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The #1 PC Game Magazine




playing

G.O.D.

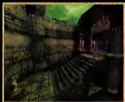
MAX PAYNE, HEAVY METAL: F.A.K.K.², KISS: PSYCHO CIRCUS

+ 501 CHEATS

SNEAKs: ULTIMA ASCENSION • GABRIEL KNIGHT 3 • DIPLOMACY

A dramatic sunset or sunrise over a dark sea, with a knight in armor in the foreground. The sky is filled with dark, heavy clouds, with a bright orange and red glow from the sun just below the horizon. The foreground shows the intricate details of a knight's armor, including a helmet and a sword, in a dark, shadowy environment.

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IT IS TAKEN.



Koubae hits the afterburner to
cheese down Prool as he tries to escape.



Multipayer Tip #1

Don't deplete your afterburners
cruising around. You'll need
them when someone locks on a
homer, or when you're trying
to catch that guy in front of
you. Keep it at 50% or more for
that burst when you REALLY
need it.

With his Gunboys positioned and ready to attack,
Sol Flare lures Maestro into his deadly trap.



Big Kid receives a warm welcome
to the world of D3 anarchy

While Spooler burrs, Soma switches to Zeus to
finish him off. Napalm, the gits that kept on going.



A favorite camper-hunting spot.
Sick One catches one off-guard with a homer.



Multipayer Tip #2

Use napalm to herd players into
traps. Players have a tendency to
back off from napalm bursts (with
good reason). Herd them into a
wall or corner and launch a frag
missile into the wall next to them.
The result is quick death for your
opponent.

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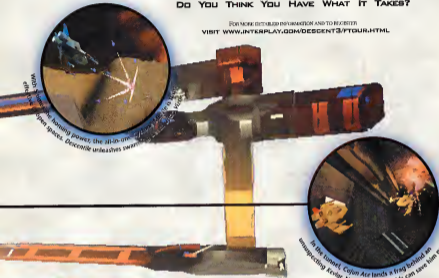
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Use the homing power, the all-in-one...
unleashes swarms...
to the...
to the...
to the...

In the tunnel, Cajon Ace lands a frag behind an unsuspecting Xavior. Not even full shields can save him now.



Multiplayer Tip #3

Use Vauss as much as possible in outdoor battles so you can keep a good distance from your opponent. Use Napalm Indoors whenever possible and use super lasers against opponents in small tunnels since the lasers are harder to avoid.



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Beechcraft King Air 200*



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There's nowhere in this world you can't go. Real-time moveable sectional charts and interactive vector maps allow accurate navigation across 16,000 nav aids in 200 countries, including over 13,000 runways at 8,500 airports.



The aircraft you are about to fly is fully operational. The game features accurate cockpits and avionics, all in the correct proportions and layout of the original aircraft. Every gauge, switch, and knob in the cockpit is ready for interaction, thanks to the most meticulously detailed cockpit in date, with multiple interactive interior views.

It's the most realistic general aviation flight simulator ever created for the PC. Integrated flight planner and aircraft load out allows visual planning of cross-country flights and user-defined fuel, passenger, and cargo loads.



- Everything from mountain peaks to sea level is accurately represented. The Global Digital Elevation Model (DEM) recreates elevations throughout the world.

- Internet-ready support allows for text and live chat communications with up to 7 other pilots.

- FLY! Now allows you to pilot your aircraft in a variety of pre-configured conditions and scenarios.



- See New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, and Dallas/Fort Worth in high-detail satellite imagery and stunning 3D models of key buildings and landmarks.

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- Available for the Mac and PC.

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Romulan Bird-of-Prey
(BoB)

4 Phaser Ia
2 Plasma Gs
2 Tractors
1 Transporter
Size Class: 4



Using data from the best-selling strategy board game, *Star Fleet Battles*, *Starfleet Command* puts you in the captain's chair for the most amazing real-time space combat experience ever created.

Dozens of multi-functional display panels offer instant access to every critical system. Weapons, Shields, Sensors, Transporters, Marines, Mines, Engineering, Science, and Energy Management.

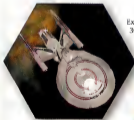


Federation
Heavy Cruiser (HCA)

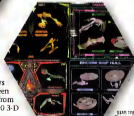
4 Plasma Torpedoes
2 Phaser Ia
2 Tractors
3 Transporter
Size Class: 3



Experience a 30 year campaign that takes you from Lieutenant Commander of a Frigate to a Rear Admiral in control of a task force including Destroyers, Heavy Cruisers, and Dreadnoughts.



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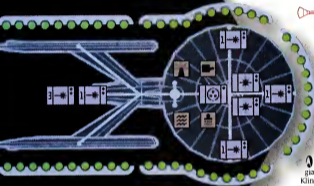
All shots are actual gameplay screens.

VARIANT

avy Cruiser - Variant: 2

te introduced into service: 8722.4

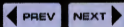
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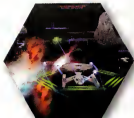
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24

01 5100	06 5100
07 001100	07 001100
08 0000	08 0000
09 01000	09 01000



01 5100	06 5100	11 0000
07 001100	07 001100	12 0000
08 0000	08 0000	13 0000
09 01000	09 01000	14 0000



Command over 50 unique campaign missions generated by the Dynaverse engine, or reenact classic scenarios from the original series.



Klingon Conquest Cruiser (K-407C)
4 Disruptors
3 Phaser 1s
6 Phaser 2s
3 Tractors
8 Transport
Size Class: 3

Federation



Klingon



Romulan



Lyrán



Hydran

1 Pledge allegiance to the Klingon Empire, the United Federation of Planets, the Romulan Star Empire, the Hydran Kingdoms, or the Lyrán Star Empire.

2 Multiple tutorials and technicals will introduce the controls necessary for you to take command.

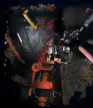
3 Numerous multi-player options include 'Pass the Tibble' and cooperative Starbase Assault with up to 6 players. Or go head-to-head via modem or serial cable.

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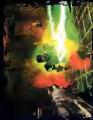
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501 CHEATS

COVER STORY

If you type a special code into STARCRAFT, it will give you access to the pre-release copy of ORC SQUAD LEADER 3000, but the code won't work until January of 2001...okay, enough of that tired joke. We've scoured and struggled with our favorite games for hundreds of hours (only for research purposes, of course) to give you the best in codes, cheats, and hacks. Use them, enjoy them, live them. And if you aren't disciplined enough to back up your data before trying these cheats, don't blame us.

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ALL OF G.O.D.'S CREATIONS



MAX PAYNE



HEAVY METAL: F.A.K.K.²



KISS: PSYCHO CIRCUS



RUNE

WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED

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The Gathering of Developers, with titles like MAX PAYNE, HEAVY METAL F.A.K.K.², and KISS: PSYCHO CIRCUS in development, can hardly be called choir boys. Who are these guys, and why do they think they're out to save gaming?

Ultima Ascension

We accepted Lord British's offer to see the latest changes Origin had made to the controversial final chapter of its role-playing epic. Check out Editor-in-Chief George Jones' in-depth, hands-on update. 60

Gabriel Knight 3

We've always claimed that Johnny Wilson has both BLOOD OF THE SACRED and BLOOD OF THE DAMNED, so who would be more appropriate to dissect Jane Jensen's latest take on the supernatural? 62

Warhammer 40,000: Rites of War

Look out! Warhammer meets PANZER GENERAL, and strategywar gaming will likely never be the same again. 65

Diplomacy

For more than 40 years, the fine art of deal-making and back-stabbing has been refined over worlds comprised of paper maps and online sites like CompuServe. Can Hasbro's new DIPLOMACY deliver on the PC? 68



Ultima Ascension

Metal Fatigue

Control not just one shiny new butt-locking giant robot, but several, with intricate missions to boot. 75

High Heat Baseball

Can Team .366 recapture the magic of leader Trip Hawkins' original Earl Weaver? 77

Seven Kingdoms II

In this latest update, we find that the deepest of real-time strategy games gets even deeper—and surprise!—it's prettier as well. 81

The Operational Art of War II

Bigger, with a tougher AI and even more ways to realistically blow up the world. What more could a serious wargamer ask for? 83



Gabriel Knight 3

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GAMER'S EDGE

SimCity 3000

Our guide to urban planning will keep you on budget and atop the polls



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Myth II

Tricks, tips, and detailed battle plans to bring out the most dastardly effects of your favorite warhats and zombies



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**Close Combat III:
The Russian Front**

Stuck on the Volga with nowhere to go? Don't end up like Peulink's Sixth Army—read this article!



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CG Tips is on vacation due to our comprehensive SDL Cheats feature. Look for CG Tips to return next month.

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JOHNNY WILSON

The Real Half-Life

In Memoriam—Allen “Doc” Greenberg

I just threw away my editorial, my pompous words about the future of online gaming and how we stand on the brink of the next wave of multiplayer gaming. It’s a good editorial and it needs to be published, but I just doesn’t hold up against the story I must write. This is the story of a real deathmatch, the story of a man who died too soon. He was a friend, a colleague, a fellow editor, a father, and a gamer in chronological years; this CGW editor lived only about half of a life’s expected duration. In important matters, his mark is longer.

He should have died under mysterious circumstances, like a hero in one of those adventure games he loved to play. He should have left behind a trail of puzzles, like the ones in the classics he continually challenged. He should have died with a wicked smile on his face as he shodded us with his Gilbert Gottfried impression of a cantankerous East Coast nerd. He should have left us peacefully with a gentle smile on his face as he nodded approvingly at the son and daughter of whom he was so proud.

Instead, he died after living large. He died as the kind of mensch he admired in those short stories and novelettes by his favorite author, Harlan Ellison. He was a victim of his own rare blood-type and his inability to recuperate fully after a series of organ transplants. He fought on to the end, hoping to make some sense of the suffering through which he was struggling.

And all the way through the period of savage nights and days of physical weakness, he played games. Even while the medication and physical weakness played games with his head, he kept on writing. He no longer tortured his editor-in-chief with lead paragraphs so bizarre and strange that it was

unclear whether we had a genius with a strange sense of humor or a demented schizophrenic on our staff. His contributions started to get smaller and less regular, but he kept playing and he kept writing right up until the end.

This is a story about heroism. Please indulge me. I first came in contact with Allen Greenberg (or



regularly Allen’s favorite author) happened to be the great author of speculative fiction, Harlan Ellison, and he not only knew that Harlan and I had once colored the atmospheres of our respective offices in blue storm clouds of unrestrained verbiage, but he was also aware that Harlan had taken some potshots at me on the Science Fiction Channel. (Yes, I’m the editor of the so-called Video Wahoo Magazine about which Harlan railed in a couple of interviews.) When I asked the question, Doc trembled all over and exhaled quickly, “God help me, it’s Harlan Ellison.” I laughed the hardest I ever have in a job interview. I happen to admire Harlan, as well. I told Doc that this was grounds for hiring.

He died as the kind of mensch he admired in those short stories by Harlan Ellison.

“Doc,” as he was known to us) after he started writing for *The Electronic Gamer*, one of the original e-zines on CompuServe. I contacted him about writing for *Computer Gaming World*, and he jumped at the chance to review computer games for us. He soon proved his mettle at writing about adventure games and puzzle games. Doc was enthusiastic and always gave us a laugh or two as we edited his material. He wrote for both the print magazine and the first CGW online publication, our long-time publication on the Prodigy service. So, when there came a time that we needed an editor for our Prodigy publication, we decided to hire him.

Even then, though, Doc was worried. You see, the guys told him that I always ask prospective employees about the books they have read, their favorite authors, and the magazines that they read

Yet, there was a problem: Doc had been diagnosed with diabetes and had left his lucrative dental practice to work in a clinic. His skills had declined because his vision was getting worse and his partners no longer wanted him. He was able to help quite a few people in the clinic, but he knew that he wouldn’t last for long. *Computer Gaming World* became his new reason for living. He moved to California and had a great couple of years before the disease began to have an impact on his work.

Even though he was weak, he continued to edit our Prodigy publication until its demise. Doc was our first telecommuting editor during that period, and his work kept him going for a long time. Yet, his life was now a series of dialysis treatments and his trips into the office became more and more difficult. The adventure game puzzles that he once solved with ease



came painfully slower and slower to him as he waited for more than two years for the much-needed organ match. In the course of getting to the office, he would often fall on the streets of San Francisco, pick himself up, and keep on going (if no one called for an ambulance—an occurrence that happened more than once). He never gave up. Finally, the transplant took place. Finally, it looked like Allen’s nightmare was over.

He returned to us with clear mind and new focus on work. He

was still weak, but his writing kept getting better and he was making the comeback for which we’d been praying.

Then, his body rebelled. He experienced a severe relapse. He left us suddenly. No more cynical shouts startling us in the office. No more incredible joy as he solved the latest puzzle. No more dry wit. Doc completed his adventure. He solved the last puzzle.

His cubicle in the office doesn’t look like the violence-torn setting for some angry Harlan Ellison story. It doesn’t look like the old sanitarium in *THE BLACKSTONE CHRONICLES*. But it looks pretty creepy without my friend and colleague. I wanted to see him win the transplant game. I wanted to see him get the best ending possible. I hope, for his sake, he did. Allen “Doc” Greenberg died in March of 1999. Shalom, Allen, Shalom. **CGW**

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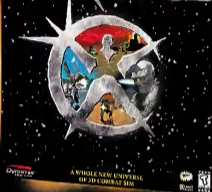
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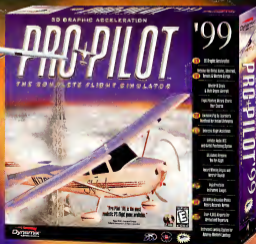
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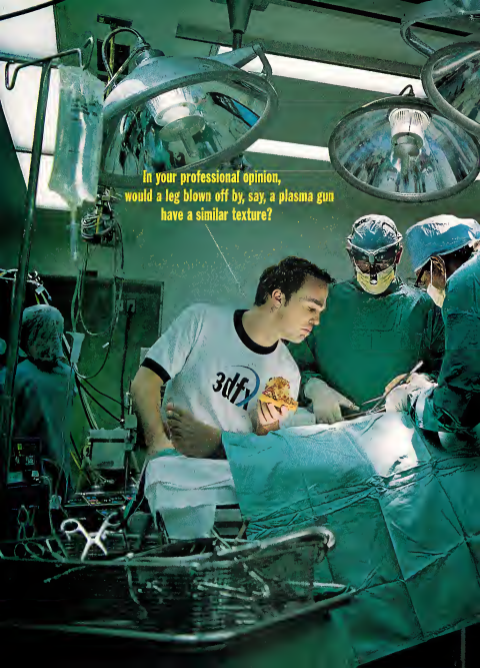
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DEMYN ATKIN

Buy Get a Life

Spending Big Bucks—Real Ones—for Hot ULTIMA ONLINE Real Estate

An odd phenomenon struck online auction house eBay (www.ebay.com) this past March: People began selling virtual castles and imaginary characters. eBay has always had an amazing selection of items, from cheesy collectibles to used Ferraris. It can be an addictive online experience (this editor has spent an embarrassing amount of time and money on eBay filling out the Green Lantern comics collection he could never afford as a kid), so it's only appropriate that it would become a venue for trafficking in ULTIMA ONLINE accounts.

It all started when eBay user Turbokaw (in real life, Steve, a 30-year-old firefighter) decided to sell his copy of ULTIMA ONLINE, complete with five characters and over half a million gold pieces. The account ended up selling for a whopping \$521. Word got around, and within a week there were over 80 accounts for sale, many with bids over \$500. At press time, one account had sold for \$2,050, while another had reached \$3,000 after 57 bids—and with six days to go until auction close!

The questions are obvious: Why would someone sell an account they'd spent thousands of hours developing? More important, what is it about this gaming experience that could cause dozens of players to drop hundreds—or even thousands—of dollars on a powerful account? To find out, I interviewed a number of UO veterans who were selling their accounts as well as wannabe castle lords who had bid \$250 or more for these accounts.

Unreal Estate

For many, the appeal of buying UO accounts is one of solving a problem that Californians will empathize with: lack of real estate.

Shadow (in real life Richard, a 39-year-old controls design engineer) explains: "What it does for you is allow you access to items that might take you a very long time to acquire on your own much sooner than it normally would. Real estate in UO is pretty much set now. There are very few places that you can actually place a small house, let



will be traveling a lot soon, and we thought it would be neat if he could play with me while he was away. I decided to first bid on one as a birthday present for him," says Jocelyn, 20, a college student in Dallas. In addition, buying an already powerful character for him means she'll be able to more safely build her own character's abilities.

Selling Out

So why sell an account? Reasons vary. Not enough time to play, frustration with game lag, and moving on to other games are some of the typical rationales. Harlan, a 22-year-old college student, sold his and his fiancée's accounts so they could move on to EVERQUEST. "My fiancée and I are selling our

ONLINE between August and March. "Many days I would put in 15-plus hours just killing stuff, making stuff, etcetera. I found myself many times up to 6 a.m. or all night and not even knowing it."

Brian saw the eBay trend starting and decided it would be a perfect opportunity for a self-intervention. "Since my time playing UO I have seen my grades go from As to Cs, to the point where I did not want to do anything but play UO. I found myself laying in bed at night thinking about what I could be doing on UO right now. This continued during school, work, driving, everything. Even dates I would cut short to get home to play UO. I got a cable modem just for UO. I saw this getting out of

It's only appropriate that eBay would become a venue for trafficking in ULTIMA ONLINE accounts.

alone something huge. Therefore the only way to obtain such a place is to buy it in a game, through various Web sites or through eBay."

Others are looking for characters. They find it tedious to perform the activities necessary to build strong enough characters and they see buying an account as a way around this. When asked whether taking over another person's character spoils the role-playing aspect of UO, Scott, 28, a systems administrator, explains, "I have my own character that I developed and spend most of my time playing. I was looking for support characters for that character. UO doesn't allow for good role playing because you have to spend way too much time doing mundane things to gain the wealth required for you to do any kind of adventuring."

Believe it or not, even romance can be a factor. "Well, my fiancé

accounts as a group deal," Harlan says, adding, "We have kept our long distance relationship alive via role playing on UO."

While many account buyers have been primarily interested in property, Harlan and his fiancée hope to see their characters live on. "So far the emphasis has been on how much gold and what equipment are available," Harlan reports. "Our sale is more about the mood we have created with our house and characters. Yes, our characters are good, but more than that, they have a history and a legacy. They are known in their shard as lovers and travelers. We are selling the characters' reputations as well as their statistics."

Sometimes, selling the account is a way to gain both money and time to spend in real life. Brian, 21, a student and part-time Best Buy computer technician, had put about 2,000 hours into ULTIMA

hand, so I had to cut my addiction off. I have since then started playing more quick games like STARGATE: TRIBES and others."

UO publisher Origin is cool about this whole trend; in fact, the company is planning to modify its user agreement to make such sales "legal" in the game license.

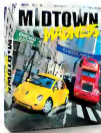
"We know items are sold and traded, but we did not think characters would hold such a high monetary value," says Origin's David Swofford. "The in-game economy in ULTIMA ONLINE has always been healthy and dynamic. It's only natural that eventually it would be mirrored in the real world like this."

With thousands of dollars changing hands weekly on eBay for virtual castles and characters, it's not hard to picture a near future in which companies join in and sell the games cheap but offer weapons, potions, and keeps as extra-cost options. **CGW**



0-60 (off a skyscraper)? Yes.

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If it's behind the scenes stories of game development that you want, visit the features section on GameSpot.

Wing Commander

The movie is probably already on video, but you can hear how Chris Roberts justified this "experiment" and read a retrospective of the entire *Wing Commander* series.

Simply Divine

We get the inside story on the rise, fall, and rise again of Maxis Software. Found out how an idea about city planning became one of the best-selling games of all time. Then, learn what Maxis has planned for the future.

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Find out how 3dfx rose from relative obscurity to become the dominant 3D chip-maker. But how long is it going to enjoy a position at the top? We explore the history of this 3D company.

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If you want to find out what games are coming out when, check out our release calendar. Not only does it list more than 200 games and their respective ship dates, but also includes game description and links to all demos, previews, and news on those games. We update it several times a month, so you always get the most current information.

Demos

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ON THE CG-ROM

Play Heroes III and Eight Other Hot Demos!

HEROES OF MIGHT AND MAGIC III

PRODUCT/GENRE: Turn-based fantasy adventure	EXECUTABLE: heroes3setup.exe	DESCRIPTION: Play 20 turns in one sample level
---	--	--



In this demo, you get to play 20 turns of the latest game in the Might and Magic series. Gameplay centres around exploring with your heroes, recruiting new forces, managing resources, building up towns, doing battle with other heroes, and expanding your territory. Improvements from Heroes II include enhanced graphics, tens of new units, upgrades for all units, and lots of new spells and heroes. In the demo level, you are placed in a world with a good selection of towns, resources, wandering monsters, treasure, and enemy heroes to familiarize yourself with the game system.



Video Clips

Planescape Torment
Darkstone
Max Payne
Glands

Toolbox

Myth II Tactics
Alpha Centauri Strategy Guide

Additional June CD Titles

MACHINES

PRODUCT/GENRE: First/third-person action game
EXECUTABLE: \machines\setup.exe
Play three single-player missions and one multiplayer mission of futuristic warfare.



HIGH HEAT

PRODUCT/GENRE: Baseball
EXECUTABLE: \hg2k_demo\setup.exe
Play three innings with either New York or San Diego.



DEER HUNTER 2

PRODUCT/GENRE: Hunting Game
EXECUTABLE: \hunter2\dehunter2demo.exe
Easy sample hunting ground to find yourself some venison.



ROLLCAGE

PRODUCT/GENRE: Arcade racer
EXECUTABLE: \rollcage\setup.exe
Drive two cars on one track in this wild and crazy racing game.



THE AXE

PRODUCT/GENRE: Interactive music game
EXECUTABLE: \demo\axe\install.exe
Claymation characters take solos with three different instruments.



SEVEN KINGDOMS III

PRODUCT/GENRE: Real time strategy game
EXECUTABLE: \sevenkingdoms\www.exe
Has interactive multimedia presentation describing Seven Kingdoms III including a video trailer.



VITRUAL DEEP SEA FISHING

PRODUCT/GENRE: Deep sea fishing sim.
EXECUTABLE: \vds_fishing\install.exe
The demo has a fishing trip off the coast in San Diego with a 10 minute playing limit.



REQUIEM

PRODUCT/GENRE: First-person 3D action shooter.
EXECUTABLE: \requiem\reqdemo.exe
Battle one boss and her demon spawn in this one chamber speak track.



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VAMPIRE BITES BACK

I loved the cover on the April issue. I just opened up my May issue to find people bitching to all hell about it. Get a life people! It's a freakin' picture of a vampire! Sorry if some of us don't get off looking at pictures of chairs and rolling nice green lawns on our magazines. Go read *Better Homes and Gardens* or some crap if you don't like CGW. And CGW, keep putting out more and more awesome covers!

Alan K

We'd like to thank all those who wrote in support of the April cover. When the issue came out, most of the feedback was negative, so most of the May issue letters reflected that. Since then huzzahs have outnumbered hurmups about 3 to 1. It has been the most controversial cover ever, and we thought we'd print a few more opinions here before closing on the issue.

I just read the Letters section in May's issue. Screw all the prudes, wussies, and whiners that didn't appreciate the fine example of a female vampire that graced April's cover! Keep up the good work, CGW.

From a 33-year-old male who gets a mahogany whenever Cleopatra's emissary visits him in GvII.

Grant Berdan

What was all the fuss about? You see a lot worse on TV, at the movies, at the mall, at the beach, etc. You would have to stay in a room with no TV, never go out, or blindfold yourself not to see this kind of thing.

Anyway, keep doing what you do best and that's put out a great magazine. You don't have to worry about me ever canceling my subscription, unless you start covering country music or give sewing tips.

Doug Anderson

So much for the Garth Brooks Cross-Street Strategy Tips Special.

I thought that the Vampire cover was inappropriate. The cover should be representative of what the other 200 or so pages of the magazine contain. The people who are looking for video game content are now saddled with a magazine that, while the content is appropriate for many age groups, and environments, the cover is not. You do not do your readers a service by putting them in this situation.

Ryan Sparrow

The April cover model, Angel Carter,

had a great makeup job. However, shouldn't the fang marks have been vertical, not horizontal? I don't think it's possible for someone to get bitten on the neck at the angle portrayed on the cover.

Gary Bremer, Jr.
U.S. Navy

We've learned that to shoot a vampire you must get the model for at least 3 hours, watch where the makeup artist puts the bite marks, and make sure her bustier fits.

I fit your target demographics (34, white, professional male), and I am sick of seeing women used as marketing devices. If CGW wants to use sex to sell, that is your right and the consumers will then vote with their dollars (you might be on the winning end). But don't take your argument for doing such to some false intellectual plane. It is pure "boobs, sex, violence = sales (money), and we want ours" marketing plain and simple.

Scott Morgan

I'm appalled at the rash of letters concerning your April cover. What's the big deal? Anytime I want to see worse than that, all I have to do is watch an episode of *Melrose Place*. Clearly we as a nation either have way too much time on our hands, or are just too friggin' repressed. Perhaps it's a combination of both.

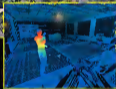
Mike Bean

I think your April cover was very spontaneous and completely appropriate

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for your readers. Please don't let a few angry parents intimidate you or your staff and stop you from doing what you think is best. Parents are not the only ones reading your magazine, and younger readers such as myself should be heard also. I hope you won't be intimidated or pressured into changing the way you select your covers.

Zark Ilayev

I can understand how some people would get upset when they saw the April cover, but I saw something in the May issue that put it into perspective: an ad on page 135 for the ATI Rage Fury shows two eyes in a bag. Now if I was a parent, that would send a chill up my spine and make me wonder about the current state of humanity, not some beautiful woman dressed as a vampire.

To all of those who wrote to complain about the April issue: It was one issue out of 12 this year. It's gone now. Get on with your lives.

Jason Allen

The April CGW cover was disturbing. The makeup and the blood on the model was unsettling. I didn't like it, my kids (including a teenager) didn't like it, and my wife hated it. I ended up tearing the cover off the issue and tossing it. That was a first—for any magazine in the house.

Mike Carabon

I cannot believe the outrage over your April cover. Every one of those letters referred to the size of that woman's breasts. What the heck does that have to do with anything? It sounds like they are saying, "I don't mind my child swearing or being exposed to simulated killing in PC games, but PLEASE, OH, PLEASE don't let them see part of a woman's breast, especially if they are big."

What a bunch of hypocrites! You're all doing a fine job; please keep it up!

Randy Millard

MAC MAKES A COMEBACK

I am writing in response to Johnny Wilson's Editorial in the April issue ("Old Mac Is Back"). I'm glad that someone in the

PC world has something nice to say about the Mac. Last April I converted to the Macintosh after using a PC for more than 10 years. I have to say it is by far the best computer I have ever used. The only problem is that good games are sometimes hard to find. I solved that problem by sticking OrangeMicros' high end PC card in my Mac, so basically I have two computers in one box. Helps save desk space. It works great and plays all the latest games great. As for the iMac, this is not a gaming computer. To get a good gaming computer you have to get one of the desktop or mini-tower G3 models. I have been a subscriber to your magazine for a long time, and I will continue to do so, as you always have great coverage of upcoming games, whether PC or Mac.

Kevin Kelly

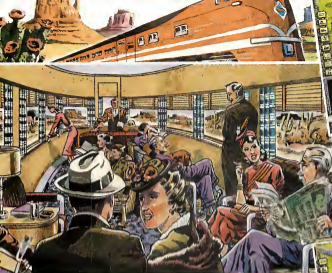
I am an avid reader of CGW and a Mac user. Obviously I don't read CGW for the in-depth Macintosh product reviews or all the snide remarks that sneak in where ever possible (though I do find them amusing). I read CGW because where else is a Mac guy going to get the dope on all the great new titles that might someday make it to his computer?

I just purchased my April edition, flipped through the first few pages and there it was! An almost fair article on Apple and how it is finally getting its act together! Who would have thought I'd see such an article in the "PC or die" game mag of them all. The article was very fair, though it's obvious that you still don't get it, but it is a start. Then to top it all off you went and listed the Mac system requirements for Morrow II! Keep it up and you might end up with a few thousand new subscribers.

Matt Masby

The Mac is indeed a viable gaming platform again (the iMacs are hot sellers, and the new G3s are solid gaming systems (see our review on page 132)). The only problem remains a lack of titles. Apple needs to get their butt in gear (and this time they're really going after the gaming market). We hope they put their money where their mouth is and help developers convert more new games to the Mac.





All about in war-torn Europe? In WWII, the great responsibility of securing supplies and transporting troops for the Allies is yours. The war years rely on the services of the iron steed. Be a patriot and do your part!



CHECK OUT THE LIMITED EDITION RAILROAD TYCOON II TRAIN SET. www.atharion.com/RET2

EXPANSION PACK FOR THE 1998 STRATEGY GAME OF THE YEAR.

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The Second Century.

Next stop, woman, and child who enjoyed the pleasures of an afternoon well spent with the smash PC hit Railroad Tycoon II has anticipated the arrival of this ultra modern expansion pack. Eighteen all-new campaign scenarios divided into three distinct historical eras are sure to delight today's modern PC gamer. **SEE THE RAILS BACK IN TIME!**

In the passage from 1939 through 1950, top along the way to do your part for the war effort. Deliver troops and supplies to the besieged Allied front. Rebuild the British rail system after its destruction in the Blitz. Protect Mother Russia from the advancing Germans. Only a foolproof rail system can spell victory for the Allies! **TOOEN TIMES REQUIRE PROGRESSIVE THINKING!**

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melting ice caps wreak new havoc for the modern railroad tycoon. The United States is a watery wasteland. The Mediterranean is an empty basin with a Mussoling Eden. Antarctica is a promising agricultural center. The heady task of providing rail systems for this strange and exotic new world falls upon your shoulders. No doubt only the most ingenious solutions will do. **ONE OF THE WONDERS OF THE WORLD?**

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www.godgames.com



www.poptop.com

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COMMAND & CONQUER TIBERIAN SUN

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CHAMPION
IS BACK."

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www.westwood.com



Go to #252 @ www.computergaming.com/info/tsk

ORIGINAL COMMAND & CONQUER

"IN 1982, HE TERRIFIED A GENERATION OF ARCADE
PLAYERS AND BECAME A 'CULT' FIGURE."



www.thq.com



www.midway.com



SUMMER '99

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HE'S BACK.

RUN, COWARD, RUN.

16

FROSTLESS

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SECOND COMING.
PREPARE YOURSELF
FOR THE THIRD.

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THE BEST KILLS ARE
NOT ALWAYS ONLINE

The excitement of the Deathmatch is no longer the exclusive realm of the online games. Thanks to Q3A's revolutionary artificial intelligence, the joys of predictable bots are just a memory. The game's characters react like experienced pros, and when you get gibbed, you may even hear your teammates in crying grief. Single player deathmatch is every bit as exciting, giving a ragged victory to every bit of hardware. You may not think twice about strapping your back to your computer.



ENERGY



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ACTIVISION

www.activision.com

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Go to #146 @ www.computer gaming.com/infoink

A

ND ON THE 7TH DAY, THEY RESTED...

Interplay

BY GAMERS. FOR GAMERS.™ SINCE 1983.

PAUL DOUGLAS

- Confounding Factor
- Last game - Tomb Raider
- Next project - Galcon

TOBY GARD

- Confounding Factor
- Last game - Tomb Raider
- Next project - Galcon

GREG ZESCHUK

- BioWare Corp
- Hi Title - Baldur's Gate
- Next project - MDK 2

FEARGUS URQUHART

- Black Isle Studios
- Latest release - Fallout 2
- Next role - Planescape Torment

RAY MUZYKA

- BioWare Corp
- Hi Title - Baldur's Gate
- Next project - MDK 2

ALAN PAVLISH

- Sarban
- Legacy - Wasteland
- Next Tadrus release - Descent 3

RUSTY BUCHERT

- Tadrus
- Last voyage - Star Trek: Starfleet Academy
- Next game - It's Top-Secret. j

BRIAN CHRISTIAN

- 14" East
- Coming Soon:
- Star Trek - Starfleet Command
- Star Trek - Klingon Academy
- Star Trek - New Worlds

DAVID PERRY

- Shiny Entertainment, Inc.
- Big Hit - Earthworm Jim
- Upcoming release - Messiah

SHOT ON LOCATION AT INTERPLAY WORLDWIDE HEADQUARTERS



DREW MARKHAM

Kapla Entertainment
• Latest game - *Rockneck Rampage*
• Upcoming - *Kings: Life of Crusoe*

STEVE CHAPLIN

Colors, Inc.
• Latest release - *Virtual Pool 2*
• Next title is on a need to know basis

NICK BRUTY

Planet Moon Studios
• Latest game - *MSK*
• Next project - *Quants: Cities Kabuto*

CGW Does E³

Your Fearless
Editors Roll Up,
Tune In, and Turn
On for the
Biggest Gaming
Event of the Year

By the time you read this, the CGW editors will have doggedly into the company 1972 VW van and gone on their way to Los Angeles for the annual headache-inducing gaming extravaganza known as the Electronic Entertainment Expo. Yes, like taxes, or a bad rash, E3 is upon us once again, and it's our job to be there and soak it in. Hype, parties, booth bimboes, and the occasional computer game are what E3 is all about, and we'll do our best to cover it all for you. Check www.gamespot.com for up-to-the-minute coverage, and be sure to read our upcoming, humongous, post-E3 Fall Preview issue later this summer, once we're back at the office and sober again.

In the meantime, here are 10 of the games we're most anxious to see at this year's expo:

Black and White

Is it a game or an elaborate Rorschach test? About all that's clear about the flagship title from Peter Molyneux's Lionhead Studios is its sweeping ambition.

Incorporating elements from Molyneux's groundbreaking POPULOUS games, this god game could shatter the real-time strategy mold by responding uniquely to every gamer's style of play. The game's magic system will encompass pure good, pure evil, and everything in between, allowing players to play as they wish. The hook here is that the physical world and everyone and everything will reflect the tenor of your play, with the earth charring and splintering under evil rule or thriving under benevolent guidance. BLACK AND WHITE has the potential to be truly revolutionary.



BLACK AND WHITE

Command & Conquer 2: Tiberian Sun

We want to see TIBERIAN SUN simply because we're champing at the bit to play it. While we were hoping the game would ship in time for last Christmas, we're encouraged by the designers' taking the time to balance and tweak it properly. We'll wipe the anticipatory drool off our chins long enough to check the progress of the dynamic, problem-solving AI, the new units, and other game revisions before relaying the information to you, our beloved readers, in a future issue.

