

# COIN OPERATED

This month, we continue our in-depth AM coverage, and take a look at Research Department #1's latest coin-op title, *Virtual On*. Although it's not due for release in this country for a couple of months, the game is nearing completion and should be out in Japanese arcades any day now. Look out for a machine that's on test at an arcade near you soon!

**T**he ATEI show is held annually at Earl's Court exhibition centre in London and gives visitors the chance to see the latest coin-ops out in Japan, which will be released into UK arcades over the coming year. Naturally, there were plenty of big names at the show, but among the prime exhibitors were Sega Amusements. Traditionally known as innovators in the arcade field, they certainly didn't let anyone down this year, and had plenty of top-quality products on display – among the games on offer were *FIGHTING VIPERS*, *MANX TT* and *VIRTUAL ON*. *SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE* was there too, and brings you this special report

Whenever Sega release a new arcade game, there's always a certain amount of excitement that surrounds it. Not only do they promise a brilliant new title, but you can be almost guaranteed that they'll be pushing back technology boundaries too. Sega had many products on show this year (including *Sega Rally*, *Indy 500*, *Virtua Cop 2* and *Rail Chase 2*), but the showcase products were the ones created by AM research departments. All three divisions of the team had products on show, and all three of the games were technically brilliant. In fact, by the time you read this, most of the games will be out in larger arcades, so for the best test, get yourself down there!

## VIRTUA FIGHTER 2 – PART 2?

After a phenomenal success on both home and arcade formats with *Virtua Fighter 2*, AM2 decided that something had to be done to curb that gap in between *Virtua Fighter 2* and the arrival of *Virtua Fighter 3*. Obviously they couldn't create a whole new game – all of their energies were being put into *Virtua Fighter 3* (of which we've still seen nothing) which is sure to be stunning. So, they got the code for *Virtua Fighter 2* and began to play around with it a little. *Fighting Vipers* is the result. Based on *Virtua Fighter 2*, this is a fighting game with a more "Western" feel.

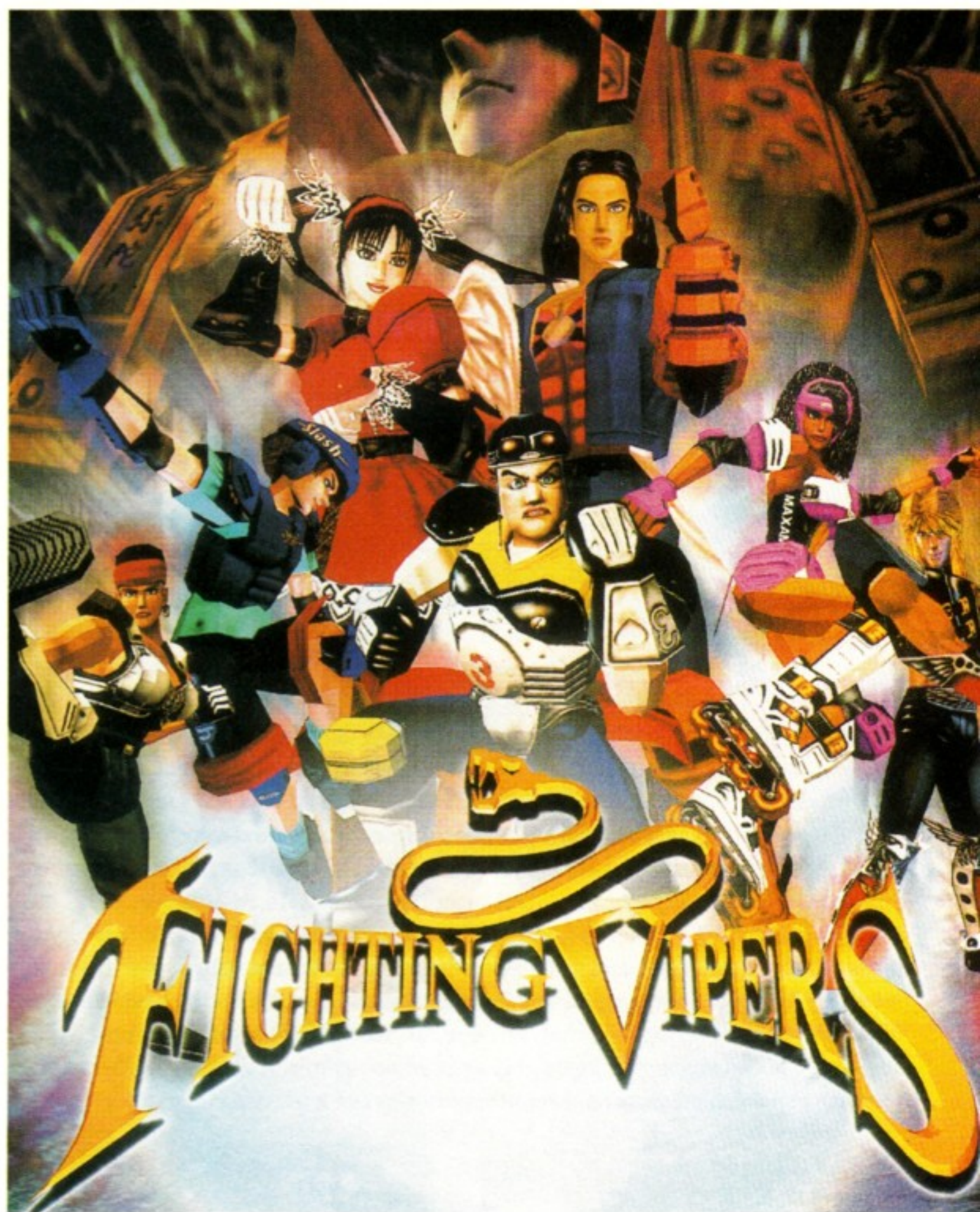
All of the characters use the same basic moves as the *Virtua* characters, but the game has a very different feel. In fact, graphically it could be likened to *Tekken* or *Tekken 2* – gone are the purist characters of Shun Di, Sarah Bryant and Akira Yuki, and in are more chaotic, brightly coloured characters with a more Streetfignery feel about them. There's no special spectacular moves as such – the characters have retained a pure fighting feel, but a few of them have weapons, although not of the fireball type.

