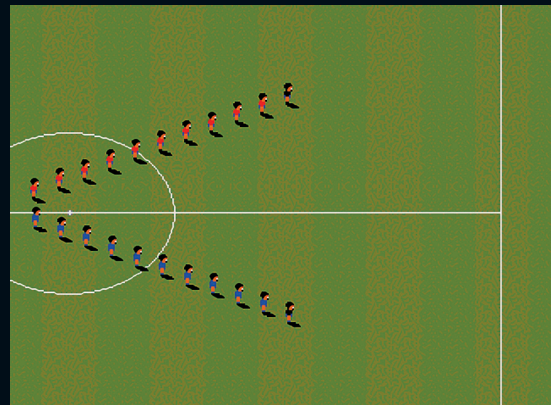
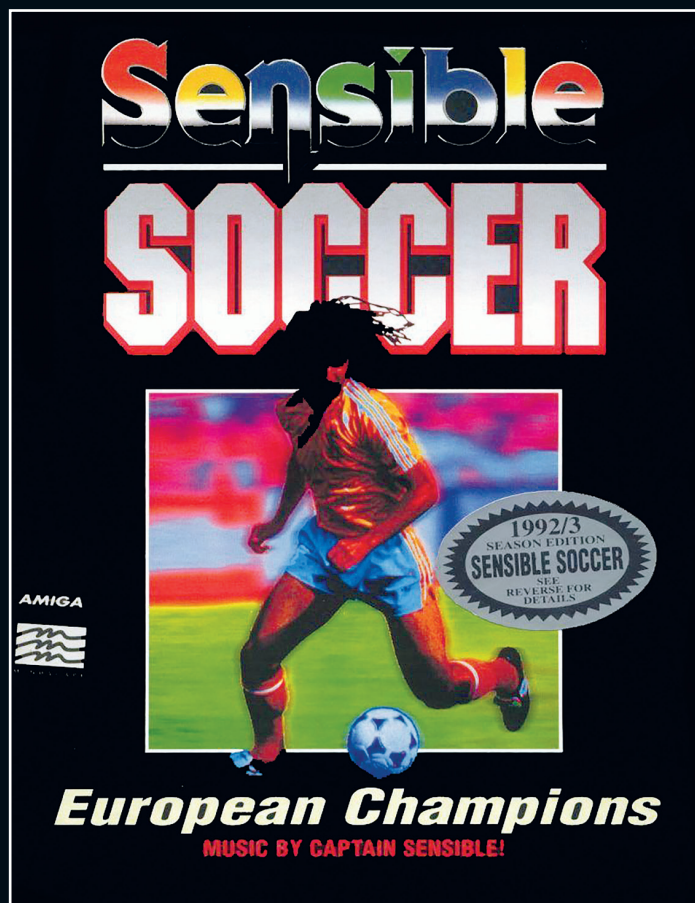


Name : Sensible Soccer
Year : 1992
Publisher : Renegade / Sensible Software



ITALY			UNDO
1	LUCA MARCHEGIANI	G	
12	GIANLUCA PAGLIUCA	G	
6	MARCO LANNA	D	4-4-2
5	A. COSTACURTA	D	5-4-1
13	RICCARDO FERRI	D	4-5-1
2	MORENO MANNINI	D	5-3-2
3	PAOLO MALDINI	D	3-5-2
4	STEFANO ERANIO	M	4-3-3
15	ALESSANDRO BIANCHI	M	ATTACK
14	ALBERIGO EVANI	M	DEFEND
8	ROBERTO DONADONI	M	
11	GIANLUIGI LENTINI	M ★	
7	GIANFRANCO ZOLA	M	
10	ROBERTO BAGGIO	F ★	
9	GIANLUCA VIALI	F ★	
16	PIERLUIGI CASIRAGHI	F	

PLAY GAME		VIEW OPPO	

What can be said about *Sensible Soccer* other than it's the greatest football video game ever created? It doesn't look realistic, doesn't really sound realistic and certainly doesn't have any fancy features like player stats or transfers. But despite these apparent drawbacks it manages to be the only football game that's actually as much fun to play as the real thing.

Programmed by legendary Sensible Software, it was the game that knocked the mighty *Kick Off* series from its lofty perch. Because the tiny little

players are viewed from above you can see a large amount of the pitch at once, which makes it easier to perform long passes, crosses and score outlandish goals. *Sensible Soccer* features real teams and players from around Europe, as well as a load of made up ones, but they can be fully edited to keep them up to date.