Deus Ex

Of the initial Ion Storm lineup, the one title we anticipate the most is also the one that is getting the least hype. The fact that it's an action-RPG using the UNREAL engine is already intriguing, but the setting and involvement of designing legend Warren Spector (SYSTEM SHOCK, ULTIMA UNDERWORLD) is



DEUS EX

COMMAND &
CONQUER 2:
TIBERIAN
SUN



what makes this title stand out. No foibles or magic potion wands here: Instead, you get spies, conspiracies, and locales like the White House and the streets of Shanghai. Think James Bond meets *The X-Files*—with the UNREAL engine and the creative energy of an industry veteran—and you can see why we can't wait to decisively this game at E3.

Diablo II

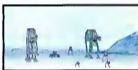
Merely the sequel to one of the best games of the last decade, Blizzard's been working on this title for so long now, and we've been anticipating it for so long, that it's easy to get excited about it. But make no mistake, this display is going to be one of the most crowded, popular ones at E3, and we'll be there too. Remember how much better *WARCRAFT II* was than *WARCRAFT*? And remember how awesome the original *DIABLO* already was? Don't start underestimating *Blizzard* now.

Flight Combat: Thunder Over Europe

Finally Looking Glass has taken its talents for developing realistic looking and flying flight sims and added a much-requested feature: guns. Taking off at E3, *FLIGHT COMBAT* will have you flying over European terrain with the quality of the company's *FLIGHT UNLIMITED* titles. But those who aren't interested in practicing for a real pilot's license will find a highly detailed damage model, realistic flight physics, and AI pilots of varying bravery levels more engaging than pretty scenery. A flight recorder will let you savor your kills, and there's even apparently a chance there will be a flyable Me-163 rocket plane.

Force Commander

In an effort to make sure George Lucas can still afford to buy groceries after the release of the *Star Wars Episode I* this summer, LucasArts will be showcasing this real-time strategy title. Shown at last year's E3, *FORCE COMMANDER* has been MIA for a year and has been the subject of more rumors than Area 51—is it set in the classic *Star Wars* universe or the prequel? Why is it taking so long? We debunked some rumors in our special *Episode I* preview last month, but we hope to bring you more info when LucasArts lifts the Cone of Silence in LA.



FORCE COMMANDER

Indiana Jones and the Infernal Machine

Harrison Ford may be getting too old to make another Indy movie, but at least gamers will get the chance to play his digital avatar in this third-person action/adventure title *Set*

5, 10, and 15 Years Ago in CGW

What We Were Writing About While You Were in Diapers

15 Years Ago: June 1984

By far the silliest thing in this issue, the ad for the "Grand Stand" is a shining example of '80s gamer's trash. A tall, curving, frontstanding post to hold your joystick in front of your chair: the device resolved any question of whether game controllers are plastic symbols. It might hold your stick steady, but it's doubtful that any folk with one sitting in the living room would have any chance at scoring.



10 Years Ago: June 1989

In June 1989, the esteemed Dave Arneson, co-designer of *Dungeons and Dragons*,



wrote a great review of *HIDDEN AGENDA*, a "Business Republic" simulator. The game is "El Presidente" of a small developing nation trying to steer a course through various political minefields. An entire game could be played in under two hours, while providing deep levels of simulation. This game is still fun 10 years later and stands as a great example of how gameplay is more important than flashy graphics.

5 Years Ago: June 1994

1994 was unquestionably the year of *DOOM*.

Significant advances in technology made it an addictive single-player experience. It was however, the multiplayer component that brought workflow to a standstill in offices across America (especially ours). Five years later, John Romero, the most famous of the id team, is still winning awards for his efforts. Most recently, Jon Stocco's *DOMINION* got runner-up for our Cosmos of the Year award.



The cheap shots never stop, kids.

Web Sites of the Month

The big Web event for the CGW goes this month was the release of the *Star Wars Episode I* trailer. Editorial Assistant Tom Price downloaded it, and the rest of us watched it over and over, until the boss yelled at us to get back to our desks and play *TRIBES*. Here's what else we found on the Web this month. [Web Sites of the Month, continued on page 68]

CGW's Reality Check

Ken Hahn's David Lee Roth once said that the reason that all rock critics loved Elvis Costello was because they looked like him. This same theory explains why all the gaming critics love *HALF-LIFE*: We all look like Gordon Freeman. In any event, here's the latest roundup of 10 recent games and their corresponding review scores in the major gaming mags and Web sites. All scores use each pair's own scoring system.

	CGW (OUT OF 100)	PC GAMER (OUT OF 100)	PC GAMES (A-F)	DO GUY (OUT OF 100)	PC ASSASSIN (OUT OF 10)	IGN (OUT OF 10)	GAMECENTER (OUT OF 100)
Baldur's Gate	4 stars	94%	A-	5 stars	8	9.2	5 stars
Conquering 2	3 stars	83%	C+	4.5 stars	7	7.6	4 stars
Close Combat III	1.5 stars	82%	A	3.5 stars	8	9.2	3 stars
Gunpoint	2.5 stars	82%	B	2.5 stars	6	5.5	4 stars
Myth II	4.5 stars	81%	A	4 stars	7	9.3	4 stars
SM's Alpha Cent	5 stars	80%	A	4 stars	8	9.1	5 stars
SimCity 3000	4 stars	80%	B-	4 stars	8	8.0	4 stars
SC: Blood War	5 stars	80%	B-	4 stars	8	9.1	4 stars
StarSinger: Tribes	4 stars	80%	B+	4 stars	9	8.5	4 stars
Thief	4.5 stars	80%	B+	4.5 stars	9	9.1	5 stars

*no rating available at press time. ■ red indicates editor's choice games

Console Wars:

CGW Checks in Start Again?

on the Other
Half of the
Gaming World

The first shots have been fired in Game Console War IV, with Nintendo and Sony answering Sega's DreamCast salvo not with hardware, but with psych warfare. The DreamCast, out now in Japan and set to ship in the United States before Christmas, is certainly an impressive system. But even with its next-generation PowerVR graphics, it's not a big enough jump to have you trading in your PC anytime soon.

At the Game Developers Conference in March, Sony showed off a number of dazzling PlayStation 2 demos, with real-time workstation-quality graphics wowing even the jaded developer crowd. That machine, however, won't ship in the U.S. until the end of 2000—at the earliest. Meanwhile, Nintendo announced that a group of ex-Silicon Graphics engineers known as Art-X were developing a next-generation machine for that company—but Nintendo won't even make specs available on the unit until the end of this year.

These early announcements by Sony and Nintendo break with the companies' usual tradition of keeping things under wraps until the last minute. The companies likely want to deflate any excitement about the DreamCast, in hopes that the machine will die in Sega Saturn-like obscurity while gamers wait another year for the Sony and Nintendo machines.

So how does all this affect PC games? While many have commented that prototype games on the PlayStation 2 blew away anything currently available on the PC, the same could be said in 1993 about games for the original PlayStation. By the time the new Sony and Nintendo machines reach U.S. shores, PC gaming technology will likely have caught up or surpassed them. So look at these new systems not as technological threats, but as previews of computer gaming to come.

The more significant effect will be the continued popularity of low-cost, high-quality game machines. These new units may serve to keep PC gaming in its niche, about a quarter the size of the console market. Although there are few console games with the depth of their PC cousins, the units' low price and ease of use means the mainstream will find them an attractive alternative to the PC market, with its higher cost of entry and cavalier "fix the game after it ships" attitude. —Denny Atkin



Sega's DreamCast is getting lots of hype—so maybe that's why Sony and Nintendo are blowing lots of smoke about their own upcoming machines.

[Web Sites of the Month, continued from page 47]
First, of course, check out www.gamespot.com for the best gaming news, reviews, and features

DENNY'S PICK

www.simhq.com

Simulation Headquarters, the Bloomberg of flight-sim sites. If your head almost never comes off your joystick (EW! No, that's not what we meant. Who do you think we are, PC Accelerator?), this is the site to check out.



GEORGE'S PICK

www.arcadeclassics.com

Blat-then-the-pair: gaming radical Brown has the finest selection of classic coin-op arcade games and buy that sit-down Donkey Kong you've been dreaming about since 1986.



JEFF'S PICK

www.gameguides.com/guides/baldurs/

Desslock's massive, exhaustive, online guide to BALDUR'S GATE is the ideal help site for those, like me, who spend more time reloading the game than actually playing it.



JOE'S PICK

www.homesitead.com

This is a great, free site where you can build your own Web pages. It has an easy-to-use, Java-based, drag-and-drop interface, and designing pages is a snap.



JOHNNY'S PICK

www.jstern.com/~vid/arn/sgp2scen.html

For those who can't get enough of the current conflict in the Baltica, check out the Serbian scenarios for STEEL DIVISIONS II at the General's Guild site.



ROBERT'S PICK

www.themushroom.com

"For Dudes, by Dorks" is the motto of this very funny gaming Web site, modeled after The Onion.



SCOOTER'S PICK

www.gamespyder.com/

The new "Yahoo for gaming." They're still taking submissions, but if you



Playing Later

Here's what our readers are blowing the most time on. (CGW Survey)

	Feb Month	Mar so Far
1. <i>Red Life</i> (Mass Interactive)	—	1
2. <i>Robo's Gate</i> (Interplay)	—	1
3. <i>StarCraft: Brood Wars</i> (Blizzard)	—	1
4. <i>Madcat and Meek II</i> (New York 2000)	2	10
5. <i>NHL Hockey 99</i> (EA Sports)	—	1
6. <i>Extreme Ski</i> (3rd Street)	0	5
7. <i>Elite Force</i> (GamesRend)	—	1
8. <i>Cosmos III</i> (SoftwareRend)	4	2
9. <i>Snake II</i> (SoftwareRend)	2	0
10. <i>Wing Gnd: Prophecy Sold</i> (Alpha/DI)	—	1

PC Data Best-sellers*

1. <i>StarCity 2000</i> (DI)	5	\$20
2. <i>3rd Wheel's Alpha Outburst</i> (DI)	—	\$41
3. <i>Robo's Gate</i> (Interplay)	1	\$44
4. <i>Red Life</i> (Mass Interactive)	6	\$34
5. <i>Cosmos III</i> (SoftwareRend)	4	\$29
6. <i>Over Hunter II SR</i> (DI Interactive)	1	\$29
7. <i>StarCraft: Brood Wars</i> (Mass Interactive)	2	\$27
8. <i>StarCraft</i> (Mass Interactive)	6	\$48
9. <i>Over Avenger</i> (Mass Interactive)	11	\$28
10. <i>Microsoft Flight Simulator</i> (Microsoft)	0	\$50

*The top-selling games as of February 28, 1999, according to PC Data (Boston, MA)

For years, gamers on tight budgets have had to resort to buying their PCs from the huge, impersonal business system manufacturers that don't know jack about gaming.

Glad that's over with.

Talon



An aggressive new gaming system by Falcon Northwest
with guts by 3dfx. Priced to move.

Summer '99



www.falcon-nw.com

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Bioware's Dr. Ray Muzyka



Up Close
and
Personal
With the
Good
Doctor
Behind
**BALDUR'S
GATE**

1. With BALDUR'S GATE behind you, what are you working on now?
I wear several hats. I'm BioWare's joint-CEO and CFO (we now have about 55 employees). I also am the executive producer of our animation division and co-executive producer of our other two video game titles, one of which is MDK2 for the DreamCast and PC, and the other a super-secret online project.

2. You're a doctor...so what's the coolest operation you performed in medical school?

I always found assisting neurosurgeons kind of cool. I was surprised to see the array of tools they use—quite a few looking like melon-ball scoops, not surprising considering the consistency of the human brain. I actually wanted to be a general surgeon for a few years. It's kind of neat to stick your arm into someone's abdomen to feel their liver to rule out potential metastatic tumors. I now mainly practice rural emergency and family medicine.

3. Which character in BALDUR'S GATE is most like you?

Daevion, a 10th-level mage, is my personal character from my pen-and-paper role-playing days—except my character was chaotic good, rather than lawful evil.

4. Okay, my union contract obligates me to ask the standard "if you were stranded on a desert island" question. What games would you want with you?

WIZARDRY: PROVING GROUNDS OF THE MAD OVERLORD (yup, the first one, in all of it's black-and-white vector graphic and text glory) is something I never really got out of my system. I've always wanted to play SYSTEM SHOCK again, as well as ULTIMA UNDERWORLD...QUAKE, STARCRRAFT, WARCRAFT, HALF-LIFE (gotta love that sniper crossbow). Maybe some of the great classic strategy games as well—CIVILIZATION, POPULOUS, SIMCITY.

5. If your team works late and you spring for pizza, do you always get Canadian bacon as a topping?

Usually, at least on one. I've never actually understood this "Canadian bacon" thing you American blokes come up with. Is Canadian bacon somehow different? The hogs are better up here somehow?

want to search for Web sites dealing with a particular game, this is a good place to start.

TOW'S PICK

www.woleslegaming.com/
Cool (and extensive) emulator site with lots of ROMs.



TC'S PICK

<http://treagan.tibblack.com/Diplomacy/>

If you ever wondered what all the fuss is about, here's the place to start learning about the Diplomacy gaming phenomenon. Plenty of great links to other Diplomacy sites as well, note that there is no www in the URL.



WHY? WHY? WHY?

PROFESSIONAL BULL RIDER May Leave You, Er, Saddle Sore

And now, in the Truth Is Stronger Than Fiction Department, from the press release for PROFESSIONAL BULL RIDER, the latest



"sports" game from Sierra Sports.

"The 2,000 pound virtual bulls are tank and ready to rumble. Perhaps the most unique feature of PROFESSIONAL BULL RIDER is competing in single events or throughout a career as the cowboy OR the bull. As the bull, you'll give cowboys the ride of their life."

Insert joke here.
On second thought—maybe not.

Tchotchke (chok'ke): slang from Yiddish: a cheap, showy trinket
—American Heritage College Dictionary, Third Edition

Tchotchke of the Month

With any luck, this month's Tchotchke of the Month will be smashed into small chunks of plastic by the time you read this. Why? Because the "Rowdy Rocker," as it is called, is an unbelievably annoying tamagochi-type toy that plays randomly generated heavy metal songs and periodically screams out rock-and-roll clichés like "Alright!" and "Are you ready to rock?!" thanks to our equally annoying managing editor, Joe Vallina, who leaves the dang' thing on all day long.

—Managing editor's note:
Scraw you, wussie rocker.
Sabôth rulez, Duran Duran droolz.

We don't know who sent this to us, or why, but whoever you are: We hate you.



Redefining Real-Time Strategy



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Y: 34 45
Z: 21 99



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PC version

• Research over 400 technologies which enable you to customize over 2000 unique battle units

• "This game should find its way from the shelf, to the register, to your computer." *Game Center*

• "A battle field worth fighting on." *Game Pro*



EIDOS
INTERACTIVE

OUT NOW!



90% PC Gamer*
"This is the RTS game."

"Warzone 2100's numerous
innovations and sharp 3D
graphics may change a
few minds." EGM

WARZONE 2100™

Strategy By Design

Play the DEMO

Go to #182 @ www.computerentertainment.com/infotink

the heat is on...



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League of Legends



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Key features

- Includes all 22 cars, 16 circuits and official data from the 1998 Formula One World Championship Season.
- Fantastic graphics and speed. Plus 3D card and Force Feedback support.
- Accurate simulation and fun-to-play arcade modes.
- 20+ camera angles and ability to create your own new camera positions.
- Multiplayer support for up to 12 players.
- Informative helicopter fly-over of each circuit.

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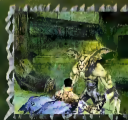


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- Shift real-time between the material and spectral planes
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"...the completely revamped sequel to Legacy of Kain promises high immersion factor."

-Spin



A promotional poster for the video game Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver. The central figure is Kain, a vampire-like character with blue skin and a white and brown patterned tunic, holding a large wooden staff. He is holding a severed, bloody demon by its neck. The demon has a pale, greenish-grey complexion, horns, and a wide, screaming mouth with red blood dripping from it. The background is a dark, misty forest with green foliage. The text "...YOU MUST DEVOUR THEIR SOULS" is written in a glowing yellow font. The game title "LEGACY of KAIN SOUL REAVER" is in a stylized font, with "LEGACY of KAIN" in red and "SOUL REAVER" in yellow. At the bottom, there are logos for Crystal Dynamics and Eidos, along with their websites and a small "Go to #272" logo.

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For the Ninth Time, Origin Rewrites the Role-playing Book

Ultima Ascension

by George Jones

ULTIMA ASCENSION begins with a jolt—literally. One evening, the Avatar (the virtuous hero who has saved Britannia at least eight times prior to now) dreams of a towering column of fiery stone rising from the earth, killing an old farmer in the process. Knowing that this is a sure sign something is wrong in his alternate reality, he rises from his bed. And the game begins.

You don't fiddle with menus or waste time with text-filled screens. After you install the game and witness your dreams, you get right out of bed, put on your clothes, amble out of your bedroom, and jump into the heart of ULTIMA ASCENSION's gaming environment.

The Earth Moves

The popularity of the ULTIMA series comes from the unique blend of a highly developed universe, a well-paced plotline, and an unparalleled moral complexity that doesn't emphasize brutality. For the first time, however, ULTIMA

ASCENSION is set in a 3D environment with an over-the-shoulder perspective. Before you worry that ASCENSION is some TOMBS RAIDER action/adventure clone, however, ask yourself this: When was the last time Lara Croft had to save the world from eight pillars that are slicing her world apart like an orange, all while making sure she walks the proper moral path?

Also, interactive is more than just a buzzword in this game. As you move around the house after you wake up, you'll find that

most everything in it actually works, from the alarm clock to the big-screen TV to the light switches. There's even a bread maker in the kitchen and a grill in the backyard that you can use to make steaks.

The backyard also functions as a training ground of sorts that allows you to practice combat skills, maneuvering skills, and yes—jumping skills. Settle down, ULTIMA VIII veterans: jumping is not a frustrating experience this time around. Instead of needing impossibly dexterous arcade-style reflexes, you jump onto rocks and over rivers in this game simply by moving your mouse to the spot you want to jump to and then clicking the mouse button. Combat is also a snap; you maneuver the Avatar around with the



3D FIT FOR A KING Don't let the smooth 3D fool you—ULTIMA ASCENSION is anything but an action/adventure game.

mouse or keyboard and press the appropriate key to attack. And the spellcasting is easier than ever. Once you discover a spell, you can easily incorporate it into your spell book by mixing the appropriate reagents for it a single time.

A Radical Departure?

ASCENSION features the traditional elements that made the ULTIMA series famous. Character creation, for example, still occurs with the help of a gypsy fortuneteller, whom you'll find in the park behind your house. You answer a series of moral questions (You encounter a beggar. Do you give him food or do you just walk on by?) to determine your game character's attributes and moral standing.



GREAT BALLS OF FIRE Casting spells is easier than ever, but ULTIMA purists will still be able to mix up unique magic using reagents.

In what some may view as a move to attract the mainstream masses, the designers are simplifying some of the more stat-oriented aspects of traditional role-playing games. Instead of tracking scores in 4,835 different attributes and skill sets, this ULTIMA is a bit more intuitive: Numbers have been turned into descriptions with tangible benefits. As you gain experience, for example, you may find yourself becoming a journeyman and gaining an extra attack type.

It's the End of the World

Everything has gone screwy in Britannia. This once virtuous land has done a moral about-face. After completing the game's opening puzzles, we entered Britain, the capital city, and approached a flock of citizens listening to the mayor speak. After pushing our way to the front of the crowd—and being scolded by an older woman for kicking dust on her in the process—we were taken aback to hear the mayor prating himself for moving the homeless out of Britain and over to the swampy city of Paws. Britain, renowned city of compassion, ousting the unfortunate? There's something wrong here.

Such chaos is brought to you courtesy of the Guardian, an evil presence with whom the Avatar has clashed in two previous ULTIMAs. Worse, the fiery pillar you dreamed about is only one of eight, each of which is being pulled through the earth by the gravity of the moon. The pillars are pulling the moon out of orbit and into a collision path with Britannia. Complicating matters even more, each of the pillars is associated with

Ultima Ascension

GENRE: Role-Playing RELEASE DATE: Q4 '99

DEVELOPER: Richard Garriot/Organ

PUBLISHER: Electronic Arts



sion

one of Brittanika's eight virtues, explaining why the people of Brittanika have become so darn selfish. Your task, in a nutshell, is to get to the bottom of the nature of the land's moral about-face and permanently fix it. You'll travel the lengths of ASCENSION's gorgeously rendered world to do so.

Alive and Living

Brittanika's living, breathing environment features lush terrain types that make wandering through the gameworld much like moving across North America in accelerated time. Flat plains, hilly forests, and even snow-capped mountains are all a part of the landscape, and you'll even witness varying weather patterns in different regions. We saw an evening lightning storm (day becomes night in about two hours of real-time) in the mountains that left us convinced that outdoor environments are the best way to showcase a 3D engine.

As you move about the land, you'll encounter all manner of AI creatures and characters. You'll even find a love interest...of sorts. At one point during our play session, we were wandering through a hilly part of the world when a thief startled us by sprinting out of the trees at us in an attempt to knock us out. And once you get into the dungeons, well...let's just say that the underground monsters are a bit larger down there.

Conversations unfold naturally. To speak to someone, you approach them and, if they don't try to knock your head off, you start



OPEN WIDE AND SAY "AH" As usual, dungeon-crawling is hazardous to your health; thankfully, ASCENSION's one-touch hot-keys can help keep you prepared.

chatting. When you have specific questions, you select from a conversation menu.

The End of an Era?

It's entirely appropriate that ASCENSION will be released at the end of the millennium, given its grand scale and creator Richard Garriott's intentions of tying up all the loose ends that eight previous ULTIMA games have created. In ULTIMA past, the Avatar has belted Brittanika out of whatever mess the country is in. But this time around will be different.

As you make the transition between our world and Brittanika, you're told that this will be your last adventure there. What does this mean? Richard Garriott most definitely isn't telling (and neither are we). As ASCENSION unfolds, however, you will start to piece together answers regarding the very nature of the Avatar: his relation to Brittanika, the significance of the eight virtues and three principles, and the meaning of the various events over his previous eight adventures. If this is his last

adventure, our hero had better come up with a solution that will not just patch up Brittanika's problems, but teach the folks there how to help themselves.

Contrary to anything you may have heard, ULTIMA ASCENSION is alive and very well, thanks to some stellar 3D graphics, evolutionary gameplay elements—and finally—the kind of living, breathing story-telling environment gaming has desperately needed. **CGW**



BEAUTIFUL DAY IN BRITTANIA Brittanika's finest are still capable of enforcing the laws, should you decide to break them.

Fight Fans, Fear Not

ASCENSION will have plenty of real-time 3D combat. While in combat mode, you'll use the mouse to orient yourself, the keyboard to move left and right, and a single key to execute an attack. At first, you'll only have a single move; as you grow more experienced, you'll add three other possible moves that can be accessed by holding down the Ctrl or Alt keys while pressing the attack button. One nice touch: Each weapon has its own repertoire of moves. With an axe your options may be chop/sweep/roundhouse/uppercut, but with a staff you'll be able to poke/sweep/vault kick/spin. Wessie Evander Holyfields can also resort to fisticuffs.

Ranged combat is just as easy. Simply line up your target by moving the targeting reticle onto it. If the cursor is yellow, you can fire away and be assured of striking the mark. If the cross-hairs are red, you'll have to aim a little higher to compensate for the distance.

One area where ASCENSION won't deviate too much from the RPG norm is in the weaponry category. In addition to run-of-the-mill swords, axes, and bows, you'll also be able to get your hands on magical weapons. Flaming swords, magical bows that do extra damage, and all sorts of unique weaponry lie in wait for the avid adventurer.

Finally, borrowing a page from Diablo, the game interface features 12 handy, combat-friendly hot-keys that you can assign weapons, spells, or any items to. Perfect when you need to summon a quick lightning storm or your trusty two-handed sword.

Blood of the Sacred, Blood of the Damned

Gabriel Knight 3

by Johnny Wilson

The Jacobites might have thought a bit differently of Bonnie Prince Charlie if they had known the mystery underlying GABRIEL KNIGHT 3: BLOOD OF THE SACRED, BLOOD OF THE DAMNED (GK3). Designer Jane Jensen is no longer content with drawing us into mysteries that are tied into voodoo and werewolves. Now, she is deftly pulling together the rumors and conjecture, the theories and the shocking speculation that surround the most mesmerizing conspiracy of all time: the Holy Grail. GK3 has everything: a kidnapping, a treasure, a cover-up, a secret society, a reunion, and some of Jensen's classic use of the supernatural. Gabriel, our hero, is still the lugubrious, drawing-bookstore-owner and novelist by chance, who has inherited the title of schattenjäger—a shadow-hunter of the supernatural. He is still assisted and occasionally accompanied by Grace Nakamura, and he also runs into his old pal Moseley Plus, there's a new supernatural adversary: the night visitors, Jensen's hush take on vampires.

Exclusive
Hands-On
Look

Gabriel Knight 3

GENRE: Adventure
RELEASE DATE: Q2 '99
DEVELOPER: Jane Jensen
PUBLISHER: Sierra



ONE SCREEN FOR ALL M'NKIND GK3 gives you a full-screen perspective with a free-flying camera view, a pop-up command toolbar, and occasional cinematic cut-scenes within the 3D engine.

Like its predecessors, GK3 features terrific puzzles and an extremely well-written story. It differs mainly in that you don't have the graphic novel effect of the first game (although there is a graphic novel introduction to the game) or the interactive video experience of the second. Now, the entire environment is 3D, and gameplay is friendlier as a result. You no longer have to walk Gabriel all over the screen in order to get him into position to see something. You can fly the camera independently; then, when you're ready you click on the floor or on an object and Gebe immediately walks into the picture from off-camera. We also like the fact that the cursor lights up whenever it crosses a hot spot, thus doing away with those annoying "hunt the pixel" puzzles. Another improvement is that there is no onscreen toolbar unless you decide to call it up by right-clicking your mouse. This gives you a full-screen perspective at all times with a pop-up interface only when you really need it.

In addition to using a pop-up toolbar, the interface also has the capacity to grow. Want to talk to the innkeeper? Icons show up for each topic, reminiscent of the interface in another Holy Grail game, CIRCLE OF BLOOD. Want to attach an item to a verb for regular use? You handle everything with an easy click. The new 3D engine and improved interface make everything about GK3 easier, except the puzzles themselves.

Another major difference here is that instead of being divided into chapters (as in the first two games) GK3 is divided into days with several time blocks within each day. Each time block has several "must do" actions before you can advance to the next time block—and each time block has enough optional actions that it's highly unlikely that you'll be able to do them all in your first playing of the game.

Glastonbury Heir

The story itself begins with an invitation for Gabriel and Grace to meet an heir to the Scottish throne. Grace believes that this is because of Gabe's position as heir to the venerable Ritter heritage. Naturally, because of Gabe's heritage, the schattenjäger tradition comes into play. The principal characters meet in Paris and, after a sinister series of events, a chase sequence takes Gabriel to the south of France. There, in Rennes-le-Chateau, a small village in the Languedoc region, the mystery begins to be unraveled.

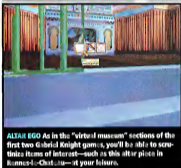
Languedoc is a province noted for heresy.



TOPICAL FRUIT Conversations throughout the game are driven by icons that reflect dynamically the topics that Gabriel has uncovered during the course of his investigation.



BANNER EAR Gabriel hides behind a banner in order to eavesdrop on a key conversation. Ambient audio adds depth to GK3, but important audio clues are close-captioned.



ALTAR EGO As in the "virtual museum" sections of the first two Gabriel Knight games, you'll be able to scrutinize items of interest—such as this altar piece in Rennes-le-Château—at your leisure.

witchcraft, and a mysterious treasure trove, reputed to include the Holy Grail—the chalice that Jesus used to serve the wine during the Last Supper and into which Joseph of Arimathea collected the blood of Christ while he was on the cross.

While those of Celtic descent would heed the Grail legends surrounding Glastonbury, Rennes-le-Château is a worthy rival with significantly more mysteries surrounding it.

It is a place where Mary Magdalene is more revered than the Madonna herself. It is the birthplace of the Cathars and the Priory of Sion. It is a mysterious place held holy since ancient times; a place where the mountainous geography is strangely symmetrical, forming a virtual pentacle of peaks for sacred bonfires and ritual observation. It is a locale where many believe that Egypt's Isis cult flourished in the days before the region's conversion to Christianity under Clovis I (circa AD 496, prior to his AD 507 victory over the Visigoths). It is the ancestral homeland of the Marovingian lineage, the long-haired and reputed magical kings of the land that would eventually become France. In short, a perfect place for a mystery.

The game re-creates the church at Rennes-le-Château with exacting detail, much the way GK2 did Mad Ludwig's castle. The strange devil holding up the holy water font, the statue of Mary Magdalene with a skull at her feet, the extremely unusual Stations of the Cross, and bizarre

inscriptions are presented in a 3D virtual museum in which you can fly the camera and examine anything.

Of course, purists may not like Jensen's addition of a hotel to the mysterious village and her use of a museum dedicated to Saunière as a handy source of clues. Just remember, poetic license has been around at least since the time of Homer and the use of a fictional hotel and a museum speeds up the pace considerably over having to travel around the countryside for clues.

Digital Divination

Fortunately for Grace and Gabriel, they are not on their own in figuring out this mystery. Since some of the mystery has to do with strange geometrical clues in paintings and natural landscapes, they are assisted by SIDNEY, a computer interface. SIDNEY will not only assist in following up on basic clues, but will also provide a rich, searchable database on Egyptian mythology and the ties to Isis and Osiris that you are likely to uncover in the search for the treasure.

Certain items have to be "scanned" into SIDNEY in order to solve the mystery. Indeed, you will have to superimpose geometrical shapes over these images in order to reach the proper conclusion. Naturally, this is no problem for gamers who are familiar with the literature concerning Rennes-le-Château. Books such as Henry Lincoln's *The Holy Place* and David Woods' *Genesis* feature diagrams superimposed over topographical maps all the time. Both researchers note that there is both a pentagon and a hexagon construction that overlay the geographical area.

For those who are into the mystery, placing points and shapes on a map has a real ring of truth. For others, this will still be an intriguing puzzle, since it hinges on one other veiling element. Jensen has taken a poem called "In Serpent Rouge" and built a series of riddles around the wordplay in the verses. If you can figure out the secondary meanings and obscure references, then you'll have no trouble solving the geometrical puzzles.

Once out in the countryside, you'll face a timing puzzle or two. Think of it as basic surveillance. Indeed, you'll occasionally have to direct Gabriel to hide and observe in order to get the clues and answers you'll need to get to the endgame. This section has a very different look to it; but in effect, the overview map recalls the New Orleans map in the first game and the U-bahn map in the second.

All of this slothiness serves as preliminary to the scenes in the underground temple, however. The temple contains puzzles based on parades, chessboards, and more. Think of the motif as a mixture of Egyptian mythology, alchemical symbolism, and Gnostic philosophy. Nothing is what it appears. Considering the Ardan and Cathars heresies that flourished in the Languedoc region, the mixture is perfect for the mystery.

With all of the conspiracy, heresy, treasure, and crime abounding in *GABRIEL KNIGHT 3: BLOOD OF THE SACRED BLOOD OF THE DAMNED*, you could almost assume that the supernatural elements so prevalent in the first two games would be missing. You would be wrong. Jensen has weaved a vampire plot into the game (isn't this logical, given the emphasis on blood in the Grail legends?), and you're not likely to forget the antagonist in the final showdown. There is also an intriguing supernatural connection to the kidnapped baby that initiates the action.

As with the previous games, GK3 won't frighten you with gore and nightmarish creatures, but it will mess with your mind. In any game in which Jesus, conspiracy magic, and vampires intermingle, you'd expect to be more than a little disconcerted. As well-crafted as any of its ancestors and, if anything, even better written, *GABRIEL KNIGHT 3: BLOOD OF THE SACRED BLOOD OF THE DAMNED* seems destined for controversy, if not preternatural success. **GKW**

Clans

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PC CD-ROM

Dreamforge Takes PANZER GENERAL Into Eldar Space—With Attitude

Warhammer 40,000: Rites of War

by Samuel Baker II

Games Workshop's Warhammer 40,000 (affectionately known simply as 40K) has for many years offered a dark, compelling, and competitive science-fiction universe for board and miniature enthusiasts. PC games based on this universe have yet to fully capture the flavor—or the sales numbers—of the original. Part of the reason for this has been a failure to re-create the stunning, if sometimes bizarre, graphics of the tabletop game.

WARHAMMER 40,000: RITES OF WAR (RITES) suffers from no such handicap. The graphics are delightful. Each unit has its own idle, attack, and death animations. The effects of weapon fire are appropriately depicted; troops with heavy flammes, for instance, graphically roast their targets.

But there's more to RITES than just pretty explosions. The game deals in detail with the trials and constant battles of the Eldar—essentially space elves with attitude—on one-great race now wandering space in huge starships. As a lord of the Eldar, you are tasked with recovering a number of artifacts thought to exist on the fringes of the former Eldar Empire.

RITES steers you through three story arcs of eight scenarios each, featuring more than 30 different Eldar, 20 Tyranid, and 20 Imperial units that include Eldar Avatars, Tyranid Hive Tyrants, Imperial Terminators, and Blood Angels Space Marines. In addition to the full campaign, there are five multiplayer scenarios and seven for solo play. The single-player scenarios are split into mini-campaigns for the Imperial and Eldar forces. The game comes with a complete scenario/campaign editor that allows full editing of objectives and scripts. If you really want to play the Tyranid (think *Aliens* with technology), you can roll your own campaign once you finish the canned missions. Any side is available for multiplayer games.

WARHAMMER General

RITES uses a simplified version of SSF's classic PANZER GENERAL engine, with each unit rated for life, armor, morale, leadership, ranged-attack strength, initiative, range, spotting, and movement. As



CARINFEX The encyclopedia is a treat, even if you're not a Warhammer 40K fan.



TALES FROM YOUR ELDARS One thing's for sure: PANZER GENERAL never looked like this.

you proceed through the campaign, your units' abilities develop, adding a nice RPG element. Units don't lose experience when taking on emplacement points—which should lead to looser, more risk-taking play. Units may also be held in barracks until needed.

