

# MARS EPISODE I: RACER

BY RAJIV ASHRAFI

would say you to play with Mars Guo at first and then use some other vehicle later on, which would give you better results than playing with Skywalker! Your normal speed would be around 560+mph and if you go to Hyper Boost then the speed will well, you guessed it right, 1000 mph or more than that! PHEW! I picked up a speed of 1045 mph for eight seconds but damn my wings had to heat up and I blew up! The characters in this game are well, not so bad but I would not give it more than 6 points out of 10! The characters feel a bit drab and they don't seem as unique as the movie ones!

### GET OFF THE TRACKS, ALIEN FACE!

That's what I would say if I could control the taunts in the game! The game's graphics engine looks like it has been revamped from the old original Tomb Raider game! The graphics break up in places and well, you won't be able to play the game until you have DX7! Huh, and I thought every game was going into OpenGL (Unreal doesn't but Q3A takes full advantage of it!) The music needs a lot more improvement and well the cut-scenes make up for that! They are taken from the movie (the opening scene) and they are beautifully done! But one thing, I would like to know more about the track I am playing in rather than see a beautifully done cut-scene! They show nearly no information about the tracks! The tracks are done nicely and planned nicely but at the end the tracks seem to be taken from the first ones and modified!

### WHAT DO YOU THINK?

I would give this game 9/10 for solid gameplay but for other things 4/10! But my final verdict is that go get it and play it yourself and listen to yourself whether its good or not!

If you have any gaming problems or want to know about anything then just mail me at ra2k@bigfoot.com!



# Enemy Engaged:

TOP PC GAME

RAH-66 COMANCHE VERSUS KA-52 HOKUM

Rating: 9 out of 10 by GameSpot

Requirements: PII 266 or equivalent, 64 MB RAM, 4X CD-ROM, SVGA, 8MB VRAM, 300 MB disk space, mouse, sound card, DirectX 7.0c

Gameplay: 9 (Even novices can play this sim first go)

The year 2000 is definitely the year of the helicopter simulation. There've already been two combat rotary-wing sims, including Ka-52 Team Alligator and Gunship. But the new Enemy Engaged: RAH-66 Comanche vs. Ka-52 Hokum is by far the best. Enemy Engaged is Razorworks' sequel to its popular 1999 sim Apache/Havoc, and while it bears a strong resemblance to its predecessor, it also stands on its own.

Enemy Engaged is a helicopter sim that puts you in the pilot's seat of either the RAH-66 Comanche or the Ka-52 Hokum. Both are the latest in attack helicopter technology, and Razorworks' game reflects this, as it seems to have the style of a real government simulator. That's because Razorworks has done a remarkable job of detailing and fine-tuning all aspects of the game. From the active radio chatter and the detailed cockpits to the sweeping dynamic campaigns, Enemy Engaged sets a higher standard for how immersive a flight sim can be, while it also avoids getting mired down in the technical minutiae of combat aviation. Enemy Engaged is not a pure hard-core simulation, but this won't matter unless you're a hard-core simulation enthusiast.

Enemy Engaged has actually been out for several months in the UK, so it's probably not surprising that the US release is relatively free of bugs, given how much time there has been to work out the problems since the game's initial launch. This is a fact that the UK release shipped with very few bugs in the first place, and those that did crop up were relatively minor and quickly fixed. However, the US release does fix a few other obscure bugs and adds some new command line parameters.

Enemy Engaged's terrain graphics are similar to those in Apache/Havoc, and while the older game's 3D graphics engine was impressive when it was released in 1999, it's no longer as impressive more than a year later. But it's still good, and manages to look both reasonably attractive and quite fast. Razorworks has improved the look of the graphics to some extent, particularly through the skillful use of lighting effects. The graphics engine also runs smoothly on a modest machine like a Pentium II-450. And if you're using a low-end computer, you can turn down the terrain details and effects to ease the load on your processor. Nevertheless, terrain graphics are not the game's strong suit.

