

Point of ORIGIN

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❖❖ Austin, Texas



Richard and Chris try to squeeze every bit of coverage possible out of LogIn editors.

Anything for a Story

Keep an eye peeled for more international press coverage. Tim Smith, with England's PC Format, was very impressed with all the work in progress he saw on *Strike*, even though it was spread out over a few rooms. He's planning a write-up on *Strike* as well as *U7* and *Underworld* in an upcoming issue. It should hit the stands pretty soon, since the lead time on European magazines is much shorter.

The same PD teams put on great shows for the "sumo" guys from the Japanese magazine, LogIn. Theirs was an unexpected trip, but they left overwhelmed with what

ORIGIN is putting together. They also echoed the feelings of all the other international press people we've had through here. They couldn't believe the relaxed and close-knit attitude of all the employees. They said it just doesn't exist at any of the other publishing houses.

Way to show off the goods, gang! And mucho thanks to all the folks in P.D. for graciously putting up with all the disruptions as we trudge through your quarters with these non-stop press contingencies. We clearly have the best schmooze machine in the biz!

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Press Roundup

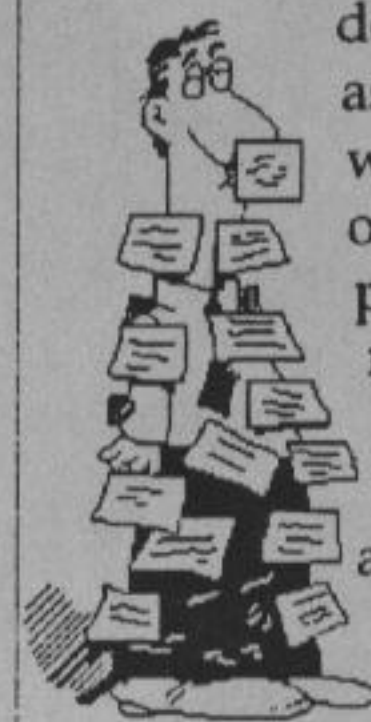
Bernie Yee reviews *Wing2* in the January 27 issue of PC Magazine's "After Hours" section. He says that "even though it's not the ground-breaking product that *Wing I* was, it is nonetheless dazzling." The rest of the review is just as good, as I recall. (Does anybody know where our copy of the magazine is?)

The February issue of Computer Game Review has a blowout 2-pager of *Underworld* coverage. The overall rating is 91 (compared, coincidentally, with an 87 for *Eye of the Beholder II* from SSI in the same issue). David White, the reviewer who wouldn't stop playing *Under-*

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Don't Forget...

The Entertainment Committee is circulating questionnaires and people who don't fill them out are being tracked down and shot. Think of it as "forced fun," so the EC will have a better handle on planning upcoming projects. Also, welcome to new PD-EC members Alan Gardner, Melanie Greene, Mike McShaffry and all-around great employee, Norma Vargas!



Take a Look at Yourself

Fred wants to remind everybody that it's almost that time of the year again: employee performance reviews. Actually, *performance* reviews can take place any time of the year, but during the month of February is when budgets are set and salaries determined for the new fiscal year which starts March 1st. Basically, it's a three-step process. The first is self-evaluation. You'll be given a form on which you're expected to list what you believe are your strengths, weaknesses and contributions and job growth ex-

pectations.

That's followed by a review from your department manager, who will evaluate your performance, look at your self-evaluation and try to determine how you fit into the "big picture" of the department. At that point, you'll be given the opportunity to agree or disagree with the opinions. And finally, there will be an executive management review, which weighs everything—including department heads' recommendations, company profitability, cost-of-living figures

for Austin and the performance/results of each employee. At that point, our new or continued course is charted, bonuses and compensation are set, and the whole package is submitted to our Board of Directors for blessing or adjustment (the Board meeting is held here in Austin the first or second week of March). Then, bang! We're on our way into another adventure-filled year. Get introspective now, because self-evaluation forms will be coming out soon.

...Press

world at CES, wrote, "It seems ORIGIN and Blue Sky have been tapping into our dreams, because this game is nearly perfect, and should be hailed by all the D&D and Dungeonmaster fans worldwide. ...*Ultima Underworld* is the premier dungeon game ever made, period. Excellent, without equal!"

Almost equally-flattering is CGRs preview of *Epic*, the new space-combat game from Ocean U.K. It starts off: "Attention Amiga and Atari ST owners—tired of wishing ORIGIN would port *Wing Commander II* onto your platform? *Epic* is the answer." It goes on to say how *Epic* is just about the next best thing in all ways to *Wing2* for those machines. It even compares a screen shot to *Wing 2's*! Look for a copy on one of the bulletin boards in ORIGIN East and West.

In the U.K.'s Strategy Plus, reviewers were asked to list the pro's and con's of 1991. 5 out of 8 of them

listed *Wing* or *Wing2* as a "pro" (one of those guys listed *installing Wing2* as a "con"). Two of them also listed *Martian Dreams* as "pro's."

Swelling Ranks

After four consecutive yearly visits as a consultant, Mike Harrison has finally realized that his fate and fortunes lie with ORIGIN. He's officially signed on full-time as Marketing Director, effective in March. In fact, he's doing some packing in Baltimore right now. When Mike comes aboard, Craig Miller will become Creative Services Coordinator, taking on the lion's share of that department.

If you've noticed some fresh faces on the PD side, they are five new TDA's: Anthony Nichols, Chris Close, Steven Powers, Melanie Greene and Prem Krishnan. Rodney Dowery's also joined the programmers and Don Derouen's in QA. Glad you're here, now get to work!

Off the Clock

Have you been wondering how you're going to impress that special someone on Valentine's Day? How about having him/her seduced by the sultry tones of the U7 love theme as performed by Raymond Benson? Or even a special recitation of English poetry from Lord British himself? Just sign up for the Zachary Scott Theatre fundraiser on February 13th. It's \$45 per person, plus \$40 for the song or poem. And you even get a videotape of the event to take home with you.

If you're looking for something completely different, check out the Stretch Williams Band this Saturday at Babes on 6th Street (2 doors west of Jazz) from 8:30 to 10:30. Jack "Stretch" Williams is none other than the husband of our own Marie Williams in Customer Service.