According to producer Sam Clifford, SSF chose the standard-size Warhammer 40K army sets rather than the *Epic* scale used in *FINAL LIBERATION* (SSF's most recent PC Warhammer) to make the game more personal. In RITES, the four arm types—air, infantry, armor, and artillery—all seem to be well integrated into the design. Eldar infantry, for example, can become increasingly specialized, with many different paths of advancement that aren't open to vehicles. As commander, you choose the aspect of the particular Eldar god you want your infantry to emulate, giving your troops greater power in one area but less in others.

You'll buy units and upgrades by expending glory points, which work much the way prestige does in PANZER GENERAL, except that RITES is more forgiving. If a unit is completely eliminated, its experience is lost, but the points expended on it are returned so that you may recover from defeat without hitting the reload button.

Even in this early version, the computer opponent does a credible job on the battlefield. Once contact is made, enemy units advance quickly to pick out and engage targets. Units don't always fight to the death, but engagements are typically Warhammer-bloody, and every turn usually involves the elimination of some units, even in the smaller battles.

Given the talent that's involved here, this seemingly bizarre marriage of the popular PANZER GENERAL system and the quirky Warhammer 40K universe could create the mass-market hit that Games Workshop fans have been looking for. Better yet, the game should be enjoyable even for those who don't know the difference between a Tyranid and an Ork—or a Zerg. **CGW**

Warhammer 40,000: Rites of War

GENRE: Strategy/Wargame RELEASE DATE: Q2 '99

DEVELOPER: Dreamforge PUBLISHER: SS/Mattel

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Microsoft

by Johnny Wilson

The Kennedy clan played it in the White House. It was Henry Kissinger's favorite game.

Generations of college students played it in their dormitory lounges. Hundreds of fortunes have earned the results of play-by-mail games using its system and hundreds of variants. In fact, it has been played by email since the days of Dow Jones' Source and CompuServe. Russell Sipe, founder of CGW, began the earliest games on both information services

The game, of course, is *Diplomacy*. Its popularity is due to the fact that there is no luck involved. There are no random die rolls, no spinners, no "get coprophagic and die" cards, and no random-effect charts. You get what you play for. It is a social game in which you must negotiate, compromise, and improvise, as well as strategize, in order to win. If you can manipulate your opponents and do unto them before they can do unto you, you win. If not, you can get even with them in the next game.

Remembrances of Games Past

The boardgame is set in pre-World War I Europe. Each of seven players represents the head of a country (England, France, Germany, Russia, Austria-Hungary, Italy, and Turkey) during a negotiation phase, order-writing phase, and execution/resolution phase. In other words, you try to get your friends to do what you want them to do. Then everyone writes down what they are actually going to do in secret. Next, the moves are read and the referee determines what happens from the orders, including resolution of any conflict. Each country tries to capture as many resource centers as possible, in order to build enough armies and fleets to ensure that the player's motherland becomes the last country standing.

It's always hard to get seven people together at the same time for several hours of gameplay—no matter how social the game. For that reason, a play-by-mail approach to *Diplomacy* has long been a



THIS SHAM IS MY SHAM Tiny flags indicate which heads of state are negotiating with which other heads of state in a given conference room.

Diplomacy

Hasbro Unveils the Crown Jewel of Multiplay Manipulation

popular option, as has a play-by-email version. The downside of these games by mail is that they often take more than a year to complete. What about the person who wants to play *Diplomacy* now?

World War Fun

The original C-64 and PC versions of *DIPLOMACY* were failures due to poor computer opponents and poor graphics. It was impossible in these computer

games to see what you could easily see in a face-to-face boardgame: Who was negotiating with whom. And if you could get friends over to host the game in front of the computer, you were better off playing the boardgame.

In this game, we finally have a playable computer version of *DIPLOMACY*. It features an elaborate iconic interface that enables you to negotiate alliances, nonaggression pacts, and detailed plans for landing support with other countries. In the version that we played, it was still impossible to spell out some of the complex quid pro quo terms that you'd be likely to hammer out in a human game, but the good news is that you can make simple deals with the artificial heads of state.

Even better news is that finally you can play the multi-player game on the Internet with all-human leaders or with a mixture of human and artificial heads of state—so you don't have to round up exactly six of your buddies for the best possible seven-player game. Better yet, you don't need to have one of the players act as referee anymore, and you don't have to worry about other players changing the orders of their allies as they read them (an old caveat in the face-to-face games). The program adjudicates each move, and the orders must be saved before you get to the resolution phase.

The bad news is that no artificial head of state can be as sneaky or conniving as a human opponent. Further, the computer game doesn't permit you the joy of concocting propaganda, as do the face-to-face or play-by-mail and email games. Still, even though it's unfinished, this version of *DIPLOMACY* looks like it could make you a Kennedy or a Kissinger. If you pardon the anachronism, I just assured that CGW supports Hasbro's latest assault on the retail channel. **CGW**



NO ALPHABETICAL ORDER In play-by-mail and play-by-email games, the order phase consisted of alphabet-soup directions (F-ANK, and so forth). Here, you use the map and the iconic interface to input orders.

Diplomacy

GENRE: Strategy RELEASE DATE: Q3 '99
DEVELOPER: Meyer-Gloss Interactive
PUBLISHER: Hasbro Interactive



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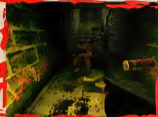


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Whe doesn't love a shiny new butt-kicking giant robot armed with missile-launching legs and a viciously humming energy sword? Thundering behemoths with an insatiable appetite for destruction are one of the cornerstones of our nation, our judicial system, our very way of life. Oh, and computer games; there are lots of them in computer games, too. But gamers with a thirst for enormous-robot mayhem have generally had to limit themselves to just one ambulatory skyscraper when gaming. That will change with the fall release of METAL FATIGUE, a real-time strategy title that lets you build, command, and design armies of 15-stoey bipedal warheads called combats in a fight to control mysterious alien technology.



HACKING AND SLASHING A Rintoch combat winds up then chops off the arm of an enemy Milagro unit. Researching such looped-off limbs will encourage and reward gamers for engaging the enemy instead of building up for dull rushes.

A House Divided, A World Divided Too

Sent as part of an investigating force to a distant planet, three brothers help defeat a drone robot at an ancient alien complex. In possession of a powerful new alien weapon, the brothers argue and eventually splinter off and become guiding forces of three separate Corporations. All of this is revealed in an anime-flavored out-scene that sets up the premise of the game. Gamers will play through METAL FATIGUE as each of the brothers, thus getting the opportunity to wield the unique weaponry and technology of each faction.

While most combat will be ground-based, there will be two additional theatres of war: subterranean and orbital. Even though the build that I played was pre-alpha, the sense of scope and challenge in the game is pretty much

unmatched in gaming today. Gamers will have to be able to launch base assaults on terra firma while drilling underground invasion tunnels to an enemy base while enduring a withering barrage of bombing from orbiting enemy platforms. Yikes.

Though every unit will be able to fight on the ground, only flying units (including flying combats) will be able to access the orbiting theatre of war, and only tanks and the like will be able to move in the cramped confines of the underground theatre. To get to and from the subterranean tunnels, you'll have to send your vehicles down via elevators. Elevators can be built from underground—perfect for launching an attack smack in the center of an enemy base. But be warned: Elevators are neutral structures that can be used by anyone, including enemies.



BOO-HUMBLE Different technology means each faction will sport its own look, as evidenced in this free-for-all.

This Real-Time Strat Title Is Anything but Tired

Metal Fatigue

by Robert Coffey

Even in its early stages, the interface is up to handling the task at hand, allowing you to monitor all three maps onscreen at once and jump to a hotspot anywhere in the world with a single mouse click. Once you arrive in a war zone, you view the action via a mouse-driven multimetric camera similar to that of MYTH (the camera can be whipped above for a more traditional, top-down view). Unit commands are accomplished via standard RTS mouse and hot-key combinations.

Build the Ultimate Killing Machine

METAL FATIGUE's unit mix will include familiar fare, such as tanks and jets, but the real focus (and the key to winning) will be on the combats. These earth-shaking warheads will have technology unique to each Corporation; one race will rely on stealth and cloaking

technology, while another will just have great big guns that shoot great big bullets.

Each combat is made of four distinct body parts: right arm, left arm, torso, and a set of legs. Combats are built individually by selecting components and then combining them to create a working unit. For example, you could construct a combat with missile-firing legs, a cloaking torso, a chain-gun arm, and an arm with a power shield. The mix-and-match nature of combat construction means that you can adjust your combat design—and therefore your strategy—more or less on the fly.

The ability to jettison parts is crucial to METAL FATIGUE's strategy. Several weapons, mostly energy swords and power saws, are built to be amputating instruments. Equipping a combat with one of them introduces the possibility of severing an enemy's arm. Should you do that, you can simply drop your old arm, snap the enemy's arm on, and, presto, you've got a whole new combat. Even better, you can then take the new arm back to your base to research it so that your forces will be able to produce it themselves. Besides letting gamers expand their faction's technology base beyond the 20 or so technologies they start with, it forces gamers to fight for upgrades instead of sitting back, mining resources, researching, and building up for a humdrum game-ending rush. It's a great design element that should ensure almost constant engagement and action.

METAL FATIGUE is definitely a title to watch out for when it ships later this year. **CGW**



Metal Fatigue

GENRE: Real-Time Strategy

RELEASE DATE: Q3 '99

DEVELOPER: Zero • PUBLISHER: Pygmalion

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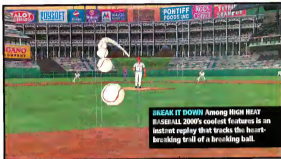
by Robert Coffey

Supporting a brand new MLB license, a 3D engine, and improvements in almost every facet of the game, **HIGH HEAT BASEBALL 2000** (HHZK) is the baseball title to watch this year. HHZK could be the first sports game in years to give the EA Sports dynasty a real run for the money.

Building a Contender

The design team has made a real effort to address last year's shortcomings, and it appears to be paying off. The horribly animated 2D players of last season have been traded for a roster full of 3D polygonal players. The animations are much more lifelike, with believable swings and relief pitches who drop down and sidarm the ball. Incidental animations such as pitchers throwing up their arms in frustration at a bad call or batters who stumble across the plate after lurching out of the way of an inside fastball give the game a real major-league feel. Once Team .366 smoothes out the somewhat jarring transitional player animations present in the pre-beta version we played, HHZK could be as good looking as TRIPLE PLAY.

3DD has wisely shelled out the bucks for a MLB license, so that gamers will finally be able to play with the big boys. A draft has been added and players will have the ability to play seasons of 16, 81, or 162 games. Regrettably, there currently are no plans to let you create custom leagues. Why, with the wild popularity of rotisserie leagues, designers continue to downplay the appeal of a custom league utility is beyond me, but, hey, I'm just an enormous fan who knows at least eight other guys that would love play in a



BREAK IT DOWN Among **HIGH HEAT BASEBALL 2000's** coolest features is an instant replay that tracks the heart-breaking trail of a breaking ball.

High Heat Baseball 2000

Last Year's Promising Rookie Could Be This Year's All-Star

custom league. Still, should you decide to run a league with your buddies, HHZK should support hotseat, LAN, and Internet play.

Franchise Player

The best news is that the gameplay looks to be even better than last year (which, despite its flaws, played more like real baseball than any other game). Managerial options have been expanded, letting wannabe dugout geniuses guard the lines or set up for the double play, and a real bullpen has been implemented so you'll actually have to manage your pitchers. Anyone who played the first game will also be glad to hear that game speed is now adjustable, letting you keep CPU-controlled pitchers from

quick pitching you into oblivion.

The statistical model has been beefed up, keeping track of split stats as well as rating every player in various batting, fielding, and pitching abilities. If the game's stat engine works as promised, games should see the realistic ebb and flow of major league baseball over the course of a season, as unrelenting pitchers suffer through occasional rocky starts and homer-launching sluggers endure cold spells.

The most promising sign that Team .366 is onto something came in one game I played. Down by four runs with two out in the bottom of the ninth, I hit what seemed to be a game-ending grounder when the opposing team made an error that let the hitter reach first. A series of singles followed and I won the game.

If **HIGH HEAT BASEBALL 2000** can consistently capture the intangible Bill Buckner quality that makes baseball *baseball*, then it could well be the title that computer baseball fans have been waiting for. **CGW**



RED SKIES AT NIGHT A strong 3D engine supporting high resolutions and graphic grace notes like this twilight Texas sky should push **HIGH HEAT BASEBALL 2000** to the top of the eye candy heap.

High Heat Baseball 2000

GENRE: Sports RELEASE DATE: Q2 '99
DEVELOPER: Team 366 PUBLISHER: IDC

The Other Boys of Summer

While Accolade's **HANDBALL** series stagnates and Sierra's **FRONT PAGE SPORTS BASEBALL III** has been killed, there still will be plenty of competition for **HIGH HEAT 2000** this season. A new **TRIPLE PLAY** game will once again flex EA Sports' considerable muscles in another steroid-enhanced arcade version of America's pastime. Last year's **VR BASEBALL** showed promise and takes the field this spring as **BASEBALL EDITION 2000**, sporting even better graphics and a revamped, friendlier interface.

Finally, Microsoft is going after the crowd in the cheap seats with the budget-priced **MICROSOFT BASEBALL**. Think of it as the journeyman utility player of the group—perhaps not the best player on the field, but still able to make the routine plays and blessed with a nice low contract.

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The Richest of Real-time Strat Games Gets Richer

Seven Kingdoms II

by Terry Coleman

Terror: Chan is one designer who can never be accused of insulting the intelligence of his fans. Boasting up Chan's CAPITALISM, for instance, is as close to a crash course in high-end catthroat economics as you're likely to get this side of Harvard Business School. But if you aren't careful, dealing with anything near that kind of depth in a typical real-time strategy game can quickly have you longing for the comparatively modest task tree of AGE OF EMPIRES.

With that in mind, we thought it was time to take another look at Chan's upcoming SEVEN KINGDOMS II. My main concerns have always been that the look of SEVEN KINGDOMS II might have trouble competing with more graphically defensible fare like STARCRAFT, and that the interface wouldn't sufficiently help you keep track of the wide range of activities you can perform.

Fryhtan Dreams

Well, in the latest build from I-Magic, the interface is cleaner, the crisp new buildings tower over the landscape, and you can actually tell a Mongol soldier from a Viking. The Fryhtans, those pseudomythical beings born from the darker warlike recesses of Chan's



WAR IS A MANY-TENTACLED THING SEVEN KINGDOMS II reveals in the differences between historical and neo-mythic. Here, Fryhtan hoards become the Carthaginians' ultimate nightmare.

fertile mind, have an even greater role here than in the original game. Not only do they sport more arcane technology and new magic spells but you can also play the Fryhtan Empire, driving pure humans before you.

The variety of scenarios and campaigns is staggering, and Chan is trying to pull off a random campaign generator that could be the most dynamic we've seen. There are four new human civilizations—Carthaginian, Roman, Indian, and Celtic—with a number of new abilities: ninjas for Japan, Druid Magic for Celts, and the like. Heroes make their first

appearance as well, though these don't seem to overwhelm play in the manner of MASTER OF MAGIC. Having Hannibal, Genghis Khan, and Richard the Lionhearted combine forces to drive out the Fryhtan menace may not be historical, but it's a total kick—and it requires that you master the arts of diplomacy as well as combat.

Like its predecessor, SEVEN KINGDOMS II is more sophisticated, and thus more difficult, than the usual real-time clickfest. In addition to new battlefield tactics such as formations, there are a number of new research paths in the tech technology tree. I particularly liked using espionage, and the enhanced military tech available really enhances gameplay—though I'm not yet sold on the advanced axe-throwing ability of the Vikings, especially when facing the Fryhtan anthero Bregmas, Master of Insects.

All in all, I found plenty to enjoy here. Amid the overcrowded real-time strategy field, SEVEN KINGDOMS II has its own identity, depth to spare, and maybe even graphics that are polished enough to convince the skeptical. **CDW**

Seven Kingdoms II

GENRE: Strategy
RELEASE DATE: Q3 '99
DEVELOPER: Elight Software
PUBLISHER: Interactive Magic

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by Marc Dultz

Last year, THE OPERATIONAL ART OF WAR ably modeled modern combat at the often nebulous operational command level. For 1999, the award-winning turn-based wargame system moves several steps further, now portraying conventional warfare from the dimotic days of 1956 to the close of the millennium.

Anywhere New to Fight?

THE OPERATIONAL ART OF WAR II (TOAW II) will reportedly cover many of the principal military engagements waged during this turbulent time frame, including America's ill-fated involvement in the Vietnam War, three Arab-Israeli wars, the protracted Iran-Iraq conflict, and Operation Desert Storm. What's more, TOAW II will depict several hypothetical, "what if" scenarios, including a 1962 invasion of Cuba by the United States, a supposed Sino-Soviet conflagration in the late 1950s, several different NATO-versus-Warsaw Pact showdowns in Europe, a second Korean conflict (circa 1995), resumption of hostilities between India and Pakistan, and even an invasion of Taiwan by Communist China.

As in TOAW, the units and maps in TOAW II will vary in scope and scale, with units ranging in size from individual companies to entire corps, and hexes measuring anywhere from 2.5km to 50km across. In addition to a simplified (and welcome) play option that will enable players to issue default orders to their units, TOAW II will contain a much more detailed treatment of nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) weapons, including the incorporation of certain triggering events that may escalate their usage.

Anything New to Blow Up?

Beyond some subtle graphical improvements, the game will feature new rules that will give games much more control over the employment of their artillery forces. In addition, TOAW II will more realistically portray the military concept known as command, control, and communications (C3) by introducing command, support, and civilian groups to each side's military hierarchy. While these specialized personnel will attend to various supply and maintenance functions for each combat unit, there may be instances when the unit in question will be paralyzed for a turn or two if its staffers are killed in battle. And although the unit may still be operating at 100 percent readiness, it may not be able to resume normal military operations until its cadre of specialized personnel has been totally re-formed.

Loads of new units and equipment will be featured, too, such as attack and transport helicopters, man-portable antitank and anti-air weaponry, surface-to-air (SAM) missiles, mobile



The Operational Art of War II

From Here to Eternity With TalonSoft's New Wargame

artillery batteries, and jet aircraft. While the equipment database will reportedly be twice that of TOAW, all of the weapons capabilities have been completely recalculated, taking into account the effect of high-explosive antitank (HEAT) rounds versus kinetic ammunition, and different grades of armor, from laminate and composite shielding to steel outer coverings and reactive chinks. Moreover, TOAW II will utilize an all-new antarmor combat resolution system

that is based upon a single shot-single hit algorithm rather than on the massed-fire methodology employed in TOAW.

Civil and military police detachments will actually play a vital role in the game, reducing a unit's movement cost whenever it attempts to pass through densely populated areas such as towns and villages or along roads choked with refugees. Several types of transport helicopters will also be modeled, based upon their airborne lift capacity (1 ton, 3 tons, or 8 tons) and subjected to certain lift radius restrictions. In fact, each ground unit will now be rated according to its transport weight (measured in metric tons), with

some units, such as armored forces, requiring heavy-lift transport helicopters to move from one area to another.

What About That Editor?

The scenario editor is being streamlined as well and will boast a variety of new editing tools and other player-requested features. Finally, many of the scenarios being designed for TOAW II will feature specially designated exclusion

zones that will temporarily prevent gamers from moving their forces into or out of the region. Although gamers will be able to examine friendly units within an exclusion zone, they won't be able to move them until an external event triggers their release.

While TOAW II may look and feel remarkably similar to its award-winning predecessor, the mechanics of play have been refined, and now more than ever the game provides players with a poignant and ingenious look at the vagaries of modern-day combat. **CGW**



SUEZ CANAL SHOWDOWN Unsuspecting frontier units of the Israeli Defense Force are about to be overrun by elements of the Egyptian Army.



THE PHANTOM MENACE With F4 Phantoms flying round-the-clock close air support missions, IDF units occupying the Golan Heights attempt to stem the Syrian tide.

The Operational Art of War II

GENRE: Strat. gfr/Wargame. RELEASE DATE: Q2 '99
DEVELOPER: Norm Kopy
PUBLISHER: TalonSoft/Talon 2

DOOR DIEZ



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501 CHEATS

COMPILED
BY
JESSE HIATT

When most people think of cheating, they picture themselves looking across a poker table at a loaded derringer. Well, this ain't poker, friends. It's *your* game, you bought it, and you can do whatever you want with it. Cheat codes and Easter eggs can get you through a tough spot, grant access to a secret level, provide a peek behind the curtain, or give insight into a programmer's twisted mind. We've sifted through all the junk out there and given you 501 cheats that actually work. Just keep in mind that we're not responsible if you use them in a multiplayer game and get yourself shot.

AGE OF EMPIRES

These codes also work in Rise of Rome, so we thought they were worth repeating. As always, just type these codes in the chat window.

dielectric All units die; you win
resign You resign
reveal map Reveals entire game map
pepperoni pizza Gives 1000 food
coinage Gives 1000 gold
woodstock Gives 1000 wood
quarry Gives 1000 stone
no fog Removes fog-of-war
hail kari Constant rain; you lose
medusa Villagers become medusas (When medusas die they become black riders; when black riders die, they become heavy catapults)
gala Lets you control the assets, but you have to give up control of your human units; good when used with king arthur and grantlinkspace in Rise of Rome

flying dutchman Cheeps piggeerants lets flying dutchmen that can soar over the land

staroids Gives instant building ability (which wears off over time)

home run You win

killk elevates player to starting position X

bigdaddy Gives you a black Chevy Camaro with rocket launcher

big momma Gives you a white Chevy Camaro with rocket launcher

AGE OF EMPIRES: RISE OF ROME

Just bring up the chat window by pressing Enter, type the code, and press Enter again to activate.

king arthur Changes birds into dragons (500 hit points)

grantlinkspace Turns animals into Animal Kings

pow Gives you a new unit called BabyPow, a baby on a tricycle with a knifehead (500 HP, 60 strength, 10 armor, 15 range)

convert this! Gives you Saint Francis, a sapiential unit (25 HP, 200 strength, 0 armor, 10 range)

stormbilly Gives you Zig Zag, a mech (100 HP, 20 strength, 10 armor, 15 range)

photon man Gives a space-age warrior

jacksonville Turns villagers in stone for catapults

BALDUR'S GATE

Open the Baldur's Gate file in your BALDUR'S GATE directory and add the line **Cheats=1** under the "Game Options" entry. Then save the file and run the game. Once you are in the game, hit Ctrl-F4 to bring up the console in which you type the cheats. Ctrl-Tab will also close this console. Type the cheats exactly as they appear below and hit Enter to activate.

Cheats: The Great Goozo {} Summons 10 psychic chadoks who defend you

Cheats: FirstAid {} Gives you 5 healing potions, 5 restorative power potions, and 1 stone-to-flesh scroll

Cheats: Mides {} Gives you 500 gold

Cheats: Cowkill {} Creates a Cowkill spell if cows are nearby

Cheats: OrizAttk {} Creates a hostile Orc



TIPS

• Ever wonder about the black outline around a resource in the base display? It's a signal that you haven't discovered the requisite technology to maximize that resource. The technologies are: Gene Splicing to maximize Nutrients, Economic Engineering to maximize Minerals, and Environmental Economics to maximize Energy

• If you aren't getting the full benefit of see improvements, just raise the see level in that square.

• Though it's easy to miss, you can build aircraft carriers in ALPHA CENTAURI. Flight decks aren't a module but an ability. Use deep radar. Once you have the required tech, put a

transport module on a ship and click on Abilities. You can even make submersible aircraft carriers if you like.

• You can't build a borehole next to one that already exists. But you can build all the boreholes you want next to each other if you start them at the same time.

• If you select a unit and it hasn't moved this turn, you can hit Ctrl-U to upgrade. This is the only way to upgrade any designs with Unity in the name.

• Go to the design screen and find a unit you want to upgrade. Click on it to put that unit in the main window. Click on Upgrade. You'll be presented with a choice of units to upgrade to. Choose one and click OK. This will upgrade

AGE OF EMPIRES: RISE OF ROME AGE OF EMPIRES ALPHA CENTAURI BALDUR'S GATE BATTLEZONE BLOOD 2:
 THE CHOSEN CAESAR III CARMAGEDDON 2 CARNIVORES CIVILIZATION: CALL TO POWER COMMANDOS:
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 PROJECT TRESPASSER TOMB RAIDER III TUROK 2 UNREAL VIPER RACING X-COM INTERCEPTOR

Cheats:DrizztDefends() Creates a friendly Drizzt

Cheats:CriticalItems() Gives you all important items

Cheats:Hans() Moves your party to a free teleport area

Cheats:ExploreArea() Marks entire area explored

BATTLEZONE

Hold down the **Shift** and **Ctrl** keys and type in one of the following:

bazbody Unlimited shields

barren Unlimited pickups and resources

baradar Full map

barfil Unlimited ammo

BLOOD 2: THE CHOSEN

To enter these cheats, just type them in

the chat window (press **T**, then type the cheat, then hit **Enter**).

Mpgod God mode

mpfire Gives you a variety of weapons

mpspawnweapons Gives another variety of weapons

mpspawn Gives you full ammo

mpclip No clip mode

mphealth Gives you full health

mpwhereami Shows your coordinates

mphide Hides your coordinates

mpheal Makes your weapons more powerful

mpkillall Kills all the bad guys on the level

mpspeedup Increases your speed

mpstronger Increases your strength

mpscale Changes your character model to Grib

CIVILIZATION: CALL TO POWER

The following cheats are accessible from the interface:

A. On the Command Line bar, there is a button called **Cheat**.

B. To access the button, hit the **Hide** (-) key, then the space bar. Click the **Cheat** button.

C. Cheats can be used with fog-of-war on, but they are more easily used with fog tagged off.

D. The main map and game are disabled while cheat mode is on. To resume playing, close the Cheat tools.

E. Cheats will destabilize network, multiplayer games.

CHEATS

* To activate the City cheat, click on the **City** button. Select a city. To change the name of the selected city, click on the text box with the city name displayed. Edit the text so that the name reads as you would like it. Hit the **Enter** key when you are finished editing.

* To change the population of the selected city, click on the text box with the population displayed. Edit the text so that the number is the population size you would like. Hit **Enter** when you are finished editing.

Advances Cheat

Click on the **Advances** button. Select the player to whom you would like to give advances; player 2 is the Human player, players 1, 3, and so forth are AI players.

* From the "All Advancements" list, highlight the advance or advances you would like to give to the selected player, then click the < (less than) button.

* To take advances away from a player, highlight the advance or advances from the list of "Current Advancements," then just click on the > (more than) button.

(Note that the arrows aren't aligned correctly, so click the upper-left corner on the > key, and the upper-right corner on the < key.)



CHEATS

After starting a game, press **Ctrl+K** to access the Map Editor and Scenario Commands:

- Y** Reveal map
- Shift-F1** Create unit
- Shift-F2** Technological discovery
- Shift-F3** Switch sides/set view
- Shift-F4** Change/set energy credits
- Shift-F5** Change year
- Shift-F6** Kill opponent
- Shift-F7** View replay
- Shift-F8** View movies
- Shift-F9** Edit faction diplomacy

every unit of one type to another whether they've moved or not. You have to have a design the program considers superior before this will work.

* When recruiting mind worms it pays to be outside your borders. Any units that are found/captured beyond the colored border of your faction are independent and don't need support from any city.

* If you're tired of fighting indigenous life-forms, activate the Scenario Editor (under Scenario on the menu window), go to Scenario Rules and click on the top box to turn off the planet. Save the game as a scenario. Deactivate the Scenario Editor. Then start a new scenario, making sure to load the scenario you just created.

* Once you have a selection of base facilities it can be tedious to take over or start a new base. To minimize tedium, find (or make) a production queue that you like (including the item currently being produced) and right-click on the queue area. Choose Save, then pick a slot and give it a name. Next time you take or build a base, right-click on the production queue and load the file you created. Close the production screen and close the base screen. Admire your work.

* There are more choices on the base governor's list than are readily apparent. If you click on the down-arrows on either side of the governor button, you get a list that lets you tailor the governor settings to your liking.

kill you. In doing so, you can also use the following cheats:

- Ctrl** Makes you run really fast
- Shift-S** Switches on/off slow mode
- Shift-F** Switches on/off time indicating polygons per frame and time used to render this frame (in milliseconds)

COMMANDOS: BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY

- These codes are for the English version only.
- Type **ODM01582** during the game. Then you can activate the following cheats:
- Shift-W** Invisible to enemy
 - Shift-X** Teletransport (use the mouse to place your commando)
 - Ctrl-I** Invincibility
 - Ctrl-Shift-N** Feels like mission

FFA 99

- To get the Water introduced, type **win** repeatedly while game is loading.
- If you are close to goal and there are no teammates to pass to, you can tap the pass button to steal into the corner of the net.
- If you are close to goal and there are no teammates to pass to, you can tap the left button to attempt a chip shot.
- You can take out defenders who are waiting for you to chest a ball by holding after side made key while the ball is in the air. At the last second your player will kick out of the way and let the ball go by.
- You can pull off some spectacular volley moves by double tapping the vol-

button. Volleys are more likely to score but require more time and space.

- If you face your player away from the net and double tap the shoot button, he will attempt a bicycle kick.
- To execute a 360-degree spin move, just hold down a still move button and press shoot (or just double tap a still move button). This leaves you wide open for a woooo slide tackle, so be careful.
- As a last resort against players who have an obvious chance on net, press **L1** and your player will foul the opponent, often in a spectacular fashion.

FIGHTER SQUADRON: SCREAMIN' DEMONS OVER EUROPE

Go into the screens on life and make the following change: **ShockRadius=1**. This enables the few cheats that are available. Once this cheat is enabled, enter the sim and open up a chat box (with ~) and then type the following: **FS_LookAtTheSillyMonkey** Shows up everyone's plane but yours **FS_HeaveABoo** Drops a cow out of everyone's plane **FS_Decompose** Causes everyone else's planes to break apart (Note that the above cheats will not work in single or multiplayer games unless you have already entered the **ShockRadius=1** cheat.)

Other on file changes:

- EnableCollBrete=1** Will turn on the collision button in the options screen.
- DisplayCoard=1** Will display your current FS coordinates in the onscreen map (in the upper-right-hand corner of the screen). This will aid you in object placement when building missions or new terrain.
- PutSlewBehindVehicle=1** Will cause you to be placed behind the vehicle you just left by hitting **S**
- TextureCacheLimit=x** Where x is a number (in bytes) for the maximum size of the in-memory texture cache (in text file). If cache grows greater than this number, it will be cleared. The default is 500M.
- TextureCacheSize=x** Where x is a number (in bytes) for the maximum size of the in-memory textures cache. The default value is 10M. Setting the cache to a higher number may improve game performance on machines that have memory to spare.
- NetMaxPlayers=x** Where x is the maximum number of players allowed in a network game (only the server machine needs to have this set). This number may not be greater than 23 and has only been thoroughly tested with 8 players

TextureCacheSize=x Where x is a number (in bytes) for the maximum size of the in-memory textures cache. The default value is 10M. Setting the cache to a higher number may improve game performance on machines that have memory to spare.

NetMaxPlayers=x Where x is the maximum number of players allowed in a network game (only the server machine needs to have this set). This number may not be greater than 23 and has only been thoroughly tested with 8 players

FORSAKEN

Type the following codes at any menu. To turn them off, just type them again.

- BUBBLES** Turns on chest mode

CHEATS

HERETIC 2

To activate cheats, first access the console by pressing the tilde (~) key then type in the codes as written.

- playbeller** Toggles god mode
- twoweeks** Toggles power-ups
- matwagon** Kill all monsters (except for the boss)
- victor** Kill all monsters (including boss)
- angermonsters** All monsters get angry
- crazymonsters** All monsters go crazy
- showcards** No-clip mode
- weapprev** Shows coordinates
- weapprev** Go to previous weapon
- weappnext** Go to next weapon



sucktdown chicken Turns you into a chicken

- sucktdown all** Gives you all (useful) items
- sucktdown health** Gives you maximum health
- sucktdown mana** Gives you maximum offensive and defensive mana
- sucktdown armor** Gives you silver armor, type again to get gold armor
- sucktdown powerup** Gives you a Tame of Power power-up

spawn item_weapon_hellstaff Gives you the Hellstaff weapon to spawn the desired item just type in **spawn X** where X is from the following list.

- item_weapon_firewall** item_defense_ringofrepulsion
- item_weapon_maceballis** item_defense_shield
- item_weapon_magcmissile** item_defense_teleport
- item_weapon_phenonbow** item_health_full
- item_weapon_redrain_bow** item_health_half
- item_weapon_sphereofannihilation** item_mana_combo_half
- item_defense_meteorbarrier** item_mana_combo_quarter
- item_defense_polymorph** item_mana_defensive_full
- item_defense_powerup** item_mana_defensive_half
- item_defense_powerup** item_mana_offensive_full
- item_defense_powerup** item_mana_offensive_half
- item_defense_powerup** item_puzzle_canyorkney
- item_defense_powerup** item_puzzle_cloudkey
- item_defense_powerup** item_puzzle_cog
- item_defense_powerup** item_puzzle_crystal
- item_defense_powerup** item_puzzle_dungeonkey
- item_defense_powerup** item_puzzle_high-priestesskey
- item_defense_powerup** item_puzzle_high-priestesssymbol
- item_defense_powerup** item_puzzle_hive2amulet
- item_defense_powerup** item_puzzle_hive2gem
- item_defense_powerup** item_puzzle_hive2gear
- item_defense_powerup** item_puzzle_minerartwheel
- item_defense_powerup** item_puzzle_ore
- item_defense_powerup** item_puzzle_plazacntainer
- item_defense_powerup** item_puzzle_potion
- item_defense_powerup** item_puzzle_refinedore
- item_defense_powerup** item_puzzle_shield
- item_defense_powerup** item_puzzle_slumcntainer
- item_defense_powerup** item_puzzle_tamekey
- item_defense_powerup** item_puzzle_tome
- item_defense_powerup** item_puzzle_townkey

IAMZEUS

Roll mode

FULLMONTY Load saved

LUMBERJACK Missile tagge

JIMBEAM Laser beam tagge

G-POLICE

Enter these cheats at the main menu

STATTOE In-game life

WOODHOG Hawk skins

SUPACAM Switches to money cam, when you shoot them down

BENIHILL Beany Hill cars

PANTALON All secret misakes (in training Menu)

ODDBIES Gives you infinite shields

MRTICKY Gives you infinite weapons

(Note: You won't be able to progress past the current mission when these last two codes are enabled.)