One of the best features of *Sensi* is the after-touch feature, which allows the ball to be curved by a small amount after it's been kicked.





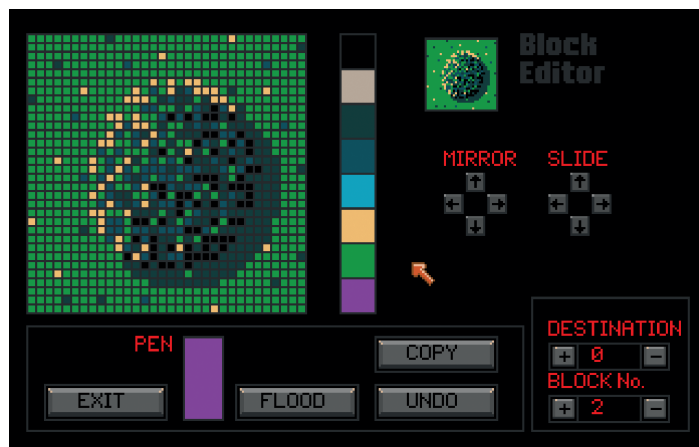
Jon Hare

Although Sensible Software made a name as developers with Commodore 64 classics such as *Wizball*, it was in the era of the Amiga that they achieved greatness with a series of massive hits such as *Sensible Soccer* and *Cannon Fodder*.

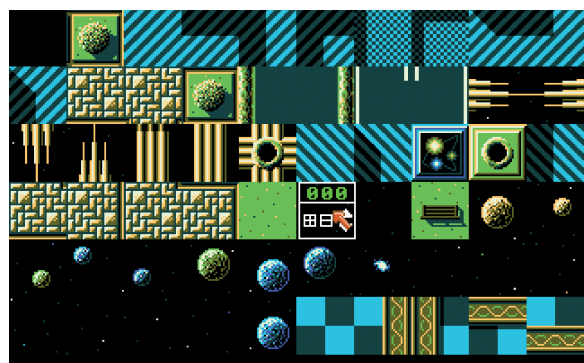
What can I say about this amazing machine that has permanently transformed my life?

Without the Amiga I would probably be doing something very different from still developing games today. Despite the fact that at Sensible Software we had already had a couple of number one games prior to the arrival of the Amiga in our lives we were still nowhere near what you could call rich. We were doing okay, it was 1989 and we were just finishing off *International 3D Tennis* on the Commodore 64, which had thus far been the machine from which our then current success as a cult British developer was starting to shape up.

Shoot 'Em Up Construction Kit, sprite editor **below** and block editor on the **right** (select a block to edit).



A few months previously we had seen two of our games converted out of house onto the Amiga. *Shoot 'Em Up Construction Kit*, which had been our first ever chart topper, published by Palace Software, had been converted by none other than Richard Leinfellner, who went on to become someone quite important at EA. The second, *Insects in Space*, was converted by a team put together by publisher Hewson Consultants. Neither conversion had rocked the world too much and in my opinion neither was as good as the original Commodore 64 versions. So with *International 3D Tennis* we decided to take the conversion in-house and hire someone new for the job; none other than Dave 'Ubik' Korn, in those days a





student at Cambridge University, which was up the road from our office.

