILL CRUSH THOSE SONOFABITCHES!

» [CPC] You'd be forgiven for thinking the game was set in a sewer – it's actually a jungle in Guatemala.

GAME INFO

- » **SYSTEM:** CPC
- » **RELEASED:** 1987
- » **PUBLISHER:** ACTIVISION
- » **GENRE:** RUN N' GUN

begin to conjoin and overlap, forming what starts to look like giant pieces of moving dog shit for the player to shoot at. If any of the dog shit touches you, it drains your energy instantly. You fire your machine gun at the stodgy brown clumps, and some parts break off and fall on the ground, returning to their human-like form, but as the gun fires a million bullets a second it doesn't take long before your ammo dries up and you're simply left to peg through the brown-looking jungle while ensuring your little brown sprite avoids anything that is both brown and moving. It's around this point that the screen turns all psychedelic, with the brown hues replaced by garish neon colours (the Predator's thermal imaging POV, not your character going blind from all that dog shit). It's at this point you must avoid something that looks like a

breakdown recovery triangle as it slowly moves around the screen. Obviously, if the triangle touches your sprite you die instantly and if this happens a few times the game is over. 'No biggie', you think; it's your first attempt. However, with *Predator*, upon dying you are presented with the hair-pulling words 'rewind tape and press play'. So you eject the *Predator* cassette, aggressively drop kick it into your games collection and vow never to pick it up again.

But, later that night, you lie in bed thinking it was something you did, that surely a big film license cannot be so dire. So the next morning you boot up the game and carefully approach the gameplay as it were about to explode at any moment. You return to the suck, and the room turns a hazy shade of green and brown. Fin.

» [CPC] This game loves loading almost as much as we hate playing it.

» THE POINTLESS PARTS

THE INTRO
The intro is supposed to be the Predator ship crash landing on Earth, but looks more someone throwing a Frisbee very far.

THE GUN
Considering your guns will dry out of ammo within seconds of starting the game makes them pointless in our eyes.

THERMAL VISION
Though these Predator POV bits fail to add any drama to the gameplay, they do save your eyes from the brown graphics.