Here are the passwords for every level

DOLMAN Level 2

SONAGAV Level 3

ACEDUF Level 4

JOIDOUN Level 5

WENSKI Level 6

Whod's your boss? Deactivates chase mode

REALISTIC GUNNERY

You can only take so many bullets in real life. To make combat with the marines more interesting, you can make the mp5 more powerful. You can set the numbers for whatever you want, but I tested the following, and it is pretty realistic and balanced. The first three are for you, the player, the second three are for the awajones.

- mp5spr_bmmAR_bullet= 20**
 - mp5spr_bmmAR_bullet= 20**
 - mp5spr_bmmAR_bullet= 20**
 - mp5spr_bmmAR_bullet= 30**
 - mp5spr_bmmAR_bullet= 30**
 - mp5spr_bmmAR_bullet= 30**
- In case you're curious, you can modify all the weapons in a similar fashion. There are too many variables to print here, so look for a complete rundown in a future CGTips

KING'S QUEST: MASK OF ETERNITY

Press **Shift-Ctrl-7** to get access to the console. You can conveniently ignore the password prompt. After typing in the desired codes, hit **Shift-Ctrl-7** again to return to the game.

noConCollide Turns off clipping mode
conCollide Turns clipping mode back on
setFirstPerson First-person mode
setThirdPerson Third-person mode

god/ungod
Toggles god mode on and off (some things still can kill you but not many)



In case you have the urge to play naked.

teleport Lets you click on the world map and be transported to the desired spot

Give X (where X is from the following list)

Dagger
SmallAx
BroadSword
Mace
LakeSword
SkatKingSword
BattleAx
WarHammer
Pike
LongSword
FlameSword
TempleSword
SmCrossbow
AzrieHammer
SmCpndCBow
ShortBow
LongBow
Crossbow
CpndCrossbow
FlameBow
IceCrossbow
WeeperEyes
DemonRocks

SkelBow
SlimStone
WitchBolt
Lava
Fists
Icicle
LeatherGloves
LeatherArmor
LeatherBoots
ChainMailShirt
ChainMailGloves
ChainMailSuit
PlateMail
BronzePlate
FullArmor
Helmet
TempleArmor
GodArmor
Mushroom
SacredWater
Crystal
ElixerOfLife
Clarity

Invisible
Invulnerable
Strength
RingOfDeadHero
Ashes
Candle
SilverCoins
MagicMap
RopeAndHook
RingOfLight
KeyToDeathMaze
Maid
BrokenShield
RustedBrokenShield
HearingHorn
AntiPoisonFlower
GreenMushroomPile
Rock
IronLock
OakRoot
LodeStone
CrystalPyramid
BlackDiamond

AmberGlow
BasiliskTongue
FireGem
PipeCap1
PipeCap2
OregonKey
RockKey
BlueAdamant
JailKey
DecipheringAmulet
Paddle
Feather
GoodSkull
BadSkull
RoundKey
SquareKey
Ladle
Ivoryband
Mask1
Mask2
Mask3
Mask4
Mask5

Piece1
Piece2
Piece3
Piece4
Scroll
LedyBell
RustedLock
KeepKey
StoneOrder
MetalShaft
TruthKey
LightKey
OrderKey
MarbleTablet1
MeekMedelian
Grail
Mask3B
Piece5
UnitHom
SpellPage
Mask1A
Piece1A
DarkPyramid

ShardFuse
MarbleTablet1
MarbleTablet2
MarbleTablet3
GriffRoomKey
GriffCageKey
ClockShaft
HookDown
HookUp
SpinningMask
Onbow
Spear
IceShard
IceLever
LucriferFire
NoRanged
NoArmor
BirthdaySuit
Logo1
Logo2

MYTH II: SOULBLIGHTER

If you hold down the **Shift** key while selecting "New Game" at the main menu, you will gain access to all the non-zeroed missions.

Hidden Griffin

Bungee had been working as a griffin unit, but bagged the idea. There is one lonely griffin left however, and



he lives in a tree on Level 15 (Relic). Just find the shard in the northeast, and just off the edge of the map there is a big tree on the hill. Rotate your camera so that it points south and **Zoom** in until your camera is in the tree trunk, and you'll see the griffin. (Too bad you can't control him.)

Long-Awaited Drinking Party

To access this hilarious secret level, alert a gnom in the third level. The mission calls for you to escort a peasant into a friendly



SABRY	Level 7
MAZMAN	Level 8
GAZMAN	Level 9
DELUCS	Level 10
ANOODOO	Level 11
KIMBCHS	Level 12
ANDYMAG	Level 13
YERMAN	Level 14
OLLIE	Level 15
THEYOLK	Level 16
TONYMASH	Level 17
ANDYCHOW	Level 18
BIONIC	Level 19
TSLATER	Level 20
IANTHO	Level 21
JONRITZ	Level 22
CLAIREC	Level 23
STEVEH	Level 24
ANDUSF	Level 25
EGANLAC	Level 26
EDFIRE	Level 27
STUBOMB	Level 28
THONBY	Level 29
JIMMAG	Level 30
PUGGER	Level 31
ROSSO	Level 32
CAKEBOY	Level 33
NIKNAK	Level 34
SADLORO	Level 35

INCORING

Just hit the following function keys to get these cheats:

- F2** Makes hitting targets easier
- F3** Makes player invulnerable
- F4** Gives infinite lives
- F5** Gives infinite weapons
- F6** Gives a smart bomb
- F7** Quit
- F8** Quick save
- F9** Reloads quick save
- F10** Shows the frame rate (Hit again to turn off)
- F11** Restart the level

INDEPENDENCE WAR

Type in **darkgoat** during flight to activate cheats.

- Left Shift-k** Allows you to dock with any vessel
- Left Shift-0** (vrs) Kill targeted ship
- Left Shift-s** Freeze most scripted event
- Left Shift-j** Freeze target
- Left Shift-i** Makes you invulnerable
- Left Shift-j** Jump to largestore point
- Left Shift-b** Jump to target
- Left Shift-B** Match the velocity of a targeted ship
- Left Shift-a** Gives you supergoed

Left Shift-backspace

View the most recent mission

Left Shift-w Win the mission

JANE'S WWII FIGHTERS

(A *CSW* Exclusive Cheat)

In *Quick Mission* mode, if you shoot down seven enemy fighters yourself, without using a weapon and with both single ammo and vulnerability turned off, there is a 20 percent chance that a UFO will be created.

MICROSOFT COMBAT FLIGHT SIM

Flying Pig

Open a game at coordinates **NS1*10.00* W1* 50.42**. Fly around and look for the cloud. Directly under the cloud at about 2,000 feet is a large pink pig, hovering in midair.

Secret Mission

Call in the mission directory for a file called **team.mil**. Rename it to **Team.mis**. Once you've done this, an interesting new mission called "Combat Flight Sim Team Dukey" will appear in the single missions list.



village. Before you reach the town, send some troops earth, along the path (on the west side of the river). When you get to the river, you will see some tiny islands. On one of the islands sit three frogs. Kill the frogs

and then proceed with the mission as planned. When you proceed to the next mission, you will be treated to some shots of the jungle town in the intro, and then get to take some photos with binoculars out for a lasting trip.

Limbo, Hends, and Smoking Greter

This level is truly spectacular, especially if fireworks are what you are looking for. The level teases with Wileys and huge piles of catchal

changes. To get to it, you have to finish *The Murder of Crowe* level. At the end of that level, The Decider walks down a path to the exit. Normally you

would follow him, but this time, turn around and go north, clear across the level, to the zibonets exit. Then you will proceed to the secret level.



NEED FOR SPEED III

Type the following codes at any screen to activate the cheat:

- RUSHHOUR** Increases NPC traffic
- EMPIRE** Opens up Empire City track
- ELMINDR** Gives you the secret El Mite car
- MERC** Gives you the Mercedes CLKDR
- GOFAST** Allows you to drive super-fast in single-race mode
- ALLCARG** Gives access to all cars

Type any of the following codes right before you click the **RACE** button in

order to drive these secret cars.

- GD01** Mazda Miata
- GD02** Toyota Landcruiser
- GD03** Cargo truck
- GD04** BMW 5 series
- GD05** '71 Plymouth Barracuda
- GD06** Ford pickup with camper shell
- GD07** Jeep Cherokee
- GD08** Ford full-size van
- GD09** '84-'85 Mustang
- GD10** '88 Chevy pickup
- GD11** Range Rover
- GD12** School bus
- GD13** Caprice Classic taxi
- GD14** Chevy cargo van
- GD15** Volvo station wagon

- GD16** Sedan
- GD17** Crown Victoria police car
- GD18** Mitsubishi Eclipse police car
- GD19** Grand Am police car
- GD20** Range Rover police car/ranger vehicle
- GD21** Cargo truck (same as G3)

POPOULOUS

Press **Tab** and **F11** at the same time, then type **lyric** and press **Enter** at the window that appears to enable cheat mode. Now, type one of the following codes at anytime during the game:

- Tab-F3** Spells
- Tab-F4** Buildings
- Tab-F5** Music

QUAKE II

To activate these cheats, press the tilde (~) key and enter the following codes in the console window:

- god** God mode
- noclrip** No larger mode
- noclip** No clipping
- give all** All items, weapons, 350 ammo
- give jacket armor** Jacket armor
- give shotgun** Shotgun
- give super shotgun** Super shotgun
- 23** Ectoplasm
- 24** Ectoplasm +
- 25** Hat up
- 26** Hat up +
- 27** Deermen love book
- 28** Deermen gear
- 29** Glass vial
- 30** Glass vial
- 31** Iron weight
- 32** Bucket
- 33** Bucket full of water
- 34** Grenade mine
- 35** Item artifact book
- 37** Redgear book
- 38** Hammerfell book on Flam
- 39** Map from Mikkie
- 40** Leather pouch of gold
- 41** Crenell's steno rap
- 42** Silver boot
- 43** Shovel
- 44** Aloe
- 45** Torch
- 46** Mosaic eyeglasses
- 47** Flag
- 48** Silver lockst
- 49** League
- 50** Resign parchment
- 51** Jeto's job map
- 52** Flask of Liberland
- 53** Mordaga's whetstone
- 54** Jester's journal
- 55** Kibben's journal, The dead monk
- 56** Tropic's tournament book
- 57** Jaro's locked journal
- 58** Star stone
- 59** Key to Izoara's house
- 60** Key to Izoara's house
- 61** Spell
- 64** Glass bottle empty
- 65** Glass bottle with water
- 66** Glass bottle with red water and wine
- 67** Strength potion
- 68** Bandage
- 69** Bandage with blood
- 70** Saine
- 71** Saine
- 72** Saine
- 73** Saine
- 74** Bone key

NHL 99

Create a player and type one of the following names. You'll see the message: "Player is already in the database," and you should click the check mark. The new player will have full stats.

Devil, **Harold**, **Flying Sausage**, **Cory Yip**, **Bray**, **Andromeda**, **John Pa**, **Jeff Duce**, **Frank Shump**, **Jeff Mink**, **Steve North**, **Andy Harris**, **Chris Deas**, **Erica Wild**, **Mark Lissner**, **Henry Goh**, **Steve Courtney**, **Bruce McElfish**

Type these codes anytime during the game.

- mkhls** Gives all players long arms, legs, and necks
- mkhls** Makes players small
- homerand** Adds a point to home team's score
- awards** Adds a point to away team's score
- penalty** Causes a penalty
- injury** Causes an injury
- zombi** Causes the zomboni to appear on the ice
- fireworks** Starts a fireworks show
- flash** All the spectators start using their flash cameras
- lights** Activates pregame spotlights
- check** Automatic body checks
- sths** Automatic stick holds

Exit the game and, while in the Credits, select **Programming** and type any cheat from the following list

- wraps** Makes game speed faster
- Enable** Enables Internet play
- giant** Makes giant players
- STB** Plays the Stanley Cup video
- unlock** Boosts all players' stats
- power** Makes huge goalies
- crowd** No crowd
- unlock** Unlocks all resolution options for D3D

hendon Gives players big hends

give machinegun Machine gun
give grenade launcher
 Grenade launcher
give rocket launcher Rocket launcher
give shells Shells
give bullets Bullets
give cells Cells
give grenades Grenades
give rockets Rockets

give slugs Slugs
give quad damage Quad damage
give invulnerability Invulnerability
give silencer Silencer
give rebreather Rebreather
give health 100 health
give weapons All weapons
give ammo All ammo
give armor Body armor

SIN

First press the title (+) key, as in other QUAKE-engine games, then enter the code.

/health 999 Health 999
/weapons All weapons
/rebreather God mode
/noclip on No clip mode
/wasteland No target

To get items, type **give** or **spawn** where **is** any of the following:

magnum Gives the magnum
shotgun Gives the shotgun
assault rifle Gives the assault rifle
rocket launcher Gives the rocket launcher
mp5 Gives the sniper rifle
holster Gives the big gun from the chopper
reactive shield Gives the reactive shield
rockets Gives rockets
coin Gives a coin
health Gives a health pack
cookies Gives a pack of cookies
sensetime Makes a light-effect
Chaingun Chaingun (the one you get with the 5-key)
Blue idcard Blue idcard
Orange idcard Orange idcard
Yellow idcard Yellow idcard
Green idcard Green idcard
Small key Small key
Bag from bank robbery Bag from bank robbery
Give a coin Gives a coin
Papers with evidence Papers with evidence
First part of pulse cannon First part of pulse cannon
Second part of pulse cannon Second part of pulse cannon
Third part of pulse cannon Third part of pulse cannon
Chemical protection suit Chemical protection suit
Blueprints from construction site Blueprints from construction site
Sample from chemplant Sample from chemplant
Silencer Silencer for standard gun

CHEATS

Level Skip Cheat

Go to the console by pressing the tilde (~) key, then type **map x** (where **x** is the level name—for instance, **map boss2**) For a list of level names, go to *Mohawk/Host Game* from the main menu.

RAILROAD TYCOON 2

To activate cheats, first press **Tab** to bring up your cursor and then type in one of the following:

BigGold Win with gold victory
BigSilver Win with silver victory
BigBronze Win with bronze victory
BoBo Lose scenario
King of the hill Give your character \$100,000
PowerBall Give company \$100 million
Slash fund Give company \$1 million
Let me in Give access to all closed territories
Speed racer Doubles maximum train speeds
AMT103 Converts all engines to AMT-103s at expense of profits
Show me the trains Give all engines
Viagra Increases city sizes

RAINBOW 6

To activate cheats, press **~** in the game and then type in one of the following:
TEAMGOD Team god mode
AVATARGOD Player god mode

STUMPY Stumpy mode as **CLODHOOPER** Enlarges player's feet and hands

MEGANAGGIN Mega head mode
BIHOGGIN Big head mode
SPINERDISCOUNT Gives full access
NOBRAKER Tears AI off!
ORBRUCKER Debris keys enabled
TURNPUNCHICK Changes player's face 3D to 2D
1-800 Heavy breaking
EXPLORE Toggles the victory conditions on/off

STAR WARS: ROGUE SQUADRON

To enter the cheats, click on **Settings** from the console, then select **General**. There you will see a blank space labeled "Enter Password Here." Click on it, and press **Shift-Oed** to disable the alert.
CREDITS Star Wars-style credits
LEIANKROUT Activates force feedback for PC joysticks
GUNDARK Modifies force feedback control for PC joysticks
CHICKEN Allows you to play as an AT-ST
IAMODLY Gives you unlimited lives



To activate any of the cheats, first press the **Ctrl-Shift-Alt-C** keys all at the same time. Then type in one of the following cheats in the window.

lem week

call cousin Vinnie

Zyxwvu

gerberge in, gerberge out power to the masses
water in the desert

Makes buildings, utilities, zoning, transportation, planting trees, and creating surface water free
 Go to the Meet with the Local Fundraising Event. Once there, Vinnie will offer you some cash
 Use the **call cousin Vinnie** cheat and refuse his offer. Then use the **zyxwvu** cheat and the beautiful **SIMCITY Castle** will appear in your Rewards menu. The castle boosts land value, eurs, and does some other good stuff
 Makes ell gerberge buildings available
 Makes ell power buildings available
 Makes ell water buildings available

Set on
Set off
Terrain one up
Terrain one down
Terrain ten up
Terrain ten down
pay tribute to your king
I love red tape
let's make a deal
nerdz root

Changes the sea to salt water
 Changes the sea to fresh water
 Raises the terrain
 Lowers the terrain
 Raises the terrain
 Lowers the terrain
 All rewards become available
 All ordinances become available
 Neighbor and business deals offered
 Gives you high-tech industry



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STARCRRAFT: BROOD WARS

These cheats are identical to the codes for the original STARCRRAFT. First hit the Enter key and type in the cheat, then press Enter again to activate it. The codes that affect gameplay conditions can be toggled by typing them a second time.

there is no cow level Wins current mission, game over man. Lose current mission.
power overwhelming All friendly units and structures are invincible (can affect scripted scenes).
show me the money Adds 10,000 minerals and 10,000 gas.

whats mine is mine Adds 10,000 minerals.
breathe deep Adds 10,000 gas something for nothing. All upgrades can be researched, instantly and free of charge. black sheep wild. Turns off fog-of-war.

operation cweil Increases unit and structure build times dramatically. Instant research staying alive. Turns off victory conditions so the current mission will never end.

medieval man All technology and special abilities can be researched instantly and free of charge.
modify the phase veridance Opens up the entire technology tree.

food for thought Turns off supply requirements the gathering infinite energy for all friendly and enemy units.

war: what what it used to be Disables fog-of-war.
Noglass Prevents enemy units from using energy-based special abilities.
media free zone Plays a hidden Zerg tune, available only when using the Zerg race.

Ophelia Enables level skipping. For original STARCRRAFT campaign mission, type **terranY, zergY, or protossY** where Y is the number of the mission. For BROOD WAR campaign missions, type **xprotossY, xterranY, or xzergY**, where Y is the number of the mission.

TOUGHBOY Gives you all power-ups in the game.

SHOGU

To access the cheats, press T (or whatever you have the message button mapped to), type the code, and then hit Enter.
mp1enra Gives you unlimited ammo.
mp6ed God mode.
mp1ka Full armor, armor, and health.
mp1ealth Full armor, armor, and health.
mp1anna Full armor.
mp1armor Full armor.
mp1clip Toggles clipping mode on/off.
mp1ps Toggles coordinates on/off.
mp1camera Toggles camera mode on/off.
mp1ightscope Tunes lightscape edit mode on/off.

SPEC OPS: RANGER TEAM BRAVO

• Move the speedball file out of the specs directory, and you'll gain access to all missions.
 • Hit **Alt-Shift-V**, go to your name list and select the Viewfinder, and your ranger will be invincible.

TRESPASSER

To change levels, hold **Ctrl-Shift-Q-W**, then release the W key. If you're stuck with this game, here is how to activate some cheats that might ease the pain. Press **Ctrl-F11**. A cursor will appear in the lower left of the screen; then type in any of these codes. After typing the code, press Enter and hit **Ctrl-F11** again to activate.

INEXT Teleports you through important locations on the level.
LOC Gives coordinates on the world map.

BONES Highlights objects you can interact with.

GORE 2 More gore.

INVUL Invincibility.

WOO Infinite ammo.

BIONISWOMAN You can jump higher, but you can slower.

WIN Shows ending FMV.

OMIGS Frezes dino.

TOMB RAIDER III

• To skip a level in the game: Grow the statue; walk one step backward; walk one step forward;rouch and stand; spin around three times; then jump forward.

• To get all weapons: Drive the statue; walk one step backward; walk one step

forward;rouch and stand; spin around three times; then jump backward.

• To find a secret room: Go to the pit in Lara's mansion; Behind the dining board; there is a switch. Flip the switch to open a door in the main room of the mansion. Behind there is another switch. Pull that switch, back around and run to the open door that's across the hall. Once in there, you'll find Lara's treasure room.

TUROK 2

Select "Enter Cheats" in the Options menu. An asterisk keycap appears on which you must type the names of the cheats you want available to you during the game. To turn a cheat on (or off), you must then go to Cheat Select Menu and select the particular cheat you want.

OBVIOUSLYOUTTHERE Lets you activate any of the cheats (it's the Aber cheat, since it's equivalent to typing in the names of all cheats).

TROMPEM Big hands and feet mode.

BIGANDNOODLE Big head mode.

HELLOSTIRNY Stick mode.

LILLIPUTIAN Tiny mode.

PIGASO Pro-and-ink mode.

HENRYBULLER Goggles mode.

YUQUIEROUAN Shows Juan's face as enemy dinosaur.

MINDPROBLEZ Do nothing.

INDEOAPPS Blockout mode.

WIZARDPOFZ Psychiclike features.

JANESSPELAWORLD Same as Juan's hel for Juan.

UNREAL

Hit the tilde (~) key, which brings up a console; then type any of the following cheats:

Allmmo Full ammo.

Fly Fly mode on.

Ghost Fly mode plus no clipping.

God God mode.

Wink Manual mode.

invisible1 Makes you invisible.

invisible2 Toggles invisibility off.

killall Kills all enemies on level.

Playersonly Frezes all enemies.

Suicide You die.

Summon X Gives the desired weapons or stats where X is the name of the item.

Enter the following names to play the corresponding level.

vortex2 Vortex Riders.

ryleve RyLeve's Falls.

dig Reggae Mine.

BONUS

Here's a secret bonus cheat the folks at Fox interactive put in just for CDW readers.

While playing a game in Easy mode,

activate the console by typing a tilde (~) and then type **RIPLEY_WAS_HERE** for a special surprise!

ALIENS VS. PREDATOR

dog passage	Depth of Resizer
ch1za	Scram Passage Ch1za-Hill Water God Temple
ceremony	The Ceremonial Chambers
dark	Dark Areas
horeb0d	Horeb0d Village
terran0x	Terran0x Underground
terran0x	Terran0x
noork	Noork's Elbow
ru1ta	Basile of Vendors
trench	The Trench
isvran4	ISV-Kran Deck 4
isvran32	ISV-Kran Deck 3 and 2
isvdeck1	ISV-Kran Deck 1
spire0llage	Spire 0llage
thesun0p1e	The Sun0p1e
skycave0	Satway to No Pah
skytown	No Pah Haven
skytown	Outpost
vel0rand	Vel0rand Pass
tblst	Bluff Caveswing
d0ssapp	D0ss Mountain Pass
d0ss0cellars	Cellars at D0ss Pass
no0t0at	Serpent Canyon
no0c	No0 Castle
no0rd0r	D0ss0rd0r Lair
d0ss0rd0r	D0ss0rd0r
extrem0lab	Membership Basement
extrem0lab	Membership Lab
extrem0care	Membership Care
extrem0gen	Sektor Generator
extrem0gen	Intersectors
extrem0dark	The Darkening
extrem0end	The Source
	Antichamber
quest0nd	The Source

VIPER RACING

Press **Shift-F12** to activate a blink camera that flies around using DESCORT-style controls.

X-COM INTERCEPTOR

Press **Ctrl-W** when you hear a double beep tone; cheat mode is active.
gentouch0is enables cheats.
gentouch0is invisibility.
fill0rup Unlimited flight range.

THIEF: THE DARK PROJECT

The following cheats work only with v1.33.

- Press **Control-Alt-Shift-End** to skip the current mission.
- Add the line **cash_bonus** to your dark.cfg. If set to an integer, its value is added to your loot total.
- Add the line **startling_mission X** in your dark.cfg, where X is the desired mission number. When you select New Game, you will start at that mission.

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G.O.D.'S WORK

...is done **out** of a **church**. But the **Gathering of Developers** aren't **choirboys**—considering that they have titles like **MAX PAYNE**, **HEAVY METAL: F.A.K.K.²**, and **KISS: PSYCHO CIRCUS** in development. Who are they, and why do they think **they're out to save gaming?**

by Ken Brown



It's anything but business as usual for the Gathering of Developers. The brush new Dallas-based game publisher—otherwise known as G.D.D.—has shaken up the industry by shaping itself as a developer's collective. Their strategy: Fund good games by successful developers, pay higher royalties, and give game makers more credit and creative freedom. If the G.D.D. strategy pays off, it could result in healthier independent developers and better games. It may also serve as a hedge against the kind of publisher consolidation that has occurred in the console-game sector of the industry.

To fulfill their vision, G.D.D. cofounders Mike Wilson and Harry Miller set out to create the gaming industry's version of the film world's United Artists. UA was formed in 1918, when Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford got fed up with the way the big studios were exploiting people. They formed a company that rewarded their talent and put more of the decisions in the hands of those who understood movie making. With that in mind, Wilson and Miller formed a collective with eight developers, including 3D Realms, Ritual Entertainment, and Terminal Reality, all of which have a say in the titles G.D.D. publishes.

The strategy has been controversial. Early critics claimed that G.D.D. wouldn't have the marketing muscle to put enough of its titles on mass retailers' shelves. Others said putting the lunatics in charge of the asylum would lead to blown deadlines and kitchen-sink game design.

But the evidence is beginning to mount that G.D.D.'s plan is indeed working. In the 18 months since G.D.D.'s inception, it has helped develop 10 games, published JAZZ JACKRABBIT and RAILROAD TYCOON II (both of which sold well), and has a string of impressive titles lined up that include FLY, MAX PAYNE, HEAVY METAL: F.A.K.K. 2, NOCTURNE, and others (covered in the following pages). G.D.D. also appears to have made an impact on the way publishers structure developer royalties, which have grown from the low teens to 20-30 percent.

That's not to say G.D.D. is taking over the world. Since the company is so lean, with a skeletal marketing and management crew, the Gathering can't fund more titles before shipping a top seller or raising outside capital. In addition, G.D.D. still hasn't attracted a top-tier, high-profile developer like id Software, Ensemble Studios, or Valve. Even 3D Realms, arguably the highest-profile member of the Gathering, hasn't committed wholeheartedly, allowing only certain titles to go out under the Gathering label (and DUKE NUKEM FOREVER isn't one of them).

WHAT'S G.O.D.'S PLAN?

So where is all of this leading? No matter how successful the Gathering is, it probably won't threaten the long-term hegemony of publishing powerhouses like EA and Microsoft. But Wilson believes it's important for someone to act as a counterweight to the big boys. He wants the Gathering to "keep the balance of power weighted in the direction of the creators rather than the financiers, before consolidation makes things really scary."

Of course, G.D.D. could become a big boy itself. It happened to United Artists and, more recently, to Electronic Arts, which was

founded on some of the same ideals. G.O.D.'s founders have said that they expect to grow with the addition of other development companies, and they hope to take on more titles when they have the money. And what if they get an offer for \$50 million to sell out?

"I'd take it," Wilson replied. "Then I'd buy one of my other partners out and get back in. It's still too much fun shaking things up in this ridiculous industry to walk away completely, and I don't know how anything could compare to the Gathering in that area."

G.O.D. Cofounders Mike Wilson (above, left) and Harry Miller (right) and the disciples (inset) in their converted church offices.



Max Payne

Taking Action to the Max

Prepare
to Truly
Feel the Payne



by Joe Vallina

Max Payne is in a world of hurt. As an undercover DEA operative in New York City, he's not in the easiest of professions. Three years ago his wife and child were brutally murdered by the New York Mafia, and he now finds himself undercover and up to his neck in the biggest organized crime family in the city. It seems that there is a new, deadly drug on the streets, Valkyr, and Max is getting close to the source. But just as he gets onto something big, his superior officer is killed and the murder is pinned on Max. This of course hits all of the local papers, blowing his cover in the mob. Quickly he finds himself being chased by the cops and the Mafia. Welcome to the world of Max Payne.

MAX PAYNE is being developed by Remedy Entertainment in Helsinki, Finland, under the watchful eye of the game's publisher, Gathering of Developers (G.O.D.). Remedy isn't very well known (the company's biggest hit to date was the driving title DEATH RALEX, a lackluster seller), but with G.O.D.'s help, the company hopes to hit the big time with MAX PAYNE.

In the Gritty Underworld

Max's trials will take place in areas ranging from down-and-dirty industrial settings all the way to palatial, upscale havens where the "real evil dwells," according to MAX PAYNE's Game Designer Sam Lake.

Some of the game's interiors sport amazing detail. The designers have created realistic environments that are unmatched by anything else we've seen. It's one thing to conjure up alien environments, but quite another to accurately and believably render the real world.

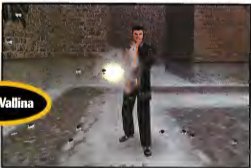
The game will use dynamic redosity lighting to ensure that the environments are as believable as possible. Realism and beauty do have their price, of course. MAX PAYNE will be 3D-accelerated only (supporting DirectX along with native support for many 3D cards); there will be no software rendering for the Luddites among us.

For that extra sense of realism, the Remedy team is sending a group of artists, armed with cameras, into the streets of New York City to gather scenes that will be incorporated into the game's environments. The designers intend to take the real world New York City scenes down a notch into the gritty underworld of film noir—and just when New York's image was starting to improve. Rudy Giuliani won't be pleased.

What a Character

But it's not just interiors and exteriors that show the designers' ambition. Max and his adversaries are also rendered in great detail. The game's skeletal animation system wraps several layers of player "skins" around a simulated skeleton, resulting in characters whose clothing and motions are very realistic. Capes and coats flap in the wind, and roll-and-dive moves border on the cinematic.

The traditional downside to detail in computer games has been the unavoidable slowdown in frame-rates at higher detail levels. Remedy has solved this problem in MAX PAYNE by using what Project Lead Petri Järvelä calls a "level of detail" system. This renders objects in the distance with relatively few pixels, and uses progressively more pixels as the object



MODEL THIS!! MAX PAYNE's ballistics model is impressive. In this shot you can clearly see each individual pellet—and you'll feel them too.

Genre: Action • ETA: Q1 '00 • Developer: Remedy Entertainment

comes closer and fills a greater portion of the screen. In this way, the computer has to perform fewer of the complex calculations that slow down scene-rendering. Another trick the design team is using to maintain high frame-rates is something called "exit optimization." In this technique, the computer draws only what the player sees, instead of everything in a specific area, whether or not the player is aware of its presence. For example, if you're looking through a doorway, only the objects and portions of walls in your direct line-of-sight will be rendered.

Cinematic Action

The Remedy guys are major movie buffs, and it shows in MAX PAYNE's design. Remedy hopes to let the gamer have a cinematic experience while playing the game, all the better to draw him into what Remedy promises will be a deep plot. That's why they decided to show Max in the third-person perspective. The designers felt that a first-person perspective just wasn't an option to fully show off all of the great moves Max has at his disposal.

If you've seen any John Woo movies, you already have a good idea of the kinds of moves Max is capable of performing in the game. From the standard crouch to the supercool sideways jump while opening up with both barrels to falling backward into a rolling getaway move, Max will execute moves other game characters can only virtually dream about.

Of course, Max isn't invulnerable by any means. If all that dodging and jumping doesn't quite get him out of danger and he ends up taking a bullet or two, he'll accurately reflect the injury. If he's shot in the leg, for instance, he'll limp his way through the rest of the game. And if he takes one through the chest, well...be sure to check out that exit wound coming out of his back before you reboot.

LIGHT UP THE NIGHT These two shots demonstrate the impressive lighting effects in MAX PAYNE. Notice how the shooter's face and body are realistically lit by the muzzle flash.



SPLATTERFEST 101 This shot demonstrates the particle rendering that the Remedy team is building into MAX PAYNE (notice the splattering blood).

"If Max takes one through the chest, well...be sure to check out that exit wound coming out of his back before you reboot."

Super Slo-Mo

One of the more novel aspects of MAX PAYNE is its use of slow motion. Throughout the game, the gamer will see many sequences play out in John Woo-style slo-mo action scenes that let you fully appreciate the level of detail while you experience that ever-so-important movie feel. The slow motion will be scripted into the game, so that it will kick in at predetermined times. Slow motion will also be



Max Payne

used as a reward of sorts for a well-placed shot on an enemy. If you score a difficult head shot, for example, a slow-motion instant replay will show the exchange from a different angle. Järvelin says that Remedy is considering letting the gamer toggle the slow-motion mode on and off, but at present it is always on.

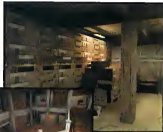
The designers also plan to make a fully slow-motion multiplayer mode to provide a whole new dynamic to the standard death-match. According to Järvelin, this option will let you take more time to plan your moves—and to savor your enemy's destruction. It remains to be seen how this element will appeal to gamers, but the Remedy crew is very excited about this newest twist on the multiplayer theme.

You Will Now Die, Bad Guy

Weapons in MAX PAYNE will be strident real-world stuff. If you're looking for alien

death rays and plasma bombs, you're in the wrong place. However, that doesn't mean that the guns available in MAX PAYNE will be without oomph. Take, for example, a fully automatic shotgun that Remedy dubs "The Jackhammer." After seeing this thing in action, I was ready to trade in my BFG on the spot.

To enhance the realism of the guns, all weapons will be rendered using volumetric particle systems that model the weapon's muzzle exhaust and flash in great detail. To put things right over the top, the particles are randomized in each passing frame, resulting in a superrealistic look and feel. The bullet trajectories are modeled with real physics that take into account the effect that gravity has on each projectile—all the way



FROM BACK STREETS TO BALLROOMS

Max will go through a varied range of environments, from gritty warehouses to gilded mansions.

garners for completing a level. Instead of a boring "Level Loading—Please Wait" screen, graphic novel panels will round out the storyline while the next level loads.

As an aside, there are even rumors that a MAX PAYNE movie project may come out sometime after the game debuts. Through his connections with G.O.D., Gene Simmons of KISS has secured the rights for any such MAX PAYNE film. No word yet as to who would play Max—Gene himself, perhaps? Nah.

Grow Your Own

Remedy will include an impressive package of editing tools with MAX PAYNE. The level editor, MaxEd, is the most user-friendly editor we've ever seen. It's a true drag-and-drop, WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) editor that will actually be easy and—get this—fun to use. After having slugged through some simple room design with DeathMutch Maker and WorldCraft, I was amazed at how easy it was to create a level with MaxEd. If all goes according to plan and the editor does indeed ship with the game, home-grown level designers will be in heaven.