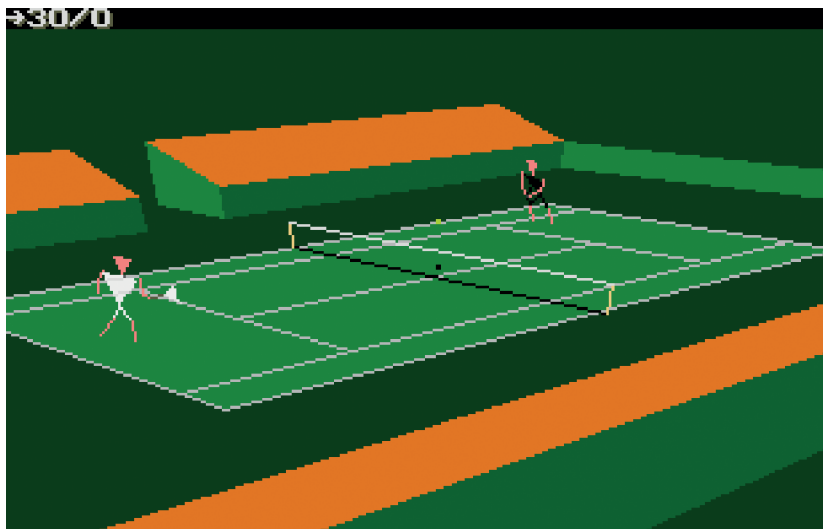
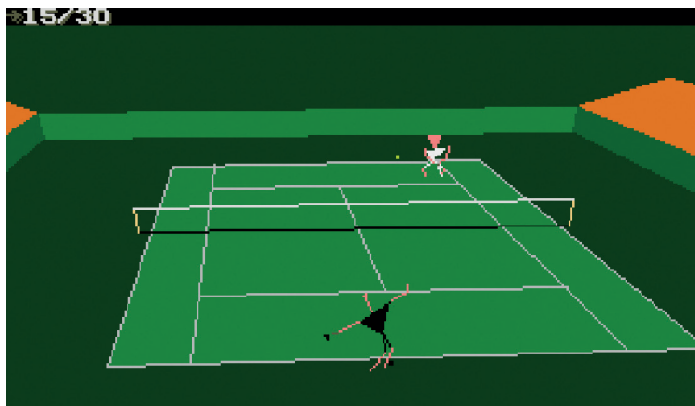
Dave had previously written *Thrust II* on the C64, among other things, within which he had grappled with the unenviable task of making the SID chip sound like his hero Jimi Hendrix. So perhaps the polite applause of the Wimbledon crowd may have seemed like an odd place for this natural born hellraiser to have been applying his talents, but we were very happy with his work and *International 3D Tennis* was the first Amiga game bearing the Sensible name of which we really felt proud.

However Dave was not the first Amiga coder we had signed up, even though his game was first out the door. In fact the Sensible potted history of the Amiga prior to Ubik's arrival went something like this: Play *Defender of the Crown*, play *Shadow of the Beast*, convert *SEUCK*, convert *Insects in Space*, hire Chris Chapman. Chris Chapman was another Cambridge programmer who made non-games applications and

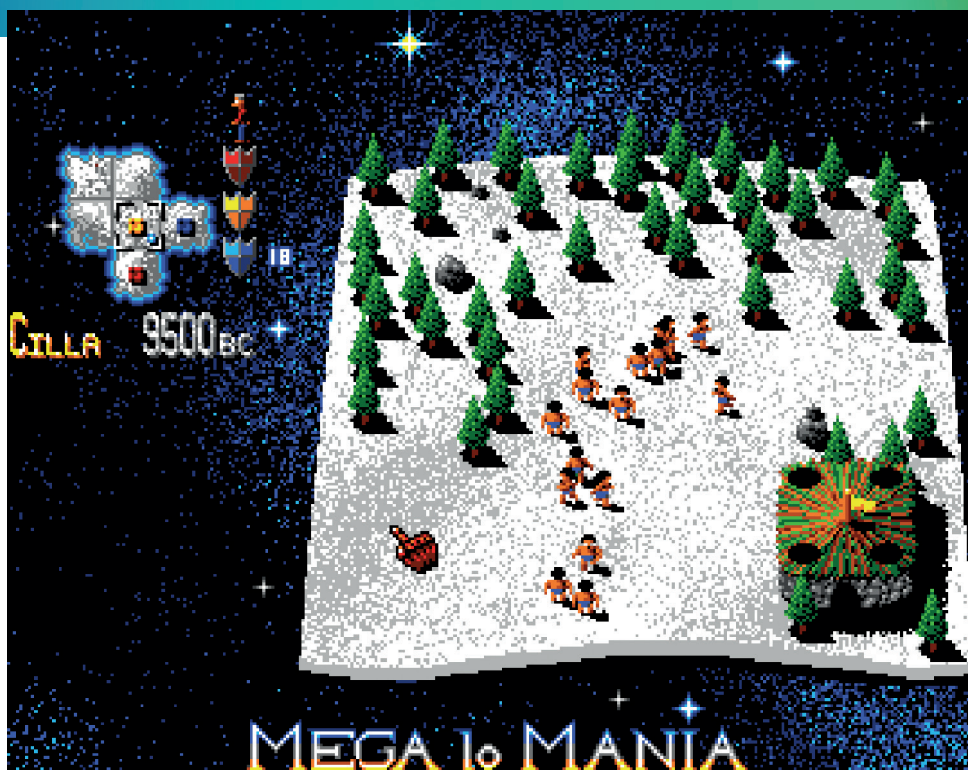
had just finished running a two-man company with a friend. He was looking for some consulting work and we were looking for a competent programmer to join our team and lead the charge on our next game.

