

BY	BMG
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	SHOOT 'EM UP
RELEASE	MARCH

Did you ever stop to think that maybe, because the universe of **Star Wars** is based in another time and dimension, the awesome Death Star might only be the size of a potato to an **Earthling**? Or that an **Imperial Battle Cruiser** would be no bigger than a baby carrot? No? Well, anyway, here's Titan Wars.



TITAN WARS

Shoot em' ups on the Saturn have taken on new standards since Panzer Dragoon. A game either has to try and match its 3D polygon muscle or go for the more retrofied 2D side scrolling approach, as is the case with the nostalgic Darius. Now, with the awe inspiring Panzer Dragoon 2 set to arrive, the quality we'd expect from a shoot 'em up becomes even higher.

In such an environment, a game like Titan Wars stands little chance of survival. It chooses the head on 3D perspective and makes a bit of a shambles of it. The movement of the ship is almost comical. It jitters up and down, left and right like its got the hiccups or something. It makes negotiating valleys and caves decidedly frustrating and this, coupled with the over-sensitive controls means that there are a lot of annoying collisions. Now this wouldn't be so bad if it wasn't for the equally frustrating restart points. Each level only has about two restart points which means you're constantly drudging through the same territory time after time.

The environments that your ship traverses aren't actually all that bad in so far as the 3D scenery all scrolls very smoothly and there's no sign of clipping or anything nasty like that. The lack of imagination though isn't as easily forgivable, the space valley's and stretches of sea looking bland and the colours lacking subtlety and variety.

The challenges themselves are equally uninspiring. Your ship dodges under and over steel girders, shoots down towers and tackles airborne enemies, all with the same plod along predictability. As you'd expect, there's a boss sitting there at the end that you hammer away at in the usual routine. Once destroyed it's on to the next level, pausing of course for the whole FMV bit in between. And so it goes.

There are a range of pick-ups available in Titan Wars. The main ones are the shield booster, the missile pick-up and the standard fire power-up. There are plenty of them as well which is a good thing because the slightest knock will really take it out of your shields.

What really seals Titan Wars' mediocrity has to

be the awful FMV sequences that fill out the story line and try and invoke a bit of atmosphere. I can picture it now... They they all were, putting the finishing touches to the FMV sequences in the game. Actors were neurotically concentrating on their Stanislavsky technique in preparation of the big finale, the director and cinematographer were arguing about depth-of-field ratios, and the special effects team were pencilling in the finishing touches on the computer. Finally, it all came together, and they got the take. Smiling, each of them sat down and lit a self-satisfied cigarette. There was silence. Suddenly, one of them jumps up. "The game! Oh my god, we've forgotten about the game!" Confused replies: "What game? What are you talking about?" "You know! The game that's supposed to go with these FMV sequences. Or was it meant to be the other way round?" In a rush, they head down to programming central and knock out the game overnight with the help of some strong coffee and a few cut corners. Unfortunately, for us, it's too little too late.

ROB



...so space just goes on and on right, and even if there's a wall, what's behind it eh?

