

JoJo's Bizarre Adventure

Expanding breasts and psychotic dwarfs are par for the course in this game. It's not just bizarre. It's mental

Capcom's mastery of the 2D beat 'em up doesn't begin and end with the *Street Fighter* series. Somewhere in a seedy arcade, probably tucked away in a corner next to the trusty *Bubble Bobble* machine, sits an imported oddity called *JoJo no Kimyouna Bouken*. We have to admit that we'd never come across it before, which made its unhyped arrival on Dreamcast all the more pleasant a surprise.

JoJo's Bizarre Adventure, as it's known outside Japan, is a game which treads a fine line between Oriental weirdness and complete insanity. Based on a manga comic book, it tells the

story of a pair of adventurers, Joseph and Jotaro, and their carnival freakshow entourage. The 16 fighter line-up is one of the most unorthodox collections of characters we've ever seen. Even the relatively straight ones come up with eye-opening moves in which they summon up a used car to throw at their opponent, or drive a choice piece of road-building equipment across the screen. One shapely female character

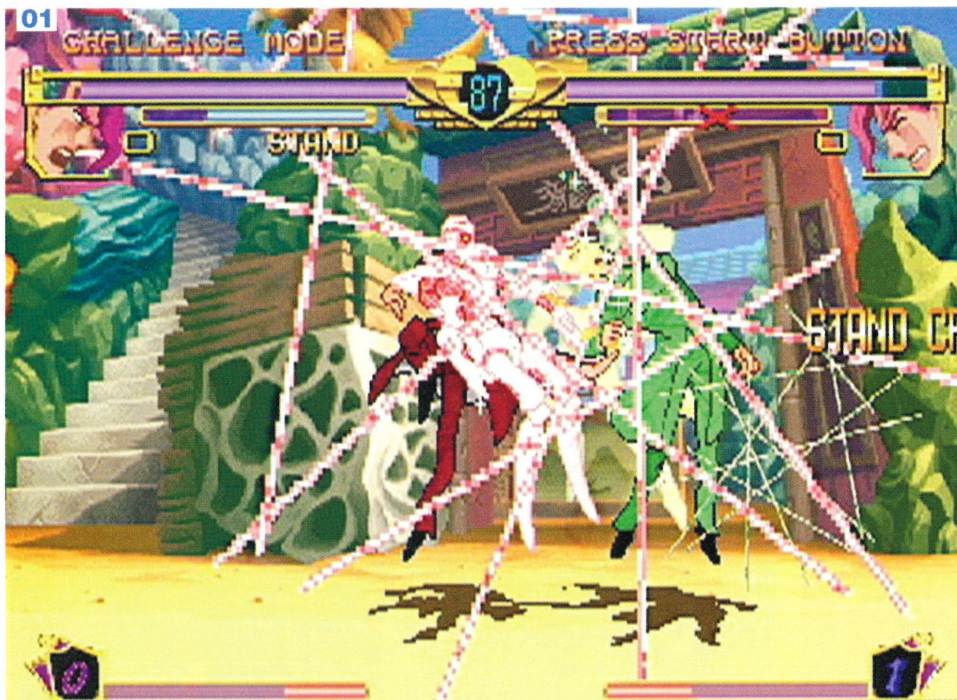
inflates her breasts until bits of shrapnel shoot out, which is, naturally, a traumatic thing to look at. Also huge pieces of static artwork flash up during special moves, and there's an awful lot of Japanese shouting and screaming.

It's very strange indeed, but the combat system is simple and elegant. Three buttons call up light, medium or heavy attacks – there's no distinction between punches and kicks. The type of move you get depends on what your character and opponent are doing at the time, so impressive combos and aerial juggles can be created from just a few taps on the controller. It's possible to get some outrageous ten-hit combos by just leaping around and pressing the buttons in sequence, although these can't easily be replicated outside of the training mode. It isn't particularly challenging on the default difficulty level (we completed it on our first

