



Spyro the Dragon

(By Sony Computer Entertainment America)

By Sly Mo

Price not available

Action/adventure

Available September

1 player



SPYRO THE DRAGON



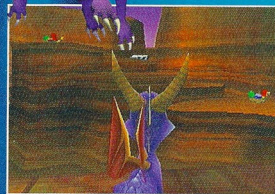
There's a mind-boggling load of great PlayStation CDs out there, so any new game seeking play time needs a little extra magic. Spyro the Dragon's got it. This cool game parlays gorgeous graphics, sweet animation, and great control into topnotch platform-style action/adventure gaming.

pening when you're mesmerized by just moving Spyro around his environment even without the gameplay.

Spyro's repertoire of moves is impressive. He can trot and jump, of course, but he can also traverse long distances by leaping from high places and then gliding through the air sort of like a flying squirrel. On the ground, he becomes a dragon dragster when he busts his supersonic speed dash.



Magic portals lead the way through Spyro's worlds.



Close-up views help you spot objects in the distance and reveal smooth polygonal graphics.

Dragon's Tale

Much like Crash Bandicoot: Warped (see Spotlight on Crash Bandicoot: Warped, "Bam! Boom! Crash!" in this issue), Spyro is all about hunting and gathering. The story's centered around a little

guy named Spyro, who must save his dragon kin from Nasty Gnorc, a real gno-goodnik. Nasty's cast a spell over six dragon worlds, turning dragons into crystal statues and transforming their treasured jewels into Gnorc soldiers.

Yes, you'd best be prepared to hunker down for the long haul: Spyro must explore 30 levels to find 80 dragon statues, defeat the entire Gnorc army to recover each and every jewel, and reclaim 12 stolen eggs.

Magical Moves

Crisp controls and outstanding graphics make playing this game a joy, but you know there's something special hap-



PRO TIP: Whenever you exit and return to a level, the enemies you've vanquished return. Beat them again, and they give up crystals that add up to extra lives, butterflies for Sparks, and, sometimes, 1-ups.

look and feel of an animated movie. Smooth character graphics manage to literally bring Spyro to life: He can practically see his muscles moving with every swish of his tail.

In addition, Spyro's far-out fantasy landscape can be breathtaking. The picturesque background pics create stunningly expansive views of massive worlds. You'll even learn to discern some jewels by the merest twinkle in the faraway distance.

Proof that these visuals and moves are nicely melded together is especially evident if

Moreover, when he has to put it to the Gnorcs, Spyro can dish out the pain. He breathes fire and uses his head as a battering ram—it's only a two-move offense, but it successfully pulverizes all Gnorcs. For protection, Spyro has a wingman, Sparks the dragonfly. Sparks buzzes around the Spy-guy, acting as a sort of living shield.

Graphics That Stick

Excellent graphics and animation provide the game with the



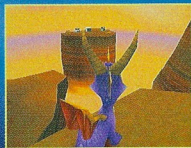
PRO TIP: There's usually a safe range from which you can fry stationary Gnorcs.



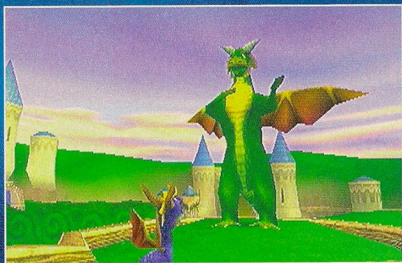
PRO TIP: Gnorc squads usually try to use the little guys to draw you within range of the big guys.



PRO TIP: Dragon fire breaks open chests.



PROTIP: For some long-range glides, you have to take off from precisely the right spot. If you're having trouble, study your launch area for humps or slight extensions.



Spyro must save the dragon world from the clutches of Gnasty Gnorc.

you use the analog joystick on the Dual Shock controller. The stick guides Spyro with precision. You can also swing the gameplay cam completely around Spyro to play from any angle. If you still need a reason to go analog, Spyro is definitely it.



PROTIP: If you fall into water with Sparks, he buys you escape time.



PROTIP: You can launch yourself with a super dash even if you have to go around a corner.

tough jump are all that threaten to stump you. Hardcore gamers will likely bust through the early levels, but with this game, the superb fantasy land beckons you to explore every bit of it.

Dragon of Destiny

The Dragon's got the chops to hang with any action/platform game for any system. Although one could argue that Spyro looks a bit too cute for his own good, this excellently crafted game is a winner. Spyro's special. **A**

Easy Listening

Spyro's nicely crafted audio is laid-back and easy on the ears. The music has a catchy, mellow jazz-rock swing to it. The crystal-clear effects feature cool details like the swoosh when he breathes fire. There's also good detail in the character vocals during the animated cinemas, as each saved dragon has a unique voice.



PROTIP: Some jewels are far away. Find a lookout, press Δ , and scan for twinkles.

No Pain—Just Gain

As you might suspect, Spyro's challenge level is tuned for all ages. Most jewels are out in plain sight, "gnuking" Gnorcs is fairly straightforward, and level bosses are a breeze. Usually a few hard-to-find jewels or a particularly



Graphics

5.0 Impressive graphics and animation make the cutesy Spyro come alive, and the environment looks and feels huge.



Sound

4.5 Nice attention to audio details and the catchy, mellow music match up with the gameplay quite nicely.



Control

5.0 The controls are excellently tuned to the visuals. A topnotch interface lets you track your jewel collection and dragon-saving for each level. This game really makes the Dual Shock controller shine.



Fun Factor

4.0 Plenty of fun for days—as long as you enjoy exploration as well as platform gaming and can hang with Spyro's cuteness. Just moving Spyro around kicks.