## EIGHT NEW CHARACTERS!

There's eight characters in *Fighting Vipers* (along with the rumour that there's a cheat to play as a fighting Sonic), plus a boss character too. And although the

characters all take their movement from *Virtua Fighter 2*, the game is played very differently. For instance, defending is a lot more important than it was in VF2, and AM2 have programmed the game especially to be like this. This makes it easier to fight back if someone has unleashed an especially potent combo on to you, and even if you're cornered, there's still ways to get out of the situation. Also, the camera angles switch around much more in *Fighting Vipers* than they do in VF2, and the fighting ring is different too. Instead of slipping out of the ring and losing the round in VF, *Fighting Vipers* is played out in a cage, so the sides of the ring can be used to your advantage. However, a particularly hard punch can break through the sides of the ring and fling your opponent right out of the fighting arena and into the distance!

# THE SER



Yeah, kiss and make up, guys. Come on now, make friends again.



Those little blips on the screen are caused by the bright lights at the arcade show.

Picky readies himself for an awesome attack.



While Jane gets Sanman in a headlock...



...Before headbutting him in the face.



# PENT'S KICK!

## FIGHTING VIPERS – THE CONTENDERS!



**PICKY:** Probably the most appealing character in Fighting Vipers, purely because he looks the best! Picky is a skateboarder and uses his board to fight. One of his best moves is slamming his board down on top of his opponent's head!



**JANE:** Jane is probably best described as a Ripley with long hair. A regular hard case, she has the strength of ten men and regularly tries her luck in the fighting tournament.



**RAXEL:** Sorry, we got the translation of his name wrong in an earlier issue of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, although Raxel still remains a fright wig rock-god. He uses his guitar to pull off some pretty mean moves too, although his main focus is to become a huge star.



**SANMAN:** Sanman is overweight to say the least. But he can use his huge body to overpower opponents. Which of course, he does. Regularly.



**CANDY:** Originally named Honey, her name was changed to Candy at the last minute. The reason for this is unknown, but if you look closely on her fighting background you'll find a tribute to the original character. Candy is the most fashionable member of the posse, fights in a red dress and uses her posterior and long stilletoed legs to defend herself against stronger opponents.



**TOKIO:** Probably the most flamboyant character in the crew, Tokio is a failed actor, and while he isn't particularly strong, he's really fast and is a worthy opponent.



**GRACE:** Another female character, Grace is a bit of a babe and although she's dressed in Pink from head to toe, she's deadly in the ring. Strong and fast too.



**BAN:** Reminiscent of Bison in the Streetfighter series, Ban is a huge fighter. His punching attacks can easily blast a fighter through the boundaries of the ring, and in fact, it's one of his specialities!

