

STREETS

1-2
PLAYERS

PRICE £44.99

BY SEGA

RELEASE JANUARY

OPTIONS

CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: 2
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS: EXCELLENT
GAME DIFFICULTY: EASY/MEDIUM

1ST DAY SCORE
FINISH THREE LEVELS

ORIGIN

Streets of Rage II is a fairly derivative scrolling beat 'em up, but has a lot of elements derived from Street Fighter II

HOW TO CONTROL



A Special move.

B Attack.

C Jump

S Pauses the game.

HOW TO PLAY

Traverse the Streets of Rage kicking the excrement out of everyone!

Just when the City had returned to some semblance of normality following the crime reign of Mr Big, the unthinkable happened... and how! Although the figurehead that was Mr Big was "removed" from "office", the machinery of organised crime remained, enabling one of the ex-kingpin's twisted lieutenants to take up the reins of power. However, this guy is ten times worse than Mr Big ever was... once more the streets run cold with blood as organised crime sweeps across the city! To add insult to injury, this new figure of crime kidnaps Adam (he of the original Streets of Rage) and threatens a terrible vengeance if the police act against him!

It's down to two ex-cops, Blaze and Axel along with another couple of helpers, Max and Skate (who's actually Adam's little bro'), to traverse the scrolling Streets of Rage, dismantling the criminal empire by beating up every one of its members! Hurrah!

Sounds similar to Streets of Rage I? Well, perhaps it is, but this time it's bigger and much, much better!



SCROLL-AROUND

Streets of Rage II isn't just a simple horizontally scrolling beat 'em up. Sometimes the action moves down-screen as the crime-busting heroes moves further into some of the levels. To see this effect (rather similar to the Turtles coin-op), take a look at the mega Sega video attached to this issue (which you probably have already).

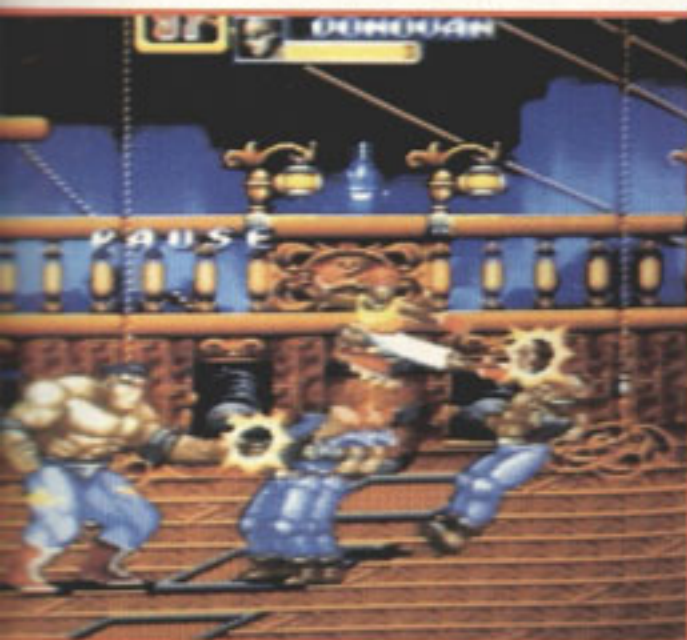


DUEL IN THE CROWN

Adding to the fun is the brilliant duel mode of Streets of Rage II. This enables two players to face up to one another in a fab Street Fighter II type competition. Along with each character's plethora of special moves, there are also plenty of weapon lying about that the players can use to beat the seven shades of shinola out of their opponents!



STREETS OF RAGE II



▲ Punch, kill, kick, maim, AIEEEE!

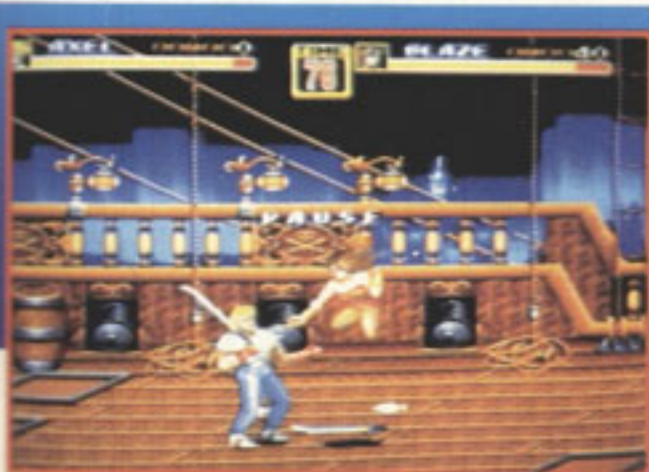


▼ Hmmm! Somewhat reminiscent of the Hurricane Punch methinks...



