



Slicks

● **CodeMasters**
£3.99 cassette
At last, thought PHIL
'GREASY QUIFF' KING, a
Brylcrean computer
game! But before he could
slick back his strands, he
was left in a cloud of
smoke on the starting
grid.

As if I haven't done enough racing this month... No! No! No! I'm not doing it for less than 23 million dollars! What? That Brazilian chap will do it for free? Oh well, all right then...

Let's take a god look at this little motor's spec's. Hmm, looks pretty slick to me: multidirectionally scrolling overhead view, Grand Prix season over six international circuits, practicenode, qualifying laps, two-player racing... ut how does it go?

The solo game is incredibly compulsive. Climbing into yor Benetton car, wait for the red starting lights to turn green, push your pedal to the metal (or ratbr, finger to the fire button) and away you go.

And very nippy your car is too, as you rotate it left/right to get round the smooth-scrolling track. Go too far round a corner and you drift wide — going on the grass slows you down; hit the tyre wall and your car spins off permanently. Th isn't too bad in qualification — you just start the back of the grid — but in a race it means 1 automatic last place.

Part exchange

Doing well in races earns you Championship points, but you'd have a hard job winning anything in your Benetton. This is where the innovative challenge feature comes in. Before a race you can challenge any of the other five drivers. If you then beat that driver (whose car flashes continually) in the race, you swap cars with him.

Beating a higher-powered car takes some doing. Your opponent will have more speed on the straights, so time must be made up with efficient cornering. Excitement is added by the way you can usually bump your opponent on the starting grid, zoom way ahead, with him eventually using superior speed to catch you near the end of the race. You then need to do lots of defensive swerving and barging to stop him getting past.

Sometimes, drivers in worse cars will challenge you. As long as you don't crash, you should be all right — the main nuisance is that they prevent you from challenging anyone else.

Winning the World Championship certainly takes some doing, as our Nige knows, but if you do well one year you start the next with your current car. So even if you've no chance of winning this season, there's always something to keep playing for.

Driving duel

The two-player game is a real bonus, based on the one in Codies' *Micro Machines* on the Nintendo. It's a straight two-car duel with the drivers trying to get far enough ahead to scroll the other car off the screen, *Hot Rod* style. This removes one of the loser's lights and adds it to the winner's. This driving 'tug of war' is great fun, a real yo-yo battle of wills and skills that can go on for ages.

At first sight, *Slicks* looks old hat, but under the

bonnet lurks a demon of a motor. Yes, we've all seen this style of game umpteen times before (as proved in my racing feature) but rarely has it been done quite so slickly (ho ho), with great trackside graphics (boats in the harbour at

Monaco etc) and neat presentation screens.

It's a shame there aren't more circuits to race on, and I reckon the multiloop (for three tracks at a time) could have been avoided. Nevertheless, *Slicks* plays extremely well in both one- and two-player modes. Better value than a used Metro, guv (anyone wanna buy mine?).

Phil! 93%

● **There's little room for overtaking as the cars go round a tight bend, so it's bump-n'-barge time.**





Corky!

● Excuse me while I kick this handy filing cabinet (several seconds of swearing and loud clanging sounds follow). That's better, I've now rid myself of all the aggression caused by playing *Slicks*. I know, I know, I normally love this game type, but there are two things that annoy me immensely here. The first is the narrowness of the tracks; there's barely enough room to swing a metaphorical cat. The second is, why didn't the programmer provide pointers to show where (and when) a bend appears? The tracks are tortuous enough without the player having to possess telepathic powers!

I suppose after a few games you do begin to learn the layouts of the different tracks, although this doesn't completely excuse the oversight. Graphically *Slicks* is competent — colourful backgrounds and small, neatly drawn sprites complement each other. Control of the car is tricky at first, especially considering the handicaps I pointed out earlier. But I reckon *Slicks* is just about worthy of consideration, especially as Phil loves it.

70%

TEST YOUR STRENGTH!



PRESENTATION

Multitask, but practice and two-player options

78%



GRAPHICS

Tiny cars on smooth-scrolling, detailed tracks

85%



SOUND

An okay title tune but with weedy engine effects

68%



HOOKABILITY

Simple racing action which is instantly appealing

85%



LASTABILITY

Championship and duels maintain interest

80%

OVERALL STRIKE 82%

FREEZING! TINGLING! RINGING! SIZZLING!

192 MPI