The Bottom Line

The danger in making a very cinematic game is that it will be pretty to look at, great to read about, and boring as hell to play. By adding new, experimental elements like slow motion, the Remedy designers are going out on a long, precarious limb. But if they succeed—and it looks as though they very well might, in spectacular fashion—they will take action gaming to the next level. Here's hoping they do. Watch upcoming issues of CGW for updates as MAX PAYNE nears completion. **CGW**

For more info, check out the MAX PAYNE Web site at www.maxpayne.com

"The designers intend to take the real-world New York City scenes down a notch into the gritty underworld of film noir. Rudy Giuliani won't be pleased."

down to that last shotgun pellet ripping through your victim's temple. And if you run out of ammo? Then it's time to pull out your trusty Louisville Slugger and the fresh can of whup ass that comes along with it.

Comic Book...er... Graphic Novel Flavor

In designing MAX PAYNE, the Remedy team decided to incorporate one of its favorite pastimes, reading graphic novels, as a reward to



BULLET IN THE HEAD Max can do tons of cool John Woo-style dives and rolls.



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Heavy Metal: F.A.K.K.²

Sex, Guns, and Rock & Roll

Ritual Takes a
Ride on HEAVY
METAL: F.A.K.K.²



by Ken Brown

Havy Metal is the ultimate teenage fantasy come to life: mind-bending animation, intense violence, and hard-driving rock. The 1981 movie was an electrifying ride across 11 unrelated (and inconsistent) stories linked by a mysterious green orb. Spurred by the fantasy magazine that featured some of the world's most psychotic illustrators, it became a cult classic.

Now, two all-rock, wildly stylized Heavy Metal projects are heading our way. A new movie, coming this fall, will combine bizarre 3D animation with an epic story and a sexy female heroine (based on B-movie queen and former Penthouse Pet Julie Strain). Meanwhile, Ritual Entertainment is working on a game using the QUAKE III engine that will blend action, adventure, and innovative combat control in the Heavy Metal universe. Eager to see how the game is taking shape, we flew to Dallas to get the world's first look.

What the Hell Is F.A.K.K.²?

Heavy Metal: F.A.K.K.², the movie, is the brainchild of Kevin Eastman, cocreator of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles (hey, at least the cave-anthropologists are helping to subsidize something interesting). The story behind the movie evolved from the 1993 graphic novel *The Melting Pot*, by Eastman, Simon Bisley, and Eric Talbot. After *The Melting Pot*, Eastman wanted to do an epic film with a strong female lead and an evil nemesis.

"I always wanted to create a heroic adventure with a female star," says Eastman, "driving in a backdrop that would combine the desperation of *Road Warrior*, the intensity of *Aliens*, the visual feel of *Blade Runner*, and the magnitude of Akira Kurosawa's *Ran*. It's intensely violent, very fast-moving, very fast-paced."

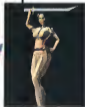
In the futuristic story, F.A.K.K. stands for Federation Assigned Katogenic Kibzons, a biohazard warning to interplanetary explorers. F.A.K.K.² indicates a biohazard so dangerous that nothing can survive it. E.A.K.K.² is also the name of an idyllic world and the woman who is trying to protect it. But the real reason Eastman coined the term is because he wanted his female lead to have a name that sounded like "F... you!"

With love in her heart and two automatic, four-barreled blasters in her hands, F.A.K.K.² sets out to free her sister from a ruthless monster (Lord Tyler) who ravaged their planet. The \$15 million movie is coming this fall from Sony & Columbia TriStar. (If you want to see how it's taking shape, check out the *Heavy Metal* site at www.heavy-metal.net/

Default-2.htm, and click on "Animation Background.")

What About the Game?

The game's story picks up where the movie leaves off. Players control F.A.K.K.² (a.k.a. Julie, a.k.a. the StarStrider), who must now defend her homeworld from invasion by a Borg-like collective known as Gith Industries. (Who writes this stuff?)

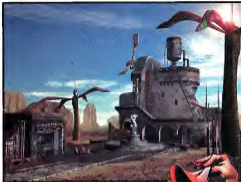


JULIE STRAIN Former Penthouse Pet Julie Strain provided the inspiration for the heroine in *HEAVY METAL: F.A.K.K.²*. Oh, and she's Kevin Eastman's wife.



HAPPY MASK Gith Industries wants its workers to be happy.

Genre: Action/Adventure • ETA: Q4 '99 • Developer: Ritual Entertainment



HEAVY METAL'S QUAKE III engine can handle large outdoor spaces, curved surfaces, and 24-bit color.

Gith—think Microsoft meets Mussolini in an H.R. Geiger nightmare—has been motoring around the galaxy in a spaceship strapped to a conquered, decimated planet. The company is looking for an upgrade and has discovered Julia's world. Time for our heroine to break out the four-barreled blasters again.

Ritual describes the gameplay as TOMBI RAIDER-esque: third-person perspective with equal parts action and adventure. As with TOMBI RAIDER, the designers chose the third-person perspective to show off their female character. But there is a more intriguing reason: Two-handed combat will allow both ranged weapons and melee weapons simultaneously.

"You'll be able to outfit your character with different combinations of swords and guns and be able to use both at the same time," said Project Manager Steve Hutchins. "Picture Braveheart-type slashing while wading through an onslaught of enemies. Right now we are looking at right- and left-hand attack buttons to keep things simple; that coupled with off-screen outfitting should reduce the overall numbers of keys you have to learn. You'll thank us later when you see how many enemies you can encounter at one time," Hutchins added rather ominously.

In addition, combat should be more grisly and realistic than in previous games. The game's QUAKE III engine allows body parts to be swapped or removed instantly, enabling such effects as blown-off limbs, gaping holes, severed parts that still move, and more. Expect new warnings about playing too soon after eating when the game ships.

Sights & Sounds

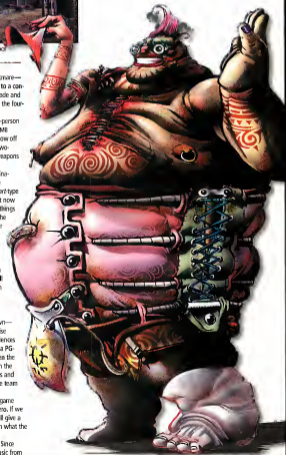
There are a couple of things for which *Heavy Metal* is known—both the film and the magazine—and those things tend to raise more than a few eyebrows. Judging by the early artwork, audiences can expect to get an eyeful in the movie, which will likely get a PG-13 rating. Nudity in games, however, is a sensitive matter, given the availability of games to minors. Developers are often caught in the middle between their desire to build visually interesting games and their need to sell those games to large retailers. What does the team from Ritual plan to do?

Art director Rob Atkins says, "We are going to make a fun game based around an adult movie/magazine with a sexy female hero. If we sneak in a nipple or two here or there, I doubt that anyone will give a shit. Wal-Mart and the other retailers are more concerned with what the box looks like on their shelves than the content."

Heavy Metal is also known for its hard-driving soundtrack. Since Ritual has full access to use the characters, voices, art, and music from

BELPHEGORIAN CITIZEN

These charming freaks are large, mentally deranged inhabitants of the Belphegorian slums. They relish in the physical and will go to extreme lengths to "perfect" themselves. Anything from removing an old arm to make way for a new one to aggravating the pox rash they have on their butt. The redder and more painful and pustulant, the better.



Heavy Metal: F.A.K.K. 2

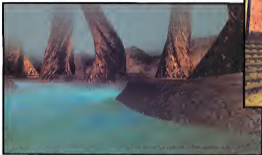
the movie sequel, it's likely the game will have a kick-ass soundtrack. At press time we were unable to obtain a complete list of songs, but Kevin Eastman has been talking with a number of music groups, including U2, Smashing Pumpkins, Hole, Metallica, KISS, Sammy Hagar, Alice in Chains, and Aerosmith.

With all of the assets of the movie at its

disposal, plus the QUAKE III engine, Ritual has a very good chance of producing a standout game. Whether the company will or not depends on many factors, not the least of which is learning from the mistakes it made with SIN. To their credit, the designers have changed the way they work and affirm that they

will perform whatever bug-testing is necessary in the future to ensure quality products. We sure hope so, because if they get it right, this game will rock in more ways than one. **CGW**

(G.O.D. feature continued on page 113)



SWAMP THINGS Ritual wants the game to have an organic, otherworldly look.



GROUND ZERO Julia's peaceful city will soon be overrun with Gith invaders.

THE CAST

BELPHEGORIAN TROOPER Thought-police thugs that monitor the population for anticorporate activities. They patrol the slums and darker areas of Raum to stamp out nonconformists or zealots.

DR. ECHIDNA The CEO of the Phantom Limb Corporation as well as head of the House Digionum. He is extremely imaginative and completely deranged.

FLESHBINDER Fleshbinders are the number one product made at the Phantom Limb Corporation. They are an amalgam of body parts and fluids of various races collected by Gith Industries. Their purpose is to collect those who do not wish to join Gith.



real Tournament
 King Kong Academy
 Quake III
 Metal Party
 SimCity 3000
 Metal Gear Solid
 Populous
 WWII Fighter
 Grand Inquisitor
 Wars Rogue Squadron
 NFL Blitz '99
 FaceOff '99
 WWF WarZone
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 Wario Land II
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 WWF WarZone
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KISS: Psycho Circus

KISS, the Game

The Psycho Circus
Is Coming to Town

Genre: Action

ETA: Q2 '00

Developer: Third Law Interactive

KISS is back with a vengeance.

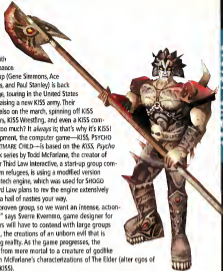
The original line-up (Gene Simmons, Ace Frehley, Peter Criss, and Paul Stanley) is back on the world stage, touring in the United States and Europe and raising a new KISS army. Their fiercest army is also on the march, spinning off KISS masks, KISS guitars, KISS Wrestling, and even a KISS computer game. Is it too much? It always is; that's why it's KISS!

Now in development, the computer game—KISS: PSYCHO CIRCUS: THE NIGHTMARE CHILD—is based on the KISS: PSYCHO CIRCUS comic book series by Todd McFarlane, the creator of Spawn. Developer Third Law Interactive, a start-up group comprised of Ion Storm refugees, is using a modified version of Monolith's Litchtech engine, which was used for SHOGO and BLOOD 2. Third Law plans to rev the engine extensively and throw down a hail of nasties your way.

"We're an unproven group, so we want an intense, action-filled experience," says Sverre Kwamra, game designer for Third Law. Gamers will have to contend with large groups of demon-spawn, the creations of an unborn evil that is somehow altering reality. As the game progresses, the gamer advances from mere mortal to a creature of godlike powers, based on McFarlane's characterizations of The Elder (alter eggs of the members of KISS).

Gameplay will vary as you control each of the four Elders, with different environments, powers, and challenges. You'll need to assemble the five parts of each KISS member's costume to give you the power to defeat the Nightmare Child, since each item holds special powers. The platform-boots, for example, will increase your jump height, the breastplate gives you better protection, and so on. (We wonder what Gene Simmons' tongue will do.)

Watch for this interactive oddity to come out early next year.



Rune

Take Me You Viking

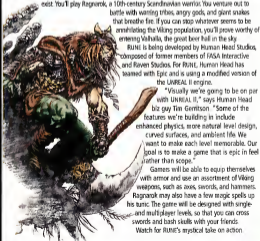
Play Out Your
Nordic Fantasies
in Rune

Genre: Action/Adventure

ETA: Q2 '00

Developer: Human Head Studios

A drink it, you've always wanted to put on the Viking helmet and go bash some heads. Here's the game that will let you fight battles with Viking weapons and explore a strange world where mythical creatures and gods exist. You'll play Ragnarok, a 10th-century Scandinavian warrio.



You venture out to battle with warring tribes, angry gods, and giant snakes that breathe fire. If you can stop whatever seems to be annihilating the Viking population, you'll prove worthy of entering Valhalla, the great beer hall in the sky.

RUNE is being developed by Human Head Studios, composed of former members of FASA Interactive and Raven Studios. For RUNE, Human Head has teamed with Epic and is using a modified version of the UNREAL II engine.

"Visually we're going to be on par with UNREAL II," says Human Head biz guy Tim Gerritsen. "Some of the features we're building in include enhanced physics, more natural level design, curved surfaces, and ambient life. We want to make each level memorable. Our goal is to make a game that is epic in feel rather than scope."

Gamers will be able to equip themselves with armor and use an assortment of Viking weapons, such as axes, swords, and hammers. Ragnarok may also have a few magic spells up his tunic. The game will be designed with single- and multiplayer levels, so that you can cross swords and bash skulls with your friends.

Watch for RUNE's mystical take on action.



RUGNOR'S

Ken Slater
8:07 a.m.
April 9, 1999
Northbound Terminal #3



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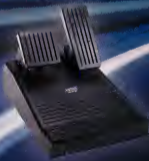
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IN SEARCH OF THE ULTIMATE GAMING MACHINE

Firewire's

Uncertain Future

Licensing Squabbles and USB 2.0 Announcement Cloud Horizon

by Dave Salvatore

Given its peer-to-peer abilities, high data rate, and relatively low cost, Firewire seems a great candidate for someday connecting your PC to your home entertainment center with a single wire. But between Apple's greed and Intel's control fetish, Firewire looks as though it may suffer several serious setbacks.

Apple recently announced that it wants to charge \$1-per-port licensing fees for the manufacture of Firewire application-specific integrated circuits (ASICs). These fees, viewed by many industry types as excessive, could cause the price of Firewire (also called IEEE 1394) and

firewire-based products to be pushed up. As a result, Intel and other concerned companies may decide to engineer another version of Firewire, called 1394B, that dances around Apple's patents. Apple's licensing move also angered many in the PC universe, including industry heavyweights Microsoft and Compaq. And while Apple has since rethought its position, it's still unclear as to what the final arrangement will be.

Intel muddied the waters even further with its announcement at the Intel Developer's Forum of USB 2.0, which the company claims will have a top-end data rate of 240Mbits/sec—20 times the current top-end speed of 12Mbits/sec—thus making USB 2.0 potentially a more direct

competitor with Firewire. The move marks something of a departure for Intel, which until recently was an avid supporter of Firewire.

There's big money at stake here, since the winner of this standards war will have its product not only in nearly every personal computer shipped (Mac or PC) but also in many home entertainment components, including DVD players, amplifiers, and TVs.

Firewire is currently better suited to be this universal connector, primarily because it's here now but also because, as a peer-to-peer technology, it doesn't need a root-hub to control all devices on a network—a limitation that USB has. At this point USB 2.0 is little more than a

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paper tiger, but unless Apple is willing to define licensing terms that are more reasonable, its current stance may well scuttle widespread adoption of Firewire and force the computer industry to devise an alternative, which could take more than 18 months. **EW**

TNT2 Comes Out Swinging

by Dave Salvatore and Lloyd Case

Last year, graphics chip releases were spread pretty well throughout the year. But now, with new chips from Matrox, 3i, nVidia, and 3dfx all shipping within weeks of one another, there's one hell of a rumble taking shape in the marketplace. And judging from early numbers on Diamond's Viper 770, nVidia definitely won't be accused of bringing a knife to a gunfight. We got our hands on final hardware and beta drivers for the Viper, and what we saw was a very fast, very stable board that should keep nVidia at or near the top of the heap.

In comparison tests against a current TNT board using nVidia's reference drivers, as well as against

ATI's Rage Fury, the TNT2 chip clearly took no prisoners. In 3D GameGauge testing, the TNT2 proved to be 40 percent faster than Rage 128, 30 percent faster than the TNT.

Diamond has put a fat on the TNT2 chip so it could clock the board up to 175MHz, and this 17 percent overclock certainly helps this TNT2 board post its impressive scores. And while nVidia has stated that the standard clock speeds for TNT2 will be 125MHz and 150MHz, Diamond's part seemed to run cool, generating little heat.

Just for fun, we boosted up GT Interactive's FOWFSURF, a good-looking driving title, and

cranked the resolution up to 1600x1200x32, expecting the TNT2 to have a decent frame rate. To our pleasant surprise, frame rate was still very smooth, and image quality was very good, thanks in large part to running at the higher resolution.

Matrox's G400 and 3i's SavageII have yet to weigh in, but from early demos we've seen they're going to be solid parts as well. So between these guys, nVidia, and 3dfx, we're most likely facing a wealth of graphics card choices this summer. As soon as we can, we'll bring all of these guys to OK Corral and see who's the new fastest gun.



3D GameGauge 800x600



3D WinBench 99 1024x768x16





"European Air War's outstanding gameplay and wealth of features make it the current leader of the WWII simulation crop" -PC Gamer, 89%, Editor's Choice Award

"This World War II simulation captured the feeling of being in a living, unpredictable combat environment better than any other sim released this past year"
-Computer Gaming World, 4 stars

"European Air War succeeds at providing the experience that makes arm-chair fighter pilots believe they're truly leaving their mundane surroundings behind"
-Gamespot

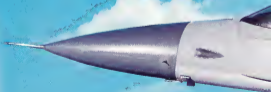
RACKING UP

"No previous sim covers so many different weapons and so many tasks in detail... it's all here and it's all beautifully executed"
-PC Gamer, 95%, Editor's Choice Award

"Falcon 4.0 is the deepest, most complex air combat sim yet... The campaign also creates the greatest sense of playing a small but important part of a huge battle"
-PC Gamer



"Thoughtful gameplay design and the effort to bring players a sense of the true fighter pilot's experience can be felt throughout the game"
-Computer Games Strategy Plus





"European Air War combined huge dog fights, a great campaign system and realistic physics to make a game that was very hard to put down"

-IGN PC.com, *Sim of the Year*

"The care and attention to detail that went into every aspect of European Air War, from the hefty manual to the bomber nose art, represents a serious achievement"

-CNET GameCenter

THE KILLS!

"Bottom line: this sets the new standard in flight sims"

-Washington Post

"Falcon 4.0 is an incredibly detailed simulation that in many ways exceeds training systems in military use."

-Computer Gaming World



UNDER THE HOOD

Murphy's Field Day

A Lesson in Following My Own Advice

by Loyd Case

This column was originally going to be about nifty little utilities I use, and how they can help readers tweak or improve their systems. Maybe I'll still do that one some day. However, my research for the column was interrupted when Murphy's Law, coupled with my innate ability to overread, got me in big trouble. It's such a good cautionary tale that I can't help writing about it.

It all began with Winalign, a little utility that ships with the Windows 98 Resource Kit. It supposedly restructures Windows programs so that they load more efficiently, speeding up software loading. It sounded like a good idea. In the help file for Winalign was a blurb suggesting that performance may not improve until you defrag the hard drive after running Winalign.

Meanwhile, Back at the Ranch

I decided it was time to re-architect my production system. I've been wanting to get more serious about learning 3D modeling and digital video, but being the kind of person I am, I wanted the production system to be the best performing system I could build. Although my priorities are different from those of most users, I'm still budget-constrained—I couldn't go out and build a hot-rod DV rig without wrecking my marriage. Then I realized that the system I use every day had an Ultra2 SCSI controller and two 7200RPM SCSI drives. That's big-time overkill for running Word, surfing the Net, and playing a few games, so I thought I'd make that my 3D modeling learning rig. I'd recently upgraded one of the

Ultimate Game Machines to a Pentium III, so I had a spare Pentium II/450 available. I also had a couple of big EIDE drives and an Intel motherboard. All I needed was a case, a power supply, and a floppy drive.

At the same time, the no-holds-barred rig needed a new motherboard tray in the Inwin tower case, as I'd successfully stripped the screw holes on



LOYD CASE

several mounting brackets. So I thought I'd swap trays.

Did I mention it was CGW's deadline week?

To recap, I'd decided to run some new utilities on my main machine, build a new system, and swap motherboard trays on the power rig, all during deadline week. This is the point where someone with some common sense (my editor, maybe) should have showed up on my doorstep and told me I was nuts. My reach was definitely exceeding my grasp, but I didn't realize it. Then Murphy came a-knockin'.

A Few Simple Rules...

There are some rules of thumb that I use when tweaking or changing systems. Rule number

one: Always test a new utility on a small scale until you know it's safe.

So, of course, when I ran Winalign for the first time, I ran it on the entire Program Files folder on my main production system.

Strike one.

Rule number two: Never, ever make multiple changes without testing each change first.

The next thing I did was run Norton Utilities Defrag Utility. As I was perusing the defrag utility, I came across a seemingly helpful item: the Norton Optimization Wizard. It stated, seductively, that my system would run better if I optimized the swap file. So I ran it. After a reboot, defrag came up and started running. Note that by now, I'd run Winalign on all my critical applications, run the system optimization wizard, and was defragging the drive.

Strike two.

Rule number three: Never, ever panic or show frustration. The gods of computing delight in torturing easily frustrated users.

I had to let defrag run all night (it takes a while to fully optimize a 9GB hard drive). When I came back the next morning, there was an error message indicating that a problem had been found with the hard drive and that Norton Disk Doctor or ScanDisk should be run. So I rebooted. When Windows came up, every utility and driver that auto-loaded on startup crashed. So did Explorer. My system was totally hosed. So I rebooted to DOS and ran ScanDisk. After about a thousand bad sectors were uncovered, I panicked. Roughly \$450 later, I had a

new 9GB drive. I used Ghost—a very cool partition-copying utility—to try to copy the old partition to the new drive. There were a number of "bad sector on read" errors, which wasn't good news. But the partition copy completed, and I booted the new drive. Explorer promptly crashed.

I did a refresh install of Windows 98. After doing this twice, and swearing a lot, I finally got a good boot. But whenever I would right-click on "My Computer," the system would hang.

Finally, I gave up. I nuked Windows 98 and did a clean reinstall, including all my applications.

Strike three, you're out.

It was a hard lesson—and what made it worse was that I knew what I'd done wrong. I ignored my own rules, got a little cocky, and ended up wasting a

huge amount of time. But wait, there's more...

Cut to Scene Two

I thought I'd take a shortcut with the new system I was building and just boot off the Windows 98 full-install CD. At that point, the right thing to do would have been to copy the contents of the \win98 folder from the CD to the hard drive (after the drive had been formatted) and install from there. Instead, I ran setup direct from the CD (after having booted from the CD). Now, bootable CDs are wonderful—no more boot floppies with missing DOS drivers—but they aren't perfect. There's an annoying bug in the Windows 98 setup process that causes weird things to happen

during the setup process if you leave the CD in its bootable state—which of course I did. Normally, if I'd been focusing on just installing this system, I would probably have remembered that quick, but I was also trying to troubleshoot my production system and swap motherboard trays on the big rig. After several tries, I remembered the problem with the bootable CD and copied the files to the hard drive. Then Murphy struck again—the mouse wouldn't work. After three installation processes and a couple of mouse swaps, everything was hunky-dory.

Meanwhile, the big rig was having its own set of problems. The tray swap went fine, but after rebooting, the SCSI hard drives would lock. Again, instead of focusing on the problem, I was also trying to install a new system and troubleshoot my production system. After much waiting and gnashing of teeth, I found some bent pins on the SCSI cable. Roughly \$120 in SCSI cables later, the SCSI drives would still lock.

After a night's sleep, I remembered that I'd recently done a clean reinstall of Windows 98 on the big rig. The ASUS P2B-LS motherboard uses an Adaptec 7895 Ultra2 SCSI controller chip, and Windows 98 has built-in support. But there's a bug—either in the driver or with the motherboard BIOS—that causes the CD drive to get confused when you copy big files from one hard drive to another. Installing an updated driver that I'd downloaded much earlier from the ASUS Web page cured the problem.

Mea Culpa

So here I sit, out roughly \$600 in hard drives and cables, and having had to painfully relearn lessons that I'd learned before. So this leads me to the last and final rule of computing:

Rule number four: Just when you get good enough to be arrogant about it, the gods of computing will make you pay.

Next time, I'll remember. **CGW**

Tech Tips

Q. When playing first-person shooters (UNREAL, HALF-LIFE), my system spontaneously reboots. I have dual Monster 3D II's in SLI mode, a hardware DVD decoder, a SCSI controller card, two SCSI hard drives, a DVD drive and a CD-R. What could be the problem?

A. There are two possibilities. First, your power supply may be inadequate for the heavy load you're placing on it. Many off-the-shelf systems from companies like Dell and Micron come with measly 200W power supplies. You may need to upgrade your power supply to something beefier, like a 300W unit.

The second problem could be heat related. Add an additional cooling fan to the case. You might even consider adding specialized Voodoo2 coolers. Also, clock back the Monster II's a bit, which could help reduce any potential heat issues.

Q. I tried to install TalonSoft's West Front recently in my spanking new Gateway system, but when I try to run the game, it keeps asking me to insert the CD. But the CD is in the drive! What gives?

A. This isn't TalonSoft's fault. TalonSoft—and many other game companies—are moving to CD-RDM based copy protection mechanisms. In some cases, we've seen incompatibilities with certain CD-RDiffs and DVD drives. However, the Gateway problem specifically lies with their BIOS. You need to get a BIOS update from the Gateway Web site and update your system. If this makes you nervous, have a Gateway technician walk you through the process.

Q. Help! I just tried to download and install Internet Explorer 5.0, and my graphics card no longer works properly. It's a Diamond Viper 550. Is there any way to fix the problem?

A. Diamond discovered a problem in certain cases where installs of new drivers somehow interacted with IES. Diamond's now got a new driver on their Web site that fixes the problems with IES.

Q. I recently tried to add a 3Com PCI ethernet card to my system. It has an ABIT BH6 motherboard. The system refuses to install the drivers. How can I fix this?

A. Try putting the NIC in one of the middle three slots. The two outside slots (the one next to the AGP slot and the other next to the ISA slots) share IRQs. However, the 3Com cards aren't happy about sharing IRQs.

Q. I have a joystick connected to my sound card. I just got a new, USB gamepad. When I install them together, the gamepad shows up as the top device in the Game Controller Control Panel, and the joystick as the second device. All my games refuse to recognize the joystick. Is there any way to use both devices?

A. Unfortunately, you may be out of luck. In the days of DirectX3.0, there was actually a bug in DirectInput that prevented the second joystick from being recognized—so no games really took advantage of it. Now, that "tradition" has continued, although a few games are supporting multiple controllers. Microsoft is trying to evangelize game developers to support multiple controllers, but it may be some time. Meanwhile, the only thing you can do is manually move the joystick to the top slot when you want to use it.

Q. I have seen the terms "OEM" and "white box" on discounted video cards. What do these terms mean? Is it OK to buy these video cards?

A. OEM stands for "original equipment manufacturer," which is an oxymoronic term that means a product was neither manufactured by nor originated within the company that shipped it. White box hardware is essentially the same. Both terms refer to hardware that is sold to dealers who are theoretically supposed to build it into whole systems. OEM hardware typically comes without software, except for drivers. In a few cases, it may also have fewer features. (TV output capability is a feature often left out of white box hardware, though not always.) In the past, you really had to watch out, as some white box hardware may actually be less capable and perform poorly, despite the same name, but that's not as prevalent. Some memory configurations may only be available in OEM hardware (for example, 5MB TNT boards).

Send your tech questions to Loyd at CGW_Letters@2zd.com.

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Processor	Intel Pentium III processor 450MHz	Intel Pentium III processor 500MHz	Intel Pentium III processor 500MHz
Cable	12MB Internal CD cache	12MB Internal CD cache	12MB Internal CD cache
RAM	128MB 100MHz SDRAM	128MB 100MHz SDRAM	256MB 100MHz SDRAM
Hard Drive	12GB Ultra ATA 66 hard drive*	12GB Ultra ATA 66 hard drive*	12GB 7200 RPM Ultra ATA 66 hard drive*
Monitor	17" Micro 1200 monitor (25" H*) (display)	17" Micro 1200 (21" H*) (display) monitor	17" Micro 1200 (21" H*) (display) monitor
DVD/CD-ROM	42X CD-ROM drive*	42 max speed DVD-ROM drive	42 max speed DVD-ROM drive
Mouse	30" UltraLite™ V80 Mouse™**	30" UltraLite™ V80 Mouse™**	30" UltraLite™ V80 Mouse™**
Graphics	1MB Shared Viper 100 3D 23 ADP graphics	1MB Shared Viper 100 3D 23 ADP graphics	1MB Shared Viper 100 3D 23 ADP graphics
Sound System	AC 128-voice WaveTable sound	FC 128-voice WaveTable sound	Sound Master 1200™ 6-speaker card
Speakers	Atmel A2020 speakers	Atmel A2020 5-speaker speaker system	Atmel A2020 5-speaker speaker system
Warranty	3-year/3-year Micron Power™ limited warranty 3-year on-site service warranty	3-year/3-year Micron Power™ limited warranty 3-year on-site service warranty	3-year/3-year Micron Power™ limited warranty 3-year on-site service warranty
Training	1-year free* training @ Micron's online	1-year free* training @ Micron's online	3-year free* training @ Micron's online
Software Included	Microsoft® Windows® 98 Microsoft Office 97 Small Business Edition Four Office 2000 upgrades Norton AntiVirus 3-year EarthLink™ Trial Access	Microsoft Windows 98 Microsoft Office 97 Small Business Edition Four Office 2000 upgrades Norton AntiVirus 3-year EarthLink™ Trial Access	Microsoft Windows 98 Microsoft Office 97 Small Business Edition Four Office 2000 upgrades Norton AntiVirus 3-year EarthLink™ Trial Access
Also Includes	Mouseless case 304-key enhanced keyboard Microsoft IntelliMouse™ 2.5" floppy drive	Mouseless case 304-key enhanced keyboard 3.5" floppy drive Logitech Joystick mouse	Mouseless case 304-key enhanced keyboard Microsoft IntelliMouse™ 3.5" floppy drive Supertool LS-100
Factory Direct Price	\$2,099 ^{95/mo.} Financed Payment Plan 48 mos.†	\$2,399 ^{95/mo.} Financed Payment Plan 48 mos.†	\$3,299 ^{93/mo.} Financed Payment Plan 48 mos.†
Upgrade to	Upgrade to: 17" Micro 1200 (21" display) monitor 42 max speed DVD-ROM drive***	Upgrade to: 17" Micro 1200 (21" display) monitor 20GB Ultra ATA 66 hard drive*	Upgrade to: 20GB Ultra ATA 66 hard drive* 304-key V80 (MicroLite™/UltraLite™)**
Factory Direct Price	\$2,299 ^{92/mo.} Financed Payment Plan 48 mos.†	\$2,779 ^{75/mo.} Financed Payment Plan 48 mos.†	\$3,699 ^{100/mo.} Financed Payment Plan 48 mos.†



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COMPONENT

COMPONENT	PRODUCT	PRICE	THE SKINNY
Motherboard	ASUS P4R LS	\$190	And it's cheaper than a standard (80x2.525) card
CPU	Pentium DMS6	\$635	It's the top of the heap, for now
Memory	1GBF Corsair Conquer PC1600 SDRAM	\$670	Just drink, a quarter gallon
Disk Controller	Western Ultra2 SCSI	\$0	8MB/sec
Primary Graphics	NVIDIA GeForce FX 5600	\$130	Stability, speed, and cooling
Secondary Graphics	GeForce3 Obsidian X24	\$140	The ultimate, special slot Video2 card
Floppy Drive	Teac	\$23	You still have to have one
Hard Drive	Samsung Channel 10	\$95	It's big, it's fast, it's loud... two out of three ain't bad
Backup	Imaging Lite 2	\$125	2GB of backup
Hard Drive Caddy	APS Technologies drive caddy	\$40	Cool it, baby
CD-ROM	Power In SCSI DVD	\$249	New Pioneer slot-drive DVD
Monitor	Sony F500	\$1,750	Perfectly flat, just perfect
Primary Audio	Diamond Monster Sound MK300	\$89	For four-speaker DirectSound, A3D, and FAX
Speakers	U7-11	\$500	Resound amazing, clean sound
Rear-Channel Speakers	Arco CS-5	\$600	Ultimate seven-channel powered speakers
Modem	Copper Router DSL modem	\$400	DSL at last
Networking	Soft-9 Intel I 8100 Ethernet chip	\$0	For frugging city builders
Case	Ice-Win D200 full-tower ATX	\$115	New expanded model
Power Supply	Teacolor 300	\$129	More power, scaling!
Keyboard	Logitech Newtouch	\$45	In with the Newtouch, out with the Natural
Mouse/Pointing Device	Logitech Cordless Wheel Mouse	\$59	Off the leash
Action Game Controller	ThrustMaster Fusion Digital	\$25	Comfortable USB gamepad
Right joystick	ThrustMaster F22 Pro	\$129	It just feels right
Trackball	ThrustMaster TG5	\$115	More control than anyone needs
Router/Hub	ThrustMaster Ether PCS	\$29	Really perfect (and placement)
Diving Controller	CCO CDS 4000	\$1,129	For the serious slot driver

TOTAL:

\$8,666

LEAN & MEAN



COMPONENT

COMPONENT	PRODUCT	PRICE	THE SKINNY
Motherboard	Abit DM6 rev 2.0	\$139	Five PCI slots, SATAware, MBR6—ready for Karna
CPU	Celcon/08	\$165	Effectively the same as a P4/400
Memory	64MB Corsair PC1600 SDRAM	\$121	The only thing better would be 1GB/10
Disk Controller	Built in UDMA/33	\$0	NA
Primary Graphics	NVIDIA GeForce FX 5600	\$130	Stability, speed, and cooling
Secondary Graphics	GeForce3 Maxstream 2	\$89	Video2 for those Giga games
Floppy Drive	Teac	\$20	Still gets here, it
Hard Drive	Maxtor 6S20 8.0GB	\$175	Fast and more, more affordable
CD-ROM/DVD	Power In2-104	\$69	30x and cheap to boot
Monitor	Olivetti VPS	\$480	Solid 19-inch monitor at a budget price
Primary Audio	Diamond Monster Sound MK300	\$89	A3D and clear audio for under a C-note
Secondary Audio	NA	\$0	NA
Speakers	Yamaha YS1-M20s	\$80	The best under \$60 speakers, Period
Modem	Diamond Speed 16K	\$106	Solid performance, good price
Networking	NA	\$0	NA
Case	Evo Vial T10-48	\$82	Use case for upgrades
Power Supply	Bull's 1,250W	\$0	NA
Keyboard	Logitech Newtouch	\$45	In with the new, out with the Natural
Mouse/Pointing Device	Logitech PS2 Wheel Mouse	\$19	More buttons per second???
Game Controller	ThrustMaster Fusion Digital	\$25	Solid USB gamepad

TOTAL:

\$1,637

The Fine Print: All recommendations based on actual evaluations.

Prices listed are average low quotes from Web price search engines like www.computershopper.com and www.pricewatch.com. You can also check prices at online stores like www.nccx.com, www.esc-tech.com, and www.buycom.com. —Lists compiled by Dave Salvatore and Lloyd Case

Gratuitous Violence is 200 Times Faster With a D-Link Network Than With Online Games.