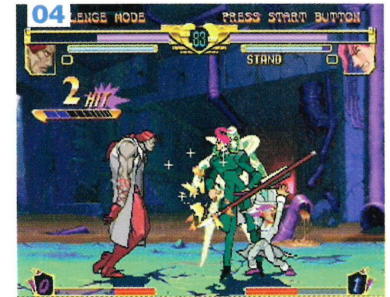
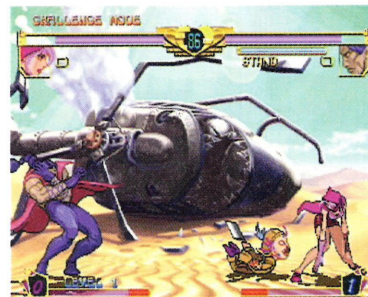
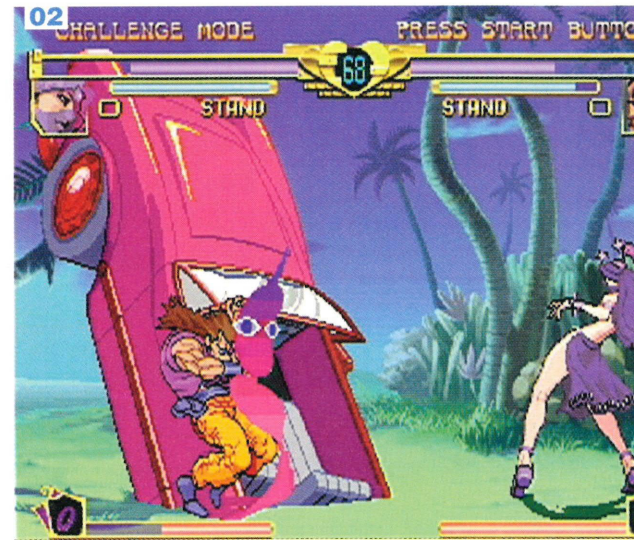
"JoJo's Bizarre Adventure is a game which treads a fine line between Oriental weirdness and complete insanity"

FINEPOINTS

- Publisher: Virgin
- Developer: Capcom
- Price: £39.99
- Release date: March
- Players: One to two
- Extras: 60Hz, rumble pack



"It's **good to find** a fighting game that can still throw up **a few surprises**"



01 Static pictures don't do justice to the quality of the animation during many special attacks

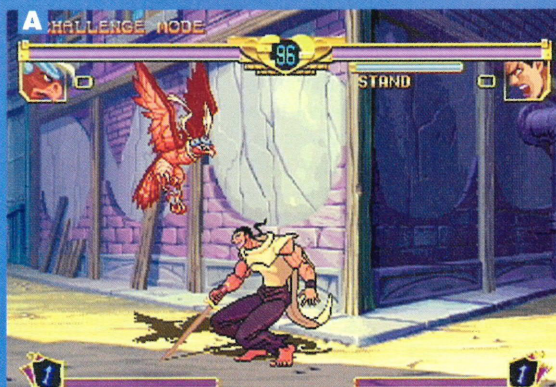
02 The car rises out of the floor to deliver a beating. No idea why

03 Alessy's shadowy Stand holds onto an opponent and keeps him out of mischief

04 Psycho-dwarf goes to work! Get him away!

Stand in the place where you live

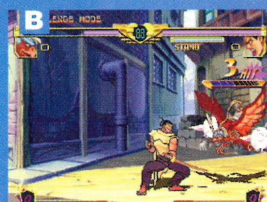
Stands are great. Everyone should have one. They come in all shapes and sizes, and they're not fussy about which species they attach themselves to. Look out for Petshop (an eagle) and Iggi's (a harmless-looking mutt) stands. Iggi's unsavoury speciality, while his Stand keeps the enemy occupied, is to attach himself to the face of his opponent and perform an unspeakable act of oral violation. Thankfully, a piece of fuzzy screen censorship spares us the worst of it.

