



JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL '92

What a veritable festive feast of footballing fun, frolics and frivolity! If you're an American football fan, you'll be wondering what this, the sequel to probably the best sports sim ever, has in store for you. And if you're not an American football fan, we'd better refresh you of the rules.

The object of the game is to get the ball into the opponent's end zone, thus scoring six points. This is not as simple as it sounds, however, as every time the ball comes into contact with the firmament, play is stopped. Play is stopped a maximum of four times, and if the ball has not been carried ten yards in this time, control is handed over to the other team.

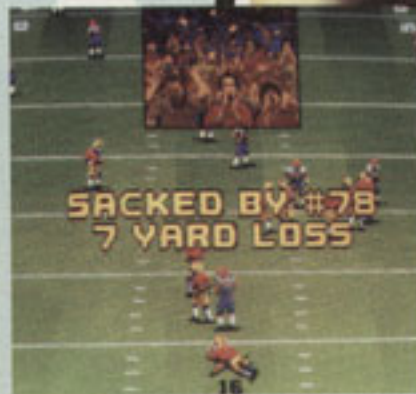
John Madden's Football was the greatest console version of the sport ever; it viewed the action from behind the offensive team and utilized impressive parallax scrolling to bring the action to life. Different plays were selected using a variety of menus and a number of moves could be performed by the player under your control, such as diving, spinning, headbutting or intercepting passes.

This sequel aims to better the original, and with more teams, more modes of play, more options, more plays and more speed, it exactly does that.



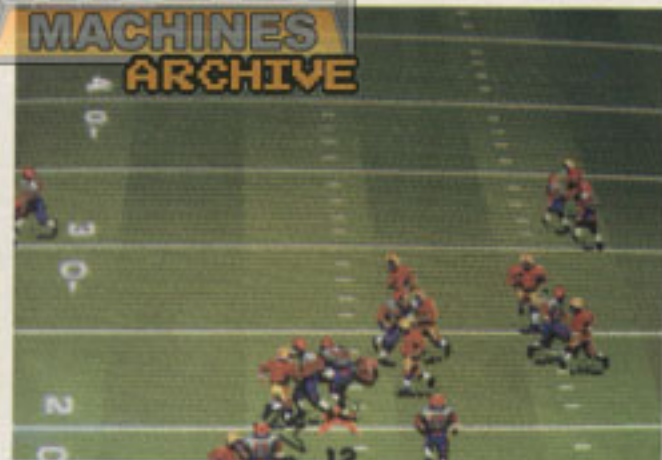
TWO ON ONE

In the original John Madden's Football, if you wanted to play with a friend it was always a straight head-to-head contest. John Madden's '92 retains this option, but also includes the choice to have both players on the same team, with the players controlling a man each and all plays being chosen with one joystick, presumably after both players have agreed on the tactics! This mode increases chances of success and reduces thumps in the face from pals who you've decimated.