To get the Maximum performance out of a multi-user game, get off the Internet and get on a D-Link 10/100Mb Fast Ethernet Network. Up to 200 times faster than the Internet, and 10 times faster than other legacy networks. Easy to set up and install, a D-Link 10/100 Network In A Box comes with everything you need to build a Windows 95/98 Network.

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or For More Info,
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www.pgl.comCONGRATULATIONS
to the Spring '99 PGL Finalists!

Here's a complete list of the 16 survivors of the Spring '99 Regular Season, who will be battling for fame and fortune at the upcoming championships — with a few factoids thrown in. For interviews and full bios of all 16 finalists, along with loads of other info on the live Spring '99 championships, check out the PGL Web site at www.pgl.com!

QUAKE II

Alex "bad-habit" Pogorzelski

Favorite Saying: "Next time I'll play with my monitor on."

Eric "DR-SaboTeJ" Minterfield

Murt "Immortal" Skimahn

John "Jmaster" Siquin

Gerrion "K8-Blastcaster" Lak

Hobbies: Table Tennis, Tuxedo, and Reading

Ben "Kaia" Dunn

Sebastian "Sytek" Lowart

Hometown: Mississauga, Ontario, Canada

Erik "Vorador" Speer

STARCRAFT

Dave "BOO" Howell

David "DeepBlue" Magru
Season 1 Strategy Champion!Billhams "Grrrr" Potry
Season 3 finalist (aka "TheInsaneFrog")

Patrick "Kaia-the-Fearful" Blaszynski

Christopher "Pillars" Page
Hometown: Andover, Mass.

Wayne "Soso" Hwang

Stephen "taurus43" Chan

Dennis "WarAngel" Lee

Check out the PGL Spring '99 Championships:

Free Player Trading Cards ■ Free Admission ■ Live Webcast ■ \$100,000 in cash and prizes up for grab

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Flat 'n' Noisy

by Dave Salvatore

A flat-panel display is quite likely in your future. The question is, when? We've seen so-called 15-inch flat panels (whose viewable area is more on par with a 17-inch CRT monitor) hitting the streets for under \$1,000, and as these prices continue to drop, flat-panel starts to look more appealing. But look before you leap.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★★☆

PROS: Fearless installation, integrated power/signal cable, decent image quality in games.

CONS: Severely noisy display on test patterns; blurred text in Windows 98 and low-mode display.

Price: \$850 (street)
Manufacturer: KDS Technologies
www.kdsusa.com

Because of bandwidth limitations, analog flat-panel displays' image quality is often inferior to that of their CRT counterparts. One such example is KDS' new V5F15 display. Its image quality is decent in games but not up to snuff for Windows 98 and command-prompt viewing.

The V5F15 is a breeze to install, and its power cord and VGA signal cord are integrated into a single strand, making for less behind-the-PC clutter. The V5F15 is a plug-and-play monitor, and Windows 98 recognized it on boot-up.

The first sign of trouble came when the onscreen display (OSD) information reported the unit was displaying 1024x768x16 at 70Hz refresh rate. This is a letdown because most CRTs can easily display 1024x768x16 at 85Hz. Four OSD buttons are mounted on the back, forcing you to have to feel around, braille-style, in order to tweak the monitor's settings.



The first visual glitch I noticed was that onscreen text in Windows 98 was blurry and often shadowed. The effect got worse when I brought up a DOS command-prompt window. While running the V5F15 through a series of monitor test patterns, I encountered a lot of visible "noise" that looked similar

to what you get on TV when a station isn't tuned in correctly. Color photographic test images (24-bit) fared better, looking pretty good at times in spite of some flaws.

The news for games is better. HALF-LIFE, JANE'S WWI FIGHTERS, and VR BASEBALL 2000 all looked pretty good, though even there I occasionally saw shadow effects caused by the display.

Flat panels are still in their infancy on the desktop. Digital flat-panel displays will go a long way toward solving analog's current shortcomings, but until a final standard is hammered out, the choices for digital flat-panel tie you to graphics chips that you as a gamer probably won't want. In the meantime, KDS' offering is passable for games, but for that same money you could get a 21-inch CRT (if you've got the desk space) and have enough dough left over to pick up two new games as well. **CGW**

photo: Michael Fabrizio



Ray:

Fearless warrior.
Powerful, chiseled, god-like physique.
Experienced forester.
Strikes fear into the heart of the most hardened villain.
Sleeps with one eye open.
Brooding. Mysterious. Intense. Intimidating.
Known to many as Ray the Beholder.
Wit and intelligence charm townspeople and defeat enemies.
Willing to give life in the fight against the dragon.
Raw animal magnetism makes him quite popular with the wenches.



DARKSTONE

Mac Gaming Revivalist

A Solid Performer, but Not Without Drawbacks

by Dave Salvatore

Recently, *CGW* ringmaster Johnny Wilson opined that the Mac was on the comeback trail. I'm sure many of you initially reacted the same way I did by asking, "Okay, what has Wilson been

graphics chipset—not bad. It also sports other cool features like FireWire, USB, Ethernet, and Ultra-SCSI 2 storage components.

But the news from Cupertino isn't all good. Despite getting more right than ever, Apple has still left a few things out of the G3s. The obvious omissions include a modem, a floppy disk drive, a pair of stereo speakers, and a decent mouse and keyboard.

I'm writing this review on the G3, and as with its kid brother the iMac, the only way I can transfer the text from my usual rig is to email it to

myself. Apple worked very hard to drive down cost on these G3s, and to its credit, the baseline 300MHz system starts at around \$2,000, including monitor. But come on, Apple, be it ever so pedestrian, users still need removable media built into the system.

The B.5.1 version of the Mac OS has several interface improvements; Internet configuration is easier, for example. But it's still missing a game-controller control panel.

Many game controller makers, including ThrustMaster, are making Mac drivers for their USB devices, so there are some decent options out there. But getting them working isn't as easy as it should be.

Gotta Call That Progress...

Apple has finally pulled its head out of its...ummm...out of the sand when it comes to gamers, and the G3 sends the message loud and clear: Apple's gaming wares are no longer hardware-related. But the Mac platform is still dogged by game scarcity—mostly due to past

The coolest thing, hands-down,

about G3 is its case design. The side of the case opens like an oven door, and the main board is on the door, making add-in cards and even constant access motherboard installs a snap. Kudos are in order.

smoking, and can I have some?" But Apple has indeed been revived by iMac sales, which at last report were still going strong, and after pounding on a new G3, I'm here to report that Apple's got a pretty good gaming box on its hands.

Basically, a Well-Hung iMac

The new G3 touts Apple's now-standard sleek design, but the improvements go much deeper than its case. The new G3 has an available 400MHz G3 PowerPC CPU and a built-in ATI Rage 128



PROS: Great case design; solid performance; OpenGL compatibility; less expensive than past Macs.

CONS: Still pricey compared to PCs; cheap keyboard-pack mouse; lacks AGP; game support is still iffy.

3D SUPPORT: 3D Now, OpenGL.
Price: \$3,500 (street)
Manufacturer: Apple Computer

www.apple.com



Apple strategies, which frequently left game developers in the lurch. If Apple wants to be any kind of player in the "consumer market space," it needs to realize that its future is inextricably linked to gaming.

Steve Jobs recently stated that Apple's new mantra is "games, games, games." Let's hope that the company has the wherewithal to translate this new mantra into sustained action.

So, Should I Buy One?

The 400MHz Mac G3 we tested comes in at \$3,500. Meanwhile, Dell's latest 500MHz Pentium III rig comes in at only \$2,000. Gamers have to ask themselves if the aforementioned trade-offs, coupled with the wait for top-shell Mac games, is worth a 75 percent price-tag premium for their next system? The answer, more than likely, is no. **CGW**

Gentlemen, Start Your Benchmarks

	Mac G3 400MHz	Mac G3 300MHz	iMac 233MHz
Processor (Integer)	1236	796	91
Floating Point	133	100	73
Disk	1441	1502	488
Graphics	126	169	151
CD-ROM	100	669	328

On the performance front, the G3 is a solid contender. Between its 400MHz G3 PowerPC CPU and its ATI Rage 128 chipset, this machine is ready to rumble. Although I couldn't get Apple or ATI to confirm, I've heard that the Rage 128 chip is being clocked at 75MHz, which, given Rage 128's twin-pipeline design, yields a peak fill rate of 150MPixels/sec—the equivalent of about one real or half-VideoRAM.

Running 20's MacBench, the G3 was solid across the board, and the Rage 128 rigs through MacBench's graphics tests. Turning to games, we ran Mac OS X's three TimeCemas and compared the results to the RIVA TNT-based 578 Velocity 4400's QUAKE

numbers (in our March issue). We tested the Velocity 4400 on a Pentium III 400MHz with 128MB of system memory, so the test systems are comparable. Unfortunately, MACOS X only runs at 640x480, which these days is pretty low-res, but G3 posted an average of 65 fps. The Velocity 4400, on the other hand, ranking at 80x600, posted a frame-rate of 74.5.

There's no provision for doubling Vsync in G3's Rage 128 driver, so monitor refresh may have slowed the G3 somewhat. But still, in this case, the PC outperformed the G3. But to be fair, other games, including UNREAL TOMB RAIDER II, MYTH II, and DARK WEREWOLF, all looked good and played well.

Dreams Die Hard

by Loyd Case

The Holy Grail for today's controller makers seems to be to develop the perfect 3D game controller. Unfortunately, the Titan's Sphere isn't it.

When I first saw prototypes of this unique 3D game controller, it looked promising: The way the controller worked resembled

controllers used for Woldos (those robotic controllers used to handle highly radioactive materials). The grips fit comfortably in your hand, and the whole affair rests in your lap. Additionally, the Titan's Sphere is very easy to configure—it operates like a standard, four-axis, four-button Windows controller (which means it also works in DOS).

In practice, it's quite awkward to use. This first becomes apparent when you try to calibrate it. Due to the sculpted grip and the button placements, it's damn near impossible to calibrate the thing without accidentally pressing a button. Pressing a button in the middle of calibrating a Windows game controller jumps the control panel to the next step.

Once you get past that process, you move to gameplay, where the awkwardness continues.



In some games, the Titan's Sphere seems quite natural—BATTLEZONE and DESCENT II come to mind. But even in those cases, it took a good half an hour to get comfortable. After extended gameplay the sculpted grips became slippery with sweat. Additionally, my arms

got pretty tired—even though the controller rests in your lap, there's a tendency to pick it up as you're trying to rotate the grips. Button placement is awkward, too—it increases the chances of pressing buttons at just the wrong time. On

some other games— notably 3D shooters like QUAKE II—the controller is hopeless.

So if you're looking more for a conversation piece than a great controller, the Titan's Sphere may be your bag. But don't expect to become a great 3D game player with it. **CGW**

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★★☆

PROS: Standard four-axis analog controller; funky looks.

CONS: Button placement almost forces accidental pressing; calibration is a royal pain; steep learning curve.

Price: \$130
Manufacturer: SGR
www.sgr.com

Photo: Michael Feldman



Phillip:

Devoted monk.
Servant of the light.
Walks through the valley of death with a broadsword.
Charismatic faith healer whose personal charm wields enormous power.
Sought out for his wisdom and loving kindness.
Held in reverence by all who cross his path.
Dogmatic about saving souls from the dragon and the devil.
Greatest triumph: releasing an entire village from an evil spell.
Once slayed 30 lizardmen. And it was good.
Vow of celibacy tested daily due to the effect his otherworldly sex appeal has on the womenfolk.



DARK STONE

IF YOU WANT TO FRAG IN 16.7 MILLION COLORS TURN ON THE POWER

"ATI totally proved 3Dfx
wrong by showing 32-bit
rendering can be done
without a performance hit..."
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- Why play in 64,000 colors when RAGE FURY delivers sinfully fast 32-bit color rendering without compromising 3D frame rate performance
- Peeking 32MB of memory, RAGE FURY gives you the fastest 128-bit 3D graphics accelerator available today
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Perfectly Flat and Nearly Perfect

by Loyd Case

Face it, monitors are just not sexy. But if there ever could be a sexy monitor, the PT795 would qualify.

This new 19-inch monitor from veteran manufacturer ViewSonic is a member of the new generation of "perfectly flat" displays. Although it uses a (relatively) standard aperture grill tube, the PT795 achieves its flatness by first adding a layer of

glass that optically corrects the underlying curved image—it's essentially a weak lens. Flat glass is then added on top of the curved glass, and that's what you see. At first glance, the display appears almost concave, because we're all used to seeing curved images.

You'd think that adding two layers of glass like this would distort the underlying picture, but during image quality tests, the only defect I could find was a bit of corner moiré distortion. Color registration was precise and the overall image quality was sharp.

To sweeten the pot, ViewSonic adds a USB hub to the PT795. There's a slight twist, though. In addition to registering a standard USB hub, Windows 98 also finds a "USB Human Interface Device." In other words, the hub is an active

device. It enables ViewSonic's monitor control software, which allows you to set up the monitor more easily than if you used onscreen displays (although it was unavailable for testing). However, at least one game with a subtle DirectX bug crashed on startup—until the monitor's USB hub was disconnected from

the PC. Most games shouldn't have this problem, however, and the hub worked great with several USB game controllers. The PT795 also has a high bandwidth and can support an 87Hz refresh rate at 1600x1200; it makes out at 1920x1440 resolution.

So if you can afford its hefty price tag, then the PT795 is a gorgeous display that will do justice to any of today's graphically intensive games. **CGW**



photo: Michael Freeman

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★★★

PROS: Ultra-flat screen, bright image, high bandwidth.

CONS: Pricey.

Price: \$475 (estimated street price)
Manufacturer: ViewSonic

www.viewsonic.com



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- And you can still play the classic Civilization II, now extended into the unknown with new challenges and perils.



In stores August 1999

MICRO PROSE
www.microprose.com

6x Slot Drive Sizzles

by Loyd Case

Snap! Doh!

These were the sounds made when I leaned against a PC with an open CD-ROM drive not long ago. It was the sound of the CD tray breaking, and it meant shelling out money for another CD drive, a trip to the store, and some time spent with a screwdriver. That's why I really like

slot-loading CD-ROM drives. With one of these, all you do is slip the CD into the front slot (much like a car CD player), and the drive sucks the CD in. There is no protruding tray to break off (or to serve as a place to put my coffee while I work).

Now Pioneer is shipping a low-cost slot drive—the DVD-103S—that delivers a sizzling 6x DVD-ROM speed and acts as a 32x CD-ROM drive to boot. In CD WinBench 99 testing, the drive posted a score of 1,430, easily outpacing the Creative Labs 5x DVD drive that we reviewed several issues ago. The Pioneer's access time was better, too, at a quick 90.4ms.

Pioneer's drive comes in two flavors, EIDE (with Mode 4 DMA support) and Ultra SCSI, so you even have a choice of interfaces (we tested the EIDE drive). It may

be hard to find the bare drive, but resellers like Hival carry the drive as a part of a DVD kit (check out www.hival.com).

If you think DVD drives are slow when it comes to running your game CDs, think again. The current third-generation DVD

drives are more than fast enough for CD-ROM chores, and you get the added bonus of DVD. **CGW**



Photo: Michael Ferguson

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD



PROS: Fast DVD and CD-ROM slot-loading.

CONS: More expensive than a standard CD-ROM.

Price: \$125 (estimated street price)
Manufacturer: Pioneer

www.pioneer.com



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REVIEWS

How Do We Rate?

★★★★★

Outstanding
The rare game that gets it all right. A must-play experience.



★★★★☆

Very Good
Worthy of your time and money, but there are drawbacks.



★★★☆☆

Average
Either an ambitious design with major flaws, or just vanilla.



★★☆☆☆

Weak Seriously lacking in play value, poorly conceived, or just another clone.



★☆☆☆☆

Abysmal The rare game that gets it all wrong. Pathetic. Coaster material.



We review only finished products—no betas, no patches

Quote o' the Month

“ I'm ready for my neural implant now. Crack open my skull and stab that little microprocessor deep into my medulla oblongata. At least as some unholy union of man and machine I'll actually be able to play HEROES OF MIGHT AND MAGIC III my every waking hour. —Robert Coffey ”

CG EDITORS' CHOICE GAMES



Heroes of Might & Magic III

170

Starsiege

156

EA Superbike

165

JUNE REVIEWS

CG EDITORS' CHOICE GAMES IN JUNE

GAME	RATING	PRICE
Army Men 2	★★★	143
EA Superbike	★★★★	165
Extreme G2	★★	151
Heroes of Might & Magic III	★★★★★	170
Imperialism II	★★★★	173
Microsoft Golf 99	★★★	169
NASCAR Revolution	★★	162
North vs. South	★★	176
Resident Evil 2	★★★★	145
Railage	★★★	151
South Park	★★	147
Starsiege	★★★★★	157
Turok 2	★★★	149
Wages of Sin	★★★★	151

South Park

147



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GAME OF 1997
-COW-

Battle Fatigue

The Return of the Other Little Green Men

by Tom Chick

A cute concept that was not fully fleshed out, the first ARMY MEN placed the little plastic figures from our childhoods in real environments: actual forests and canyons rather than the carpeted staircases and backyard flowerbeds that were the killing fields of our youth. Aside from featuring the occasional puddle of melted plastic, the game almost completely wasted its theme. ARMY MEN II continues this disappointing tradition by making only a few half-hearted nods to the true milieu of these little green men—the imaginary battlefields of our childhood bedrooms, our dens, and our neighborhood yards.

There are some clever maps set on places like kitchen counters and model tables. But these levels are too few and far between, serving as interludes between dull real-world environments. The developers of ARMY MEN II just don't seem



GETTING THE SCOOP Make sure the parking brake is out on the backhoe before your troops fall into formation.

to understand that this game is at its most interesting when the little green men play in our world.

The single-player campaign is a curious mix of arcade action and sometimes frustrating map puzzles. There are some fun touches, like magnifying glasses that fry enemies with focused sunbeams, and suicide troops with M80 firecrackers strapped to their backs. There are also bits of humor, particularly the riffs on *Apocalypse Now*. But these feel more like diversions than the meat of the game, which is a silly story about warring plastic factions in an alternate universe.

The maps are much bigger and more interactive than in the first ARMY MEN, allowing you to burn

trees, enter buildings, and destroy objects that aren't hard-coded obstacles. But there are problems: The graphics have a rough, low-res look that hasn't come very far since the last game.

The logic of the action also seems somewhat flawed: Your troops can't so much as crawl over a butter knife, and a simple mushroom proves to be impervious to mortar fire, bazookas, and flamethrowers. The result is that many of the maps seem to be little more than glorified mazes.

Full-Plastic Jacket

Although it appears to have pretensions to real-time strategy, ARMY MEN II is very much an

action game along the lines of *CONTRA* or *RETURN FIRE*. You take direct control of an infantryman whose gravelly voice makes Clint Eastwood sound shrill. Although you can command other troops, they really aren't useful as anything other than Keystone Cops-style bodyguards: They cluster around you and shuffle nervously, occasionally attacking enemies in range.

Luckily, gameplay in ARMY MEN II is primarily a matter of charging headlong at the enemy, because the limited choice of commands that you've got at your disposal doesn't lend itself to many tactical options. It would have been nice to be able to split your men into separate groups to cover a wider range of terrain, but there's no telling what these little bubble-headed troopers will do when left to their own devices. Give them a destination and sometimes they'll simply stop halfway there. ARMY MEN II could be accused of poor pathfinding if it actually got around to that more often.

In fact, ARMY MEN II has no real AI. The enemy reactions are either scripted, or they bligger when you enter an activation radius. You can set up multiplayer games against the computer, but the AI simply amasses troops and makes a bee-line for its objective. Perhaps even more disappointing is that the multiplayer games can be played only on real-world maps.

Fortunately, ARMY MEN is still a good multiplayer game with a strong online following. It offers several fun variations on Capture the Flag and a long list of option toggles. Multiplayer matches in the first game were almost fatally flawed by powerful air strikes and paratroopers, but in ARMY MEN II these attacks can be effectively trumped with anti-aircraft guns.

Is it wise to completely miss the point of a game concept (ARMY MEN) or to tease players by not taking full advantage of it (ARMY MEN II)? At least 3DO is moving in the right direction. At this rate, ARMY MEN II should be the game we're waiting for. **CGW**



FEEL THE RUMR A magnifying glass applies a little intense scrutiny to an enemy tank.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD



PROS: Much better than the first *Army Men*, some good maps and power-ups, fun, flexible multiplayer gaming.

CONS: Still misses the point, nonexistent AI, poor control of friendly troops.

DIFFICULTY: Easy

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 90, 16MB RAM, 150MB hard disk space.

3D SUPPORT: None.

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: IPX, TCP/IP, serial, modem, NEAT, and MPlayer G-4 players, 1 CD per game.

Price: \$39.95

Publisher: 3DO

www.3do.com





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Zombie Jamboree

They're Dumb, They're Ugly, and They're Hell-bent on Eating Your Brains!

by Jesse Hiatt

RESIDENT EVIL 2 will probably stand as one of the best console games of the 20th century. Too bad this isn't a console magazine.

More than a few developers who've passed through our offices have readily admitted their debt to the horror classic; however, those same developers have been able to complete their entire production cycles in the time it took Capcom to release this port.

RESIDENT EVIL 2: PLATINUM EDITION is going to have trouble competing with all those more advanced made-for-PC titles. But RE2 is still a game worth playing, if only for its solid gameplay, its strange Japanese translations, and its wacky humor.

RE2 takes place in a universe so faithful to the plot conventions of the classic *Night of the Living Dead* movies that you could almost consider the game an unlicensed adaptation. Both are slim on characters and sets but are definitely thick with drama, tension,



KNEE-DEEP IN THE DEAD Well, ankle-deep at least. Helping zombies return to their more traditional, nonambulatory dead state is all in a day's work for cop Leon Kennedy.

and humorous B-movie dialogue. RE2 uses all these techniques to great effect.

Twitch and Shout

Most of the gameplay centers on key hunts and puzzles, but along the way there is a lot of zombie slaying to do. The presentation should be familiar to adventure gamers: 3D character models move about an eerie abandoned police station and secret labs.

The models looked great on the console version and have been improved for the PC. Zombies shuffle and twitch toward you, their cleaved torsos clawing across the floor to attack you. Heroes limp and drag their feet as they absorb increasing levels of punishment (although this realistic feature can be a serious pain in the rear when you have to limp clear across a level to get some health).

The fixed camera angles can be a problem: They occasionally get in the way when you're killing zombies—a definite downer since RE2 has more combat than the average adventure game.

One of the features that sets RE2 apart is its use of intertwining plot lines. You can play from the perspective of Claire Redfield (sister of Chris Redfield, the protagonist from the first game) or Leon Kennedy, a rookie cop in the Raccoon City Police Department.

After you play through a plot from one character's perspective, you can go through the plot you just finished from the other character's point of view. Some of the decisions that you make the first time through will affect what happens when you play the plot from the other character's viewpoint: You'll see the same rooms, but the puzzles, item distribution, enemies, and side quests will be different. This means the game's two-plot-per-character format

yields a total of four plot lines. For the RE2 hard-core who wore out their console version, the PC edition has something new to offer: Extreme Battle Mode. Here all of the key hunts and puzzles have been thrown out the window leaving you with a pure zombie-killing action-fest. You get four different characters to choose from (including Chris Redfield), all armed to the teeth with special weaponry. The only other notable bone thrown to PC gamers is a

still-image gallery and a Windows desktop theme.

RESIDENT EVIL 2: PLATINUM EDITION holds its own as far as gameplay is concerned, but next to the latest and greatest PC releases it falls a little flat. The title probably won't match the success of the console version, but gamers without PlayStations might still find much to enjoy here. **CGW**



CHIPPED SHOULDER RE2's high-quality mod-like animations include dynamic bullet-impact effects like this.

COMPUTER
GAMING
WORLD



PROS: Plays exactly like the console game.

CONS: Plays exactly like the console game.

DIFFICULTY: Intermediate.


REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 166, 24MB RAM, 250MB hard drive space.

3D SUPPORT: Direct 3D, Direct Draw.

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: None.

Price: \$34.95
Publisher: Capcom Entertainment

www.cjpc.com



It takes a killer
to stop a killer.

SHADOW MAN



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Going South

SOUTH PARK License Can't Save the Weak Game Behind It

by Thierry Nguyen

Suck on my chocolate salty balls...put 'em in your mouth and suck 'em!" Either you recognized the South Park quote or you're flipping to the cover and wondering if you bought the wrong magazine. Relax, you didn't.

South Park is one of those pop-culture phenomena that make companies hunger to snatch the license and whip up a quick game. In this case, unfortunately, the license is better than the game—in both its PC and console versions.

It's Coming Right for Us!

The game's campy premise gives you the feeling of playing a long episode of the TV show. Essentially, a giant comet of evil has landed in South Park and has generated many enemies ready to go on a rampage. The infamous four South



CRUSH THEM, GIANT ROBO! Enemy design is sorely lacking; the enemies can generally be divided into two groups: grunts and grunt creators. At least these fart-doll weapons are cool.

Park kids must save the town. The game comprises five episodes filled with varying levels, and Chef gives the kids a briefing before each one.

SOUTH PARK perfectly captures the spirit of the show, both visually and aurally. Even though the game is in 3D, characters and settings remain graphically true to their TV roots. The sound is even better: All of the show's actors did the voiceovers, and again, it's a damn good use of the license. While you play the four main kids in the single-player game, the multiplayer mode lets you choose from any and all other characters, each with a set of witty quips.

The enemies are both from the show and created for the game;



ARMAGEDDON AT LAST The PC version of SOUTH PARK will let you pit Satan against Jesus, something you can't do in the N64 version.

fans of the show will recognize the killer generic turkeys, the clones, and the cow-laughing aliens.

Finally, the weapons provide an interesting spin on tired, traditional FPS gear. Grenades are replaced with Terrence and Phillip fart dolls, and the infamous sniper rifle is now a chicken that you squeeze to shoot eggs. The best is a multiplayer-only weapon, an Alien Gamo that forces its victim to dance a little jig, clearing the way for fragging.



ON THE TOWN Capturing the look of the show has the unfortunate side effect of guaranteeing some lackluster levels, like this straightforward street in South Park.

is very uninspired. The problems start with the level design. Everything looks alike, so you have to pay attention to the arrow signs to get through the linear levels.

There is no real AI to speak of, any difficulty comes from simply stacking the odds. The levels that make up an episode tend to focus on just one or two enemies and throw them at you in hordes. Quantity over quality is the level-design mantra here.

Multiplayer is slightly better, since you have a larger variety of characters/skins. The main problem is character imbalance, due to size.

like is about the size of a football, while Mr. Mackey's head is as wide as a goalpost. Sure, like starts with less health, but with a competent player behind him, he's impossible to hit, while it's impossible to miss when aiming at Mr. Mackey.

Graphically, the problems stem from residual N64 and general engine limitations. You'll see the ever-present fog (a bit better here than in the N64 version), seams and cracks on the walls, bad texturing, and a fixed resolution of 640x480, regardless of your 3D card. Another console leftover is the fact that you can save only at the end of every level.

As the big South Park fan in the CGW office, I found the game disappointing. The only people I can see enjoying it are die-hard fans who don't do much action gaming, so they don't know what they're missing. For the rest of us, though, it's just one more licensing misfire, but with a twist: Instead of a bad game that misuses the license, we just get a bad game that uses the license well. Not even Mr. Hankey can save this game. **CGW**

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★★★

PROS: Uses the license perfectly, capturing the look, sound, and feel of the show; amusing twist on weapons; great audio commentary depending on which character you choose.

CONS: Bad level and enemy design; annoying enemy AI; various visual problems; unbalanced multiplayer characters.

DIFFICULTY: Intermediate.

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium III 266, 32MB RAM, 950MB hard-disk space.

3D SUPPORT: 3dx Glx2, Direct3D.

MULTI-PLAYER SUPPORT: LAN, Internet (2-8 players; modems, serial (2 players), 1 CD per player).

Price: \$49.95
 Publisher: Action Entertainment
 www.actionent.com

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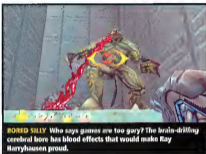
The Follow-up to an N64 Hit Hunts for Some Respect

by Tom Price

TUROK 2 must have seemed like a good proposition to Acclaim; based on a popular comic book series, the original TUROK was wildly popular on the N64. But the PC port of the original was somewhat less than impressive, so PC gamers haven't exactly been waiting on pins and needles for TUROK 2: SEEDS OF EVIL. That's too bad, because in spite of some significant faults that keep it out of contention for a place among the HALF-LIVES of the world, TUROK 2 at least deserves a look.

TUROK 2 begins after the destruction of the Campaigner and the Chronosceptor at the end of TUROK: DINOSAUR HUNTER. This time you are Joshua Preseed, the new Turok, and you must fight your way through six worlds full of aliens, zombies, and, of course, dinosaurs, defending the energy totems against the Primagen.

Helping you in your quest is Adon, the requisite buxom babe with an English accent, who



BORED SILLY Who says games are too gory? The brain-drilling cerebral bore has blood effects that would make Ray Harryhausen proud.

announces all the weapons you pick up—and can't be taken seriously at all once she says "flame-throwah." Too bad, because some of the weapons are quite cool. The aforementioned flamethrower sends out a nicely rendered arc of fire, while the firestorm cannon has a cool triple-spinning animation and a deadly rain of fireballs.

The most gruesome weapon (and therefore my favorite) would have to be the cerebral bore. No, it has nothing to do with William F. Buckley. Instead, it's a brainwe-horring, exploding drill bit. The beastie lucky enough to get one of these locked onto his skull withers around while the bore whines away like a dentist's drill, spraying blood and gray matter until the bore finally explodes inside the

head of the creature, popping it like an overripe melon. Yum!

Unfortunately, technical glitches abound in TUROK 2. The most ridiculous example would have to be the bloodstains if you kill a monster next to a wall, bloodstains actually hover a few inches above the wall itself, and if you're near a corner, as much as 50 percent of the bloodstain bitmap will hang over the edge, in midair. While these aren't exactly game-stopping bugs, they don't do much to improve the game's overall image.

Also problematic is the fogging, a cheap way of avoiding Z-buffering that's a carryover from the N64. In sniper mode, the fog forms a hard edge instead of a gradual one that makes for

pools of gray poi collecting in the nooks and crannies of the structures you're looking at. It's just one more amateurish touch that tarnishes the game.

The Lost World

The biggest downside to TUROK 2 has to be the level design. You run around, find the switch, hit the switch, find the door that opened, rescue someone, find the portal, go to the next maze of repetitive bitmaps, and generally operate in a confused state. Further adding is the overlay map, à la DARK FORCES. It's a serious pain trying to watch out for hazards in front of you while playing a game of Lock 'n' Chase at the same time. Worse yet, there is no static map that you can access while paused. What seems like an attempt to be challenging ultimately just makes the game boring.

So if you're thinking about suggesting some TUROK 2 multiplayer the next time you're meeting with your QUAKE clan, forget it; they'll laugh you out of the group. However, if your 10-year-old cousin who got that new Celeron for Christmas needs a game to introduce him to first-person shooters, you could do a lot worse than TUROK 2. A whole lot. **CGW**

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★★☆

PROS: Better than its predecessor; good weapons; decent AI.

CONS: Poor level design; numerous graphical glitches.

DIFFICULTY: Intermediate.

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 200, 32MB RAM, 200MB hard-disk space.

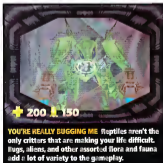
3D SUPPORT: 3Dx Voodoo 1 or better.

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: LAN and Internet (2-16 players), 1 CD per player.

Price: \$49.99
Publisher: Acclaim Entertainment
www.acclaim.net



YOU ARE HERE The cheesy overlay map only serves to make the repetitive levels even more difficult to navigate.



YOU'RE REALLY BUGGING ME Reptiles aren't the only critters that are making your life difficult. Bugs, aliens, and other assorted flora and fauna add a lot of variety to the gameplay.

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Extreme G2



Publisher: Acclaim Entertainment
Price: \$29.99
www.acclaim.net

For scenery-smacking, speed-filled, oh-my-God-I'm-going-the-wrong-way confusion, *EXTREME G2* is the epitome of Bad 21st-Century Motorcycle Gaming.

To be fair, the lightweight physics model is bearable and you get some interesting weapons. Gameplay modes include time trials and a drone-filled arcade thingy that seems a lot like a mobile *SPACE INVADERS*, but the basic idea here is to blast and race your way through a series of circuits to the "Extreme Contest."

Of course your opponents are trying to do the very same thing, and the challenge often lies in deciding between a clean, fast run or picking up some of the many yet momentum-crippling power-ups littering each course. Upgrade shops and garages aren't part of the equation, though you can choose from several uniquely performing bikes and win even bigger and badder machines as you progress.

Track structure, though at times repetitive, is as wild as I've seen, with loop-the-loops, jumps, and spiraling tunnels painting with ridiculously high speeds to instill a

perpetual sense of impending doom—one that unfortunately detracts from enjoyment.

The game won't let you add-map analog throttles and brakes, meaning that owners of four-button sticks

and wheels must use two buttons for digital speed control while accessing the keyboard for camera views and weapons. Plus, only the N64 version of the game has multiplayer racing—one more reason why *EXTREME G2* is best reserved for its original audience: the console crowd. —Gordon Goble

Rollcage



Publisher: Psygnosis
Price: \$49.99
www.psygnosis.com

ROLLCAGE strives to lead the congested combat-racing pack by offering reversible, gravity-defying cars that can ride up walls or along ceilings, yet somehow keep on ticking. Unfortunately, vertical and/or inverted *ROLLCAGE* driving is a wrecked experience, one that'll toy with your equilibrium, screw with vehicle physics, and destroy any hope you had of winning a race.

But if you play it as a right-side-up drive 'n' shoot, it becomes one



very attractive affair. *ROLLCAGE*'s intuitive menus, enormous options and settings area, awesome graphics, and skill-testing driving model show that England-based designer ATD (Attention to Detail) really put some work into this one.

The game has some of the most visually impressive weapons and power-ups ever to torture a 3D card, yet each is geared to a specific purpose. Just try pulverizing a building before you've scooted by the plummeting, flaming wreckage or launching a "Leader Missile" when that leader is you and you'll understand.

