



Ice Hockey? It's like Football, innit? Well, sort of, except that the action takes place on a rink of frozen water, and instead of a ball, a nice flat, circular puck is used as a substitute. Kicking the puck isn't really on, so players have a large hockey stick with which to set the puck in motion.

Two goals are situated at either end of the rink. One of them is your team's and this must be defended. If the other team get the puck past your goalie then they've scored a goal. It's your job to get that circular puck-like item into the opposition's net. You've got to net more goals than the other team to win.

You change ends at half-time in football, and a similar situation occurs in Hockey. But instead of just having halves, the action is split into three periods, with the teams switching ends at end of each period.

In addition to that over-kill explanation of Hockey for the hard-of-thinking, it's best to remember that Ice Hockey can be just a little bit rough at times...

# ICE HOCKEY

▼ A fist fight breaks out after a nasty foul!



## BEAT THE PUCK OUT OF THEM

The players tend to be rather wound up at times, especially if they're losing 5-0 and the opposing team are using all manner of under-hand tactics! At times like this, fist fights tend to break out. Upper cuts and body blows are available to floor your opponent, but good enough provocation is needed to get a decent fight going. Anything will do, including hitting the puck at high speeds at opposing players. A vicious shoulder charge or high slash is also good enough to cause some aggro.



## COMMENT



**RICH**

EA Ice Hockey is one of those truly classic games that's a unique gaming experience in two-player mode, and even remains exciting when you're up against the computer. I think the biggest hook of this game must be the gratuitous lashings of needless violence. Shoulder charges, overhead slashes and even smacking the puck right into the opposing goalie's face are all

possible in this game! If tension's running high, fist fights break out at regular intervals, and there's an option included to make all this fist-related action and blatant fouls perfectly legal! The control method, and just about every form of pass, shot (or foul!) can be managed with relative ease and the inertia of the players on the ice makes for realistic and exciting play. There's also the essential replay option to look over that classic goal. It's speedier and more violent than any other Megadrive game, and ranks along with John Madden Football as one of the greatest sports sims ever produced!







▲ An overhead slash from red...



◀ ...and the white player's floored!



**OPTIONS ANONYMOUS**

Many different options are available in Ice Hockey that subtly alter the gameplay. The length of each period can be either five, ten, or twenty minutes. Line changes can be turned on or off, but the most useful option must be the ability to turn off some - or all - penalties. For example, you can keep fouling an offense, but do away altogether with off-sides. Best of all though, is turning all penalties off and changing the game into a veritable orgy of violence and excitement!

**TWO-PLAYER PUCKS**

Two-player action is available in a couple of different forms in Ice Hockey. First of all, there's the traditional head-to-head option which enables two players to take control of a team and battle it out. But if you get bored with that, there exists the option to play as team mates, with each player taking control of one member of the same team.



**REPLAY!**

Players will be pleased to hear that there's a replay option, so that goals, fouls, or even fights can be viewed in slow motion - or even frame by frame!



▲ White's down, and the puke's getting lonely!



▲ Another white player gets the puke...



▲ ...and moves into a dangerous position!



# ICE HOCKEY

▼ The Soviets celebrate a classic goal!



## HOME AND AWAY

Audience participation is the name of the game in Ice Hockey. A dangerous foul courtesy of the home team results in massive rounds of applause from the audience, whilst the same dirty play from the away team delivers many boos and hisses from the assembled masses. The audience like a good fight as well, especially if the member from the home team completely wipes out his opponent!



## PUCK OFF

The action starts in the centre of the rink where the players wait for the puck to be delivered into play by the referee. A close-up representation of the ref and the two players is shown in a corner, and a press of the B button makes your man hook out his stick for the puck. Pressing the button at the right time and collecting the puck is all-important as whoever gets the puck has the immediate advantage. This "face-off" situation occurs after penalties, icing, or if the "keeper keeps hold of the puck too long.