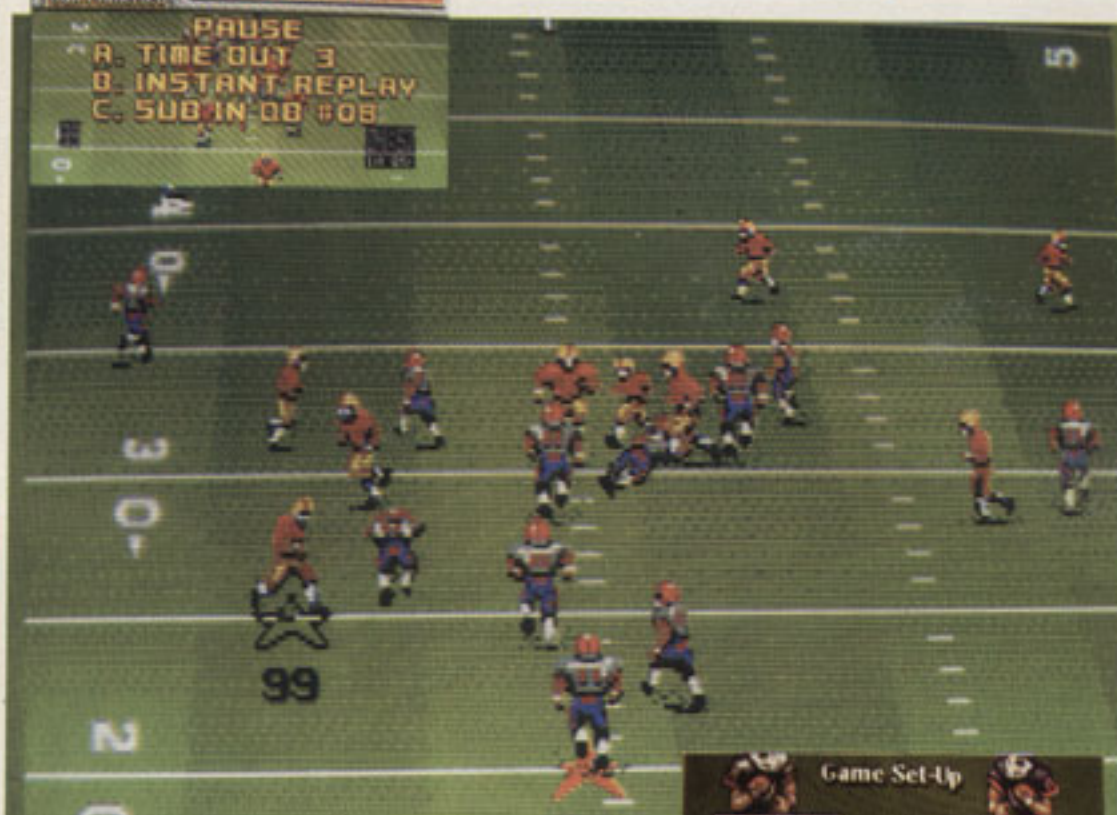


HE STARTED IT NEXT

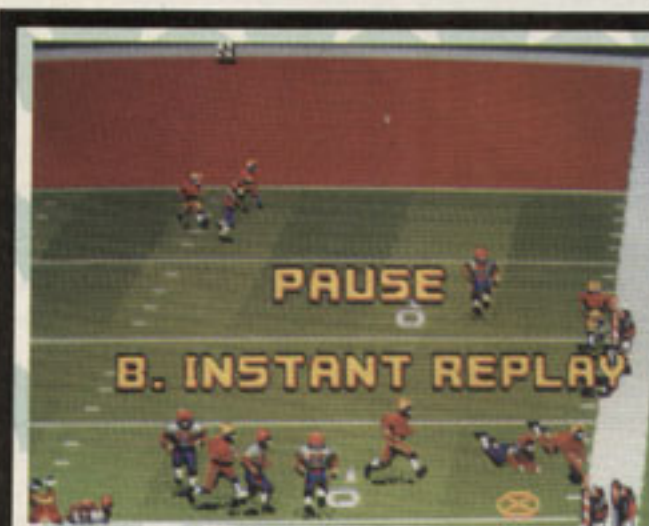
It's always annoying to have your quarterback sacked or be heinously scored against, so it's good to see that now you can fight back. When play is stopped, you remain in control for a few seconds, allowing you to jump on or headbutt any offending players! The corresponding charge of Unsportsmanlike Conduct earns you a five-yard penalty, but it's sure worth it!



▲ It's all-out action in this thrilling game. The player in possession is barging his way through opposing players, and a couple of players are just waiting for him to attempt a massive throw!



▲ The team in possession are attempting a massive throwing play! The quarterback's running back, readying himself for the throw, while his team mates run headlong into the opposing team, keeping them as far away as possible from the quarterback. Some of the players break off ready to receive the ball.



▲ The replay option can be selected at any time!