The spectacular *ROLLCAGE* world teems with short cuts and unconstrained off-track spaces. Each undulating circuit is crafted to offer solace only to those who can adapt to its peculiarities and take advantage of its hidden rewards. And that's where that car model comes in. Terrifyingly responsive and inordinately powerful at first, *ROLLCAGE* cars call for a surprisingly modulated, pseudosimulation approach and prove to be a joy to drive once you get the hang of it.

Split-screen multiplayer retards the otherwise smooth frame rate considerably and the game could do with a true cockpit rather than bumper view, but *ROLLCAGE* is nevertheless annoyingly addictive and a lotta bombastic fun.

Just ignore all that upside-down stuff. —Gordon Goble

Wages of Sin



Publisher: Activision
Price: \$29.95
www.activision.com

Mission packs have the dubious history of either reinforcing a bad game or taking a good one to another level. Fortunately, Activision has achieved

the latter and come up with a great addition to the shooter *SIN*. Unlike other mission packs, *WAGES OF SIN* (WOS) also manages to play off and add to the *SIN* storyline.

This time *Blade* is up against a nasty local crime organization called, you guessed it, the Mafia. These baddies have been hiding mutants in the sewers, under the leadership of family boss Gianni Manero. After a band of hapless construction workers accidentally bump into Manero's mutants in the sewers, *Blade* is called in.

WOS adds 17 new levels to the *SIN* universe (including multiplayer levels with cool hoverbikes) and seven new weapons. There are also 12 new enemies, plus two rather nasty end bosses.

The AI has also been improved, with enemies consistently trying to evade your attacks. You'll find that this adds an additional bit of zip to the game; it's just not such an easy affair to waste those monsters this time around.

Activision has included an automatic patch to WOS that will upgrade your *SIN* installation to version 1.03. The patch makes a really big difference in terms of



performance. The excessively long loading times are history and the action is smoother as well.

WAGES OF SIN is a worthy addition to the original *SIN*, adding new goodies while rectifying some of the annoying flaws of that predecessor. It's definitely worth checking out if you're an original *SIN* nec. —Jim Lynch

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Robots Rising

The Third Time's the Charm in the War Against the Cybrids



by Greg Fortune

An upstart has seized the throne. Dynamix's STARSIEGE has wrested the crown from the MECHWARRIOR 2 series, the long-time king of the giant robot hit. Where the company's earlier EARTHIEGE games were also-rans, STARSIEGE comes to the party equipped with a deep back-story, a number of gameplay innovations, and enough unique flair to make for stiff competition for the upcoming HEAVY GEAR II and MECHWARRIOR 3. Only time will tell how long STARSIEGE will stay at the top, but right now, the view from here is spectacular.

What's My Motivation?

Earlier games in this series were hampered by a lack of background. Where MECHWARRIOR had years of development behind it and hundreds of pages of documentation from the paper-based BattleTech universe, the EARTHIEGE games had about as much exposition as a Terminator



HOW ARTICULATE Despite the lack of torso twist, articulated weapons still give the HERCs a decent field of fire.

2 trailer. This time, Dynamix didn't just write a convenient excuse for you to get into a fight, the company actually laid out the timeline for an entire universe. This ties STARSIEGE in with not only the EARTHIEGE titles, but with TRIBES as well. The story is presented to you through a very detailed compendium, as well as through

opposite sides. This background plays into strategies and even the design of the game's units. The rebels, for instance, use HERCs (this universe's name for its giant robots) based on souped-up construction equipment, and this is reflected in those units' physical designs, capabilities, and paint jobs. Eventually, though, the long-dormant Cybrid threat reemerges, and changes humanity's priorities from conflict to survival.

In addition to the built-in back-



NOTE THE DIFFERENCE in scale between the tanks and the larger vehicles. Don't worry, the tanks give as good as they receive.

news-leads in the game's interface. The story here isn't just interesting, it's compelling, and I found myself actually taking the time to read through all the news postings between missions.

The story starts with a civil war of sorts, with two brothers, Caeron and Harabe, fighting on

story, you'll also find fan fiction at www.starsiegeplayers.com, and there's even a non-computer-based STARSIEGE game in the works (ETA as yet unknown).

The Next Dimension

The game engine is a beauty. STARSIEGE supports both Glide and OpenGL (officially, the RIVA TNT), but we had good luck with the Rage 128 as well! 3D cards, and has a capable software rendering engine for those who have not joined the cutting-edge club yet. Frame-rates are smooth even on a 3D-card equipped Pentium system, and the textures and lighting effects are beautifully done. Sound effects and music are also well done, with 3D audio support for those who have the hardware.

Input configuration is extremely detailed, allowing you to reconfigure every command in the game. There's even drag-and-drop reconfiguration of your Heads-Up Display layout. My control setup—ruder pedals, CH Pro Throttle, and mouse—was easy to configure to work with the game, and it functioned flawlessly.

The game's interface is well designed, with little jumping around necessary. Configuration can be done from the main menu,



NICE DIGS Buildings look as good as vehicles in this game.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★★★

PROS: Lots of gameplay innovations, but giant robot game just.

CONS: Canned dialogue, a communications.

DIFFICULTY: Intermediate.

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 166 (with 3D card, \$200 without), 32MB RAM, 299MB hard disk space.

3D SUPPORT: 3Dx Glide, OpenGL.

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: Modems, LAN (IPX), Internet (TCP/IP), number of players limited only by bandwidth.

Price: \$49.95
 Publisher: Dynamix (Gems)
www.starsiege.com

and from the cockpit of your HERC as well—a very nice touch. Several times I needed to map a command I had left out of my custom configuration while inside a mission and was able to do so easily.

Customization isn't limited to controls—multiplayer fans will appreciate the ability to import your own custom skins, squad



BOOM BABY BOOM! This Cybrid just learned the meaning of teamwork, the hard way.



OUCH! HOT! HOT! Dynamic lighting effects spruce up the game nicely. Here we see the best way to smoke a Glitch.



HEY, TAXI! StarSIEGE will let you customize your HERC to taste, regardless of how odd that taste may be.

insignia, and character portraits for use in the game.

A Plot Twist

One design decision that worried MECHWARIOR fans was the elimination of torso-twisting from the HERCs. The only vehicles that support rotating gun platforms are tanks, which are fast and small, but have no shields. At first, my predisposition to torso twists as the basis for a set of strategies caused me some grief. I was determined, however, not to damn this game based on my own prejudices. Eventually, I was able to adapt my tactics to the targeting pointer-based interface and had a blast piloting both the HERCs and the tanks.

If you must swivel, though, there's always the tank. I'll admit I still have a tendency to take Harabec's Predator tank into the

field more often than not, as old habits are really hard to break and this tank is really cool. It's a real tribute to the design team that I can be as successful from the turret of a tank as I am from the cockpit of a HERC.

The missions in StarSIEGE are

a definite highlight. There are 34 single-player missions, split between the human and Cybrid campaigns. Add to that the training and multi-player games, and you've got more than 50 distinct missions to work through. Several of the missions I found myself playing repeatedly just to play out "what if" scenarios—they're that good. The best thing about the missions is that, while they are scripted and not dynamic, you never feel like you're on an endless series of combat patrols. Each mission has distinct objectives that often change midstream, and they flow together very nicely. Not once during all the countless hours I played StarSIEGE did I think to myself, "Great, another canned mission." Dynamix plans to release a mission editor eventually, although they're still working out the details on how that will happen.

The game has too many nice touches to mention them all. One example: Sitting in the cockpit of your HERC, watching Cybrid landing pods rain from the sky, you can feel the despair of knowing that an unstoppable force is bent on your destruction. The Cybrid units look decidedly alien and very menacing, and they are even more fun to pilot than destroy. The new cloaking devices, with their Predator-style shimmering effect, are also very cool, and add a whole new dimension to the battlefield tactics. Like a ghost, you can now slip in and out of the enemy formations wreaking havoc at will.

There numerous other gizmos to load into your vehicles, like ECM units, extra capacitors, sensors, and so on. All of this variety means that there's little chance that you won't be able to configure a vehicle to work with your fighting style.

Hate Your Friends

Multiplayer games are also supported using TCP/IP, IPX, or modem. While there was speculation that StarSIEGE would work in multiplayer games with StarSIEGE: TRIBES, that isn't the case. Deathmatch and team-play games are supported, with two of the most notable variations being Capture the Flag and

Star Links

StarSIEGE players will want to check out the following sites for gameplay tips, the latest news on enhancements, online squads, and even fan fiction.

www.starsiege.com

Dynamix's official StarSIEGE Web site.

www.starsiegeplayers.com

The official StarSIEGE players' site, with message boards and more.

www.planestarsiege.com

Perhaps the most thorough site for news, strategies, additions, and links to all things StarSIEGE.

www.dastemplate.com Another top-notch news, information, and squad site.

the amusing StarSIEGE Football. Dynamix provides a free Internet-based matchmaking hub, and if you're in the mood for something a little more private, you can set up your own server. Server setup is absolutely painless, and if you have a spare machine, you can use the included nongraphical dedicated server process, which allows many more players in a game.

While StarSIEGE is a very solid effort in today's world of patch-to-work games, it's not glitch-free. AI units sometimes get stuck on objects, which causes them to stand in place, acting like a dog getting its belly scratched. Once time, I actually blew the feet of a unit I was sent to rescue because she wouldn't move to the pickup point. This was after I had destroyed all the enemy units in the area by myself, which made for a particularly painful do-over. Also, don't be too quick to reconfigure your controls. The training missions use the default key configuration and ignore any custom setup you've done, preventing you from practicing the controls you'll be using in combat while you're learning.

The annoyances I found were all pretty minor, and StarSIEGE is great fun to play. I didn't find anything that would keep this off anyone's play list, and I found a whole lot to like. It looks like the former also-ran is definitely now the one to beat. **GGW**

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Might and Magic VII

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DAVID S. COOPER

Revoltingly Bad

Start This NASCAR Revolution Without Us

by Scott A. May

A stock-car racing game for the simulation-impaired, *NASCAR REVOLUTION* offers arcade action for casual drivers, with variety and flash galore. But you'll need an industrial-strength PC just to drag this beast out of the pits. Again, Electronic Arts has used Stormfront Studios, the developer that dumbed-down the IndyCar experience in *ANDRETTI RACING*. That game was laughably simplistic, but at least it screamed and was a blast to play. No such luck with *NASCAR REVOLUTION*, a game that promises not to tax your intellect or skill yet puts your hardware through living hell.

All That Glitters

At surface level, where even the dullest games manage to



IT'S THE PITS *NASCAR REVOLUTION*'s eye candy for the arcade crowd includes motion-capture pit crews who work feverishly to your specifications.



PICTURE PERFECT Graphically stunning in freeze frame, *NASCAR REVOLUTION* loses most of its appeal when you set it in motion, unless you've got a killer gaming rig.

what Stormfront calls Thunder AI, which certainly sounds wicked.

Other potential goodies include a bevy of shop adjustments, such as wedge, downforce, gear ratio, fuel load, steering lock, weight distribution, shocks, and wheel cambers.

All this from a game that pretends not to care about such details. Thanks to sploshed performance issues, neither do we. Luckily, most adjustments have no effect on the track.

In spite of 3D accelerator requirements, the game's graphics are a mixed bag. I loved the detailed car skins, and the transparency and windshield reflection effects are dazzling. On the other hand, visual sloppiness abounds, including square car shadows and a fair amount of polygon clipping.

The game supports a wide range of controllers, from gamepads to force-feedback steering wheels. Too bad the actual in-game controls are so sluggish. But it does take your

mind off the stupefyingly unrealistic physics model. You know, the one that lets you take any corner, at any speed, from any racing line, with virtually identical results. Or that causes cars to stick—not bounce—when they hit the wall. The game can be set to either realistic or arcade modes, but both feel about the same.

Pony Up Some Horsepower

EA Sports promises this game will push your hardware to its limits, and it will, but not in a good way. Despite a minimum system requirement of a Pentium 200, the game was sluggish as hell on my trusty old P233 MMX, with 64MB RAM and 12MB Monster 3D II. So I tossed it on a P1600, with surprisingly similar results. Turning down the eye candy helps, but visual flash is the game's only redeeming feature; without it, all we have are boxy graphics and a pathetic driving model. If you're determined to stick with this game, my suggestion is to use the Direct3D rendering option, in which you'll lose graphic glitter but gain a consistently playable frame rate.

As you'd expect, the game's multiplayer performance is quite frightening. There's no Internet play, for obvious reasons, and even a direct serial cable (null modem) connection begins to shudder when more than four cars share the asphalt. LAN play fares best, but again, for the best performance, limit the total number of drivers in a single race.

I understand the market EA and Stormfront were aiming for with *NASCAR REVOLUTION*. What I don't get is how they managed to miss the mark so badly. The only revolution this game might incite will be at the return counter of your local software store. **EW**



PROS: Killer car graphics; large selection of real-world tracks and drivers; decent garage mechanics; good sound effects.

CONS: Inevitable frame-slip, even on fast systems; even worse multiplayer performance; lousy physics model; stiff controls.

DIFFICULTY: Easy

REQUIREMENTS: 200MHz or faster PC (Pentium, Cytrix 486, or AMD K5); 32MB RAM; 430MB hard-disk space.

3D SUPPORT: 3dfx Voodoo, Voodoo Rush, Voodoo2, and Banshee; Intel i7-0; nVidia TNT and Riva 128; ATI Rage 128, 53 Savage 90; Rendition Work: 2200; Direct3D

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: IPX networks (2-8 players), modem and serial (2 players); 1 CD per player

Price: \$49.95
Publisher: Electronic Arts
www.easports.com

shine, this one sports some mighty impressive features. You get a whopping 17 accurately modeled real-world tracks—mostly oval variations, with two road courses—that include Atlanta, Bristol, Indianapolis, Michigan, Richmond, Talladega, and Watkins Glen. Three courses also offer night racing, which can be a kick. Further, the game lets you test your mettle against 31 of NASCAR's brightest active drivers, including Jeff Gordon, Dale Earnhardt, Rusty Wallace, Ted Musgrave, Bill Elliott, Dale Jarrett, and Hut Stricklin. You can also race against such legends of the tarmac as Cale Yarborough, Richard Petty, and Bobby Allison. They are all empowered with



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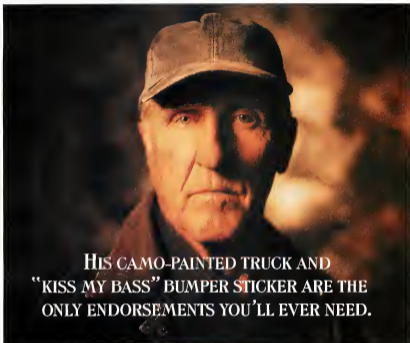
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Hog Heaven

This Racer Boasts Challenges and Thrills in All the Right Places

by Gordon Goble

There are games and there are classics, and in PC racing we are fortunate to have had our fair share of the latter. But whoever said a landmark racing game had to ride on four tires certainly didn't count

on the latest release from the recently prolific racing stables of Electronic Arts.

Designed by Italian-based game developer Milestone (SCREAMER), SUPERBIKE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP is an unexpectedly remarkable world-class presentation of world-class motorcycle racing. It's so good that it gracefully renders its only true

arcade affair with simplified riding and enough stereotypical coin-op menu trappings to look like an explosion at a Sega factory. The second game-within-a-game, however, is the real reason SUPERBIKE will make everyone's short list for racing game of the year.

Let me put it this way—I spent my first two hours perfecting a single lap at Italy's Monza, enjoying every subtle moment and reminiscing fondly about my earliest experiences with MicroProse's GRAND PRIX II. Make no mistake, with its multitude of difficulty and realism options opened, SUPERBIKE is at least that involving and perhaps even more difficult.

First and foremost, there is little doubt you are astride a tenuous, temperamental motorcycle, one that differs from manufacturer to manufacturer: Accelerate too quickly and you'll wheelie and flip; brake too sharply on a downhill slope and you'll bring the rear wheel up and potentially take a header over the handlebars. Along the way, SUPERBIKE forces you to take an ultraslow approach and smart racing lines, with the believable crash-avoidance techniques and uncanny behavior of the AI competition an added bonus.

Should you go for a spill, however, it's a wild show to be sure, with detached riders doing their best rag doll impersonations, and bikes tumbling and skidding to a stop. Sadly, crash-damaged bikes and racers are not part of the equation, though at 100 percent realism you will have to run back to your overturned mount and manually get it pointed back in the right direction again before you can continue!

Looking Good

As impressive as the SUPERBIKE ride is, the game's graphics are even more so. Granted, you have

to exceed the recommended system requirements to experience its true glory while maintaining a workable frame-rate; but if you do it's a knockout show, with brilliant detail, shadows, lighting, tire smoke, and a gorgeous rendering process that creates unbelievable, almost TV-like images.

It's not just the polish that shines—it's what's underneath, too. SUPERBIKE features a dozen of the finest real-life circuits ever seen in a sim. The game also never lets you forget that each rider is somewhat independent of his machine. You can see this best exemplified in the first-person perspective, in which the camera view actually bobs about in accordance with the position of the rider's head, not the handlebars. I, however, preferred the situational awareness of the third-person chase view.

A full garage facility and seemingly accurate telemetry readings will help you tune your beast, and the game offers several modes of play from pre-season practice through a full championship (with real-time qualification sessions) and several multiplayer options.

SUPERBIKE doesn't pull any punches in the audio department either, superbly showcasing the unique engine notes of each of the five bike types on display and positioning the sound wonderfully across the stereo spectrum. Unfortunately, the game slowly unloads and reloads each track with every new session. Of course, this complaint pales against all that is right with the game.

SUPERBIKE succeeds on many levels, not the least of which is that it becomes more enjoyable the longer you play and the better you get. And yes, serious racers will continue to improve as their experience, ability and knowledge increase—the true mark of a top-notch sim. **CGW**



GET ME OFF THIS CRAZY THING! The view from SUPERBIKE's first-person camera, a truly frightening perspective.

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD



PROS: Killer graphics, impressive physics, racing options, great audio.

CONS: Heavy system requirements, slow track loading, no crash damage or injuries.

DIFFICULTY: Advanced

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 233, 8MB RAM, 452MB hard-disk space, 8x CD-ROM drive.

3D SUPPORT: Direct3D compatible card with 8MB RAM

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: Modem, serial cable (2 players), IPX or TCP/IP (2-8 players), 1 CD per network game

Price: \$49.95
Publisher: EA Sports

www.easports.com

competition—Intense Entertainment's sound-alike SUPERBIKE WORLD CHAMPIONS—darned near forgettable.

A New Standard in Racing

With 12 real-world Superbike courses and an overflowing roster of real riders, bikes, and sponsors, this game is far more authentic than Intense Entertainment's candidate. With hauntingly photorealistic graphics that surpass those of Ubisoft's F1 RACING SIMULATION, it is a visual masterpiece. And with a demanding and complex physics model, it challenges games like no other bike-racing game ever has.

But should you think you'll need a license in Simology just to get upright, fear not. SUPERBIKE is two, two, two games in one. For the casual crowd, it's a blatantly



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Here on Mulligan's Isle

MS GOLF 1999 EDITION Is a Great Game but Only a Slight Upgrade

by Scott A. May

It seems like only yesterday that I was heaping high praise on MICROSOFT GOLF 1998 and applauding the veteran franchise for finally coming into its own. Wait a minute—that was yesterday. Well, almost. And now, a scant six months or so after the release of GOLF 98, Microsoft and Friendly Software are offering GOLF 1999 EDITION, an ever-so-slight remake of last year's model.

Packed with only three new courses and a few cosmetic changes, this release is basically an upgrade. In fact, Microsoft could easily have gotten by with a downloadable patch and expansion disc. Thankfully, a \$30 mail-in rebate for owners of GOLF 98 takes the sting out of paying full price for a game you more or less already have. Owners of previous MS GOLF products also qualify for a \$10 rebate, which, all things considered, might be an even better deal.



THIS PERFECT WORLD As with many of today's top golf sims, the graphics in MS GOLF 99 are so polished that they've become somewhat sterile and lifeless.



GIMME VARIETY Six new 18-hole courses are available for play in MS GOLF 99, including three new links and four returning championship greens.

With an engine licensed from Access Software, MS GOLF began as merely a watered-down version of LINKS, contractually crippled to always be one step behind the Carver mother lode. And the game has covered in the shadows ever since. It wasn't bad; it just wasn't good—as if it had no soul.

A Bastard No More

Last year Microsoft finally patted up the dough to hire Ohio-based Friendly Software to do an original, stem-to-stem makeover of the feeble franchise. Driven by an improved version of friendly's GREG NORMAN game engine, a sleek interface, and knockout graphics, GOLF 98 rose to the ranks of the

genre's top contenders, alongside its estranged parent.

The good news is, GOLF 99 delivers three new 18-hole courses—Donald Ross Memorial, Eagle Heights, and Medallist Golf Club. They join four holdovers from last year—Loth of the Dog, the Links at Casa de Campo, Bay

Harbor, and the Preserve 9—for a total of 117 holes. That's a heap o' holes, which is nice, because unlike LINKS or JACK NICKLAUS GOLF, in GOLF 99 you can't import courses from older versions of the game.

The bad news isn't really bad; it's just disappointing. Virtually nothing else about the game has changed. Microsoft claims that a few aspects of gameplay have been tweaked, like chipping dynamics, but after playing for three weeks—and comparing it back-to-back with GOLF 98—I could find few discernible differences. Again, this isn't necessarily a bad thing. It just makes you wonder why Microsoft didn't wait to release a bona fide sequel.

Same Old, Still Good

Highlights of returning features include excellent customization of your gaming environment, including player strength, club distance, ball size and type, pin placement, and weather conditions. Up to four players can compete in one of five game types—Stroke, Match Play, Skins, Bingo-Bango-Bongo, and Scramble.

The availability of four swing modes assures that players of almost any skill level (real or imagined) can participate, from club lawyers to ball scrubbers. There are the standard dual- and tri-click mouse-button modes; an automated sim swing that virtually eliminates player input (not to mention all the fun); and Natural Swing, in which backswing and ball strikes are controlled entirely by mouse movement. This last method is touchy and difficult to master, to say the least, and not performed in real time. Stick to the traditional click-and-twitch instead.

MS GOLF 99 doesn't support 3D video acceleration, but it doesn't need to. In terms of photorealism, the game element that everyone seems to clamor for, the graphics here can toe the line with any competitor, using a combination of prerendered backdrops and video-captured golfer animations. Screen redraws are zippy, with multiple views to choose from. Truth be told, as in many of today's top golf sims, the landscapes here are so buffed and polished that they're somewhat cold and lifeless, as if you're playing inside a presentation slide show. Be careful what you wish for, people.

Redundant features and the lack of viable improvements make MICROSOFT GOLF 1999 EDITION best suited for fans who don't already own GOLF 98. For the rest of us, the countdown to GOLF 2000 is still ticking. **CGW**

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD



PROS: Improved ball physics, ultra-clean interface, attractive graphics, in-depth player customization, four swing modes.

CONS: Gameplay not appreciably better than last edition, lacks printed manual, no 3D hardware support.

DIFFICULTY: Easy

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 90, 16MB RAM, 55MB hard-disk space.

3D SUPPORT: None

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: Modern (2 player), IPX or TOPIC (2-4 players), 1 CD per player.

Price: \$49.95

Publisher: Microsoft

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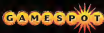


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DRESSED FOR SUCCESS



Rather than let a hero load up with every artifact in the game, **HEROES III** uses a paper doll model to limit how many artifacts a hero can use at once, forcing you to make strategic decisions.

UNDERGROUND MOVEMENT



The addition of opening subterranean areas in the adventure section of the game effectively doubles the size of many of the maps.

the paralyzing feature blout that could have easily

being able to gain a bonus when commanding certain troops—and there are lots of new abilities to acquire as well. One new ability, tactics, lets heroes move their forces within a limited range immediately prior to a battle—it's great for offense-minded heroes, letting them move ranged units into prime positions while cutting down the distance melee units have to travel.

All this makes for a game that is mind-boggling in its depth, and the designers deserve praise for adding so much while managing to dodge

sunk the title. Unfortunately, they also deserve a slap on the wrist for a tutorial that requires players to either print out a huge manual or constantly toggle between the game and a separate text file.

Storyteller Theatre

HOMMIII breaks from its predecessors in its campaign mode. Instead of a pair of linear campaigns with a few branches, the campaign is broken up into six minicampaigns of three to four scenarios apiece. While this lets the game tell a more interesting story,



Herolism 101

To protect your more valuable units, let your weakest creatures attack tough enemies first so they absorb the counterstrike.

The AI almost always focuses its attack on the largest group of units, so build up hordes of cheap cannon-fodder units to occupy enemies while your stronger armies pound on them. For infame heroes,

but enemies with legs so that rogues can hurl fireballs without damaging more-expensive units. Build marketplaces early. Almost every map is scarce in some resource (generally gold), so you'll need to convert resources early and often.

Just because you start a scenario with two towns doesn't mean you need two heroes. Instead, use one town as your central production point while building up only the income-generating aspects of

the second town. With one well-equipped hero you'll be able to win crucial early battles for resources that will eventually make additional heroes affordable and effective.

Use your units' special abilities. For example, since cavaliers and champions get 5 percent extra damage for every hex traveled, they should always charge before an attack, even if it means just circling an enemy that's already next to them.



Killing Kendal and Capturing Steadwick

You'll need two waves of enormous armies to take out General Kendal, who guards Steadwick. The key to this limited-time scenario is to grab the dragon generator in the lower-right corner of the subterranean level. Load your best hero with units and then seize the generator before the end of the first week. Build up your dungeon town first, initially choosing upgrades aimed at creating black dragons. Above ground, secure resources quickly and don't waste any units in fights with creozes who want to flee. Raise gold any way possible. By the second month, break through the southern magic-inhibiting garrison, flagging the grille towers and the lone gold mine. Load up your best heroes and then attack, using your first hero to take out Kendal's biggest stack and napping up with your dragon-laden hero.

fans of the series will probably miss the either/or branches of **HEROES II** that rewarded them for taking on more challenging scenarios. The campaign mode's greatest drawback is that gamers can't load individual scenarios from any completed minicampaign—you have to save each scenario at its start to replay it. While the campaign game is loaded with more than 20 great, challenging scenarios featuring a variety of goals—including wiping out enemies, seizing specific towns, escort missions, and more—they're unevenly paced, with one cruelly hard mission finishing up the

goals scan the map and their towns during an opponent's turn; while you can't issue orders during your enemy's turn, at least it's better than just staring at your monitor. A problem with DirectPlay makes Internet HOMMIII a sluggish experience, but that should be corrected in an upcoming patch.

Ultimately, the rewards of **HEROES OF MIGHT AND MAGIC III** far outweigh its few drawbacks. Hopefully most of those shortcomings will be patched, but even as it stands now HOMMIII is a game that strategy fans should absolutely be playing. **CGW**

relatively easy second campaign (see sidebar for tips on beating this scenario) before lapsing into easy mode for the next campaign.

Fortunately the game ships with an enormous number of mostly customizable single scenarios, giving the game remarkable replayability while the map editor that's included ensures that tons of user-created maps will be available online.

HOMMIII has improved its multiplayer play allowing for timed turns and letting strate-



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Imperialism with a Dash of Civ

Explore a Brave New World Set in a Bold New Era

by Loyd Case

Elizabeth I was lucky. If it hadn't been for an errant storm and the plucky courage of Sir Francis Drake and a few bold Englishmen, we might all be speaking Spanish today.

Playing *IMPERIALISM II* really drives this point home. Toward the end of one game, I found myself locked in a life-and-death struggle with Spanish invaders on English soil. The battle seasawed back and forth for some time, but ultimately I was ignominiously defeated. If only I'd had my own Drake.

It's the Same, but Different

As you might guess by the name, *IMPERIALISM II* is the successor to *SSI's* original turn-based empire builder. The original was set in an era—roughly the 19th or 20th century—when empires had already been established in the New World, and the objective was to become the world's first real



A NEW-SCHOOL OLD SCHOOL At first glance, *IMPERIALISM II* looks like an old-school title, but the 2D playing surface is actually fairly detailed.

superpower. *IMPERIALISM II* is set in an earlier time in which there is a completely undiscovered New World—a world with plenty of secrets to be uncovered by adventure- and glory-seeking explorers. A highly engaging game, *IMPERIALISM II* certainly has similarities to the original—especially in terms of interface—but there are some significant differences, too.

You'll notice the first difference right off the bat: The game map is hidden when you begin play. This hidden area is the undiscovered country, and it's up to you to send out explorers, sailors, and merchants to reap riches, resources, and living space for your country. You can play on a random map or, if you're historically inclined, one that reflects realistic geography.

If We Build It, They Will Come

IMPERIALISM II is a game of strategy, exploration, resource management, and combat. When you start a game, you can configure not only difficulty levels but also a host of other parameters. If you like a more building-oriented style of game, you can set that up. If you want lots of combat, no problem.

The graphics are solid-looking, in a classical kind of way, but they're mostly static, with a few minor animations. One nice touch is the zoom-out mode, which resembles an old parchment map.

You begin the game with three land units and three caravacs (small cargo ships). As in the original game, movement is abstracted. Except when building roads or railroads, you place your units where you want them, without worrying about paths and terrain. (I can imagine King Philip pointing to a location on the map and suggesting to Magellan, "Go there.")

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★★★

PROS: Intelligent AI and hidden new world make for an interesting blend of *IMPERIALISM* and *Civ II*.

CONS: The game is a little dry; some audio glitches.

DIFFICULTY: Intermediate.

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 200, 32MB RAM, 110MB hard-disk space

3D SUPPORT: None.

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: IPX, modem (2-6 players), 1 CD per player.

Price: \$49.95
Publisher: SSI

www.ssi.com



ONE-MINUTE WONDER: Combat in *IMPERIALISM II* may not be sophisticated, but it works.

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TREE-HUGGIN' NEW WORLDER IMPERIALISM II's new tech tree allows you to highlight a desired research goal and then work toward the smaller advancements that help you achieve that goal.

The nations that make up your world consist of six major powers and a handful of minor powers. You win by gaining control over 32 provinces in the Old World. While most of your acquisitions will be achieved the good-old-fashioned way, through combat, diplomacy is also a major factor.

Setting up trade pacts, embassies, and alliances is a key part of IMPERIALISM II's diplomatic game. You cajole minor powers to join your empire with careful application of trade subsidies and outright bribes, and you attempt to play different factions off each other. This aspect of the game is very similar to the original, but the computer opponents handle things

better than before. Get a province taken away from you by force, and suddenly your friends will start to give you the cold shoulder. Fend off an invader, and all of a sudden you're everybody's best buddy. At times, it's more just how much the AI mimics real life—or the fourth grade.

Here Be Dragons

Where this version of IMPERIALISM diverges from the original is in its aforementioned focus on discovering the New World, which adds an extra dimension of strategic depth to the game. To win, you have to capture provinces in the Old World. But you'll never get enough money and resources to do that without commandeering provinces in the New World. More than a few times, I got carried away with uncovering hidden lands and setting up shop there only to discover late in the game that I'd fallen behind because I didn't pay enough attention to expanding my old-world empire. If you act like the Dutch did

historically, you'll end up with the same results they did: You'll get pretty rich but become an also-ran in the game of power.

As you uncover the New World, you'll come across a new set of minor powers, which creates an interesting choice: Do you just roll in and suppress the natives, or do you try to deal with them in a more civilized manner? (Hint: Even if you're playing in a more peaceful style, you can lock out the other powers simply by buying a piece of land in the new country. The AI can't come in after that unless they declare war on you.)

The game requires you to balance two objectives. First, there's the dance between managing your new acquisitions and paying attention to your homeland. Then there's the resource ballet. The basic resources needed to feed and clothe your subjects lie mostly in your own domain, but the real wealth-generating resources, such as spices, diamonds, and gold, lie in the unexplored regions. In addition, luxuries needed to create a productive middle class, like tobacco, sugar, and fur, also lie in the New World. The difficulty is this: Just when you think you've gotten a handle on food, you find yourself running low on lumber and iron. You frantically build up those resources, only to find that you don't have enough clothing to recruit new laborers.

It gets more challenging the further you get into the game, as your citizens move up the economic chain. Each new class of worker is significantly more productive but demands a new type of luxury to stay productive.

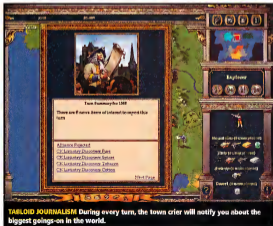
It all sounds a little dry on the surface, but it's incredibly addictive. And if it does prove too much for you, you can always assign the AI to handle some of the micromanagement.

It's the AI, Stupid

IMPERIALISM II boasts one of the stronger AIs I've seen. Aggressive and smart, the computer opponents will send in a lone cavalryman to scout out your position, then return later with a much stronger force. The AI also does a good job of building a mix of units that can give you fits on offense or defense.

The strategic AI is no slouch, either, though it tends to be quite aggressive. For example, even if you configure the game to be peaceful and builder-oriented (rather than centered around combat), the AI tends to send in the troops to take over minor New-World countries.

IMPERIALISM II is one of those rare games that actually adhere to the truism that gameplay is the first priority. It's not flashy, but as you dig into it you find that it's deep, addictive, and challenging. And there's no 3D accelerator or Pentium II required. This is one title that will live on my hard drive for quite some time. **CGW**



TABLOID JOURNALISM During every turn, the town crier will notify you about the biggest goings-on in the world.

Un-Civil War

The JULIUS CAESAR Engine Can't Handle Rifled Muskets

by Jim Cobb

The first thing you need to know about NORTH VS. SOUTH (NVS) is that it uses the acclaimed GREAT BATTLES OF JULIUS CAESAR engine, which was designed to simulate ancient tactical combat.

Problem is, a few things intervened between the times of Julius Caesar and Robert E. Lee—things like gunpowder, the disappearance of personal armor, and the decline of shock combat. Even so, the units of NVS resemble their ancient counterparts in their ratings for morale, strength, weapons type, range, and the like.

The units take up either one or two 330-yard hexes. Each turn represents basically an hour, and in that time, units can be ordered to move, turn, wheel, and change formation (column/line, mounted/unmounted, or limbered/unlimbered) individually or if their commander is capable, in groups.

Units take cohesion hits (à la GREAT BATTLES) whenever they

Lost in the Wilderness



move through difficult terrain or suffer damage in combat. Eventually, enough hits will rout a unit, though hits can be removed and routed units can be rallied—provided they haven't already retreated off-map.