However, the aircraft and vehicle models are another story. They look outstanding, and they are certainly among the best in any simulation to date. The weapon effects are gorgeous, so much

so that it's quite an experience simply to fly around at night and let loose with the chain gun while you watch from an external camera view. The effect of rain beading up on the first-person cockpit view in the darkness is positively eerie, especially when you're creeping up on a ridgeline to pop up on a row of targets. This combination of lighting and sound effects, as well as the detailed unit models, more than makes up for the mediocre terrain. While the graphics in Gunship! were simply flashy, the graphics in Enemy Engaged give you the sense of being in a helicopter in the middle of a war. Which is, presumably, the whole point of a simulation.

simulation.

The flight model in Enemy Engaged is not just that of a generic helicopter, as the US and Russian helos handle very differently and require different flying styles. The Comanche is a good bit more agile, and the distinctive flight experiences offered by these two choppers greatly adds to the value of the sim. Complex dynamics such as vortex ring, blade stall, ground effect, and cross coupling can be turned on or off individually if you prefer not to contend with some of the challenges of realistic flight.

Both the Comanche and the Hokum cockpits are very detailed, although neither one offers a 2D-cockpit option that lets you click on the various controls, as in other sims. Otherwise, the Enemy Engaged commands are very similar to those used in Apache/Havoc, and as the manual states, the transition from one sim to the other should be straightforward. The game's avionics are comprehensive without being overwhelming, yet the difference between these and those found in Ka-52 Team Alligator make it difficult to believe they're supposed to represent the same helicopter.

But Enemy Engaged's greatest feat is likely the way in which it manages to be accessible, without being intimidating or dumbed down, as well as without cutting any corners. It's true that the avionics in Jane's popular Longbow 2 were more detailed and comprehensive than those in Enemy Engaged. However, Enemy Engaged seems so complete and well designed that the specific level of detail likewise seems appropriate and effective. There is so much to do in Enemy Engaged, especially in the multiplayer mode, that even veteran pilots will find a suitable challenge. At the same time, novice flight sim enthusiasts won't feel overwhelmed by a mass of MFDs and HUD symbology. The balance is just about perfect.

The dynamic campaigns - two in the Middle East and one in Taiwan - are everything you can reasonably hope from a flight sim's dynamic campaign. The game's artificial intelligence responds to your incursions and thrusts in what seems like a realistic manner.



# The GraFix Column

By The \$al-Man

## How to Spice Up Your Text

The first thing you need to do is fiddle around randomly. Write some text in Photoshop (render the text layer if you're using photoshop 5, by choosing "Layer->Type->Render Layer", then use the load selection command to select the text). Then have some fun spraying patches of color inside the text with the airbrush. Experiment with the filters - the lighting effects filter with a texture channel chosen can produce good results. If nothing pretty turns up, keep trying. For hours and hours if necessary. Sam and I used to spend all day doing this. Those were the days!

Here're some of my favourite effects (discovered mostly by just messing around):

### Beaten Solder:

Create some white text on a black background. Press D to set the colours to Black and White. Apply the Difference Clouds filter. Then keep pressing CTRL+F to keep applying this filter. Keep going until there's a nice balance of light and dark regions, and hopefully some nice intricate veins too (Picture 1).

Now load the Lighting Effects filter (Picture 2).

Set the texture channel to Red or Green or Blue (doesn't matter which).

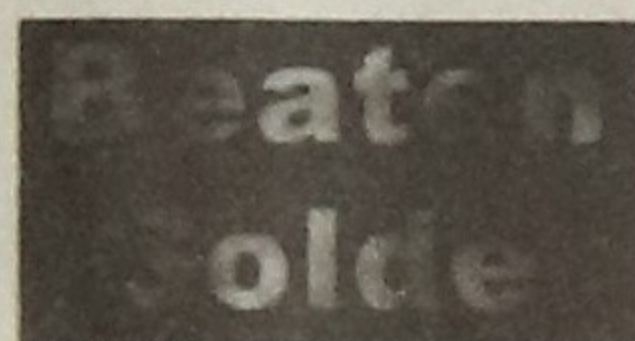
Set Light Type to Spotlight, and set the colour to white (by clicking in the upper collar box, and choosing white).