At the time Chris joined Sensible Software the company was just three people: myself, art and design; my partner Chris Yates, programming and design; Martin Galway, top C64 games musician and part time programmer for Sensible who was just about to leave for a new life in the United States. Chris Chapman fitted in to the set up instantly

With its multiple viewing angles, *International 3D Tennis* was the first Amiga title completely by Sensible.



Heading for the 'Mother of all Battles', 1991's *Mega lo Mania* established Sensible's small-sprites-and-maps trademark style in their first 16-bit-only game – the premise wasn't all that sensible though.



and it was with him that I started to craft Sensible's first proper, 16-bit only, game on the Amiga...that game was *Mega lo Mania*.

What was amazing about the Amiga was how much it allowed us to do compared to the C64 that we had worked on previously. The graphics alone gave us so much to play with and

“The extra resolution of the Amiga enabled a trademark graphic style with small sprites on map-like backgrounds.”

as the only artist in the company at the time I really enjoyed it, although it did increase the workload somewhat from what I was used to. The memory size meant we could start to plan bigger worlds to include in our games, which had previously been inspired mostly

by emulating arcade machines within the tight memory confines of a C64. Added to this potential was the amazing acquisition, via Palace Software, of musician and sound man Richard Joseph. Everything Martin was to the C64, Richard was to the Amiga – he was a proper sound genius.

For *International 3D Tennis* Richard added BBC-style Wimbledon Music and real tennis commentary in an era when speech in games was almost unknown. For *Mega lo Mania* he stepped up his game further by adding a series of three memorable tunes for the game's intro sequence, menus and in-game music based on *Mars, The Bringer of War* by Gustav Holst, plus the most memorable speech in any Sensible game with gems such as 'Do you want to be on my team' and 'the design is ready' in a variety of voices

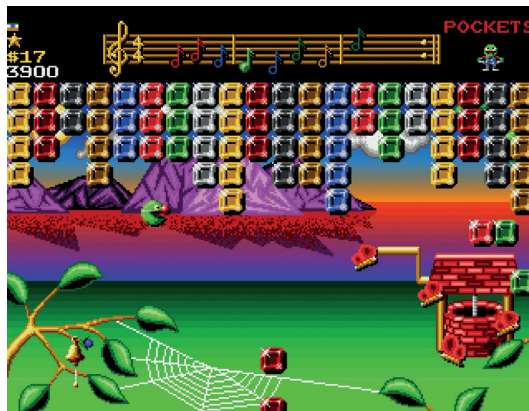


adding real character to the games in a way that was previously impossible to do.

In terms of the gameplay, *Mega lo Mania* morphed from a game about flying spaceships and managing land and space stations into one of the first ever real-time strategy (RTS) games, with the world's first ever tech tree pitting cavemen against WWI pilots and Victorians with muskets against nuclear weapons. The variety of graphical detail needed to show this kind of gameplay was simply not possible on any of the 8-bit home computers.

Meanwhile Chris Yates and I had embarked upon a follow-up to *Wizball*, called *Wizkid* this was a psychedelic mishmash of numerous game styles built loosely around an *Arkanoid* clone and a platform adventure game. Recently voted No.4 Amiga game of all time in yet another online poll, with its crazy style *Wizkid* has been a slow-

burning favourite over the years that was not reflected at the time in Ocean's sales figures. However *Wizkid* was so long in development, due to Chris Yates' numerous other technical roles in all of our other titles, that Chris Chapman and I had time to work on a follow up to another one of our C64 hits: *Microprose Soccer*. This game would go on to be our best-selling game of all time; a perennial chart topper in best-ever Amiga games



Wizkid: The Story of Wizball II, with a riot of colour, made a great follow-up on the Amiga to the Commodore 64's popular *Wizball* for Ocean.



lists... it was of course *Sensible Soccer*.