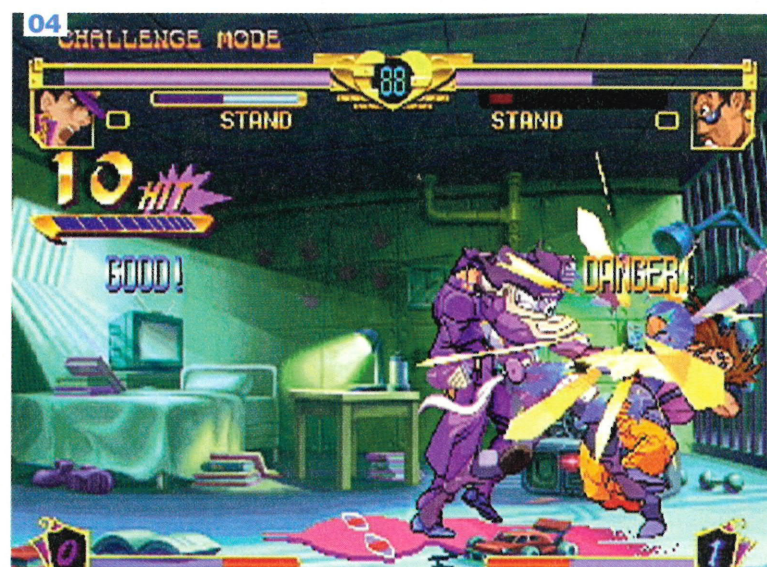
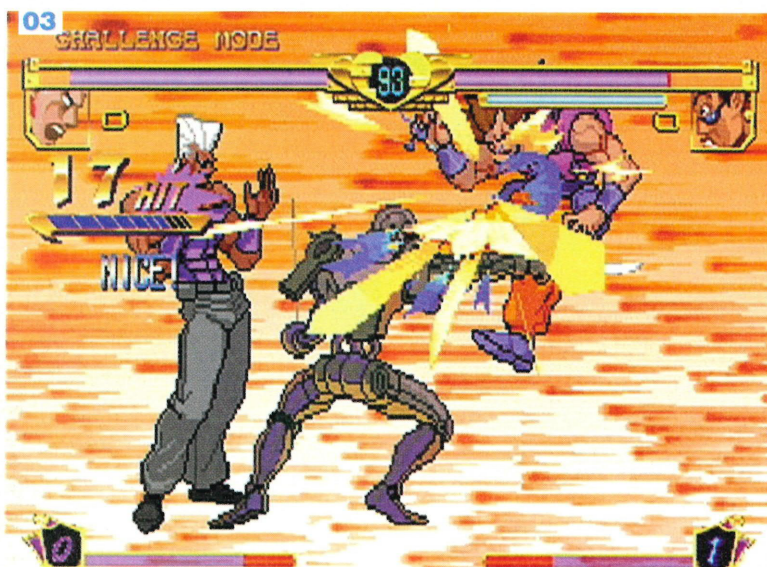
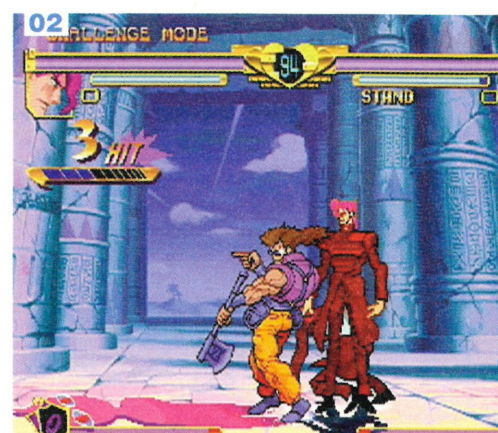
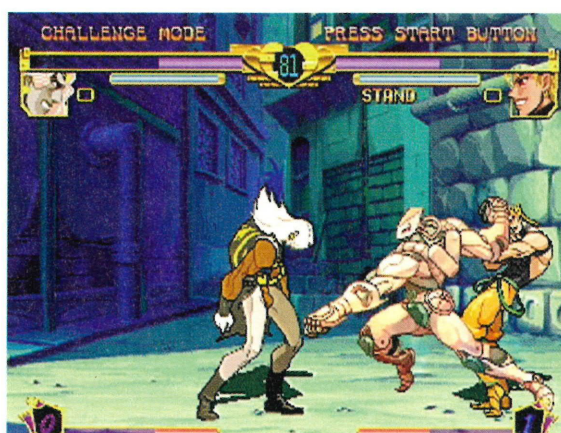
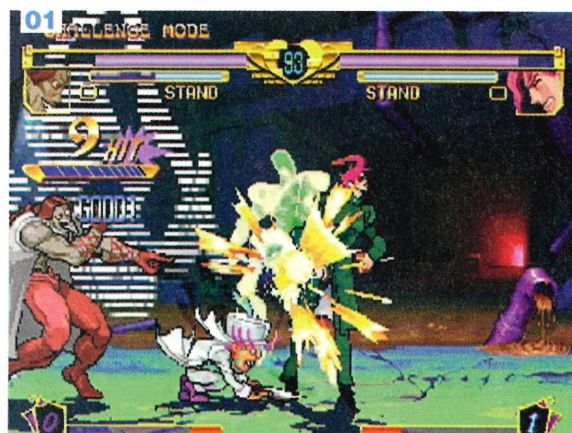