Make sure that the Height value at the bottom is NOT 0.

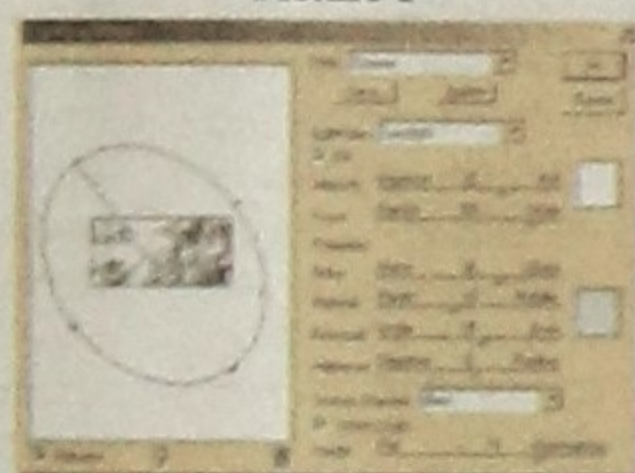
Play around with the other settings, till the preview looks nice and metallic (incidentally, under Properties", setting the Material slider to Metallic may not have the intended results - all that does is control how the material reflects the colour of the light - more metallic means that it reflects the light's colour, while more plastic means that it retains its own colour).

Since this is a useful effect, you might want to click the save button, and give this effect a name, so you can use it again later. The end result could be something like this: (Picture 3)