Chris and I had simply taken the little *Mega lo Mania* men and dressed them up in football kits, let them run around a football pitch drawn in *Mega lo Mania* perspective, added some nice controls, and we had an instant hit on

our hands. We all knew it in our office from the moment *Sensible Soccer* was first played. It was special. Initially released in June 1992, it went on to be converted to numerous platforms and had many versions

on the Amiga, including *Sensible World of Soccer*, the only Amiga game to be inaugurated into the 2006 Stanford University list of the ten most influential games of all time.

The extra resolution of the Amiga enabled us to find a trademark graphic style with small sprites on zoomed out map-like backgrounds, allowing much

more strategic play, and this was also carried through onto our next title.

For *Cannon Fodder* the code and art were by newcomers to our team Julian 'Jools' Jameson and Stoo Cambridge. It was the six-man team of myself, Chris Yates, Chris Chapman, Ubik, Stoo and Jools with the addition of Richard Joseph that would go on to be the classic Sensible Software Amiga team. Between us we produced five No.1 Amiga games and topped the UK charts for an incredible fifty-two weeks between June 1992–May 1995.

Richard Joseph and I worked on a reggae song, 'War Has Never Been So Much Fun', written as the title song for *Cannon Fodder*. It was the first computer game to have a proper sung title, and we also made a silly pop video of the team running around to it which featured on some versions of the game.

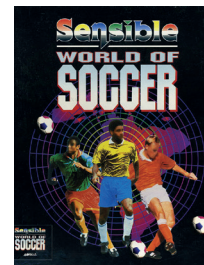
Our run of Amiga games from 1991–1994 went: *Mega lo Mania*, *Sensible Soccer*, *Wizkid*, *Cannon Fodder*, *Sensible World of Soccer*, *Cannon Fodder 2*, *Sensible Golf*. It isn't any wonder we were sad to see the end of this amazing machine. The Amiga cemented our reputations as game makers and it made us a lot of money. But more than that it had been so much fun to work with, in a small committed team, on a totally free platform, with excellent support from many British publishers who all paid us advances during development and increasingly good royalty rates at a time when three new games a day were



Football simulation and strategy games came of age on the Amiga with *Sensible World of Soccer*.


Below: Choosing tactics.





published. That might seem a lot, but in retrospect it was just about perfect and infinitely preferable to a thousand mobile games appearing every day twenty years on. The average quality and innovation of all games was a lot higher in those days and by and large Amiga fans were far more experimental and dare I say 'intelligent' than the masses of console and smartphone gamers who were about to follow.

By 1995, I believe we were the No.1 Amiga developer in the world – certainly in Europe – but all good things must come to an end and we were being offered four times as much money per game to move from the Amiga to new machines like Playstation and PCs with 3D capability. Little were we to know that the two years more we spent staying

focused on the Amiga and 2D graphics would cost us dear when we moved up to the next-generation machines. But I would not swap it for the world. The Amiga is, and will always be, my favourite games machine. It has a place in my heart for ever. 

Cannon Fodder – war's never been so much fun.





Stoo Cambridge

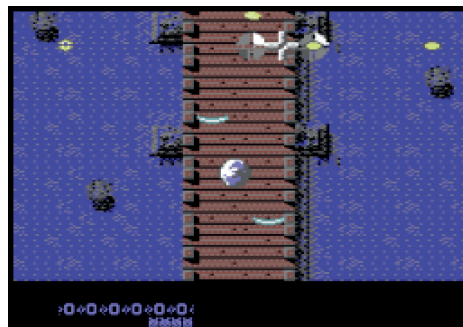
Joining the Sensible camp meant that Stoo produced the graphics for some of the best known and fondly remembered games on the Amiga – namely *Sensible Soccer* and *Cannon Fodder*. A couple of great titles to have on your CV!

The 1980s, what fond memories I have of this amazing decade. To experience first-hand new computer technologies and witness the emerging development of the home computer games industry is something I'll never forget. It's only in recent years I've truly realised how it played such a major part in shaping my life and my career choice.

My first computer was a Commodore VIC-20, a machine my parents bought me to help with my homework (and the occasional bit of gaming). I don't remember using it much for maths but I do remember playing to death the early Llamasoft titles like *Abductor* and *Lazer Zone*; did anyone use them for homework? It wasn't long before I started to learn more about the technical aspects of how these machines worked and 'got into' computers like many of my generation did at that time.