LET'S SEE THAT AGAIN

If you're a proper Jeremy Beadle who just can't resist watching the juicy moments of each match over and over again, you can put away your video, because John Madden's '92 has a replay option! After pausing the game, you can either select a time out or replay. Accessing replay shows the action starting at the last down. From here, you can watch the fun at normal speed, in slow motion or even in frame-by-frame advance! Then, if you feel like watching it all again, just rewind to the start and off you go!





JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL '92



EAGLE EYES AND GRIPPING HANDS

Players in John Madden's can do pretty much anything which their real life counterparts are capable of. This ranges from faking the snap to diving for a touchdown or to make the ten yards, spinning to avoid tackles, powering out of tackles, punting the ball, jumping to catch the ball or even performing one of eight celebratory dances when a touchdown is scored!

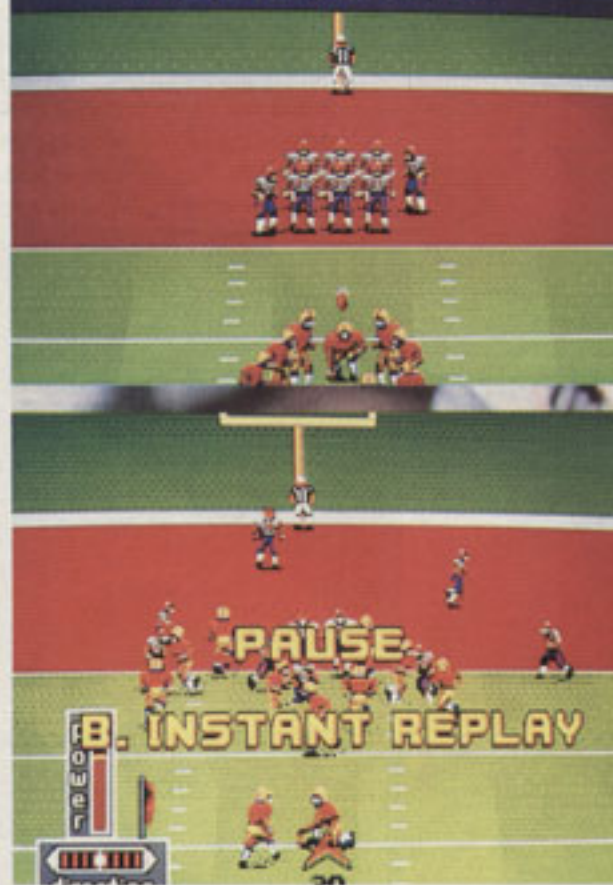
COMMENT

John Madden's Football was probably the best Megadrive game ever. I say "was" because John Madden's '92 is even better! For a start, the difficulty level has been tweaked so the game provides something of a challenge - especially if you play a weak team against a stronger one. There are yet more options and a greater number of plays. As far as the graphics go, the sprites are slightly

RAD

smaller, but they're packed with loads of neat touches, such as the quarterback looking around before the snap, and some fab close-ups of the crowd and team celebrating. The sound has also been improved, with a much better crowd noise. To put it simply, John Madden's '92 is one of the best games to appear on any format recently.

Passing	10	75%
Total	10	75%
Time of Possession	2:36	
0 yard TD pass to #82		



NEE-NAR NEE-NAR

With all the new plays, and, in particular, fouls, it's inevitable that someone is bound to get hurt. Luckily, an ambulance crew are on hand to save the day! When a player is injured, the ambulance tears onto the scene, sirens blazing and whisks the injured party off to hospital. After this, it's a simple matter of choosing a substitute from your lists of reserves and rejoining the game.