PROTIP: As long as you zap critters to feed Sparks, he'll absorb up to three hits for you.



PROTIP: If you face an especially long glide, look for super dash arrows nearby.

Getting Started with Spyro



Here are some tactics to help you guide Spyro through the first three worlds of his huge adventure.

By *Slo Mo*

The Artisans World

Dark Hollow

Belly-bashing Gnorc



This Gnorc's strength is in his stomach, so figure out how to fry his butt.

Gnorc Gangs



Before you can fire on the big guy in this Gnorc Squad, you must first headbutt through the little guys. If you charge too hard, big Gnorc will flatten you with his club.

Stone Hill

Ramming Rams



As soon as you arrive in Stone Hill, be sure to ram the rams. If you don't, they may attack when you're not looking.

Well Done



Although water's deadly to Spyro, you should always check out the wells. This one holds the Key Chest and other surprises.

Jewel Beach



Scan the area from all vantage points. On the railing near the Return Home vortex, you'll discover a hidden vortex, a bejeweled beach, and a hidden Key Cave.

Toasty Boss Level

Sleeping Dogs



The dogs on Toasty's level are fast, and you have to burn them twice. Use a hit-and-roll technique: Throw flames once, press L1 or R1 to roll away from their jump-attack, and then roll back and throw flames a second time.

The Peace Keepers World

Home

Bulls-Eye Tower



Shoot the bulls-eye on the rock tower with the cannon to open a pathway. Push the cannon with Spyro's head to aim it, then fire it with his flame. The cannon also blasts open chained chests.

Land Bridge



Once you open up the pathway, you'll find this rock bridge. One glide-jump away is a jewel cave, but you'll need a key to open the chest.

Boss Toasty



To beat Toasty, torch his dogs first. Try to get them one at a time. Flame Toasty quickly or he'll slice you up with his scythe.

Dry Canyon

Plateau Planing



In Dry Canyon, you have to make one major leap of faith. Find the point on this ledge and jump from there. You'll have to press Δ and release the joystick to stick your landing.

Buzzards



Here's your first encounter with a Buzzard Team. Move in close, wait for the birds to attack, and then blast 'em. After you get the birds, the big Gnorc is finished.

Cliff Town

Jewel Pots



After flaming the big mama Gnorcs, don't hesitate to fire up their kettles.

River Crossing



The glide across the river is huge, but you can make it by pressing \times to jump and glide, and then by pressing \times again at the top of your jump. Be prepared to battle buzzards on the other side.

Rocket Unlocks It



To open the chained chest in this level, look for a sole sky rocket on top of a roof directly opposite the chest. Use your flames to set off the sky rocket.

Ice Cavern

Key Concerns



After rescuing the first dragon, you can reach the key for this level from here. You have to hit your jump just right, however, to glide far enough to reach the plateau.

Getting Started with Spyro



Slippery Footing



You have to headbutt these ice Gnorks before they pound you.

Doctor Shemp Boss Level

Hard-Chargers



The boss, Doctor Shemp, is protected by wild charging Gnorks. Your headbutt will beat them, but they'll try to surprise you by suddenly running around a corner. If you dragon roll to avoid them, they'll run off the cliffs.

Hidden Warp



Just past the first flurry of charging Gnorks is a tower on the edge of the cliff. A warp awaits you just around the corner—but it's guarded by a big mama Gnorc.

Magic Crafters World

Alpine Ridge

"Open," Says Me



You'll have to time the opening and closing of this cave entrance to enter it. Think "one one-thousand, two one-thousand" and then press \times twice to jump and glide.

The Three Towers



These three towers are the most challenging jumps in this level. If you leap from the ledge where you found the Return Home Warp, you'll be able to glide to the first tower.

Operating on the Doctor



To beat Doctor Shemp, you have to grill his butt on three platforms. On the first platform, make him charge you. Jump off, then jump back on and blast him. On the next two platforms, jump over his swing and fire away.



From the first tower, you can see that each tower has a box of fireworks. You have to ignite the fireworks to get the jewels, but the explosion will knock you off the tower.



So, for each box of fireworks, you have to blow fire and then immediately jump to a ledge below you. You must return to the tower to collect the jewels.

High Caves Spiders!



You can't hurt the spiders right now. However, if you run past them at the end of the caves, you'll meet someone who will help you defeat them.

Long-Distance Gliding



The super dash can help you make this extra long leap. Aim for the cave on the right.

Fairy Friends



On this level, the faeries will not let you die if you miss a jump.

Wizards Peak



The small green wizards look harmless—but they're quick with their magic blasts. Press L1 or R1 to dodge their blasts, then quickly press \circ to fry them.

Wizards Party



There are two white Wizard Parties like this one. Their magic is too powerful when they're in a pack, so use the super dash arrows to slam into them and knock 'em down before they can get you. Run down the arrows and press \square .

Long Leap



Look for super dash arrows nearby to help you make this leap.

Blowhard Boss

Long Green Road



To reach the Blowhard you have to battle a road full of green wizards. Press L1 or R1 to roll away from their blasts and then unleash your built-in flamethrower on 'em.

Blowhard



Whenever you encounter the Blowhard, fire on him before he zaps you with lightning.

Wacky Towers



The hardest part of this boss level is negotiating the swaying towers. Time your jumps and don't forget that you can flame the wizards from each tower. After that, you can complete the level by tracking down Blowhard and flaming him again.

Spyro's Saga

If you've gotten this far, you're feeling like a flame-throwing 'Pro...but you're not hot stuff yet! In fact, you're just getting started in this massive adventure! Good luck blazing trails in Spyro's remaining worlds.