It was Christmas 1985 when I progressed from the basic delights of the VIC-20 to the awesome C128 – what a great present from my parents. With it I taught myself 6502 assembler and it wasn't long before I was writing

sprite and scrolling demos, but it was the decision to hack a *SEUCK* game I'd created, *Battle Ball*, that led me to dip a toe into the industry. To my surprise budget game publisher Power House offered to release it on their £1.99 label – so who was I to argue? The timing of this deal was spot-on, as I didn't have enough money to buy an Amiga, but with the advance on royalties from *Battle Ball* I could finally afford one.



UK stock of the Amiga A1000 was in somewhat short supply so my dad drove me to a computer shop in Huntingdon that still had some; all my Christmases had indeed come at once!

Unfortunately even though I'd signed a deal to get my game published Power House went under before it had even

Battle Ball, a 1988 C64 shoot 'em up against a world defence computer gone crazy – it never made retail when Power House went under. It's available for download from GTW64 (gamesthatwerent.com).

reached the duplicators – I was out in the cold. My foray into the games industry was over before it had begun and with the new 16-bit machines emerging I made the decision to concentrate on the art side of games development. I'd like to say I had this grand plan and it was carefully orchestrated but of course that would be a work of fiction; the truth is far less grandiose. The reality... well there was no plan, I just spent all the time I could learning, using, and experimenting with the Amiga and *Deluxe Paint*.

During the early 16-bit days I strived to create proper arcade quality graphics like those seen in the machines of the time. Being an avid fan of coin-op games I would often visit the arcades along Southend seafront analysing the graphics with a clinical eye, observing what they looked like and analysing how many colours they used. Before the Amiga, achieving anything close to arcade-level graphics was a pipe dream, but I could see with the Amiga's 4096 colours the 'arcade look' could now be represented in the home. So that's what I did and built up a small portfolio of artwork.

I showed my efforts to a few people and it wasn't long before I got my first graphics job working for the publisher Impressions. The first game I worked on, *Renaissance-1*, was a generic collection of four classic arcade games. It was nothing fancy but that didn't really bother me. I was grateful for the opportunity and I always did my best when creating the artwork. Impressions, pleased with what I



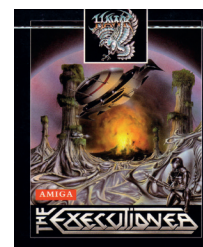
had done, offered me subsequent projects. To quote Kevin Flynn at the start of *Tron: Legacy*, 'I got in!'

During the next couple of years I worked on a few titles of varying genres, but one that stood out to me was a bizarre *Gravitar*-style game called *The Executioner*. I was into HR Giger quite heavily at the time and this can be seen

Renaissance-1 was a mix of arcade gameplay – *Asteroids*-cum-*Space Invaders* – rolled up into one package.

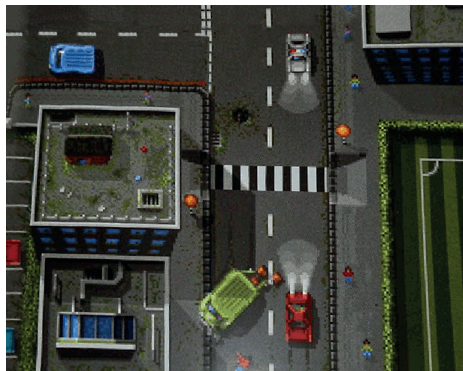
"I saw the job ad from Sensible Software. I can't believe I actually hesitated to send in my application..."

in the look and feel of the game. This was the first project I'd worked on that took many months of development and required lots of artwork – previous titles



Graphics influenced by Swiss artist HR Giger added an uneasy feel to *The Executioner*, which was little more than a simple side-scrolling shoot 'em up.

Based on the Driving Theory slogan 'MSM' (mirror-signal-manoeuve) *Mirror Signal Manslaughter* was never going to be a serious – let alone sensible – game.

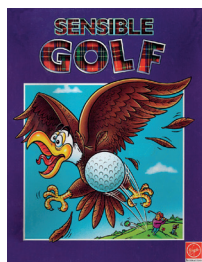


had taken far less time to do. The game looked great but – crazily – we omitted keyboard controls. To this day I can't believe we left that out in favour of a joystick-only control system and it's no wonder that was the main criticism raised in magazine reviews.

