

# Micro Maniacs



**They're not nippy midgets, they're just vertically challenged speedsters!**

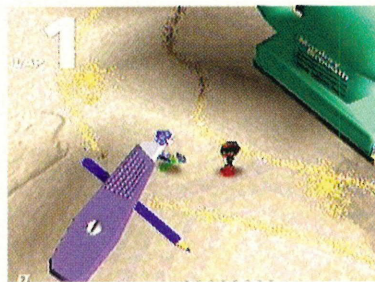
**S**tay at home most nights, do you? A can of cold beans for tea while you amuse yourself by sending stamped addressed envelopes to mail order companies, just so it looks like someone out there, beyond the blackened void you call your pathetic existence, actually cares enough to put pen to paper. The outside world is for the other people. Bad people. People who never say 'hello'. You are utterly alone.

Is that true? Does that describe you? Answer yes and you should keep away from this miniaturised racer because it's only going to remind you that you need

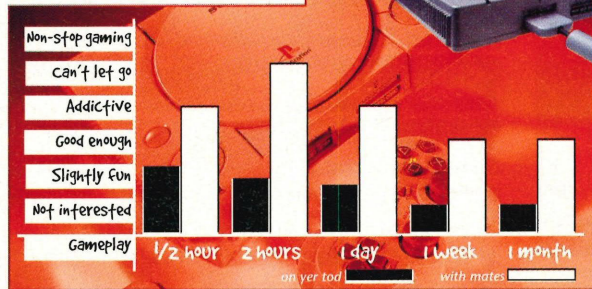
friends. In fact, to get the best out of this, you'll need up to eight of the buggers. No mates equals no fun. Got them? Well great, we can carry on because this is a party game and it's not for playing solo. You try to do it. You may even pretend to yourself that you're enjoying yourself, but not for long. Soon the harsh reality of the game will dawn on you and your solitude will become unbearable. So enough of this downbeat stuff, get some mates round and let's get on our marks to get set for some hot jogging action!

## Rampant runs

Think *Micro Machines V3* on foot and you'll have hit this nail so dead on the head that you could penetrate an oak beam with one strike. Actually that's a lie. Sometimes you get to race on wet bikes and skateboards and then it's exactly like *Micro Machines V3*. In fact the game is like it's predecessor in almost every way then, bar a few extra game modes and a general



## In a nutshell



**These insect riders can fly up and over a fun-packed garden. Hurray for innovation and huzzah for originality!**





Fly my pretties. Fly and be FREE! Those little beggers, you've got to love 'em.



**"Think Micro Machines V3 on foot and you'll have hit this nail so dead on the head that you could penetrate an oak beam with one strike!"**

sinister feel to the characters. Racing in bath tubs? Check! Racing on garage floors? Check! A game written with the use of a photocopier? Check!

The old maxim of, 'If it ain't broke then flog it again', has never been proved more correct. But hey, we all know what to expect and we all love it. Everything is still here and it plays the same to boot. You'll recognise it straight off; whoever gets more than a screen away from the nearest competitor wins a point while the others lose one. It's like a tug of war over a number of laps, the nutter with the most amount of points by the final lap wins.

Classic stuff and this time you get a few more weapons to mess up your mates with. There's nothing that spectacular, but when your trying your damndest not to tumble off a clay pipe you don't need to be worrying about a nuclear inferno or a plagues of locusts. Little blackholes, laser beams and haunting nightmares will do just fine.

### Mini guns

*Micro Maniacs* is for those of you who like to memorise your tracks, because when you're in the lead and blurring your legs right at the edge of the screen, you can see absolutely bloody nothing of the rest of the route [Will is useless at this game, incidentally - Ed]. Didn't know that there was a fall coming up or a jump to be made? Tough luck, hard cheese and tough titties because this game isn't here to do you any favours.

Playing with eight people huddled over four controllers can be both extremely frustrating (when you fall of a ledge) and exhilarating (when you don't fall of a ledge and then use a power up against someone). This mixture of huge highs and pit-of-despair lows makes for some fantastic moments. Then the art of Zen creeps in. Once you have learned a track, you can trot around it in your sleep, only the other players weapons

and incompetence can stop you winning.

When you have all become daddies of the control system something happens. You enter the 'zone'. No one can speak everyone is concentrating so hard they almost begin to levitate. It's a strange feeling. Eight friends united to stay on track, all understanding the symbiotic relationship between each other, their environment and the PlayStation. A moment of perfect balance and ultimate beauty. Then one aggressive son-of-a-gun batters an opponent with a mallet and the spell is broken; man's bestial self rises to the surface and total war is declared.

It's a strange mix of cute and cuddly, yet gory and gothic action, that gives us a game with all the humour of a loony toon racer mixed with the decapitating disgust of a Tim Burton movie. Watch out for that saw blade and keep your legs away from that stanley knife! Oh yes, it's all very nasty stuff indeed and it deserves your respect before someone gets hurt.

Will PRO

**Déjà vu?**

Wow, were getting severe flashbacks maaan! It's just like 'Nam all over again, but with small people. INCOMING!



multi-tap • dualshock analogue • memory card • And friends 'cos it's up to eight players!

### The verdict

- Graphics ★★☆☆
- Sound ★★☆☆
- Gameplay ★★★★★
- Lastability ★★☆☆

Release: April £39.99

Published by Codemasters

This is as good as *Micro Machines* has ever been, but it's furnished in a more inventive and even more playable casing. The party game has been lost for a while and this is the new post-pub barrel of laughs. Oh, and it has midgets!



Alternatively: *Micro Machines V3* - Codemasters ★★☆☆