## WHO GIVES A PUCK?



There are 22 different teams ready to hit the ice in EA Ice Hockey, ranging from the likes of the United States and the Soviet Union (both brilliant in all aspects) to teams like the United Kingdom or Spain (who cripple along at a snail's pace and can't play Hockey to save their lives). So, novices would be best to choose a team with superior abilities, whilst experienced players would go for a crappier team to really test their skills.



▲ It's a shot! But is the goalie up to much?



▲ The goalie's going to get it in the face...



▲ But no! It's a goal and a classic too!







- ▲ Players gather around to witness some fisticuffs!
- ▲ The filled-in star indicates which player's got the puck. Looks like this guy's going to try for the goal!

## MADDEN PROGRAMMERS STRIKE BACK!



EA Ice Hockey is the second Megadrive game to emerge from Park Place Productions. Their first game was the totally wonderful John Madden football, which scored a mind-boggling 95% in issue three of MEAN MACHINES! Again, Rob Hubbard provides the aural accompaniment in the form of stunningly realistic sound effects and awesome music!

## THE SIN BIN

If the penalty option is switched on, the ref regularly chucks players off the rink. Slashers, hookers, fighters and even fight instigators end up with a special rink-side, where have to sit and cool down for a certain amount of time - usually two minutes. The current office record for the amount of players sent off in one game is held by a Mr Julian Rignall, with a massive six team members cooling off at once in the sin bin!

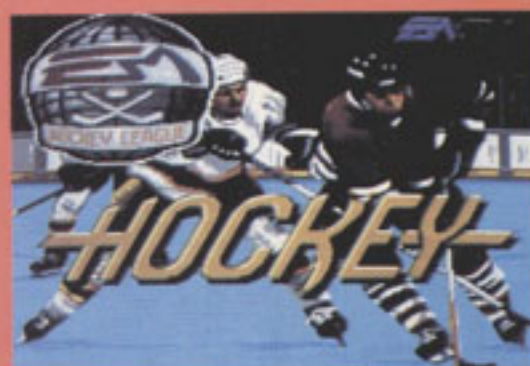


## COMMENT



### JULIAN

What can I say? Programmers Park Place have done it again, and Ice Hockey is to that violent high-speed sport what John Madden's is to American Football. The game is more straightforward than Madden's, with only two basic controls to get used to, so you can get into the action and play the game without even looking at the instructions. But actually getting good at the game takes a lot of practice. The action is fast and furious, and it's packed with subtle and not-very-subtle-at-all touches. You can deliberately trip and charge opposing players (it's great when you splat them up against the wall) and knock them over by smashing the puck into their faces at high speed. Skating with the puck can be turned into an art form, with your player gracefully dodging and weaving through an onslaught of violence. Shooting past the very competent computer-controlled keeper and actually scoring requires skill, precision and great timing. I also love the way the crowd cheer mega violence and boo the away team if they trip your players! The only flaw Ice Hockey has, and it's a similar one to John Madden's, is the fact that if you choose a very good team - for example the Soviet Union - you can beat other computer teams fairly easily. It's more difficult if you choose a rubbish team like Great Britain and play against a tough one. So bear that in mind if you're a single player. Otherwise Ice Hockey is another superlative sports simulation from EA, and ranks as an utterly essential purchase.



BY: EA

PRICE: £39.99

RELEASE DATE: AUGUST

GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM

LIVES: 1

CONTINUES: 0

SKILL LEVELS: 1

RESPONSIVENESS: SUPER-SMOOTH

1-2

PLAYERS



PRESENTATION 93%

Superb! Loads of useful options, great control method and nice presentation screens!

GRAPHICS 94%

Some stunningly detailed sprites and a great, super-smooth eight-way scrolling rink.

SOUND 96%

Mean and moody music and some stunning sampled sound effects which gives this true ice hockey atmosphere!

PLAYABILITY 95%

The inertia on the players is perfect, and the hyper-violent gameplay is immediately addictive...

LASTABILITY 94%

22 teams and a choice of two duel-player modes make this one that'll last just as long as John Madden's.

OVERALL 95%

Another super-slick sports sim from EA. Simply stunning - buy it immediately and get the puck out.