DAMAGING TOOLS

Aiding our quartet of heroes in their battle against organised crime is the vast range of weapons either left lying around the streets or hidden in smashable containers. The line-up of tools isn't really that different from the weapons found in the first game, so look out for the like of swords, lead pipes and knives! With every weapon you can attempt a basic attack or just chuck it at your foe for mega damage!



TWO-PLAYER ACTION!

What with all of these massive sprites on-screen, you'd think that Streets of Rage II would be one-player only, like Super NES Final Fight. Not so! Two players can participate in this fine game in much the same manner as the first game. Just like Double Dragon, hitting each other inflicts large amounts of damage, so avoid it where possible!

COMMENT

Streets of Rage II is a truly arcade quality beat 'em up from Sega! And when I mean arcade quality, I mean a game that actually beats the spots off any Neo Geo beat 'em up! The basic gameplay hasn't been changed much from the original, but the execution is far, far superior. The graphics are brilliant. Each character has brilliant animation and around 20 different moves (according to Sega) and the sheer amount of different backdrops (all of them completely fab) will leave you gasping. The sound (from the guy who did the music for the original game and Revenge of Shinobi) has come up trumps with a totally stunning set of highly atmospheric tunes - you'll be stunned by their quality, I guarantee you. Streets of Rage II is simply the best scrolling beat 'em up you can get for a console (it's a bit unfair to compare it with Super NES Street Fighter II because they're different games). My only gripe is that it is too easy in EASY mode - leave it in NORMAL mode and you're in for a highly challenging, mega-quality game! Buy it NOW!



▲ Max gives an impromptu breakdance demonstration



▼ Something you don't see on Junior Kickstart

RAMATIS PERSONAE

There are four heroes to select in Streets of Rage II, each with their own special abilities and offensive manoeuvres! Here's the list of characters you can control.



COMMENT

Having had a quick scan at the screenshots, my initial reaction was, hmm, a snazzed up version of the original but with a few added extras. How wrong I was. This one eats the prequel for breakfast, spits it out and then comes back for more. The graphics are outstanding with massively improved, speeded up sprites, not a hint of slow-down when the going gets tough and a whole range of new moves and attributes- all different for each player. So if you're a bit of a speed freak you'd go for Skate or for Blaze if it's all round ability you prefer. The backgrounds are stunning, with stacks of animation, and the sound has improved ten-fold (it was damn good in the first one) with bowel-bustingly brilliant music booming at you throughout. Will my praise for this game ever stop? I don't think so. The arcade mode with eight sizeable levels and more geeks to batter (including your mate if it takes your fancy) than you can shake a stick at is entertainment enough but the addition of a duel mode where you can fight any of the other characters is just mega (Blaze can also fight Blaze etc without cheating so eat yer heart Streetfighter II freaks). Basically if you like beat 'em ups you have to buy this and if you don't like beat 'em ups, buy it anyway because this game will convert you.



BOSSES R US

A game like this isn't complete unless there are a good number of mega-tough bosses awaiting your fist-related attentions at the end of each level. Streets of Rage II more than delivers the goods with a knife-wielding maniac, as well as a very dodgy-looking female called Electra, who inflicts damage with the aid of her electrified whip! Adding to the carnage is a massive Ultimate Warrior look-alike barbarian and a bloated fat boy, whose uppercuts are unstoppable!



AXEL

Axel's spent the time since the end of the last Streets of Rage caper in learning even more martial arts skills. Even though he's still a dab hand at the old fisticuffs and headbutts, he's learned a few more special moves, including one that bears something of a resemblance to Ryu's dragon punch in Street Fighter III
POWER: 2
TECHNIQUE: 3
SPEED: 2
JUMP: 1
STAMINA: 2

BLAZE

Fearing another criminal onslaught, vigilante Blaze Fielding has kept in shape following the last Streets of Rage game. What's more, she's learned a few more attacks, including a somersault kick (a bit like Guile's in Street Fighter II) as well as a mega damage-inducing short range fireball! Blaze is probably the best character of the lot.
POWER: 2
TECHNIQUE: 2
SPEED: 2
JUMP: 2
STAMINA: 2

