

**Centaur Gallops Into x86 Market** . . . . . 1  
 IDT's C6, designed by its Centaur subsidiary, is a scalar x86 processor that matches the Winstone 97 performance of a 200-MHz Pentium/MMX, according to the company. At just 88 mm<sup>2</sup>, it is smaller than any other Pentium-class processor; we expect the C6 to sell for between \$80 and \$160, about half of Intel's prices, when the chip reaches volume production in 3Q97.

**Editorial: Exit Strategies for RISC Desktops** . . . . . 3  
 Although they won't admit it, Apple and the RISC workstation vendors are all positioning themselves to succeed in a world where Intel chips have taken over the final vestiges of the desktop RISC market.

**Most Significant Bits** . . . . . 4  
 Exponential decays, bipolar flames out; Pentium/MMX reaches 133, 233 MHz; PA-8200 takes second place; Sega developing SH-4 system; National to enter Pentium-compatible market; MSP dies, Mfast reborn, Equator rises; Cyrix loses Sound Blaster suit; Lucent to ARM its DSPs.

**Cyrix 6x86MX Outperforms AMD K6** . . . . . 12  
 The 6x86MX, formerly known as the M2, adds MMX and a much larger cache to the previous 6x86. The new chip outruns the fastest Pentium/MMX and K6 chips on Winstone 97, yet sells for about half the price of Intel's chips. A PR300 version is planned for early 1998.

**3D Chips Break Megatriangle Barrier** . . . . . 16  
 Just in time for this fall's PCs, several vendors rolled out 3D graphics chips that can deliver at least 1M polygons/s. ATI's Rage Pro delivers the best score on 3D WinBench, but we expect Number Nine's T2R to do best on CAD applications, albeit at a high price. The only one of the bunch to forgo an on-chip setup engine, S3's Virge/GX2 is likely to lag in performance.

**NEC V830 Adds Speed, New Instructions** . . . . . 22  
 NEC continues to extend its V800 family as a low-cost complement to its high-speed MIPS line. The V830 parts use a new core that breaks binary compatibility with older V800 parts in order to add arithmetic and multimedia instructions.

**Digital, Cyrix Lawsuits Pressure Intel** . . . . . 26  
 With its patent-infringement lawsuit, Cyrix is seeking a cross license that would allow it more flexibility to choose foundries. The motives for Digital's suit are unclear. Both companies have a good chance of ultimately gaining an Intel patent license, but a large financial settlement is unlikely.

**The Slater Perspective: x86 Positioning May Disappoint** . . . . . 32  
 The latest x86 processors are similar in performance on integer PC applications, but users of FP or MMX applications may be disappointed in the performance of the non-Intel CPUs.

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