

● **Kixx, £3.99 cassette**  
**He may appear cuddly, cute and loveable but, with Kixx's newey in hand, MILES 'HOTROD' GUTTERY sets out to prove he's tougher than he looks.**

# ROD

**B**leugh! As well as being too sickeningly sweet for words, Tam and Rit are tiny little fairies in a strange and hostile land. Their poor mom's been kidnapped by an evil demon and imprisoned in the mysterious 'Maboots' tower and the pixie-like pair are her only hope. To help in their quest, a village elder bestows upon them the Rods of Sheesanomo; powerful, mystic artefacts, hidden for centuries, surrounded by folklore and quite painful if you're biffed on the head with one — and that's what Tam and Rit do. Stopping only to take the rainbow shoes from their pop, they make their way to the tower.

On entering the strange construction, the two are confronted by a room consisting of several platforms accessed by ladders. Atop these walkways roam several strange animals. Suddenly, one such creature lunges for the cutesome twosome. Rit ducks out of the way just in time, as Tam brings his rod down heavily on the nastie's head. Stunned for a moment, the evil one is unable to move, so thinking quickly Tam picks

him up with the rod and smashes him against the floor. Once, twice, and on the third bash the poor beastie vanishes out of existence. In his place lies a shiny metal object. At that moment another creature comes lurching towards young Tam who, in his haste to escape, trips over the metal thing. There's a resounding explosion and two more baddies cease to be problem. It's then that our loveable heroes realise another 39 tricky screens stand between them and their beloved mother's freedom.

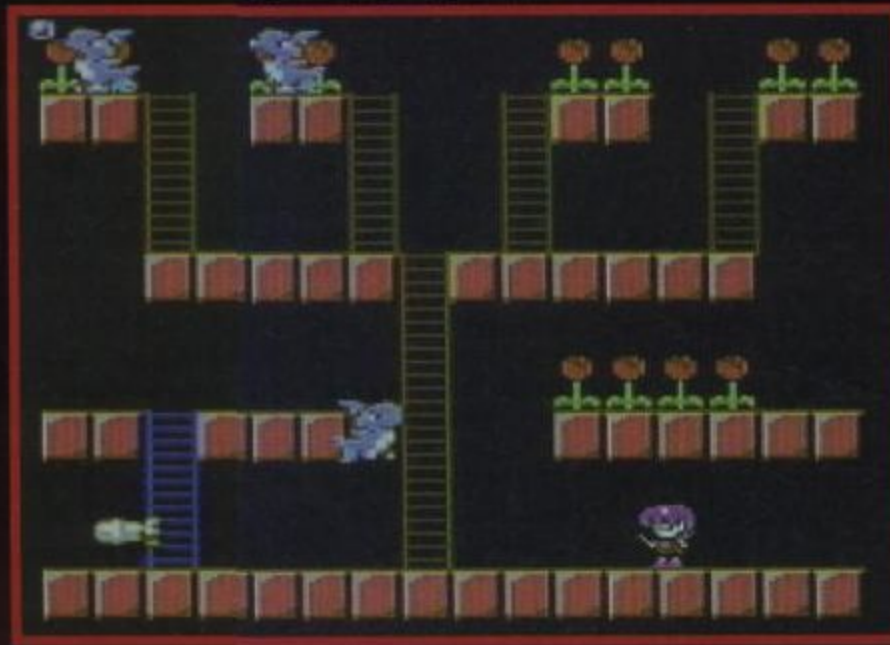
Every eight screens, a big guardian pops up to test the reactions and rodding ability of the fairies to the limit. These include tearful crocodiles, smiley whales, a droopy elephant — all vicious, but so sweet it's a shame to hit them.

In addition to the baddies, each level contains loads of swaying flowers. Collect all of these and you enter the 'extra game' — for a short period, every baddy drops a letter when killed. Collect all the letters to make up the word 'extra' and a rather nice fairy pops up to give you an additional life.

● **Rit and Tam — Kindly faries or sadistic, gore-hungry warriors? You should see what they do to to sharks... ugh!**

**We've got a rod and we're gonna to use it**

Inspired by the classic *Bubble Bobble*, *Rodland* is refreshingly playable and jolly outing, especially with two players. Co-operating to dispose of baddies, then racing hell for leather to get the bonuses first is a delight to behold. Then there's the charming graphics, particularly the main characters; they're



## CHRIS!



● The degree of cuteness packed into *Rodland* is absolutely sickening; fluffy squirrels, rotund elephants, etc. but it's so compulsive to play, you'll risk the chance of splattering your monitor with stomach ejections anyday. Blatting the furry felons and collecting the muchous objects is easy to get to grips with, it's also good to see a two-player mode included, an essential option in games of this type. It's hardly a prime candidate for any lastability trophies, but there's that little something that makes it so inviting, what ever time of day. And at this price, why worry?

**81%**



# REVIEWS!



# ROD-LAND

excellently drawn with flowing hair bouncing as they trot around the screen. Just as good are the natty tunes, perfectly complementing gameplay with merry little melodies jiggling away on the presentation screens.

With such simple and enjoyable gameplay, it's hard to think of many downers to mention. Even the well thought-out multiloop is as painless as a multiloop can be, with each (fairly long) section loading very quickly. With only forty screens I did at first harbour some doubts as to the long term difficulty level, especially after bounding through the first few levels with consummate ease. Later on though, things get a whole lot tougher. New features appear such as teleporters which, when activated, transport the duo to another part of the screen. These are useful for getting out of sticky situations, but you could wind up landing on top of another nasty. Out of the frying pan, into the proverbial toaster as they say.

So it's all perfectly-cute, perfectly-paced action

which any fan of the genre will lap up. I could waffle on saying it's all been seen before, that it's uncannily similar to *Bubble Bobble* etc, but what's the point. Fun's the name of the game and *Rodland* has it coming out of its little ears. Interest is enhanced further by the novel method of baddy extermination — swinging them back and forth over your head is both effective and worth a smile.

Whilst writing this I'm glancing out of the window. It's a glorious day outside, the sun's out, blue sky smiles upon the countryside. Spring's in full swing and *Rodland* is a warm and engaging 'watching cricket on the village green while eating triangular cucumber sandwiches and sipping tea from a china cup' kind of game. Howzat!



**MILES! 89%**



**JAMES!**



It owes more than a little to *Bubble Bobble* design-wise, and its difficulty level is hardly phenomenal, but *Rodland* is just so shamelessly cute you'll have no alternative but to wrap it up in a warm blanket and feed it milk and biscuits. On the other hand, if you want to play it you'll not be disappointed. The platform antics are of a very high standard, and its two player mode is great fun, but there's a massive question mark that hangs over its lastability. For £3.99 it's a bargain and fans of the genre will be thrilled to bits — just bear in mind that as slickly executed as it might be, you'll tire of it before the one-month mark.

**80%**

## GALE WARNING



**PRESENTATION**  
STATIC PICCIES AND UNOBTUSIVE MULTILOAD

**85%**



**GRAPHICS**  
FULL OF JOLLY TUNES WHICH YOU'LL HUM FOR DAYS

**92%**



**SOUND**  
SPARSE AT TIMES BUT GENERALLY GREAT

**62%**



**HOOKABILITY**  
INSTANTLY ACCESSIBLE, INSTANTLY FUN

**94%**



**LASTABILITY**  
SO GOOD YOU'LL KEEP ON COMING BACK

**87%**

**FORCE FACTOR 84%**