MAX

One of the new boys in the neighbourhood, Max is a street-tough customer whose power attacks are second-to-none. Unfortunately, owing to his not inconsiderable bulk, Max is a bit slow. One of his favourite moves is charging his enemies! Devastating!
POWER: 3
TECHNIQUE: 2
SPEED: 1
JUMP: 1
STAMINA: 3

SKATE

Make way for Skate, the brother of Adam - a streetwise kid brought up on the eponymous Streets of Rage. His speed and jumping power are superb, but his stamina and power levels are very dodgy indeed. His special moves are great. He jumps on people's shoulders and smacks their head in! Alternatively, a fab Dhalsim-style yoga-spear inflicts multiple hits on his prey. Nasty.
POWER: 1
TECHNIQUE: 2
SPEED: 3
JUMP: 3
STAMINA: 1

LONG TERM REPORT

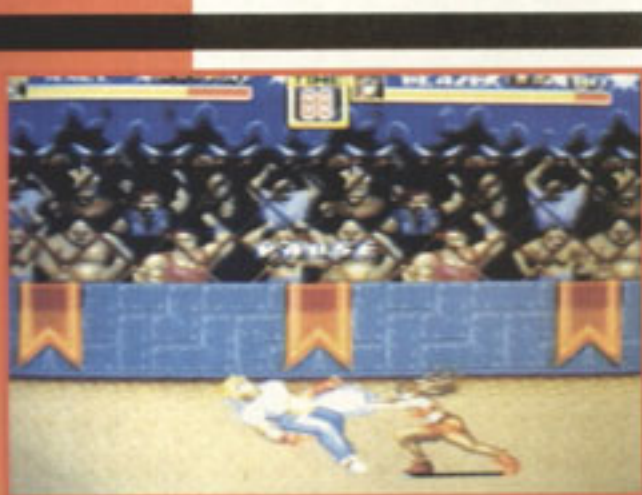
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BREAKDOWN

STRATEGY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ACTION	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CHALLENGE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
REFLEXES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



▲ Is that an iron bar in your hand or are you just pleased to see me? Listen, there's no time playing Twister - we've got places to go and people to kill!



▲ Don't you just love being in control?



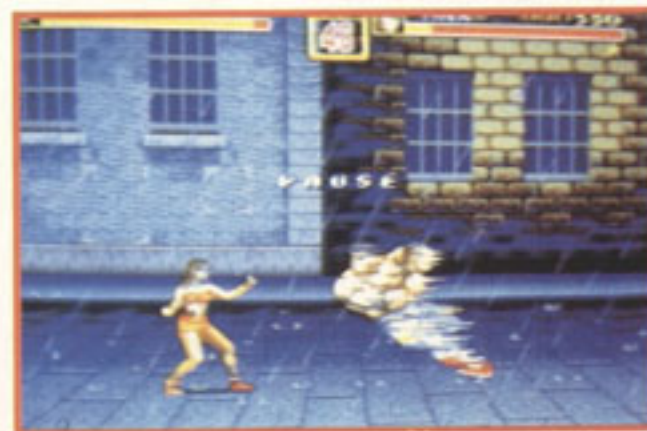
▲ Axel plays serious head games while Max takes a nap - get up fatty, you're needed!



▲ That's it Max, kick a girl when she's down — big bully!



▲ Blaze dear, this really is no time to swoon just because Skates is imitating a helicopter!



PRESENTATION

▲ A brilliant range of options to tweak, along with a truly excellent, polished feel to the game itself. There are some nice presentation screens as well.

91

GRAPHICS

▲ A vast range of sprites and backdrops, the quality of which will amaze you! The animation on each character you slap around is also nothing short of astounding!

94

SOUND

▲ The guy who programmed the music for the prequel has come up with a host of ace house tunes - probably the best ever on the Megadrive. The effects serve their purpose remarkably well too.

97

PLAYABILITY

▲ Laying into legions of bad guys and mastering the special moves is excellent fun and instantly addictive, while the duel mode satiates that need for one-on-one combat.

97

LASTABILITY

▲ Eight massive levels (each with sub-levels) and the two-player modes add to the fun!
-But use the EASY mode and you'll finish it in a couple of days.

95

OVERALL

90

Let's make no bones about it, Streets of Rage II is the greatest sequel we've seen for ages and is certainly the best scrolling beat 'em up ever to hit a home console!