Turn About

Also as in GREAT BATTLES, command is at the heart of NVS. Commanders have command ranges and initiative ratings, which equal the number of orders they can give to units; group movements, if successful, use up that leader's allotted orders. The side whose commanders have the higher initiative ratings tends to go first and most often. The twist in NVS is that commands come from army commanders to corps commanders down to division level. The corps commanders can either spread orders between their subordinate division commanders or drive a crucial division multiple times at the risk of sustaining hits for the additional movement.

NVS applies this system to 10 engagements between the Union Army of the Potomac and the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia. Each engagement has an historical setting and up to six "what if" variants. The campaign game has all 10 engagements

strung together with the victor sometimes able to choose a different battle to shorten the war.

Sounds great, but NVS fails to deliver. The graphics, for example, aren't even up to the standard of the GREAT BATTLES series. Why, with the colorful assortment of kepis, butternuts, Zouaves, and other uniforms that colorfully filled the Civil War battlefield, are we subjected to a monotonous procession of blue and gray ranks? The terrain can conceal corps and division commands, causing you to waste time searching for them with the slow scrolling and touchy fly-by window. The animation for battle is unintentionally funny when the defender leaves the hex and the attackers bayonet the sic, and when routed units execute neat wheels and march smartly away. It can also be frustrating when the view switches to the next commander before combat is finished.

Blunt Bayonet

If the gameplay were good, the other irritants wouldn't matter so much. But NVS is too much like

A sea of blue and gray in the Virginia woods, with a close-up of Union forces (inset). Check out the cavalry commander (and mount) stuck in the roof of the house.

GREAT BATTLES in that fire combat is still only preparatory to melee,

despite the fact that the American Civil War demonstrated the uselessness of charges against rifle fire. Also, Civil War units didn't break and run as ancient troops did; they often took fire, fell back, and regrouped many times. Yet, in NVS, units are terminally routed after an unsuccessful rally attempt (or just at the end of a turn). So how are you supposed to recreate Antietam or Chancellorsville?

The scenarios are also a let-down, with many of the important battles missing in action. The campaigns just link things together, with no carryover from one battle to another. Thus, a Northern victory at the First Bull Run still gives them only McClellan on the peninsula instead of the more likely early end of the war.

In the end, NVS falls short both as a serious simulation and as a fun beer-and-pretzels wargame. With TalonSoft's *Civil War* series still available (see the May CGW Hall of Fame), there's no reason to waste time with this. **CGW**

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

★★★★★

PROS: A fast-playing brigade-level Civil War game.

CONS: Looks bad, plays poorly, isn't historical, and isn't fun.

DIFFICULTY: Intermediate.

REQUIREMENTS: Pentium 166, 16MB RAM, 154MB hard-disk space.

3D SUPPORT: None.

MULTIPLAYER SUPPORT: Robert, modem, LAN (1-2 players), 1 CD per player.

Price: \$39.95
 Publisher: Interactive Magic
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★★★★★
— Computer Games Strategy Plus



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Trevor Chan is the creator of advanced strategy games like *Capitalism*, *Seven Kingdoms*, and *Seven Kingdoms Ancient Adversaries*. Although only 25, Chan operates his own game design studio, overseeing all aspects of production at Hong Kong-based Enlight Software (www.enlight.com).



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SimCity 3000

Can't Urban Plan Your Way Out of a Paper Bag? We Can Help!

by Marc Dultz

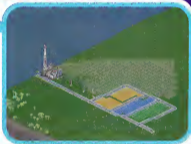
SIMCITY 3000 is unquestionably one of the most challenging simulations around, aptly modeling the growth of a city from its embryonic beginnings into a bustling metropolis. The first 25 years or so represent the most difficult phase of the game, because it is during this period that you must successfully lay the groundwork for your ideal city. At the outset, you must determine where to locate neighborhoods, workplaces, and industries; decide which city services you will provide to your inhabitants; and implement a plan of action that will ensure steady growth of the community. Here are some tips on accomplishing your lofty goals—without bankrupting the city coffers or turning your administration out onto the streets.

In the Zone

Obviously, the first item on the agenda

is to decide where to set up shop. Early on, it makes sense to establish only light residential, commercial, and industrial zones instead of medium or densely populated zones, since these are cheaper to create. While you can cram more people into a medium or densely populated zone, these areas also take far longer to fully occupy and have far lower land values.

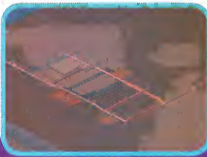
Plan on placing your industrial parks somewhere along the edge of the map, preferably close to your power plants and far enough away from your residential and commercial districts so that they don't lower land value. Residential zones should be created near waterways, lakes, or atop hills, because these types of terrain will generally have a positive effect on their land value. Commercial zones should be placed nearby, with schools, fire departments, police stations, and hospitals in close proximity.



Once your residential, commercial, and industrial zones have been created, your next task is to provide both water and power to them. Start out by placing a pumping station near a body

of fresh water (preferably along a river or on the shore of a lake), then construct a water main that leads from your pumping station to each of your newly formed zones. Pipes can be spaced at least seven tiles apart and still provide plenty of water to each of your zones. If it still appears as if some zones aren't receiving their fair share of water, you may want to construct a few water towers nearby or perhaps connect one of your water mains to a neighboring community so that you can pump in additional water.

Unlike SIMCITY 2000, you need not erect power lines all over the map in order to keep the juice flowing. In fact, most buildings will draw power from distant power plants if the buildings are simply situated near another fully powered zone.



See the Review **MAY ISSUE** • 4 STARS

Let's Make a Deal



From time to time, your neighbors will

propose all sorts of deals to you, such as purchasing excess power and importing garbage. If you're in dire straits, they may even offer to pump in potable water, albeit at an exorbitant cost. Unless the terms of these arrangements are utterly outrageous, it makes sense to take them up on their offers as quickly as possible before they decide to rescind the proposal. The short-term benefits of these deals often will outweigh the long-term costs; besides, you can always cancel the contract at a later date if it looks as though the deal is starting to go sour.

Check with your financial advisor to see what types of ordinances you can enact. Early on, pass any ordinances that will generate income, such as parking fines and legalized gambling. While such ordinances tend to upset your populace and lower your popularity, your most immediate concerns are to stimulate growth and establish a positive cash flow. You can always strike down these ordinances later if they are doing more harm than good.

Although some legislation will end up costing you money, you

Have Smoke, Will Travel

During the early stages of the game, pollution is by far one of your most pressing concerns. Pollution generally comes in three forms—air, ground, and water.

Depending upon where it occurs, pollution can lower the value of land, retard growth of the city, and turn away city dwellers by the droves.



should still enact these ordinances as quickly as possible, since they will generally allow you to build certain structures or hasten the availability of other ordinances. For instance, the passage of the shuttle ordinance permits you to build slightly larger residential, commercial, and industrial zones (one extra tile each), which means that you can create larger zones and far fewer roads.

Other ordinances, such as the passage of a junior reading program, will generally raise the education level of your populace and improve their happiness, making it more attractive for other sims to move into your community. The creation of a maximum-security prison makes sense too, since this will bring in additional revenue at a time when you can use it most. Because prisons and jails drastically lower neighboring land value, they should be sited in low-value areas along the edge of the map, where their adverse impact will be severely lessened.



Riding the Rails

In addition to a decent neighborhood, your sims require a viable transportation system so that they can travel from one destination to another. While some sims don't mind walking to the corner Quickie Mart every so often, most would rather drive or ride the rails than hoof it, since this will appreciably cut down their travel time.

Resist the urge to build an extensive network of roads, since this will only lead to higher maintenance costs and greater traffic congestion. Instead, create an above-ground rail system that parallels your most frequently traveled routes and intersects at key junctures. Place train stations at regular intervals alongside the tracks, locating them within walking range of each major residential, commercial, and industrial zone.

Make sure to leave ample room for the rail system to expand, so that it can efficiently and effectively meet the demands of your citizens. It's also a good idea to connect your rail system to as many neighbors as possible since this will enable more sims to quickly move into your community.



Later on, as land values rise and new modes of transport become available, it may be wise to build an underground subway system that mirrors your rail system. When subway ridership increases, you can then think about tearing up the above-ground rail system and replacing it with a network of roads capable of supporting bus traffic. Be sure to place bus stops at random intervals, as close as possible to any subway stations.

Knowledge Is Power

Early on, the only power sources available

are coal and oil-based power plants. Although coal plants are cheaper to purchase and operate and produce slightly more power, they emit far more pollutants than oil plants.

So, unless your city desperately needs power, stick with oil, at least until gas-powered plants come online.

Like landfill sites, power plants should be situated in the

corners of the map or along its outer edges so that their pollutants "drift" off the map instead of into your community. At the map edges, power plants will also be ideally situated to supply unused power to nearby communities.

Finally, it should be pointed out that power plants start to decline with age, operating at less than peak efficiency as the years pass by. If they do break down, power plants spew even



more waste into the surrounding region, which can lead to all sorts of problems. Every so often, it would be wise to check on the condition of your power plants, replacing decrepit plants with newer power sources.

Whose Trash Is This Anyway?

Unless you are prepared to export garbage to a neighboring community (not a good idea considering the cost) the next most logical recourse is to create a landfill, placing it in a corner of the map where it won't affect your main urban center. Landfills are some of the worst polluters, and left unchecked, can become serious blights on the urban landscape.

In terms of zoning costs, landfills are also fairly expensive, so keep your initial site small and well out of range of the nearest inhabitants. Try to allocate a large enough tract of land to accommodate any future site expansion, making sure to leave some space vacant for an incinerator when it becomes available.



While landfills are obviously eyesores, they do have their benefits. Neighboring communities will routinely offer to export their garbage into your community, paying a fairly handsome fee to rid themselves of their unwanted waste. So, while importing garbage may seem like a fairly unattractive option, the extra income will prove handy when expenditures outstrip revenues.

Later on, as your bottom line improves, you can always rescind those heartless waste management contracts. If things are going especially well, you can even dismantle your landfills and export garbage into someone else's backyard, reducing the pollution level and perhaps causing more sims to move into your community!

Break the Bank

If your city is in dire need of funding,

or if an attractive opportunity presents itself, it makes good sense for you to turn to the banks for a low-interest loan. Since you can have only 10 outstanding loans at any one time, it's wise to borrow the maximum amount allowable (\$25,000), although it'll cost you something on the order of \$30,000 to pay it back in full.

Loans should be used as an immediate stopgap measure or to finance key projects such as the construction of a backup power plant or water tower, and should never be used to pay off other outstanding loans. It's easy to get into a situation in which you have multiple outstanding loans and no hope of ever digging out from under all that red ink.



While the advent of clean industry will lower pollution levels much later in the game, the planting of trees and the establishment of parks will have a much more immediate effect and will help to reduce emission levels throughout your city.

Remember that even Rome wasn't built in a day. And while the first 25 years or so in SIMCITY 3000 are troubling times even for veteran players, overcoming this stumbling block means that you're well on your way to creating the ultimate utopia. **CGW**

Myth II: Soulblighter

Applying the Principles of War for Online Success

See the Review
APRIL ISSUE • 4.5 STARS

by Raphael Liberatoro

Draw your swords, string your bows, prime your mortars, and prepare your spells, because we're gathering around the war table to discuss MYTH II multiplayer strategy and tactics. With MYTH II's fast-paced multiplayer options, victory depends on your ability to make quick tactical decisions, utilize fine-tuned skills, and employ surefire strategies.

The Importance of UNIT TRADING

Strategy starts with unit trading. One consideration is mix of units: Choosing the best combination of troops for your army is a factor of paramount importance for victory. Another is the game type and map being played: Choose units best suited for specific games and maps.

Units in MYTH II fall into four

nucleus of your army: Melee units have three functions: Support missile and special units, defend a flag or ball, and strike the enemy when an old-fashioned infantry assault is needed. When a particular strategy calls for defensive tactics, melee units should make up the bulk of your force.

Missile units are probably the most underrated of the categories. They provide support for direct assaults and are perfect for protecting your army against Ghouls, Wights, Dwarves, or Warlocks.



ATTENTION! Strategy starts with unit selection. Winning depends on having the right mix of units and the right units for the game and map you'll be playing.

categories, requiring an incredible amount of focus and energy. They also have a tendency to get killed easily. What's more, their explosions can't tell friend from foe;

while it's not a good idea to let them wander too far from the main body of forces, it's also unwise to let them huddle too close to your army.

WHAT'S A GIMBLE? With more than 21 multiplayer maps to choose from—in addition to single-player game maps—you must get to know maps like Gimble in the Wake and the games they best support.



LOSING 101 Even though the archers are at a good elevation, the Warriors should be flanking them on both sides for protection. Here, the Ghouls can claw past the archers to assassinate the poorly protected peasants.

categories: recon, melee, missile, and special units. Units like Berserks, Giant Myrkridia, and Bre'Unor overlap two categories. Recon units like Ghouls, Spiders, Myrkridia, and Berserks are the fastest units of the game. They're used primarily for scouting, skirmishing, harassing, and/or grabbing an undefended flag or ball.

Melee units such as Berserks, Myrkridia, Giant Myrkridia, Heron Guards, Bre'Unor, Troll, Thrall, and Warriors are the

Depending on the game type, choosing a balance of melee and missile units provides a strong force for any task.

Special units like Dwarves, Mortar Dwarves, Warlocks, and Fetch are easily the coolest units. With their ability to inflict damage on massive areas, they make a nice complement to any army. New players tend to load up on Dwarves, Fetch, and Warlocks, but they soon learn that there's a downside: They're the trickiest and hardest to master of all the unit



MELEE GAMES

Body Count In this most popular of MYTH's multiplayer games, the player or team with the most kills and/or total damage wins. Start out with a mix of recon, missile, melee, and special units. Units that pack a wallop, like Dwarves, Wights, and Warlocks, are ideal. Try to pick a good balance of melee troops but keep the slower-moving Thrall to a minimum: Vulnerable to explosions, Thrall will give opponents the points needed to win. Take

flag. Here's another good tactic: After gaining the flag in the waning seconds, send out small groups of units, a couple at a time, to slow down and prevent other units from contesting your flag.

King of the Hill The player or team holding the flag at the center for the longest period of time wins. It's a tricky game that requires constant maneuvering on an ever-fluid battlefield. Launch a

wise to be flexible, so yield the flag to superior forces and regroup for another attack.

Assassin The object is to assassinate your opponent's unit or group of units (usually a hapless baron) while protecting yours at the



SEARCH AND DESTROY Ghoib make excellent recon units in this game of Assassin, the Ghoib quickly scouted a group of peasants trying to hide, with minimal protection, in the corner of the map. Farewell, peasants.

some time. Assassinating a baron causes that player's army to disappear from the map. In addition to searching for enemy barons, your primary objective is to protect your baron at all costs, so keep defensive units nearby. Send an attacking force of recon and special units to scour the map for targets, assassinating an opponent's baron when their forces are locked in battle with someone else and aren't prepared for an assault.

exists. Trade for units that are fast but can protect themselves if attacked by an opponent's hunting party. Avoid spreading your units thin in search of prey, chances are they'll get killed. Form two or three hunting parties and multi-task them in a counterclockwise or clockwise direction, each group within bowshot of the other.

Stampede You must successfully guide your herd of pigs to the center of the map for teleportation (some game types provide the enemy flag as the teleportation point). The winner is the player or team herding the most pigs off the map. In this game, quickly split your force into two groups, the first consisting of recon, missile, and melee units; the second, of slow-moving melee and special units. Charge your first group to the teleportation point so you can keep other players from herding their pigs to safety. This also gives you an opportunity to secure the teleportation point. At the same time, use your second group to quickly herd your pigs toward the point. The first players to herd their pigs to the center usually meet with little resistance. Remember to protect your pigs while killing as many of the opponents' pigs as possible.



YEE-HAAW! In Stampede, move your herd to the flag before anyone else in order to secure the teleportation area and gain the upper hand.

the offensive by scouting the map with your recon units, looking for favorable terrain, enemy weaknesses, exposed flanks, or players locked in combat, then take the initiative and exploit them. Most Body Count games are decided within the first several minutes, so don't hold back for too long.

concerted effort toward seizing the flag early on. After you gain the flag, expect a barrage of attacks from all sides. Move your forces to a defensive perimeter near the

Hunting The player or team killing the most neutral units (deer, birds, or peasants) wins. The strategy for this wild but fun game hinges on staying focused on your objective to kill neutral units. Don't get caught up trying to attack other units unless the opportunity

MINED YOUR STEP You don't have to engage in hand-to-hand combat to protect a flag in Last Man on the Hill—just place satchel charges around the flag and wait for victims to walk into your trap.

Last Man on the Hill

The player or team in possession of the flag at the center of the map when time runs out wins. Pick troops with good defensive posturing—special and melee units are optimal choices. Timing is everything here: Experienced players wait till the last possible minute before launching a well-planned assault, en masse, on the

base of the flag while creating one or two quick-response teams, composed of recon and melee units, for added maneuvering. Use recon units to skirmish with advancing enemies to slow them down. It's





FISH IN A BARREL Be on the lookout for opponents who bait you into traps. This player blundered badly, twice: He passed close to a deep body of water in which Wights were lurking and then got caught downhill from a force of deadly Archers and Dwarves.

FLAG GAMES



STEP RIGHT UP The *Sealess* are great missile units because of their ability to travel across impossible terrain. Deploy *Sealess* along the side of a hill near a heavily traversed corridor and watch the bodies pile up.

Flag Rally The player or team who touches all flags wins. For this fast-paced contest, stock up on recon and quick-moving melee units. Quickly take the offensive and send your recon units to touch all the flags. Move your army en masse to each flag, destroying resistance along the way while redirecting recon units to grab unclaimed flags.

You can also play defense by sending out your defensive units to grab other flags while at the same time you keep the bulk of your army behind in order to guard your main flag.

Capture the Flag The player or team capturing the most flags while maintaining

possession of their own flag wins. Select a good balance of forces for multitasking. Split your forces into two groups, keeping defensive units behind to guard your flag while attacking with the rest of your forces. Recon the map in search of exposed flags and/or weakened opponents. Try sneaking your units past the defense of another player while he's engaged in combat, and touch the flag.

Territories

There are several flags scattered

throughout the map, and the player or team controlling the most flags when time runs out wins. For this pure strategy game, a balanced force of recon, melee, missile, and special units is required.

The best overall strategy is to methodically capture and hold as many flags as possible without spreading your army too thin. For best results, it's a good idea to split your army into three main forces for multitasking, but make sure you keep each force within supporting distance of each other; should a large enemy force attack. Send your recon units across the map to exploit enemy weakness and/or take unguarded flags. In the final minute of the game, make a concerted push to capture flags.



SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

Keep your eye on the minimap for players engaged with other opponents, then exploit the situation. This single Warlock decimated an unsuspecting force while the player was busy fighting on the other side of the map.



HIGHPOINT AT THE OK CORRAL Position your missile troops at high elevation so that their attacks will go farther and be more accurate. Here, Archers receive an exploding gift complete with shards and fragments.

Steal the Bacon The player or team with possession of the "bacon" (an oversized mobile soccer ball) when time runs out wins. As in Last Man on the Hill, the key here is to conserve your forces till the end. Let others battle it out, and avoid combat at all costs unless an exposed flank looks tasty. Wait until the

protected. Just as you need to protect your bacon in Assassin, in this game you must secure your ball or you'll be eliminated. Try to pick a mix of forces for defending and attacking. As in Steal the Bacon, actively search for opportunities to sneak in recon units while others are locked in combat. Try using

Ghols, Myrkrida, and Berserks for stealing opponents' balls.

Scavenger Hunt Several movable balls are scattered throughout the map. The first player or team to touch all balls wins. This game gets chaotic, so it's smart to choose a bal-



Mapping Things Out

Line up your archers, preferably on a hill or elevation, with soldiers in a protective embankment. Load up your ghols, shown in yellow, with satchels then send them in groups to saturate the enemy as deeply as possible with satchels (noted by the red arrow lines). Three preset ghol groups, represented in red circles, work well for flanking and penetrating the enemy positions.

Once you've gotten the satchels in, you have three choices for setting them off: Bowman (gold arrows) shooting flaming arrows; a group of ghols with night bits or dwarfen mortars (though you risk having them cut down by archers or soldiers), or dwarfen mortar or a standard dwarf can set them off (riskier since dwarves are slow and cost a lot).

With practice, this can be a devastating maneuver. For movies of this and other MYTH II tactics, check out this month's CG-ROM.

BALL GAMES

last minute before launching a focused attack on the ball holder's forces. During the battle, maneuver recon units to sneak in and grab the ball. If you get the ball early on, dribble the ball to a defensible position. Depending on the terrain, sometimes you can dribble or blast the ball to

anched force. Load up with recon units, because opportunities to snatch unguarded balls will occur and you'll need the fastest troops to get at them. Use small teams to get as many balls as possible before your opponents do. On defense, dribble balls out of your opponents' grasp and keep them near your troops for protection.

Captures Several mobile balls are placed throughout the map. The player or team possessing the most balls when time runs out wins. The strategy is similar to



TIMING IS EVERYTHING Playing MYTH II requires not only strategy and skill but also cunning—and a bit of luck. In the final seconds of this team Steal the Bacon game, a skilled team member sneaked his Ghol into the fray and dribbled the ball away unnoticed.

the side of a hill or onto deep impassable water for added protection.

Balls on Parade Each player or team begins with a mobile ball that must be

that of territories, but rather than spreading your army thin trying to capture that game's flags, here you have the option of using fast recon units to obtain and bring back as many

unguarded balls as possible to a defensible, secured position. You should use your recon units to constantly roam the map in search of balls without engaging the enemy, but—as in other Bacon games—you should always keep a sharp eye out for opportunities to ambush the enemy. Make your big push just before the end of the game by maneuvering two or three groups of troops toward as many balls as possible. **CGW**



Close Combat III: The Russian Front

Battle Tactics for the War in the East

by Marc Dultz

Spanning nearly four years, Germany's *Russlandkrieg*, or War in Russia, proved to be one of the longest and most ferocious military campaigns of the Second World War, locking two powerful armies in a life-or-death struggle to determine the fate of Europe. In *CLOSE COMBAT III*, you get a sense of what it was like to soldier on the war's inhospitable eastern frontier, dashing across the vast open steppes of the Ukraine one moment, only to inch your way through the thick defensive belts surrounding Moscow and Stalingrad the next.

See the Review

MAY ISSUE • 3.5 STARS

It's easy to fall into the trap of using the same cadre of units and a

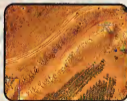
similar set of battle tactics for every conceivable circumstance, rarely taking into account the enormity of the situation or the disparate forces under each side's command. Such a formulaic approach avails you little in the campaign's more formidable scenarios. To succeed, then, you must draw up a sound contingency plan for every type of engagement, a plan of action that will marry the right mix of forces with the correct battle tactics to produce the best possible results.

What follows then are some general guidelines and techniques for the conduct of offensive military operations in *CLOSE COMBAT III*, all drawn from the Wehrmacht's experience in the Russian campaign. Bear in mind that certain factors, such as troop strength, terrain, weather, and the disposition of the opposing forces, will have to be weighed and carefully considered before a definitive plan of action can be put into effect.

Armored Attacks

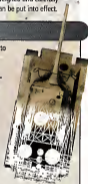
Armored forces (tanks, assault guns, half-tracks, and other mechanized units) play a much more vital role in *CLOSE COMBAT III* than in previous installments of the series: In many instances they are forced to shoulder the brunt of the fighting. Armored forces are typically employed to maintain the momentum of the attack, are often called upon to rupture a defensive line, and, when the case warrants, are charged with destroying enemy armored concentrations on the battlefield.

During the war, panzer commanders deployed their mobile reconnaissance units well ahead of the armored advance in order to establish the proximity of the nearest enemy forces, fix their positions, numbers, and composition in preparation for the main assault. Typically, motorcycles, fast-moving armored cars, or half-tracks were employed in this role, with two vehicles working in tandem to ascertain the enemy's whereabouts. Ordinarily one vehicle would move as swiftly as possible from one area of concealment to the next while the second stood off a few hundred yards to the rear, ready to provide covering fire in case the first vehicle came under attack. If the lead vehicle happened to be destroyed, the second vehicle would withdraw in earnest, then assist with the screening of the main assault or in locating any nearby enemy armored units. Whenever possible, reconnaissance units would attempt to occupy the highest ground, such as a ridge line or a hill,



thereby giving them the best vantage point to survey the surrounding countryside.

Once the composition and disposition of the enemy's forces had been established, the main armored force would assume a battle formation. Typically, light and medium panzers would spearhead the attack, with the trailing elements—mechanized units, assault guns, towed as well as self-propelled artillery, and trucks—forming the second and third waves of the assault group. The battalion commander, usually leading the assault at the head of the second wave, would determine each phase of the attack, based upon the outcome of the initial meeting engagement, the progress of the lead elements as they passed through the defensive line, and the overall mission goals. The vanguard, supported by artillery fire and field pieces, would either push on into the enemy's rear areas or would be ordered to encircle then annihilate the enemy in a bold pincer movement.



Units assigned to the second wave of the assault were charged with protecting the armored forces should any enemy armor appear on the battlefield. Towed antitank teams and heavily armored assault guns were deployed along either flank of the attack, ready to turn back local armored counterattacks. If infantry or antitank teams were harassing the lead elements, mechanized infantry units would immediately dismount from their vehicles and engage these units, forcing them to ground until the armor could destroy them. Generally, units in the second wave were used to mop up any remaining enemy resistance that the armor had bypassed. However, as the conflict dragged on, and newer, much more lethal tank destroyers were introduced by the Red Army, units in the second wave were often held in reserve for extended periods of time, until the armor could outflank and eliminate these threats.

Prior to and even during the opening stages of the assault, a short yet intense rolling artillery barrage would be launched, targeted at both known and suspected antitank gun sites as well as mortar and artillery positions. When the attack commenced, friendly artillery batteries and mortar teams would fire smoke ahead of the armored units, screening their advance as they crossed the open ground. Meanwhile, field guns were usually sited along tree lines or on hilltops ready to provide standoff fire should the armored forces require further assistance. Once the enemy's



antitank guns had been silenced, some of the armored units and field artillery would direct their fire against any enemy machine-gun teams or rifle squads in the area, so that dismounted infantry could approach, engage, and destroy these holdouts.

River Crossing Operations

In many respects, the seizure of a river crossing shares certain similarities with the attack on a fortified line. A specialized assault team must be created from several different types of units, a battle group that will usually consist of field artillery, armored cars, mortars, machine-gun teams, tanks, and both light and heavy infantry.

Typically, the enemy will attempt to defend a river crossing by withdrawing his forces over the bridge to guard the more defensible span. Since landing craft and other troop-ferrying equipment aren't available in the game, the attacker must somehow attempt to get his forces across the bridge in the most expeditious manner possible and then establish a defensible lodgment. Again, speed, artillery, smoke, and overwhelming firepower are critical to the operation.

Prior to battle, reconnaissance units should immediately occupy any high ground that overlooks the river crossing. The recon teams, acting as artillery observers, will then be able to call in accurate artillery fire against any observable troop concentrations within the immediate area. Tanks and field artillery should also take up positions atop ridges, inside tree lines, or behind buildings, so that they too can support the attack. Finally, light and heavy infantry squads should be placed as close as possible to the bridge, preferably in



concealed terrain, from which they can swiftly move out and onto the bridge.

Once everyone is in position, mortar teams should fire smoke canisters along the opposite riverbank, usually near the entrance to the bridge. Once the smoke screen thickens, machine-gun teams should immediately begin to



rake the opposite embankment, keeping the defenders busy while the assault troops press forward. At this point in the battle, an armored car or half-track can speed down the road and over the bridge, stirring up as much havoc as possible on the opposite riverbank. Next, two teams of light infantry race across the bridge, then take up defensive positions on either side of the bridge. Finally, tanks and heavy infantry squads storm the bridge, fanning out in all directions once they reach the opposite riverbank, quickly eliminating any enemy forces still operating near the bridgehead.



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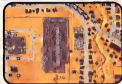


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Urban Combat

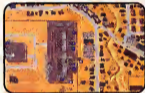
During the war, armored forces were usually withheld from the opening phase of an urban assault because they were extremely vulnerable to close-quarter fighting. Antitank teams occupying the upper floors of a multistory building were ideally situated, able to fire down at an approaching vehicle's top, where its armor was the thinnest. Moreover, specially formed tank-hurting units were trained to infiltrate sections of town already lost to the attacker, then fire at a tank from behind. As a result, infantry units were generally used to spearhead the main assault, with tanks and other fighting vehicles accompanying the second wave to bolster the attack. Armored units were used to smash barricades and act as mobile artillery supporting the infantry units as they cleared out each section of town.

German forces tended to employ flanking or encircling tactics to bypass a major strongpoint, preferring to reduce them with withering artillery fire rather than attack directly. In some instances, armored cars and half-tracks would speed through a village in order to take up



positions just beyond the town limits. The idea here was to block the defenders' retreat route if they attempted to withdraw.

The ultimate objective in urban combat was to divide the defending forces, then isolate them from each other, denying them any freedom of movement and reducing their overall cohesiveness. Assault troops were divided up into several columns, which would then make a series of coordinated attacks following parallel routes. Each column would be further subdivided into an assault group and a mop-up detachment, which were typically composed of reconnaissance troops, engineers, and various infantry squads.



When maneuvering, the Germans would attempt to avoid the streets as much as possible, infiltrating the enemy's positions via backyards, over roofs, and through sewers. Tall multistory buildings were always seized first because these dominating positions provided the men with key observation points from which to survey nearby streets and the widest field of fire should the enemy attempt to redeploy. When a section of town was finally surrounded, every exit and side street was quickly blocked to prevent the defenders from escaping. Mop-up detachments would then proceed house by house, clearing any remaining resistance while machine-gun teams and other units stood off to provide suppression fire.



The wedge, or "arrowhead," formation was most frequently adopted because it provided the platoon commander with the greatest degree of flexibility during the attack. Each tank in the platoon was responsible for watching a specific arc, ensuring that at least one set of eyes was covering each sector of the front. Unfortunately, the wedge formation wasn't always the ideal formation. Tanks on one side of the wedge were generally unable to engage any enemy units located on the opposite side for fear of hitting their own vehicles. What's more, the platoon commander rode in the lead tank, which was usually the first vehicle to come under attack.

The blunt wedge, or "crescent," formation was regularly used because it

Panzers Vorwärts!

offered each tank a good field of fire and typically didn't expose the lead vehicle to as much enemy fire as the wedge formation. However, because the command vehicle was located at the rear of the for-



ward, the other tank commanders were unable to observe what the command tank was doing.

The echelon formation allowed the platoon commander to place the greatest volume of fire on either side of the formation. While each vehicle had a clear line of sight, the lead vehicle was exposed, often drawing the most enemy fire.



The line abreast formation was generally used when the platoon commander wanted to place fire on targets located in front of the formation. Unfortunately, the line abreast formation restricted each vehicle's line of fire, leaving them susceptible to flanking fire. Usually, this formation was adopted on the defense, where interweaving terrain and other units could be used to protect each flank. **CGW**



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A Real Grim Fandango

Such a Long, Long Time to Be Gone, and a Short Time to Be There

I takes a lot to shut up a smart-alecky loudmouth like myself, but this month I finally met my match. Yep, life's all fun and games here at Computer Gaming World (except for those annoying couple of days each month when we have to make this magazine), but this month really gave me a Tyson-sized upper-cut, cold and hard, right in the kisser. And boy, I'd give anything to be able to write about anything else right now.

One minute I'm at the Game Developer's Conference in San Jose, attending sessions like "Are Adventure Games Dead?" (short answer, yes), and the next minute I find myself driving home at midnight in the rain, furiously hoping to beat the clock so I could say goodbye to my cousin Suzy—36 years old and dying of ovarian cancer—our last time.

I didn't make it.

In the face of such inexplicable, horrifying, incomprehensible news, how does one write a dumb column about computer games? Good question. I can't

do it. For a while, I tried focusing and writing about my hopeless addiction to HERODES OF MIGHT AND MAGIC III. It was kind of funny until I wrote something about needing an IV line and a bucket under my chair to take care of my bodily functions while I played. Then I thought about Suzy, and that line lost all its humor. Death—that heartless



I hear people trying to justify their gaming habit all the time, but I'm here to tell you—don't even bother.

son of a bitch—just sucks all the humor out of everything

■ ■ ■

Or maybe not.

Suzy—my irrepressible,

stubbornly optimistic hippie Deadhead of a cousin—would have hated that idea. In her 36 brief years, Suzy never had the time to get maudlin like that. There was too much fun to be had. Not that she didn't work hard too; this is someone who actually chose, without someone holding a gun to her head, to teach social studies to the evil alien beings known as "7th graders." But she never lost sight of her main goal. *Have as much fun as possible, all the time.*

It's a good thing to remember. Actually, it's just good to remember that it's okay to want to have fun. Playing computer games, for example. This is a fun thing to do. We don't have to pretend that it's anything else, right? I hear people trying to jus-

Just yesterday, for example, I learned that it's way easier to beat someone over the head with a crowbar in HALF-LIFE than it is to keep reloading and firing the pistol. So I take it back. Games are very educational.

■ ■ ■

My point is this: Don't let anyone shame you into thinking that playing computer games is a waste of time. Because whatever they're doing to pass the time is no better—and it certainly isn't going to make them any less dead in the end. By all means, turn your computer off at least part of the day. Do your best to be a useful and responsible member of society, too. Plant a tree. Volunteer at a shelter. Help Ion Storm finish DAKATAMA. Just don't forget

tify their gaming habit all the time, but I'm here to tell you—don't even bother. You don't need to say "it's better than TV." That's only partially true, anyway, but, more to the point, why should anything have to be better than TV? Life is hard enough. We're allowed to rest, we're allowed to goof off.

Yeah, yeah, some games can manage to be educational, too, but save that for your parents or spouse. That's not why I play them, and I bet that's not why you play them either. Well, let me qualify that. Some gaming education is very important to me.

that when old Manny Calavera comes knocking at your door holding the big, black "Game Over" sign, you're not going to find a Restart button anywhere in your inventory.

So long, Suzy. Say hi to Jerry for me. Me, I've got some HERODES OF MIGHT AND MAGIC III to play. **CGW**

What Jeff doesn't realize is that Jerry Garcia currently holds the high score on the Ms. Pac Man machine in Heaven. Send your favorite magic brownie recipes to Jeff at jeff_green@aol.com.

Jeff Responds:

If you think I'm boring, you should read Denny Atkin's column.

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