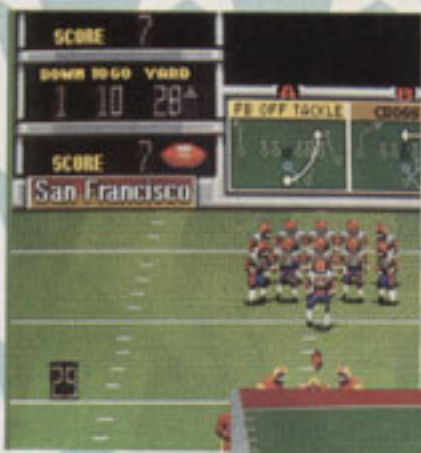


REVIEW



ON TODAY'S MENU

Choosing plays in John Madden is a cinch. The format is the same in either offense or defense. First the player chooses the set, that is, the general style of play he wants to use like passing or wide blocking. Next, the formation is selected, which denotes how the team sets themselves out. Finally, the individual play is chosen, which dictates where the players move to after the snap. There are now 100 plays - all the old ones and some new ones in the form of run and shoot and 3-4 defence.



LEAGUE-ON OF DOOM

There are four ways to play John Madden's '92. There's Pre Season, a friendly game where the going is much easier than in Regular Season, a normal game in which the opposition are far more on their toes. Sudden Death is a tie-breaker match where the first team to score wins the game, and Playoffs is a league set-up leading to the Superbowl!



COMMENT



JULIAN

The greatest ever Megadrive sports game has just got even better! Rather than completely rewrite the game, the programmers at Park Place have kept the basic elements that made John Madden's Football so brilliant, and just tweaked the gameplay and added some new features. Some people might be disappointed by this, but personally I'm not - what's the point of fixing something that's not broken? So what's new? Well, there are twelve additional teams, the menu systems are better to look at, there are new presentation points (such as the digitised crowd scene), much more stats information, instant replays and the chance to choose the weather conditions. But to really appreciate the difference between this and the original, you have to play it. The differences between each team are now far more pronounced (you've got some real crap-artists in there), there are different plays, players can get injured and, if you play dirty, you can also get penalised for unsportsmanlike behaviour! More importantly if you're a single player, the computer opponent is a lot faster, tougher and more aggressive; he takes less time when choosing his move and also learns - try doing the same move more than twice! And there's a new two-player participation mode to go alongside the normal head-to-head option. The big question obviously is, is John Madden's '92 worth buying if you already own the original game? Well, if you still love playing it, but want more challenge and new features, definitely. But if you're not so sure, I'd recommend you give this a good go beforehand, just in case you think it's too similar. If you haven't already got an American football game, John Madden's Football '92 is utterly essential.

SHOCK PRICE NEWS

If you're still not sure whether you want to invest £40 in such a brilliant game, help is at hand. The original, which is still a skill game has plummeted to a mere thirty sovs, so cheapo gamers can still get their mitts on a fab piece of software! But if you want the premium product, you pay the premium price.





BY: EA

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE DATE: TBA

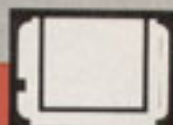
GAME DIFFICULTY: EASY/MEDIUM

LIVES: N/A

CONTINUES: N/A

SKILL LEVELS: 4

RESPONSIVENESS: INCREDIBLE



RUN, SNOWY!

Those of you who loved the different weather conditions of the original will be doubly pleased to see some of the new options. First there's a choice of either a domed or open pitch. Open pitches are at the mercy of the elements, whereas domed ones are able to stave off the ravages of nature. Then there's pitch type: turf or grass. Grass has less traction, especially in snow, but doesn't get so muddy in the rain as turf. Finally, there's the weather itself, rain (causes mud and resulting loss of traction), windy (blows passes and aerial balls off course), fine (totally normal) and snow, which really messes up a game and leaves players sliding hopelessly out of control all over the place.



PRESENTATION 97%

More options than ever before, and outstanding in-game presentation.

GRAPHICS 95%

Fabulously detailed and animated sprites plus great parallax, cut scenes and stills.

SOUND 94%

Brilliant crowd noise, music and realistic effects, as well as plenty of groovy speech.

PLAYABILITY 96%

Even slicker and faster than before. Easy to get to grips with and immediately rewarding.

LASTABILITY 94%

Mountains of teams to play with and against, four different play modes, including playoffs, and a challenging computer opponent.

OVERALL 95%

Better than the original John Madden's Football in every department. What else can be said?