Incidentally, there's a boss character too, but we're not going to reveal him just yet! You'll have to get down to the arcade yourself to see it!



**COMBATED**

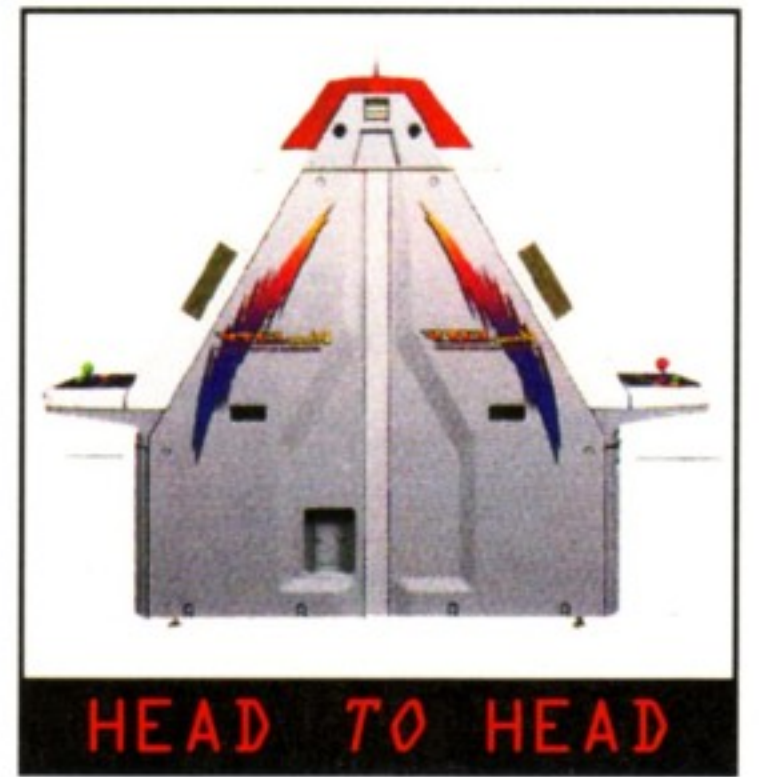


"In memory of Honey". That was Candy's original name!



**TWO WAYS TO PLAY!**

Although the majority of arcade cabinets are standalone with a two player option, there are a number of head to head cabinets out in some arcades. If you want to play against a real opponent, this is definitely the best way to do it. It's also good because if you stay on as the winner, you won't always know who your next opponent will be!



**WORK HAS BEGUN ON A HOME CONVERSION!**

As revealed in SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE #1, work has already started on the Saturn conversion of Fighting Vipers. Logically, this shouldn't take to long to appear, as it basically uses the same game engine as used in the VF series. However, the time lag between arcade releases and home conversions will always be significant, as if both versions were released at the same time, there would be less hype surrounding the title. And besides, they have their work cut out at the moment, creating new characters for Virtua Fighter 3. Expect to see the first pictures of a home conversion within the next three months.



## IN YOUR HOME BY CHRISTMAS!

Despite the non-availability of Saturn screenshots at the moment, you can expect to see an almost perfect conversion of the game by the time it's released (probably around Christmas of this year). AM2 did an amazing job on Virtua Fighter 2 – in fact this is probably the closest home conversion of an arcade game ever seen. However, AM2 are even more proficient now, and with the help of the new graphics library, which the team are now fully used to, they can produce even more technically perfect titles. As is usual in a home conversion, Yu Suzuki is overseeing the project, and has also mentioned that he would like to continue the fighting Vipers series, in much the same way as the collective Virtua Fighters have progressed.

It's difficult to say how popular Fighting Vipers will be in this country, as despite being technically brilliant as well as great to play, it's a somewhat more low key release than VF2. However, the game was created with the western audience in mind, and it will certainly appeal to Tekken and Streetfighter fans. Virtua fans will no doubt love it too, although on first look, it seems very different from the clean, realistic graphics of VF. But, once played, you'll instantaneously be able to tell it's an AM2 game, and as a stop gap for the VF series, it's certainly a worthy addition. As we said before, the best way to find out what you think is to get down the arcades and see for yourself! Look out for a full player's guide in a couple of months!



Tokio and Raxel prepare to duel to the death. Either that or one of them is about to be expelled from the ring.



Picky is probably the most popular character in the entire game. He certainly looks the most appealing.