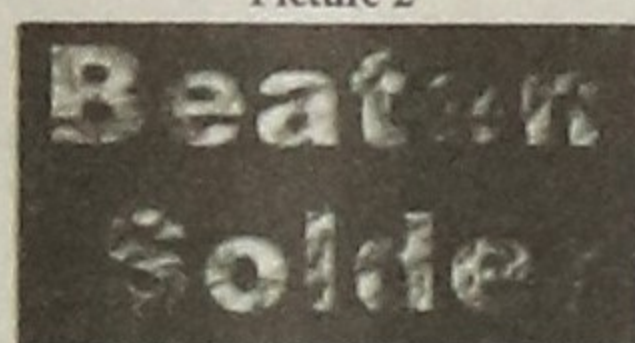
It may not be too legible on this black



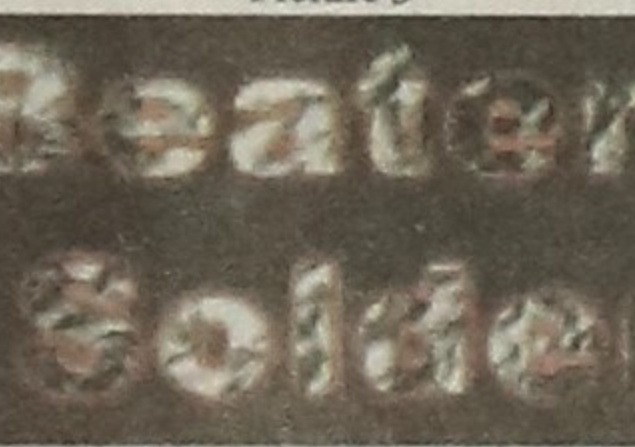
Picture 1



Picture 2



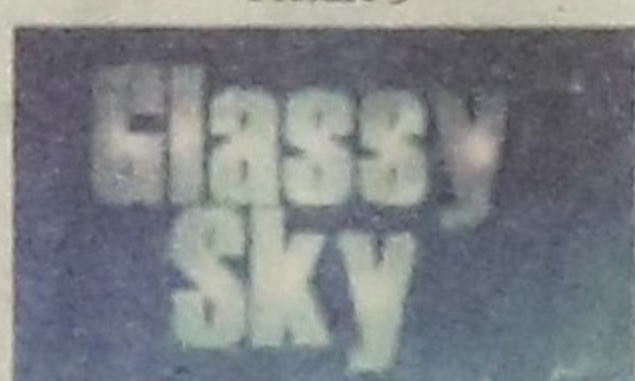
Picture 3



Picture 4



Picture 5



Picture 6



Picture 7



Picture 8

which shows the effect in all its glory (Picture 8). And here's a detail form a more recent variation (Picture 9), with the flares, and with some flames.

background, but you might try adding a glow, or using a different background (Picture 4).

### Glassy Sky:

I've only ever tried this on skies (hence the name), but you can probably pull it off on any backdrop. The basic idea is to put text over some sky, then use the rubber stamp to mix in various parts of the background inside the text. Then you put some lens-flares inside the text, and then use Eye Candy's glass filter to make text look like smooth glass letters refracting the background. Works best with nice big, thick letters, in a rounded font.

Start with some white text on a not-too-confused background (a sky scene, some light foliage, some gentle flames, maybe some wood - nothing too dull - Picture 5). Select the text. Press S to select the stamp tool.

Here's how it works - hold down the ALT key, and click and hold in the portion of background that you want to start filling the

text with. Then, keeping ALT pressed, drag the mouse over to the text, and release the ALT key and mouse button. Click as normal to start cloning in the image from the origin you specified to the text. Use one of the soft brushes.

You may want to play around with the opacity. And you'll probably want to repeat this procedure, cloning from different portions of the background.

Now, with the text still selected, use the lens flare filter to add lens-flares at the centre of each letter in the text. I use the 50-300mm Lens. Try to get the flares near the centre of each letter, and don't make them so big that they fill the entire letter (Picture 6).

Then apply Eye Candy's Glass filter to get it all glassy (Picture 7).

OK, this picture sucks...but that's because I've spent, like, 5 minutes on it, and I'm being bitten by mosquitoes the whole time.

Here's a detail from a pic I did a long time ago, which shows the effect in all its glory (Picture 8). And here's a detail form a more recent variation (Picture 9), with the flares, and with some flames.

## Red Rain Peter Gabriel

[D/C] [Cmaj7] Red [D]rain  
is coming [Cmaj7]down, red [D]rain  
[Cmaj7] Red [D]rain is pouring  
[Cmaj7]down,  
pouring [D]down, all over [Em]me  
I am [Em]standing up at the [D/E]  
water's edge in my [Em]dream  
[Em]I cannot make a [D/E]single sound  
as you [Em]scream  
[Em7] It can't be that [A/E]cold,  
the ground is still [Em]warm to touch  
We [Em]touch, this place is so  
[D/E]quiet,  
sensing that [C]storm  
(c:chorus)  
Well I've seen them buried  
in a sheltered place in this town  
They tell you that this rain can sting,  
and look down  
There is no blood around  
See no sign of pain

No pain, seeing no red at all, see no rain  
(C:chorus) (c:bridge)  
[D/E] [G/E] [Gsus4/E] [G/E]  
[D/C] [G/C] [Gsus4/C] [G/C]  
[D/A] [G/A] [Gsus4/A] [G/A]  
[D/Gb] [G/Gb] [Gsus4/F] [G/F]  
Putting the pressure on much harder now  
To return again and again  
Just let the red rain splash you  
Let the rain fall on your skin  
I come to you defences down  
With the trust of a [Em]child  
(c:chorus)  
And I can't [C]watch any more,  
no [Em]more denial  
It's so [C]hard to lay down in all of this  
(C:chorus - repeat 3 times)  
- I see it - I'm bathing in - I'm begging you,  
Over [D]me in the [Cmaj7]red red [D]sus4]sea  
Over [Cmaj7]me [D]sus4] Over [Em]me Red rain