A Petshop is something of an acquired taste. Very lightweight and easy to kill

B Unless you hover out of reach, you're easy pickings for any bird-hating enemy

C Oh dear. Iggi has his way in one of the cut scenes. Let's hope one of those blokes brought some mouthwash





"If you're **already experienced** at *Street Fighter* then **we'd recommend switching the difficulty level** up a couple of notches"

► attempt by hammering away at the buttons) but it'll take a beat 'em up expert to conquer the hardest setting. If you're already experienced at the likes of *Street Fighter* then we'd recommend switching the difficulty level up a couple of notches, otherwise you'll experience the disappointment of blasting through the game in next to no time.

Where *JoJo* really differs from other fighting titles is in its use of 'Stands'. A Stand is a kind of elemental superhero which each character can invoke at any time. When the Stand is active, it does most of the dirty work for you, with a whole new set of power moves to use. The Stand takes damage just like its

master character, and it also has a charge meter which is depleted with each hit. When the meter is

empty, the Stand departs temporarily, leaving its owner vulnerable for the split second it takes to recharge – the ideal time to attack.

The Stands are even stranger than the main characters, although it's hard to make out the detail on some of the more ghostly ones. Midler, a woman who lives in a tree (as far as we can tell) has a particularly excellent Stand, which takes the form of a gore-encrusted hovering mouth. It's absolutely lethal, as is Iggy's hunchbacked thug and Alessy's purple shadow. The most dangerous of all the Stands is Dio's, as it can freeze time around an opponent – very annoying if you're on the receiving end. There seems to be some kind of hint about Dio's weakness in one of the story screens, but we haven't figured it out yet. The only Standless fighter, D'Bo, has a razor-toting ventriloquist's dummy as a travelling companion, so he can sit

back and watch as the psychotic dwarf attacks in a whirlwind of glinting steel and woodchips. Perfect for fans of the *Child's Play* movies and 'little people' in general, a bit creepy for everyone else.

It's an engagingly unusual sort of fighting game. The story which unfolds in the cut-scenes between battles is suitably offbeat, and is completely different for each character, providing a good incentive to play through the whole thing with all 16 fighters. The disc also includes the arcade prequel, *JoJo's Venture*, a smaller version of the main game with fewer characters and a different plot. Even though it doesn't have the depth of gameplay that Capcom's more illustrious beat 'em ups offer, it's good to find a fighting game that can still throw up a few surprises. Bizarre simply isn't the word for it ■

Martin Kitts

01 The most evil ventriloquist's dummy since Orville

02 Strange how a combo meter can rise when both fighters are just standing around, posing

03 A reasonably good total to get out of a charged special attack, and a pretty effect too

04 The fight looks like it's all over, but – wait – what's that on the floor... A doormat? Or...

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■ **For:** Visually stylish, with plenty of attention to detail in the animation. Two complete arcade games on one disc
■ **Against:** The range of moves is limited compared to the serious fighting games on Dreamcast. Easy(ish) to beat

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