The magazines back then were more popular than today and along with the regular monthly publications there were a few that came out weekly. These periodicals often had games-related jobs sections near the back and I kept my eye

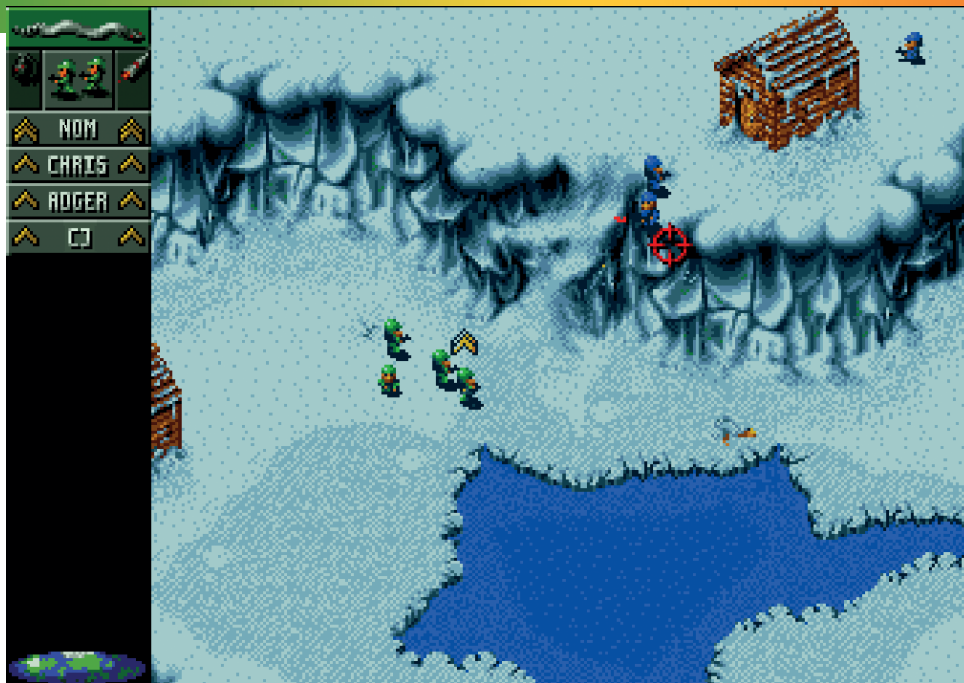
on them. It was in one of the weeklies that I saw the job ad from Sensible Software. I can't believe I actually hesitated to send in my application, but I did. Crazy right? Thankfully I convinced myself that I had nothing to lose, so I put together a portfolio disk and sent it off to Jon [Hare] and Chris [Yates]. What happened thereafter was indeed a life changer! I got in...again!

I hit the ground running and soon settled in, initially working on a few small bits and conceptual pieces like *Sim Brick*,



Sensible Golf never hit the dizzying heights of success as its older *Sensible Soccer* sibling and, as the packaging suggests, this was less a simulation than a fun practice session.





Classic wargame fun... just don't become *Cannon Fodder* and end up as another poppy.

Mirror Signal Manslaughter and *Sensible Startest* before starting on *Cannon Fodder*. I had absolutely no idea the game would achieve such huge success and still be remembered so fondly today.

The graphics for *Cannon Fodder* were mostly done on my Amiga 500, as was pretty much everything else I did at Sensible. I bought an A1200 later for home use and I did the Atari Jaguar version of *Sensible Soccer*, which was awesome because the AGA chipset was lovely – pure digital magic!

In comparison to the PC the Amiga was friendly, powerful and offered a real sense of creative freedom. Even using it for console graphics work was just brilliant. The 256-colour mode was spot on for doing Sega Mega Drive and Super Nintendo graphics. I just wish it had lasted longer and had evolved sooner, for it really was gone too soon.

Looking back I had absolutely no



Would you trust the word of any of these recruiters? The Sensible Software developers, ready to throw you into battle at the drop of a hat. As the mortality counter increments and the casualties pile up, survivors are rewarded with a fast promotion, and only the brave (read: 'lucky') get to the end.



idea a computer like this would change my life so dramatically and leave such fond memories. I guess it had that effect on many people. Long live Amiga! 