

Just as we were expecting everything to go a bit quiet in the not-much-happening month of February, developers seem to have gone Saturn mad. There's well over ten releases to plough through, and among them are a couple of outstanding titles, most notably X-Men: Children of the Atom. Acclaim had initially decided to release this in July (to co-incide with their in-house PC version - B-I-G mistake) but thought better of it, so Saturn owners, for once, get a good deal on third party software. It has to be said that this makes a change - after all, on the PlayStation the situation

is reversed with the Sony games are typically not that good, whilst third party titles are that much better.

Things are a bit quiet for Sega themselves at the moment - with their "Big Three" all out on the shelves, they're preparing for another top-quality assault on the market at around Easter time. In the meantime though, there's Baku Baku Animal to plug the gap - designed by none other than AM3. What next? A fighting game starring Sonic the Hedgehog...?

X-MEN: CHILDREN OF THE ATOM

Capcom bring their arcade smash into the home!

Played X-Men? Seen the ridiculous amounts of hits combination attacks can inflict? These are the highest recorded by Capcom in their official guide to the arcade version...

1. ICEMAN (80 hits)
2. STORM (76 hits)
3. WOLVERINE (38 hits)
4. SILVER SAMURAI (30 hits)
5. CYCLOPS (27 hits)
6. SPIRAL (27 hits)
7. SENTINEL (21 hits)
8. PSYLOCKE (18 hits)
9. OMEGA RED (18 hits)
10. COLOSSUS (15 hits)

INFORMATION SUPPLIED
BY CAPCOM

There's been a certain amount of confusion regarding the UK release of X-Men. First, it was supposed to be out in time for Christmas. Then, Acclaim decided to hold the release back to co-incide it with the PC and PlayStation versions - due in July. Finally, they decided not to wait after all, and as a result, X-Men should be out in the shops by mid-February. Which, of course, can only mean good news for Saturn owners.

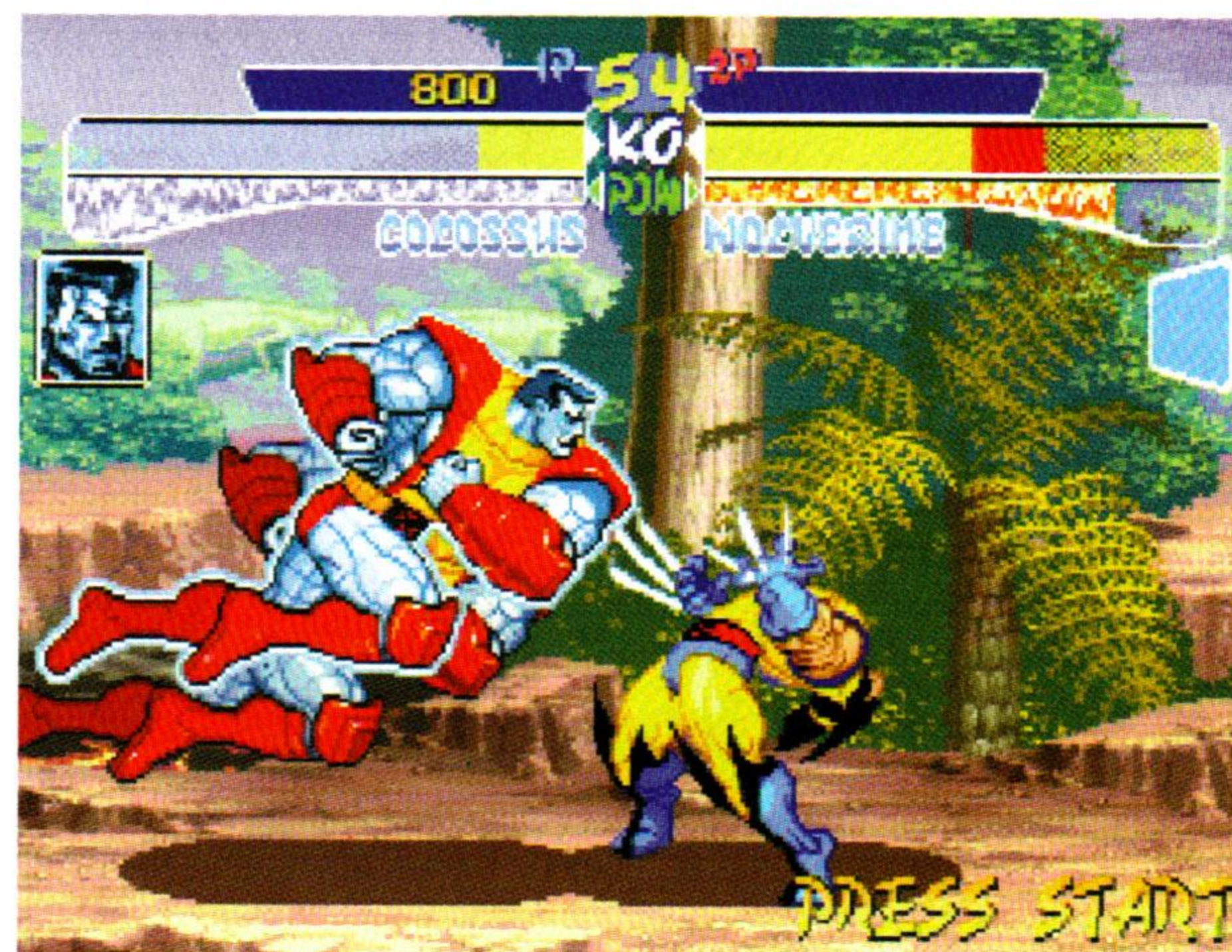
This isn't just because it means that there's another combat game available for the machine. Nope, it's more to do with the fact that Capcom's first Marvel coin-op is an absolutely

awesome conversion from the arcade original, retaining both the superb graphics and excellent gameplay. It's also a sad fact that this is the only version of X-Men that will remain so close to the original, as Acclaim's in house programming team will be responsible for both the PlayStation and PC versions. Naturally, this doesn't necessarily mean that they will be inferior conversions, but if you want the closest conversion put together by a Capcom team, the Saturn is the only place you'll find it.

Plus, in addition to the inclusion of all the original features, Capcom have also created a few home-only modes too. As well as the usual two-player mode, there's a group battle mode where two players pick a team of warriors and fight until the last man is standing, and there's also a survival mode. In this mode just one round of a fight is played, then the contender moves on to the next fighter until he either beats all 13 or drops down dead. This obviously helps the game in terms of lastability and gives you more of a challenge when you're fed up of playing in standard mode.

Graphically, there's absolutely no way of faulting X-Men. It remains almost exactly the same as the original title and all of the sprites are a decent size. There's a couple of surprise characters to discover as well, most notably Akuma, who takes time off from Streetfighter to give mutant asses a good kicking. The other two are Juggernaut and Magneto, both of whom are absolutely deadly foes for any standard (?) X-Men mutant (see page 70 for some player-controllable Juggernaut action).

There's no doubt that any beat 'em up fan will find this an absolute joy to play - while it lacks the coolness of Virtua Fighter 2, it's more of a hark back to the Street Fighter style of gameplay (which of course Capcom were responsible for anyway) which is just fine by us. And of course, it's a game that's going to last you



longer than a week - after all, how long do you think it will take to master Iceman's 80-hit combination attack?

★★★★★



ARE YOUR POWERS STRONG ENOUGH TO SURVIVE THE MIGHT OF MAGNETO?

