



By Trent Drake

This week: Clockwise

We're back, B-buffs! The holidays were a lot shorter than we might have wished, but now that we're back in the swing of things let's get straight to the movie.

Take one super-punctual and ultra-strict headmaster (school principal, to you). Mix in a bad case of mixed directions, add one slightly baked student in her parent's classic car, garnish with monks and enjoy. That's basically how to make a movie like *Clockwise*.

Now, I don't normally review B-grade comedies in this column, because they usually aren't funny. The bad production or mediocre script rob them of even unintentional laughs. But *Clockwise* is different. I can sum up why in two words: John Cleese.

John Cleese is funny. He's the epitome of the stern, cold, deadly serious Brit. What makes him funny is how well he reacts when set adrift in a world that appears to exist just to make him look silly: He stays serious, and gets angry. And this struggle to keep his dignity in the most inane of situations is what makes *Clockwise* work.

Cleese plays Headmaster Stimpson, a man with a passion for time. Every moment of his life is plotted out to the second. He knows each of his students by name, seems almost psychically tuned to catch disobedience, and has absolutely no sense of humour whatsoever. Right from the word go, you know he's in for it.

Stimpson has the most important meeting of his life today. He's going to be sworn in as chairman of an influential group of headmasters. He wants to arrive in Norwich at precisely three o'clock to greet everyone before his speech at five. But despite his uncanny knack for time, he has no sense of direction and when he goes to the station, he gets on the wrong train. Too late, he realizes the train pulling out across the station is his... and he's just missed it. Running like he has a stoat in his drawers, he misses his wife as she pulls away from the station to run errands. Then it's off to the races again, because he's left his all-important speech on the wrong train. And he misses that one too.

After a futile search for A) his wife or B) a cab to Norwich, he fortunately finds C) a very nervous student that he catches skipping classes and who (joy of joys) has a car. Off to Norwich without a hitch, then? Not on your life, mate. There's still a whole obstacle course of delays to overcome, like cows and muddy field and parked police cars and phones that don't work and on and on and on...

Acting (Or Lack Thereof): Cleese is the movie's star, and he's great. As his self-control erodes along with his schedule, he slowly becomes more and more neurotic. He

constantly repeats his speech to try and remember it all, but mutates it into a truly hilarious piece of Python-esque nonsense. The bit characters are not so important and I've forgotten their names anyhow so it doesn't really matter, but you should keep an eye out for the four senile old ladies who keep roaming through the scenery in an incoherent haze.

The Technical Stuff: The one flaw of this movie

is how cheap it looks. It looks more like a 1970's TV movie than a 1986 feature. The colours are faded, the audio occasionally hard to make out and there's no polish to the presentation. It may move with Swiss precision, but it looks like a Mickey Mouse watch.

Stuff To Watch For: Too much to go into here... the plot is so intricate that you can't quote from it without noting everything that came before.

The Bottom Line: Once you get past the cheap look and feel of the movie and get sucked into the clockwork plot, you have a tremendous amount of fun. Besides, it's got John Cleese! This neat little movie is one of the true rarities of cinema: a good B-comedy.

Next Week: Hold on to that big, furry lug as tight as you can, cause we're gonna trip out on anime! *My Neighbour Totoro!* *Black Magic M-66!* *Fire Tripper!* More Japanese cartoons that you shouldn't watch on any form of substance!

Available at: *Off The Wall Video, Richmond Street, across from the Confederation Center.*

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Nintendo and the Next Generation

By Trevor Cuthbertson

Some of you (well, very few of you) might know me from the "Dimension X" show on CIMN every Tuesday night. I was going to submit an article that on my all time Top 7 albums. But since I am a big nut on video games and there's plenty of hype going around about these so called "New Generation" systems, it seems impossible to know which one will be the best of them, and more importantly, the best value for your money. So here's a guide to all the new game systems.

Let's start things off with the *3DO* by Panasonic. *3DO* got off to a very bad start when it was released last year. The system price was very high, and only two games were available. But over time, the system price has dropped (though not by much) and the software library has begun to grow. Now popular titles such as "Doom", "Super Wing Commander", and "Samurai Showdown" are available. But even the reduced system price, \$499.95, is still too steep for my wallet.

Another new contender in the video game market is the *Atari Jaguar*. Finally, Atari is looking ahead instead of recycling long dead 2600 games. The *Jaguar* has good software, like "Tempest 2000" (the system's current hit), "Kasumi Ninja" (a game in the "Mortal Kombat" vein), and the cool-looking "Aliens vs. Predator". Unfortunately, the rest of the *Jaguar* library is pretty mediocre. The current price for the system is \$299.95. It isn't sold anywhere on the Island.

A system that has sort of kept quiet since its release last year is the *CD-*I** by Phillips. While there are game programs available, it's really more of an interactive machine than a video game system (it plays information/educational cds, specially designed movies, regular CDs and so on). Among the games available are "7th Guest", an adaptation of the arcade smash "Mad Dog McCree", and the classic interactive cartoon "Dragon's Lair". But the game library is really pretty small. While the machine is versatile, at a price of \$389.00, it's not for the hard-core gamer.

And then there's the *32X* upgrade for the *Sega Genesis*. This system add-on has potential, especially for those *Genesis* owners who want to upgrade without changing systems. The game line-up sounds impressive: "Virtua Racing Deluxe", "Star Wars", and

"Super Space Harrier". The asking price is \$197.98.

One would think Sega would want to rest on its laurels and let this new system develop. Guess again. Sega's planning on releasing ANOTHER new system called the *Saturn* sometime next year. This system will feature state-of-the-art technology and home version of "Virtua Fighter" and "Daytona Racing". Will Sega abandon the *32X* for the *Saturn*? Wait and see!

And there are more new contenders on

the way! Nintendo is getting ready for their new system, the *Ultra-64*, which we won't see until fall of next year. This system is rumoured to be fast and powerful, but we'll have to wait to see if the games live up to the technology (though "Killer Instinct" looks pretty cool). Sony will soon unveil their own system, the *Playstation*. This system doesn't look too bad (it doesn't have the technical hype that the *Ultra-64* or the *Saturn* have). It does have a very promising line of titles planned, but again,

Another scenario sees a whole ton of neat new games being released... for every system except the one you bought. You end up out several hundred dollars for a useless system and you look like a fool.

we'll just have to wait. One game really looking forward to is "Toshiden".

Anyway, at the moment your best bet is to keep playing your *Sega Genesis* or *Super Nintendo*. Right now it's too early to tell who'll come out on top. Yes, there is a good chance one or two of these systems could quickly corner the market (remember how quickly the *Turbographx-16* bit the dust once Sega snatched up all the lucrative third party developers?), but you'll be happier if you wait until these systems become established and have larger libraries. Then you can go down to your local video store and rent whatever game you want. Also, look for the system you that is best for you. Does it have your favourite titles? Can you afford to switch to a new system? Be very careful. The system you buy in haste today for \$500 might drop to \$250 within months. Another scenario sees a whole ton of neat new games being released... for every system except the one you bought. You end up out several hundred dollars for a useless system and you look like a fool.

I'm not saying these new systems aren't worth a good look, but you shouldn't commit to any of them just yet. Just wait a year, maybe two, until we know who the winners are. Right now there's a lot of smoke on the "New Generation" battlefield. Wait until the smoke clears to make your move.