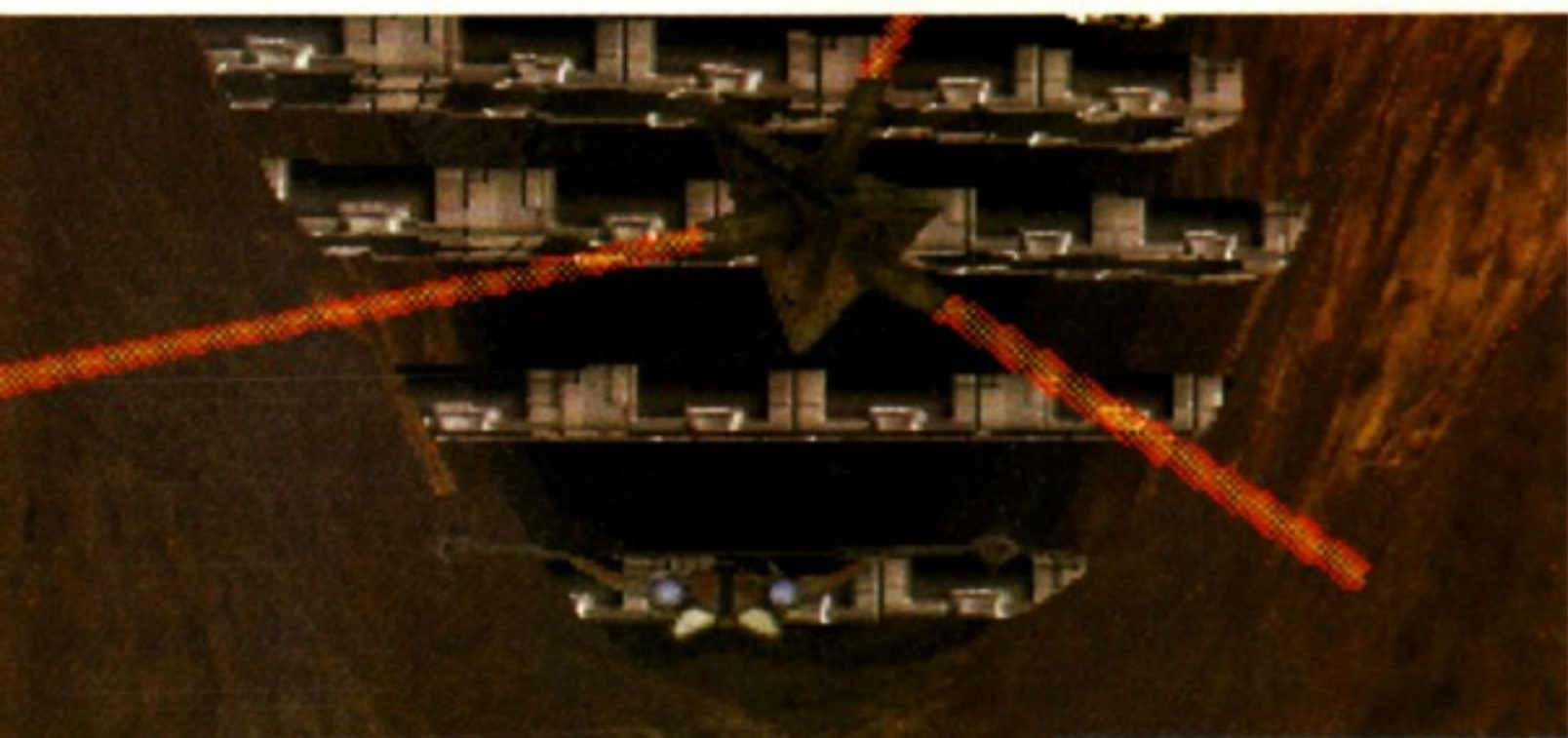




A battle with the boss at the end of the first level.



After some rapid button pressing the boss is destroyed restoring order to the galaxy. Hurrah and huzzah!



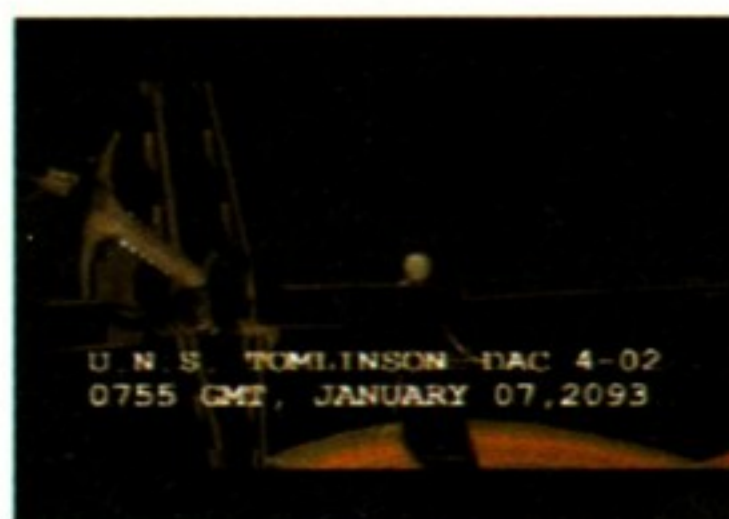
Babes of the future are really hard. Harder than blokes in fact. Blokes are sissy's in the future.



These luminous blue geysers might look harmless and serene but should you fly through any of them you'll see your shield power reduced. So, mind the geysers, alright geezer.



...and right, if something can be infinitely huge right, then something can also be infinitely small and get smaller and smaller but never disappear, and right, this universe might just be an atom that makes up a huge turnip, and...



FIGHTING TALK

One thing that will raise a smile in Titan Wars is the incredibly cheesy FMV sequences. Whoever the scriptwriter was (probably the bloke who wrote Top Gun), he has succeeded in supplying an admirable number of cinematic cliches. Here's some classic dialogue from the game:

[After the first mission, the new guy Cross - you in other words - comes back having flown a blinder and destroyed the boss. Your maverick style of flying however, takes some other members of the squadron a little by surprise.]

PILOT: [very angry] "That is not the way we fly in Alpha Wing, Cross! We take our mission objectives seriously!"

CROSS: [with casual superiority] "Yea, well my objectives are powder right now."

PILOT: [sternly] "You do not want to piss me off lieutenant!"

CROSS: [with arrogance] "Sure I do."

So there, you have it, a snippet of the kind of challenging dialogue you can look forward to. It's a shame that the aggravated pilot didn't say to Cross that he "flies by the seat of his pants" but you can't have everything.



Titan Wars is a shoddy shoot 'em up straight out of the bottom draw. Ruined by banality and frustrating gameplay. Oh, and some naff FMV.

graphics	50	overall
sound	65	
playability	52	
lastability	60	
		54%